



Telling the Story of Narrative Activity & Analysis in the AD(H)D Clinic

Louise Gaffney BSc

&

Irene P. Walsh PhD

Trinity College Dublin

(in conjunction with Lucena Clinic)



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Introduction: What is AD(H)D?

- characterised by developmentally inappropriate levels of **inattention**, **hyperactivity** and **impulsivity** (APA, 2010)
- **language dysfunction (metacognitive & pragmatic deficits)** inherent to the presentation; may also have a co-occurring **language impairment** as evident on testing (Westby & Cutler, 1994)
- language profiles variable & rates of **co-morbidity higher** than general population (Im-Bolter-Colter & Cohen, 2007)



Background: AD(H)D & the ‘disorder’ paradigm

Predominant “disorder” paradigm associated with AD(H)D:

- through use of negative terms such as ‘*disordered*’, ‘*dysfunctional*’, ‘*poor*’ & ‘*problematic*’ (Walsh et al., 2010)
- extends to language and communication in AD(H)D, including narrative ability (Im-Bolter & Cohen, 2007)

Reports in literature:

- problems understanding and producing narratives
- narratives tend to be less complete, coherent, complex, and well organized than narratives told by typically developing peers (Newman & McGregor, 2006, Petersen et al., 2008)



Background: Challenging the ‘negative’ paradigm re narrative & AD(H)D

- Able to reproduce a **coherent story** when distractions are minimised (Flake et al. 2007).
- Comprehensive evaluation of narrative skills - “**across a variety of elicitation methods**” (Luo & Timler 2008; 18)
- Consider notion of ‘**individual variation**’ among the narrative abilities of children with AD(H)D (Walsh et al., 2010) .
- Difficulties reflective of the assessment tools adopted, rather than truly **representative** of narrative ability?



Background: What is a narrative?

- Labov (1972) - “fully developed” narrative
 1. **Abstract** - *What was this about?*
 2. **Orientation** - *Who, when, what where?*
 3. **Complicating action** - *Then what happened?*
 4. **Evaluation** - *So what?*
 5. **Result/Resolution** - *What finally happened?*
 6. **Coda** - *So what does this mean for now?*
- Much variability amongst the definition of what a narrative is or should be (Walsh, 2006)
- Narratives may not have abstracts or codas
- Personal experience narratives **less monologic** than originally proposed by Labov (Johnstone, 1996)



Everyday stories

Everyday stories “*are not produced alone*”, whether it is “*full collaboration*” or a “*more limited jointness*” all “*oral stories are joint accomplishments*”

(Tracey 2002, p. 151)





Background: Narrative & the Clinic

- Important vehicle for academic, social, linguistic, and cultural learning
(Petersen et al., 2008; Spencer & Slocum, 2010)
- Should be evaluated routinely as part of language assessment (Fey et al., 2004; Petersen et al., 2008)
- Traditionally assessed by formal means
- Significant flaw with formal measures is that they assess narrative as a ‘solo’ performance (Holmes, 1997, p. 94)
- Formal measures do not assess spontaneous personal event narratives





Aims of Project

1. To **investigate & describe narrative skills** among a group of children with AD(H)D, occurring in a conversational context in a SLT clinic
2. To reach **a better understanding of the narrative abilities** of children with AD(H)D
3. To **discover & develop a means of analysing narrative activity**, as occurring conversationally



Context

- **Setting** Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- **Participants** a group of 6 children, aged 9-12 years, with a primary diagnosis of AD(H)D
- **Data Collection** audio recordings of participants' assessment sessions; focus was on both:
 - (i) the general talk between the child and SLT and
 - (ii) the *Narrative Elicitation Protocol* (adapted from Peterson & McCabe, 1983)



Analytic Framework & Definition

Ochs and Capps (2001)

- propose a framework of analysis for conversational narratives
- suggest that they can be described by a set of dimensions occurring along a continuum
- discourse analysis perspective => we have imported into SLT world

Working definition

“The recapturing of a past event or story through the recall and chronological sequence of two or more events, which can be constructed collaboratively with others in an interactive and dialogic way or as a solo performance of the speaker themselves”

(adapted from Ochs & Capps, 2001)



The Analytic Framework

Adapted from *Narrative Dimensions and Possibilities Framework*

Ochs and Capps (2001, p. 20) who propose that narratives can be described according to five core dimensions:

1. tellability

2. tellership

3. embeddedness

4. linearity

5. moral stance

➤ these dimensions can displayed in different ways and to different degrees within narratives



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The Narrative Dimensions and Possibilities Framework (Ochs & Capps, 2001, p. 20)

Dimensions		Possibilities
1. Tellership	One active teller	→ Multiple active co-tellers
2. Tellability	High	→ Low
3. Embeddedness	Detached	→ Embedded
4. Linearity	Closed temporal and order	→ Open temporal and causal order
5. Moral Stance	Certain, constant	→ Uncertain, fluid



What we did

- Refined definitions
(e.g. tellership, tellability etc.)

- Adding a mid point on
the continuum



- Establishing a descriptor for each point on the
continuum

Dimensions	Descriptions
Tellership	<p>1 Active Teller <-----> 1 Active Listener</p> <p>refers to extent and type of involvement of the interlocutors in the recounting of a narrative; measured in terms of degree of activity or passivity of the interlocutors and whether they collaboratively produce the narrative</p>
<u>Tellability</u>	<p>High Tellability <-----> Low Tellability</p> <p>relates directly to content and substance of events being told and analysed in terms of whether it is of a novel, unusual, unique, common or mundane quality.</p>
Linearity	<p>Closed Order <-----> Open Order</p> <p>extent to which narratives organise events in terms of time & causality; measured in terms of structure i.e. start, middle and end and chronology or sequencing of events</p>
Moral Stance	<p>Certain, Constant <-----> Uncertain, Absent</p> <p>refers to interlocutor's perspective on events within narratives and how they encode and maintain moral worldviews about what they believe to be good and valuable</p>



The Analytic Framework

The Continuum of Narrative Activity adapted from the framework of Narrative

Dimensions and Possibilities devised by Ochs and Capps (2001, p. 20)

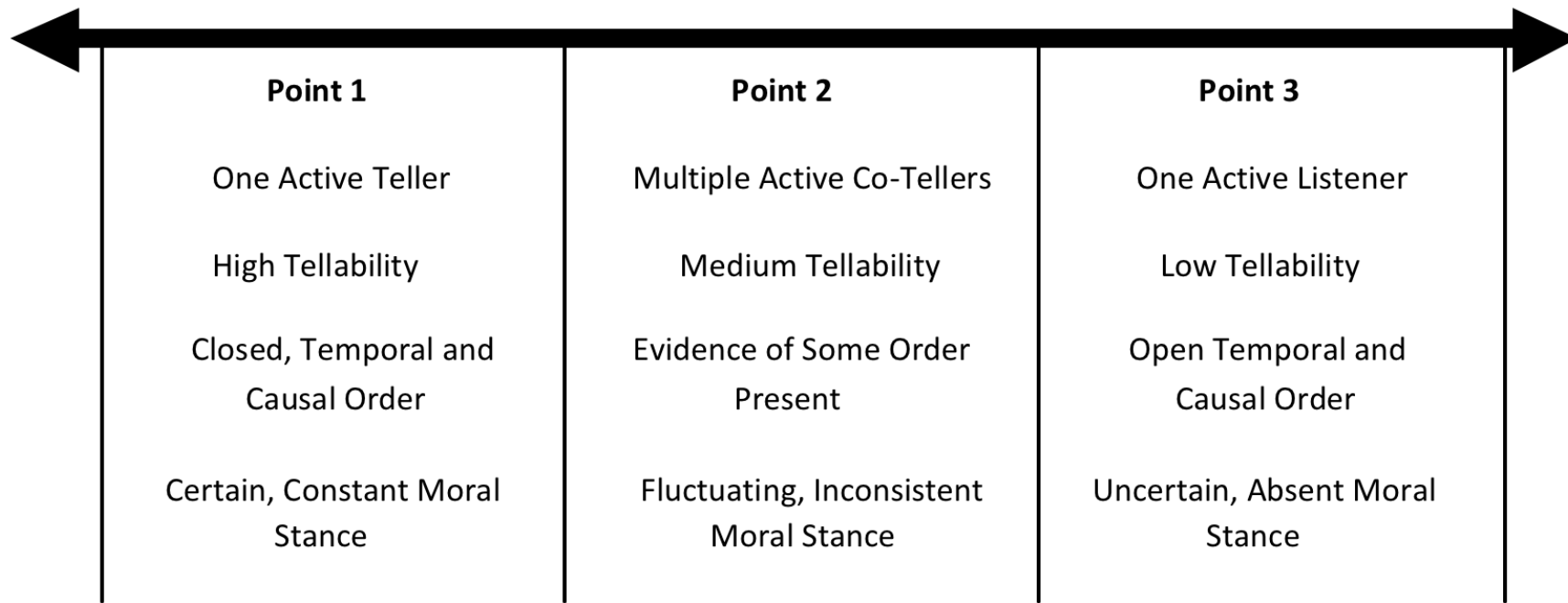


Table 2.15: Summary of the entry level criteria required for the three main points on the Continuum of Narrative Activity (as adapted from Ochs & Capps, 2001)

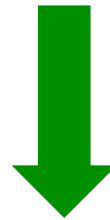


Dimensions	Point 1 (Left Hand Side)	Point 2 (Midline)	Point 3 (Right Hand Side)
Tellership	<p>May contain multiple co-tellers, but main active teller engages in narrative production.</p> <p>Content of the teller's turns contribute more substantially to shaping of narrative than listeners turns.</p> <p>Teller more active than listener.</p>	<p>Multiple co-tellers collaboratively produce narrative.</p> <p>Both interlocutors make substantial contributions and shape recall of narrative.</p> <p>Both listener and teller display active involvement in narrative production.</p>	<p>Multiple tellers involved but narrative is mainly told by listener.</p> <p>Listener's turns contribute more substantially than those of the teller and directly shape the recall of narrative.</p> <p>Listener more active than teller.</p>
Tellability	<p>Content of narrative is novel, unique or unusual in some way.</p> <p>Narrative is not one that is heard frequently or on an everyday basis or in general conversation and is of a newsworthy quality.</p>	<p>Content is more universal and familiar to the interlocutor.</p> <p>These narratives are told more frequently but not necessarily on an everyday basis.</p>	<p>Content is ordinary and mundane. Typically of everyday activities which the listener can readily relate to.</p> <p>These narratives tend to be told very frequently and are typically about events that occur on an everyday basis.</p>
Linearity	<p>Narrative contains a clear beginning, middle and end and a clear chronology/sequence of events is evident.</p>	<p>Narrative does not necessarily have a clear beginning, middle and end. However, some degree of order or sequencing of events present.</p>	<p>Narrative contains no beginning, middle or end. There is no form of sequencing or links evident between events.</p>
Moral Stance	<p>Moral stance constant and consistent.</p> <p>Moral stance clearly stated by one of the interlocutors regarding their moral views in relation to the events being told and remains certain throughout the narrative's telling.</p>	<p>Some degree of moral stance is present however it is typically fleeting, inconsistent or fluctuates i.e. variable.</p> <p>Moral stance may be initially stated but usually becomes less constant and more unstable as narrative progresses.</p>	<p>Very low degree of moral stance present or is completely absent from narrative production.</p> <p>Moral stance usually uncertain and not explicitly stated or mentioned at all throughout narrative.</p>



The Analytic Framework

Narrative Dimensions and Possibilities Framework
(Ochs & Capps, 2001, p. 20),




‘The Continuum of Narrative Activity’
(hereafter referred to as CNA)

Each narrative was closely reviewed and analysed in terms of each of the four dimensions (i.e. *tellership, tellability, linearity and moral stance*) following the entry level criteria.


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Table 2.16: *Table used for the analysis of the four dimensions within a narrative*



Dimensions	Point 1	Point 2	Point 3
Tellership			
Tellability			
Linearity			
Moral Stance			

Table 2.17: *An example of how a narrative may be mapped on the continuum in terms of dimensions*



Dimensions	Point 1	Point 2	Point 3
Tellership	x		
Tellability	x		
Linearity		x	
Moral Stance	x		



Narrative Telling and Analysis in Children with AD(H)D

Example 1:

- This example focuses on type of narratives whose dimensions cluster predominantly **at the left hand side of the CNA**
- Narrative 1 is about ‘an accident resulting in a broken arm’.





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Example 1

Narrative 1

(IW4 Combined Am Extract 1 (Narrative Probe), Session 3 - 24'00 – 26'16 (narrative 4))

1. SLT: and have you ever have you ever hurt yourself like have you ever broke yuno cut your
2. //arm or *
3. C: //my brother* broke his arm
4. SLT: did he
5. C: yeah=
6. SLT: =what was that like
7. C: it was a bit sore for him
8. SLT: oh what happened how did he break it
9. C: [be]cause my friend me and my friend he was a boy and he we were bouncing on the
10. trampoline the two of us and there was another and his brother were em (.) were out
11. on the trampoline and my eh (1.0) my friend he was a boy he eh squished my brothers
12. arm and one of his em (.) bones popped out
13. SLT: oh my goodness=
14. C: =put it didn- popped out like=
15. SLT: =no I know=
16. C: =he was it was just like broken //like that*
17. SLT: //broken* yeah and were they able to fix it
18. C: mm yeah it took about three or four or two weeks
19. SLT: hhh my goodness and did they put a plaster on it?
20. C: yeah it was like an arm thing=
21. SLT: =an arm thing //a sling?*
22. C: //and a* big hard.=
23. SLT: =yeah
24. C: thing and it would be rotten when ye take //took it off *
25. SLT: //oh was it*
26. C: but he took a shower and it was all clean
27. SLT: oh good. so it all ended up okay
28. C: then he went then before the other week that he broke his after the other week that he
29. broke his arm he em had to get another one on he's he didn't break it again it just
30. SLT: oh okay=
31. C: = it was just soft one just to help him again=
32. SLT: =just to give it support
33. C: yeah
34. SLT: alright=
35. C: =then he was better
36. SLT: okay my goodness

Table 3.2: Narrative 1 and its dimensions plotted on the proposed CNA



Dimensions	Point 1	Point 2	Point 3
Tellership		x	
Tellability	x		
Linearity	x		
Moral Stance	x		

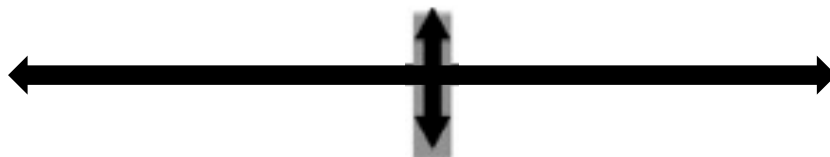
i.e. two co-tellers, high
tellability, clear linear order, 21
certain moral stance



Narrative Telling and Analysis in Children with AD(H)D

Example 2:

- This example looks at types of narratives whose dimensions **are at the midpoint**, or span the areas to the left or to the right of the midpoint.
- Narrative 2 focuses on the previous completion of a reading assessment.





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Narrative 2

(MS1 Combined Ae Extract 2, Session 3; 01'18 – 03'00)

1. SLT: em I did these in school and //em*
2. SLT: //did you* =
3. C: =the teacher said that em or the girl em eh em her names Karen she's the type who did
4. that (.) the and em she said that I got up to like a sixteen year olds vocabulary or
5. something like that
6. SLT: wow wow =
7. C: =aren't you suppose to take the pho- the story away from when we're reciting it
8. SLT: okay {whisper} which for the questions is it =
9. C: =yeah
10. SLT: yeah I was watching you yesterday and you weren't you weren't checking it out so I
11. didn't have to do that em and can you remember when you did these (.) with: her
12. C: last no (2.0) em I think eh (.) last year
13. SLT: last year
14. C: yeah
15. SLT: at the start of fifth class is it sometime in fifth //class*
16. C: //near* the end of fifth
17. SLT: so like in June
18. C: y- yeah
19. SLT: so like a couple of months ago
20. C: yeah a couple of months ago
21. SLT: these exact stories? =
22. C: =no different ones =
23. SLT: =oh the same idea was it =
24. C: =yeah the same idea
25. SLT: oh: right em did the whole class do them
26. C: no
27. SLT: oh? just you?
28. C: just me and another boy
29. SLT: oh right I wonder why that was
30. C: I dunno
31. SLT: ((laughing)) and is sh- she a teacher in the school
32. C: em well she's eh she's like a I'm not sure what type of teacher she is she's not like she
33. doesn't teach a class she takes people out of their class like she takes people out
34. SLT: oh okay
35. C: so
36. SLT: to give some extra help is it
37. C: yeah
38. SLT: okay well you're happy they weren't these stories
39. C: yeah
40. SLT: that they're different
41. C: yeah //(XXX)*
42. SLT: //okay then let's keep going with these* that's super and that's that's great news isn't it
43. yeah all the way up to sixteen?

Table 3.4: Narrative 2 and its dimensions plotted on the proposed CNA



Dimensions	Point 1	Point 2	Point 3
Tellership		x	
Tellability	x		
Linearity		x	
Moral Stance	x		

i.e. two co-tellers, a high degree of tellability, varying linear sequencing and a relatively certain moral stance.



Narrative Telling and Analysis in Children with AD(H)D

Example 3:

- This final example centres on those narratives whose dimensions tend to fall predominantly **toward the opposite end** or right hand side of the continuum
- The final narrative, Narrative 3, focuses on visiting people in hospital.



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Narrative 3

(SB5 Combined R Transcription of Session 1 Extract 1 Narrative 3; (25'08 – 27'10))

1. SLT: have you ever had to see anyone in hospital before (.) ever had to visit anyone (9.0) or
2. can you remember
3. C: I saw myself in hospital
4. SLT: huh
5. C: I saw myself in hospital
6. SLT: ((laughter)) you saw yourself in hospital ((laughter))
7. C: well who else (6.0) I think I went to see my Mam
8. SLT: your Mum. can you remember why she was there
9. C: eh (.) I forget
10. SLT: forget. {whisper} you think you went to see her did you %
11. C: but (.) eh (.) I remember I saw somebody else
12. SLT: was it any of your brothers or sisters or friend. or an aunty or an uncle
13. C: oh yeah my sister
14. SLT: your sister?
15. C: she got something wrong with her she has asthma
16. SLT: oh:?=
17. C: =yeah (.) and I think she had an asthma attack I think yeah I think so
18. SLT: and what happened to her then did you have to go in {whisper}
19. C: well no she didn't have an asthma attack she just was not well?
20. SLT: okay
21. C: and we lived in Dublin and we had to go to Tallaght hospital cause she got sick or
22. floor in the hospital
23. SLT: oh. uh-oh ((laughter)) I'd say she didn't feel very well
24. C: (XXX) she was only four
25. SLT: she was only //four*
26. C: //five*=
27. SLT: =five
28. C: going on six
29. SLT: oh and was she okay
30. C: eh yeah
31. SLT: and what did the doctors do to make her better do you know
32. C: eh: not really
33. SLT: probably gave her {whisper}=
34. C: =I've been in hospital two times
35. SLT: you have?
36. C: three
37. SLT: three oh my gosh {whisper}
38. C: cause my finger my arm and my leg- ankle
39. SLT: that's loads (.) loads and loads don't want to go anymore do you (.) no that's enough.
40. ((laughter)) any way that's loads of news a really big chat

Table 3.7: Narrative 3 and its dimensions plotted on the proposed CNA



Dimensions	Point 1	Point 2	Point 3
Tellership	x		
Tellability			x
Linearity			x
Moral Stance			x

i.e. one active teller, of low tellability, with a non linear order with no evidence of moral stance emerging.



Discussion

1. The Success of the CNA as an Analytic Tool

- accounts for both monologic & conversational narratives

2. The CNA versus Traditional Narrative Assessment

- more ecologically valid way of describing narrative ability

3. Narrative (dis)ability & Children with AD(H)D

- can expose ability and identify difficulties



Clinical Directions & Implications

- ***In general, clinicians could:***
 - think more broadly in terms of narrative and its assessment
 - consider conversational nature of narrative
 - consider level of ‘jointness’ present within narrative productions
 - audio record sessions frequently & attend to the talk around tasks
 - use narrative elicitors & allow for naturally emerging narratives to be heard

- ***Using the CNA, clinicians can:***
 - adequately view personal event narratives in terms of the dimensions tellership, tellability, linearity and moral stance (Ochs & Capps, 2001).
 - richly describe any narrative activity using the CNA
 - specifically assess individual dimensions within narratives, allowing them to be targeted individually in therapy
 - evaluate therapy or progress both within narratives as a whole or individual areas being targeted



Conclusion

- This study was an unexpected journey, from the beginning when searching for a suitable analytic tool, to the later development of that tool, which ultimately allowed for the description of the complex narratives seen in children with AD(H)D.

“Full of hesitations, queries, and considerations of alternative perspectives” “generally difficult to demarcate and systematically analyse”

(Ochs and Capps, 2001, p. 23)

- In reality, these are the narratives which we experience on a day by day basis with our familiars and the analysis of such narratives is believed to be the most *“ecologically valid way”* to assess narrative activity (Botting, 2002, p. 1).



Special thanks to Lucena Clinic

Thank you for listening



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