

Communication Impairments and Knowledge Acquisition

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INTRODUCTION

- Knowledge acquisition occurs when the individual interacts with the world (physical and social)
- Performance on this determines the extend of knowledge acquisition
- Interaction is through communication
- Communication is through language and speech skills.
- Language and speech problems therefore would affect communication and knowledge acquisition.
- How this happens has not been directly documented.

KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION

- Is a process
- Knowledge is organized into theories
- That are elaborated and revised over time
- They serve as vehicles for understanding the world.
- The process is facilitated through a number of strategies
 - Strategic competence
 - Metastrategic competence
 - Metacognitive competence

Language, speech and the brain

- Language is located in the left hemisphere of the brain
- Two areas of the brain are pertinent to speech comprehension and language production
- Broca's area: responsible for grammar-syntax
- Wernicke's area: responsible for meaning

Acquired language disorders

- Due to brain damage
- Aphasia
 - Broca's
 - Wernicke's
 - Conduct
- Alexia and agraphia
- Dyslexia
 - Phonological
 - Surface

Developmental language disorders

- Emerge in young children
- Grammatical Specific Language Impairment
- William's syndrome
- Down's syndrome.
- Autism
 - Low functioning autists
 - High functioning autists
 - Aspergers
- Pragmatic Language Impairment

Speech disorders

- Damage to the nervous system
- Motor speech impairments
 - Apraxia
 - Dysarthria
- Stuttering.

Hearing impairments

- May be congenital or acquired during or after language acquisition.
- Can be in the form of mild, moderate, severe, profound or total hearing loss
- May be fluctuating or progressive

Effects on knowledge acquisition

- Communication impairments prohibit proper development and execution of communication skills which are of vital importance in knowledge acquisition
- They prohibit proper development of the three competencies (strategic, metastrategic and metacognitive) necessary for knowledge acquisition
- This results in long term implications such as poor academic achievement, risk to mental health, reduced employment options and social isolation

Interventions

- Early and correct identification and handling of the impairment
- Use of appropriate individual and communication strategies when handling, dealing and interacting with people with communication impairments
- Use of recommended specific strategies for each communication impairment to assist the subjects

Conclusion

- Communication impairments are with us
- They are often misunderstood and/or misdiagnosed
- Without intervention they affect speech, language, literacy and social communication: aspects that are relevant and paramount to knowledge acquisition
- Problems with these aspects hinder knowledge acquisition. They endanger the development of the different strategies of knowledge acquisition
- There is urgent need for the understanding, correct diagnosis and therapeutic treatment of communication impairments
- There is also need for urgent and timely help and support for individuals with communication impairments
- This will help alleviate the long term effects of communication impairments on knowledge acquisition

THANK YOU

FOR LISTENING TO ME