

Phenomenological Study of The Deaf Community in Sign Language and The Meaning Construction

By Alfred Schultz

Teguh Hidayatul Rachmad , Yohanes Probo Dwi Sasongko

Doctoral Student of The Agricultural and Rural Development Communication Study Program
IPB University

ABSTRACT

Every event that presents itself in society and shapes a habit is a way that can be brought forth to draw a meaning. Through the actions carried out by those who have hearing limitations, especially the deaf, their ways and actions make interpersonal communication forms intriguing to be deeply examined. With all their forms and limitations, spaces of communication always manifest and are given their meanings. The way the deaf community communicates, whether through sign language or alternative methods, highlights the richness of their social interactions and the unique construction of meaning that occurs in these interactions. Meaning in this context is not fixed, but rather fluid and dynamic, shaped by both individual and collective experiences. According to Alfred Schutz's phenomenological approach, meaning is a process that emerges from individuals' lived experiences and their interactions with others. It is something that adapts to the conditions and contexts in which it is embedded. Schutz's concept of "meaning construction" emphasizes that meaning is not only a subjective experience but also a social one, grounded in shared understanding.

Keywords: *Meaning; Phenomenology; Deaf; Alfred Schutz; Society*

INTRODUCTION

"Hearing is closely related to social relationships; without hearing, socialization will not proceed smoothly, and relationships will suffer. In the realm of education, it's also of great significance. If hearing is impaired, educational quality will decline." — Director of Non-Communicable Disease Prevention and Control, Ministry of Health, Dr. Cut Putri Arianie.

Hearing impairments represent a significant public health issue in Indonesia, one that is often overlooked but crucial to address in order to improve the quality of life for many individuals. As Dr. Arianie highlights, hearing is essential not only for social relationships but

also for effective communication and education. The ability to hear allows individuals to engage in meaningful social interactions and absorb educational material, both of which are critical to personal and societal development. However, hearing impairments, whether congenital or acquired, pose challenges that can hinder these processes.

Based on data from the 2013 Riskesdas (Basic Health Research), the prevalence of hearing impairments in individuals aged 5 years and older in Indonesia is estimated at 2.6%, a statistic that highlights the significant number of people affected by this issue (kemkes.go.id, 2019). This data points to a public health concern that impacts a considerable portion of the population, potentially leading to a range of socio-psychological and cognitive challenges. From this, it can be inferred that Indonesia is still facing a broad vulnerability concerning hearing-related problems. These issues may range from mild hearing loss to profound deafness, which often affects the cognitive, emotional, and social development of individuals, leading to reduced quality of life and productivity.

The issue of hearing impairments extends beyond a medical concern; it also has social implications. For instance, children born with congenital deafness, estimated at 1 to 2 out of every 1,000 births in Indonesia, represent a group whose early development is significantly impacted by hearing loss (kemkes.go.id, 2019). These children, if not properly supported, face barriers to acquiring language skills, engaging in school activities, and forming relationships, all of which are essential for their growth and development. Similarly, adults who experience hearing loss may face difficulties in communication, both in professional settings and in personal relationships, further marginalizing them within society.

Dr. Cut Putri Arianie also emphasizes that addressing hearing impairments is essential not only to improve the quality of life for those affected but also to ensure the overall well-being of the nation. Effective communication is a cornerstone of any society, and without the ability to hear, individuals face considerable challenges in engaging in society at large. As such, the Ministry of Health has been working toward better understanding and addressing hearing impairments as part of their broader efforts to enhance public health across Indonesia.

From a social perspective, the ability to hear is foundational to interpersonal communication. It allows individuals to exchange information, understand emotions, and foster mutual understanding. In education, hearing is equally vital; it enables students to absorb lessons, participate in discussions, and process information. Without adequate hearing, students are at a disadvantage, as they struggle to keep up with academic content and may miss out on critical learning opportunities. Therefore, maintaining hearing health is paramount to ensuring that individuals are not excluded from these essential life aspects.

However, despite the importance of hearing health, there remains a low level of public awareness and attention to its preservation and care. This neglect, as stated by Dr. HR Dedi Kuswenda, MKes, Director of Basic Health Efforts Development at the Ministry of Health, contributes to the widespread effects of hearing impairments, which extend beyond the medical realm. These effects include disruptions in cognitive development, emotional well-being, and social relationships, all of which can lead to lower quality human resources in the country. This underscores the need for comprehensive efforts to address hearing impairments, including

better healthcare, improved education systems, and stronger social support structures (kemkes.go.id, 2019).

The challenge posed by hearing impairments in Indonesia is multifaceted and demands a coordinated approach. Health professionals, educators, and policymakers must collaborate to provide effective interventions that address both the medical and social needs of individuals with hearing impairments. In this context, one of the most significant steps we can take is to understand the deaf community from a social perspective. By deepening our understanding of how individuals with hearing impairments communicate, build relationships, and navigate social contexts, we can identify more effective methods to support their needs.

The deaf community's experiences of communication and social interaction offer valuable insights into the broader societal issues surrounding hearing impairments. Their ability to adapt to communication barriers, whether through sign language or alternative methods, highlights their resilience and creativity in navigating a world that is often not designed with their needs in mind. Therefore, this research aims to explore the social aspects of the deaf community's communication practices, emphasizing the importance of recognizing these practices as legitimate forms of communication and understanding.

By examining the deaf community through a social lens, we can identify effective strategies to support their integration into society, ensuring that they have equal opportunities to participate in education, employment, and social life. This research aims to contribute to the ongoing efforts to raise awareness about hearing impairments in Indonesia and provide practical recommendations for improving communication, accessibility, and social inclusion for individuals with hearing loss.

The issue of hearing impairment in Indonesia is not merely a medical concern but a multifaceted problem that intertwines with social, educational, and psychological factors. As the population grows and the number of people affected by hearing impairments continues to rise, the urgency of addressing this issue becomes even more apparent. Despite the increasing awareness of the impact of hearing loss, the infrastructure and support systems for individuals with hearing impairments remain insufficient in many areas. While government programs and healthcare initiatives aim to address the medical aspects of hearing loss, social inclusion remains a critical gap. Individuals with hearing impairments often face social isolation, communication barriers, and a lack of understanding from the broader community, which further exacerbates the challenges they face in daily life.

Socialization, which is deeply dependent on communication, is one of the areas most affected by hearing impairment. Without the ability to hear, individuals are not only excluded from conversations but also miss out on the shared social experiences that form the foundation of relationships. As a result, they may feel marginalized, leading to a diminished sense of belonging in their communities. The impact of this isolation is particularly significant in education and professional settings, where communication is key to learning and career advancement. Research has shown that individuals with hearing impairments are more likely to experience lower academic achievement and face greater barriers in finding stable employment. This reinforces the need for more accessible communication channels, tailored educational support, and inclusive workplace environments.

Moreover, there is an urgent need for greater public understanding of the role of hearing in cognitive, emotional, and social development. Hearing does not just facilitate communication but also plays a crucial role in cognitive processing, particularly in young children. Delays in acquiring spoken language, which is often the case for children with hearing impairments, can have long-lasting effects on their cognitive and emotional growth. Early intervention and support, including the use of sign language and other accessible forms of communication, are crucial in mitigating these effects. However, for these interventions to be effective, there must be a societal shift towards greater acceptance and understanding of the needs of individuals with hearing impairments.

This research, therefore, aims to investigate how individuals with hearing impairments interact socially and construct meaning within their community. By exploring the ways in which these individuals communicate and build relationships, the study seeks to highlight the importance of recognizing alternative communication methods, such as sign language, as valid and effective means of social interaction. Through this exploration, the research will contribute to the growing body of knowledge on the social inclusion of individuals with hearing impairments, emphasizing the importance of creating a society that values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.

Ultimately, this research seeks to offer practical recommendations for improving the quality of life for individuals with hearing impairments, ensuring that they have the same opportunities to participate fully in social, educational, and professional spheres as their hearing counterparts. This will require concerted efforts from all sectors of society, including government, education, healthcare, and the community at large, to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for individuals with hearing impairments in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following will outline several subsections that can provide a comprehensive explanation of the findings within the context of consciousness transformation theory. The findings that can be highlighted are as follows:

1. Understanding Phenomenology

If we carefully observe, in a literal sense, phenomenology is a study that pertains to the presence of a phenomenon (Wattimena, 2017). In a broader sense, phenomenological study delves into everything that is observed and experienced subjectively by the individual.

On a broader scale, if we attempt to comprehend phenomenology as a whole, it encompasses how we experience everything around us in our daily lives. This understanding is rooted in the fact that each person has essentially practiced phenomenology. In an example that can be collectively understood, when you ask yourself, "What am I feeling right now, considering what happened today?" Or another common question often posed in social gatherings, "What's on my mind?" Lastly, the question that naturally emerges from human experience, "What will I do?" (Wattimena, 2010). This sequence of questions represents our lives. In this scenario, the questioner asks about something we are experiencing, something that might be currently highlighted because we are engaging in that action in our daily lives as social beings. In

essence, you are engaging in phenomenology, attempting to understand what you feel, think, and what you will do from a first-person perspective.

From the above argumentation, it can once again be understood that social phenomenology is related to the collective scope within society. Social phenomenology, as a social science, engages with the shared spaces within society. It grapples with the knowledge and real experiences that identify the everyday lives of individuals within their communal existence.

Thus, delving deeper, it can also be assumed that phenomenology is an effort to understand consciousness from the subjective perspective of the individual. This understanding and approach are inherently different from the approach of neuroscience, which seeks to understand how human consciousness works within the brain and nerves, employing an observer's viewpoint.

Upon closer examination, there's a fundamental distinction. Neuroscience predominantly views consciousness as a biological phenomenon, while phenomenological description comprehensively observes human experiences as they are subjectively encountered, from a first-person perspective (Wattimena, 2009).

The study of phenomenology primarily centers around human experiences that manifest in their lives. When this is related to the field of psychology as the science that examines human behavior, it can be understood that the connection between phenomenology and psychology as the study of human behavior fundamentally originates from an understanding of the context of human behavior alone. However, the more profound understanding lies in how we derive meaning from the context of events we experience.

Furthermore, it can be explained that within phenomenology, the concept of meaning holds significant importance. It's a concept that forms the core or essence of the experienced context, reduced to a meaning that can be extracted (Id.wikihow.com, 2020). The existence of meaning that can be interpreted within an action or event becomes something valuable (Mutoharoh, 2022). In essence, meaning constitutes the vital content of the individual's conscious experience. As a note, two friends might share the same experience. For instance, both of them climbing a mountain. However, the resulting meanings derived from their experiences will undoubtedly differ from one another.

In a different example, consider two friends riding a motorcycle together. They embark on the same journey, traveling from one city to another (Nindito, 2005). When asked about the meaning derived from the shared experience of riding, each friend will undoubtedly explain their riding experience based on previous encounters. One friend's explanation will differ from the other's. They will narrate unique experiences and meanings even though they are both riding the same motorcycle. The meaning of that experience varies for each individual who goes through it.

Understanding and deriving meaning from experiences, as encountered by each individual, indicate the presence of diverse meanings and understandings. In other words, it's the meaning that distinguishes one friend's or individual's experience from another's.

Going even deeper, one can extract a message that holds value and significance for those who experience and attribute meaning to that experience. Through the presence of meaning within an individual's experience, classifications can be made to differentiate one experience from another (Nindito, 2005). An experience can become a part of consciousness and then leave a lasting impression on the individual, precisely because they attribute meaning to it. Only through actions can one grasp a holistic view of the experience. The person who is present and undergoes the experience can attribute meaning to consciousness and touch the world as an organized structure of everything around us.

In this point, one of the phenomenological figures who developed this theory, Husserl, emphasizes that meaning is not the subject of empirical sciences. Meaning is the subject of pure logic. In the present era, pure logic is also known as semantics. In a broader sense, a conclusion can be drawn that phenomenological study represents an exploration that synthesizes psychology, philosophy, and semantics, or in this case, pure logic.

According to Alfred Schutz, within his perspective, phenomenology is an independent field of study distinct from the natural sciences, social sciences, law, and other fields (Yuni, 2018). Through the examination of phenomenology, Schutz aims to emphasize the primacy and provide an alternative to all biologically mechanistic approaches to human consciousness, such as those found in positivistic psychology and the study of the human brain's composition within neuroscience.

In a broader perspective, Schutz asserts that phenomenology can be seen as a part of the development of transcendental science, distinct from naturalistic science. This distinction is evident in fields such as physics and biology. As previously mentioned, the main difference between phenomenology and natural sciences, including positivistic psychology, lies in the central role of meaning within human experience (meaning in experience) (Wattimena, 2010). Therefore, this context reveals the limitations of phenomenology. Its weakness lies in not taking the observational or generalization steps commonly found in research on humans, as is prevalent in positivistic psychology.

METHODOLOGY

The current research is framed within the context of sustainable development communication. Emphasis is placed on the method used to thoroughly dissect and develop structured explanations of the existing and visible phenomena within society. Therefore, the method employed is qualitative, utilizing social phenomenology from the perspective of Alfred Schutz (Wattimena, 2010).

This research focuses on an in-depth understanding of the social phenomena present in society, particularly within the context of sustainable development communication. This study emphasizes the importance of the method used to thoroughly explore and develop structured explanations of observable phenomena in society. Therefore, the method employed in this research is qualitative, using social phenomenology based on the ideas of Alfred Schutz (Wattimena, 2010). The phenomenological approach allows researchers to understand the essence of human actions within their social contexts, which is especially relevant for exploring

the daily experiences of individuals with hearing impairments and how they construct meaning through sign language or alternative methods of communication.

1. Phenomenological Theory as the Theoretical Framework of the Study

In this research, phenomenology is used as a tool to explore subjective human experiences. As explained by Schutz, phenomenology emphasizes that meaning built by individuals in their social life is not only personal but also social, shaped through interactions with others. In this context, this research focuses on how individuals with hearing impairments construct meaning in their communication, whether through sign language or other alternative verbal communication methods.

Phenomenological theory serves as a means to examine the lived experiences of individuals with hearing impairments, exploring how they interact with their social environment. This is important for understanding how they communicate with individuals who do not have hearing impairments and how meaning is constructed in cross-cultural and cross-linguistic communication. This approach allows us to gain deeper insights into how people with hearing impairments face communication challenges in their everyday lives and how they adapt to social norms and values within their communication.

2. The Importance of Communication in Raising Social Awareness

This study also highlights the importance of communication as a means of raising social awareness, particularly in addressing issues such as waste management in a structured manner. Communication, in this context, serves not only to convey information but also as a tool to raise awareness and understanding among the community, including those with hearing impairments. The process of awareness-building is crucial in sustainable development communication, where communication goes beyond influencing behavior to fostering a deeper understanding of broader social issues.

In this case, communication plays a key role in addressing gaps in understanding, especially in communities that may not fully comprehend the importance of waste management or other social issues. This study aims to demonstrate how individuals with hearing impairments can actively participate in raising social awareness through communication, whether through direct sign language or through other inclusive forms of communication. Such inclusive communication helps bridge the gap in understanding and enhances community participation in broader social initiatives.

3. Qualitative Analysis and Emphasis on the Quality of the Study

The qualitative approach used in this study allows for a deeper exploration of the quality aspects of the entities being studied. In qualitative research, the researcher has greater freedom to explore contextual aspects that may not be quantifiable. In this case, the study prioritizes understanding the experiences of individuals with hearing impairments in communicating and constructing meaning in their social interactions.

The qualitative approach enables the researcher to explore more complex social dynamics that cannot always be explained by statistics or numbers. This allows the study to

uncover richer, more contextual findings about how individuals with hearing impairments navigate communication challenges and how they adapt to the social norms of their society. Therefore, this research emphasizes the exploration of the quality of experiences rather than merely seeking numbers or quantitative data that can be measured.

This qualitative study also allows for the optimization of all the reference sources used in the research, integrating various theories and previous findings to provide a more holistic and comprehensive understanding. In this study, Alfred Schutz's phenomenological theory is used as the foundational framework for understanding the experiences of individuals with hearing impairments, while also incorporating other references to strengthen the analysis and provide a broader perspective on social communication.

4. Findings and Discussion in the Research

In the findings and discussion section, this study outlines the results obtained from the phenomenological analysis of the experiences of individuals with hearing impairments. These findings reveal how individuals with hearing impairments interact within their social environments and how they construct meaning through their communication. The findings also highlight the importance of inclusive communication and accessibility in enhancing their participation in the broader social context.

The discussion section separates the theoretical framework used to understand the phenomena, the findings derived from the data analysis, and the social implications that can be drawn from the results of this research. The discussion explains how these findings are relevant to Schutz's phenomenological theory and how this theory can be used to better understand the experiences of individuals with hearing impairments within society. Additionally, the discussion explores how the results of this research can be applied in broader social contexts, such as in policies for social inclusion and the development of more accessible communication systems.

This research provides a deeper understanding of how individuals with hearing impairments construct meaning in their communication and how they adapt to social and cultural challenges in their daily lives. The findings have important implications for social inclusion policies, the development of sign language, and sustainable development communication.

In conclusion, this research emphasizes that inclusive and accessible communication is essential for raising social awareness and enhancing community participation, including for those with physical or sensory limitations. This study also demonstrates that Schutz's phenomenology can be a robust framework for understanding individuals' experiences within their social contexts and how meaning is constructed in everyday communication.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to uncover how individuals with hearing impairments construct meaning in their communication, utilizing the social phenomenology theory developed by Alfred Schutz. In this section, we will discuss the key findings that emerged from the phenomenological analysis of the everyday life experiences of individuals with hearing

impairments, and how they construct meaning through their social interactions. This study does not only focus on how individuals with hearing impairments communicate with one another but also how they interact with the wider society, which often does not have hearing limitations. Therefore, these findings are crucial in understanding how they adapt to communication challenges and contribute to creating more inclusive social meanings.

One of the main findings from this research is that communication within the deaf community is not limited to sign language, but also involves various alternative forms of communication, such as writing, facial expressions, and body language. This phenomenon indicates that individuals with hearing impairments have the ability to create and interpret meaning flexibly, depending on the social context and interactions that occur. This aligns with Schutz's idea that meaning is not static, but dynamic, and depends on the subjective experiences of individuals in their social lives. This study also shows that the meaning constructed by individuals with hearing impairments is often collective, indicating a shared understanding within the group, even though they use different communication methods.

Additionally, the findings reveal that individuals with hearing impairments often face challenges when interacting with individuals who do not have hearing limitations, especially in the context of more common verbal communication. While efforts are made to adapt, a gap in understanding remains, creating barriers in building more inclusive social relationships. In this regard, communication becomes key to bridging these gaps, and it is crucial to create more inclusive spaces for those with hearing impairments. Through inclusive communication, they can participate more actively in social life and contribute to raising broader social awareness, especially in issues related to sustainable development and social consciousness.

From the perspective of Schutz's phenomenological theory, the meaning constructed in communication between individuals with hearing impairments and the wider society is not merely a process of conveying information but also an effort to build a deeper shared understanding. This process involves constructing meaning through subjective experiences, which is then translated into more inclusive and accessible social communication. Therefore, it is important to understand that effective communication between individuals with hearing impairments and the wider society is not solely about the use of sign language or verbal communication, but also how each individual within this social context constructs mutual understanding through various methods of communication.

In this discussion, we will explore further how this phenomenon is relevant to Schutz's phenomenological theory and how these findings can be applied to improve social inclusion policies and the development of more accessible communication in society. This research is expected to make a significant contribution to strengthening our understanding of the importance of inclusive communication for individuals with hearing impairments and how this can support the goals of a more equitable and sustainable development for all members of society.

1. Deaf Varieties

When discussing individuals experiencing hearing impairment, it's important to understand two distinct types of hearing disorders that can be classified under specific circumstances. Hearing impairment can lead to a person being classified as deaf, categorized into the following types:

- a) Congenital Hearing Impairment (Hearing impairment present since birth) and Acquired Hearing Impairment (Hearing impairment that occurs after birth). Congenital hearing impairment occurs due to genetic mutations, hereditary factors, or exposure to diseases during pregnancy (Nofiaturrehman, 2018).
- b) Acquired Hearing Impairment (Hearing impairment that occurs after birth). This type of hearing impairment is usually caused by various factors, including prolonged exposure to loud noises, age-related factors, injuries, or specific diseases, such as infections affecting the ears (Nofiaturrehman, 2018).

Looking at these two types, it's crucial to recognize that there are two distinct categories of concern: naturally occurring hearing impairment and acquired hearing impairment resulting from accidents or incidents. In light of these conditions, it's evident that individuals experiencing such situations might face challenges in communication and interaction in their daily lives.

2. Varieties of Hearing Disorders

Those experiencing hearing impairment also have distinctions between those with hearing disorders. Due to these differences, individuals facing challenges with hearing impairment and deafness will encounter unique difficulties in speech and communication (Resna, 2020). In the context of hearing disorders, it can be assumed that hearing disorders are medical conditions that impact an individual's ability to hear sounds clearly through the auditory sense.

Hearing disorders can arise from various causes, including genetic factors, prolonged exposure to excessive noise, specific diseases affecting patients, and more. Therefore, below are several forms of identification for hearing disorders that occur within society:

a) Conductive Hearing Impairment

Conductive hearing impairment occurs when sound waves or messages fail to reach the intended recipient's inner ear due to disruptions in the outer or middle ear (Resna, 2020). The sound messages or information brought by a speaker cannot effectively reach the inner ear due to issues in the outer or middle ear. This impairment can be caused by earwax blockage, ear infections, or abnormalities in the hearing bones (ossicles) (Resna, 2020).

b) Sensorineural Hearing Impairment

Sensorineural hearing impairment involves damage to the inner ear or cochlear nerve. It affects individuals who experience hearing loss when there is damage to the

cochlear nerve or other parts of the inner ear (Nofiaturrehman, 2018). This type of impairment can be caused by genetic factors, age-related changes leading to degeneration, or extended exposure to excessive noise, damaging the auditory membrane and causing infections. Individuals with sensorineural hearing impairment typically struggle to hear sounds clearly, especially at high frequencies. Consequently, this condition makes communication challenging for them.

c) Mixed Hearing Impairment

The occurrence of mixed hearing impairment demands further understanding. Mixed hearing impairment refers to a combination of conductive and sensorineural hearing impairments. Individuals with mixed hearing impairment experience difficulties both in hearing sounds clearly and in transmitting sounds to the inner ear, affecting their ability to receive news and information (Resna, 2020). This type of impairment requires a more comprehensive approach to address both the issues related to the outer and middle ear as well as those related to the inner ear and nerve pathways.

3. Beyond Deafness

Deafness is a medical condition wherein an individual experiences hearing loss in their auditory system. This condition can be present from birth or can result from hearing disorders caused by injuries or specific illnesses. A person with deafness faces obstacles in their ability to hear sounds.

For those born with deafness, the condition often leads to the inability to speak adequately, as speech development heavily relies on what babies hear in their daily environment. Babies learn language by mimicking the speech they hear regularly. Individuals with congenital deafness will likely also experience speechlessness, making it challenging for them to understand conversations. Such a situation can be difficult to accept within society and may impact their quality of life and social interactions. Therefore, it's crucial for us to understand how to communicate with the deaf. Below, several ways of nonverbal communication with those facing difficulties in speaking will be explained:

a) Communicating through Sign Language

Individuals with hearing limitations face unique challenges. Therefore, those who are deaf often rely more on sign language to interact. Communicating through sign language becomes an essential means for them to convey thoughts and ideas.

Hence, finding a suitable phenomenological approach for individuals with hearing problems involves practicing sign language. Through practicing sign language, it's understood that communicating through sign language in daily life becomes more accessible for them compared to trying to speak and convey information verbally (Nindito, 2005).

One of the sign languages they commonly use and that we may be familiar with is the Indonesian Sign Language System (SIBI), which is still commonly used in

Special Education Schools in Indonesia. This effort is made to openly teach and learn SIBI as a means of communication.



Figure 1. A person is engaging in a conversation using Indonesian Sign Language (SIBI).

(Source: kompasiana.com/ Mutoharoh, Z.)

In this SIBI Dictionary, we will be introduced to letter signs, prefixes, and suffixes. Similarly, there are words commonly used for communication, especially standard words. Furthermore, aside from learning signs with SIBI, in its development, many other sign languages have emerged. One of them is BISINDO (Indonesian Sign Language). In BISINDO, letter signs are also introduced. However, there are differences between the signs in SIBI and BISINDO (Nofiaturrahmah, 2018).

In this context, referring to Schutz's phenomenology, which is used to provide a comprehensive understanding, the phenomenon of sign language in SIBI and BISINDO becomes a way for their daily interaction and communication. Within the context of these languages, when they move their hands and use gestures, meanings and messages are conveyed to their conversational partners.

Those who experience hearing impairment and limitations in speaking use communication with conveyed meanings to their conversation partners. These messages have multiple interpretations that can be understood by those who have corresponding understanding, making it a basis for discussion.

b). Determine the sign language you use.

It needs to be fully realized that the use of sign language has different meanings in each region (Hikmat, 2021). Therefore, in the context of conveying messages and facilitating communication among those with hearing impairment in a society, it's important to consider the various patterns of sign language that exist.

It's important to note that there are deaf individuals. In this case, not everyone communicates using sign language. Almost every country has its own sign language. Therefore, in the process of conveying these messages, the language used and conveyed differs significantly from spoken language, and in a broader context, the distribution of these languages doesn't necessarily follow the same geographical distribution. For

instance, British Sign Language is quite distinct from American Sign Language (Id.wikihow.com, 2020).

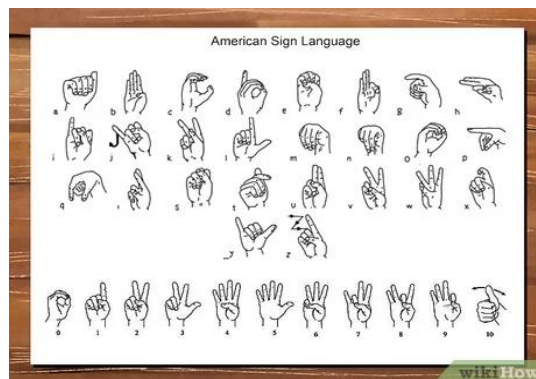


Figure 2. Varieties of Sign Language

(Source: Id.wikihow.com, 2020)

Sign language is a natural language, with its own grammar and syntax; for example, the phrase "I give you" in English is one word (or "sign") in American Sign Language or ASL (Id.wikihow.com, 2020). From the context above, it can be understood that the meanings that can be interpreted regarding this matter are very diverse, considering the understanding and usage of codes in sign languages differ in each region. Therefore, the usage of sign language from a regional context needs to be carefully considered.

c). Communicating by Speaking

This method can be applied, but not for all deaf children (Resna, 2020). There are deaf children who prefer speaking directly rather than using sign language. Of course, this is influenced by the child's level of hearing. It also depends on the communication habits within the family. If a child is encouraged to communicate by speaking, they will become accustomed to it. If not encouraged, it will be more difficult for the child to speak.



Figure 3. Speak Reasonably to The Deaf

(Source: Id.wikihow.com, 2020)

Try to speak as naturally as possible. Whispering and shouting can distort lip movements, making it harder for deaf individuals to understand your words. Similarly, if you exaggerate lip movements, you will be more difficult to comprehend compared to speaking naturally. Raising your voice is only useful if your conversation partner asks you to do so. Also, speak a bit more softly if your conversation partner requests it.

d). Communicating with Expert Assistance

One effective way to ensure meaningful communication and understanding is by seeking guidance from experts in the field. Learning from experts, especially those who understand the language used by deaf individuals, can be incredibly beneficial (Mutoharoh, 2022).

A simple approach to enhancing our understanding of messages and meanings is by utilizing media such as television broadcasts of news or other formal events. This practice can be implemented by television broadcasters or event organizers to ensure that deaf or hearing-impaired individuals present can easily comprehend what is being said by speakers or presenters. Another example of this approach is seeking expert assistance during events involving deaf individuals, such as marriages between deaf partners (Sasongko, 2018). Similarly, when cases or events involve deaf children, having an expert in the field can facilitate better understanding of what the deaf child is trying to communicate. This assistance also extends to understanding the meanings or messages conveyed through their communication methods. With the aid of experts, meanings can be more readily accepted and understood (Rachmad, 2020).

CONCLUSION

After delving deeply into the potential meanings that can be understood and interpreted regarding the communication patterns of the hearing-impaired, it can be comprehensively understood that phenomenology in relation to their communication forms is a reflection of consciousness from a first-person perspective. This signifies that individuals with hearing impairments truly capture and understand the messages received from their conversational partners, and subsequently rephrase these messages to convey the intended meaning. This process continues until the communication process concludes, reaching an agreement on the desired and appropriate understanding.

In a broader sense, phenomenology aims to depict human experiences as they are lived through thoughts, imagination, emotions, desires, and more. In the views of Alfred Schutz, phenomenology becomes an autonomous discipline. Schutz succinctly formulates it as the science of the essence of consciousness, emphasizing that human consciousness never stands alone. Consciousness is always about something – about what is perceived and experienced by those who receive the message, and then they interpret it within a framework of understanding and action.

Schutz's phenomenology, in the context of grasping comprehensible meanings, can be understood as a way to analyze the human lifeworld subjectively and intersubjectively with

other individuals. Thus, the nonverbal language conveyed through gestures and actions to their conversational partners becomes a meaning interpreted within the scope of their capabilities, and this is not fixed. It could even be stated that meanings are multifaceted.

Subjective aspects pertain to an individual's personal experiences, where they intensely undergo and engage in their life's journey as human beings. On the other hand, objectivity refers to the world around us, which is permanent within space and time. Intersubjectivity involves the worldviews of all individuals engaged in social activities in their daily lives, encompassing the various elements they encounter. Meaning is also a limited representation of human experiences and struggles, which shape them into beings who continue learning every day, day by day.

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