



NSW Speech Pathology Evidence Based Practice Interest Group

Critically Appraised Paper (CAP)

CLINICAL BOTTOM LINE:

Intervention targeting specific maladaptive behaviours in either the client or carer, may result in more effective communication interactions, as seen in this single case study. Nil specific information pertaining to Q2.

- Part 1: "Which communication partner training methods are effective in facilitating communication activities and participation for people with aphasia?"
- Part 2: "Which patients and / or communication partner characteristics lead to better outcomes in communication partner training?"

Citation: Wilkinson, Ray, Bryan, Karen, Lock, Sarah and Sage, Karen (2010) 'Implementing and evaluating aphasia therapy targeted at couples' conversations: A single case study', *Aphasiology*, 24: 6, 869-886, First published on: 17 May 2010

Design/Method: Single-case design study.

Participants: Married couple. Male 66 years old – left CVA 18 months previously (Broca's type aphasia and right hemiplegia). Female 63 years old. Both retired teachers.

Experimental Group: Conversation Analysis was used to evaluate interaction-focused intervention for a couple where one partner had aphasia. Conversation samples were taken pre intervention and analysed. 3 maladaptive behaviours (2 for the communication partner and one for the client with aphasia) were identified. The analysis particularly revealed how the couple conversed on a turn-by-turn basis through question-answer sequences, and intervention targeted changing conversation behaviours to eliminate restrictive talking styles. There were 8 intervention sessions, which took place once a week at the couple's home and lasted between 1 and 2 hours. Education was given regarding these behaviours and how they might be changed. Intervention was done by reviewing the video, reviewing written handouts and role playing scenarios. (Based on *SPPARC*, Lock et al, 2001). Evidence of change was measured pre- and post- intervention (2 conversations before and 1 conversation after). Quantitative: 15 naïve speech pathologists had to distinguish between pre-and post conversations and rate whether there was a significant difference between the 2 extracts; and the Conversation Analysis Profile for People with Aphasia (CAPPA) was used. There was also quantitative comparison of conversational behaviours in extracts from pre-and post-intervention samples. Qualitative: conversation analysis, post-intervention interview and spontaneous feedback from wife.

Control Group: N/A

Results: 14/15 naïve listeners (all Speech Pathologists) were able to identify pre versus post interventions conversations indicating that there was a positive communication change post therapy. Qualitative evidence showed that intervention had improved the couple's conversation behaviours, with the non-aphasic partner presenting as less restricting (asking less questions and using more other types of turns, ie. Paraphrasing); and the person with aphasia producing more turns that had more sentences, or attempts at sentences, allowing an increased topic of talk across several of his turns. Post intervention interview and spontaneous carer feedback described conversational improvements especially with sentence length post intervention. Post intervention CAPPA suggested that the couple felt the person with aphasia was able to speak with more people, in a wider range of places and on a wider range of topics.

Comments – Strengths/weaknesses of paper

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|------------|---|
| Weaknesses | - small design size – one case study |
| | - nil control group |
| Strengths | - segments for review independently reviewed by blind SP's |
| | - Naïve SP's used to ID pre/post conversation excerpt and then rate same. |

Level of Evidence (NH&MRC): IV

Appraised By: Adult Language EBP Group

Date: 2011

May 2002