

Examining the utility of 'photovoice' as a tool for audiologists and audiology researchers: An NCRAR pilot study

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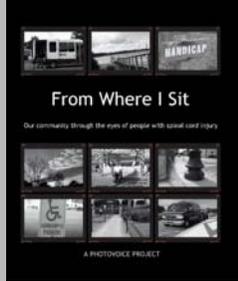
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NATIONAL CENTER FOR REHABILITATIVE AUDITORY RESEARCH

Photovoice

A qualitative method used for community-based participatory research to document and reflect reality




Our study

Evaluated use of photovoice as a tool for

- (1) Providing tailored communication strategies counseling
- (2) post-hearing aid fitting counseling
- (3) Enhancing communication and problem-solving about hearing loss between partners
- (4) Understanding the emotional impacts of living with hearing loss




Instructions

What we want from you:

- 20-25 photographs that show us xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx taken using your smartphone over the next week. Emphasized privacy issues
- Write in a sentence or two what the situation was, what is represents, and why you chose it
- If possible, write your notes within 4 hours of taking the photograph.
- If you are making handwritten notes add the date and time you took each photograph.
- At the end of the week, you will email the photographs to us.
- You will then come to the laboratory for a debriefing session during which photographs will be discussed



Experiment-specific instructions.

20-25 photographs that show us:

Expt 1 (tailored communication strategies counseling): common situations in which you have trouble hearing

Expt 2 (hearing aid counseling): typical daily activities in which you find your hearing aid particularly helpful or particularly problematic

Expt 3 (enhanced conversation between partners): typical daily activities you and your partner share. Decide individually what you want to photograph because you might have different opinions on what you think is important

Expt 4 (Emotional impacts of living with hearing loss): what having a hearing loss means to you



Participants

Group	No. participants (n with hearing aids)	Eligibility criteria
Facilitating strategies counseling	5 (3)	Hearing impairment
Hearing aid counseling	4 (4)	Received first pair of hearing aids within prior 6 months
Enhancing between-partner communication	5 (5) communication dyads	Hearing impairment and a communication partner willing to participate
Emotional impacts of living with hearing loss	5 (4)	Hearing impairment

Hearing impairment defined as 1 kHz thresholds \geq 40dB HL in both ears.
Hearing status of communication partner was not assessed

Did people take photos and were they willing to discuss them?



What did participants think?




Learning and problem solving

It's made me think concretely about specific things- specific losses- but that hasn't depressed me..... it's made me adapt. I think it **made me more aware and pay more attention. You know, speak up, tell people.**

When someone is first exploring their hearing loss, this activity is to get a picture of where the problem areas are... [it] may be very helpful in figuring out what are those options for hearing, whether it's devices or settings.



Learning and problem solving (cont.)

- It made you think a bit more.... What the real challenges are, instead of just living those challenges, thinking of the challenges
- It made me think about what areas do I have problems hearing and what things could be done to help them out.
- ...and it was interesting to me to reflect- where exactly do I have challenges and where don't I?



Hearing aid use

- I wore the hearing aids, which is something I was avoiding before.
- But then I decided, look, you got the hearing aids to help you hear so now I try to wear them every day.
- so it made me realize that I had to wear them all the time, instead of like wear them three days and then don't wear them two days, and then wear them one day and then don't wear them two days. You know, that's what I was doing.



Appreciation of hearing aids

- I never really thought about my hearing aids in the way that they worked for me or didn't work for me, I just did 'em and went 'maybe I don't like these and maybe I'm not going to be able to wear them' and I've had them adjusted like 2 or maybe 3 times.'
- It made me appreciate wearing my hearing aids more. There was a period where I was like- oh, I don't need them....
- What I found was that the sounds that were pleasant to me and that I enjoyed were mostly outside and that surprised me.
- It made me appreciate them because it made me feel safer...



Facilitation of conversation

- I enjoyed doing this and because I eventually told people what I was doing, I brought it up in conversation and then it helped create understanding and create also people's willingness to bring something up that they might not have brought up, because you know, we didn't know those people that well.
- It made us actually think about Did force us to think about more of the situations... it was positive because it gives us an opportunity to be more aware of what's going on and get some of our frustrations out in the open



Empathy for others

- ...it gives me a little bit more insight into people that are fully deaf
- I think the idea of having the couples come in and share like this is really good because it does give the hearing partner a better appreciation as to why [my partner] isn't paying attention to me'.
- Couples learned what each other thought



Researcher perspective

- Facilitated highly tailored counseling
 - Can see details about specific listening situations



Researcher perspective

- Facilitated highly tailored counseling
 - Can see details about specific listening situations
 - Highlights assistive technology needs (taxi driver, family in car)
 - Couples communication (dedicated listening time)
- Provides insight about
 - Lifestyle (use to select technology up front)
 - Priorities (safety/TV/socialization)
- Participants could identify with input
- Led to good rapport and trust



Other insights:

- Goal setting versus outcome (hearing outside)
- Activity itself provided forum for discussion with others
- People have vastly differing needs and goals
- Debriefing can get very personal



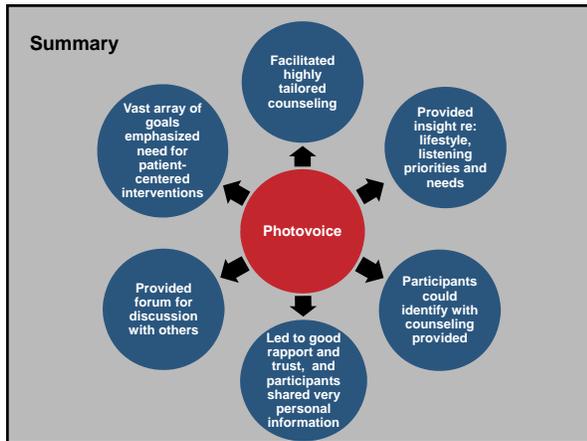
Living with hearing loss: Key emotions identified

Emotion	No. participants who assigned emotion to 1+ photo (max = 5)	No. photos to which word was assigned
Frustration, annoyance, irritation, stress	4	23
Sad, depressed	4	12
Left out, isolation, missing out, hard to be there	3	9
Peace, relaxation, joy, comfort, relief	2	13
Anger	2	2
Fear	1	3
Gratefulness	1	3
Embarrassment	1	2

Other insights:

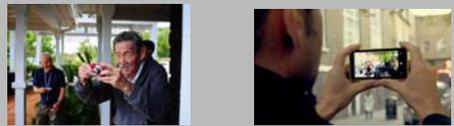
- Goal setting versus outcome (hearing outside)
- Activity itself provided forum for discussion with others
- People have vastly differing needs and goals
- Debriefing can get very personal
- HL is emotionally difficult but there can be positive impacts





Conclusion

- Potentially a valuable tool for intervention selection, communication counseling, facilitator of family-centered care
- Could be adapted for e-health

Thank you for listening



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