

AN ENACTABLE PLAY AND ITS ROLE IN INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS

REG.NO.M.9619

**AN INDEPENDENT PROJECT SUBMITTED AS PART FULFILMENT
FOR THE FIRST YEAR M.Sc., (SPEECH AND HEARING)
TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MYSORE**

**ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF SPEECH AND HEARING
MYSORE 570 006**

MAY 1997

DEDICATED
WITH LOVE
TO
MY MUMMY

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the Independent project entitled, **AN ENACTABLE PLAY AND ITS ROLE IN INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS'** is a bonafide work done in part fulfilment for first year degree of Master of Science (Speech and Hearing) of the student with register number M-9619

Mysore
1997

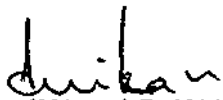

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the Independent project entitled, AN ENACTABLE PLAY AND ITS ROLE IN INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS' has been prepared under my supervision and guidance.

*Mysore
1997*


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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this Independent Project entitled "AN ENACTABLE PLAY AND ITS PROBABLE EFFICACY IN INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS" is the result of my own study undertaken under the guidance of Dr. (Miss) S. Nikam, Director. All India Institute of Speech and Hearing, Mysore, and has not been submitted earlier at any University for any other Diploma or Degree.

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May '97

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INTRODUCTION:

Plays since ancient times have been a powerful medium of expression and putting forth one's ideas or message to the public in a relevant manner. Message, script, enactment, stage projection, costumes, dialogue delivery constitute important constituents of a play. During the course of history, plays evolved into various forms. This is especially true for a country like India where various forms of plays are popular in particular regions for example, Nautanki in the regions of North India Kajri in the west and koothu in some southern parts. There are innumerable such forms.

Of late, street plays have become part of such forms, though some ancient forms are also prevalent. Street plays of the day are short, to the point professional use very less of costumes and music. They are more symbolic and dialogues are very powerful. They also use film parodies, humor and other popular gimmicks.

Street plays have been successfully used by various government agencies such as National Literacy Mission, Health and Family Welfare agencies and obtained startling results.

Reasons for this are not difficult to cite as these plays are less time consuming, adaptable and less expensive.

Most of the street plays usually stretch to a maximum of half an hour, hence the message has to be conveyed within a limited, short period of time only. Street plays help in pulling crowds, hence it should be interesting to achieve the goals. As it is difficult to expect street crowds to wait for hours together and watching a street play. This may also cause disruption of traffic, daily activities, etc.,

Scripts written for street plays can be adapted to any language dialect for that matter, any other form of enacting (even stage enactment is possible). These plays can be easily organized at fairs, festivals and other places. The language of the script is usually simple and lucid. For that matter it is even adaptable to a vast cross-section of the society. Street plays can also be adapted in accordance with cultural and religious customs and sentiments of the society. This is very important as plays which do not do so can become subject of controversy as it has happened at many times.

Enactment of street plays involve minimal costs as no stage is required, no music is required and usually it is done without specific costumes or make-up.

Purpose of the study:

Purposes of this Independent project are the following:

- 1) First and foremost purpose is to have an interesting mode for public education.
- 2) To make people aware of the following:
 - i) Basic anatomy and physiology of the ear.
 - ii) Common causes of hearing loss and usual signs and symptoms of ear diseases. Preventive measures for the above cited hearing losses.
 - iii) Awareness of the facilities available in a speech and hearing centre.
 - iv) To project how the hearing impaired can be helped by those who live in close proximity.
 - v) To assess the efficacy of street plays as a mode of public education.

Thus keeping the above facts in mind an effort is made to make the public aware of hearing-impairment, its causes, and management. There is very little effort toward running awareness campaigns regarding hearing loss, its causes, prevention, identification and rehabilitation, through the medium of street plays. Hence the present study.

**"SCRIPT FOR AN ENACTABLE PLAY AND ITS
ROLE IN INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS"**

PART-I

(Giri's house, Ramani is busy with household work.. Giri is getting ready to go to work. Thathu is squatting at one corner and enjoying his beedi. Raju is sleeping near Thathu)

Mohammed: (Enters) Hello Giri Namaste sister !

Giri : Hello ! How come you are early today?

(Mohammed looks at Raju and suddenly shifts his gaze)

Mohammed: Just like that ! (points to Raju) He is sleeping still?

Thathu please wake him up. He has to go to school, right?

Thathu : (laughing) Hi Hi yes Mohammed, I got up a bit early today!

(Mohammed shows an embarrassed face and shy smile)

Giri : (laughs loudly) Thathu wake him up.

Thathu : Why are you shouting Giri? I can hear well

I am not deaf....!

Tries to wake up Raju.....

(Giri laughs softly Raju gets up and goes out)

Ranani : Now! you don't laugh at Thathu once you
become old, you may be even worse than this.

Giri : O.K O.K ! (in a compromising tone) is my
breakfast ready?

Ranani : Call brother and come its ready.

Mohammed: No sister Just now I had mine.

Raanani : Atleast have, some coffee then, brother.

Giri : Come Mohammed we'll have together
(both of them sit for breakfast Raju also
joins them)

Mohammed: Giri, actually I came early to tell you an
important thing.

Giri : (becomes serious Ranani also listen) what is
it Mohammed? I know that com'n tell me
whatever it is!

Mohammed: My daughter Neemu who is studying with Raju told me that Raju is not coping up well with his studies and often gets scoldings from the teacher.

Giri : I know that he is not like other kids. He cannot speak and I don't know what really his problem is ! may be he is not intelligent enough in studies.

Mohammed: Well I think he is smart and intelligent but has some problem ! Anyway we should take him to a village doctor today evening.

Raju goes to wash, his hands

(Giri's and Ramani's eyes follows him - a sad expression on their face ...)

Giri : (Turns to Mohammed) Yes ! I'll take him to doctor today itself.

Mohammed: Anyway I'll also come with you. I also want to see him because I am having ear pain.

Ramani : (to Giri) Munni has got a very bad cold. She has is been crying from yesterday night I think we should take her, also to the doctor.

(Giri gets up and goes to wash his hands)

Giri : It is nothing but common cold, you need not worry
so much about such silly things

(Giri comes back wiping his hands)

Mohammed: Giri I don't think we should neglect such
things. There is no harm in showing her to doctor
isn't it?

Giri : O.K.! Ramani you come to doctors place with
Munni and Raju in the evening, we will be waiting
there for you.

Ramani : (Busily keeping the used plates aside) O.K...!
(Raju gets his bag to go to school)

Giri : Bye Raju (with action)

Raju : (Shows in action to bring toffee in the evening and
Giri nods his head in agreement)

(....Raju leaves to schools with bag on his
shoulder)

Giri : Bye Ramani !

Ramani : O.K. Bye !

SCENE II

{(Doctor's chamber. . . . Everyone is seated viz., Giri, Mohammed, Ramani and Munni (on Ramani's lap))}

Doctor examines Munni's ears and nose.

Doctor : Yeah ! Munni is having cold from past one day, is it?

Ramani : Actually, doctor she had cold last week also and she gets this bad cold frequently. She cries very badly and I don't know what to do doctor.

Doctor : Don't worry ! it must be because of irritation that the child has. As far as I examined, your child is on the safer side at present. But if you had not brought her it could have become a serious problem.

(Ramani, Mohammed and Giri look at each other)

Giri : (Surprised and scared tone) what would have happened doctor? Isn't it just a common cold?

Doctor : No Giri ! Common cold is not an harmless condition as you think. If proper treatment is not taken, it can cause problems like hearing loss. Not only such infections of nose and throat but also direct infections can occur by taking bath in dirty water or pouring dirty water into the ear.

Doctor : (smiles) If you want to know, I'll tell you. But before that you should know what exactly is our ear. (suddenly Giri shows his pinna and tells in a tone' it is a simple as this)

Giri : Oh ! This is our ear doctor, we all know that.

Doctor : Giri, that is just a part of our entire ear. (Giri looks at the doctor surprised)

Doctor : Our ear

(Giri takes a small piece of palm leaf stick from his pocket and tries to put it in his ears and scratch)

Oh Giri ! (Giri stops) please take that stick out of your ears. If you do this you may damage the ear canal, or even the eardrum and that impairs the hearing ability.

Giri : How?

Doctor : I'll tell you . . . first you see the structure of our ear.

(points to the picture or model)

This part is what we can see outside. It is called the pinna. It continues as a 'S' shaped canal inside you can see the canal here

(points appropriately). In children this canal will be straight. So, they may easily damage the structures in their ear. If you put, a stick or any other substance in the ear canal it can tear the eardrum membrane seen here at the end of the canal. This membrane is a thin and delicate structure., which would have got damaged when you (Giri) were cleaning your ears.

Giri : Oh ! (an ashamed tone).(gives a shy smile)
So hearing ability can be lost in the process so clean your ears properly using ear buds.
Otherwise it is harmful to yourself. Not only this, slapping on the side of the face or an accident that injures parts of ear can also break the membrane.

- Doctor : There is more to it Mohammed ! This membrane is attached to one end of the chain formed by three little bones (points). See here the 3 little bones of our ear. These are the smallest bones in our body.
- Giri : Doctor, the other end is attached to a snail like thing and the circular portions here what is that ?
- Doctor : Yes, that is the inner ear. it has some fluids and membranes in it. This portion of the ear helps in hearing as it also has connections to brain through nerve fibers. The circular portions help in balance.
(points appropriately)
- Giri : If that is the inner ear (points appropriately) then, this has to be outer ear right doctor?
- Doctor : Yes Giri! This is our outer ear and this is our middle ear. Here the middle ear has connection with the throat through this tube (points). That is why, I said, common cold can cause hearing loss.
- Mohammed: Oh I see !

Doctor : The infection at throat region during the attack of a common cold enter the middle ear through this tube (points appropriately). Same infections can enter the middle part of our ear during such conditions later it may rupture the membrane due to pressure of the

Ramani : Oh God ! Luckily we brought Munni before that (others nod)

Doctor : Do you know how we hear?

Giri : It must be through this canal (points to external auditory canal).

Doctor : Yes ! The sounds from the air, enters this canal and sets this membrane vibrating (points appropriately).

Ramani : Doctor, if this membrane vibrates, all these three bones will also vibrate right ? It is attached to this membrane isn't it?

Doctor : Exactly ! Hence this vibration will be carried on to the fluids and membranes of the inner ear that is nothing but this (points) snail shaped organ.

Mohamaed: Oh, That is how we hear?!

Doctor : Mohammed, there is a little more to add to the process. I told you that nerve fibers connect brain to the inner ear right?

Giri : Yes ! I remember.

Doctor : Yeah ! the vibrations of the membranes and fluids in the inner ear will excite these nerve fibers and thus the nerve impulses are sent to the brain. It is the brain that recognizes the sound.

Giri : What all can cause hearing loss doctor?

Doctor : Any blockage in the way of sound conduction starting from outer ear upto the brain can cause hearing loss (points appropriately). It can be in the external ear, middle ear, inner ear or nerve fibers leading from the ear to the brain. The blockage can be caused by malformations of ear structure, right from birth, due to hereditary or complications during pregnancy and delivery or can be acquired like infections, injuries etc.

Mohammed: Doctor, the factory where I work tells that we should wear ear protective devices. They say that even sounds can cause hearing loss, is it true? This is what they have given me to wear (shows an EPD).

Doctor : Yes Mohammed ! Loud sounds or in other words, noise is harmful to our ears. In order to prevent the harmful effects on the ear if, the factory does not obey the rules regarding limits of noise, the employees have right to sue them. An employee who has lost his hearing ability due to noise at work place has a right to approach court demanding compensation from the employes. You should know that noise from loud speakers, crackers, loud volume radio, T.V etc., also can cause hearing loss. During festivals, wedding etc., people enjoy crackers but the price that they will have to pay for it is their hearing !

(Doctor writes a prescription) Every one nods....)

Giri : My god ! I didn't know that.....!

Doctor : I have given some medicines for Munnii.

Giri : Yes Doctor ! (Takes the prescription from doctor's hands).

Ramani : Doctor, this is Raju our eldest son who is not able to speak. We do suspect that he may have problem in hearing. We need medicines for him also.

Doctor : Is he your eldest son? (Doctor examines Raju....)

Giri : Yes doctor, he is about 5 years old.

Doctor : You will have to take him to Speech and Hearing Center. One of the best centers is situated in Mysore at Manasagangothri - The All India Institute of Speech and Hearing.

Mohammed: So, they will be having medicines for such problems.... doctor?

Doctor : No Mohammed, I am very sorry to tell you that there are some types of hearing problems for which there are no medicines. They give training for patients to utilize their hearing abilities that they possess to the maximum. Certain types of hearing problem can be helped by medicines/surgery. Certain other types require the use of a hearing aid. To check

what sort of problem Raju is having and to how it can be managed, please take him to the All India Institute of Speech and Hearing.

Giri : Doctor, how much will it cost?

Doctor : Services available at this Institution is free of cost, except for a registration fee of Rs.5/. It won't be more than what you can afford. It is meant for people like you. You have already delayed taking Raju there. Please do not waste more time.

Giri : Then I won't allow him to waste his life as a 'mute'

Mohammed: It is in Mysore University Campus. Bus no. 130, 135, 146, 95, 252, 253, 255, 256 etc., go to this place from City Bus Stand. It works from 9.00 am to 5.30 pm on all days except Saturdays, Sundays. It is closed on Central Government Holidays.

Ramani : Can we take Thathu also?

Doctor : Thathu? Who is that? What is his problem?

Giri : Thathu is my father. he is not able to hear since about 2_{1/2} years. That is quite normal, right? Does that need some treatment?

Doctor : Yes, most of the elderly people develop problem in hearing and vision. For his hearing problem, services are available at the All India Institute of Speech and Hearing. When he can live a better life why do you want to deprive him of it. You take him also to the Institution.

Mohammed: (gets up) O.K then Namaste doctor.

Giri & : Namaste doctor.

Ramani

Doctor : Namaste

(Mohammed, Giri and Ramani leave the room)

(In AIISH - Audiologist's Chamber - an attender brings two files)

Aud : Looks like these two cases are from the same family.

Aud : Please call them.

(Attender goes out Giri, Raju and Thathu enters).

Aud : Raju and Thathu isn't it?

(points appropriately)

May I know who you are (to giri)

Giri : I am Raju's father. . . . Thathu is my father Sir,

Aud : O.K Please sit down. You came alone?

(Giri takes the seat with the rest)

(Audiologist takes a brief case history, tests the hearing of Raju and Thathu)

Aud : O.K. you have finished, a hearing check-up.

Giri : Yes Sir, I would like to know what the problem is?

Aud : (looking through the file) Sure I will tell you ! Yeah ! according to the hearing evaluation report, Raju is having only 20% of hearing left with him in both ears. While Thathu has around 50% of his hearing saved in both ears.

Giri : Can we get back the hearing ability Sir?

Aud : No Mr. Giri ! this type of hearing loss is irreversible. Because, the problem is in the inner ear and beyond. If the problem was in the outer or middle ear, it could have been alleviated through medicines or surgery.

Giri : Then what is it that we can do, Sir?

Aud : I think you are not aware of the use of hearing machine'. 'Hearing machine' or 'hearing aid' is a device that can be used for effectively utilizing the remaining hearing ability.

Giri : Does this machine cure the hearing problem, Sir?
For how many days do they have wear it?

Aud : A hearing aid can never bring back the hearing ability to normal.

Giri : Is this machine harmful Sir?

Aud : No Giri if you follow our instructions regarding its usage it won't cause any harm.

Giri : How does such a machine work Sir?

Aud : It is simply an amplifying device like a mini public address system. I will explain to you (Takes a body level hearing aid). For example, see this machine If you see here (points appropriately) there are a few small holes. It is the mic.

Giri : Sir, the mic the politicians use to give speeches.

- Aud : Exactly Giri ! But a smaller version of it. It's function is like the mic that you told. It simply picks up sounds from the air and converts it to electric signals for amplification.
- Giri : What is this box of this machine consist of?
- Aud : It has a device, the amplifier that increases the loudness of the sounds picked up by the mic.
- Giri : This increased or loud sounds enter this button through this wire Sir?
- Aud : Yes ! Once it reached the button or the receiver, it enters your ear if you fit it into your ear with a proper earmould.
- Giri : Like how the loud speakers do in politician's mic system.
- Aud : Yes ! (laughs) exactly ! And, here this is the battery compartment, you have to place battery according to this sign '+' and '-' written here it is exactly how you put it for torch light.
- Giri : What battery should be used sir ?

- Aud : For this type of machine a pen torch battery should be used. One battery can be used up to 10-15 days. You should insist that Raju uses this machines always except while taking bath and sleeping. Remember the mic should not be covered with anything like clothings etc.
- Giri : O.K Sir, but what are these switches for, Sir?
- Aud : These switches have some markings against it them can you see it here (shows)? for Raju, this switch should be in M position, Mic Volume control should be in between 2 and 3. As you increase this, loudness of the sound increases. You can wear it like this in the pocket or can stitch an harness for it like this one (shows an harness exhibited on the wall).
- Giri : Yes, Sir ! but what is this 'T' and 'O' !
- Aud : Oh Yes, 'T' should be the position where this switch should be while conversing through telephone and 'O' is 'off' position. You should be extremely careful while handling this machine.
- Giri : Is it Sir?

Aud : Yes. Let me start from this plastic piece or mould
.... It should not be broken or blocked by any
thing like wax. Wash it once in 2 or 3 days using
mild soap and luke warm water. You can even use a
small brush if needed. Before washing, it should
be detached from the machine like this (shows how
to detach). Fix it to the machine after earmolds
are thoroughly dry.

Giri : Oh! It can be taken off like that?

Aud : Yes ! even these wires can be taken off and if
damaged it can be replaced. But take care not to
damage it. Don't tangle it or stretch it. When
you are not using the machine wind the wire gently
around it like this (shows how to wind the
wire) around your finger too.

Giri : If cord is broken sound won't come isn't it Sir?

Aud : Yeah right ! right and if an unpleasant
squealing sound occurs like this (demonstrates)
that means mic is too near to this button like
receiver or the mould is loose.

Giri : Sir, what about the body of the machine?

- Aud : It should be handled with care. It should not be dropped down. Dust, food, water etc., should not fall on this. Giri even though I am talking about this type of machine, it is true for Thathu's machine also. It is just a smaller version of this type. See this is Thathu's machine (Shows BTE hearing aid, which was prescribed after a trial)
(gives a BTE for Thathu to wear and Body level hearing aid for Raju to wear).
- Aud : If there is any problem in the machine, you can get your machine repaired from this Institute itself. Whenever you want to come here get your identity card and the hearing aid.
- Giri : Sir, I would like to know whether I can send him to normal school.
- Aud : I am sorry to say but with 20% of hearing left, he will not be able to cope in the normal school. You bring him here for therapy and we will give the addresses of good special schools where he can easily get admission and come out with flying colours.

- Giri : So kids who have hearing loss can't study in normal schools?
- Aud : It is not that way Giri ! It depends upon certain factors such as his degree or severity of hearing loss, associated problems etc.,
- Giri : Oh I see (sad tone)! Raju has severe kind of loss, that is why, isn't it?
- Aud : (understands his depressed state) But, I think you need not worry we can always help him to come up with the limited ability he possess.
- {All of them leave the room, walk to one end of the stage and come back. By that time, a speech therapist and a kid of 3-4 years with hearing loss occupy the stage}.
- Aud : This is our therapy clinic you can see there are many rooms let us see what is happening in this room. Here we give speech and language therapy, not only for children hearing-impaired but also for patients who have any kind of speech problem due to any kind of cause like mental retardation, stroke, cleft lip, stammering, voice problems etc.

Aud : Hello Mr. Deepak

Sp.Th : Hello !

Aud : May I have a short demonstration of Sp. therapy for these people.

Sp.Th : Sure ! keep watching.

Sp.Th : (to the kid) Say hello to uncle.

Kid : (to audiologist) He..llo (shows hand)

Aud : Hello ! (give hand).

Sp.Th : Now, tell me what is this (points to eye).

Kid : a - i (distorted).

Sp.Th : Very good (to Giri) this was a simple demonstration of building up of linguistic abilities or language abilities. Moving on to auditory skills ... That is hearing abilities we may work on hearing skills some what like this (Make the kid hold a beed or block near the ear then strike the drum from back kid puts the beed into a box and takes another and a gain holds it near the ear same thing is repeated).

Sp.Th : What you see here is just the initial level. More complex abilities like discrimination, localization etc., of both speech and non-speech sounds will be trained under this category.

Giri : (nods) Oh ! I see.

Aud : (Shakes hand with Sp. Therapist) Thanks a lot Deepak, let us make a move.

Sp.Th : Welcome !

(Giri signs Namaste)

{Others, except the kid and Sp. Therapist, leave and walk to the other end of (stage). By that time Sp. Therapist and kid leave the scene. Others walk back and take their original positions}.

Aud : I hope that you got some idea on the services that we render.

Giri : Yes Sir, and I am indebted to you for your advices and services.

Aud : You are welcome. It is our duty to serve you. O.K then see you later.

(Looks at watch and leaves the scene and others also leave)

SCENE IV

Back at Giri's house Raju is playing at one corner rest of the characters have taken the centre of the scene. All are sitting in a semi-circle. Raju and Thathu are wearing their hearing aids. Raju vocalizes while playing).

Ramani : Then was your journey comfortable?

Naseema : It was a nice trip akka you should see that place ! That Institution is a very big one. There are gardens and places to sit and take rest inside the Institute and toys for children to play with.

Ramani : (surprised) um ? Then what did they say and what all happened there?

Mohammed: We first went to the reception. Where we were directed to get registred. From there we had to go to a room where they asked some questions regarding Raju and Thathu's problem and did some tests for Raju's speech. Oh yes sister. . . . they asked whether you and Giri were married in blood relation. When we said that Giri married his cousin only, they told that it could have been the reason for Raju's problem.

Ramani : (sad and guilty) But We didn't know it, right?

Naseema : Anyway, Don't worry about the past. Now there is no use in repenting or feeling sad about it.
Let us see what we can do as a remedy !

Giri : Yes ! that is what even I am telling. You know that Prasad ... Oh ... our neighbour He has a son whose ear looks shapeless. He can't hear also unless we talk very loudly. They said that it is familial ..Prasad's grand father also had the same problem it seems !.

Ranani : Oh.. I see ... O.K. . . . tell me how they got this machine for ear ?

Giri : After those questioning and all we had to go to another room where they tested Raju's and Thathu's hearing.

Ramani : How did they do that ?

Thathu : For me they put a band on my head which had 2 cup like things which was fitted on my ears. Through those things different kinds of sounds came. They told me that when I hear the sound I have to raise my finger like this (shows in action).

- Giri : But for Raju it was not like that. He had to do some play. He had to put beads into a basket when he heard the sounds.
- Ranani : (Surprised) um ? But why do they both has different type of machine ?
- Giri : They told Raju has a very severe hearing loss. But Thathu's is not as severe as Raju's, that is why they are having different machines. They also told that we cannot exchange these hearing aids with any other hearing aids without an audiologists consent. The machines also differ in their cost.
- Ramani : Oh ! Now they will be able to hear every thing like us right ?
- Mohammed: It is not exactly like that ? Sister this machine works for ears some what like how spectacles work for eyes. It won't bring back the lost ability.
- Ramani : Then ?
- Mohanmed: It will increase the loudness of sound and thus helps the user to utilize his 'left over ability'. But, for Thathu it will be easy because left over

ability is more for him and also previously he had good hearing. Hence, he will be able to understand easily.

Ramani : What do you mean brother ? With this machine also...

Giri : Ramani don't be discouraged ! He will be able to understand but may need special training to do so. I have been told to take him there twice a week for training.

Ramani : What about his schooling ?

Giri : Since he is having a very severe degree of hearing loss, they advised us to put him in a special school. If he had a little more hearing left, we could have admitted him to a normal school with some extra training given to him.

(Raju is still playing and during this play he runs out of the scene)

Ramani : I have a doubt. If Raju's problem is because of our marriage in blood relation, why Munni is not having the same problem ?

Giri : (Sighs and shows a gesture of "who knows")
That might be his fate !

Mohammed: No ! Raju is born to take away the burden from his sister. We should always think in this way and give him the best that we can ! It's not that all the children will have the problem, it's only that chances are more if one marries among blood relation.

(Every one nods as a sign of approval)

(Ramani wipes her tears with her saree and Giri also looks sad)

Thathu : Why are you people worrying so much. Now that at least we have a hope of making life better for Raju. Isn't it?

(Every one nods)

Mohammed: O.K.Giri ! Let's go for a walk.

Giri : O.K. then we will come back soon. Get our snacks ready ... Ramani.

Thathu : I am also coming out for a walk.

(Three of them leave . . . Now only Ramani and Naseema are left)

Ramani : (touching Naseema's face) you should take care not to tire yourself during this time. I'll make something for you.

(Ramani goes to the side where vessels are kept).

Naseema : You know what, akka ? I saw so many posters at that Institution. I asked 'him' to read it for me. Some of them were about care that has to be taken by 'would-be-mother'.

Ramani : What does it say?

Naseema : She should take proper nutritious food, should maintain cleanliness, should keep herself away from any kind of diseases that can spread. Care should be taken against accidents and even the medicines that she takes should be under medical supervision.

Ramani : Medicines? Medicines are good for our health, isn't it?

Naseema : They say not all are good ? A pregnant woman should take medicine only if the doctor prescribes. Amount of medicine that she takes also should not be more than what doctor has told. Akka... ! there are some medicines that reduces our hearing ability it seems.

Ramani : Oh ! I see (gives coffee and snacks to
Naseema)

Naseema : Akka I'll eat after he

Ramani : It is O.K. I'll tel him you are not supposed
to starve like this during this time. You have
this. (both of them sit down)

Naseema : (Takes from Ramani starts eating) Oh Akka ! It is
very tasty ! you teach me also how to make this.

Ramani : O.K. ! one day I'll come to your house and teach
you.

(after some time)

Then ... what else was written there?

Naseema : Care that has to be taken during and after delivery
also was written there?

Ramani : What is it ?

Naseema : They say it is better to have the delivery at
hospital. Birth weight of child should be not less
than 1 kg 500 grams it seems! If at all it is not
possible to take the pregnant woman to hospital
.... care should be taken at home regarding

cleanliness of delivery room and the things that are used during delivery.

Ramani : Oh I see ! Then ?

Naseema : As soon as the child is born if it did not cry there are more chances to suspect some problem with the child. Moreover we have to note the general appearance of the child also it seem.

Ramani : If the child doesn't cry what happens ?

Naseema : If it doesn't cry, there will be a block in air supply. This will affect the brain it seems ! It can also cause hearing loss. We should note: Whether our child looks healthy like other babies or it is having something very different from other babies like blue colouration of body or a slit of lip. They say that blue baby will be born if the blood of father and mother doesn't match !.

(Ramani nods her head)

After the child is born, care should be taken to protect him from any disease like jaundice, high fever, fits, etc. Regular injections that has to be given, should be given at the right time.

Ramani : Yeah ! I have given it to Raju and Munni. More over, for the baby to grow healthy, good food should be given and they say mothers milk is the best food for the baby.

Naseema : Yeah I forgot to tell you one thing. They have written that while feeding the baby if we keep the baby in lying (horizontal) position (shows action) like this flat milk may go into this ears and infection can occur, it seems? How can it enter the ears, akka?

Ramani : Oh Yeah ! I remember.... when we went to the doctor to show Munni, he said that there is a tube connecting throat and ears. Milk may enter the ears through this tube.

(Thathu, Raju, Giri and Mohammed enter)

Mohammed: What are you both talking?

(smiles to Naseema) Oh ! you already had your snacks and coffee?

Naseema : (laughs) Akka compelled !

Ramani : Yes ! I only compelled her. She is not in a condition to sit and wait for you O.K?!

Mohammed: O.K ! O.K.! (compromising tone) I just simply told (laughs)

(Ramani serves coffee and snacks for all of them)

(All of them started having their snacks)

Thathu : (After a moment of silence) Giri ... I want to tell you one thing.

(Every one except Raju stops eating and looks at Thathu)

Thathu continues

Inspite of not being a member of our family Mohammed has done really a great thing for our family. He is the one who made us open our eyes! It is with his support and help that we got back our happiness and hope in life we should never forget it.

(Giri nods)

Mohammed: It is my duty to make sure that the people I love are happy and comfortable.

Giri : Yes thathu I realized his love and the way it made our life beautiful !

Mohammed: Giri (holds Giri's hand firmly) depth of ray
love compared to yours.

(Both of them hug impulsively Others look at
them with a smile of satisfaction.

(END OF PART I)

PART-II**SUTRADHARA:**

Listen, Listen, Listen, to the story of ears, an ear that is normal; an ear that is discharging; a two day old ear, diagnosed as disordered, an ear tortured by loud noise, until it stopped hearing noise itself; an ear damaged by the supposedly protectors, the medicines!, an ear now in old age which cannot perform well; and an ear-physically invisible-but still a person can hear loud noises. Yes, so many kinds of ears, one of very large size, one, only a button-like appendage. Yes! ears, the organ we tend to ignore in our body until there is pain, or itching or discharge from the ear, where elders slap children forcefully without knowing the consequences, an organ pulled and twisted by the teacher of their students-at will. An organ assaulted by a music buff through his walkman. I am not just scaring you. I am really sad, very sad (cupping the ear, exaggerate) What, someone asked who am I? Something? Why, Why am I sad? I am an Audiologist and I am sad because I come across so many people who are suffering from ear problems which they can totally prevent or which can be treated easily. But, for ignorance, poverty, old beliefs! I was totally dejected before I got this idea to meet you all, talk to you all and tell you this story. First, I will take you all to Dr.Rama's clinic. This clinic caters to ENT problems in the neighbouring ten taluks.

(Dr.Rama's Clinic. The Doctor is yet to come. Around fifty people are sitting outside; young, old, middle aged, even three infants are also there with their parents carrying them)

Sutradhara: This is Dr.Rama's Clinic as the Doctor is not there so we can just get invisible and listen what those patients have to say. First we will listen to these two ladies.

Lady 1 : (with tears in her eyes) I don't know when the doctor will come, I have such a severe pain in my ear. I didn't suffer this much even when my second son was born. This is just unbearable.

Lady 2 : Did you put oil into your ear pain may get relieved. I used to put in my ear, the pain would stop.

Lady 1 : I had also put it once, though there was initial relief but later the pain increased more and Doctor had told me that time not to put oil in the ear though it may soften the wax a bit but when we take bath or get wet in rain, when water enters the ear it may form fungus in the ear.

Lady 2 : How?

Lady 1 : At home when you make pickles why do you save it from water?

Lady 2 : Because it goes bad, fungus comes over it..

Lady 1 : Exactly, in the same way the ear gets infected, even there may be a hole in your ear drum also.

Lady 2 : Oh! may be that is the reason why there is water coming from my ear.

Sutradhara: You saw how putting oil or milk or other things can cause fungus to grow in the ear. Even cleaning the ear with match stick, hairpin, pencil tip can cause infections by scratching the skin of the ear canal. They can even cause a hole in the middle ear. What? what did you ask? should we clean our ears with an ear bud. An audiologist will say no because it can push the wax or dirt present in your ear canal further deep in the your ear and can cause earache or discomfort. I remember how my grandfather would tell me about this. He used to tell that except two things you should not put any thing in your ear. What, your elbow or your knee! Anyway jokes apart. Now we will listen to the conversation of two industrial workers sitting there.

- Worker 1** : If I would have known that I would stop hearing due to exposure to noise I would have never worked there. I am thinking of leaving my job.
- Worker 2** : Leaving your job?!! Are you mad? What will you eat? I also have the same problem, in addition there is lot of ringing noise in my ear also.
- Worker 1** : Our employer didn't even inform us of the impending fate for us. I do not know why others in our factory do not have this problem.
- Worker 2** : I am thinking of asking our boss for compensation for damage done to my ears and ruining my life.
- Worker 1** : Can we do so?
- Worker 2** : I think we can do so. I have also heard these kinds of problems can be prevented if only they could have guided us properly! I am angry only about that only because I was caught unaware.
- Sutradhara:** I have been seeing such patients since very long, workers are not aware and employers also out of sheer callousness and sense of exploiting most from the employees tend to ignore our forewarning. Yes noise can cause hearing loss of a permanent kind if exposed to long durations. Louder the sound, the faster and more pronounced the effect it will have. We should take the

following steps to prevent noise induced hearing loss. Noise induced hearing loss can be caused by any kind of noise of sufficient loudness but a very loud noise can have immediate effects. These noise may include, gun shots, crackers or shouting in the ear etc. So while playing the crackers one should not stand near it and children should be discouraged to shout in each others ear and they should be advised to develop good listening habits. Don't blare walkman in your ears listen to good systems etc.

SCENE II

Now we will listen to the parents of a fifteen day old child who was detected to have hearing loss.

Mother : I do not know why God has punished us like this. Did we fail in our prayers. Or it could be because of our internal weaknesses

Father : It may be because of some mistakes I had done in my younger days.

Mother : (Thinks aloud) What can we do? I think it is our fate to suffer like this. I was thinking of celebrating but then when I saw him crying like this, and not responding to my calls I felt suspicious of his hearing. When he was sleeping

I clapped near his ear and to my astonishment he did not wake up. On many other occasions I noticed that he did not respond to rattles, bells etc. When I took him to the paediatrician and told him about my doubts he referred us to the audiologist who confirmed the hearing loss but told me to get the child's ear cleaned to do a magic test.

Father : Magic test?! What is that?

Mother : He was telling that we can know about an infants hearing while he is asleep only.

Father : In sleep?!

Hother : Yes.

Father : (Wondering) Has technology progressed so much?

Sutradhara: (To the audience) Yes, of course, the technology has progressed* and so has our knowledge. Today we can detect the presence of hearing loss at birth itself. What all could be the causes of hearing loss from birth.

These parents are so anxious about future of their child, but they are ignorant about the problems faced by the child. They are apprehensive that they have to go to various doctors and so forth. Like this, three out of every 100

births can have hearing loss. So every person should know how hearing loss is caused and what to do in case they suspect hearing loss.

Hearing loss from birth in children can be caused by various factors. These include hereditary causes. These are the causes due to which the defect comes to the child due to genetic influences of the parents, near relatives and grandparents. What! What did you ask? Why are not parent, grandparents not affected?

It is so because genes in parents or older generations may not be expressed overtly in them but as every child has a different genetic make up, several genetic factors can combine to result in a given problem or handicap. Also marriages among blood relations should be avoided as weaknesses in parents with similar genetic make up can lead to overt manifestations of the disorder. Usually hearing loss caused due to genetic disorders is usually associated with problems like faulty kidney function, mental retardation, distorted facial features, etc.

Other causes include the infections that mothers suffer during pregnancy like German measles, herpes, etc, which may travel through umbilical cord into the child and in turn may weaken the nerve of the child which is responsible for hearing. Mothers while suffering from this illness may also undergo X-rays or take medicines which also may affect

hearing of the child. One of the other major cause of hearing loss in children could be the drugs that the mother may take during pregnancy for abortion which may damage the foetus, thus causing hearing loss. So, as an Audiologist I advice you all to avoid as far as possible all these causes and keep away the hearing loss.

SCENE III

We have seen many old people asking others to repeat during a conversation, "What did you say?". These are senile conditions. Yes, we are quite correct. We shall listen to the sad story of an eightyfour year old man who is tired of being unable to understand what people around are speaking and asking for repetitions. Even his family members seldom talk to him.

Person : Sir, do you have change for this money?

Oldman : For changing honey son you have to come to my shop (Person realizes that old man is hard of hearing and he goes off).

Oldman : This is not only with this man. Even my children have stopped talking to me saying that I have become senile and it is useless to talk to me. It is a real trouble. They just throw the things in front of me and treat me very shabbily.

Sympathisers: Why don't they talk to you now?

Oldman : I do not know why, the thing is that I am unable to understand what they say. When I ask them to repeat, they get angry.

Sutradhara: Old age can impair with all the organs of the body and thus with different senses. One can not isolate hearing from them. This results in gradual hearing reduction in sensitivity which is not recognized until it starts interfering with the communication. This hearing loss sets in due to overall weakening and reduction of efficiency of the nerve for hearing and other structures which form the ear. Therefore, it is necessary for the people above fifty years of age to get their hearing tested at least once in a year so that hearing loss can be detected in time and steps are taken for appropriate management such as fitting a hearing aid. Other steps like the following can also reduce the difficulties in communication.

1. Facing the speaker during communication.
2. Talking under proper light conditions.
3. Making the best use of contextual clues.
4. Speakers should also respect and show patience while talking as they owe a lot to the older generation.

SCENE IV

Have you ever seen medicines turning hazardous such as a case of this man who is suffering from tuberculosis.

Bystander : Sir, what is your problem?

Han : Sir, can you speak loudly as I have some problems in hearing?

Bystander : Sir, does pus or watery discharge come out of your ear or do you clean your ear often?

Man : No I don't have any such problem. It all started when I was having some illness (trying to conceal the same) and started medication at a sanatorium.

Bystander : (Increasing the distance) Sir, do you mean you have TB?

Man : No, I had. Gradually I started to have hearing loss. It was then that my doctor told me that this loss is caused by streptomycin.

Bystander : A medicine?!

Man : Unfortunately yes. Medicines, the life saving medicines have caused damage to hearing. But there was no other go. Doctors had to choose between the devil and the deep sea and they

opted for the latter. Now they have instructed me to reduce the dosage of the medicines. Some medicines such as gentamycin, kanamycin, even headache pills like aspirin can cause hearing loss if taken for a long period or if the dosage is more.

Bystander : Thank God. I met you today and I came to know about this. I have the habit of taking medicines for every thing from headache to cough, cold and fever. Now I would be more careful and consult a doctor.

They have understood. Have you? Don't take medicines indiscriminately. Even if you have to take a medicine make sure to consult an audiologist as we have many tests like audiometry which can detect such hearing losses in early stages. This will help in reducing the dosage, if possible or preparing the patient psychologically regarding the side effects of the medicine.

SCENE V

I feel most sorry for the children who suffer from hearing loss. Hearing loss may be temporary in some of them and permanent in others. We will meet some of the children and their parents. To meet them let me take you to a voluntary organization formed by parents of hearing impaired. (Parents are sitting and discussing and their children are playing around)

Parent 1 : How come your child had hearing loss? What did the audiologist say? Is he having the problem since birth?

Parent 2 : No, it was not from birth but slowly it became more and more. The child specialist has told us that it is hereditary progressive hearing loss and it might increase till he loses his hearing completely. What about your child?

Parent 1 : My child is not hearing impaired as such from birth. His teacher slapped him once on his right ear. Since then he is unable to listen to soft sounds from right. Doctor told that his eardrum has been ruptured and told us to keep ear dry and now we have come to see whether there is some improvement or not.

Parent 3 : My child had some ear discharge from his ears and doctor had told that there is a hole in his eardrum. And he gave some medicines and asked to keep the ear dry. Why didn't he prescribe some medicines to your child?

Sutra : It is because the problems in children differ. The first child was having ruptured tympanic membrane with no infection. So he was not prescribed any medicine whereas the second one had an infection, that is why he had discharge and he

was prescribed medicines. Both were told to keep ears dry to prevent any further infection. Taking bath in dirty pools, sleeping in underventilated rooms, persisting cold and cough, etc., can cause ear infection.

Whereas tympanic membrane can get ruptured due to many factors such as trauma like being slapped or while cleaning the ear or a loud bang. It is important to avoid such factors and maintain personal hygiene.

TAKE CARE_____ENJOY HEARING

(END OF PART II)

PART-III

Characters : Paediatrician, Bommakka, Basavamma, Audiologist)

Paed : Yes! how is your child?

Bomma : He is better now, doctor. Diarrhea has stopped, but fever is still there. I am giving the medicines that you have given.

Paed : Then why didn't you bring your child?

Bomma : Actually she wanted to meet you (pointing to the next woman) and I came with her. She is my neighbour. Her child is not speaking. She wanted to show him to you.

(Woman 2 wishes him Namaskar)

Paed : Okay, tell me what is the problem with your son?

Basava: He is not speaking. He just says ma. '. If he wants anything he just points out.

Paed : Is he able to hear sounds?

Basava: No doctor, he hears only very loud sounds.

Paed : Then that must be the reason why he is not speaking.

Basava: But doctor there is another person in our place who does not hear, but speaks and goes for work also.

Paed : How old is he?

Basava: Twenty four years.

Paed : When did he get hearing loss?

Basava: Three years back he met with an accident. After that we have to shout if we have to call him.

Paed : So he was speaking normally before that accident. Isn't it?

Basava: Yes.

Paed : That is why he is still speaking. He had learnt to speak before he lost his hearing.

Basava: Then do you say that because of the hearing problem my son has not learnt to speak?

Paed : Yes.

Basav : But, he has learnt to play cricket, he has learnt to paint and all. How is it possible?

Paed : You know, for learning speech and language, hearing is essential. Children learn only to speak what they hear. Your child is having this hearing problem since birth. Isn't it?

Basava: I think so.

Paed : So, he wasn't hearing any sound since birth and that is why he has not learnt to speak. By the way, where is your son?

Basava: He has gone to school, doctor.

Paed : How old is he? Which class is he studying in?

Basava: He is seven years old and studying in third standard.

Paed : How did he pass first two classes?! (with surprise). Because without hearing, he can't learn in the class also.

Bomma : No doctor, the teacher knows that he is deaf. So, she passes him directly to the next class every year.

Paed : No, no, she should not do that. That is not going to benefit him by any means. You are doing mistakes after mistakes. I thought your son would be a small child. You are telling he is seven years old. What have you been doing for seven years?

Basava: **My** mother said that he would develop speech if, we do some offering to the God. We did, but still he is not speaking.

Paed : Stupidity. You better take your son immediately to an audiologist.

(Woman 2 starts crying looking at the doctor so irritated)

Basava: All his sin in past birth

Paed : No, nothing is his sin. It might be because of your carelessness also.

Basava: (Surprised and shocked) How doctor?

Paed : See, there are many causes for a hearing loss. If you had any problem during your pregnancy then some germs would have gone into your body and that in turn would have affected your child in womb. Did you have any problem during pregnancy?

Basava: Yes, doctor. I had fever for some time during my pregnancy. But it was not for a long time. Moreover, my sister also had fever during her pregnancy but her child is normal?!!

Paed : You should remember that, that is not the only cause for a hearing loss.

(The attender comes and says that Mr. Rahul, the audiologist has come to see him and the doctor says to send him inside)

Audio : Hello doctor! Good evening.

Paed : Hello Good evening, please come in.

Audio : Am I disturbing you?

Paed : Of course not. One way, it is good that you came now. See (pointing to Woman 2) her child is seven year old and he is deaf and they have not consulted anybody yet.

Audio : Is he deaf by birth?

Paed : Yeah, I was actually talking to her about the cause only.

Audio : Then you continue doctor.

Paed : (Turning to women) This hearing loss could have happened before he was born only. You know how? (Women shake 'No') It may be hereditary, that is, the problem has been carried to your child from his grandparents, parents and so on.

Basava: But they don't have any problem doctor!!?

Paed : It is okay. It can also happen if you have married your blood relatives. Your child can also get hearing loss if your and your husband's blood are not matching.

Basava: Doctor, I had fallen down from bench when I was expecting him.

Paed : Yes that also could have been a reason.

- Basava:** Then do you say that his head would have broken when I fell down?
- Paed :** No, that shock would have hampered the development of sensitive parts like ear and their neural connections.
- Bomma :** Then for any hearing loss, the reason is at mother's womb only before birth. Is it so, doctor?
- Paed :** No, no, some problems like accidents or pressure over head or reduced air supply for breathing during birth can also affect the child.
- Bomma :** Then everybody must be having hearing loss right from birth. Isn't it?
- Paed :** See, hearing loss can be caused by any of the things reasons that I have told you so far. For example, food will be spoiled if you prepare food using rotten vegetables. Or if you don't cook it properly or if you don't keep the cooked food properly also. Like that hearing loss can occur before birth or during birth or after birth, during adult life or even during old age.
- Bomma :** Doctor, when I was small, I used to get ear pain very often and once I had water coming out from the ear. My parents took me to a doctor. After that I was alright. Now I don't have any problem.

Audio : This type of earache and ear discharge that is water or pus coming out from the ear is very common among children. The reason for this can be many such as common cold, any infection, faulty feeding habits of mother to the young babies. If the common cold is not treated and if it persists for a longer duration, infection spreads to the ear and causes ear discharge. Ear discharge should not be ignored. The patient should consult an ENT specialist and get treatment immediately.

Bomma : Why is it so important?

Audi : If the infection persists, the other parts of the ear and even the brain may also be affected.

Bomma : But, how faulty feeding habits will lead to this problem?

Audio : If you do not keep the young baby in oblique position while feeding, milk may enter the nasopharynx and is in the upper part of the throat. From there it may pass into the ear through a small tube connecting which connects the two.

Bomma : Mmm... Can you get hearing loss if anybody slaps on the cheek also doctor? Because my mother's neighbour woman was once slapped by her husband on her cheek and after that she is not able to hear on that side.

Audio : Yeah, but not exactly. If you are slapped on the ears, the eardrum membrane will tear and then you won't hear. And not only that, if you use any sharp objects to clean your ears that also will damage your ear.

Bomma : In TV they show that germs will affect the teeth. Same way, will the germs affect the ear also doctor ?

Audio : Yes, for eg. when you swim in dirty water, germs may enter your ear and cause infection in the ear.

Bomma : Then we put some oil into ear and the germs die. Am I right doctor?

Audio : Yeah (sarcastically) you put oil in your ear and make 'Vada' in that. Don't talk non-sense. If you do any such thing, then that will increase the problem. You should take proper medication.

Paed : (laughing) But, don't take medicines straightaway from any medical shop for anything. Again you will be in trouble.

Bomma : How? You said we should take medicines for any problem. Isn't it doctor?

Audio : Because, especially concerning ears and hearing , some medicines are very prone to damage the hearing and those damages are highly incurable. So don't

take any medicine indiscriminately without consulting a doctor.

Paed : Not only that. One boy next to my house was lighting crackers during Deepavali time and after that he lost his hearing in one ear. So you should be careful while burning crackers.

Audio : That cracker burst is one of the causes. There is another more dangerous thing. Like when you are exposed to loud noises for longer durations that can permanently damage the inner parts of your ear and you may not regain your hearing.

Paed : Then what is the remedy for the workers at factories who are exposed to such loud noises?

Bomma : So, those who work in flour mills are in that risk isn't it doctor. Because my brother is working there.

Audio : Yes, they should protect their ears from that noise by wearing ear protective devices like earmuffs and earplugs.

Basava: What should be done for my child doctor?

Paed : See, you should have consulted a speech and hearing specialist long back. Now it is very difficult to make your child speak normally.

Basava: Then if I had taken him for treatment earlier, my child would have learnt to speak by now isn't it doctor? (asks very sadly)

Paed : No amma, it is not possible to detect the hearing loss very early. So, no child with such problem can speak.

Audio : No, no doctor, we can detect the hearing loss as early as even few days after birth. That we call neonatal screening. And research is being done to test the child's hearing when in the womb itself. So, it is not that we can't test the hearing that early. By doing that we can definitely help and treat such children in the best way.

Bomma : Can't we prevent this hearing loss?

Audio : Surely we can prevent through certain preventive measures. Our All India Institute of Speech and Hearing is training so many people like school teachers and Anganwadi workers to detect speech and hearing problem at an early stage itself.

Paed : So, what do you do after that?

Audio : With initial screening if hearing loss is suspected, one has to undergo a complete hearing test at All India Institute of Speech and Hearing in Mysore or any nearby speech and hearing centre.

Basava: Then will you give medicines to my son also doctor?

Audio : No, your son cannot get back his hearing through medicines. Only remedy can be putting a hearing aid and then training him to speak. A hearing aid will help him to hear speech loudly.

Bomaa : But, one person who works with my father under went some operation. Now, he can hear normally.

Audio : That is not possible for your son. See there are three parts in the ear. One is outer ear, second is the middle ear and the last one is the inner ear. If there is any problem in the outer ear and middle ear that can be cured with medicine or surgery. Otherwise, giving a hearing aid is the only simple remedy.

Basav : So, can my son speak now doctor? (asks sadly)

Audio : Yes it is possible. But the extent is not definite. It all depends on how well you train your child after our advice. You bring your child to our institute. We will examine him and give him proper advice.

(Paediatrician sends the patients and the scene ends)

(END OF PART III)

PART-IV**ROLE OF SCHOOL TEACHER**

The various characters

- 1) 1 Audiologist
- 2) 1 school teacher
- 3) 4 parents

The setting is of monthly parent - teacher meeting where an audiologist is also invited.

Teacher: Our guest today is a person who is working in All India Institute of Speech and Hearing which is situated in Manasa Gangothri, Mysore. He is an Audiologist who is specialized in the profession that deals with the problems of the ear and hearing. So all of you can come up with your problems so that he can solve them or atleast help you in solving them.

Audiologist: Good morning, every body. Feel free to ask any question regarding the ear and hearing. I am here to help you.

Parent I: Sir, my child Prathima seems to talk very loudly even when I am sitting just close to her and whenever we say something to her, we have to

shout and tell so that she can understand. Do you think she has any hearing problem ?

Teacher : Yes, yes ! even in the class I have to shout loudly so that Prathima can understand me. And she has a very poor academic performance. Can hearing loss effect academic performance also?

Audiologist: So, you are telling that your daughter is not able to hear and understand whatever you are saying right? could you please tell me how old is your daughter and in which class is she studying?

Parent I: Our daughter is 4 yrs old and we have admitted her in LKG.

Audiologist: Okay! does your daughter respond to all the environmental sounds like bus horns, dog barks, door knocks or when called by name?

Parent I : Sir, ! she responds to only loud sounds like bus horns but when some one knocks the door softly, she does not seem to hear to it.

Audiologist: When did you notice this for the first time?

Parent I : We noticed it for the first time when Prathima was 1 1/2 years.

Teacher : Sir,! can I ask something?

Audiologist: Yes!

Teacher: Is there any correlation between age and development of speech.

Audiologist: Definitely ! Madam.

Teacher : Can you please explain, Sir?

Audiologist: If the child gets the hearing loss at a very young age, speech and language development is directly affected, because of the critical period.

Parent I: Sir, May I know what critical period is?

Audiologist: Critical period for language development is that age during which time the child gets maximal speech and language input and a hearing loss during this period definitely affects normal development of speech.

Parent I: Sir, does my child have a hearing loss?

Audiologist: I am not saying that your child does have a hearing loss because I have not tested her objectively till now.

Teacher : So what do Pratima's Parents do now"?

Audiologist: I suppose it would be nice if they come along with Prathima to AIISH once for detailed evaluation.

Audiologist: The test results indicate the nature and degree of hearing loss. This helps to decide whether the hearing loss has be treated medically or surgically or other wise she will have to wear a hearing aid.

Parent I: Sir, what is a hearing aid?

Audiologist: It is a small instrument which makes sound louder so that the child with a hearing loss can hear better.

Parent I : Sir, when should we get Prathima to AIISH?

Audiologist: You can come on any day from Monday to Friday between 9.00 am to 5.30 pm Saturday's and Sundays are holidays. We are also closed on other Central Government holidays.

Teacher : As a teacher what can I do for Prathima?

Audiologist: As a teacher, it is your responsibility to give a special attention to Prathima, so that she can be on par with the other children. Whenever you are speaking with her, look at her face and talk. Also talk slowly, so that she can understand better and more easily. There should be good lighting in the room and do not move around when you are speaking with her.

Parent I: Sir! How can we help Prathima?

Audiologist: As Prathima's parents whenever you are talking with her, speak clearly with a good explanation with repetitions if required. Also motivate her to speak. Look at her face when you are speaking with her, whenever she greets someone, let her say verbally without any gesture.

Parent I : Do we have to do any thing else?

Audiologist: Yes, make her aware of the various sounds like dog barks, door knocks, voice of the mother, father etc.,

SCENE II

Parent II : Sir, our son Rajesh has a continuous flow of a semi-solid fluid from his ears.

Audiologist: From when is this problem present in the child?

Parent II : From the last one month

Audiologist: Does it look Yellowish and puss - like?

Parent II: Yes, sir

Audiologist: I think you should get you child treated from an ENT Doctor immediately.

Parent II : Does this discharge affect hearing?

Audiologist: Yes, this discharge does affect your hearing unless treated at the right time, because this continuous ear discharge if neglected may reach the inner ear and the brain layers and thus affect them. Also, it may lead to a permanent tear on the eardrum which may lead to a hearing problem.

SCENE III

Teacher: Sir, this boy, Pradeep he always complains of pain in his ears.

Parent III: Yes, Yes he always says that he has pain in his ears.

Audiologist: Is it in both the ears?

Parent III: Yes.

Audiologist: It is possible that he has hardened wax in his ears because of which it is paining. This ear pain could also be because of regular cold and cough, due to which the eardrum becomes stiff.

Parent III: So what should we do now ?

Audiologist: You can consult an ENT doctor, and get the wax removed.

Parent III: But sir, I have seen one nan who sits near my house and cleans it using pins.

Audiologist: No, you should never ever go to any unqualified people. Using pins or match sticks to clean the ear, can damage the eardrum and inturn cause hearing problem.

Parent III: Then what should we do?

Audiologist: Go to a qualified ENT doctor to get it cleaned.
Take your child regularly for ENT checkup as
children have more accumulation of wax.

SCENE IV

Teacher : I find, Rahul to be very active, but with poor
concentration and he also asks for repetitions.
What could be the possible reason for this?

Audiologist: These are the common features of the hearing
problems, which are clinically called as the
auditory processing disorders.

Parent IV: As the parents of Rahul could we please know
what are these disorders?

Audiologist: Auditory processing disorders are those in which
the child has no apparent hearing loss but has a
problem in understanding what is being said.

Parent IV : Will Rahul be having a hearing loss?

Audiologist: Rahul may not have problems in hearing sounds
but he may have problems in understanding
speech.

Parent IV : So what should we do now?

Audiologist: Bring him to All India Institute of Speech and Hearing so that we can test him in detail and know exactly about his problem.

Teacher : What are the general guidelines a teacher should follow while teaching a child who cannot hear properly?

Audiologist: Bewares of the fact that the hard of hearing child tires easily as he makes an effort to follow that is going on in the classroom. Do not punish him for occasional poor attention. Encourage him to participate in all the school activities. Allow him to sit in the front bench so that he can hear better and also lip read. While talking with him look at his face and talk. Let there be good lighting in the room. Remind him to have a hearing test periodically at least once in a year at a speech and hearing center. Seat the child in a less noisy area in the class, that is away from windows facing a noisy street etc. Do not move around when you are talking and do not turn or cover your face. Avoid standing with your back to a window or any

source of light. If there is light behind you, it is more difficult to watch facial movements. Speak naturally and do not over exaggerate. It is easier to see the word when it is spoken naturally than when the tongue and lip movements are exaggerated. Avoid speaking while you write on the black board.

Teacher : Thank you very much sir, for your valuable suggestions.

(END OF PART IV)

PART V

Characters : Somu's family, Wife, Daughter-in-law, Grandson, liuthu, Vishwas, Villager, Anganwadi worker, other patients)

The child is playing with the doll, squeaker and toys.

(Ramu meets his friend)

Ramu : Somu, how are you? How is your grandson?

Sonu : I am fine and my grandson is also fine. He is very active, naughty but

Ramu : But, What?

Sonu : I don't know. But he is one and half year old and we don't know whether he hears our speech or not and he doesn't speak a word yet.

Ramu : Somu, Why don't you take your grandson to a specialist for help?

Sonu : Who is the specialist for this?

Ramu : A person who will test and find out the hearing problem and will also tell you what should be done.

Sonu : Where can I go?

Ramu : In fact my son is a specialist for this. I will take you to my son.

SCENE II

(Two friends are talking to each other)

Muthu : How is your job?

Vishwas : Pardon me.

Muthu : (Speaking loudly) I asked how is your job?

Vishwas : It is good.

Muthu : How is your family?

(Once again Vishwas asks for repetition)

Muthu : How is your family?

Vishwas : Everybody is fine. Thank you.

Muthu : Vishwas, why don't you go and consult an audiologist for your hearing problem.

Vishwas : Muthu, Is he a specialist! I don't know. Please tell me more.

Muthu : Audiologist is a person who deals with evaluation and rehabilitation of the hearing-impaired.

(Vishwas explains his problem to his friend)

I can't hear soft sounds and I have difficulty in understanding what is being said especially in a group.

SCENE III

Villager : I have got a child who is very inattentive and sometimes he hears and sometimes he doesn't. He is very worried about his child. But he is not getting any solution to his child's problem. Anganvadi worker comes to the village and she comes to villager's house. He explains his son's problem to Anganvadi worker.

Villager : I am very upset and worried about the problem of my child and what can I do about my child.

Anganvadi : You can go to some speech and hearing centre for help.

Villager : Where is a speech and hearing centre ?

Anganvadi : You go to All India Institute of Speech And Hearing Mysore. It is located in Manasagangothri and works from Monday to Friday, between 9 am to 5.30 pm. Please take him immediately for testing, don't delay.

Villager : Thank you sister. I will surely go and consult there.

SCENE IV

(Audiologist's clinic, waiting hall, patients are waiting to get their hearing tested.)

(Somu along with his grandson, a villager and daughter-in-law, Vishwas and other patients)

(Audiologist addresses Somu)

Audiologist: Namasthe, Please come, sit down. Is this your grandson, what is his problem?

Somu : My grandson is now one and half year old, but, he does not speak even a single word and I suspect that he does not hear also.

Audiologist: Please call his mother also. Did his mother have any problem during pregnancy?

(Mother enters)

Somu : What problem?

Audiologist: Did you have chicken pox, measles, or any illness during pregnancy?

(addressing the mother)

Somu : No.

Audiologist: Did you get married among close relatives?

Somu : Yes.

Audiologist: That may be one of the causes of your grandson's problem. Because there are more chances for the problems to be expressed in such cases.

Audiologist calls Somu's grandson for testing. Somu comes along with his grandson. The audiologist presents auditory stimuli through the audiometer speakers to observe at what level of the stimulus, there was response. Then the, audiologist put three electrodes; one each at the back of the two ears, i.e., on the mastoid bones, and one on the forehead. Then he puts the earphones and presents stimuli to the ears. He views the responses and finds the degree of hearing loss.

(Somu comes out along with his grandson after testing. One of the patients asks him "What did he do to test your child?" Somu explains about the test).

Sonu : He put pins like things with long wires on both the bones behind the ears and put bowl/cup like thing on my son's ear and saw the brain functioning on the TV. He told that my grandson can't hear in both the ears.

(The Audiologist comes out and calls Somu)

Audiologist: I have done the hearing testing of your grandchild. For this testing the child should be sleeping. Electrodes are put on the bones behind the ears and forehead and headphones are put on the ears. Then the sound is presented through the headphones. Eventhough the child is sleeping , hearing system gets activated and

response to sound is seen as waves on the monitor. This will tell us whether a child has hearing problem or not. It will also tell us the severity of the hearing problem.

Somu : Then, son can you tell me how much problem my child has and what medicines have to be given ?

Audiologist: See, your grandson has got hearing loss. This cannot be treated by any surgery or medicine, as the problem is in the inner ear and beyond. He has to be fitted with a hearing aid which increases the sound, speech etc., in the surrounding. The increased sound, speech is passed on to the ears.

Somu : How long should he wear a hearing aid?

Audiologist: He has to wear it throughout his life.

Somu : Oh! then my grandson will not be able go to school?

Audiologist: Wake up, we are not still living in the dark. There are so many methods to overcome the problem. He can be given training to learn to speak and now, schools are well equipped where special care is taken for those who cannot hear normally.

Somu : Thank you son.

SCENE V

(Vishwas goes for testing. Audiologist asks him about his problem and details of the problem.)

Audiologist: Since when are you having this problem?

Vishwas : Sir, last two years.

Audiologist: Did you meet with any accident?

Vishwas : No Sir.

Audiologist: Do you have ear discharge now or did you have it before?

Vishwas : No Sir.

Audiologist: Where are you working?

Vishwas : I am working in a factory.

Audiologist: Since how long are you working there?

Vishwas : Last six years.

Audiologist: For how many hours do you work?

Vishwas : Sir nearly about 9 to 10 hours per day.

Audiologist: Is it very noisy?

Vishwas : Yes.

Audiologist: What kind of noise is produced?

Vishwas : Heavy machinery noise which is very loud.

Audiologist: That may be one of the causes of your hearing problem.

(Vishwas goes for testing)

Audiologist puts headphone on his ear and asked him to raise his finger whenever he hears the sound. He finds how soft a sound he can hear. He speaks and asks him to repeat whatever he speaks.

(After testing, Vishwas and Audiologist comes out)

When Vishwas was waiting for the audiologist to give him the results, one of the patients waiting asked Vishwas what did the audiologist do with him.

Vishwas : He put the headphone on my ears and asked me to raise the finger whenever I hear the sound. He spoke some words and asked me to repeat the same.

Audiologist: Your test results show that you have problem in hearing high frequencies. This may be because of the exposure to loud noise in your factory. Your problem may increase if you continue to expose yourself to noise.

Vishwas : Sir, what should I do to protect my hearing?

Audiologist: You have to take preventive measures.

Vishwas : What preventive measure, Sir?

Audiologist: If you want to prevent your hearing from further damage then you have to change your place of work.

Vishwas : Sir, It is difficult for me to change the place of work.

Audiologist: Then you have to wear some ear protective devices. There are different types of ear protective devices. I will prescribe you the ear protective device according to your convenience and factory noise.

SCENE VI

(Audiologist calls villager and asks some questions)

Audiologist: Swamy, since how long do you suspect that your child has this problems?

Villager : I don't know exactly but since last one and half years I am noticing this problem. Now he is three and a half years old.

Audiologist: Did your wife undergo x-ray, or did she have any infections like measles, rubella, chicken pox or did she take any medicines during the pregnancy?

Villager : Sir, she had measles.

Audiologist: Did she have measles during the first three months of the pregnancy ?

Villager : Yes Sir.

Audiologist: Swamy, then measles may be the cause of your child's problem.

SCENE VII

(Audiologist calls him for the testing. Audiologist asks the villager to sit on a chair along with child. Two sound boxes are kept one either sides of the patient's chair and sound is presented through it. The audiologist looks for the responses of the child to the sound given such as eye blink, crying , laughing, head turn , body jerk etc. But he doesn't do properly. Then audiologist starts showing a doll when sound is given, so that the child will look at the doll and also hear the sound. After sometime only sound is given. Now the child does properly. Villager comes out from the testing room. All are very much eager to know about him because he took a long time for testing).

One patient asks him : Swamy , Why did he take such a long time to test your child?

Villager : My child was not doing properly?

Patient : What did he actually do for your child?

Villager : He asked me to sit on a chair along with my child. There were two boxes near my chair from which sound came. He looked for movements such as body jerk, eye blink, headturn, etc., but he did not do properly. Then, he started showing a doll along with sound. So, my child would look at the doll when sound was given. After some time, he stopped showing the doll and gave only sounds. Then, my child would look at the sound box whenever sound was given. So, it took a long time to test my child.

(Audiologist comes out of the testing room)

Audiologist: Swamy, your son has hearing loss and he has to be fitted with an hearing aid, a machine that makes the sound louder. I have to do the hearing aid trial and choose the best hearing aid for your child. Please wait for some time here.

SCENE VIII

(Audiologist takes the next patient and goes into the testing room)

(One patient comes to consult the audiologist with the complaint of headache)

Audiologist: Yes, what is your problem?

Patient : Sir, I have severe headache, since last two

months. One of your patient's father told me that you give treatment for headache also.

Audiologist: No, (with surprise)

Patient : Yes sir, he has seen you doing some test for the patient with headache. You put pin like things on bones behind the ear and forehead and saw something on TV.

Audiologist: No. that is one of the tests to check hearing.

Patient : I don't know sir. He told me that you give treatment. That is why I have come here.

Audiologist: Sometimes, head ache can be an associated problems along with hearing loss. This test is done for patients who complain of headache, giddiness or balancing problems along with hearing loss. The test helps in check if there is a tumour or any other problem in the nerve that is responsible for hearing.

Patient : But how will you test hearing from head sir?

Audiologist: In this test sound is presented to the ear. The electrodes placed on the head or behind the ear will tell us how the sound is transmitted to the brain.

(END OF PART V)

3. SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The script given in the previous section is meant for enacting a play. It can be performed as a street play or a drama or can be projected in the form of telefilm or teleserial, or even as monologues by making some necessary modifications, such as using costumes, stage-setups etc., whatever mode is used, the essence of the script should not be lost.

This play can be translated into other languages including some typical verbal expression behaviours of the respective languages. Moreover, songs also can be included during performance provided that it should be appropriate to the situation.

Efficacy of enacting plays depend upon the efficiency of actors to a greater extent. Hence the performers have to be careful to be as natural as possible but, to project appropriate expressions verbally and non-verbally while playing.

1. Efficacy of the play should be studied by ensuing detailed pre- & post- exposure studies on various sections of the society.
2. Comparative study of effectiveness of two or more modes public education should be undertaken to ascertain the relative effectiveness.

3. Comparative study of effectiveness of enacting a play with costumes, stage-setups and situation relevant songs versus the same play without the above aspects can be undertaken.
4. A study on effectiveness of same play on various subject groups such as parents of hearing impaired, professionals of our field, laymen, other professionals etc., can be undertaken.

All the studies done in our field should be propellants of speech and hearing field to make attain heights (of professionalism) by understanding the depths of knowledge. Propelling towards higher altitudes without having knowledge about the depth is foolishness and dangerous. Let us hope for more and more speech and hearing professionals who understand that any human being as a man not as machine.

"Despised and rejected men - yet,
Sure as the sun rises in the east,
Love will triumph; for hate destroys;
But, love is creative and it is
the light of ages!"

- Sadhu T.L. Vaswani about
Jesus on the cross.

Yes! at present the speech and hearing impaired more despised and rejected by other. But, sure as the sun rises in the east, the love of speech and hearing professionals for them will triumph in giving them a new life full of happiness and it will continue as the light of ages!.

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