

Virtual Humans that Teach and Conduct Therapy

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The Coleman Institute for Cognitive disabilities has provided continuous support to the Center for Spoken Language Research for the past five years to conduct research to demonstrate the feasibility and potential of computer programs that can provide accessible and effective clinical treatments to individuals with cognitive disabilities. The seed funding provided by the Institute has enabled us to develop system prototypes and to collect pilot data that has led to over \$3 million in subsequent grants from the NIH and NIDRR to develop fully functional clinical treatments and to conduct clinical trials to assess the effectiveness of these programs. Our poster presentation will describe five computer programs developed at the Center for Spoken Language Research in collaboration with reading researchers and speech and language pathologists that have developed effective clinical treatments. Each of the programs uses a lifelike computer character that is designed to behave like an effective and sensitive clinician. The programs include *Foundations to Literacy*, for teaching children to read and comprehend text, LSVT Virtual Therapist, for individuals with Parkinson disease, and ORLA, Skriptalk and Sentactics, for individuals with aphasia. The results of initial clinical trials will be provided for each program.