Classroom Accommodations for Students Who Are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing

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Classroom
Accommodations/Modifications

• Adaptations or adjustments which may assist the student in their educational achievement.

• Accommodations and modifications should always be chosen purposefully based on the child’s needs.

• Careful observation, thoughtful educational planning, and systematic evaluation will guide decisions on which accommodations are needed for the child (Kronberg & Filbin, 1993).
If properly implemented in the classroom, these accommodations and modifications may help minimize the social, educational, and emotional hardships that many students who are D/HH experience.
Teachers are the gatekeepers to a successful academic career; therefore, they must be fully aware of the proper techniques available to help provide the best learning environment possible for children with hearing loss.
According to Underwood (2003) a **Teacher** should:

- have a basic understanding of hearing loss.
- be able to troubleshoot technology associated with hearing loss.
- have adequate knowledge of the educational implications associated with hearing loss.
The purpose of this study was to:

• Explore if teachers are receiving training prior to educating students who are D/HH.

• Determine what accommodations and modifications teachers report using in the classroom with students who are D/HH.

• Investigate what accommodations and modifications teachers perceive as useful and convenient.
Method

- Convenience sampling
- K-12 teachers
- Online survey emailed to potential participants
- Survey consisted of three different sections
  - Demographic questions
  - Accommodations/modifications
  - Convenience/Usefulness
Educational Background

- Secondary: 27.50%
- Combination of Degrees: 3.10%
- Elementary: 25.40%
- Deaf Education: 15%
- Special Ed: 21.20%
- Other: 4.70%
Experience Teaching Students who are D/HH

- Never, 22%
- Some Experience, 78%
Teachers’ Comfort Level Educating Students who are D/HH

- **Very Comfortable**: 36%
- **Comfortable**: 16.60%
- **Moderately Comfortable**: 25%
- **Slightly Comfortable**: 16.10%
- **Not Comfortable**: 6.70%
Teachers’ comments regarding what would make them feel more comfortable educating students who are D/HH

- “Personal introduction with student BEFORE classroom chaos begins to know if I can communicate adequately with the student.”
- “More communication with the student, parents, and the person overseeing the student.”
- “If I knew how to sign.”
Accommodations/Modifications for Students who are D/HH

Categories

• AMPLIFICATION OPTIONS
• COMMUNICATION ACCOMMODATIONS
• PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT ACCOMMODATIONS
• INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS
• CURRICULAR MODIFICATIONS
• EVALUATION MODIFICATIONS
• OTHER NEEDS/CONSIDERATIONS

Johnson, C.D., Benson, P.V., & Seaton, J.B. (1997)
AMPLIFICATION OPTIONS

- Personal hearing device (hearing aid, cochlear implant, tactile device)
- FM system (any style)
Teacher Comments about Hearing Aids

- “Some students are embarrassed to wear devices in the classroom and refuse to do so.”
- “It benefits most students, but not all students are willing to wear it for various reasons.”
- “battery replacement can interrupt instruction and often they need to be adjusted because kids complain they hurt.”
- “problems with feedback and how to correct problem”
Teacher Comments about FM systems

• “Not familiar with this.”
• “be careful when you go to the bathroom!! :)
• “Even with new features, it's hard to tell for sure if they're working the way they should.”
• “Hardest part is getting mainstream teachers to use them”
• “Awkward; Battery problems; Not effective half the time”
• “students don’t like to wear them”
COMMUNICATION ACCOMMODATIONS

- Specialized seating arrangement
- Reduce auditory distractions (background noise)
- Enhance speechreading conditions (avoid hands in front of face, mustaches well-trimmed, no gum chewing)
• Clearly enunciate speech
• Repeat or rephrase information when necessary
• Educational interpreter (ASL, signed English, cued speech, oral)
• Obtain student’s attention prior to speaking
• Reduce visual distractions
• Present information in simple, structured, sequential manner
• Allow extra time for processing information
• Frequently check for understanding
Teacher Comments about Communication Accommodations

• “hard to always remember to do this”
• “In a mainstream classroom, it is difficult to always have their attention and still maintain the floor of instruction”
• “sometimes more distracting than needs to be”
• “Necessary”
• “kid noise is hard to deal with without embarrassing the hearing impaired student”
• “I’m a gum chewer! I always forget to throw it in the trash prior to the lesson.”
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
ACCOMMODATIONS

- Noise reduction (carpet & other sound absorption materials)
- Room design modification
- Specialized lighting in the environment
- Flashing fire alarm
Teacher Comments about Physical Environment Modifications

- “Would like to do more, cost and structure of buildings sometimes out of our control”
- “Teach in a science/lab classroom (lab tables/tile floor). Carpet and sound absorbing wall tiles, etc are BIG budget items.”
- “Not an option in this computer lab.”
- “Budgeting”
- “not sure school will accommodate”
INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS

• Use of visual supplements (overheads, chalkboard, charts, vocabulary lists, lecture outlines)
• Buddy system for notes, extra explanations/directions
• Down time/break from listening
• Step-by-step directions
• Notetaker
• Captioning or scripts for television, videos, movies, filmstrips
• Check for understanding of information
• Extra time to complete assignments
• Tutor
Teacher Comments about Instructional Accommodations

• “Often, work is not turned in if extra time is given. Move at a fast pace. Student has other classes, projects, assignments.”

• “Students can depend on this and it can become a crutch”

• “Often teachers get on a fast track; are behind; have difficulty remembering to review”

• “This is essential for Secondary Grades -- needs a good notetaker”

• “Difficulty finding qualified notetakers”
CURRICULAR MODIFICATIONS

• Modify reading assignments (shorten length, adapt or eliminate phonics assignments)
• Pre-tutor vocabulary
• Provide extra practice
• Modify written assignments (shorten length, adjust evaluation criteria)
• Provide supplementary materials to reinforce concepts
• Alternative curriculum
Teacher Comments about Curricular Modifications

• “Takes lots of time to do adaptations properly”
• “Again the standard is set and the bar is lowered”
• “teachers don't have the information for pre-tutoring, usually it is done after the fact”
• “clearly benefits all students”
• “Has become much more difficult since NCLB”
EVALUATION MODIFICATIONS

• Reduce quantity of tests
• Provide reading assistance with tests
• Use alternative tests
• Allow extra time on tests
Teacher Comments about Evaluation Modifications

- “lower expectations do not help”
- “regular ed they have to take same number of tests”
- “requires a classroom teacher to produce extra work”
- “Difficult to find time to organize”
- “not possible because of no child left behind”
- “students can finish tests during resource time or during study hall times”
OTHER NEEDS/CONSIDERATIONS

- Supplemental instruction (speech, language, pragmatic skills, auditory, speechreading skills)
- Sign language instruction
- Counseling
- Deaf/ hard of hearing role models
Teacher Comments on Other/Needs and Accommodations

• “effective only if the person doing the counseling has understanding of hearing loss and its effects on language”

• “as students get older they don't want these services; more difficult to get them to attend”

• “Depending on the hearing loss and finding someone qualified to teach sign language -- not simply use a book to learn signs”
The Five Most Implemented Accommodations and Modifications Reported in %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seating Arrangement</td>
<td>73.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visual Supports</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeat</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check for Understanding (Directions)</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check for Understanding (Communication)</td>
<td>64.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Five Least Implemented Accommodations and Modifications Reported in %

- Special Lighting: 11%
- Reduce Quantity of tests: 19.2%
- Counseling: 23%
- Room Design Modification: 26.4%
- Tutor: 26.9%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation/Modification</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Convenience Rating for D/HH M (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual supplements</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>4.4(0.85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing devices</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>4.4(0.90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seating arrangement</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>4.4(0.95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearly enunciate speech</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>4.3(1.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra time to complete assignments</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>4.2(1.0)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Rated Least Convenient

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation Modification</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Convenience Rating for D/HH M (SD)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternative curriculum</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>2.3 (1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative tests</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>2.4 (1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized lighting</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>2.6 (1.4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D/HH role models</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>2.6 (1.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room design modifications</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>2.9 (1.4)</td>
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## Rated Most Useful

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation Modification</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Usefulness Rating for D/HH M(SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual supplements</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>4.8 (0.63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing devices</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>4.7 (0.74)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Check for understanding</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>4.7 (0.64)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(communication)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Check for understanding</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>4.7 (0.68)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(instructions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeat/Rephrase</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>4.6 (0.68)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Rated Least Useful

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reducing the quantity of test</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>3.2 (1.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Curriculum</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>3.5 (1.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized lighting</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>3.5 (1.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Test</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>3.6 (1.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra time to complete assignments</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>3.6 (1.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Accommodations</td>
<td>% D/HH</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of visual supplements</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>179</td>
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<tr>
<td>Captioning or scripts for TV</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>168</td>
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<td>Buddy system</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Check for understanding of information</td>
<td>65.8%</td>
<td>182</td>
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<tr>
<td>Down time/break form listening</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>174</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extra time to complete assignments</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
<td>168</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step-by-step directions</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutor</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>158</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notetaker</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curricular Modifications</td>
<td>% D/HH</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modify reading assign.</td>
<td>40.41</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modify written assign.</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-tutor vocabulary</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide supplementary materials</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide extra practice</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
<td>168</td>
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<td>Alternative curriculum</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
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<td>Evaluation Modifications</td>
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<td>Provide reading assistance with tests</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow extra time on tests</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>172</td>
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Take Home Message

• Avoid giving teachers checklists without further explanation about how to implement
• Involve IEP team members when selecting and implementing accommodations and modifications
• All recommendations should be prioritized and individualized for each child
• Teachers may need to be educated about curricular and evaluation modifications
• FOLLOW UP OFTEN
References

