



## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Presented by



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Our religious literature known as sruti which arose in the course of centuries was handed down from generation to generation through oral transmission. Thus the ears were considered as channel for divine learning. Stotram daivam says the Chandogya Upanisad.

The ancient Indians attached much Importance to sound. Special efforts were made to ensure the correct enunciation of words. (and elaborate rules were laid down for this purpose). In reciting the Upanisads for instance, a reference is made in the Taittiriya Upanisad, to corrections made in pronunciation. "We will expound pronunciation, letters or sounds, pitch, quality, force or stress, articulation, combination. Thus has been declared the lesson on pronunciation." Siksani vyakhyasyamah: varnas svarah, matra balam, sama santanah, ityuktas siksadhyayah.

Significance was attached to how the words sounded. Hence it was attempted to combine the meaning with the sound, leading sometimes to delightful combinations and sometimes to crude mixtures. Silence and sound are opposites. But there is a sound that symbolizes the mystic silence. This is *Aum*. It is a sound that silence creates and into which it fades away.

Many branches of science and medicine contribute to an understanding of disorders of speech, hearing and language. Several professional groups contribute to the services rendered for the handicapped. The contents of the service rendered may be different, but in moral quality they are the same. All service rendered to the handicapped ranks high. As we learn from the Gita, virtue lies in practicing Sva-dharma, in doing one's own duty.



# Indian Speech and Hearing Association (ISHA)

Regd. Under the Kamataka Societies Registration Act. Karnataka Act No. 17 Registration No. 25/67-68

Our sva-dharma lies in providing the expertise in the sphere of disordered speech, language and hearing. This function, we may fulfil in various capacities and in different organizational structures. We may serve as consultants in providing information to members of allied professions, to administrators, to parents. We may serve as team members in providing comprehensive diagnostic evaluation, in the ongoing evaluation and in planning the educational and the vocational placement of the handicapped children and adults.

In the near future, our professional involvements with educational institutions, especially at the school level ought to increase. This involvement is important because communication processes play a significant role in self-actualization. The educational orientation can be a very satisfying orientation. It gives us an opportunity to work as both clinicians and educators, clinicians with respect to the handicapped children and educators with respect to parents and teachers.

In furthering our professional interests, parent guidance is an important element. In interacting with the handicapped child, at what stage does the parent stop being a parent and become a clinician? At what stage does a parent stop being a parent and become a teacher? Is it necessary to stop being a parent to become a teacher? Is it necessary to stop being a parent to become a teacher or a clinician? In their multiphasic role, the parents need orientation; they need guidance. Let us give it to them. There is no better place than home where integration of the handicapped in the community can begin. It is where it ought to begin.

In serving the communicatively handicapped our major professional concern is making available the necessary services to those who need them. The immediate need for making such services available has given the impetus in undertaking service oriented programs. In this endeavour we have been assisted by service groups such as the Rotary, the Lions, the Leos and the Jaycees, Specifically they have assisted in holding camps in several parts of the country, in establishing more speech and hearing centres and in conducting school screening programs. In spite of what has been achieved so far, a large number of communicatively handicapped individuals in the country, especially in the rural areas, remain unserved or underserved. Whereas we should be anxious to see that services reach these individuals, it should be ensured that adequate services are assured.



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While service oriented activities assume priority, to better serve the communicatively handicapped, scientific data and use of scientifically sound methodology are necessary. Efforts must be made towards developing standardized methods of testing and reporting appropriate for our unique conditions. Treatment and training procedures suitable for our conditions must be evolved. In serving the handicapped, we are clinicians and researchers at the same time. Clinicians because we deal with disorders and researchers because we must be constantly striving to find better and faster methods of identification, treatment and training.

As knowledge expands and as new test procedures and new techniques for behavioural management become available, it is necessary for each profession to analyze and revise professional training programs. Evaluation of the effectiveness of a curriculum purports to verify whether the aims and objectives of the training programs are achieved.

To fit speech pathology and audiology into a professional pattern, the program of study should be one that combines a scientific with a strong professional orientation. As a first step the objective should be mastery of subject matter and proficiency in the use of tools employed in professional practice. The knowledge and skill acquired may be used in the collection of data, in the analysis and synthesis, and in the interpretation of data drawn from various sources.

A variety of modes of instruction may be made use of. The relevant processes and procedures may be explained through lectures. Patient participation may be used in demonstration. Prepared aides such as models, audio-visual material, and programmed instructional materials are other useful modes. The successful accomplishment of the training objectives depends to a large extent on the selection of appropriate learning experiences.

Not to be overlooked in training program is the selection of suitable performance samples for determining the level of competency reached. If there are different levels of training, what is the competency expected at each of these levels? What compromises can be made when the trainees show unequal levels of competencies in the various skills expected of them? How is professional experience to be quantified so that it can be equated to a percentage of marks in accepting candidates for training programs?



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A close evaluation of training programs must also be undertaken periodically in the light of current potential employment opportunities. To ensure this, necessary data regarding current needs must be collected. Data regarding employment opportunities may reveal the needs of specific age groups, of individuals with specific types of communicative disorders. These may call for training in specialized skills to be incorporated in the curriculum.

Continuing education is essential for maintaining professional vitality. It may take a variety of forms: short courses, professional meetings and conferences, audio-visual presentations, books, monographs and articles. As part of continuing education, orientation courses may be given for collaborative work with other professionals. Such orientation courses, however, are not to be considered synonymous with training received for specialization in a field.

The aim of all training ultimately is to equip the individuals to become problem solvers. In professional training such as ours, it must also be inculcated in the trainees that their knowledge and skills are to be used in the service of the community. The wisdom that makes one wise is the wisdom to serve.

Man's struggles and achievements contribute to what is called history. It is a new event that contributes to history. An event is one thing as it happens and another thing as it is understood. We understand the following events as further steps in professional growth and better service delivery.

With the trend (which we hope will increase) in the integration of the hard of hearing in normal classrooms, the question arises what need, if any, may be there for modifications in the curriculum prescribed. In recognizing such a need, the governments of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have exempted the hard of hearing children from studying all three languages in schools. The Indian Secondary School Board has conceded that hard of hearing children may substitute an art paper for additional languages. Allowances for modification in the curriculum at the University level has been initiated by the Karnataka Government, and they have been accepted by the University of Mysore.

Several state governments, including Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, have announced subsidization either in full or in part in the purchase of hearing aids. The declaration that 1



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percent of the jobs will be reserved for the handicapped should serve as a good incentive for the handicapped in making full use of the available services in realizing their potential.

A broad spectrum of activities contributing to professional growth and our happiness include publication of new journal, the Hearing Aid Journal and cords for hearing aids manufactured indigenously. Our profession is represented in two committees of the Indian Standards Institute. The decision of the Indian Standards Institute to have regional centres for calibration provides a much welcome relief.

Interdisciplinary collaborations include representation of our field on the editorial board of the Journal of the Acoustical Society of India and the ensuing interdisciplinary seminar jointly planned by the All Institute of Speech and Hearing, Mysore and the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.

We are happy that there is now a Karnataka branch of ISHA, in addition to the Delhi and Bombay branches. Like the Sun that remains stationary in the sky, but through its reflection in water appears to be many, ISHA remains one, but appears to be many through the state branches. The list of events ends here, but history does not, for history continues whether we nudge history this way or that is up to us because it is people who make history.

The interests of a group of people can be pursued more effectively through a common Association. In forming an association, recognition of common interests is essential. In pursuing interests that are common to a group of people, in seeking something for himself, a member has sought it for other members. When interests are common, the benefits accruing from the pursuit of these interests are not divisible.

The common interests of the members of ISHA are spelled out in the aims and objectives of the Association. In achieving these objectives, the members have not only a right, but the responsibility in shaping the programs that need to be undertaken. The members have a voice over the governance of the Association through the direct election of the officers of the Executive Council. The Association has more powers than the individual members. However, the members together are more powerful than the Association. We may be experts in communication; but because of our small numbers, we sometimes have difficulty in being heard! Speaking a unanimously, we can exert an influence that is significant. It



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is important that the influence be exerted intelligently and in the right direction. Our mission should be to stimulate a national assessment of the problems faced by the communicatively handicapped individuals, to create a national awareness of the problems and to make recommendations for legislative and administrative measures. For this purpose, it is necessary that our profession be represented on decision making committees at the state and the national levels. Our objectives must be given a high level visibility. Our responsibilities towards prevention, identification and management of communicative disorders must be written into laws and regulations. Further a clear statement of our professional image should be maintained before the public. We have a meaningful image. Let us affirm it.

Our association is still youthful. Being youthful, it has some advantages. Youth has the vitality, the energy and the impulsiveness to tackle problems. More important, it can do so unimpeded by modes it has experienced within the past. It is free from the weight of habit formation. If it were not for youth seeking enlightenment, we would not have had the Upanishads.

In identifying with our association, we feel youthful. Feeling youthful, let us seek light for those who do not have light. As Yagnavalkya says to king Janaka, when the sun has set and the moon has set and the fire has gone out, speech indeed is the light.