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## PRINCIPLES OF DEAF COMMUNICATION IN THE LEISURE SERVICES SECTOR CASE

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### Abstract

The main organs of human senses: eyes, nose, ears, mouth, skin, thanks to which we know the world by touching, tasting, smelling, hearing and seeing it. Each sense helps to receive a wealth of information from the environment around us, thus forming a person as an independent personality. When one of these senses is disturbed, negative phenomena are observed. It is difficult to adapt to the environment, to form a personality, to be safe, etc. (Gutierrez-Sigut, et al., 2022; Kilimonytė, 2009). Hearing is especially important, it plays an important role in communication. Unlike hearing people, deaf people constantly face problems of communication and integration into society as equal members, which are determined by hearing impairment. Access to society is also severely limited by prejudice (many people feel uncomfortable trying to communicate with deaf or hard of hearing people) and lack of understanding of deaf language and culture. A particularly big problem for the deaf is communication with service sector personnel. The lack of communication between the staff in this area and the deaf greatly complicates the provision of opportunities for users of such services. The problems of deaf people's communication with service providers, the possibilities of help are little studied, which makes this topic relevant and new. It is known that in many cases, the client's own communication skills depend greatly on the social environment, cultural sophistication, and the time of the onset of the disorder, so each communication is very specific and individual (Amadeo, et al., 2022; Butkevičienė, 2008), which complicates the possibilities of communication, and encourages researching the analyzed topic in principle. As a result of hearing impairment, the communication capabilities of individuals deteriorate, and it is extremely difficult for service companies to understand the needs of such customers. Sometimes there are situations when the client needs information, and for its optimal provision it is important to properly collect the material. Knowing more about the client's needs will depend on the professionalism of the service provided and the satisfaction of the client's expectations. The choice of this topic was influenced by the fact that those working in the leisure service sector are not specially trained to communicate with the deaf and this creates many problems for both parties. The literature analysis and research was based on scientific literature Francisco & Mesquita, (Eds.) (2023); Hallahan and Kauffman (2003); Butkevičienė (2008); Duthey (2013); Ališauskas (2003); Kelleher (2011) et al. The aim of the work: to analyze the principles of communication between the deaf and organizers of leisure services. Problematic questions: 1. What are the main accents of verbal and non-verbal communication between service providers and deaf people when providing services? 2. What emotional states are expressed by workers and deaf people? The rule of successful communication is to convey information in such a way that it is understood properly and correctly. Deaf customers face difficulties when information about services is oriented towards the hearing community. Deaf people's understanding of information is determined by the way service providers communicate, sincerity, shown empathy, favor, empathy, respect, care – all elements are closely related. Each case of communication with a deaf person is different, but consists of the same basic components of communication: attentiveness and genuine interest. Verbal communication includes spoken language symbols, written text, while non-verbal communication takes place by conveying information through images, gestures, facial expressions, and similar methods. In order to improve communication both for the deaf and for employees, the first aid tool is a Lithuanian sign language interpreter, which would ensure a smooth flow of the conversation. If you do not have the opportunity to communicate with an interpreter, you can use literature for help, for example: a dictionary of Lithuanian sign language, as well as use the advice given by deaf people: stand in a clearly visible place near the client, speak slowly, do not fill out documents when communicating. Deaf clients feel tension, fear about their health condition, and because of communication difficulties. Service providers face various difficulties in performing service steps, assessing customer needs, providing information and ensuring a smooth service process. Employees who provide information to deaf people experience stress, confusion and frustration due to not being able to communicate with the customer. By using the complex aspects of communication and the help of Lithuanian sign language interpreters, a safe environment is created for deaf clients that removes the negative emotions experienced. Research methods. Using the method of theoretical analysis, scientific literature on the subject of communication is analyzed, communication conditions, methods, etc. are discussed. in the service provision process.

**Key words:** Principles of communication, deaf people, leisure service, service.

### Communication problems of the deaf

It is innate for every person to hear, understand the environment around him, to learn, to achieve the set goals, and to fit into the social environment as a full-fledged person. Communication has

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long been considered one of the most important vital activities. Vital activity is the activity of an individual's body that ensures natural life processes (Rozenbergaitė, 2016; Mansutti, et.al. 2023). Communication is a normal daily activity for each of us, the slightest disruption of which causes major social and medical problems, making general communication difficult. Impaired communication can inhibit or even limit an individual's ability to function in the community (Morillas-Espejo & Martinez-Martin, 2023; Larkins, Worrall, & Hickson, 2013). Deaf people want to be treated like all members of society. Communication problems caused by hearing loss directly affect a person's quality of life. Kuzinkov (2016), states that the main rule of good communication is the ability to convey a message in such a way that it is correctly understood. Often an obstacle to communication is caused by the fact that the person who wants to communicate information does not know how and by what means to do so. In such cases, the content of the information remains unclear or difficult to understand. Deaf clients are not sufficiently understood and provided for socially. Many of them feel mistrust, which limits their perception of the environment (Frajtag, Jelinic, 2015; Alsulaiman, et al, 2023).

The work of service providers in service sectors can be considered one of the most intensive. This is determined by constantly changing customer flows, reasons for referrals, staff work organization and, of course, qualifications. The workload of such employees requires high professional qualifications and professional preparation for contact with both clients and their relatives, who, due to stress, are not always in a good mood towards the staff (Obi, et. al, 2023; Bradulskienė 2017).

The essential purpose of communication is to provide and receive information or express one's thoughts in an understandable manner. Therefore, it can be said that three elements are important in customer communication:

- Empathy – the ability to recognize subtle messages sent by the speaker.
- Attention – the ability to read “from the eyes”, facial expressions and not only from the essence of words.
- Response – verbal and non-verbal.

Employees working in the service sector who encounter deaf people often face the dilemma of how to provide the customer with information about the services provided. This happens because the employees are not specially trained in how

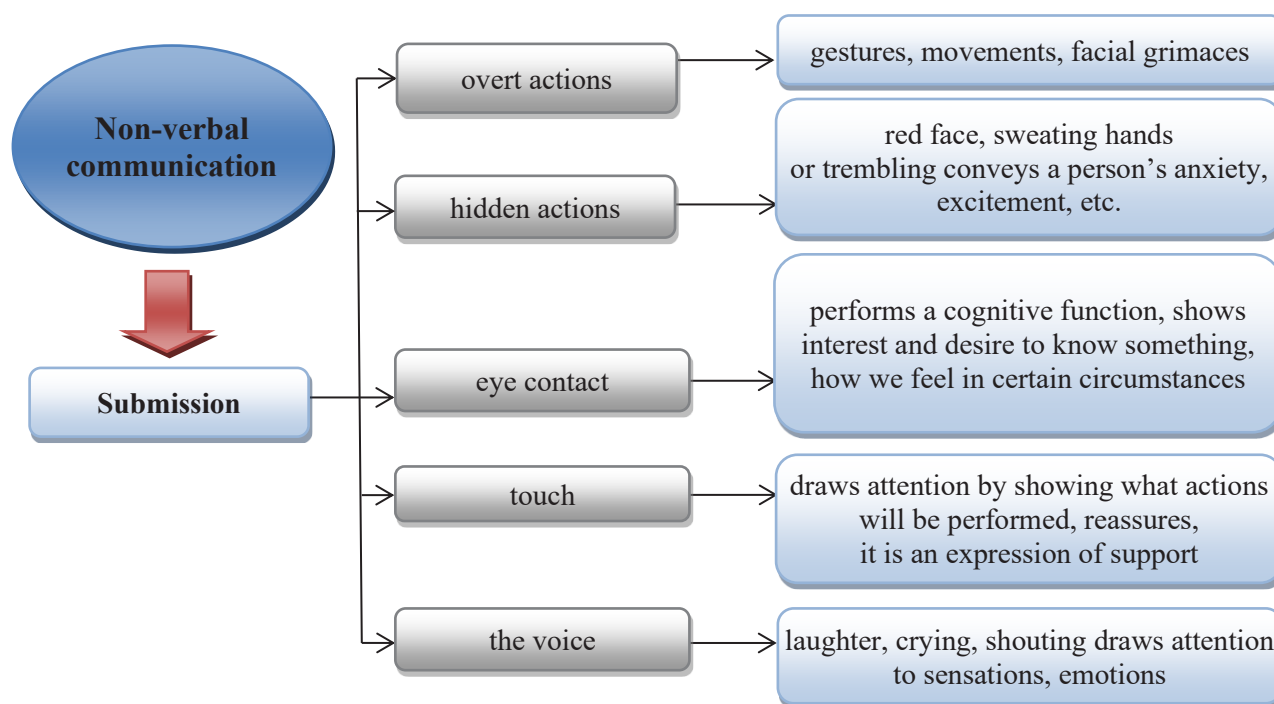
to communicate with such customers. In summary, it can be noted that the amount of received information decreases, communication worsens. The problem of services arises due to adaptation in the social environment, therefore it is very important to notice and assess the problems arising from the disruption of this vital activity in time.

#### **Possibilities of assistance in improving the quality of communication among the deaf**

In modern society, there are many expressions of communication. Communication is a process during which information is exchanged, emotional states are transmitted, a certain influence is exerted, during which people improve, satisfy their needs, and learn something new. There are many interpretations of the concept of communication. In the literature, a distinction is made between verbal and non-verbal communication. Oral communication (verbal) is considered to be communication using sound symbols of speech or writing. Meanwhile, non-verbal communication, also known as non-verbal communication in scientific terms, takes place by transmitting information through images, gestures, facial expressions or similar methods. According to Riklikienė (2008), non-verbal communication replaces speech when it is impossible, e. g. due to deafness. The literature describes ways of expressing non-verbal communication, which presents the possibilities of forms of communication (see Figure 1).

Every communication starts with communication. And the conversation is the first step, as a result of which communication is established (Riklikienė, 2008). Employees must be able to effectively communicate with deaf people in order to perform service provision procedures, explain service content, service tactics and their need, or simply answer questions asked by the client. For the above reasons, it can be assumed that effective communication between staff and the deaf is vital (Ramsay, Keith, Ker 2008; Rodríguez-Correa, et al., 2023).

It should be noted that the staff of organizations providing services should maintain eye contact when communicating with deaf clients, because the client's reactions, such as fear, anger, confusion, happiness or dissatisfaction, are best seen through the eyes. Facial expression corresponds to the intonation of spoken language. With the help of eye contact, the employees themselves show the client tenderness and empathy, which calms and reduces tension. A properly chosen form of communication and information presentation significantly contribute



**Fig. 1. Examples of expression of non-verbal communication**

*Compiled by the author of the paper*

to the quality of service provision and customer comfort (Basevičius, 2013). Non-verbal language skills are very useful, they bring clarity and understanding to the communication between the deaf person and the service provider and help to avoid unwanted events. In such cases, when the client cannot hear, gestures, eye gaze or hand movements can help the employee and the client to communicate with each other and understand the information provided (Leigh, et al., 2022; Štreimikienė, 2009). Touch is an integral part of work. In this way, customer support and reassurance are expressed (Alčiauskienė, 2014).

When communicating with a deaf person, service sector personnel should avoid using complex terms, technical language, and if this is not possible, explain the terms in clear, simple words. A deaf customer understands people by their smile, movements or frown. For such clients, a smile is associated with good emotions, a desire to cooperate and help, while he may perceive sudden movements as haste and lack of interest. Having experienced negative emotions, these clients experience painful emotions, feel less important than the listeners (Strobel, Schoormann, Banh, Möller, 2023; Kuzinkovas, 2016). The Lithuanian Society of the Deaf (2016) provides advice that is important to follow when communicating with a deaf person:

- First of all, don't be afraid, "the deaf are the same as everyone else" – they feel pain, joy, sadness, love.
- If you need to leave while trying to communicate with a deaf person, draw his attention and show that you are leaving, otherwise the deaf person may not notice that you have left and will not know where to look for you.
- When communicating, it is important to use facial expressions and body language. If you don't know sign language, don't overdo it with gesturing;
  - It is important to look the deaf person straight in the eye. This is a polite gesture, as eye contact is essential for deaf communication. It is advisable to stand in front of the deaf person, close enough so that he can see the eyes of the interlocutor.
  - It is recommended to speak slowly and clearly while maintaining eye contact. The movements of the lips and mouth must be visible, it is important not to cover the face. Some deaf people can read lips and thus understand their interlocutor.
  - It is useful not to stand in direct light, it can dazzle the deaf person, he will not be able to see his face.
  - It is recommended to confirm spoken words with gestures, deaf people rely on sight. You are warned not to gesticulate while holding objects.

- If it is not possible to communicate, it is suggested to write down words or draw images on a sheet of paper, you can use a mobile phone for writing.

- It is advised to be careful and try to make the deaf person feel comfortable, to be patient, to pause and make sure that the deaf person understands (Lietuvos kurčiųjų draugija, 2016).

Recently, computers, video cameras, mobile phones, internet connection have significantly changed the everyday life of the deaf, facilitated the exchange of information, and had a great impact on the socialization and integration of these people into society. In order for communication to go smoothly and all the necessary information to be provided, it is necessary to use the services of a Lithuanian sign language interpreter. When a meeting with a hearing-impaired person is scheduled in advance, the services of a Lithuanian sign language interpreter can be ordered: if you call the Lithuanian Sign Language Interpreter Center, the interpreter will come to the meeting and help you communicate. These services are free of charge for the customer and are provided Mon – Fri from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

If the communication is unplanned in advance, the Lithuanian Society of the Deaf suggests that specialists should be equipped with stationary or tablet computers with the Skype program installed, the Internet and a video camera, so that the deaf person and the employee can use the remote Lithuanian sign language translation service. However, such service is provided on weekdays, during working hours. (Lithuanian Association of the Deaf, 2016). In summary, it can be noted that in Lithuania there is a lack of training aimed at communication with the deaf, so in most cases the employees improvise in order for such a client to feel the smallest possible communication barrier and the resulting discomfort when he enters the service provision organization. Without certain knowledge or skills, communicating with deaf people can cause a lot of problems and make work difficult. In order for the communication between the client and the service provider to be smooth and effective, it is important to remove language barriers by training employees to communicate in non-verbal language, which can help explain the situation and help the deaf to understand it. Fluent communication is the most important tool in providing services to the deaf.

A good state of psychological well-being is a sense of self-worth and the ability to cope with life and thus reach one's potential. Mental

illness encompasses a wide range of psychological conditions, including depression, anxiety, delusions (strong but false beliefs), and addiction. Health problems are psychological or emotional reactions that can temporarily cause unusual behavior, but do not interrupt established routines and activities.

#### **Ways to improve communication for the deaf**

In summary, it can be said that the first aid tool for deaf people and service sector workers is a Lithuanian sign language interpreter, which would ensure a smooth conversation. Observing the current situation, if the translation is not agreed in advance, the translation service is not available. Otherwise, it requires a computer with a video camera or a smart device with the SKYPE program installed and translators who are not busy at the time, which does not guarantee that the translation will be available if necessary, it is also important to mention that help is available only on weekdays until the evening. If you do not have the opportunity to communicate with an interpreter, you can use literature for help, for example: the dictionary of Lithuanian sign language, as well as use the advice given by deaf people: stand in a clearly visible place near the client, speak slowly, do not fill out documents when communicating.

#### **Conclusions**

1. The rule of successful communication is to convey information in such a way that it is understood properly and correctly. Deaf customers face difficulties when the information provided is focused on the hearing public. Deaf people's understanding of information is determined by the way of communication, sincerity, shown empathy, favor, empathy, respect, care – all elements are closely related. Each case of communication with a deaf person is different but consists of the same basic components of communication: attentiveness and genuine interest. It became clear that verbal communication includes verbal language symbols, written text, and non-verbal communication occurs through the transfer of information through images, gestures, mimicry and similar methods.

2. In order to improve communication both for the deaf and for employees, the first aid tool is a Lithuanian sign language interpreter, which would ensure a smooth flow of the conversation. If you do not have the opportunity to communicate with an interpreter, you can use literature for help, for example: a dictionary of Lithuanian sign language, as well as use the advice given by deaf people: stand in a clearly visible place near the client, speak slowly, do not fill out documents when communicating.

3. Deaf clients feel tension, fear due to communication difficulties. Service providers face various challenges in performing information steps, assessing customer needs, providing information and ensuring a smooth process. Employees who provide information to deaf people experience

stress, confusion and frustration due to not being able to communicate with the customer. By using the complex aspects of communication and the help of Lithuanian sign language interpreters, a safe environment is created for deaf clients that removes the negative emotions experienced.

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## ПРИНЦИПИ СПІЛКУВАННЯ ГЛУХИХ У СЕКТОРІ ПОСЛУГ ДОЗВІЛЛЯ

### Анотація

Особливо великою проблемою для глухих є спілкування з персоналом сфери обслуговування. Відсутність комунікації між персоналом даної сфери та глухими значно ускладнює надання можливостей користувачам таких послуг. Мало вивчені проблеми спілкування глухих з постачальниками послуг, можливості допомоги, що робить цю тему актуальною та новою. Відомо, що в багатьох випадках власні комунікативні навички клієнта значною мірою залежать від соціального середовища, культурної витонченості та часу виникнення розладу, тому кожне спілкування є дуже унікальним та індивідуальним (Butkevicienė, 2008), що ускладнює можливості комунікації та заохочує до дослідження аналізованої теми в принципі. Внаслідок порушення слуху погіршуються комунікативні можливості людей, і сервісним компаніям надзвичайно важко зрозуміти потреби таких клієнтів. Іноді виникають ситуації, коли клієнту потрібна інформація, і для її оптимального надання важливо правильно зібрати матеріал. Знання більше про потреби клієнта залежатиме від професіоналізму наданої послуги та задоволення очікувань клієнта. На вибір цієї теми вплинув той факт, що працівники сфери дозвілля не мають спеціальної підготовки для спілкування з глухими, і це створює багато проблем для обох сторін. Аналіз літератури та дослідження базувалися на науковій літературі Hallahan and Kauffman (2003); Буткевичене (2008); Даті (2013); Алішаускас (2003); Kelleher (2011) та ін. Мета роботи: проаналізувати принципи спілкування глухих та організаторів дозвіллевих послуг. Проблемні запитання до роботи: 1. Які основні акценти вербальної та невербальної комунікації між надавачами послуг та глухими при наданні послуг? 2. Які емоційні стани виявляють робітники та глухі? Правило успішної комунікації полягає в тому, щоб передати інформацію так, щоб вона була зрозуміла правильно і правильно. Глухі клієнти стикаються з труднощами, коли інформація про послуги орієнтована на чуючу спільноту. Розуміння інформації глухими людьми визначається способом спілкування постачальників послуг, щирістю, виявленою емпатією, прихильністю, емпатією, повагою, турботою – усі елементи тісно пов'язані між собою. Кожен випадок спілкування з глухою людиною різний, але складається з одних і тих же основних компонентів спілкування: уважності та щирого інтересу. Вербальна комунікація включає символи усної мови, письмовий текст, тоді як невербальна комунікація відбувається шляхом передачі інформації за допомогою зображень, жестів, міміки тощо. Щоб покращити комунікацію як для глухих, так і для працівників, засобом першої допомоги є литовський сурдоперекладач, який забезпечить плавний перебіг розмови. Якщо у вас немає можливості поспілкуватися з перекладачем, ви можете скористатися літературою, наприклад: словником литовської жестової мови, а також скористатися порадою глухих людей: станьте на добре видному місці біля клієнта, розмовляйте повільно, не заповнюйте документи при спілкуванні. Глухі клієнти відчувають напругу, страх за стан свого здоров'я, через труднощі спілкування. Постачальники послуг стикаються з різними труднощами під час виконання етапів обслуговування, оцінки потреб клієнтів, надання інформації та забезпечення безперебійного процесу обслуговування. Співробітники, які надають інформацію глухим людям, відчувають стрес, збентеження та розчарування через те,

що не можуть спілкуватися з клієнтом. Використовуючи складні аспекти спілкування та допомогу литовських сурдоперекладачів, для глухих клієнтів створюється безпечне середовище, яке знімає пережиті негативні емоції. Методи дослідження. За допомогою методу теоретичного аналізу аналізується наукова література з теми спілкування, умови, способи спілкування тощо. обговорюються. в процесі надання послуг.

**Ключові слова:** принципи спілкування, глухі люди, дозвілєвий сервіс, сервіс.

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