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Discussion/Débat

Teacher Preparation in Hearing Impairment: A Proposed Model

Gary O. Bunch
york university

Teacher preparation in the field of hearing impairment in Canada has not kept pace with the changing needs of the profession. Programs are based on limited, traditional models not designed to meet many contemporary needs. New program approaches, new educational aids, and new pressures from parents, the hearing impaired themselves, medicine, government, and society in general necessitate changes in the traditional systems. A re-examination of the philosophy and curricula of teacher preparation programs and, indeed, of the concept of *teacher* of the hearing impaired is required.

SEGMENTATION OF THE SCHOOL-AGE POPULATION

Hearing impaired children are divided into three groups. First come those severely and profoundly impaired but without additional handicaps. The majority of established Canadian teacher preparation programs for the deaf were designed for the needs of this type of student. Most of this group are being educated in full-time classes for the hearing impaired in residential schools, day schools, or local public schools (Department of National Health and Welfare, 1984; Karchmer & Trybus, 1977; *Today's hearing impaired ...*, 1985). Second, and more recently, come students primarily in the mild and moderate loss ranges who are integrated into regular education situations on a part-time or full-time basis. Third are multiply handicapped hearing impaired individuals in residential schools, day schools, and local classes (see Table 1). Obviously this distribution is approximate: some mildly hearing impaired students are to be found in residential schools; some profoundly deaf individuals are fully integrated. Traditional programs were not designed to deal with the needs of these latter two groups in any more than a cursory fashion.

TABLE 1
Educational Placement of Hearing Impaired Students By Hearing Loss and Multiple Handicap

<i>Loss/Handicap</i>	<i>Educational Placement</i>			
	<i>Residential</i>	<i>Day School</i>	<i>Local P.S.</i>	<i>Integration</i>
Profound	11,210	2,679	4,289	1,582
Severe	4,805	1,442	2,960	1,759
Moderate	1,602	927	2,656	3,518
Mild	178	103	409	1,935
Multiple Handicap	3,073	1,018	1,975	521

NOTE: Information is derived from Karchmer & Trybus, 1977.

Teachers and resource personnel perceive these three groups as presenting distinctly differing teaching challenges. Yet there is the overriding shared problem of hearing impairment which suggests common educational needs. A comprehensive teacher preparation program must treat both those needs which rise from a shared incapacitating condition and those which rise from differing degrees of incapacity and ability. At present, Canadian preparation programs appear to stress commonality rather than difference. The programs offer relatively standard, if not inflexible, courses of study to all candidates. So, topics such as integration, the preschool child, parent counselling, and additional handicapping conditions are not common, and interdisciplinary linkages are few and relatively weak.

Professionals indicate in various ways that they are aware of differences among the three groups. Essentially, the training requirements for dealing with integrated students differ from those for dealing with non-integrated students and, in turn, differ from those for dealing with multiply handicapped individuals (Sass-Lehrer, 1983; Serwatka, Venn, & Shreve, 1984; Wolk & Sass-Lehrer, 1985). Serwatka, Venn and Shreve (1984) asked whether differing types of certification were necessary for different types of teaching situations. Though these studies did not examine precisely the student groups suggested above, professionals evidently hold quite varying views on what preparation is essential in varying teaching situations.

A brief mention of the possible differences in preparation may help. Traditional preparation programs prepared teachers for the education of hearing impaired children in residential or day schools. The fare of such programs is reflected in the professional standards of both the Council on Education of the Deaf (Proposed revisions of standards ... ,

1984) and the Association of Canadian Educators of the Hearing Impaired (Professional standards ... , 1977). Neither CED nor ACEHI stresses the necessity to be able to work closely with parents, to interact with other professionals, or to utilize multidisciplinary resources. Yet these are daily needs of teachers of integrated students. Neither stresses the necessity to understand the effects of multiple handicapping conditions, to practice the principles of diagnostic teaching, or to deal effectively with inappropriate behaviours. Yet these are daily requirements of teachers of multiply handicapped hearing impaired children. These things may be subsumed in the standards but they do not stand out as central.

CANADIAN PREPARATION PROGRAMMES

Clarke and Bibby (1984) noted that most Canadian preparation programs, designed primarily to meet traditional requirements, need to address contemporary demands directly. The McGill program has made the most concerted moves to meet certain of these demands. Unlike programs at UBC, the University of Alberta, Belleville, and Amherst, the McGill program is unique in its emphasis on preparing professionals to function in "clinical or educational programs focussing primarily on aural/oral communication abilities" (Clarke & Bibby, 1984, p. 69). The McGill model combines programs in speech and hearing science with those in education.

Other Canadian programs also attempt to come to grips with emerging needs. That at UBC includes the study of phonetics and voice science and the study of remedial speech for children with relatively intelligible speech development. In addition, candidates may opt for study of various areas of special education in their programs. Those enrolled at Amherst study the physical pathology of childhood, early diagnosis, counselling, home training, and psycholinguistics. Candidates at the University of Alberta have the opportunity to study normal communicative processes, counselling of hearing impaired students, and counselling for families of the hearing impaired. It is only at Belleville that program course offerings beyond those considered basic to the field are unavailable.

York University offers a program "designed to develop the expertise of experienced professionals to a master's degree level in ... hearing impairment" (*Master of Education ...*, 1985) for teachers already possessing basic training in hearing impairment. This is the single Canadian program aimed beyond the basic preparation level. Yet the series of courses offered appears to be poorly conceptualized, lacks focus, and repeats basic level courses in significant respects. In general, the program

would be of greater interest to allied professionals seeking familiarization with topics within hearing impairment than to specialist teachers of the hearing impaired.

This review reveals an interesting and important point. While the majority of programs fall into what I have broadly termed the traditional category, McGill's falls sharply into the language, speech, and audiology sphere. A second, that at the University of Alberta, has forged a close, though less pronounced, relationship with this importantly allied discipline whose focus on auditory management, development of listening skills, language development, and development of speech skills was outlined by the Expert Group convened by Health and Welfare Canada (Canada Department of Health and Welfare, 1982). Unfortunately, extensive preparation of this type is not available in most teacher preparation programs and is only available to a greater or lesser degree in a number of language, speech, and audiology programs in Canada. We need to promote cross-disciplinary efforts between education and communication disorders programs in the preparation of educators of the hearing impaired.

A SUGGESTED MODEL

Consideration of the changing field of education of the hearing impaired and of the various Canadian approaches to teacher preparation leads us to propose a model which attempts to recognize the values of traditional programming, the contributions of the speech and hearing sciences, and the diversity of the three groupings of students discussed earlier. It grows from a recognition of the fact that contemporary educators of the hearing impaired require both a common base of knowledge in hearing impairment and preparation in selected specialties. Coupled with this recognition is an acceptance that preparation in this highly complex and specialized area must reflect interdisciplinary knowledge which can be obtained only with time and requires opportunity for post-graduate study in areas of practical and theoretical importance. Given the distribution of population in Canada and the modest availability of resources, it is necessary to firmly combine basic preparation and advanced study programs. A well-developed basic program will provide the needed foundation for a more specialized advanced one.

The proposed model consists of three levels (see Figure 1). The first, embracing core full- and half-courses, is compulsory for all candidates. The second is an array of half-course offerings. Course selection at Level 2 would concentrate on preparation for either classroom work, integration settings, or work with multiply handicapped students. At the

LEVEL 1

*5 full courses or equivalent**Compulsory courses*

Normal language development (half)	Measurement of hearing and anatomy (half)
Language and hearing impairment I (full)	Curriculum and instruction I (half)
Speech and speechreading (half)	Foundations of hearing impairment (half)
Aural habilitation I (half)	Internship I (full)

LEVEL 2

*4 full courses or equivalent**Optional courses*

Language and hearing impairment II (evaluation and programming) (full)	Systems of integration and support (full)
Reading (half)	Mental retardation (half)
Aural habilitation II (half)	Emotional disturbance (half)
Hearing aids and audiological management (half)	Learning disabilities (half)
Curriculum and instruction II (special systems) (half)	Manual communication systems (half)

Compulsory courses

Internship II (full)
Thesis/seminar

LEVEL 3

*Course load dependent on individual needs**Individualized program*

Courses from above optional courses and other courses as pertinent

FIGURE 1

Proposed Three-level Model for the Preparation of Teachers of Hearing Impaired Students

second level only two courses, the internship practicum and the thesis or seminar, would be compulsory and both should focus on the area of concentration. This short article allows only nomination of general areas of study with an indication that some areas require extended and hierarchially organized instruction, not the explication of course content.

Levels 1 and 2 provide an extended preparation program for teachers

and other qualified professionals who wish to become teachers of the hearing impaired. Completion of the first-level program meets the majority of certification requirements of both ACEHI and CED. Completion of the second level component would provide an area of teaching specialization, would complete certification requirements, and might result in the award of a Master's degree. The total preparation program is designed to cover a minimal period of two academic years of study.

Candidates at the third level would be teachers and allied professionals taking courses not selected during earlier preparation and those wishing to go on to further graduate study and research at the master's or doctoral levels. Courses would normally consist of those offered at Level 2 or those already available at the graduate level in related disciplines.

This model is presented to stimulate discussion among those concerned with appropriate preparation of teachers of the hearing impaired. While suggestions are made for revision of existing models, these comments should not be construed as indicating that present programs have not done a fine job. Over the years, Canadian programs have graduated an exceptional cadre of teachers prepared to carry out an exacting task. Recently, however, the nature of the task has changed. Professional preparation for the education of hearing impaired students must change too. This model represents an attempt to respond to this need through an interdisciplinary, three-phase program extending from basic preparation to advanced study.

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Gary O. Bunch is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education at York University, 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario M3J 1P3.