

Adolescents' Experiences of Communication Following Acquired Brain Injury (ABI)

Background

- Studies have found communication to be more challenging for adolescents with ABI compared to typically developing peers.
- Most previous studies are quantitative and use standardised assessments focusing on specific speech and language impairments (e.g. Catroppa & Anderson, 2004).
- There is little research asking young people themselves how they feel their communication skills have been affected by ABI.



Aim of the study

To seek a deeper understanding of adolescents' everyday experiences of communication following ABI.

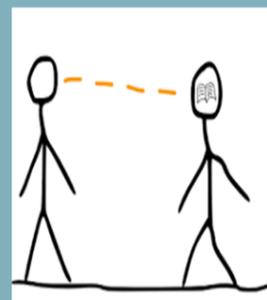
Catroppa, C. & Anderson, V., 2004. Recovery and predictors of language skills two years following pediatric traumatic brain injury. *Brain and Language*, 88(1), pp.68–78.

Method

- The study used *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)* (Smith et al. 2009)
- Purposive sampling recruited six adolescents between 11 and 18 years old.
- Semi-structured interviews were digitally audio-recorded and transcribed.
- Following analysis of each interview, themes were identified across the group.

Findings

The Social World	Communication Competence	Life in the Classroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facing disability • Hiding away • Outside of the group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stumbling over words • Recovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding our needs • Finding solutions



'If I could actually roll my eyes back into my brain I'd be able to tell you...if I could read you the stuff it was saying, I really wish I could.' (Alex, 11)

Smith, J., Flowers, P. and Larkin (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: theory method and research*. London: Sage

Conclusions

Self Identify was affected by perceived communication changes and depended on the age when ABI occurred.



Participation in communication following ABI related to self confidence, teacher understanding and peer group support.

Next steps

To explore how communication difficulties affect participation following paediatric ABI.

To consider how speech and language therapists and other professionals can best support children and young people to adapt to communication changes after ABI.

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