



Dinner Table Syndrome: “What are You Talking About?”

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Brief Overview

- ❖ Conversations at the dinner table
- ❖ Personal experience



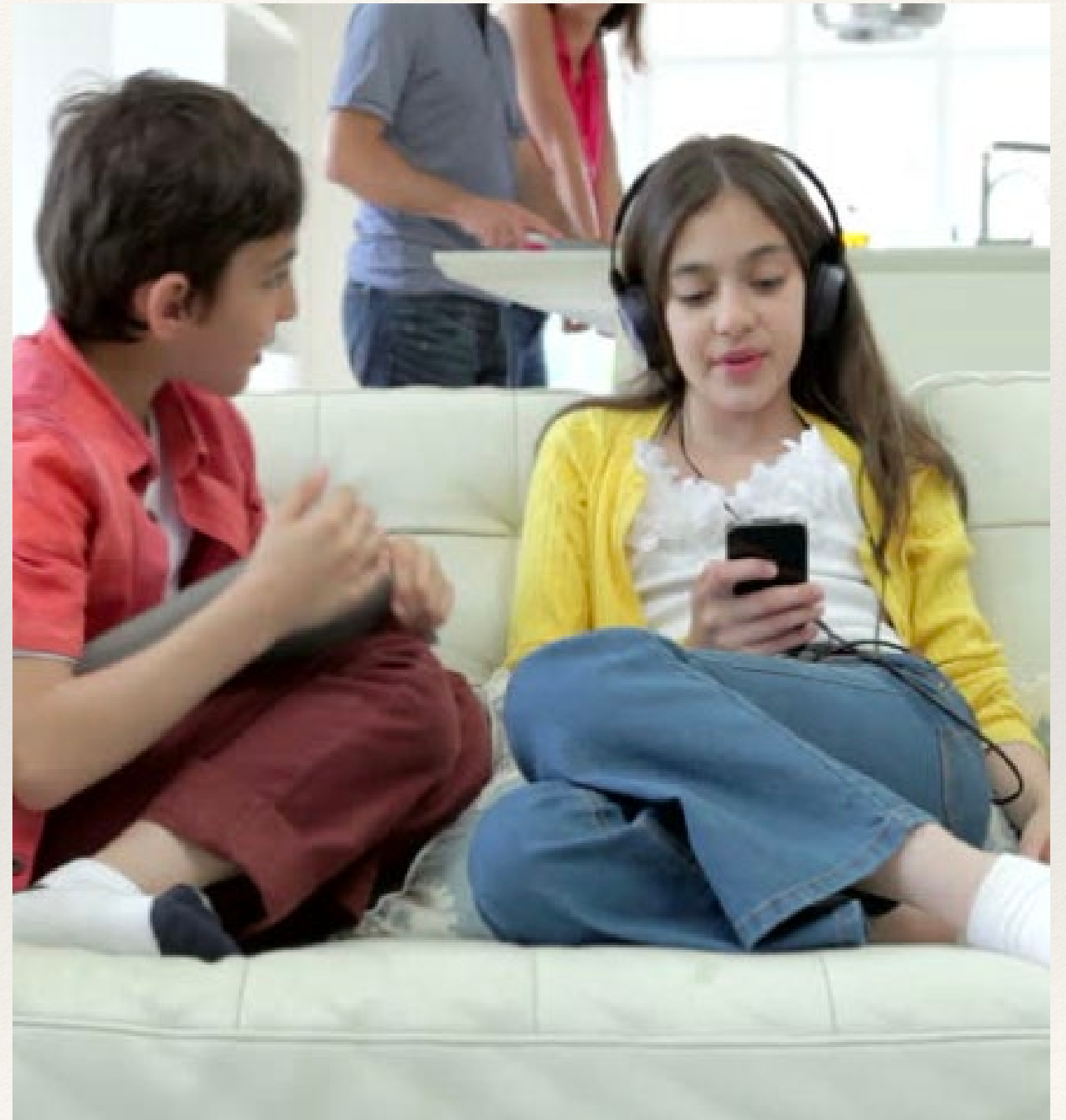
Dinner Table Syndrome

Metaphor



Incidental Learning

- ❖ Learning experiences that are unplanned or unintentional
- ❖ Occurs by "overhearing" speech or sounds
- ❖ Hearing children hear approximately 90% of information in surrounding environment



World Knowledge

- ❖ Information learned formally and informally
- ❖ Develops through interactions with parents, family members, other children, and adults



Participants

Mainstreaming Program

Oliver

Peyton

Luke

School for the Deaf

Carmen

Ria

Shelby

Interview Themes

- ❖ Communication/Language
- ❖ Current News/Events
- ❖ Conversational Belonging/Sense of Exclusion
- ❖ Realization of Missing Out

Communication/Language

- ❖ Mixture of language modes
 - ❖ ASL, Spoken English/Spanish, Sim Com, Home signs, Gestures
- ❖ Difficulty understanding social cues
 - ❖ *I learned a lot of the social cues from the Disney Channel, since were heavy on using sarcasms. (Ria)*
- ❖ Wanting to escape during dinner
 - ❖ *I eat fast and leave as soon as I can. I probably eat the fastest in my family. (Carmen)*
 - ❖ *If I didn't have my phone, I couldn't leave the table and escape. I ended up being stuck at the table watching everyone's conversations. (Luke)*

Current News/Events

- ❖ Technology
- ❖ Limited of World News
 - ❖ *As soon as I was finished eating, I would leave the table and then play on my phone. I think that is where I got some of my world news from. (Carmen)*
- ❖ News from where?
 - ❖ Facebook, Daily News, Daily Moth, TV
- ❖ Receiving news one-on-one
 - ❖ *When my family talk about the news, everyone is throwing in their thoughts or opinions about whatever is going on. Once in a while, my mom would talk to me afterwards and tell me what was being said or what the news was about. (Luke)*



Conversational Belonging/Sense of Exclusion

- ❖ “It’s no big deal,” “Never mind,” “I will tell you later”
 - ❖ *I see them laughing and then I ask what was funny. Then my mom would tell me to stop interrupting and let them finish what they were saying. (Ria)*
 - ❖ *If it was a long conversation, then they would briefly explain it to me. (Carmen)*
- ❖ Short answers/conversations
 - ❖ *I give them short answers and then move on to the next person. (Oliver)*
 - ❖ *Sometimes I feel that I’m not fully invested in relations with my family. My conversations are usually brief. (Luke)*

Conversational Belonging/Sense of Exclusion

- ❖ Holiday gatherings

- ❖ *My mom would try her best to sign, more than usual. My family would also talk slower so that I could understand. (Peyton)*
- ❖ *We would all get together to cook and open up gifts. We would do things together. (Shelby)*
- ❖ *I couldn't participate in a game called, Mad Gab, with my family. I just sat and watched my whole family having fun when I couldn't participate. (Ria)*

Conversational Belonging/Sense of Exclusion

- ❖ What is “normal” for one family may not be normal for someone else...
 - ❖ *At the dinner table, it was awkward. I was used to eating quietly. While my family were talking, I was quiet looking at my food. For me, I was used to that environment. Later after dinner, my girlfriend asked me if that is how our normal dinners are. I responded yes and that I was used to that. My girlfriend thought that was awful and it made her sad that my parents didn't talk to me and acted as if I was not there and didn't include me in their conversations. (Luke)*

Realization of Missing Out

- ❖ School for the Deaf
 - ❖ *It irritated me that I was missing out on the laughter, jokes or stories. When I came home, I wanted to know everything. (Ria)*
 - ❖ *I could have deep conversations with my friends at school, but when I came home, I had to go back to basic signs. (Shelby)*

Realization of Missing Out

- ❖ Mainstreamed

- ❖ *After graduation, I had dinner with my extended family. I had a hard time communicating with them. There were so much overlapping of conversations that I could barely understanding them. So, I just sat ate my dinner until someone actually talked to me. (Oliver)*

- ❖ *I had friends who were deaf with hearing parents that knew signs. I saw the communication with them and compared it with my family. They were not the same. I just saw how much my friends were involved with their family conversations. I knew that my family was different. (Peyton)*

- ❖ Television families vs. Real-life families

- ❖ *I thought...wait a minute, that is not like my family. My family do not chat as much as they do on sitcoms, or maybe they did, and I just didn't know it. (Luke)*

To ask or not to ask?

Ask your child or teen if they feel included.



Tips on including Deaf or Hard of Hearing children

- ❖ Make sure everyone has eye contact.
- ❖ Make sure one person signs at one time. You can take turns.
- ❖ If the deaf child knows a new word in sign, ask the child what the new sign means.
- ❖ The longer each conversational dialogue, the better.
- ❖ Laugh and have fun!

Thank you!

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