Developing and Supporting Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Conversation Groups

Teresa Gray, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
Some background....

• **SF State’s mission:** Advancing social justice;

• **Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences:** Committed to anti-racism, as well as promoting linguistic diversity and dismantling barriers to access equitable communication for individuals with communication disabilities. ([https://slhs.sfsu.edu](https://slhs.sfsu.edu))
Spanish Conversation Club

• Summer 2021 – present
  • 2 - 6 group participants
  • Currently living in the United States
  • Meets via Zoom; twice a month; 1-hour sessions
  • Co-facilitated by student clinicians
Black Conversation Club

Subject line:
“Looking for info and resources about Black people with aphasia”

• January 2022 – present
  • 12-15 group participants
  • East and west coasts of the United States
  • Meets via Zoom; twice a month;
    1-hour sessions
  • Co-facilitated by student clinicians
Treatment: What is the experience?

• For language rehabilitation programs to be meaningful and appropriate, they must engage with the cultural contexts in which our clients live (Penn & Armstrong, 2016).
Spanish Conversation Club

Language

Culture

Racial/Ethnic Identity

sorbete, popote, pajilla
A retired special educator: “Because we [Black people] have the different issues—politically, socioeconomic, the racial issues and things like that—this is a safe place. This is a place that we can still, within the aphasia, we can still be proud Black people in this aphasia group.”
Who are ASHA licensed SLPs?

• Concordant relationships: Treatment outcomes improve when patients and caregivers share racial or cultural identity (Thornton et al., 2011).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>93.8%</td>
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<th>Multilingual Service Providers</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
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<td></td>
<td>8.20%</td>
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ASHA 2021 Member & Affiliate Profile: n = 213, 115;
Note: These counts include ASHA Certified Members and nonmembers, international affiliates, assistants, and associates during the period and whose dues/fees were paid.
Toolbox Takeaways:

Black Conversation Club

1. Actively recruit Black adults with aphasia, Black students, or Black healthcare professionals to facilitate the group.
2. Educate yourself on race in America.
3. Ask your patients what they would like to see from rehab services.

Spanish Conversation Club

1. Understand the culture
2. Demonstrate cultural flexibility
3. Practice cultural humility
4. Collaborate with an interpreter and recruit Spanish speaking SLP clinicians/students
Thank you and appreciation:

• Conversation Group members and their support partners

• Group Facilitators:
  • Maryvi Morales
  • Karina Tampa
  • Annel Rojas
  • Devora Dominguez
  • Angela Rowell
  • Tiara Thompson
  • Kenly Doyle
Black Conversation Club

A retired social worker: “For me, it’s the community and to be in a supportive setting. And as many people have already said, it’s just nice to be kind of free just to be open to be who we are with no apologies. This is my fourth meeting with you all. And I feel just suddenly, I have a community. I’ve also felt like more empowered so that when I go to some of these medical facilities, I can express again what I’m feeling, I don’t like, I feel like sometimes they don’t get it, because they don’t get sometimes us in general, but then when you tack on some of the medical things you’re dealing with it’s hard to express exactly what I feel.”

Grandmother of two: “My [other] group is definitely White, Asian, Hispanic. But … with [George] Floyd … I don’t think that they really understood how painful it was every week, and I went every single week. I wanted to say every day it’s very painful to see people [being beaten in] the street.”

A retired academic adviser: “It’s just nice to be kind of free just to be open to be who we are with no apologies. This is my fourth meeting with you all. And I feel just suddenly, I have a community.”