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# **The Construct of Stance as a Unifying Framework to Understand the Communicative Functionality of Narrators and Co-Narrators with Aphasia in Conversational Settings**

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## **Introduction**

The ubiquity of personal narration in everyday life (Bruner, 2002; Fludernik, 1996; Norrick, 2000; Ochs & Capps, 2001; Quasthof & Becker, 2005) has catalyzed lines of research on the communicative functionality of narrators with aphasia. Past research on elicited personal narration of people with aphasia (e.g. Olness, Matteson, & Stewart, 2010; Olness & Ulatowska, 2011) serves as an entrée into emerging lines of research on spontaneous narration and co-narration among people with aphasia in conversational settings, which are represented by the present study.

The history of aphasiology has established a long and fruitful tradition of breaking new scientific ground with phenomenological case studies that are rigorously framed theoretically; the present study follows in that tradition. Specifically, data from a case of an aphasia-group session that displays multiple exemplars of spontaneously occurring, conversationally-integrated personal narration and co-narration are analyzed. Analytic methods are derived from converging, theoretical models that are relevant to conversational narration and its pragmatic underpinnings: models of stance (Keisanen & Kärkkäinen, 2014; Dubois, 2007), stance intersubjectivity (DuBois, 2007, 2014), linguistic evaluative devices (Labov, 1972; Martin & White, 2005), and the contrast between pragmatic modalizing/emotive and referential communicative functions (Nespoulous, Code, Virbel & Lecours, 1998; Olness & Ulatowska, 2020). Complementary constructs of relevance include: discourse typology (Esser, 2014; Longacre, 1996), footing (Goffman, 1981), multi-modality communication (Goodwin, 2003); language as a form of cooperative activity (Goodwin, 2013; Lerner, 2002); and contextual relativity of narrative coherence (Hyvärinen, Hydén, Saarenheimo, & Tamboukou, 2010).

## **Methods**

Data: Video-recorded, orthographically transcribed, 45-minute session of an aphasia group specifically designed to engage group members in “dynamic, naturalistic conversation” on topics that “shift(ed) in response to current events, member interests, or spontaneous

comments and opinions” similar to the group design described by Garrett, Staltari & Moir (2007, p. 164). The group served as a clinical training venue for graduate students in speech-language pathology. Conversational participants: Seated around a common table; six adults with aphasia (five male, one female; among them mild to moderate aphasia; non-fluent and fluent aphasia types); four female student clinicians.

## Results

At least 18 primary-teller narratives, of a variety of lengths, embedded in the conversation; each co-narrated verbally and non-verbally by others. The estimated total time spent in narration, 62%. Use of evaluative devices, semantic paraphrase, and syntactic parallelism across conversational turns (Figure 1) reflected stance resonance. Chains of stories on a thematic topic reflected parallel stance (evaluative content), e.g. young age at the time of first employment. Conversational turns consisted of verbal, prosodic, and gestural moves, and combinations there, across all conversationalists.

## Conclusions

The field of aphasiology has faced an ongoing challenge to reconcile the seemingly tenuous relationship between clinical linguistic impairment and naturally contextualized communicative functionality of individuals with aphasia. The present study provides one portal into the larger field of potential theoretical and phenomenological solution sets that may address this challenge: an instrumental case study that provides theoretical inroads centered on the construct of stance to advance the study of conversational narration and co-narration by and among people who have aphasia.

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17. GS:	Oh that-				
22.	That 's a		good book	.	
32.	That 's a		good book <b>Wally</b>	.	
33.		<b>Very</b>	good book	.	
34. ST.2:	<b>Which</b>		book	?	
35. GS:	<b>The</b>			,	
36.			<b>Stroke of Insight</b>	.	
38. ST.2:			My Stroke of Insight	?	
					41. ST2: We're probably going to start reading it.
					71. ST.1:Have you read it?
61. ST.3:		<b>on a</b>	stroke of insight	?	72. GS: Yeah.
63.	the		book	?	73. I read that.
					74. First time I read it,
82. GS:	<b>It 's</b>			,	
83.			very good <b>reading</b>	.	
84.			<b>You can't put it down</b>	.	
85.			<b>Basically</b>	.	
99.			Very good	.	
100.			Very good book	.	
103. ST.3:	<b>What 's</b>		very <b>cool</b> about it	,	
129.	It 's		very intense	.	
130.	It 's			,	
131.			unbelievable	.	

**Figure 1:** Syntactic parallelism and semantic paraphrase across conversational turns of multiple conversationalists (manifestation of stance resonance) at the beginning of a jointly-narrated story about a good book