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Developing a new procedure for assessing communication in severe aphasia: The Famous People Protocol.

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AphasiaBank is a shared, multimedia database of aphasic language (mostly in English) that has been funded since 2007 by NIH/NIDCD (MacWhinney, Fromm, Holland & Forbes 2013). AphasiaBank initially relied on methods for transcription (CHAT) and subsequent analyses (CLAN) originally developed for CHILDES, the remarkably productive database of child language that has been in existence for over 20 years. However, as a result of the development of AphasiaBank, CHAT now includes additional codes specifically tailored to aphasia. AphasiaBank currently contains almost 200 extensive and uniform samples of aphasic speech and language. AphasiaBank data largely comprise a protocol of discourse tasks, and responses to them. Also included in AphasiaBank are a number of demographic variables such as type of aphasia, age, use of certain morphological or lexical features, gestural accompaniments to spoken language, change over time etc. The database is available for use by researchers /clinicians to study a wide range of variables important to the study of language in aphasia.¹

This initial AphasiaBank protocol was heavily weighted toward spoken discourse and, as a result, precluded the collection of data regarding *communication* skills in individuals with aphasia (IwA) who have global aphasia or severe aphasia or apraxia of speech, or some combination of them. The result is that this reliance on discourse tasks has limited AphasiaBank for providing researchers with data across the the entire spectrum of aphasia.

To broaden the potential utility of AphasiaBank, we have recently developed an additional measure designed to study communication abilities of these severely (sometimes non-verbal) IwA. The procedure, called the Famous People Protocol (FPP), has been extensively pilot tested and revised on the basis of the performances of over 40 individuals with moderate to severe Broca' aphasia/Apraxia of speech and global aphasia. It is now included as a part of the AphasiaBank tasks, and is used with individuals who cannot provide discourse data. The proposed presentation will demonstrate the FPP, and describe its development in detail. Preliminary data on its correlation with the Western Aphasia Battery will be included. The presentation will also suggest how the FPP can be used by clinicians as a way to measure and document the communicative strengths of severely impaired aphasic speakers.

MacWhinney, B., Fromm, D., Holland, A., & Forbes, M. (2013). AphasiaBank: Data and methods. In Müller, N., and Ball, M., *Research methods in clinical linguistics*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

¹For a complete description of the child language and adult databases, see the website TalkBank.org. For AphasiaBank, follow TalkBank's link to AphasiaBank.

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