



## Communication Skills of Deaf Children

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### ABSTRACT

As social beings humans have a main need, namely communication, basically communication is a process, and the process must have an obstacle. Like the barriers experienced by deaf children, they experience barriers in their hearing as a result of which deaf people have difficulty speaking so that deaf children are not or less able to communicate verbally. Deaf children maximize their sense of sight as a way to complete the lack of hearing. The purpose and benefits of this study are to determine communication skills in deaf children, know how to socialize deaf children, and find out what are the obstacles in communicating deaf children. This study also aims to test whether there is an interaction between two independent variables that affect verbal and nonverbal communication skills in deaf children. Deaf people often have communication problems as in students at SLB B-C Wijaya Kusumah, they still have difficulty in communicating even though generally deaf people use sign language alternatives. The results of our research found that the communication skills of deaf children in SLB B-C Wijaya Kusumah are still very low, this was obtained from the results of the researcher's interview with the class teacher concerned. There are only two children out of nine children who have comprehension in communicating using sign language, the rest still need special guidance in order to maximize their sense of sight as a way to perfect communication.

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## INTRODUCTION

Communication is a form of interaction between humans, unique differences between humans are very heterogeneous making communication patterns also so diverse. According to Tita Melia, et al. (2022: 26) effective communication is a process of exchanging ideas, thoughts, knowledge and information so that goals can be fulfilled properly. In other words, this communication is an effort to convey messages between people. In the communication process there are 3 elements of communication so that the communication process can occur, namely: 1. The sender of the message (communicator). 2. The recipient of the message (communicant). 3. The message itself.

Humans are social creatures, which means that humans are always in contact or interacting with others to meet their needs. As social creatures, humans have an inquisitive drive, want to progress, and also develop, communication is the means. Communication can be done both verbally and non-verbally. Verbal communication is the delivery of messages that use words, both written and spoken from the sender of the message. While non-verbal communication is communication that is not expressed in words or in writing (Hess, 2016).

Humans can receive information through the five senses, the sense of sight, the sense of hearing, the sense of touch, the sense of smell, and the sense of taste. With these five senses humans can receive, digest, or produce new information. However, unlike someone who has physical disabilities or even someone with special needs such as the deaf, they can only use well-functioning senses to receive information. The most common way deaf people can build information is by reading lip gestures and using sign language.

Deafness is a condition where a person loses his hearing so that the person cannot pick up on various stimuli, especially through the sense of hearing. A person with deafness often has communication problems. His inability to communicate had a broad impact on his language, reading, writing, social interaction skills and academic achievement. According to Andreas Dwijosumarto (Suharsiwi, 2017: 35-36) that deaf people are someone who is not or less able to hear sounds. Meanwhile, according to Mufti Salim (Suharsiwi, 2017: 36) deaf children are children who experience lack or loss of hearing ability caused by damage or malfunction of part or all of the hearing apparatus so that they experience obstacles in their language development. A person who is deaf needs special guidance and education to achieve a decent life. The obstacles experienced by deaf people start from difficulty hearing, so that language formation, especially verbally, becomes hampered. This language inability results in deaf people having difficulty in conveying thoughts and ideas that they want to convey to others. These barriers often make a person deaf isolated from his social environment.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Researchers used qualitative research methods of case study type, by observation, interviews and documentation of deaf students at SLB B-C Wijayah Kusuma. This study was motivated by the author's thoughts on the communication skills of children with deafness. Data collection techniques were carried out by interviewing deaf class teachers, observation and documentation. Then the collected data is analyzed by the author.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Understanding Communication and Types of Communication

Muhammad Yasin in Vardiansyah (2008) explains etymologically, the term communication comes from the Latin *communicatio*, which comes from the word *communis*, and *the word communis* comes from the word *communico* which means to share. In this case, sharing means giving each other understanding through the exchange of messages. According to Kinkin, et al (2020) based on the meaning of the word "Communicare" which represents the etymology of the word "Communication" literally, communication means announcement, greeting, conversation, exchange of ideas, or relationships. According to Muhammad Yasin (2015) defining terminologically, communication refers to the process of conveying statements from one person to another. From this definition it is clear that communication involves many people, and someone communicates something to others. In other words, humans are involved in communication. Therefore, communication here is human communication, or also called social communication.

Totok bintoro in Cangara (2006: 19) that communication is a process in which an idea is transferred from a source to one or more recipients with the intention of changing behavior. This definition was later developed by Rogers with D.Lawrence Kincaid giving birth to a new definition which states that communication is a process in which two or more people form or exchange information with each other, which in turn will arrive at a deep mutual understanding. In this case, it can be concluded that communication is a human effort in conveying messages or information in social interaction.

Types of Communication:

#### 1. Verbal Communication

Miptah Parid in Iriantara & Syaripudin (2013: 86) explained that communication that often occurs between educators and students is verbal communication, for example during the learning process in class, during conversations inside and outside school. This verbal communication can take the form of face-to-face conversations between educators and students, conversations during classroom learning, or telephone interactions. In everyday conversation, communication is often equated with verbal communication, or commonly called conversation.

#### 2. Nonverbal communication

Miptah parid (2020: 6) explained that when communicating, not only send verbal messages but also nonverbal messages. Therefore, doing nonverbal communication becomes a complement or alternative to verbal communication. Nonverbal communication can occur through hand movements, body movements, facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, manner of speech, clothing, and others. According to Totok bintoro in Muhammad (2005: 130) Nonverbal

communication is communication that uses songs, facial expressions, eye contact, body language, gestures, touch, the use of space and distance, and the use of time for individual communication.

### **Communication Function**

The function of communication according to Radolph F. Verderber in Yosol is (1) The purpose of comfort means relationships with others, forming and building relationships. (2) Decision making is deciding whether or not to do something in a given situation. (Miptah parid, 2020:6)

According to Dimbleby and Burton in Yosol, the usefulness of learning communication is as follows; 1) to survive. An example could be when someone is hungry or thirsty and asks for food, or when someone goes to the doctor to complain of pain. 2) cooperation. Humans everywhere need others, so people cooperate and communicate with others is a bridge to establish this cooperation. 3) Personal. Everyone needs to communicate with himself. For example, using her body language to show who she is through the clothes and books she reads. 4) Socialize. In social life, we as humans are naturally involved in various things and activities with others. 5) Practical: For example, discussing how to do something in a learning activity, providing guidance, or answering questions. 6) economically. Economic benefits such as running advertising campaigns and placing advertisements in mass media. 7) information. We need communication to receive information about the world around us. 8) Play. There are many games that can be played using communication, such as deduction. (Miptah parid, 2020:6).

### **Communication Processes and Barriers**

Of course, the communication process is not without obstacles, failures occur due to certain factors. According to Thill & Bove (Sietohan & Liliani, 2018), there are four factors that inhibit the communication process, namely noise and interference factors, competing messages, intervention, and channel degradation. Meanwhile, according to Rahma (Ahmad, 2023) there are several common obstacles in the communication process, namely: 1) Psychological barriers such as prejudices, stereotypes, and motivation. 2) Sociocultural barriers are related to sociocultural environments such as ethnicity, social norms, and language differences. 3) Barriers to verbal interaction. Relates to all elements of stimuli produced by a person in the process of communication, excluding verbal stimuli.

Obstacles in communication will result in the communication process becoming ineffective, which ineffectiveness shows that to carry out a communication is not easy, especially in delivering information or messages, communication must be conveyed effectively to the recipient. According to Nida (Ahmad, 2023) that communication barriers also occur in disabilities, the success of children with disabilities in communicating depends on the instruments they use. Disability or also called special

needs is someone who has physical or mental disorders that can interfere or inhibit them from carrying out normal activities. According to Khikmawati et al (Ahmad, 2023) that there are also several types of disabilities such as deaf, blind, mentally impaired, mentally impaired, hearing impaired, autistic, and hyperactive.

### Understanding Deaf Children



Deafness is a "disability" which refers to a person who has a hearing loss and cannot receive information using his or her hearing. (Rahmah, 2018). According to Somat and Hernawati (Agus Trihartono, 2019) stated that deaf people are someone who experiences a lack or loss of the ability to hear either partially or completely caused by the malfunction of the sense of hearing, so that his hearing cannot be used properly.. From these opinions we can conclude that deaf children are children who have hearing loss so that they cannot hear sounds perfectly or cannot hear at all.

There are many factors that cause a person to experience deafness, but the results of research at SLB B-BC Wijaya Kusumah researchers get reports that all of these children experience deaf conditions due to genetic factors and are congenital. Children at SLB B-BC Wijaya Kusumah experience severe category deafness where they are unable to respond to sound at all and can only rely on visual or visual skills in communicating. There are four types of deaf categories, which are as follows.

1. Mild deafness, namely deaf people who experience a level of deafness of 25-45 dB, in this condition a person has difficulty responding to sounds that come some distance away. Therefore, someone who is deaf in this category needs to be placed in a seat at the front close to the teacher
2. Moderate deafness, namely deaf people who experience a level of deafness of 46-70 dB. A person who is moderately deaf can only understand conversation at a distance of 3-5 feet face to face. Someone who has this deaf condition needs a hearing aid.
3. Severe deafness, namely deaf people who experience levels of 71-90 dB, where someone who is severely deaf can only respond to sounds at very close distances

and must be amplified. Someone who is deaf in this category needs hearing aids in attending school.

4. Deaf people are very heavy, namely deaf people who experience a level of deafness of 90 db and above. Where a person cannot respond to sound at all, and usually the kicker of this deaf category relies more on his visual or visual abilities.

#### Communication Skills of Deaf Children at SLB B-C Wijaya Kusumah



The resource person who is a class teacher for deaf children said that the communication skills of deaf children in SLB are still very lacking, there are only two out of nine children who have understanding in communicating using sign language, the rest still need special guidance in order to maximize their sense of sight as a way to perfect communication. The first inhibiting factor of the communication ability of deaf children in SLB does come from the malfunction of the sense of hearing so that they cannot hear and speak, which they do experience deafness due to genetic factors. Then the second is the lack of role of parents in developing their children's communication skills, this is because some parents are also deaf and cannot communicate with the correct sign language, there are also some parents who only rely on school so that their children are able to communicate well, even though the role of parents is also needed.

Like other languages, sign language has an important function as a means of accessing information for children with disabilities, especially deaf. Sign language is a right for the deaf and speech impaired and must be protected. The types of sign languages found in Indonesia are the Indonesian Sign Language System (SIBI) and Indonesian Sign Language (BISINDO). SIBI Sign Language uses methods from American Sign Language (ASL). According to the Indonesian Sign Language Dictionary (2009), SIBI supports people with disabilities to communicate in society. SIBI is manifested in a systematic arrangement of finger and hand gestures as well as several gestures that symbolize certain Indonesian vocabulary. The use of SIBI Sign Language is specifically aimed at educational institutions, especially special schools. Another type of sign language, BISINDO, is more commonly used in daily communication by people

with disabilities. BISINDO sign language utilizes cultural techniques and regional languages, so that each region has a different sign language.

## CONCLUSION

Researchers can find out through interviews with resource persons, namely the deaf class teacher, that in SLB B-C Wijaya Kusumah some students are still unable to communicate well even the use of sign language as a substitute communication tool is still very lacking, so special guidance is needed in order to maximize their sense of vision as a way to perfect communication, not only that family and environmental support also affects Communication skills of deaf children. Deaf children who receive family support and a positive environment generally have better communication skills. Family and environmental support can take the form of providing accessibility, guidance, and motivation. This research certainly has many shortcomings, so for that it is very important to develop research on communication that discusses more deeply about the communication process of people with deaf disabilities so that we can create effective communication for people with disabilities, especially deaf.

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