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Broken story of a woman with aphasia

Eija Roisko
Director, M.Ed.
Communication and Technology Centre
Tikoteekki/FAIDD , Finland
eija.roisko@kvl.fi

Kaisa Launonen
Ph.D., University lecturer of logopedics
Institute of Behavioural Sciences
University of Helsinki, Finland
kaisa.launonen@helsinki.fi

Introduction

What kind of stories do people with speech impairment have and how they tell about their lives when the means of communication vary, when the teller use only a few hundred graphic symbols or few words and gestures, an alphabet board or the speech is so unclear that it is difficult to understand?

Totally stories of 21 adults with speech impairment were collected, centring on their life and the way in which the speech impairment has affected it. All the storytellers used the services of an interpreter (AAC interpreter) with whom they had prepared a story or stories in advance. Some of them had also produced their stories in written form.

1. What kind of story is build in an interaction process together with a teller, interpreter and researcher? How does the teller describe the speech impairment has affected to her life?
2. What kind of identity can be found in this story? [Are the stories varying if the person with speech impairment has not been able to speak fluently from the birth or if the speech has been lost later (aphasia or progressing disease)?]

People routinely interpret and misinterpret other people's minds. Mind reading in cognitive psychology has been described as our efforts to explain people's behavior in terms of their thoughts, feelings, beliefs and desires (Nichols & Stich, 2003). Explain and predict the everyday behavior means monitoring other people's attitudes and feelings when interacting with them.

Participants use verbal and non-verbal means to make themselves understood and to understand each other. They try to interpret the minds of each other. Mind reading is an act of interpretation and understanding. In the interaction process in which the story is processed mind reading may be vital involving severe speech and other communication means (Aaltonen, T. 2010).

Data

This woman was 1966. She had a brain tumor 2005 which was operated. That caused her "aphasia". She has good comprehension of spoken everyday language and she uses words, gestures, writing (words, numbers) and pictures when communicating. She has an individual AAC interpreter paid by the municipality.

The data was gathered with an interview (informal telling of the story). Before our meeting she had done preparations together with her interpreter (a paper) how the speech impairment has affected to her life. Telling was recorded to the video and to the audio recorder.

Qualitative methods

The data is transcribed orthographically. The story will be looked through the narrative method: what kind of story is built, what kind of themes can be found and what kind of roles can be found in this extremely fragmented and hard-to-comprehend story built together with the teller, interpreter and interviewer (Halliday's processes and roles, see Herman, 2002, s. 141).

Literature:

Aaltonen, T (2010). *Mind reading', a method for understanding the broken narrative of an aphasic man*. In Beyond Narrative Coherence. Hyvärinen, M, Hydén, L-C, Saarenheimo, M & Tamboukou, M (eds.) Studies in narrative 11, Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 49 - 66.

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Nichols, S. & Stich, S. P. (2003). *Mindreading. An integrated account of pretence, self-awareness, and understanding other minds*. Oxford Cognitive Science Series. Oxford: Clarendon Press.