

Script Club: motivating real change through remote group script training for people with primary progressive aphasia (PPA)

Talbot, R. ^{1,3}, Farrington-Douglas, C. ⁴, Mummery, C.L. ^{2,3}, Warren, J.D. ^{2,3}, Volkmer, A. ^{1,3}

1. Psychology and Language Sciences, UCL, UK
3. National Hospital for Neurology & Neurosurgery, UCLH, UK

2. Dementia Research Centre, UCL Institute of Neurology, UCL, UK
4. Headway East London, UK

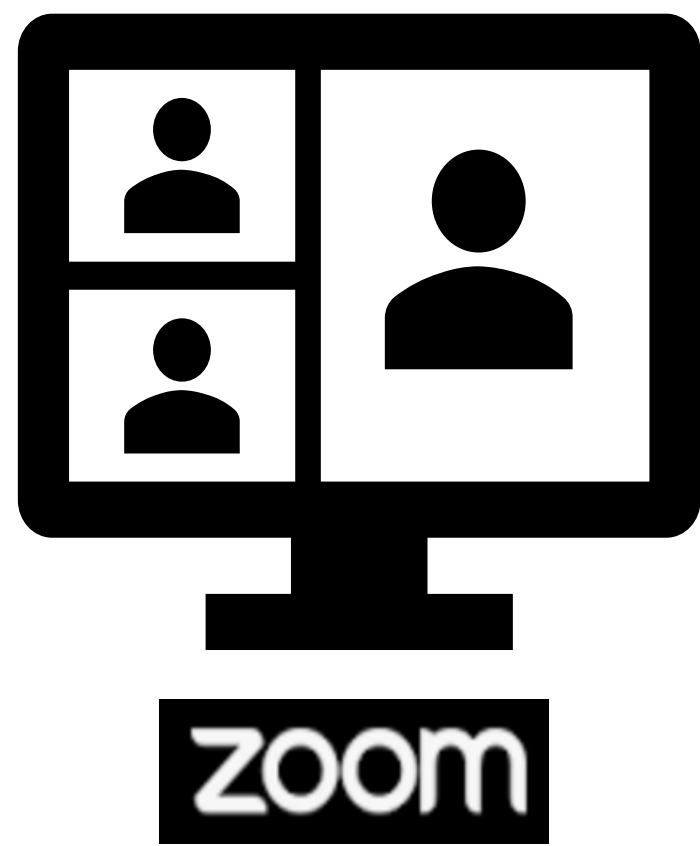


Background

- **Script training** is a **speech & language therapy** intervention that has been shown to improve fluency and grammatical well-formedness in nonfluent PPA, including when delivered via **telehealth** (Henry et al. Brain 2018;141 1799–1814)
- Therapy can be difficult to **access** (e.g. due to service availability, travel, support). Getting therapy on via **synchronous telehealth** may help
- **Group** therapy has the potential to support **carryover** of skills and learnt scripts to **everyday conversational contexts**

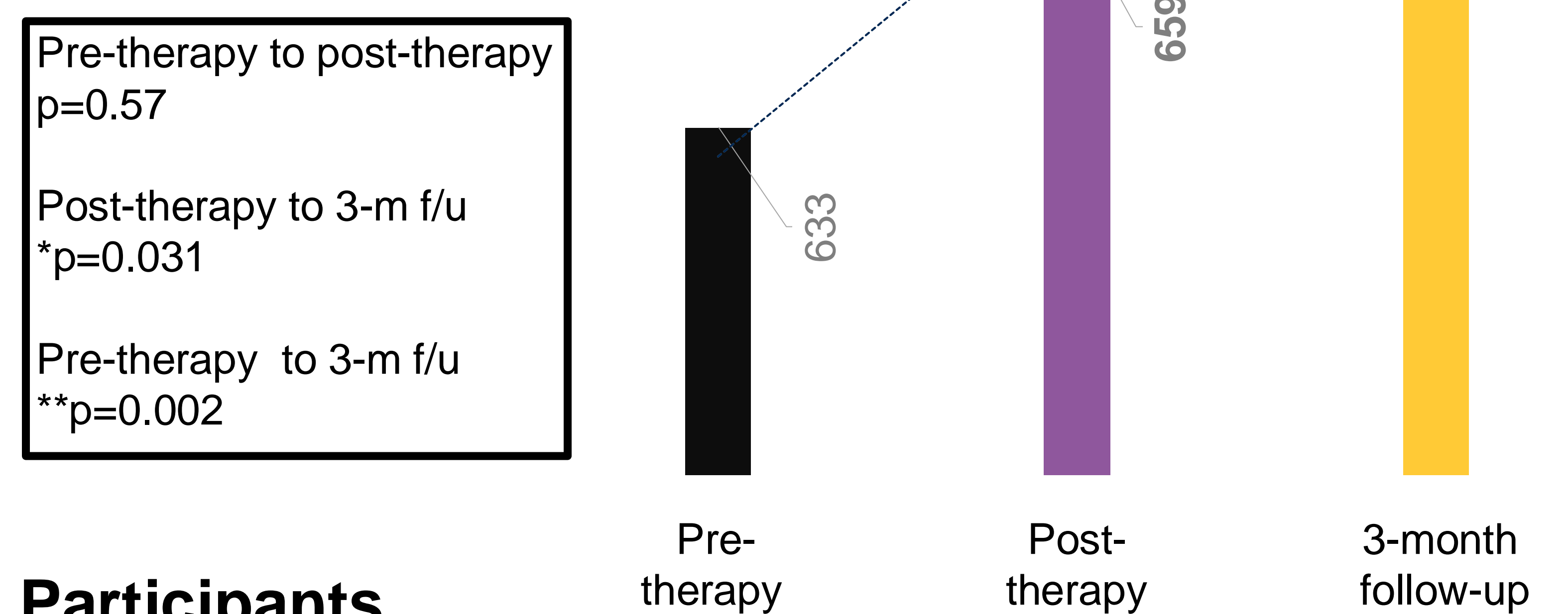
Methods

- Four groups of four people with PPA took part in **'Script Club'** for an hour each week across eight sessions using the videoconferencing platform **Zoom**
- Feasibility and acceptability were assessed by attendance and feedback
- Measures including the Communication Confidence Rating Scale in Aphasia (CCRSA) (Babbitt et al. Aphasiology 2011; 25 727-735) and accuracy of script production (words correct) were taken pre- and post- therapy and at 3-month follow-up

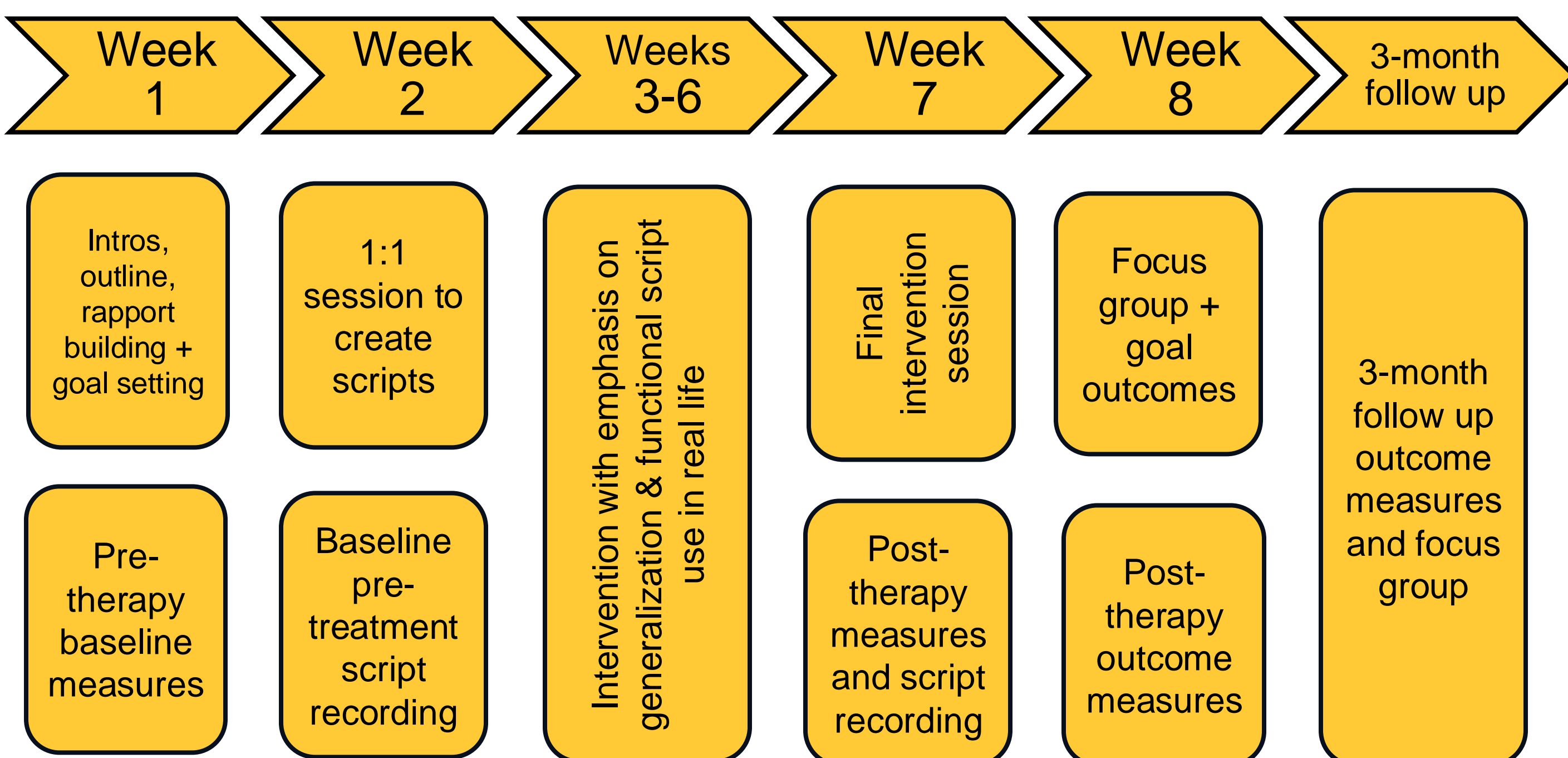


Results - communication confidence

CCRSA scores improved non-significantly following therapy, reaching significance at 3-month follow up



Session-by-session overview of Script Club



Results - feasibility & acceptability

Attendance at script club was **93%**, and feedback overwhelmingly

positive with themes including **functional script use** and the benefits of **meeting others** with PPA

"We all have a PPA diagnosis...but we are all people as well, it is a **privilege** to have met everyone, we are all muddled together - it's an amazing experience for us to be in a **safe place** - we are different, but we have the same challenges in different ways. It makes me happy to see how **competent** we all are"

"I use them every day - I prepare little scripts. I make sure what I'm going to say before making a phone call"

Participants

PPA variant	n	Average age (range)	Average time since diagnosis / onset
Nonfluent (PSP, CBS)	n=5 (3F)	73 (53-82)	15m / 50m
Logopenic (YOAD)	n=9 (6F)	66 (69-76)	8m / 45m
Mixed (GRN)	n=2 (2F)	58 (56-60)	26m / 49m

Results - script accuracy

Overall script accuracy improved immediately following therapy for all participants

Mean of all participants with PPA		Words spoken	Script words produced	Words per minute	Intelligibility (/5)
	Pre-therapy	172	42%	79	2.5
Post-therapy	246	68%	92	2.75	

Improvements were more marked for participants with nonfluent variant PPA

Mean of all participants with nfvPPA		Words spoken	Script words produced	Words per minute	Intelligibility (/5)
	Pre-therapy	75	46%	29	2
Post-therapy	109	87%	67	2.5	

Conclusions

- Remote script group therapy is **feasible** and **acceptable** to people living with PPA & it is possible to deliver 'Script Club' in an **NHS** clinic
- Improvements in communication confidence and script production may be attributable to **carryover**, or **'enactment'**, of script use in **real-life**

