

Uncommon Ground: The Role of Semantics in Shaping Pedagogical Perspectives and Dialogue

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Learning Objectives

- **Describe** the historical and present impact of contested terminology on dialogue in deaf education and early intervention
- **Identify** benefits and risks of specific word choices when communicating with community partners and families
- **Generate and apply** operational definitions of sensitive terms during role play to promote shared understanding and clearer dialogue

A Little History Lesson

Including our history. 😊

What can we learn from this shared history?

We must establish common ground through engaging in uncommon conversations.

Our Goal is NOT....

...to erase differences.

Our Goal IS....

... to model constructive approaches for navigating differences, creating opportunities for **authentic dialogue(s), reducing harm,** and **identifying shared ground** that can inform equitable and inclusive educational initiatives for children who are d/DHH.

An Uncommon Conversation Model

Question: How do your beliefs about *natural language* shape the way you think about communication options for children who are d/DHH?

Key Points: Moving from Debate to Dialogue

- Operationally define key terms at the outset of the conversation
- Summarize your colleague's position well
- Assume that your colleague shares the same goal – optimizing outcomes for all children who are d/DHH
- Replace “no” with “tell me more”
- Create a Common Ground List

We don't need to agree on the **best** path to agree that barriers still exist for every path.

When we define our terms, we stop fighting each other and start fighting the barriers that keep children from language.

Our Challenge

Have you had an uncomfortable conversation? What has that looked like for you?

Have at least one uncommon conversation at this conference.

Also, what did we miss?