

Taking up situated perspectives on language-use and discourse, a growing number of researchers are investigating the impacts of aphasia on individuals' abilities to communicate in everyday situations. Such research has begun to build a detailed portrait of the diverse resources individuals with aphasia and their communication partners draw on as they co-construct meanings and successfully manage communicative interactions (e.g., Goodwin, 2000; Hengst, 2003, 2006; Hengst, Frame, Neuman-Stritzel, & Gannaway, 2005; Oelschlager & Damico, 1998; Perkins, 2003). It has also begun to draw sharper attention to the often deleterious impacts that aphasia has on established personal and social identities as well as patterns of participation in community activities (e.g., Howe, Worrall, & Hickson, 2004; Shadden, 2005; Simmons-Mackie & Damico, 1999). This paper extends that growing portrait by exploring the use of conversational narratives (e.g., Ochs & Capps, 2001; Linde, 1993) as a discourse practice in a set of interactions among individuals with aphasia, their routine communication partners (e.g., children, spouses), and the clinician-researcher. Drawing on the narrative literature, this paper presents a framework for operationally defining conversational narratives, categorizing them by type, and describing their interactional production in conversational samples. It then provides an initial analysis using that framework on a small corpus of data (approx. 8 hours of recorded interactions centered around 5 communication pairs). Overall, the paper suggests that conversational narratives provided participants with a critical contextual resource in these interactions and that individuals managing aphasia used diverse verbal and nonverbal resources to initiate and contribute to such narratives.

Background: Research on conversational narratives (e.g., Bruner, 1986; Ochs & Capps, 2001; Hymes, 1974; Miller, Hengst, Alexandar & Sperry, 2000) has highlighted the pervasiveness and value of narratives across the lifespan. Extended and jointly produced narratives support everyday argumentation (e.g., Ochs, Taylor, Rudolph & Smith, 1992) and appear in a wide variety of forms and functions in everyday interactions (Ochs & Capps, 2001; Basso, 1979). Other researchers (e.g., Linde, 1993) have highlighted the importance of narratives to production of identity, documenting repeated accounts of individual life stories and events. To date, studies of narrative (e.g., Ulatowska & Chapman, 1994) in the discourse of adults with acquired aphasia have elicited narrative samples in controlled conditions (e.g., story telling to prompts, story retelling) and analyzed micro and macro level linguistic variables (e.g., word production, content units, coherence). Although a few studies have drawn on interactional data to examine particular types of narrative (e.g., illness narratives) by individuals with aphasia, we know of no study analyzing the use of conversational narratives in the discourse practices of individuals with aphasia and their routine communication partners.

Methods: Data presented here were collected in a broader ethnographic study of the discourse practices of individuals with aphasia and their routine communication partners, subsets of which have been previously analyzed for collaborative referencing (Hengst, 2003), reported speech (Hengst, et al. 2005) and verbal play (Hengst, 2006). Each participant pair included an adult with chronic aphasia (6 months to 4.5 years s/p CVA) and a routine communication partner (usually a spouse or child) without a history of brain damage. Pairs were videotaped on 12 occasions, four times in each of three settings: *community observations* (e.g., cooking, shopping); *clinic sessions* completing a barrier-task referencing game; and *semi-structured interviews* about their communicative practices. During data collection and transcription, the researchers identified use of narrative as a promising category for further study. Although initial

impressions suggested that full-blown, extended narrative performances were relatively rare, participants seemed to draw heavily on brief narrative forms (e.g., anecdotes, personal narratives) to manage these communicative interactions. The goal of this study was to examine these initial impressions by developing a framework to systematically analyze all narratives (brief and extended) in these data.

To optimize the number of conversational narratives identified, initial analysis focused on interview sessions, during which participants were encouraged to discuss recent conversational successes and breakdowns. Ten interviews (approximately 8 hours of video data), with two interview sessions for each of five participant pairs, were analyzed. Consistent with the constant comparative method of grounded theory (see Strauss, 1987) and rigorous ethnographic procedures (see Miller et al. 2003), this preliminary analysis consisted of three broad phases. In the first phase we developed a broad operational definition of conversational narrative and a framework for analysis by drawing on characteristics (and definitions) of conversational narratives presented in the literature along with characteristics of narrative productions observed in the target dataset. In the second phase, we are using the framework and consensus-coding procedures to identify and characterize all conversational narratives in the ten sessions. Coding all narratives allows us to characterize both narrator and audience roles of the participants. In the third phase, the coding scheme will be used to identify striking examples of narratives across all three settings in the dataset (i.e., interviews, clinic sessions and community observations). This extension to other settings provides a useful test of the completeness and versatility of the coding scheme and identifies further examples of conversational narratives. A qualitative, situated discourse analysis of striking examples will then explore not only the form and the patterns of production, but also the social and discursive functions of conversational narratives for these participants.

Results: To date, we have completed phase one, most of phase two, and anticipate that all three phases will be completed by April 2007. In phase one, conversational narratives were operationally defined as a stretch of discourse with 1) a marked shift in temporal frame and 2) a minimum of two elements (i.e., two linked events, or an event plus a linked evaluation). The framework then categorized *narrative elements* (e.g., background descriptions, temporal framing, evaluation, use of nonverbal resources, number of events), *narrative types* (e.g., historical or personal event, video/book retelling, future plan), and *patterns of production* (e.g., teller, which includes joint production; initiation by self/other; narrative ownership; patterns of initiating, organizing, and closing the narrative). In phase two, targeted sessions for four of the five pairs have been coded; early findings indicate that conversational narratives are pervasive in these data. Indeed, the total number of conversational narratives identified for each of these four pairs ranged from 47 to 100. In addition, all participants with aphasia actively contributed to the production of some of the narratives (5 to 42 per pair). The paper will present both quantitative and qualitative findings from all three phases of analysis.

Discussion: These findings contribute to the emerging portrait of aphasia in situated discourse practices. They begin to document the pervasiveness of conversational narratives in the discourse of individuals with aphasia and the role of narrative in managing successful communicative interactions. We anticipate that, as with other discourse resources (e.g., reported speech, humor, collaborative referencing), this analysis will find that the use of conversational narratives contributes to both social and referential functions by contextualizing talk/actions,

creating shared perspectives and histories, and contributing to the naturalness of communicative interactions. Our initial analysis suggests the value of further study of conversational narratives in clinical interventions as well as in the overall life course of individuals with aphasia and their interlocutors.

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