

Aphasia Treatment Activities

Aphasia is a speech and language disorder that significantly impacts a person's ability to communicate. It can result from various conditions, most commonly a stroke, and affects speaking, understanding, reading, and writing. Each individual's experience with aphasia is unique, requiring a personalized and tailored treatment approach.

Semantic language exploration

Semantic language exploration focuses on understanding word relationships and enhancing word retrieval by examining item characteristics within a category.

Semantic feature analysis (SFA): Present a picture of an apple. Ask the individual to describe its attributes by answering prompts like:

- "What is its shape?" (round)
- "What is its color?" (red or green)
- "Where can you find it?" (grocery store, orchard)
- "What do you use it for?" (eating, baking, juicing)

This activity strengthens word associations and supports better word retrieval.

Verb and sentence production

Improving verb and sentence production helps individuals create meaningful and grammatically correct sentences.

1. **Verb network strengthening treatment (VNeST):** Provide a target verb like "paint." Have the individual create sentences using different subjects and objects, such as:
 - "The artist paints a canvas."
 - "The child paints a picture at school."
 2. **Response elaboration training (RET):** Show a picture of a dog playing with a ball. Start with a simple sentence like, "The dog plays." Encourage the individual to expand on it, adding details such as, "The energetic dog plays with a red ball in the backyard."
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Speech production techniques

Speech production techniques use melody, rhythm, and articulation exercises to improve fluency, particularly in non-fluent aphasia.

- **Melodic intonation therapy (MIT):** Start with a simple phrase like "Good morning." Sing the phrase in a rhythmic and melodic tone, encouraging the individual to mimic. Gradually transition from singing to speaking while maintaining the rhythm.

Communication support activities

Communication support activities involve enhancing interactions through structured techniques and training communication partners.

1. **Supported conversation techniques:** Use a picture board with images of daily activities (e.g., eating, sleeping, walking). During conversation, encourage the individual to point to the images to communicate their needs.
 2. **Communication partner training:** Role-play with a caregiver. For instance, practice slowing down speech and asking yes/no questions like:
 - "Do you want coffee?"
 - "Should we go for a walk?"
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Language practice exercises

Language practice exercises help individuals build vocabulary, form sentences, and improve narrative skills.

1. **Picture description:** Show a picture of a beach scene. Prompt the individual to describe what they see, such as:
 - "I see the blue ocean."
 - "A family is building a sandcastle."
 2. **Rhyming practice:** Provide a word like "cat" and ask them to generate rhyming words like "hat," "bat," and "mat."
 3. **Word games:** Use a crossword puzzle with simple clues, such as "A yellow fruit" (answer: banana). Alternatively, play a category-naming game, like listing as many animals as possible in one minute.
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Additional notes