Changing Trends from Traditional to Technology Based Approach: Speech Language Pathologist’s Preferences for Computer Mediated Aphasia Therapy (CMAT) in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT
Aphasia is an acquired neurological disorder of communication with a range of language impairments. Aphasia rehabilitation is becoming an important concern in clinical aphasiology. Traditional approaches for rehabilitation are being practiced. Latest computer-based strategies are also introduced in aphasiology. In this study, a qualitative phenomenological research approach is used to gain an understanding on how the SLPs of Pakistan perceive the changing trends of clinical practice in aphasia towards technology-based treatment method; the CMAT. The purpose of this study is to present lived experiences and preferences of the SLPs regarding changing trends from the traditional approach to the technology-based method. Ten SLPs participated and were recruited through purposive sampling. The participants were included if they were qualified SLPs and had at least 2 years of experience. The data was collected through audiotapes of detailed group discussions with the participants. The data was analyzed qualitatively using thematic analysis. The commonly emerging findings were grouped into 5 themes: traditional rehab activities, auditory and visual input, cost-effective approach, access and prognosis note. A range of subthemes were also identified. The findings suggest the SLPs’ preferences are showing limited trends towards adapting the CMAT program.

Keywords: aphasia, CMAT, speech therapy, SLP, rehabilitation