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Speech and language professionals

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Using this Site



Full utilization of this site requires Adobe Reader, Apple QuickTime, Macromedia Flash Player, and a high-speed Internet connection. Best viewed with Internet Explorer 6.x or later.

Welcome



Introduction

This site was developed in an effort to assist speech-language pathologists in working with deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals. However,

it is not meant to be a comprehensive treatise on assessment and intervention with deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals. Instead, it provides a sampling of the kinds of activities that may occur.

[Faculty Team](#)

Site Content



- ||| Suggestions for assessment
- ||| Instructional strategies
- ||| Case studies
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opportunities

⋮ **The strategies and techniques** discussed and demonstrated here are based on experiences with deaf and hard of hearing college students. Consequently, they may be most appropriate for older children and adults.

⋮ **The instructional sequences** with students were filmed during actual therapy sessions and were subsequently selected for demonstration purposes. They are therefore more “real” but also less polished than if we had used scripted interactions. Students granted permission for the samples that were used.

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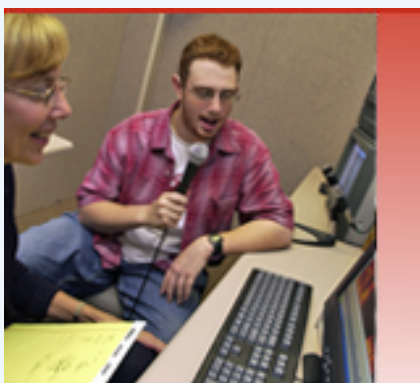
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> Our Services



The National Technical Institute for the Deaf, a college of the Rochester Institute of Technology, provides a unique opportunity for college students to receive comprehensive communication services, including speech-language instruction.

Communication courses and services are offered through the Communication Studies and Services Department.

Although there is a general institute expectation for students to improve their communication competence, there is no specific expectation for improvement in spoken English. Students thus seek instruction on their own accord and on their own time. This results in a body of students pursuing instruction who are motivated to improve.



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> Case Studies



📖 A General Introduction to Case Studies:

❖ Starting with the Spring Quarter, 2002, **we have begun presenting case staffings featuring students** currently enrolled in individual speech-language therapy at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID). The focus will vary so that over time readers will see the scope of instruction provided at NTID and the diversity of students accessing clinical services. Staffings will address intelligibility, voice, pitch, articulation, pronunciation, spoken language and accent reduction as well as students' use of hearing aids/cochlear implants.

❖ To put these staffings in a context, **it would be beneficial for the reader to become familiar with RIT/NTID.** NTID was formally established in 1965 through an Act of Congress (Public Law 89-36) and admitted the first students in 1968. NTID, the first technological college for students who are deaf and hard of hearing, is one of the eight colleges of the Rochester Institute of Technology, located in Rochester, NY. While the highest degrees awarded by the college of NTID are associate degrees, approximately 40% of the 1100 deaf students are mainstreamed within the greater university which offers bachelor and master degree programs.

❖ **The vast majority of NTID students are born deaf to hearing parents** and have an average PTA of approximately 92 dB and entering age of 20 years. Students come from a broad range of educational backgrounds including schools for the deaf and mainstreamed programs in public schools with varying support services. Students enter NTID with differing communication preferences and skills, as indicated on the Language/Communication Background Questionnaire which they fill out after acceptance to the college. Approximately 29% prefer ASL (sign language with no voice) while 14% prefer speech without sign language and the majority (57%) prefer simultaneous communication (signs with speech).

❖ **Communication assessment and instruction at NTID** is available on a voluntary, no credit, no cost basis, for any student who chooses to access the services. Typically, the seven speech-language pathologists at NTID have a caseload of six students per quarter as part of their teaching responsibilities. Students attend from one or two 50-minute sessions per week depending on their needs and course schedule. Most students continue for multiple quarters.

❖ **Case Staffings** are conducted at our department meetings once quarterly for the purpose of presenting salient information about students currently enrolled in individual speech-language therapy. Approximately seven students are staffed each quarter. Instructors provide identifying information and general comments about their students' speech, language and voice characteristics. Relevant results of intake evaluations and associated therapy goals, activities and progress are discussed with department faculty.

❖ **Case Staffing Summary reports** are written to document the types of students enrolled in speech-language services in a given quarter and the unique characteristics they present for clinical intervention. They reflect the challenges the department faces in meeting the needs of a diverse student population. Excerpts from three quarterly summaries are presented below to give the reader a flavor for the types of students we serve and will be highlighting in subsequent months.

❖ **Quarter 1:** "Service was being provided to the students in a range from once every other week to twice a week. Several students came from a foreign language background and were desirous of learning spoken English. Students ranged from unintelligible, unaided students with little previous speech therapy to those who had intelligible speech with relatively minor interferences. Direct-admit, Pre-baccalaureate, and NTID majors were represented. Goals were diverse and included such aspects of spoken English as phrasing, vocabulary, fricative production, respiratory control, knowledge of letter/sound correspondence and carryover of skills into conversation."

❖ **Quarter 2:** "Students who were staffed varied widely in their background and motivation for seeking speech-language therapy. One student attended a school for the deaf, another had attended both deaf and mainstreamed schools and others were always mainstreamed. One student with strong spoken language skills had a primary focus on improving written English, while another had excellent English skills and wanted to improve speechreading and articulation. Two students had objectives related to improving voice quality, with one needing to coordinate respiration and phonation to reduce vocal tension and the other trying to lower habitual pitch. One student came from a French speaking background and was learning not only the English sound system to assist in pronunciation, but also functional communication in our American culture. Several students had no recent experience with amplification but were investigating the possible benefits of the newer digital hearing aids. Many of the students were cross-registered into RIT Bachelors level programs. In all, the students seemed highly motivated to improve their spoken language and had good retention of what they were learning in therapy."

❖ **Quarter 3:** "Students in speech-language therapy who were discussed at the meeting displayed a

range of intelligibility scores, articulation skills, voice characteristics and language levels. Several students were in their first year at NTID/RIT while others had been at the college for 5 years. Three came from foreign language backgrounds but had strong English language skills. Two of the students had medical syndromes as well as deafness. Students' speech-language therapy goals related to learning speech sound production categories, improving articulation, blending, co-articulation and pronunciation, and reducing rate and habitual pitch. Some were at the level of learning a phonological system while others were refining production or carryover into spontaneous speech. The use of audition varied in the group and several students were being referred to audiologists because of possible problems with their current devices including a cochlear implant, a programmable digital Impact hearing aid and BTE's.

The [first of four case studies](#) on this website will feature a 23 year old first year female student with a severe-to-profound sensorineural hearing loss due to maternal rubella. Despite a lengthy history of individual speech therapy she is unintelligible and exhibits severe articulation, prosodic and pitch problems.



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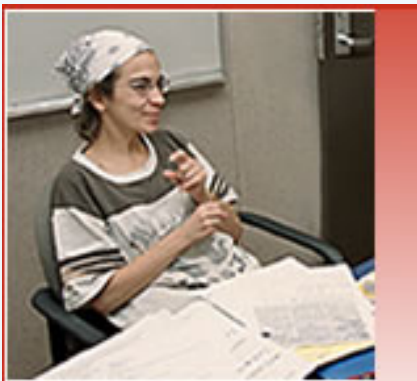
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> Assessment



The key to effective intervention is competent and thorough assessment. In this section we will focus on assessment of spoken English, including segmental and suprasegmental aspects of speech and phonological, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic aspects of spoken language use.

Our concern is with how successfully an individual communicates face to face using English (spoken only or with sign) and with how competencies in conversational English relate to literacy. We place these assessments within a broader context of communication competency assessment and within a theoretical framework that developing face to face communication competence influences and promotes the attainment of textual literacy.

Assessments include: perceptual and acoustic analyses of speech, linguistic analyses of spoken utterances, self-reports, and explorations of the affective dimensions of spoken communication use.



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> Instruction



Instruction is provided in order to optimize students' success using spoken communication. Defining *success* and establishing goals to achieve success involves collaboration. Together the instructor and student review assessment information and decide on the most appropriate instructional focus. This focus may be narrow or may extend across the range of phonologic, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic aspects of spoken communication competence. Instructional decisions should be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis, especially as they relate to student motivation.

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