



Using Outcome Research to Inform Educational Practice in AAC

**Mary Hunt-Berg, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
Elisa Kingsbury, M.S., CCC-SLP
The Bridge School
Research Program**

**AAC by the Bay
San Francisco, CA
September 30, 2005**



Times have changed since 1987...

- New legislation
- Increased availability & capacity of assistive technologies
- Increased focus on full-participation and quality of life
- Increased recognition of the need for outcome data



Our retrospective study allowed us to examine:

- Characteristics of former Bridge school students
- Aspects of their Bridge School experience
- Patterns of acquisition of AAC systems
- Outcomes in areas of
 - Current educational setting
 - Communication modes & partners
 - Perceived quality of life



Data Collection

Archival data review

- Selective data entry from archival data sources
- Included 15 years of existing educational documents
- Data points taken at specified intervals

Follow-up Interviews

- *Social Networks: A Communication Inventory for Individuals with Complex Communication Needs and their Communication Partners*
(Blackstone & Hunt-Berg, 2003)
- Quality of Life for Persons with Physical & Sensory Impairments
(Renwick, Rudman, Raphael & Brown, 1998)



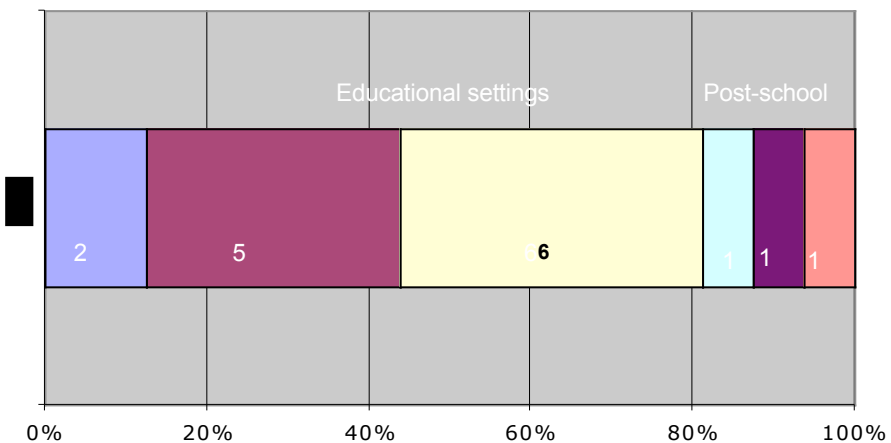
Our 16 participants included 7 males & 9 females ages 11 to 26 years.

- Diagnoses
 - All had severe speech & physical impairment
 - All had hearing within normal limits
 - 14 had cerebral palsy, 7 of these had visual impairments
- Mobility
 - 14 used wheelchairs for mobility, 2 were ambulatory
- Access
 - 8 used switch operated scanning
 - 8 used direct selection with a tool or body part
 - 4 who used direct selection also used iconic encoding



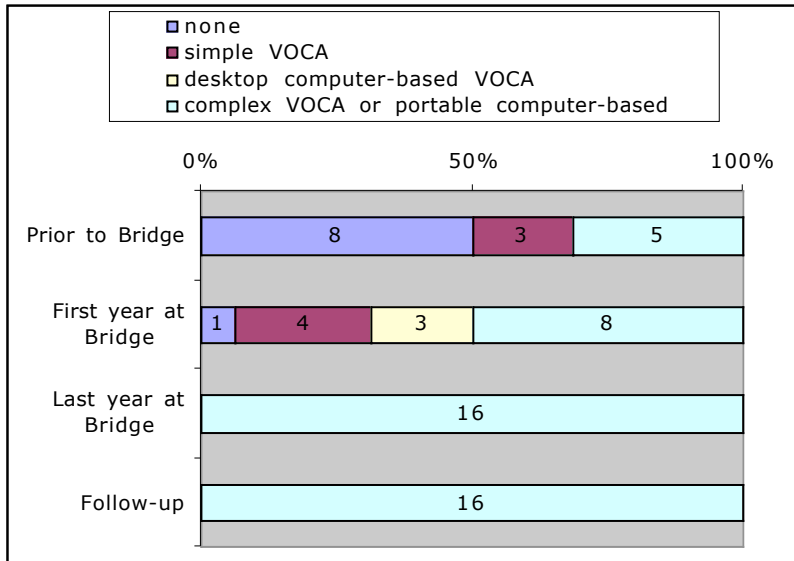
Where were participants at follow-up?

- noninclusive setting
- selective inclusion
- full inclusion
- employed
- community based adult program
- university





Did participants have complex VOCA's at follow-up?



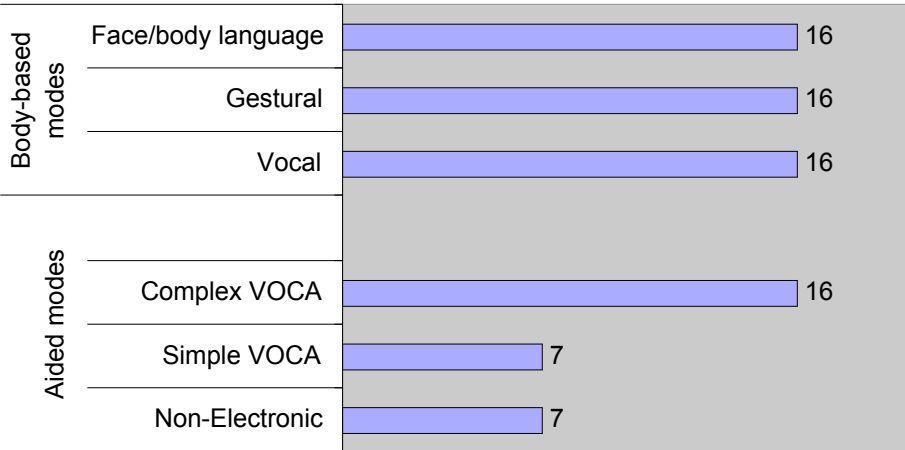
Which complex VOCA's did participants have at follow-up?

	Final Year Bridge	Follow-up
DynaVox	5	6
Pathfinder	1	3
DynaMo	1	1
DynaMyte	1	1
Freestyle	2	1
DeltaTalker	2	1
TouchTalker	2	0
LightTalker	1	0
Audscan	1	0
Vanguard	0	1
Vantage	0	1
Liberator	0	1

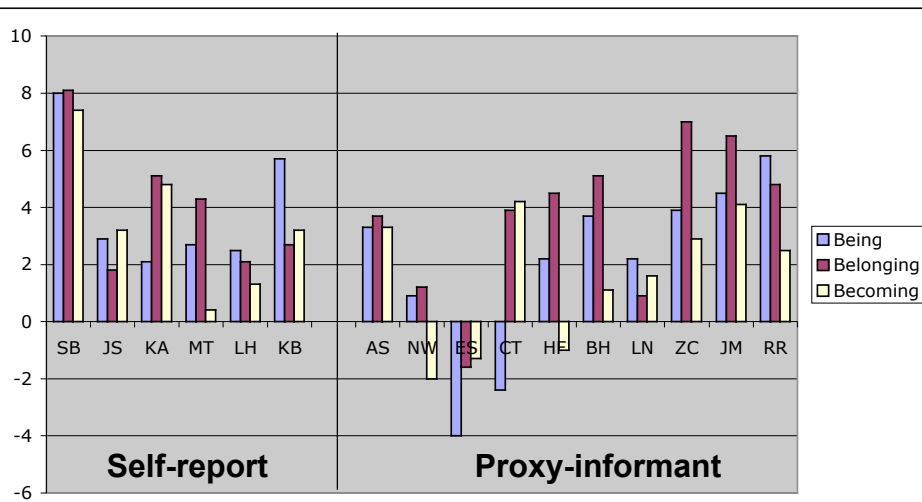


What modes did participants use at follow-up?

All modes used

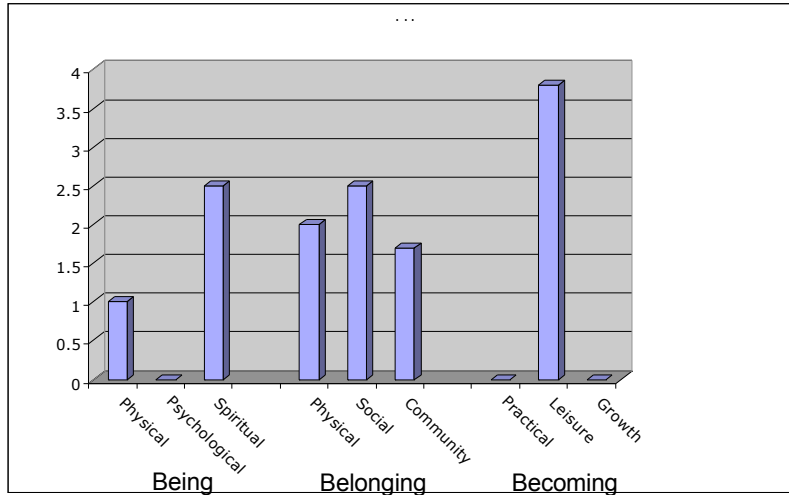


There was wide variation in perceived quality of life.





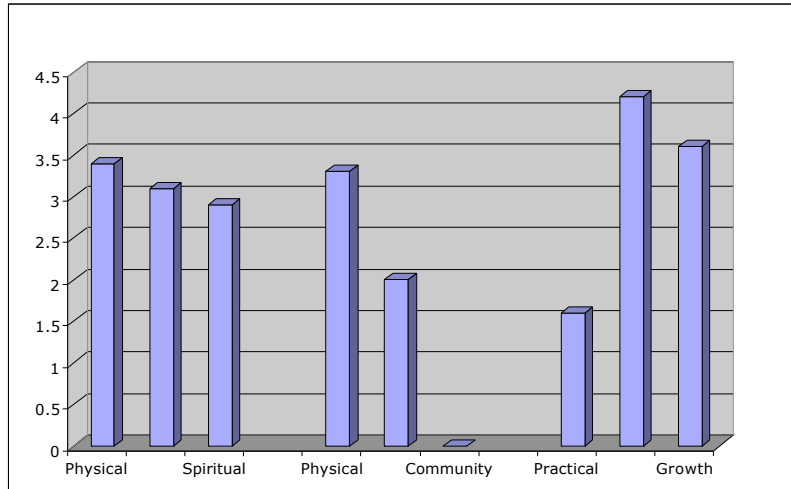
Individual profile across quality of life domains



Being	Low Importance	Medium Importance	High Importance
High Satisfaction		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning to get along better with others (growth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having vacations and holidays (leisure) • Doing outdoor activities (leisure) • Participating in holiday activities (leisure) • Visiting and socializing with people in my family (leisure)
Medium Satisfaction		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing volunteer work (practical) • Doing work around my house (practical) • Doing school work (practical) • Doing hobbies (leisure) • Improving/maintaining my skills (growth) • Learning about new things (growth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking after a pet (practical) • Doing work I get paid for (practical) • Going to appointments (practical) • Shopping for myself and others • Helping family, friends, others in practical ways (practical) • Getting out with others (leisure) • Going to movies or shows • Doing indoor activities (leisure) • Visiting and socializing with friends or neighbors (leisure) • Trying things I haven't tried before (growth)
Low Satisfaction			



Individual profile across quality of life domains



Belonging Community only	Low Importance	Medium Importance	High Importance
High Satisfaction			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> going to places in my neighborhood having events in my community to go to
Med. Satisfaction			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the degree to which I depend on my family being able to get social services being able to get other special services being able to live in affordable housing feeling the gov't. understands my needs having access to meaningful work having adaptive equipment or services
Low Satisfaction		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> having classes or programs I can take 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> being able to get health services having transportation to get to where I want to be

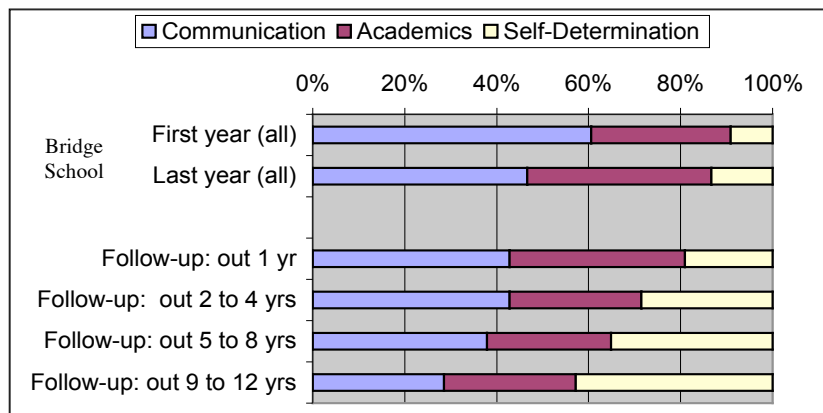


What was the focus of instruction at follow-up?

Communication	Academic	Self-determination
Communicative competence as defined by Light (2003). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Operational •Linguistic •Social •Strategic 	Skill development in literacy & math plus specific content areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reading •Writing •Language arts •Math •Science •Social studies •Music 	Essential characteristics of self-determined behavior choice making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •increasing independence •decision-making •goal setting •problem solving



What was the focus of instruction at follow-up?





References

Hunt-Berg, M. (2005). The Bridge School: Educational Inclusion Outcomes over 15 Years, *AAC*, 21, 116-131.

Blackstone, S. W. & Hunt-Berg, M. (2003). *Social Networks: A Communication Inventory for Individuals with Complex Communication Needs and their Communication Partners*. Monterey: Augmentative Communication, Inc.

Renwick, R., Rudman, R., Raphael, D., Brown, I. (1998). *Quality of Life Profile: People with Physical and Sensory Disabilities*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto.