

Life Participation Outcomes in Group versus Individual Therapy for Adults with Aphasia: A Systematic Review

Jordan Jarrett, Taylor Petroski and Marissa Rock

Division of Speech and Hearing Sciences, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Research Question

In individuals with aphasia as a result of a stroke, how does participation in group therapy compared to individual therapy influence life participation?

Background

When evaluating the status of individuals post-stroke, their extracurricular participation in activities is often underreported (Skolarus, Burke, Brown, & Freedman, 2014). Within speech-language pathology, there has been a push for usage of the World Health Organization’s International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) framework (Galletta & Barrett, 2014). The ICF focuses on functional communication goals, activity participations, and limitations (Papathanasiou & Coppens, 2016). Therefore, targeting the restrictions that individuals are feeling in social settings should be an aspect of intervention. Therapy models, specifically individual versus group therapy sessions, are important to consider as therapists seek to include more opportunities for functional communication. This systematic review set out to explore this idea by analyzing available evidence on life participation outcomes in individual versus group therapy for individuals with aphasia following a stroke.

Methods

Databases Searched:

- ComDisDome, CINAHL Plus, and PubMed

(See Figure 1)

Search Terms Utilized:

- Persons with aphasia (PWA) and post-stroke
- Group therapy and individual therapy
- Life participation and quality of life (QOL)

Inclusion Criteria:

- Individual speech/language therapy, group speech/language therapy, or combined speech/language therapy
- Primary diagnosis of aphasia
- Any language of participant

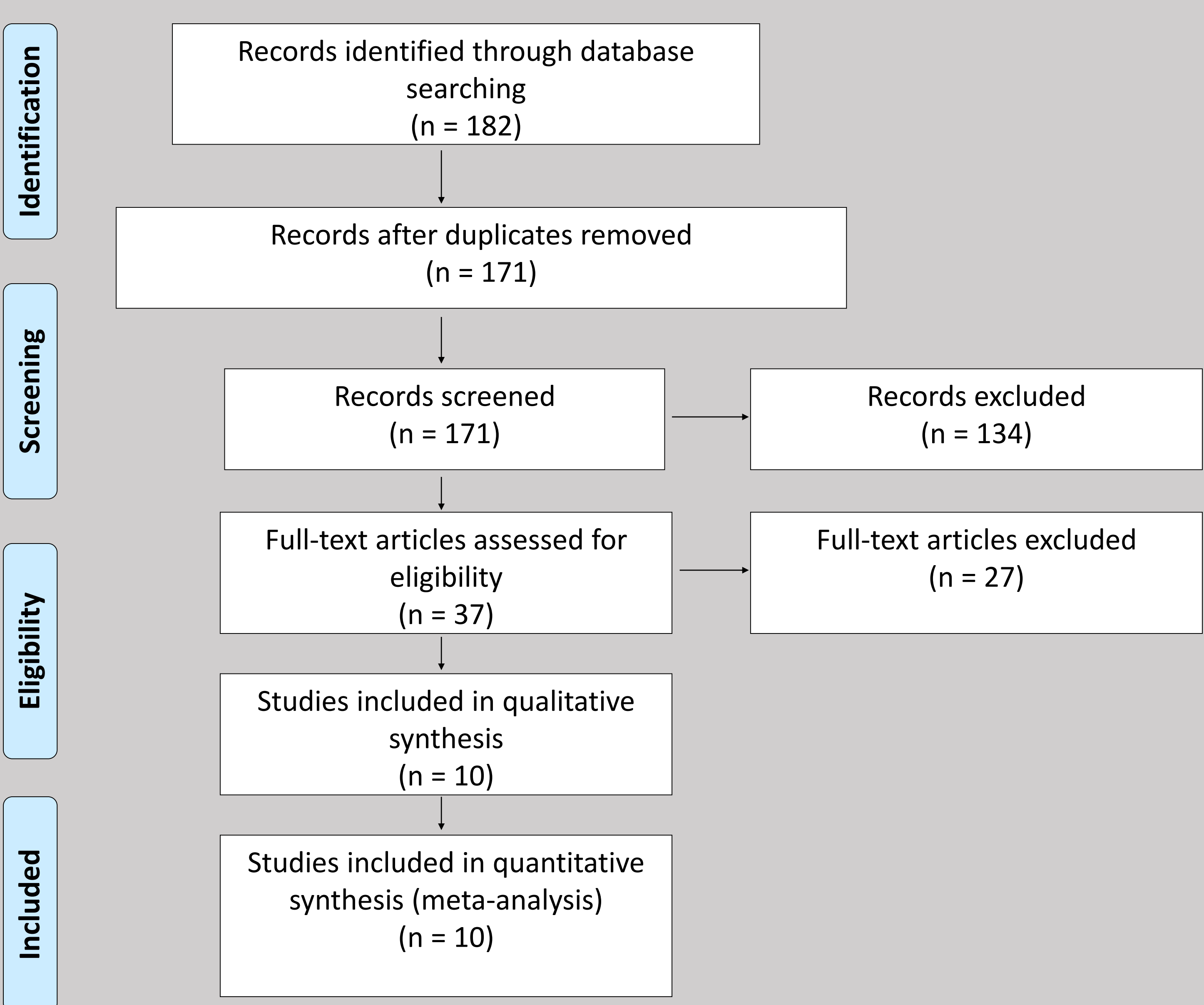
Exclusion Criteria:

- Traumatic brain injury
- Progressive diseases (i.e. PPA)
- Children (0 - 18 years old)

Appraisal Process

- The research team used the LEGEND Appraisal Forms for Intervention and Diagnosis (Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, 2012) aligned with the study design of the article being reviewed.

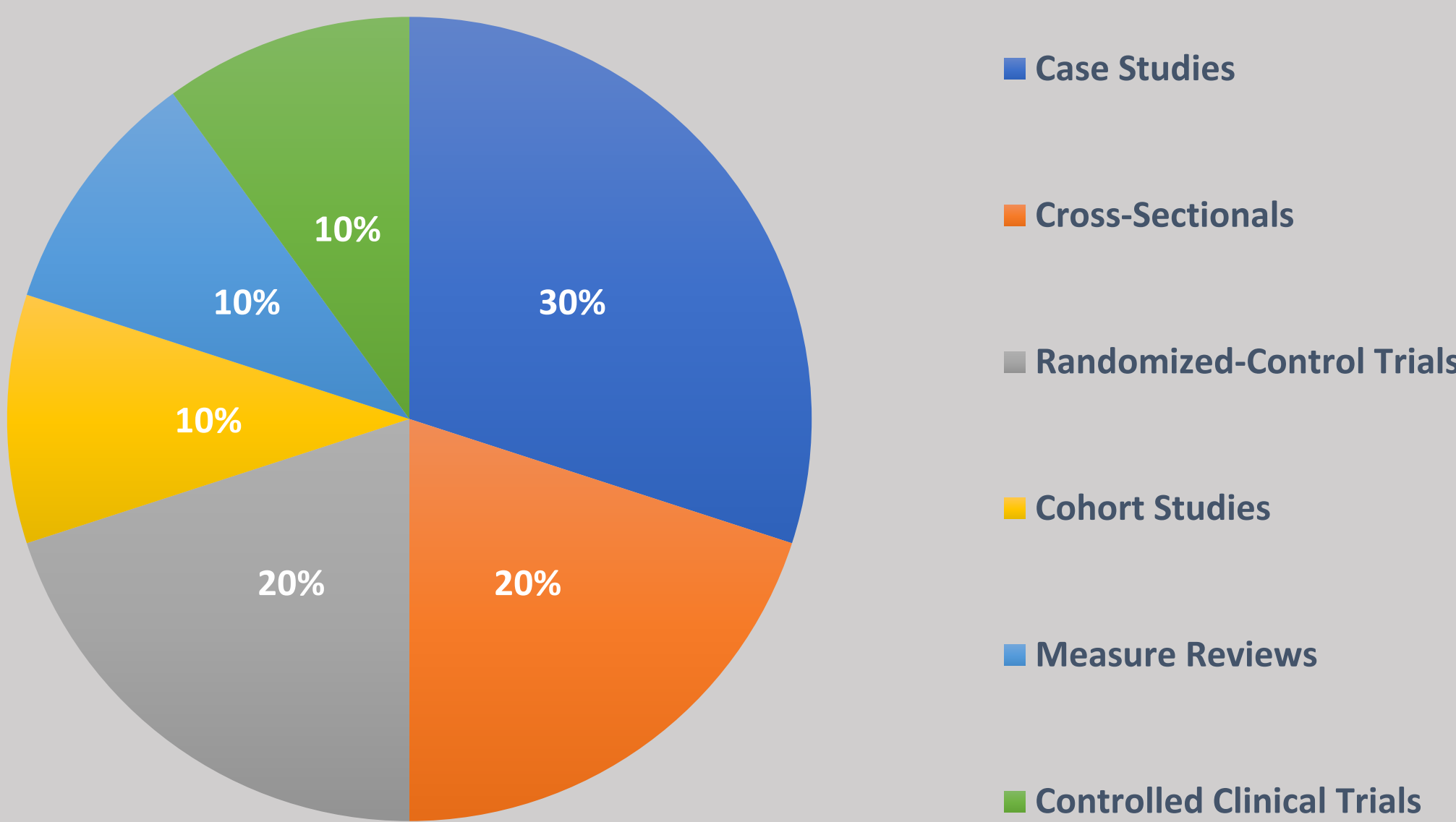
Literature Search Flow Chart



Reliability

| Review | Reliability | % of Articles |
|-------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Title/Abstract | 90% | 20% |
| Full Text | 85% | 20% |
| Quality Appraisal | 100% | 40% |
| Data Extraction | 100% | 40% |

Study Type



Results

- The two RCTs showed group therapy is beneficial for life participation.
- The non-RCT studies supported group therapy for individuals with aphasia; however, comparisons were not made to individual therapy.
- Our conclusion from this systematic review is that group therapy improves life participation equally or more than individual therapy.

Article Conclusion and Appraisal

| Author | Study Design | Group/Ind | Conclusion | Quality | a | b | c | d |
|--------------|---------------------------|-----------|--|---------|---|---|---|---|
| Van Haaran | Case Study | Ind | Communication and interaction are main concerns of PWA | Lesser | N | Y | Y | N |
| Van der Gaag | Cohort Study | Group | PWA experienced more confidence after attending group sessions at center | Good | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Kong | Cross-Sectional | Both | Satisfaction ratings were highest for community group activities | Good | Y | Y | Y | N |
| Rose | Cross-Sectional | Both | All ICAPs schedules included ind and group therapy in their program designs | Good | Y | Y | Y | N |
| Cicchone | Randomized Control Trial | Both | Group therapy may be more practical and efficient because 2-4 people are treated at once | Lesser | Y | N | Y | N |
| Grohn | Case Study | Both | Group therapy is highly valued because of the support given from others in the group | Good | Y | Y | Y | N |
| Hoover | Case Study | Both | Both therapy models with intensive and individualized treatment get improvement | Good | Y | Y | N | Y |
| Mayo | Randomized Control Trial | Group | Participants made gains of 2-5 hours in life participation; increased HRQL scores | Good | N | Y | Y | Y |
| Attard | Controlled Clinical Trial | Group | Group therapy supports ICF domains of activity and participation | Lesser | N | Y | Y | N |
| Carod-Artal | Measure Review | Ind | Stroke specific measures are more helpful to apply to ICF domains | Lesser | Y | Y | Y | N |

KEY:

a. Were instruments used to measure the outcomes reliable?
c. Was there freedom from conflict of interest?

b. Was the study long enough to fully study effects of the treatment?
d. Did the study have a sufficiently large sample size?

Discussion

- Given the multitude of ways to phrase “life participation” and “group therapy,” additional search terms might be necessary to encompass more research related to our initial question.
- Group therapy is defined in different ways: It can include different participants and leaders.
- Life participation is measured in different subjective and objective ways: It can be measured using scales, surveys, questionnaires, etc., making the comparison between studies difficult.
- Treatment structure was vague, which hindered the analysis of the content covered in the sessions.

Future Directions

- In order to answer our research question, further high quality research is needed to determine life participation results via direct comparison of these therapy models.

Contact

Jordan Jarrett – jordan_jarrett@med.unc.edu
Taylor Petroski – taylor_petroski@med.unc.edu
Marissa Rock – marissa_rock@med.unc.edu



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

References

References available upon request.

Acknowledgements

This systematic review was completed as a project for SPHS 701 Introduction to Research Methods, under the guidance of Dr. Jessica Steinbrenner and Thomas Page