



Investigating Augmentative and Alternative Communication Users' Narratives: Analyzed Using Multilingual Assessment Instrument for Narratives (MAIN)

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Objective

- Investigating AAC users' narrative production and comprehension skills

Introduction

- Telling a distinct **narrative** is a determining factor in ability to communicate effectively [1]
- AAC**: An adaptive method of communication for individuals who have complex communication needs [2]
- Gap**: There is no standardized method of collecting AAC narratives [2]
- MAIN**: A tool used to collect narrative production and comprehension scores, has not been used with AAC users [3]
- Goal**: To pilot the use of the MAIN to collect and analyze narratives from AAC users

Methods

Participants:

- Four participants (female=1;male=3) between 13-37 years old, with diagnoses of cerebral palsy (n=3) and Autism (n=1)

Design:

- Observational case studies

Materials:

- MAIN PowerPoint and scoring protocol
- High-tech AAC

Outcome Measures:

- CLAN software was used to code and analyze the microstructure [4]
- MAIN scoring protocol was used to assess the macrostructure

Procedure

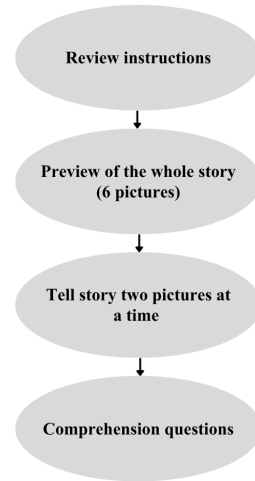


Figure 1: Flowchart of MAIN procedure

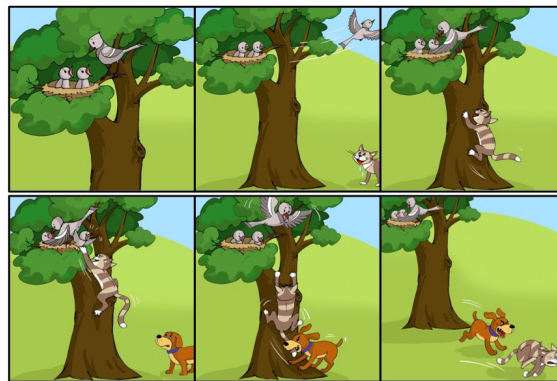


Figure 2: MAIN story picture example

Results

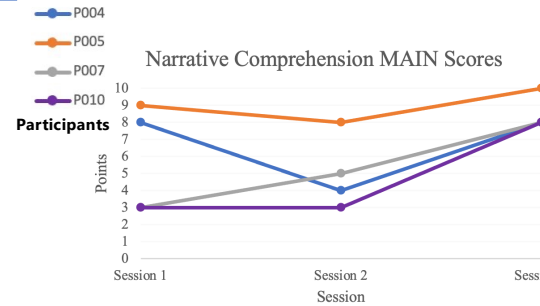


Figure 3: Comprehension scores the total amount of comprehension points each participant received out of 10

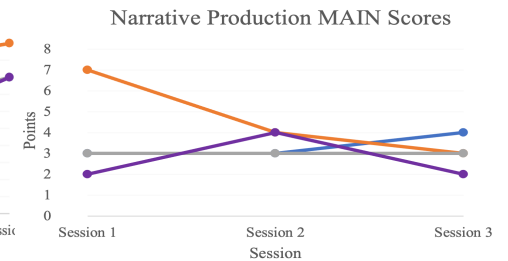


Figure 4: Production scores the total amount of points each participant received out of 17

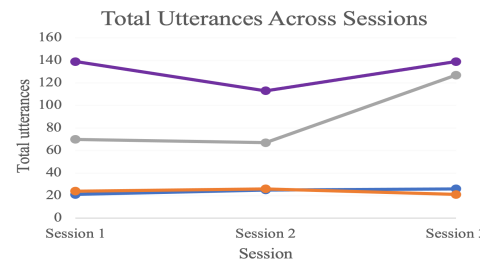


Figure 5: Total utterance the total amount of utterances the participant produced during each session

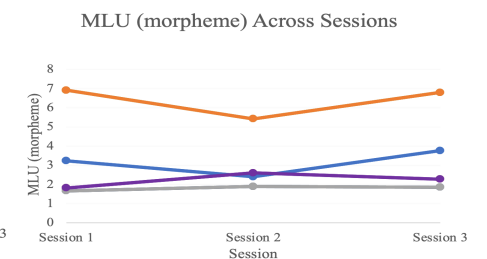


Figure 6: MLU morpheme the average number of morphemes the participant produced per utterance during each session

- Macrostructure: Production scores were much lower than their comprehension scores based on MAIN scoring protocol
- Microstructure: Length of the AAC users' narrative (Total utterance) did not reflect complexity level (MLU morpheme)

Discussion

- Limited complexity and production due to AAC access, available vocabulary, and motivation
- Findings suggest that the use of MAIN with AAC users is feasible, however, adaptations may improve user experience and engagement

Future Directions

- This is a preliminary study, part of a larger ongoing study that aims to have 20 participants
- These results provide insight into use of MAIN with AAC users and AAC users' narrative production & comprehension skills

References

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