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Melodic Intonation Therapy via Zoom for a Person with Severe Broca's Aphasia

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Applied Sciences Poster Presentation*

Abstract: Aphasia is a language disorder that affects a person's ability to speak and understand language due to stroke or traumatic brain injury. Melodic Intonation Therapy (MIT) is an effective evidence-based aphasia therapy approach that uses intonation and rhythmic patterns to improve verbal phrase production and overall language performance. Many research studies have shown that MIT helps people with aphasia learn useful verbal phrases and improves their standardized language test scores. However, little is known about whether MIT is effective when delivered teletherapy. Also, little is known about what people with aphasia think about their experience participating in MIT. The current research focused on the following research questions: 1) Is MIT effective when conducted via teletherapy? 2) What does the participant with aphasia think about their experience doing MIT? These questions were investigated using a mixed methods design including quantitative ratings of speech accuracy for the phrases and qualitative analysis of a post therapy interview. One participant with aphasia from stroke was included in the study. Her speech accuracy for the phrases was measured seven times before, during, and after MIT teletherapy allowing effect sizes to be calculated using a single subject multiple baseline design. The results showed that the participant increased her accuracy for intermediate and complex phrases but made no significant increase for the short, simple phrases. Thematic analysis of her post-therapy interview revealed that she preferred teletherapy on her tablet because of the independence it allowed her. Additionally, she said that she would like to do more MIT in the future and would miss the clinician. Future research should include more participants with aphasia to find out whether these results generalize to the larger population of people with aphasia.

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