

# Speech-Language Pathology Preparation to Address Communicative Quality of Life Among People with Adult Neurogenic Disorders

Ethan Kristek, M.S., CCC-SLP  
Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Jamie Doronkin, Ph.D.  
Fontbonne University

## Research Question:

If I analyze an accredited speech-language pathology program's adult neurogenic course syllabi for quality-of-life outcomes and physiological or psychosocial concerns, and interview current college professors teaching those courses at a local liberal arts university, in what ways, if any, will that information inform speech language pathology instructional practices?

### Abstract

Physiological and psychosocial components impact people with neurogenic communication disorders communicative quality of life. This pilot study aimed to understand these components in speech-language pathology pre-service preparation. Interview and archival data were used in mixed-methods analysis. Findings suggest physiological terms were communicated more frequently than psychosocial. Results can inform speech-language pathology pre-service educational practices.

### Introduction

Current speech-language therapy practices recognize quality of life as the main goal of aphasia rehabilitation with psychosocial aspects being an important element (Northcott, Simpson, Moss, Ahmed, & Hilari, 2017). Navarta-Sánchez et al (2016) also report the relationship of positive psychosocial adjustment to quality of life for PwPD when receiving speech-language therapy services. Despite the need to address psychosocial components in speech-language therapy, many SLPs lack confidence addressing the concerns (Northcott, Simpson, Moss, Ahmed, & Hilari, 2017).

This raises the main premise proposed by the study's research question:

- 1) Does current pre-professional speech-language pathology preparation merit review?
- 2) What pre-professional preparation is found in current literature?
- 3) Does current literature research investigate pre-professional training of adult neurogenic instruction related to psychosocial aspects and quality of life?"

The literature review provided a need to understand and describe physiological, psychosocial, and quality and variables associated with adult neurogenic disorders to perform an efficacious analysis of speech-language pathology pre-professional training.

Physiological and psychosocial variables are necessary to incorporate into speech-language therapy services across adult communication disorders and to enhance quality of life for people with neurogenic communication disorders (Baylor et al., 2011).

### Methodology

One participant and 21 archival syllabi sources were included in this action-research pilot study. Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed in a convergent/parallel mixed methods approach. A convergent/parallel mixed methods approach incorporated quantitative and qualitative components at approximately the same time for interpretation (Creswell, 2014). Burkholder, Cox, Crawford, and Hitchcock (2020) discuss the benefits of using a mixed methods approach for action research to create a more accurate representation of the research question.

### Qualitative Results

An open-ended semi-structured interview, member-checking, and peer-debriefing occurred in this study. Qualitizing the quantitative data approach (Burkholder, Cox, Crawford, & Hitchcock, 2020) was used to assign descriptions from categorical aggregation from an open-ended, semi-structured interview via deductive coding. Deductive coding was employed using American Psychological Association (APA) definitions of physiological, psychosocial, and quality of life (see Trends and Summations below). Preliminary concepts and meanings associated with these terms were identified. These initial codes were then divided into a hierarchy of main and sub-trends. Member-checking and peer-debriefing were also applied to add credibility to the interviewee's responses.

#### Trends and Summations

Trends	Summations
Quality of Life	Physiological and psychosocial elements establish enhanced communicative quality of life and are necessary components of pre-professional adult neurogenic course preparation.
Physiological	Teaching physiological elements often occur when distinguishing differences between adult neurogenic communication disorders.
Psychosocial	Instruction of psychosocial components create the context when discussing neurogenic communication disorders.

### Quantitative Results

Two types of quantitative data analyses were implemented. Quantitizing categorical aggregation data from interview transcripts and applying descriptive statistics to transcripts and archival syllabi. Frequency counts, percentages, and ratios were also obtained for nominal data analysis.

#### Interview and Syllabi Ratios for Study Variables

Source	Ratio
Interview	1.35
Syllabi	2.67
Interview and Syllabi	1.41

Note. The ratios results are shown physiological to psychosocial variable comparison.

### Conclusion

The preliminary findings of this study suggested adult neurogenic courses fall short of describing, assigning, and implementing evidenced-based psychosocial and quality of life outcomes in their syllabi. This could warrant collaborative discussion among education professionals to modify syllabi to benefit pre-service speech-language pathology preparation of adult neurogenic communication courses.

### References and Resources



Scan QR Code to visit website for additional information.

### Acknowledgements

The Education/Special Education Department at Fontbonne University.