

Gesture is key to communication, but assessing or analysing it is time consuming, and requires specialist technology & skills. This project synthesises gesture coding frameworks to make a screening checklist that can be used live, the **City Gesture Checklist (CGC)**.

## Theoretical Issue Addressed

People with aphasia have difficulties with communication which result from stroke.

- gesture may be impaired in aphasia
- gesture can serve a communicative function in aphasia

For this reason, gesture is a common focus for clinical intervention in aphasia (Rose, 2006).

A number of gesture coding frameworks have been used in aphasia research. Such frameworks could potentially be useful in clinical intervention, in helping to identify a person with aphasia's gestural strengths and weaknesses.

However these may:

- require specialist analysis
- require specialist software (e.g. ELAN).
  - impractical for clinical practice.
- often place emphasis on issues of theoretical form above communicative function

This research aims to explore whether and how frameworks developed within the context of aphasia research can be distilled to make them relevant and practical for clinical use.

## Findings

**Seventy-two** coding categories identified across the seven frameworks.

**Thirty-four** used unique descriptive titles. **Nine** of these were classified within the 'function' class and **25** within the 'form' class.

## Similarity between categories

Considerable overlap between the different categories, e.g.:

- Deictics<sup>3</sup> & Pictograph-locatives<sup>1</sup>
- Handling<sup>4,7</sup> & Kinetograph<sup>1</sup>

## Clinical Utility

Gesture coding categories were considered in terms of feasibility for an online gesture checklist.

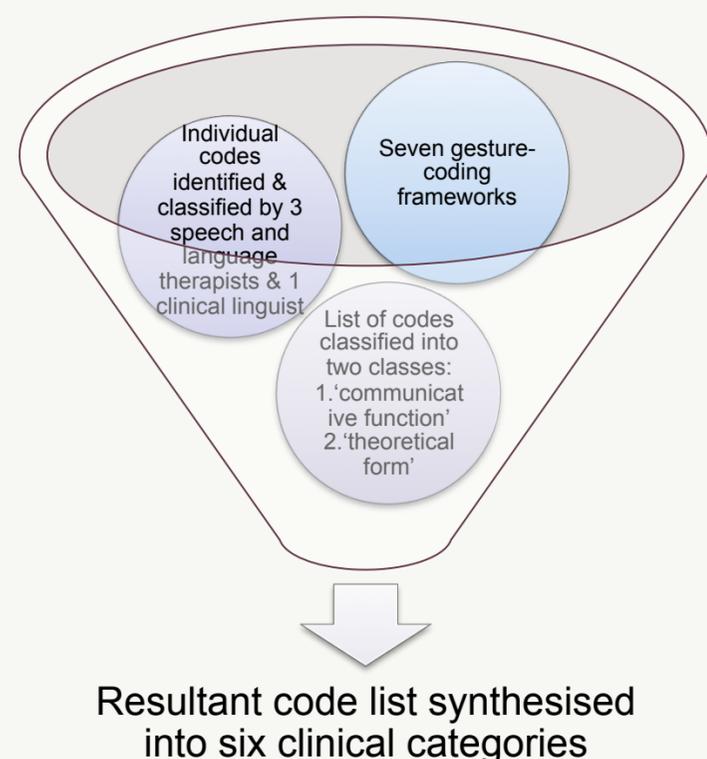
*Function* gestures (e.g. similar, additional, essential) were judged too difficult to determine online, as the meaning of the entire utterance would need to be considered.

*Form* gestures synthesised into six categories:

- 1) **Deictic** [Concrete/ abstract]
- 2) **Emblems**/ conventional gestures
- 3) **Iconics** [outlining/shape, handling, enacting, object]
- 4) **Number**
- 5) **Air writing**
- 6) **Other**

## Research Methodology

Aim: to identify coding features suitable for use in a clinical gesture screen



## Conclusion and Next Steps

Currently, there is no commonly accepted clinical tool to support theoretically informed evaluations of people with aphasia's gesture production. The current project created a theoretically-informed list which minimises the need for specialist skills in gesture coding and analysis and is intended to be clinically useable and informative. Next, a prototype gesture checklist (**CGC**) will be tested with potential users at a co-design workshop to examine the reliability of the different categories. Feedback will be sought on the utility of categories, and how to provide clear definitions to ensure the checklist can be used accurately in practice.