Be Specific! Patient reported outcomes using a client-centered, context-based treatment approach

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PROGRAM BASICS

- Individual, large group and cooperative treatment sessions, 18-20 hours/week
- University clinic setting
- Comprehensive:
  - Technology
  - Caregiver education and support
  - Therapeutic Yoga
  - Community outings- adaptive sailing, structured use of communication skills in retail environments

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Recent research suggests that patients in rehabilitation programs who are actively engaged as partners in establishing their goals in real-world, highly-valued functional tasks show better functional outcomes as compared to patients participating in more traditional intervention such as impairment-based activities (Hubbard, et al., 2009). The ITAP program is an intensive therapeutic approach that incorporates client-centered goals and context-based activities. Based on previous research findings, the goal of this approach is to increase the clients' self-reported participation in real life communication activities.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Thirty participants with aphasia participated in the study. All assessment and treatment was administered by 3rd semester SLP graduate students and supervised by certified SLPs. The 18 hours of treatment/week were divided roughly into 9 individual, 3 technology-based, 3-5 group sessions, social lunches, and an education session. Participant to clinician ratio was 1:1 and all individual sessions were administered by the same student clinician. Participants identified 5 goals and rated their current performance on each, then identified their 3 highest priority goals. These 3 goals were treated; the last 2 goals were not targeted directly. After treatment, the participants again rated their performance on the 5 goals.

ASSESSMENT

Baseline and post-testing were compared across three levels of disease as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF). The body functions/structure level was evaluated using standardized aphasia testing (WAB); the Activity level was assessed using the Patient Specific Functional Scale (PSFS), a patient-reported outcome measure; the Participation level was assessed using the Assessment for Living with Aphasia (ALA) quality of life measure. Context-based goals were obtained through extensive client and communication partner interview.

DEVELOPING TASK-SPECIFIC GOALS

Real-world – functional daily communication tasks

Highly-valued – chosen by PWA and partners

Refine goals: To be able to… say the names of my children, order my own meal at a restaurant, text a friend about our favorite sports team, tell my spouse that I love them

TREATMENT

- Use of strategies emphasized: word prediction, text-to-speech, speech-to-text, scripting, speech entrainment
- Multi-modal communication encouraged: gestures, writing, visual aids
- Training of partners and modification of environment
- Skill-based treatment as indicated: semantic feature analysis, confrontational naming of targeted vocabulary (i.e. tools, health terminology)

OUTCOMES: As Expected

- Little difference on the impairment- based test: WAB-R
- Significant changes on the 3 targeted activities, as measured by the PSFS
- Some participants also perceived improvement on the untreated tasks, possibly due to generalization of communication skills
- The results indicate that a task-specific approach may be effective across treatment settings.

WAB AQ Pre- Post Scores by client

ALA Pre-Post Ratings by client

PSFS Pre- Post Ratings by client

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