

Operationalization Of The Progressive Aphasia Communication Toolkit (PACT)

#0817

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The PACT represents a strengths-based approach to documenting communicative ability, developed in close partnership with clients, care partners, clinicians, and researchers.

“Testing reminds me that I’m degenerating.” - PwPPA

“I loved it. A conversation was what I needed.” - PwPPA

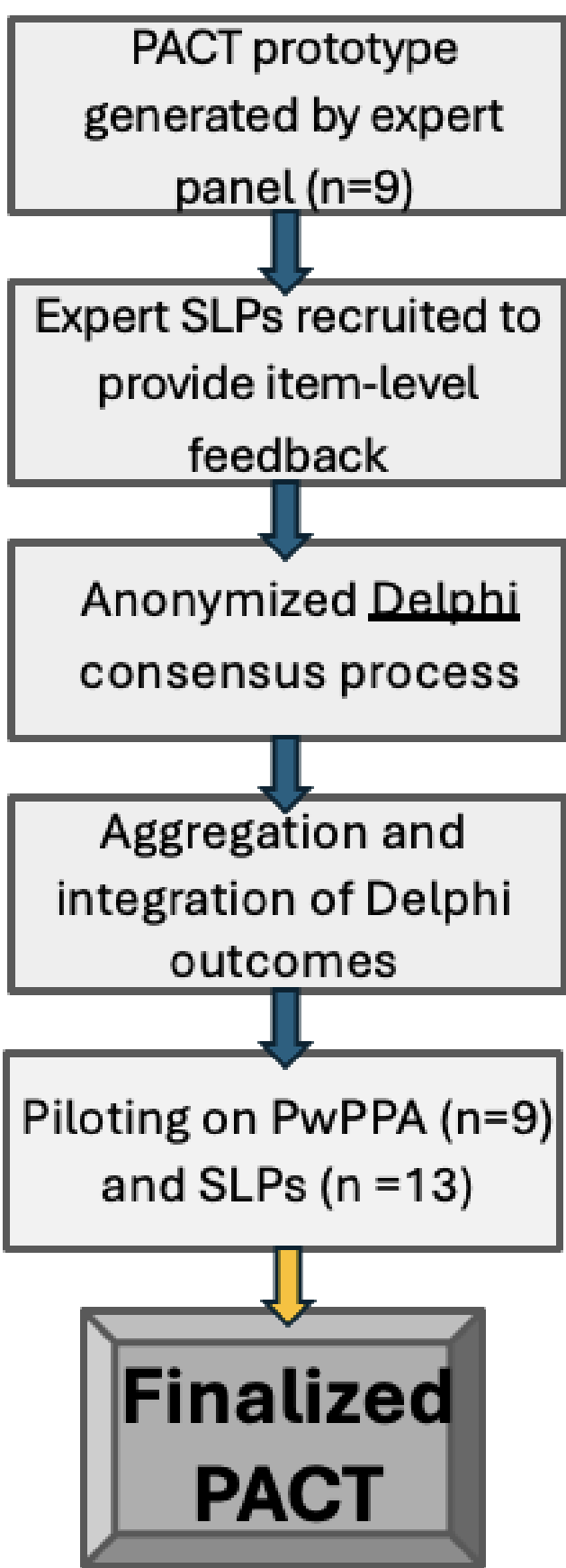
INTRODUCTION

- Current tools to assess communication insufficiently capture strengths in real-world interactions and generalize poorly to the goals of speech-language intervention.
- This is especially true for progressive conditions, such as primary progressive aphasia (PPA).
- Existing measures are typically impairment-focused and overlook multimodal, contextual communication strategies and are non-specific to PPA.
- We introduce the PACT to address this gap. The PACT is an assessment tool developed via Delphi methodology to holistically assess **STRENGTHS** across domains of communication (Gallée et al., 2026).

We aimed to create a tool that is:

- An assessment of communicative competence, based on a mutually-beneficial and minimally burdensome naturalistic conversational sample
- Easy to implement across clinical and research settings
- A valid, reliable, and holistic measure of communication for therapeutic targets in speech-language therapy
- Developed specifically to assess communication for people with neurodegenerative conditions
- Developed in partnership with patients, care partners, clinicians, and researchers
- Reflective of patient and care partner feedback in outcomes

METHOD

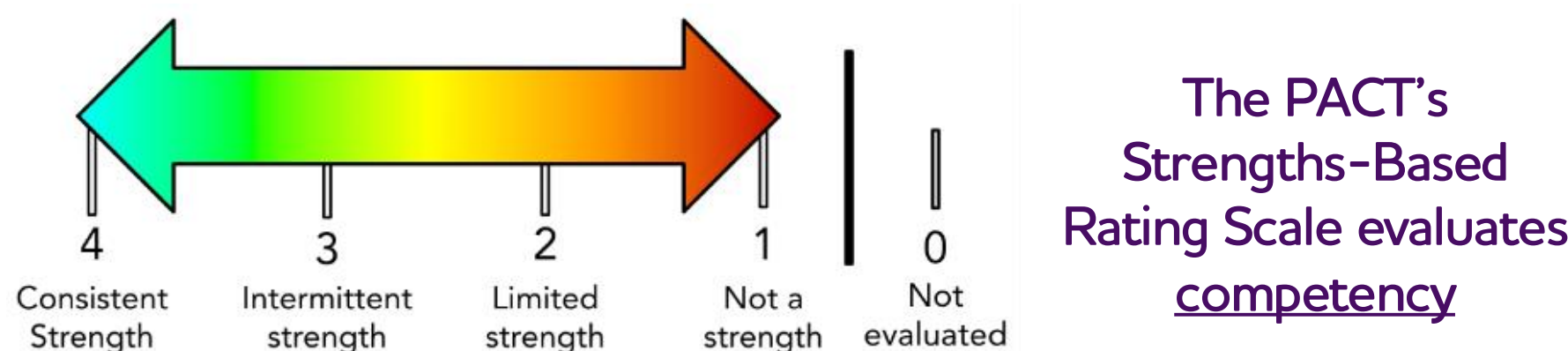


- Data were collected between May 7th, 2024, and November 10th, 2025.
- Feedback from 95 **partners in research** (patients, care partners, clinicians, and researchers) was integrated
- The PACT is now an interactive collection of scales with 31 items that assess multiple domains on a 5-point scale:
- Speech and Voice** (8 items; e.g., “Intelligibility”; 4.3/5 importance [SD: .95])
 - Language** (9 items; e.g., “Specificity of word retrieval”; 4.4/5 importance [SD: .22])
 - Social-Pragmatics** (8 items; e.g., “Initiation of spoken or compensatory communication repair strategies”; 4.5/5 importance [SD: .72]),
 - Discourse** (6 items; e.g., “Topic relevance”; 4.4/5 importance [SD: .78]).

RESULTS

RESPONDENTS		
	Accessed	n
Participants	Survey	100% Completed
Round 1	68	58
Round 2	36	28
Round 3	30	30
Round 4	34	31
Identities		
Speech-language pathologist	46%	
Researcher working in the field of PPA	60%	
Expert in functional communication	18%	
Gender Identity		
Female	94%	
Male	5%	
Non-Binary	1%	
Clinical Practice		
Years of Clinical Practice	14.4 (SD: 7.60)	
Number of PwPPA seen (either clinically or for research)	105 (SD: 70.6)	

- 31 PACT items evaluate strengths-based performance from the listener perspective



- Clinician observation, patient, and care partner feedback are integrated qualitatively into the scale as three separate items.
 - The PACT is based on a video recording of a structured conversational sample, probing
- Case History** (e.g., “Tell me about your communication challenges or successes.”)
 - Light Conversation** (e.g., “How was your trip over to the clinic today?”)
 - Communication Task** (e.g., “Show me how you’d communicate with your spouse if you needed to tell them something.”)

Usability

- 8/9 PwPPA and 6/6 care partners rated the PACT as superior to traditional neuropsychological assessment.
- Preliminary validation (n = 13) shows 85% agreement in strength ratings from SLPs trialing the tool for pre-recorded conversations, with the most variation observed for the logopenic and mixed PPA variants.
- Good reliability established in a follow-up study (n = 36) with 3 raters (ICC = 0.83; Talbot et al., in progress)

“It’s helping me think about things in a little bit of a different light instead of deficit-based, which is usually what we’re thinking about.... What can this person do? What’s a strength and what’s not a strength?”

CONCLUSIONS

- The PACT is the first freely accessible strengths-based instrument specifically developed for progressive aphasic syndromes
- Future directions include broader-scale validation, psychometric analyses of scale items, and cross-cultural adaptations in collaborations with teams in Belgium, Brazil, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

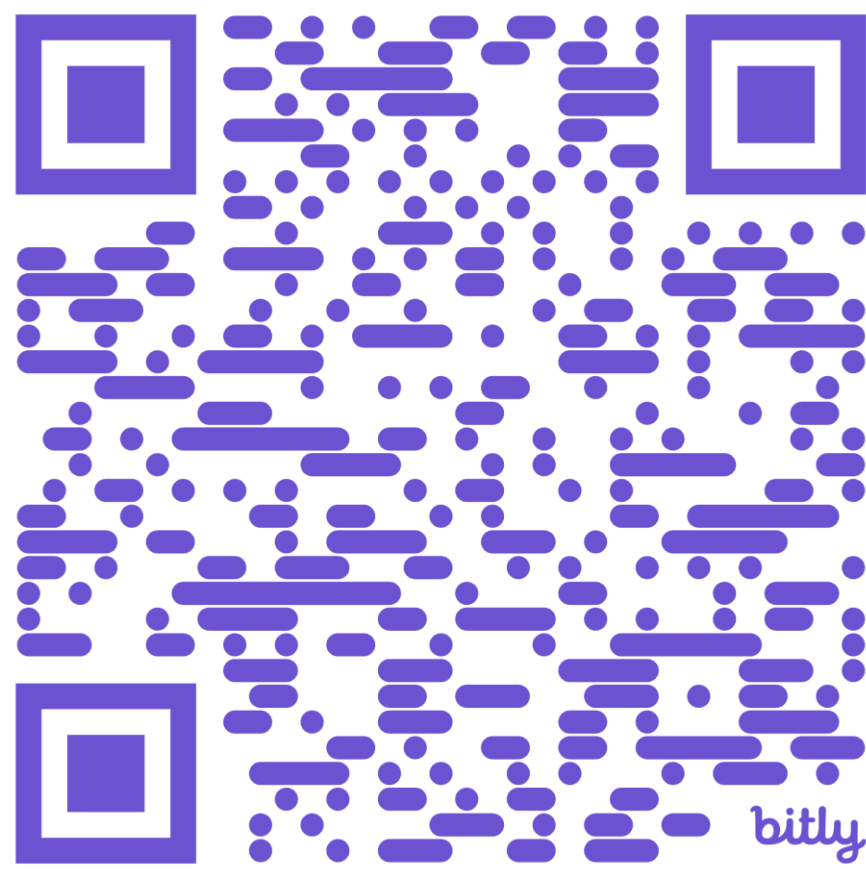
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Access the PACT here:



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