

Title: Primary progressive aphasia and technology: Creative “app”lications to promote increased life participation

Abstract:

This Round Table discussion focuses on how technology may be harnessed to support the life participation approach for people living with primary progressive aphasia (PPA). We recognize that technology is not a single entity but instead can be used both directly and indirectly to enhance communication through (1) increasing access to care through telemedicine; (2) facilitating practice of personalized impairment-based word exercises; (3) facilitating use of compensatory approaches (low-tech or high-tech communication aids); and (4) supporting participation in leisure activities. This presentation will discuss the potential benefits of utilizing technology to optimize evidence-based and person-centered interventions for individuals with progressive communication impairments.

Feasibility evidence will be provided from two technology-based research projects (Communication Bridge and CoChat) that were designed for individuals living with PPA. In the Communication Bridge feasibility study, the care model focuses upon a person-centered, multicomponent, dyadic approach that includes disease education, counseling, with individualized impairment- and compensatory-based communication strategy training. Technology is integrated to apply this approach in a telemedicine platform with a custom web application. The web application includes many components to promote a life participation approach throughout the course of treatment, including: personalized lexical retrieval and pronunciation exercises that integrate participants’ own pictures, personalized script practice exercises, and educational videos discussing communication strategies. CoChat is a research application developed for the iOS platform that generates lexical displays on a tablet based on user-captured photos and related comments that are obtained by real-time use of a social network for word suggestions. CoChat was presented to six individuals with PPA in an effort to improve lexical retrieval during spontaneous conversation.

We will facilitate group discussions about how technology-based solutions can be implemented across service delivery models (e.g., aphasia centers, private practice, home care) to better meet the needs of individuals with PPA and their families.

Learning Outcomes:

- (1) Describe 4 different ways that technology may be used to support communication for people living with PPA.
- (2) Discuss the difference between the direct and indirect use of technology and give examples of each.
- (3) Discuss several examples of how technology might be applied to support evidence-based interventions that target a life participation approach for people living with PPA.

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Preferred Format: ROUND TABLE