

**Teachers' attitudes towards
students with LNFS
using two AAC devices.**

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to determine and compare teachers' attitudes towards students with little or no functional speech, using two Alternative and Augmentative communication (AAC) devices i.e. an Alpha Talker™ and communication board. Teachers viewed videotapes showing students communicating using either AAC device. Attitudes were measured using the Teacher Attitudinal Scale (TAS) and biographical information about the teachers was obtained using a questionnaire. The results revealed teachers were generally positive towards both devices. A comparison of teachers' attitudes towards the devices revealed no statistically significant differences in teachers' attitudes. Hence, teachers had similar attitudes towards both devices. However, there was a consistent tendency to perceive the Alpha Talker™ more positively. Reasons for this finding are discussed, as are the implications of this finding for implementing AAC services. In addition, the results revealed that teachers perceived a need for training in AAC strategies. Furthermore, the suggested mismatch between teachers' attitudes and the reality of the teaching context supports the need for teacher training prior to facilitating the implementation of AAC strategies and devices within the classroom context.

Key terms:

- Little or No Functional Speech (LNFS).
- Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC).
- Picture Communication Symbols (PCS).
- Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCA).
- Alpha Talker.
- Communication Board.
- Attitudes.
- Teacher self - efficacy.
- Expectations.
- Interaction.

Opsomming

Die doel van hierdie studie was om onderwysers se houdings teenoor studente met min of geen funksionele spraak wat twee Aanvullende en Alternatiewe Kommunikasie (AAK) hulpmiddels gebruik het. 'n Alpha Talker™ en a kommunikasiebord, te bepaal en vergelyk. Onderwysers het na videobande gekyk van studente wat met behulp van die onderskeie hulpmiddels kommunikeer. Houdings is met behulp van die "Teacher Attitude Scale" (TAS) gemeet en biografiese inligting is deur middel van 'n vraelys verkry. Die resultate het aangetoon dat onderwysers oor die algemeen positief was jeens beide hulpmiddels. 'n vergelyking tussen houdings rakende die hulpmiddels het op geen statisties noemenswaardige verskille in onderwysers se houdings gedui nie. Dit blyk dat onderwysers in hierdie studie soortgelyke houdings teenoor beide hulpmiddels gehad het, maar daar was 'n konstante neiging om die Alpha Talker™ meer positief te bejeën. Die redes vir hierdie bevinding word bespreek asook die implikasies hiervan vir die implementering van AAK-dienslewering. Die resultate het ook aangetoon dat onderwysers 'n behoefte vir opleiding in AAK-strategieë het. Die voorgestelde aanpassing tussen onderwysers se houdings en die realiteit van die onderwys konteks ondersteun die belang van onderwyseropleiding alvorens die implementering van AAK strategieë en hulpmiddels in die klaskamer konteks plaasvind.

Terme:

- Min of geen funksionele spraak (MGFS)
- Aanvullende en Alternatiewe Kommunikasie (AAK)
- Picture Communication Symbols
- Stem-uitset kommunikasiehulpmiddels
- Alpha Talker™
- Kommunikasiebord
- Verwagtinge
- Interaksies