THE TALKING HANDS

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There are numerous reasons why we communicate every day. Conveying our daily needs, ideas and feelings is a way to deal with people around us. Thus, good and clear communication is essential for ultimate understanding.

Language as a communication has varied definitions. One of those is according to Miriam (2021), stating that language is any kind of systematic symbols used by a group of people in one uniform way that enable them to intelligibly communicate with one another.

Language is not always a group of words. It could be a group of signs like street/traffic signs, emoji, body gestures, facial expressions as equally important and useful like sign language for deaf people and hearing. (Sue, 1996)

Sign language is communicating without uttering any words but with talking hands to convey messages to our families, friends, co-workers and fellow men in the community. We talk to them with the use of ours hands about social, educational, religious, business, entertainment and other physiological needs.

Further, sign language is a kind of communication that uses body movements, like hands and arms as replacement for spoken words that are not possible for people with hearing disability. It is a set of symbols per level that a deaf person or a family member of a deaf person must learn to bridge the gap between the hearing and the deaf world. It also employs total communication. Talking hands, with the aid of different body parts, are used to express a clear message being communicated to a deaf or even to a hearing person who could understand sign language (Sue, 1996). The goal of total communication
is to optimize language development among people with hearing disability and people who could communicate with them like interpreters and teacher – interpreters.

Talking hands are more effective when combined with total communication. They develop language competence from childhood to maturity stage for them to be productive citizens of the country.

Interpreters who are usually talking with their hands also follow professional code of conduct to protect the deaf who are the ultimate users of the aforementioned language. Interpreters are bound to follow the standards of confidential communication. Any confidential information cannot be revealed without subpoenas or law requirement. Just like in an ordinary language, the speaker is responsible for word he/she utters that must be bound with what the law says.

Talking hands also require continuous knowledge and skills development to be competent language users. Like in our own language, there may be changes as time passes by.

Moreover, talking hands are bound to be used in a manner appropriate to a specific situation. Deaf and interpreters should know when and what sign language or hand signal to be used in a particular situation like court, church and social events.

Professional development in using talking hands is very essential. It is the key to assure the continuous communication link between the world of hearing and the world of deaf.

References:


Schwartz, Sue; (Editor) Choices in Deafness: A Parents' Guide to Communication Options; Woodbine House, 1996 (2nd Edition)

