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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Amy Lanman entitled "Facilitated Communication as a Reasonable Job Accommodation: The Opinions of Speech-Language Pathologists." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Rehabilitation Counseling.

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FACILITATED COMMUNICATION AS A REASONABLE JOB ACCOMMODATION: THE OPINIONS OF SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Science
Degree
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Amy Lanman
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother

Dr. Barbara W. Woodlee

for her inspiration and guidance.

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ABSTRACT

In this study three research questions were addressed in order to gain a clearer understanding of facilitated communication and its potential as a reasonable job accommodation. Previous studies on facilitated communication have produced conflicting results. Two opinions have been formed. The first is in support of the communication method, affirming that it can be used as a valid method for persons with neuromuscular and communication disabilities in facilitating the communication process. The other opinion is opposed to the facilitated communication process and maintains that it is jeopardized by facilitator authorship. This study attempted to clarify the potential success of facilitated communication and its utilization as an accommodation in the workplace. The information was obtained from the personal opinions and beliefs of Speech-Language Pathologists during individual interviews with them. The Speech-Language Pathologists are members of the faculty at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Each study participant responded to the following questions: (1) What is your general opinion of facilitated communication? (2) What are the barriers to persons with nueromuscular and communication disabilities becoming employed?

(3) Do you believe that facilitated communication could be a reasonable job accommodation? In response to these questions, the participants voiced skepticism, and experienced a need for further research.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

A person who has a severe disability, that impedes the ability to communicate orally, may benefit from some method of augmentative and alternative communication. Facilitated communication is an example of an augmentative and alternative method. The procedure requires the use of a trained facilitator who assists the individual by providing physical support to the individual who is communicating. The facilitator guides the communicator as he or she points to pictures or letters, or as the individual indicates letters on a keyboard (Simon, Toll, & Whitehair, 1994). Biklen (1992) describes this method as being appropriate for an individual for whom meaningful and realistic communication is possible, but who is unable to use a communication aid independently.

The present study is designed to examine the opinions of Speech-Language Pathologists concerning the utility of the facilitated communication method. Specifically, the study attempts to determine if the facilitated communication method is perceived by

Speech-Language Pathologists as a reasonable accommodation that would enable a person with a neuromuscular disability, who is unable to communicate, to be employable. Similarly, as a sign language interpreter is seen as an accommodation for individuals who are deaf in order to facilitate communication, the facilitator for this method could be seen as an accommodation. This study offers a professional perspective as to whether facilitated communication, as an accommodation, would assist a person with disabilities while at work.

Statement of the Problem

There are conflicting opinions concerning the success of facilitated communication that have arisen as the result of studies focusing on the facilitator (Janzen-Wilde, Duchan, & Higginbotham, 1995). Some professionals believe that this method may be a new mechanism for persons with communication difficulties to express their thoughts and feelings, while others view this method as being an illusion in which the facilitator is trying to will the communication process (Coughlin, 1994). In support of this method, professionals have presented success stories in the literature (Janzen-Wilde, Duchan, & Higginbotham, 1995). In criticism of this method, Fried-Oken, Fay, and Paul (1995) have concluded, from

research findings using oral subjects, that the communication messages are authored by the facilitator. The problem is that, with so many conflicting opinions in the literature, an individual and his or her family may be confused as to whether or not this method should be pursued. Furthermore, professional in the rehabilitation counseling field also are confused as to the appropriateness of facilitated communication as an accommodation for certain vocational rehabilitation clients. This study addresses this problem, to some extent, by accessing personal perspectives and beliefs of Speech-Language Pathologists concerning the utility of facilitated communication as a workplace accommodation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to access personal perspectives and beliefs of Speech-Language Pathologists concerning the utility of facilitated communication as a workplace accommodation for individuals who are unable to communicate without the assistance of another person.

In order to obtain this information, consideration is given to three research questions. First, what is the professional's general opinion of facilitated communication? Second, what do they believe

are the barriers to persons with neuromuscular and communication disabilities becoming employed? Third, do they believe that facilitated communication can be a reasonable job accommodation? In response to these questions, Speech-Language Pathologists can provide a professional view to help rehabilitation counselor in the consideration of this method as a job accommodation.

Significance of the Study

The literature surrounding the method of facilitated communication is conflicting, and the clinicians who have encountered this method are in disagreement. Professionals who believe this method to be successful have observed the method demonstrated in natural communication interactions. Professionals who believe that the method has had little or no success have witnessed the method used in controlled experimental conditions (Duchan, 1993). The significance of this study is that information is provided in the form of opinions and beliefs by professionals who are not directly involved with the research agenda. This is significant for rehabilitation professionals who are confused as to whether this method would suffice as an accommodation on the job.

The literature focuses on opposing views. The positive opinion is that this is a breakthrough method for individuals

who are nonverbal. The negative opinion is based on the belief that this method is jeopardized by facilitator authorship. Sarah Blackstone (1994) examines these extreme opinions. She states "People with disabilities and their families need help sifting through this quagmire" (p. 1). The current study provides a professional and personal perspective of this method and its potential value as an accommodation.

Procedures

The data used for this study will be obtained primarily from Speech-Language Pathologists at the Hearing and Speech Center of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. These professionals will be selected based on certain credentials, that is, that they hold their Certified Clinical Competency in Speech- Language Pathology and that they are on the faculty at The University of Tennessee. Their contributions to the study will be provided voluntarily through the interview process.

Assumptions

Two assumptions are noted. The first is that the subjects are knowledgeable about facilitated communication. This includes

having witnessed this method first hand or having kept current with the literature on the topic. The second is that the individuals are truthful, accurate and non-biased during the interview process.

Limitations

The study is limited to information obtained from five Speech-Language Pathologists at a single university. Their perspectives and beliefs may not be representative of Speech-Language Pathologists at other universities across the nation.

Definitions of Terms

Facilitated Communication. Zirkel (1995), defines facilitated communication as a technique involving a facilitator and an individual with some disability that results in the inability to access communication. The facilitator supports the hand, arm, or shoulder of the individual, while enabling the person to indicate, by pointing, the key that the individual wishes to press on the keyboard. Typically this method is used with individuals with autism or cerebral palsy.

Reasonable Accommodation. Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 mandate that certain employers make reasonable accommodations for their employees with disabilities. Bayh (1979) describes these as making the workplace accessible, providing necessary equipment, interpreters, readers, or alternative schedules in order to assist people with disabilities in performing their jobs.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication. A method of communication in which an individual, who is unable to produce oral speech, uses a device to aid in communication. These devices range from simple boards with pictures or letters, to complex computer programs (The Alliance for Technology Access, 1994).

Autism. A condition characterized by an individual demonstrating difficulties in speech, language, and communication. Mutism, echolalia, or perservative speech also may be exhibited. Other problems may exist in social interactions evidenced by stereotyped activity, the need for repetitive activity, and unusual or nonexistent response to external stimulus (Biklen, 1993).

Cerebral Palsy. Williams, Peak, and Hanesian (1991) define cerebral palsy as a nonprogressive motor deficit that affects the

central nervous system. This disorder is characterized by neuromotor dysfunction along with psychological and behavioral problems of organic origin. The individuals may have convulsions.

Organization of the Study

This report contains five chapters. This first chapter includes an Introduction, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Significance of the Study, Assumptions and Limitations, and Definitions of Terms. The second chapter reviews relevant literature in four sections: 1) Facilitated Communication, 2) Validation of Facilitated Communication, 3) Qualitative Research, and 4) Interview Process. The third chapter discuses the Methodology. The fourth chapter includes the Data Presentation and Analyses. The fifth chapter consists of the Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations for Further Research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The review of the literature addresses four topical areas. First, the literature on facilitated communication is discussed. Second, the literature concerning the validation of facilitated communication is presented. Third, the methodology of qualitative research is addressed due to the nature of this study. Finally, there is a discussion of the interview process and its relevance to the study.

Facilitated Communication

Facilitated Communication is defined in the literature as an augmentative and alternative method of communication involving a facilitator, some sort of communication board or computer keyboard, and the communicator (Simon, Toll, & Whitehair, 1994). However, the research on this method of communication is both inconclusive and controversial. There is evidence of opposing views on this method among clinicians and professionals (Duchan, 1993).

These views both support and criticize the method of facilitated communication.

Crossley and Remington-Gurney (1992) identify the research, resulting in support for the success of facilitated communication, through studies involving individuals with autism. Prior to the utilization of this method, many of these individuals were nonverbal. They were unable to communicate orally or intelligibly. The researchers believed, however, that these individuals had the capacity for language, but were unable to express themselves. Through the use of facilitated communication, these individuals were able to access a computer keyboard and type messages that the researchers believed were authored by the individual. The use of facilitated communication also has been reported to be beneficial in some cases of cerebral palsy and Down's syndrome. For example, even though these individuals were verbal, they were limited to echolalia and familiar utterances. With facilitated communication, the individuals were able to express themselves in written language, which was easier to understand. Facilitated communication also provided these individuals with more flexibility in their expressions.

Critics of facilitated communication believe research has failed to demonstrate that facilitated communication is successful (Duchan, 1993) Facilitated communication has been described as an illusion

by its critics. They claim that the words being produced by this method of communication are authored by the facilitator and not the communicator. Critics believe that these results are not a deliberate attempt to deceive but, rather, an unconscious effort on the facilitator's part to demonstrate that the method is effective (Coughlin, 1994). Research studies, conducted in controlled environments, have been subject to much of the criticism. Supporters of facilitated communication believe that more convincing results are achieved with a descriptive, naturalistic approach to research, involving observation of communication occurring in natural interactions rather than under controlled conditions (Duchan, 1993).

Several theories have been presented as to why there exists such opposing views on facilitated communication (Shane, 1994). One of those theories is that facilitated communication is inappropriately used. Howard Shane (1994) further discusses this theory by stating:

> It follows that something as innocuous as teaching a point response should not have grown into the huge controversy that facilitated communication has become. I submit that the controversy has arisen, however, because the practice of facilitated communication has extended far beyond its definition (p.4).

Shane (1994) theorized that facilitated communication involved the teaching of responses, but has become a method of expression for the individual that, for some, is as reliable as the spoken word. Another theory goes beyond the technique itself and faults the scholars and the research methods. Coughlin (1994), for example, questions whether observations and empirical studies alone provide valid information and whether researcher bias influences results. The result is controversy among researchers who assess appropriate methods for validating facilitated communication.

Validation of Facilitated Communication

Validation of facilitated communication is a requirement of the method's supporters. Validation studies have received criticism, however, especially regarding the environments where the studies occurred. Kurtz (1992), for example, believes that a study designed to validate facilitated communication, that is conducted under artificial conditions, would interfere with the facilitated communication process itself. In further support of this belief, Biklen (1992) states that if the testing situation involves procedures that differ from the naturalistic setting or imposes artificial conditions on the facilitated communication process, facilitated communication competency will not be evidenced. Many researchers

support validation studies occurring in a naturalistic setting without imposing on the process. However, in many of the studies designed to validate facilitated communication, researchers have focused on the authorship of the messages produced. In order to validate the method, the case study must demonstrate communicator authorship. Often, authorship is designed to be obtained in a controlled environment. For example, the researcher presents information, unknown to the facilitator, to the communicator. The communicator is asked to relay the information through the facilitated communication process. Validation is determined by whether or not the communicator is able to relay the same information that was presented (Simon, Toll, & Whitehair, 1994).

Qualitative Research

"Qualitative research involves data collection, that is, collection of extensive data on many variables over an extended period of time, in a naturalistic setting" (Gay, 1996, p. 208). The main focus of the qualitative method is to study variables in their natural environments and describe what is occurring. Researchers want to further describe the occurrences by exploring the feelings and beliefs of their subjects, while gaining understanding of the

motivation and meanings behind their actions. The qualitative research method allows the researcher to pose general open-ended research questions and to collect responses through the written or spoken word or by observation of behavior. The data analysis involves categorizing and interpreting the data and then summarizing conclusions that have been drawn (Gay, 1996). The current study used the qualitative research method in order to explore the opinions and beliefs of Speech-Language Pathologists toward the utilization of facilitated communication as a reasonable job accommodation. This method of research allows the researcher to probe the knowledge and experience of study participants and to gain understanding about facilitated communication and how it is viewed. This study is not conclusive in presenting the views of all Speech-Language Pathologists in general, but offers a sampling of the views of Speech-Language Pathologists at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Interview Process

The purpose of the qualitative interview process is to provide information for events that can not be observed by the researcher (Gay, 1996). The interview "...is a one-on-one session in which the researcher asks a series of open-ended, probing questions" (Gay,

1996, p. 223). In using open-ended questions, the interviewer allows the subjects to explore past or present events and to provide detail to these events. The degree of structure for interviews may vary depending on the need for specific, factual responses. A qualitative interview of loose structure would allow a researcher to probe into the many different content areas as the interview progresses (Gay, 1996).

Summary

This chapter provided a discussion of the current literature relevant to this study. The research presents two opposing views of facilitated communication. In brief, research is inconclusive due to the controversy surrounding the method. Much of the controversy is the result of inconsistency in validation of the method. Literature on the validation of facilitated communication was discussed as well as qualitative research and the interview process.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Chapter three describes the methodology utilized in the study. Included is a restatement of the research questions and a description of the subjects and procedures for data collection. Further, the chapter discusses the interview process and the data analysis procedure.

Research Questions

The study was designed to gain insight into the personal opinions and beliefs of Speech-Language Pathologists, regarding the use of facilitated communication as a reasonable job accommodation. There were three research questions: (1) What are the subjects' views toward facilitated communication? (2) Do the subjects believe that there are barriers to persons with neuromuscular and communication disabilities to becoming employed? (3) Do the subjects believe that facilitated communication could be a reasonable job accommodation for persons with neuromuscular and

communication disabilities? In order to address these questions, subjects were interviewed and presented open-ended research questions.

Subjects

A total of twelve information packets were sent to potential subjects, all of whom were members of the faculty in the Speech Pathology and Audiology Department at the University of Tennessee. Five of the twelve faculty members responded and expressed interest in the study. The researcher was able to contact and schedule interviews with four of the five respondents. The researcher attempted to contact the fifth person by telephone, leaving messages on voice mail, but the calls were not returned. During one of the interviews, the researcher was informed of another possible participant who had not been contacted when the initial letters had been sent. The researcher contacted this person and provided a letter describing the research project. This person consented to be the fifth participant.

Procedures

Each of the five participants signed a Consent Form (See Appendix B), agreeing to participate in the study. The researcher scheduled an interview with each participant who had returned a Consent Form. Approximately thirty minutes were utilized for each interview, which was audio-taped. The audio-tapes were immediately transcribed by the researcher, removing or altering any identifying information. Following transcription, the audio-tapes were erased.

Participation in the study was completely voluntary and the subjects were reminded of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The researcher made every attempt to maintain the confidentiality of the participants, although some information about the participants was provided as it was necessary for the design of the selection process.

A Pilot Interview

A pilot interview was conducted in order to provide the researcher with practice in conducting the interviews and to finalize the wording of the open-ended questions. The participant involved in the pilot interview met the same criteria as the participants in the

study. This participant was a Speech-Language Pathologist in a setting that was similar to that of the study participants. The interview was conducted and audio-taped, although the data was not incorporated in the results. The pilot interview was useful in providing feedback about the research questions. The feedback obtained identified a need for the development of additional questions for the researcher to ask, in order to further clarify each of the research questions.

The Interview Process

The interview process provided each participant with opportunity to address the three open-ended research questions and express their knowledge and opinions. Additional questions were asked that related to the general research questions. These additional questions were necessary to obtain information needed to more fully understand and clarify the personal views and beliefs of each participant. An interview guide (See Appendix B) was used to ensure that identical questions were being asked of each participant.

Data Analysis

Transcripts from the interviews were used to identify emerging themes and patterns. The themes were then labeled and categorized. Each interview was constructed to address the three main research questions, and the responses were assigned to each of the three corresponding questions. The researcher reviewed each of the transcripts, and the information assigned to each of the three question categories was analyzed to identify similar characteristics of participant responses. Some distinct differences were noted. Conclusions were summarized from similar characteristics and noted differences for each research question.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of interview data collected from study participants during the interview process. Responses to each of the research questions are presented and the similarities and differences noted. Some of the participants' individual comments are included.

Subjects

Each of the five participants in the study was a Speech-Language Pathologist from the faculty at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The subjects were experienced teaching faulty or clinical supervisors. All of the five participants had their master's degrees in Speech Pathology and three of the five were pursuing their doctoral degrees. Each of the five participants had experience working as Speech-Language Pathologists in settings that varied from school systems to acute hospital care. Interview responses of

the five participants are presented under the headings corresponding to each of the three research questions.

Research Question Number 1:

What is your general opinion of facilitated communication?

The five participants concurred in describing the facilitated communication process as a hands-on guidance to assist a person in identifying the representative letter or picture they wished to communicate. All of the participants associated the use of this method with persons diagnosed with Autism. One of the participants had attended a conference on facilitated communication and had witnessed its use first hand. Two of the other four participants also had experienced facilitated communication in person. The other two participants had seen demonstrations via television and video-tape.

The participants were questioned as to whether or not they were current with the research on facilitated communication. Two of the five participants said that they actively reviewed the research, while the other three professed to reading research articles from time to time. One participant stated "I read studies about facilitated communication as I come across them in my professional journals." Table 1 summarizes the participants' experiences with facilitated communication.

Table 1

Experiences

#	Context of FC experience	Current with literature?
1	via TV	yes
2	in a demonstration	yes
3	via TV	no
4	in a demonstration	no
5	in a demonstration	no

The opinions of the participants regarding the effectiveness of facilitated communication were conflicting. Two of the five participants believed that facilitated communication appeared to have potential for success. They believed, that with an appropriate client, this communication method could work. Two of the remaining three participants were skeptical about the efficacy of facilitated communication. The fifth participant expressed an inability to formulate an opinion about the facilitated communication method before further assessing its ethical parameters. This same participant believed that further research was needed to support the

appropriateness of using facilitated communication. The two participants, who expressed skepticism, further described the method as "a crock" and "hocus pocus."

Each participant expressed his or her views on facilitated communication. Each participant's experience with the method was unique, but their overall views were based on observation and education from the research.

Research Question Number 2:
What are the barriers to persons with neuromuscular and communication disorders to becoming employed?

All five participants expressed positive support for the employment of persons with neuromuscular and communication disabilities. Four out of the five study participants believed that persons with neuromuscular and communication disabilities could become employable with appropriate accommodations. The barrier that was specifically mentioned was communication. In addressing the communication barrier, three of the five participants believed that augmentative and alternative communication could be a successful accommodation on the job. The fifth participant expressed skepticism about augmentative communication being

utilized as a practical accommodation. This participant claimed to never have witnessed the successful use of augmentative communication on the job.

Two participants mentioned that the physical environment could be another barrier. Neither participant, however, viewed this barrier as an unsolveable problem for the individuals. These two subjects believed that there were many accommodations available for rendering the workplace accessible. Table 2 describes the barriers and accommodations that the participants identified.

Table 2

Barriers and Accommodations

#	Barriers	Accommodations
1	communication and physical	augmentative communication
2	communication	augmentative communication
3	physical and communication	no suggestion
4	communication	augmentative communication
5	communication	no suggestion

One participant shared a story of a parent who had suffered a stroke and used augmentative communication in everyday life. This participant stated "He [the parent] had retired from his job, but was able to use augmentative communication effectively to communicate in other aspects of daily living and could have continued to be employable, had he not been already of retirement age." Three of the five participants provided several examples of possible accommodations to assist a person with communication. These accommodations included switches, eye gazers, and pointers which are adaptations often used with personal computers.

Research Question Number 3:
Do you believe that facilitated communication could be a reasonable job accommodation.?

Four of the five participants reported that they did not believe that facilitated communication would be a successful job accommodation. These participants believed there were serious limitations to the method. One of the four participants stated that there was insufficient evidence to support the efficacy of facilitated communication as a job accommodation. This participant reported a

need for research and demonstration projects using facilitated communication in the workplace. One of these four participants expressed concern as to whether it would be feasible to have another person [the facilitator] on the job with the employee.

The fifth participant viewed facilitated communication as a possible job accommodation, but saw the need for additional evidence to support its effectiveness before others would accept it. This participant stated "If facilitated communication can be proven effective for specific individuals or populations of individuals, then I certainly think that those individuals should be able to access what they need, like a facilitator, in a job setting."

Additional Information

Two participants discussed the utility of facilitated communication as a training tool to assist an individual in learning to use augmentative and alternative communication. Both participants believed that facilitated communication would be useful to introduce an individual to an augmentative communication device. They thought that the provision of a facilitator in guiding the individual to the augmentative communication device would be beneficial to the individual in learning how to use the device.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the findings and conclusions that have been infered. Further, recommendations for related research will be presented.

Summary of the Study

The study was designed to obtain the opinions and beliefs of Speech-Language Pathologists regarding facilitated communication as a reasonable job accommodation. The data was obtained through personal interviews in which three research questions were addressed: (1) What is your general opinion of facilitated communication? (2) What are the barriers to persons with neuromuscular and communication disorders becoming employed? (3) Do you believe that facilitated communication could be a reasonable job accommodation for persons with neuromuscular and communication disabilities to becoming employed? Additional questions were asked, as needed, to further clarify the research

questions. Each interview took approximately thirty minutes. Data collected in the interviews was categorized and the similarities and differences among the responses were noted.

Discussion

What is your general opinion of facilitated communication?

Each participant was asked to talk to the researcher about facilitated communication. This gave the researcher an idea of how much each participant knew about the method. The participants were consistent with each other in describing the method. The researcher considered this finding very important because, when presented the remaining questions, each participant responded from a similar conceptual understanding of facilitated communication.

The participants were asked in what context they had observed facilitated communication demonstrated. Further, the participants were asked to what extent they remained current with related research. Responses to these questions provided information concerning each participant's knowledge and understanding of facilitated communication. The finding was that each participant was knowledgeable about facilitated communication, although their experiences with the method differed.

The final question addressed whether or not the participants believed that facilitated communication was effective and to what degree. The finding was that participants had concerns about the validity and the efficacy of the method. The participants expressed a desire for additional research to support the effectiveness of facilitated communication.

What are the barriers to persons with neuromuscular and communication disabilities to becoming employed?

The participants expressed the belief that every individual deserved opportunity to be employed. They identified communication deficits as the major barrier to successful employment. Several of the participants mentioned physical barriers, such as mobility, but did not consider these a major problem for the individual because of existing accommodations available to render a workplace more accessible. One of the participants was not able to support augmentative and alternative communication devices as a means to overcoming the communication barrier. This participant who did not support this possibility did not have much practical experience with augmentative communication devices and was, consequently, having difficulty visualizing its use in the workplace. The subjects were asked to provide some specific

examples of accommodations that they would recommend. Switches and pointers, to be used with a personal computer, were most frequently mentioned.

Do the subjects believe that facilitated communication could be a reasonable job accommodation for persons with neuromuscular and communication disabilities?

All of the participants had reservations concerning facilitated communication as a reasonable job accommodation. Four of the five participants believed that facilitated communication would not be a reasonable job accommodation. The fifth participant thought that facilitated communication might be considered as a possible job accommodation, "someday." Overall, each participant recommended additional research on facilitated communication. One of the participants suggested there was a need for research and demonstration on the use of facilitated communication in the workplace.

Conclusions

Based on the data collected in this study, facilitated communication is not viewed by Speech-Language Pathologists as a

reasonable job accommodation at this time. The subjects desired more conclusive research about the efficacy of facilitated communication. In consideration of the results of this study, the use of facilitated communication as a reasonable job accommodation cannot be justified.

Recommendations

Several recommendations can be made, based on results of the current study: (1) The current study should be replicated in other settings to determine if experiences and exposures in different settings would produce different results, (2) The study should be replicated in university settings in other areas of the country to determine if geographical location yields differential results, (3) The study should be replicated at a later date when further research has been conducted to assess the validity and effectiveness of this method, and (4) A research and demonstration project should be conducted to assess the utility of facilitated communication as a reasonable job accommodation in the workplace.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

INFORMATION SHEET

I am conducting a research study for my master's thesis in Rehabilitation Counseling. This study is interested in hearing the personal opinions and beliefs of Speech Pathologists, in a university setting, regarding the potential use of facilitated communication as a reasonable job accommodation. I feel that it would be beneficial for rehabilitation counselors to learn more about how professionals, such as yourself, view this method and its potential use to accommodate someone in a job situation. This information would assist rehabilitation counselors in determining the appropriateness of this method with clients who have neuromuscular disabilities that hinder the ability to communicate.

If you choose to participate in the study, you will be involved in a personal interview with me that will last approximately one hour. This interview will be audio-taped with your consent. The tapes will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in room 133 Claxton Addition at the University of Tennessee. Only the advising faculty member and I will have access to the tapes. Following the interview, the tape will be transcribed and then destroyed. I will alter any Identifying information necessary to ensure confidentiality.

There will be no risks to you beyond those experienced in everyday life. There are possible benefits to the rehabilitation counseling profession by increasing the understanding of how this method is used and its potential as a reasonable job accommodation. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the project at anytime with no penalty or personal identification.

Please return the enclosed form if you are interested in participating and would like to learn more about this study. I will contact you immediately upon receiving your response. Returning the consent form constitutes your consent to participate. If you decide to

participate, you have the option of withdrawing from the study at anytime.

Thank you for your time in considering helping me with this important study. Please contact me if you have any questions, 588-7881, or direct them to me at 623 Emory Oak Place, Knoxville, TN 37909.

Sincerely,

Amy Lanman
Graduate Student
Rehabilitation Counseling

James H. Miller, Ed. D.
Professor/Advisor
974-8090

Appendix B-1

CONSENT FORM

I understand that you are conducting a research study about facilitated communication and its potential as a reasonable job accommodation and I am interested in participating. I am willing to let you contact me to provide me with more details and to arrange a time for us to meet. I understand my right to decide not to participate and to withdraw from the study at anytime without penalty. I understand that you will ensure my confidentiality throughout the study.

Name_____

Campus Address_____

Phone_____Office Hours_____

Comments or Questions_____

_____

_____

_____

Signature_____Date_____

Appendix B-2

CONSENT TO BE AUDIO-TAPED

I,_____, understand the nature of this study to be conducted by Amy Lanman for the purpose of completing her thesis. I agree to participate in the personal interview process and for the interview to be audio-taped. I understand that the information on the tape will be kept confidentially and identifying information will be eliminated or modified when the tape is transcribed to hard copy. The tapes will be destroyed and the information will be used only as data in the research study being conducted by Amy Lanman. I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw from participation at anytime.

_____

Signature of the Participant

_____

Signature of the Principal Investigator

Appendix C
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

I. What is your general opinion of facilitated communication?

A. Describe facilitated communication for me.

B. Have you seen facilitated communication demonstrated and in what context?

C. Do you feel that facilitated communication is successful and to what capacity?

D. Are you current with the research on facilitated communication?

II. What are the barriers to persons with neuromuscular and communication disabilities becoming employed?

A. Can these barriers be accommodated?

B. Tell me what you know about workplace accommodations.

C. What are some specific suggestions that you may have to accommodating and individual with these disabilities in the workplace?

III. Do you believe that facilitated communication could be a reasonable job accommodation for persons with neuromuscular and communication disabilities?

A. Do you believe these individuals could be successful on the job using this method?

B. Do you believe that the use of a facilitator would be feasible in the workplace?

C. Tell me what role you see facilitated communication playing in the future.

D. Do you believe that there will be a future for facilitated communication as a reasonable job accommodation?

VITA

Amy Lanman was born in Waterville, Maine on January 21, 1972. She attended schools in the public school system of Waterville, Maine, where she graduated from Waterville Senior High School in June, 1990. She entered Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York in August of 1990. She received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Speech Pathology and Audiology in May of 1994. After working for a year, she entered the Master of Science Degree program in Rehabilitation Counseling at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She received her degree in December of 1996.

She is presently employed by Resource Opportunities, Inc. at Virginia Beach, Virginia as a Vocational Consultant with workers' compensation claimants.