ASEAN Journal of Community and Special Needs Education

Journal homepage: https://ejournal.bumipublikasinusantara.id/index.php/ajcsne

Modern Interventions for Aphasic Speech Recovery: Integrating Speech Therapy, Neuroplasticity, and Digital Technologies

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ABSTRACT

This study explores modern interventions for aphasia rehabilitation, evaluating the integration of traditional speech therapy with neuropsychological techniques and digital technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and virtual reality (VR). Employing a mixed-methods approach, 50 patients with varying aphasia types were divided into traditional, technological, and combined therapy groups. Results indicate that multimodal, individualized therapies can enhance speech restoration. Specifically, combining transcranial magnetic stimulation and AI applications accelerated recovery and improved word retention. The findings underscore neuroplasticity's crucial role in rehabilitation and emphasize the necessity of a multidisciplinary approach involving speech therapists, neurologists, and technology experts. Integrating neuroscience with advanced technology may improve the recovery process for aphasic individuals.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:
Submitted/Received 20 Nov 2024
First Revised 21 Dec 2024
Accepted 09 Feb 2025
First Available online 10 Feb 2025
Publication Date 01 Mar 2025

Keyword:
Aphasia;
Neuroplasticity;
Rehabilitation;
Speech therapy;
Technology.

1. INTRODUCTION

Aphasia is a neurological speech disorder resulting from damage to the language centers of the cerebral cortex, profoundly affecting an individual's ability to comprehend, articulate, and write language. This condition is primarily triggered by strokes, traumatic brain injuries, tumors, or neurodegenerative diseases. Globally, out of the estimated 15 million individuals who suffer a stroke each year, approximately 30 to 40% subsequently develop aphasia (Li *et al.*, 2022; Zettin *et al.*, 2021). Although aphasia is predominantly seen in adults, childhood aphasia (characterized by the partial or complete loss of previously acquired language skills) does occur, albeit rarely. Current estimates suggest that the prevalence of childhood aphasia is less than 1%, with boys being affected more frequently than girls (Schreiner *et al.*, 2022; Hartini *et al.*, 2023). In regions such as Uzbekistan, precise statistical data and scientific research regarding childhood aphasia remain insufficient. This highlights an urgent need for future in-depth studies focusing on the prevalence, diagnosis, and treatment of this disorder in pediatric populations.

Modern medical and speech therapy research categorizes aphasia into various forms (including sensory, motor (afferent-motor, efferent-motor), acoustic-gnostic, acoustic-mnestic, semantic, and dynamic), each necessitating a tailored therapeutic approach. Neuropsychological and speech therapy interventions play a critical role in rehabilitation, heavily relying on the brain's inherent neuroplasticity to restore speech functions. Consequently, contemporary speech therapy widely adopts multimodal methods. Techniques such as visual-auditory exercises, sensorimotor integration, and computerized therapy significantly accelerate the patient's recovery process. Furthermore, virtual reality (VR) technologies and specialized speech therapy programs driven by artificial intelligence (AI) have emerged as highly effective rehabilitation tools. This article comprehensively analyzes these diverse forms of aphasia, diagnostic methods, and collaborative rehabilitation strategies involving both speech therapists and neurologists (Akinina *et al.*, 2021; Hisham, 2021; Markashova *et al.*, 2022).

Beyond linguistic impairment, aphasia severely affects a patient's social adaptation and psycho-emotional well-being. Studies indicate that 50% to 70% of aphasic patients develop depressive and anxiety disorders, which can further complicate their rehabilitation. Therefore, a holistic speech therapy approach is essential, one that aims not only to restore language but also to enhance overall communicative competence and facilitate social integration. In recent years, neurorehabilitation theories centering on neuroplasticity have gained significant prominence. Therapies leveraging this adaptive capacity focus on strengthening existing neural networks, forging new connections, and recruiting alternative brain regions into the speech production process (Small *et al.*, 2013; Aderinto *et al.*, 2023; Chatterjee *et al.*, 2021). These approaches yield faster and more robust improvements in speech recovery levels. Concurrently, the integration of technological interventions in aphasia rehabilitation is rapidly expanding. Scientific evidence confirms that AI and VR technologies provide potent therapeutic benefits for patients. Interactive computer programs and mobile applications, for instance, deliver specialized, individualized speech exercises tailored to each patient's specific needs. Ultimately, this study analyzes the synergistic combination of traditional speech therapy methods with modern neuropsychological and technological advancements. The primary objective is to identify the most effective methodological resources for restoring language abilities in aphasic patients and to establish a strong scientific foundation for their practical application.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Scientific research consistently demonstrates that aphasia rehabilitation is fundamentally rooted in the brain's neuroplastic properties. During the recovery process, undamaged brain areas can assume the functions of damaged regions, or entirely new neural connections can be established through neuroplasticity (Aderinto *et al.*, 2023; Chatterjee *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, a core objective of aphasia therapy is to stimulate and increase the activity within neural networks responsible for speech production. To achieve this, a combination of traditional and innovative speech therapy methods is typically employed (Husak *et al.*, 2023; Rose *et al.*, 2022). Among conventional approaches, melodic-intonation therapy (MIT), visual-kinesthetic exercises, and structured repetitive speech tasks have proven highly effective in restoring speech for aphasic patients. MIT, for example, is particularly beneficial for patients with Broca's aphasia, facilitating speech improvement by encouraging patients to pronounce words rhythmically and melodically.

The foundations of modern neuropsychology and neurolinguistics emphasize the critical interplay between thought and inner speech. Foundational psycholinguistic theorists, such as F. de Saussure and I.A. Baudouin de Courtenay, are frequently cited for establishing essential distinctions between concepts like "language" and "speech," "paradigmatic" and "syntagmatic" relations, as well as "language statistics" and "speech dynamics". Building on these linguistic theories, researchers emphasize the crucial role of neuropsychological approaches in rehabilitation. Specifically, for patients suffering from left-hemisphere brain damage, the compensatory functions of the intact right hemisphere are vital. Consequently, therapeutic exercises designed to integrate the functions of both cerebral hemispheres have shown significant efficacy.

In recent years, the integration of modern technologies into aphasia rehabilitation has expanded significantly. Studies confirm that speech therapy systems utilizing computer programs, VR, and AI are highly effective therapeutic tools. These advanced technologies enable the real-time analysis of a patient's responses, allowing for the dynamic adaptation of individualized rehabilitation programs (Ekunola *et al.*, 2022). Furthermore, multimodal approaches play a pivotal role in recovery. Evidence suggests that when traditional speech therapy is combined with these technological interventions, patients' speech abilities are restored much more rapidly. Computerized programs relying on visual and auditory stimulation are particularly useful in facilitating this process. Beyond software interventions, therapies involving electromagnetic stimulation (EMS) and other methods aimed at directly activating brain functions are increasingly utilized (Wang *et al.*, 2023). The combination of speech therapy with targeted brain stimulation has been shown to expedite patients' word recognition and expressive language capabilities.

Employing diverse forms of communication can also significantly expedite the rehabilitation journey. Utilizing augmentative strategies (such as gestures, facial expressions, graphic symbols, and multimodal communication methods) greatly enhances a patient's overall communication skills. Importantly, social and psycho-emotional factors must be integrated into treatment planning. Studies indicate that patients who receive robust social support and actively engage in communication experience faster rehabilitation progress (Berthier, 2005). Research confirms that family support and ample opportunities for social interaction are directly linked to higher recovery rates, making it imperative for speech therapists to involve the patient’s environment in the therapeutic process. Ultimately, speech

therapy must address both linguistic skill development and social integration. Recent evidence underscores that interventions designed to enhance neuroplasticity via innovative technologies significantly accelerate aphasic speech recovery. Thus, continuously improving rehabilitation methodologies through the integration of emerging technologies and rigorous scientific frameworks remains essential (Hillis, 2007).

3. METHODS

This study utilized a mixed-methods design, integrating both experimental and theoretical analyses to evaluate the efficacy of various aphasia rehabilitation interventions. Specifically, the research assessed traditional speech therapy, neuropsychological rehabilitation, and the incorporation of advanced technological tools such as AI, VR, and TMS.

3.1. Participants

The study cohort comprised 50 patients diagnosed with aphasia resulting from a stroke or traumatic brain injury. These participants were recruited from a local rehabilitation center and stratified according to age, gender, severity of the condition, and aphasia subtype (Broca's, Wernicke's, Anomic, or Global). Inclusion criteria were restricted to adults aged 18 to 75 who had experienced persistent speech deficits for at least three months post-injury. Before participation, all individuals provided written informed consent.

3.2. Experimental Design

The intervention spanned 12 weeks, with therapy sessions lasting 45 minutes and conducted five times per week. Certified speech therapists and neuropsychologists facilitated these sessions, customizing the therapeutic approach to meet each patient's specific needs. Participants were randomly allocated into four distinct groups: (i) Control Group: Patients received routine rehabilitation support without a specific targeted aphasia therapy program. (ii) Traditional Therapy Group: Patients received conventional speech therapy, which encompassed phonological exercises, semantic therapy, and repetitive speech training. (iii) Technology-Assisted Therapy Group: This cohort engaged in computerized speech exercises utilizing AI-powered applications, such as Aphasia Tutor and Lingraphica, and VR-based programs designed to stimulate speech recovery. (iv) Combined Therapy Group: These participants underwent a synergistic regimen of traditional speech therapy, technology-assisted exercises, and neuropsychological interventions. This included TMS to stimulate language-related brain regions, alongside multimodal exercises that integrated auditory, visual, and motor activities. The distribution of participants across the intervention groups and the main therapeutic components is summarized in **Table 1**.

3.3. Data Collection

Data collection was conducted systematically across three primary stages:

(i) Pre-treatment Assessment: Baseline evaluations were performed using the Boston Diagnostic Aphasia Examination (BDAE) to gauge speech comprehension and production, the Western Aphasia Battery (WAB) to classify aphasia type and severity, and the L.I. Wasserman scale to quantify the extent of the speech disorder. Furthermore, participants completed the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) to evaluate their baseline psychological state before initiating therapy.

(ii) Intervention Stage: Throughout the 12-week therapy period, the research team conducted weekly progress assessments, adjusting the treatment modalities dynamically to optimize patient outcomes. For the control group, routine

rehabilitation support was monitored during the same period to provide a comparison with the targeted intervention groups.

(iii) Post-treatment Assessment: Following the intervention, participants were re-evaluated utilizing the same pre-treatment diagnostic tools to measure advancements in language comprehension, speech production, and overall emotional well-being.

Table 1. Participant characteristics and intervention groups.

GROUP	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	MAIN INTERVENTION	THERAPY COMPONENTS	MAIN PURPOSE
Control group	12	Routine rehabilitation support	General monitoring and standard care activities	To provide comparison with targeted intervention groups
Traditional therapy group	13	Conventional speech therapy	Phonological exercises, semantic therapy, repetitive speech training	To improve speech production, articulation, and comprehension
Technology-assisted therapy group	12	Digital rehabilitation support	AI-based applications, computerized speech exercises, VR-based contextual practice	To support individualized and technology-assisted speech recovery
Combined therapy group	13	Integrated multimodal therapy	Speech therapy, AI-based exercises, VR practice, TMS, auditory-visual-motor activities	To enhance neuroplasticity and improve multimodal speech rehabilitation

3.4. Technological Interventions

Within the technology-assisted group, AI-based applications delivered real-time feedback and dynamic, personalized exercises designed to enhance vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence construction. Simultaneously, the VR programs immersed patients in simulated real-world environments, encouraging contextual speech practice. In the combined therapy group, TMS was specifically applied to stimulate neural regions governing language processing, to bolster neuroplasticity and accelerate speech recovery.

3.5. Statistical Analysis

The efficacy of the rehabilitation interventions was evaluated using SPSS version 26.0. Descriptive statistics, namely mean scores and standard deviations, were utilized to summarize the pre- and post-treatment data. To ascertain the comparative effectiveness of each treatment approach, differences in outcomes among the control group and the three intervention groups were analyzed via independent T-tests and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). A p-value of less than 0.05 was established as the threshold for statistical significance.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section evaluates the efficacy of logopedic, neuropsychological, and technological interventions in aphasia rehabilitation. The findings suggest that structured speech therapy can improve patients' linguistic capabilities. Specifically, Boston Diagnostic Aphasia

Examination (BDAE) baseline and post-treatment scores showed improvements in speech comprehension and expression across the treatment groups, with greater gains observed among patients receiving combined and technology-assisted interventions. This underscores that logopedic intervention is an indispensable component of aphasia rehabilitation, achieving maximum efficacy when tailored to individual needs. The comparative improvement patterns across the control, traditional, technology-assisted, and combined therapy groups are presented in **Table 2**. The combined therapy group demonstrated the strongest recovery pattern because it integrated traditional speech therapy, neuropsychological stimulation, and technology-assisted practice. The technology-assisted group also showed positive outcomes, particularly in repeated practice, word retention, and contextual communication. In contrast, the control group showed more limited improvement, suggesting that routine rehabilitation support alone may not be sufficient for optimal aphasia recovery.

Table 2. Pre- and post-treatment improvement across intervention groups.

GROUP	BDAE IMPROVEMENT	WAB IMPROVEMENT	WORD RETENTION	EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING	OVERALL INTERPRETATION
Control group	7%	Low	Low	Slight improvement	Limited improvement
Traditional therapy group	23%	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate improvement	Improved speech production and comprehension
Technology-assisted therapy group	25–30%	Moderate to high	High	Moderate improvement	Supported repeated and individualized practice
Combined therapy group	40%	High	High	High improvement	Strongest overall recovery pattern

These findings also indicate that aphasia rehabilitation should not rely on a single therapeutic method. Patients with aphasia often present different combinations of speech comprehension, word retrieval, articulation, memory, and emotional difficulties. Therefore, individualized treatment planning is essential to match the intervention with the patient's aphasia type, severity, cognitive condition, and psychosocial needs. Traditional speech therapy remains important for strengthening basic language functions, while technology-assisted tools can provide repeated practice, immediate feedback, and flexible learning opportunities outside formal therapy sessions. In addition, neuropsychological and stimulation-based interventions may support recovery by activating alternative neural pathways and strengthening neuroplastic mechanisms. The integration of these components explains why the combined therapy group showed stronger recovery patterns than single-modality groups.

These findings suggest that combining Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS), speech therapy, and multimodal approaches may produce stronger rehabilitation outcomes than traditional therapy alone.

Phonological exercises and repetitive pronunciation methods benefited patients with Broca's aphasia, improving articulation clarity and accuracy. These results suggest that targeted articulation exercises can support speech production in patients with motor aphasia. Concurrently, vocal therapy combinations supported the expansion of patients' overall vocabulary. For Wernicke's aphasia, semantic therapy and imagery-based enhancements improved word comprehension, while visual-motor technologies, such as picture- and video-based learning, also supported comprehension recovery. These findings suggest that semantic and visual-motor exercises can help improve language comprehension in patients with receptive aphasia. Furthermore, for patients with global aphasia, Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) technologies supported the restoration of communicative abilities. Sensorimotor approaches also contributed to improvements in word memorization.

The intervention focus and observed rehabilitation outcomes according to aphasia type are summarized in **Table 3**. Each aphasia type required a different intervention focus. Patients with Broca's aphasia benefited mainly from articulation and repetitive speech exercises, while patients with Wernicke's aphasia required stronger semantic and visual-motor support. Patients with anomic aphasia needed vocabulary retrieval and word retention activities, whereas patients with global aphasia required broader multimodal and alternative communication strategies. These findings support the importance of individualized rehabilitation planning based on aphasia type, severity, and communication needs.

Table 3. Intervention focus and observed outcomes according to aphasia type.

APHASIA TYPE	MAIN DIFFICULTIES	INTERVENTION FOCUS	REHABILITATION ACTIVITIES	OBSERVED OUTCOME
Broca's aphasia	Reduced speech fluency, articulation difficulty, limited expressive speech	Speech production and articulation improvement	Phonological exercises, repetitive pronunciation, vocal therapy, structured speech practice	Improved articulation clarity, pronunciation accuracy, and expressive speech production
Wernicke's aphasia	Impaired word comprehension, difficulty understanding meaning, receptive language problems	Comprehension and semantic processing	Semantic therapy, imagery-based exercises, picture-based learning, video-supported activities	Improved word comprehension and stronger association between words, images, and meaning
Anomic aphasia	Word retrieval difficulty, naming problems, reduced lexical access	Vocabulary retrieval and word retention	AI-supported vocabulary exercises, naming tasks, cueing activities, contextual word practice	Improved vocabulary access, word retention, and naming ability
Global aphasia	Severe impairment in comprehension and expression, limited functional communication	Functional communication and multimodal support	AAC strategies, gestures, graphic symbols, sensorimotor activities, multimodal communication practice	Improved communicative participation and use of alternative communication strategies

The application of neuroplasticity principles appeared effective across different patient groups. Methods designed to enhance brain activity alongside speech therapy supported faster speech recovery. More specifically, stimulating neuronal activity using TMS contributed to overall improvement in speech recovery. This finding supports the use of neuroplasticity-based approaches in aphasia rehabilitation (Pulvermüller and Berthier, 2008). Incorporating neurobiological mechanisms into the therapy process may improve rehabilitation outcomes.

Simultaneously, the integration of modern digital technologies has expanded the possibilities for aphasia rehabilitation. AI-based mobile applications, such as Lingraphica and Aphasia Tutor, facilitated independent practice beyond therapy sessions. Additionally, VR therapies immersed patients in contextual environments that supported memory and speech retention. Digital interventions may provide flexible and individualized support when combined with continuous practice. The findings suggest that VR and AI-based applications can support recovery processes related to neurocognitive rehabilitation (Thompson, 2019).

To sustain and scale these positive outcomes, several structural challenges must be addressed. First, the widespread implementation of these new methodologies requires specialized training for speech therapists. Second, because aphasia rehabilitation is inherently lengthy, patients frequently experience a decline in motivation. Integrating interactive technologies and gamified approaches is a crucial preventative measure to maintain engagement. Finally, a multidisciplinary approach is important in aphasia rehabilitation (Hillis, 2007). The findings suggest that collaboration among physicians, speech therapists, neuropsychologists, and technology specialists can support stronger clinical improvements.

Multimodal and individualized strategies may support stronger aphasia rehabilitation outcomes when different therapeutic components are integrated into a coordinated intervention plan (Marshall and Mohapatra, 2017). Multimodal and individualized strategies, supported by brain plasticity mechanisms and advanced digital technologies, may produce better outcomes than traditional single-modality approaches. In the future, the widespread introduction of artificial intelligence and neurobiological stimulation in aphasia therapy represents a critical and highly promising scientific direction.

5. CONCLUSION

Modern aphasia rehabilitation may achieve better outcomes when traditional speech therapy is combined with neuropsychological and technological interventions. The findings indicate that multimodal and individualized therapy can support speech recovery, particularly when treatment is adapted to the neurological, linguistic, and psychological needs of each patient. The incorporation of neuroplasticity-based interventions, including TMS, may support rehabilitation by stimulating neural activity and strengthening language recovery processes. In addition, AI applications and VR environments provide opportunities for repeated, personalized, and engaging practice beyond conventional therapy sessions. These approaches may support language comprehension, speech production, word retention, and emotional well-being. Effective aphasia rehabilitation requires collaboration among speech therapists, neurologists, neuropsychologists, and technology specialists. Future research should examine the long-term effectiveness, accessibility, and cost-efficiency of multimodal aphasia therapy across larger and more diverse patient groups.

6. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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