

# Understanding the Language Needs of Deaf/Hard of Hearing Children

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# Objectives



1. to explore the research related to language acquisition in deaf/hard of hearing children
2. to identify the abilities and needs of deaf/ hard of hearing children to develop complete language and self-esteem
3. to experience the value of parent-to-parent support in early intervention through stories by a parent support provider.

Roger Kenneth  
Smith, PhD?!  
You put PhD on  
the birth  
certificate?!

It's never too  
early to give em  
an advantage.  
would you rather  
have it say,  
"Esquire?"



**Instructions:**

# Washing Baby



**GOOD**



***BAD***

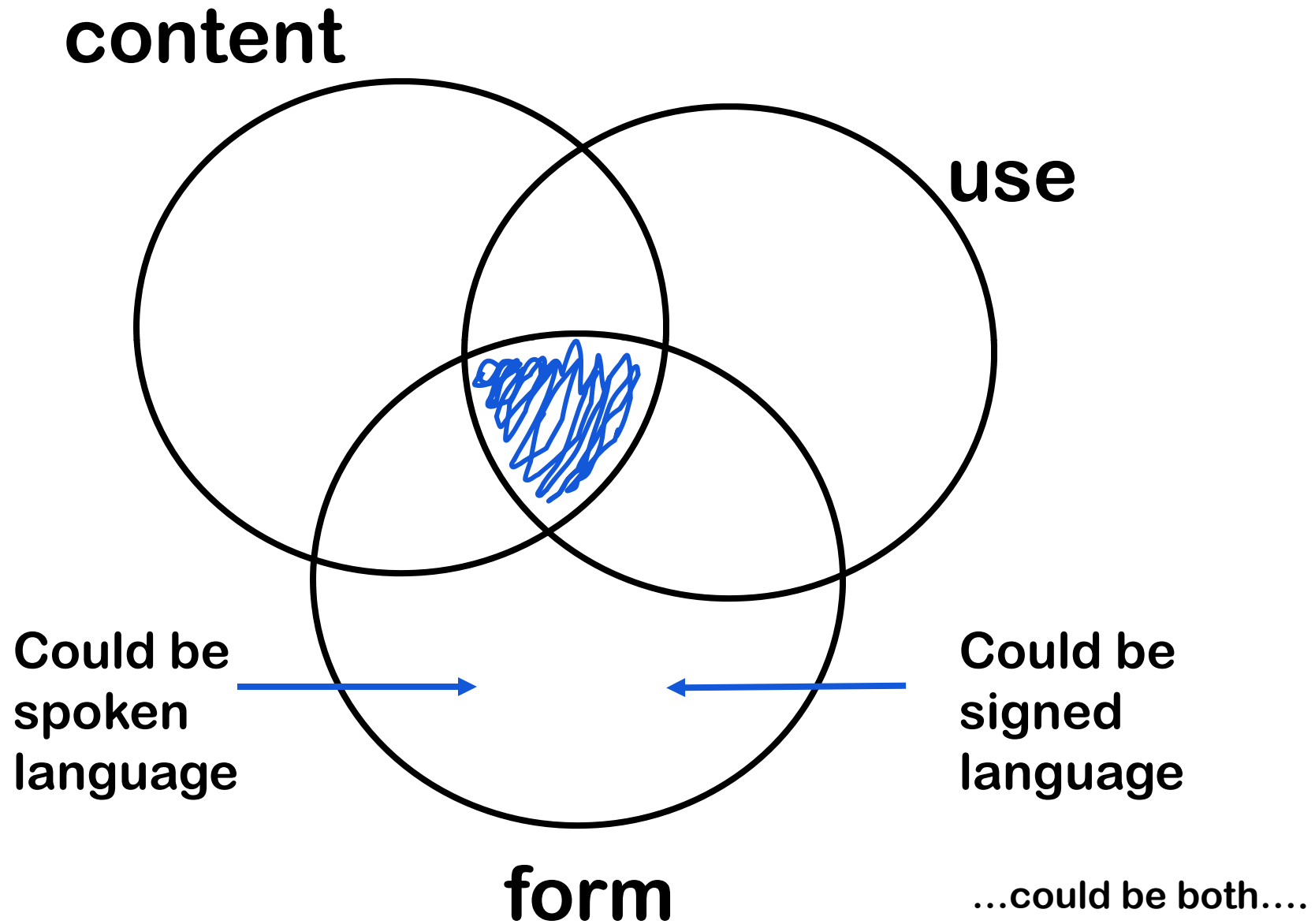
# LANGUAGE *Speech* Language

- What do we mean by LANGUAGE
- Lack of language



# WHAT is language?





# Lack of language

- Deaf and Hard of Hearing children have a history of impoverished and underdeveloped language.
- It is **not** “DUE TO” deafness.
- It **is** due to lack of accessible input.

Spencer, 2004



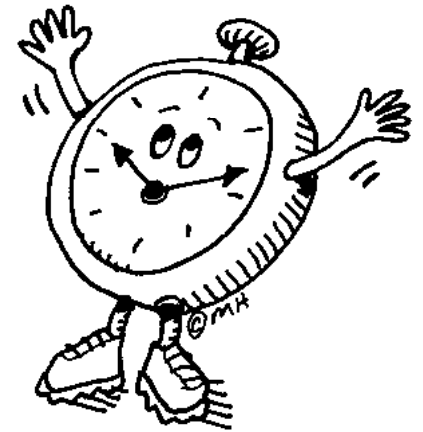
- For acquisition of a complete language, they need to be able to access it **AND** understand it.
- All children need to feel good about who they are and what they know





# **WHEN do Deaf/Hard of Hearing children achieve age-expected language?**

**In some oral environments through intensive speech and auditory training, if they have access.**



**When the families are devoted to learning ASL and use it consistently with and around their children.**

**and When families are committed to making language access easier for their children.**

# Early Intervention Research

- Children who are deaf/hard of hearing with mild-severe hearing levels developed intelligible speech regardless of “communication mode”
- Children are linguistically more competent in two modalities, visual and auditory



Yoshinaga-Itano, 2003

Spencer & Marschark, 2003



- Acquisition of a complete language **ENABLES** and facilitates acquisition and development of another language. Mayberry, 2009
- Children **CAN** successfully acquire more than one language at a time.



"I doubt that Hector has read a book in months but he's  
texting at an eighth grade level."





# What can you do?

Encourage optimism

Encourage connections

Encourage **EVERYTHING**



Empower parents to meet deaf adults and get more information

Parent-to-Parent Support  
Education



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