Intervention models for working with communication books for people with aphasia and their communications partners

ISAAC Barcelona 2010
Komm-A

A 3-year project headed by
DART – centre for AAC and assistive
technology & the Aphasia association
of Gothenburg

Funded by The Swedish Heritage
Foundation
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This presentation

- Background: Aphasia & AAC, pilot study
- Project: aims and methods
- Communication book: templates
- Information/instruction DVD
- Clinical model
- Group model – some experiences
- Training of SLPs and group leaders
Background

Aphasia rehabilitation until recently almost only aimed at language training.

Increased focus on aspects of activity and participation in ICF: functional communication!
Aphasia classification according to Lasker, Garrett & Fox, 2007

- More useful classification if your aim is functional communication and participation

- Partner dependent communicators
  - Emerging Communicator
  - Contextual Choice Communicator
  - Transitional Communicator

- Independent communicator
  - Stored Message Communicator
  - Generative Communicator
  - Specific Need Communicator

- Augmentative strategies are needed and useful for all types of aphasia
Increased interest in AAC strategies and tools to manage daily interactions

Earlier negative clinical experience – BUT – (the limited) research results are positive!

Many tools and technologies are better today – and they are not new to many of the users!
What seems to be the critical factors of AAC and Aphasia?

- The partner and expectations—AAC does NOT make a partner dependent communicator independent!
- Not wanting to be deviant

New communication strategies MUST be led, guided and modeled by PARTNERS - not the individual with a brain lesion

- Access to tools and methods that are easy to use and to personalize. Personal photos!
Pilot study
Master thesis: Ellborg & Zechel, 2005

- Template to a communication book
- 5 home visits during 3 months
- 5 couples, person with apasia + partner

Very positive results:
- Most communication goals achieved
- Books also used for language training purposes (functional vocabulary)
- Above expectations – why not earlier?
Aims of Project Komm-A

- Increase the possibility for individuals with aphasia to communicate and participate in society through the use of a communication book
Specific goals

- Develop templates to communication books that are available on the internet.

- Produce materials and models for information and education in AAC and aphasia for
  1) speech-language pathologists
  2) aphasia associations/educational services

- Evaluate the implementation in
  a) speech-language pathology practice
  b) group practice (mainly aphasia association)
Templates

Important to

- facilitate: to start practice and save time and energy
- give concrete ideas of content and design

Necessary to personalize!

- Include own photos
- Change word/phrases
- Delete/add pages/topics
- Chose format, size & type of book
Types of templates available today

- One for severe aphasia
- One for moderate aphasia – more pictures/words on each page/topic and more pages/topics
- Sort-out-book – to augment the inquiry-process during communication breakdowns
Two software formats:

- **PowerPoint**
  - available to most people
  - stable
  - all pictures/photos have to be imported

- **Communicate InPrint**
  - a good ready-made symbolbase
  - has to be prescribed or bought
  - instruction necessary
  - slow and unstable with many photos
DVD-film

- 20 min
- Content:
  - Basic information of aphasia, communication & AAC
  - Demonstrates use/practise
  - User interviews
  - Demonstration of how to make a book
Handbooks

Basic handbook for
– Partners and individuals with aphasia
– Group leaders
– Other professionals

Information of communication, aphasia, communication strategies, AAC and communication books

SLP-handbook

AAC and aphasia, The model of Lasker, Garret & Fox, communication books
## Individual clinical model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oc</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Home assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mapping: social network, Talking Mats: environments, people</td>
<td>Partner starts to use book/template</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choice of template</td>
<td>Bring personal photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mapping: Talking Mats: topics</td>
<td>Both use book/template</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Setting of goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bring more photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Completion of personal book</td>
<td>Use the personal book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goal setting in scale (GAS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Evaluation and revision of goals and book content</td>
<td>Use the personal book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Follow-up (after 2 months): evaluation and revisions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Group model

- Conversation partners
- Lots of opportunities to communicate and use the book
- Ideas from others
- Work together with others – support each other
Group model

- 7 occasions + a first information
- You apply as a couple: an individual with aphasia and a close communication partner.
- Information of conditions: knowledge of IT, access to digital camera, memory stick
- Optimal group size: 4 couples and 2 leaders (one knowledgeable in aphasia, the other in technology)
Preliminary reports from groups

Three associations have tried
  – Jönköping
  – Borås
  – Göteborg

One group at the Hospital Stroke Forum
(outpatient group)

Worked very differently! Did it their own way: no of participants, no of group meetings, amount of book use
Some results

- Very positive to the group – with both individuals with aphasia and partners
- All associations were positive to our original model but still adapted it a lot – seems to be important
- The amount of time it took to actually make a book was underestimated. A lot of time spent in front of the computers. They liked this but most needed a lot of help.
An idea might be to provide two courses: the making of the book – and use of the book – or to add some extra occasions to manage the content of the original model.

All course leaders were very satisfied and thought that the group and the model felt so meaningful, important and made communication so very concrete!

The Apasia Association of Sweden will invest money in the printing of books and spreading of the model!
Education of SLP’s/therapists

2 days

Content:
- Aphasia and AAC
- The Lasker, Garret & Fox aphasia model
- The clinical model of Komm-A
- The templates and design of books
- Down-loading of templates and practising of using InPrint/Boardmaker/PowerPoint to make changes
- Talking Mats
Education of group leaders

2 days

Content:

- Aphasia and AAC
- The group model
- The templates and design of books
- Down-loading of templates and practising of using Power Point to make changes
- Talking Mats
And what were the opinions of the individuals with aphasia using Talking Mats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good +</th>
<th>Neutral +/-</th>
<th>Negative -</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Initial information about the book</td>
<td>-Initial information about the book</td>
<td>-To use the communication book at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-The template was a good help</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-My personal communication book</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Good to make the book together with partner</td>
<td>-No of occasions</td>
<td>-To use the communication book at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Good to practice with my partner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-To use the communication book at home</td>
<td>-To use the communication book at home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-To use the book with family &amp; friends</td>
<td>-To use the book with family &amp; friends</td>
<td></td>
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What’s left of the project?

- Printing of handbook (SLP only in pdf-format)

- 5 seminars in different cities of Sweden
  - Morning: clinical model
  - Afternoon: group model

- Announcement of courses

- Publication of research article
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Here you find the templates and other project information