Digital Technology Supporting Children's Speech Therapy

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Abstract

Considering that all children are attracted to technology and spend a lot of time using digital technology, it would be advisable to use IT support for education and/or therapy. The advantage is that the speech therapist may start with face-to-face therapy sessions and ensure continuity remotely from home in a familiar and comfortable environment. Language gives the child autonomy and the possibility to socialize better. Acquiring from the preschool age the ability to communicate with persons around her/him, to express thoughts, ideas, and impressions, the child forms a basis for school activity and for later social life. In the instructional-educational process, language represents a fundamental mean of communication, but also an important mean of facilitating knowledge. Through knowledge, the children's horizons are broadened with new representations. This work presents the professional evaluation of 10 speech therapists and the perception from 60 parents with children participating in speech therapy using an application to improve the language behavior of children with speech disorder. The results of the interviews show that speech therapists are open to use digital applications as a tool in speech therapy. Using this type of tool in speech therapy engages the children more in the activity. The interview results show that 88.3% of parents agree to use digital apps at home, between face to face speech therapy sessions coordinated by speech therapist, and 75% of parents agree to use them several days a week. 68.3% of parents believe that digital applications would increase children's motivation and commitment to speech therapy. Almost forty-seven parents take into consideration interactive apps, instructional videos, educational games and digital books as useful digital resources: 21.7% prefer educational games, 16.7% interactive apps, 8.3% instructional videos and 6.7% digital books. Using these types of applications may provide multiple benefits for children and speech therapists, having a high degree of customization to children's specific needs.

Keywords: Digital technology; Children; Education; Application; Speech disorder