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ECE 410 (050W): Supporting children with hearing loss

Hearing loss will not only affect students' experience in the classroom, but also affect their social and emotional development, literacy skills, and speech and language skills.

According to the National Deaf Children's Society, the author explains that a child with a mild hearing loss can miss up to 50% of what is being said in the classroom. Therefore, as an early childhood teacher should maintain good communication channels with hearing loss children's parents, and use strategies and screening tools to help identify children with hearing loss, and provide support to these students in class.

First of all, the objective observation method can help teachers identify children with hearing loss, which means teachers record the words and deeds of students without subjective emotions. For example, according to "Recognising the signs of hearing loss" by National Deaf Children's Society, the author explained the common signs of hearing loss with children. The author writes, "Does not respond when called; Constantly says "what?" or asks for speech to be repeated; Watches faces/lips intently; Doesn't always follow instructions straightaway; Often misunderstands or ignores instructions; Makes little or no contribution to group or activities or discussions; Watches what others are doing before doing it themselves; Complains about not being able to hear" (National Deaf Children's Society, par 6). Therefore, compared with other children who need special help, children with hearing loss need the teacher to carefully observe their words and deeds, record and write a descriptive review. Through objective observation that helps the teacher to understand the student with hearing loss and find a positive way to communicate with their parents and establish a trusting relationship.

Moreover, teachers can provide support to students with hearing loss in class. According to the video of "Tips for teaching deaf children with a mild hearing loss" by National Deaf Children's Society, the speaker explains the major impact a mild hearing loss can have on a child in school, and what professionals can do to support a child with a mild hearing loss in their class. For example, first of all, the speaker explained that "reduce background noise," which means when arranging the learning environment, teachers should take into account the hearing-impaired students and reduce background noise as much as possible. Secondly, "Make sure they can read your lips" because many students with hearing problems are visual learners, and they will learn through the teacher's lips, facial expressions, and body language. Therefore, teachers need to maintain sufficient light in the classroom, which can better support these students to develop skills. The third tip is "Get their attention," which means make sure that you have the child's attention before starting talking, speaking clearly and at a normal level. The way of communication that can support hearing loss children is clear and effective. Next, "Plenty of breaks" because hearing loss children need more energy to study than other students. It is very important for them to arrange appropriate breaks on the course. This not only helps hearing loss children relax, but also helps them learn better without losing their interest and motivation to learn. Lastly, "Use technology," the speaker said that "there is lots of technology available such as sound field systems, which project your voice across the classroom" (National Deaf Children's Society 2:02). These technologies can help hearing loss children hear their voice better and more clearly, which helps them to learn.

Also, teachers should pay attention to the problem of bullying in or outside the school faced by hearing loss children, which means teachers need to pay attention to the signs that bullying may occur, especially some hearing loss children may not be able to report whether they are bullied, because their communication is poor. According to "Bullying and deaf

children" by National Deaf Children's Society, the author explained that teachers should pay attention to signs that students with hearing loss may be bullied. The author writes, "It is important not to assume that all deaf children are going to be bullied, but it's sensible to be mindful of signs that it might be happening, especially since some children may not report if they are being bullied or are unable to because of communication or learning difficulties. Other children can be good at hiding their feelings" (National Deaf Children's Society, par 11). Therefore, teachers should encourage children with deafness or hearing loss to participate in classroom activities, physical education and extracurricular activities, so that they can truly integrate into the classroom.

Furthermore, teachers should also pay attention to children who use a second language with hearing loss, which means they need more help. Because there are a lot of children from different cultural backgrounds in the classrooms of kindergartens in New York. They have different languages and traditions, and they will bring their special views combined with their own culture into the classroom behaviors and interaction. Thus, supporting hearing loss children who use English as a second language is important. According to the video of "Supporting the achievement of deaf children who use English as an additional language" by National Deaf Children's Society, the speaker gives tips on supporting hearing loss children who use English as a second language. For example, the speaker explained that teachers should adjust classroom strategies to help hearing loss children because they need extra-support that makes the same progress as other learners. The speaker said, "Pre-teaching to help the child understand vocabulary and concepts that will be used in class. Creating opportunities for activities like hand on learning, guided reading, visual phonics, peer tutoring, and small group work, which all benefit deaf EAL learners by making language learning more visually accessible and practical" (National Deaf Children's

Society, 0:38). These teaching strategies can help hearing loss children better integrate into the classroom and build a trusting teacher-student relationship.

In sum, as early childhood educators, there are many things we can do to support children with hearing loss in the classroom. Such as reducing background noise, making sure they can read your lips, getting their attention, having plenty of breaks, and using technology. Also, teachers should go through the parents of children with hearing loss, the teachers of special education professionals to learn more information about students, and cooperate with them. This is very helpful for students because it can help us to quickly establish a relationship of mutual trust with students, and it is also the basis for establishing a caring learning environment. Moreover, teachers should pay attention to the problem of bullying in or outside the school faced by hearing loss children, and guide them to express their difficulties and help them overcome them. Students with hearing loss usually think that it is difficult for them to succeed, so we have to create some opportunities for them to recognize, celebrate their achievements, and introduce rewards to encourage them. This can bring positive course experience to students and help them stay motivated to learn. Therefore, as a teacher, we need to create a caring learning environment that can support children with hearing loss to thrive.

## Works Cited

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