Communication skills training pilot programme after traumatic brain injury: short and medium term benefits

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Abstract

Objective: The study aimed to evaluate whether a pilot communication rehabilitation programme improves different communicative modalities in people who have sustained a moderate to severe TBI immediately following the training and at 3 months follow up. Methods: We have recruited 12 participants who had moderate-to-severe TBI. Subjects were randomly divided into two groups, EG and CG. We have assessed the groups before and after treatment and we have performed a follow-up three months later, through of the ABaCo. The EG followed a very structured programme. In the CG, a programme to stimulate communication through free conversation was carried out. Each programme consisted of 24 group sessions, of 1h30 min, twice a week, for 12 weeks. Results: Improvements were observed in both groups, although more evident in the EG. Both groups had better results in extralinguistic production. In the EG, there was still an improvement in the paralinguistic production and extralinguistic comprehension, after ending the training. These improvements persisted 3 months after ending the programme. Conclusion: The results demonstrated the effectiveness of the intervention of a structured pragmatic rehabilitation programme. However, the existence of a communication group based solely on conversation can also have positive results and should be implemented whenever a more specific intervention is not possible. In future research, it will be important to increase the sample size and involve caregivers in person and regularly in the EG programme.

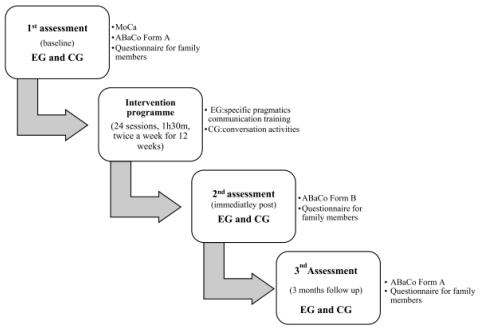


Figure 1. General scheme of the communication rehabilitation programme – experimental group and control group.

Recent Publications (minimum 5)

1) Agrela N, Santos ME, Guerreiro S.Transcultural translation and adaptation of the Assessment Battery for Communication (ABaCo) for the Portuguese population. CEFAC Speech Lang Hear Sci Educ J. 2020;22(3):e15319.
2) Agrela, Santos & Sandra Guerreiro (2021): Communication skills training pilot programme after traumatic brain injury: short and medium-term benefits, Brain Injury, DOI: 10.1080/02699052.2021.1872096
3) Gabbatore I, Sacco K, Angeleri R, Zettin M, Bara B, Bosco F. 2015. Cognitive pragmatic treatment: a rehabilitative programme for traumatic brain injury individuals. J Head Trauma Rehabil. 30 (5):14–28. doi:10.1097/HTR.0000000000000087
4) Parola A, Bosco FM, Gabbatore I, Galettod V, Zettind M. The impact of the cognitive pragmatic treatment on the pragmatic and informative skills of individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI). J Neurolinguistics. 2019;51:53–62. doi:10.1016/j. jneuroling.2018.12.003.
5) Santos ME, Agrela N. 2019. Traumatic brain injury in Portugal: progress in incidence and mortality. Brain Inj. 33(12):1552–55. doi:10.1080/02699052.2019.1658227
6) Hawley LA, Newman JK. 2010. Group interactive structured treatment (GIST): A social competence intervention for individuals with brain injury. Brain Inj. 24(11):1292–97. doi:10.3109/ 02699052.2010.506866
6)Agrela, N., Santos, M.E., Guerreiro, S. (2020). Communication after traumatic brain injury: the effectiveness of a Pragmatics rehabilitation programme. *Journal of interactional Research in Communication Disorders*, 9(2), 172-190. https://doi.org/10.1558/jircd.38533



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