

Research Proposal: Measuring Identity in Individuals with Aphasia at Fontbonne University

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Overview:

This research proposal will:

- Outline how modifying a pre-existing identity scale can measure whether G.R.A.C.E. therapy at Fontbonne University works to increase a sense of identity in individuals with aphasia,
- G.R.A.C.E. therapy will be outlined and defined as well as the terms identity and aphasia,
- case study results will be documented
- And potential next steps in furthering the study

Methodology:

Modified identity scale: Functions of Identity Scale (Serafini, Maitland, & Adams, 2006):

- The scale will be modified to a 1 to 3 rating scale as opposed to a 1 to 5. Clients can answer “yes, no, maybe” on the scale.
- Questions modified to be more simplistic while still maintaining reliability and validity.
- Lower scores implies a higher sense of identity.
- Tests will be given at two points of the year: 1) the beginning of the therapy semester, 2) the end of the therapy semester.
- The scores will be compared.
- The test will be administered to three groups: 1) individuals in G.R.A.C.E., 2) individuals in 1:1 style therapy, and 3) individuals with aphasia not in any form of therapy.
- Copy of modified scale is located with the case study

Potential Next Steps:

- Acquiring results from new clients at Fontbonne University, prior to the start of their therapy
- Promoting more group therapy services at clinics, hospitals, SNFs, rehab facilities, etc..
- Encourage activities that promote social interaction thus increasing overall sense of identity

Predicted Outcomes & Case Study Results:

	G.R.A.C.E	No Therapy	Individual Therapy
Pre	Baseline Identity Score	Baseline identity score	Baseline identity score
Post	Predicated significant increase in identity (predicated to be greater than individualized therapy)	No predicted change	Predicated increase in identity

What's Identity? Aphasia?

Introduction:

Identity:

- a combination of one's experience and perception that piece together who we are to others and to ourselves; functional communication with others helps increase identity.
- “What makes you *you*?” (Eaton)

Aphasia: (according to American Speech-Language-Hearing Association)

- a language disorder occurring as a result of brain damage.
- Individuals with aphasia may have difficulty understanding, speaking, reading, or writing.

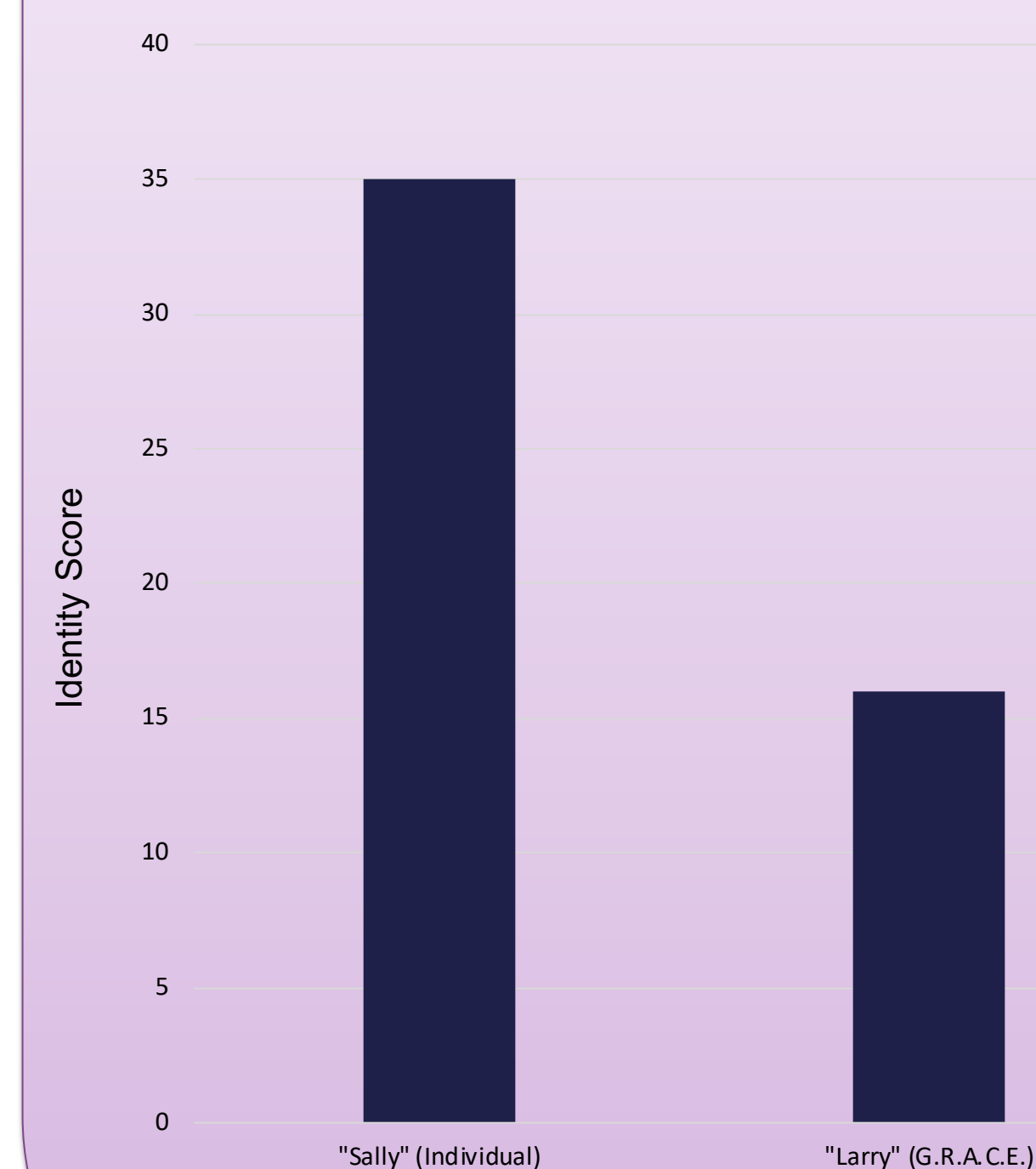
Group Rehabilitation for Aphasia and Communication Effectiveness or G.R.A.C.E. therapy:

- group therapy designed for individuals with aphasia to improve language skills & meet and interact with others with aphasia.
- Clients share not only language successes, but personal successes and failures of day-to-day living with brain injury, aphasia, and more.
- G.R.A.C.E. allows individuals with aphasia to re-establish their sense of identity.

Why Group Therapy?

- Individuals with aphasia experience social isolation and reduced social engagement. Group therapy encourages positive psycho-social outcomes (Layfield et al).
- Group therapy is beneficial even at the earliest stages of stroke recovery; promotes an enriched communicative environment (Coppens et al).
- Enriched communicative environment helps to promote neuroplasticity (i.e. the brains ability to change) (Diodge)

Case Study: Identity Score in Individual vs. G.R.A.C.E.



* Disclaimer: names reported have been changed.

The modified scale was administered to two clients at Fontbonne University: 1) a client in individual therapy and 2) a client in G.R.A.C.E. therapy. As the results show, the client in G.R.A.C.E. therapy had an increased sense of identity compared to the client in just individual therapy.

Adapted from the Functions of Identity Scale (Serafini, Maitland, & Adams, 2006): answer 1 (yes), 2 (sometimes), or 3 (no).

1. I am certain I know myself: 1 2 3
2. My values and beliefs reflect who I am: 1 2 3
3. I have made my own personal goals for myself: 1 2 3
4. I have a good idea of what my future holds for me: 1 2 3
5. When what I'm doing isn't working, I am able to find different approaches to meeting my goals: 1 2 3
6. I feel a sense of peace with myself and my identity: 1 2 3
7. My values and beliefs are consistent with the commitments that I make in my life at this time: 1 2 3
8. I tend to set goals and then work towards making them happen: 1 2 3
9. I am clear about who I am now and in the future: 1 2 3
10. The decisions I made about how to act are based on my personal choices: 1 2 3
10. I feel I have a consistent sense of self from day-to-day: 1 2 3
12. My values and beliefs fit with the person I am: 1 2 3
13. I am a goal-directed person: 1 2 3
14. Thinking about my future gives me a sense of direction: 1 2 3
15. I am self-directed when I set my goals: 1 2 3

References & Acknowledgements:

