

INTEGRATION OF CONTEXTUALLY-RELEVANT INFORMATION INTO LOW-TECHNOLOGY COMPENSATORY INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

The presenters will illustrate how contextually-relevant materials can be integrated into the low-tech communication notebooks of persons with aphasia or TBI who require augmented means to communicate. Many individuals with aphasia continue to have difficulty communicating following restoration treatment and require some type of augmentative and alternative communication to assist in meeting communicative needs. Currently, practicing therapists employ a variety of available low-tech augmentative and alternative communication strategies including drawing, gesturing, writing, and using low-tech communication books and boards. However, the aforementioned techniques are often decontextualized. Clinicians often provide people with aphasia with commercially available low-tech communication books/boards that limit conversational topics to one purpose: communicating basic wants and needs. This approach neglects three of the four primary purposes for communicating: social closeness, information transfer, and social etiquette. The presenters will demonstrate how digital photography, image scanning, and computer software applications such as Microsoft Publisher® (a feature of Microsoft Word®) can be used to create contextualized communication books and boards that provide a range of topics people with aphasia can use to interact with communication partners. Examples from aphasia interventions will be shared and participants will be provided an internet address with links to downloadable Microsoft Publisher® templates developed by the team.

INTEGRATION OF CONTEXTUALLY-RELEVANT INFORMATION INTO HIGH-TECHNOLOGY AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION FOR PERSONS WITH SEVERE, CHRONIC APHASIA

The presenters will discuss the team's involvement in the Visual Scenes Display (VSD) project. Over the past four years, the research team has worked VSD technology that utilizes contextually-rich visual images to represent meaning and support navigation within a high-technology augmentative and alternative communication device. VSD strategies employ contextually-rich visual images to represent meaning and incorporate a set of diverse communicative themes to support dynamic interactions. Additionally, contextualized pictures can be paired with text and voice output to communicate specific messages, ask questions, and/or provide support for a listener.

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

The presenters will summarize data from a series of research project involving the use of VSD strategies by persons with aphasia and TBI and the impact of personally and/or contextually relevant scenes on language performance.