

Linguistic parameters in an app-based assessment of German verbs and nouns in aphasia

Dörte de Kok¹, Sarah Hanekamp² & Roelien Bastiaanse^{1,3}

¹Center for Language and Cognition, University of Groningen, The Netherlands

²Master in Linguistics, University of Groningen, The Netherlands

³Center for Language and Brain, Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia

Introduction

In previous research, various linguistic parameters were found to influence action and object naming. Bastiaanse et al. (2016) reported that, when looked at parameters in combination, only **age of acquisition** and **imageability** were significant predictors of performance in action naming of Dutch-speaking people with aphasia. For object naming, also **frequency** played an important role. In the current study, we investigate the role of these and several other linguistic parameters in German aphasia with an app-based diagnostic tool.

Participants

Table 1. Demographic data of the participants with aphasia (PWA) & the non-brain-damaged participants (NBD).

	Age: average (range)	Gender: % female	Type of aphasia
PWA (n=11)	61;1 (40;5-73;1)	27%	27% fluent, 73% non-fluent
NBD (n=11)	61;2 (46;2-80;5)	27%	-

Procedure

- Tests administered on the iPad in fixed order
- Comprehension scored automatically, production audio-recorded
- Analysis:
 - Difference PWA-NBD per subtest (Mann-Whitney-U tests, 1-tailed)
 - For PWA:
 - Task comparisons: AN-ON, Fin-Inf (paired t-tests, 2-tailed)
 - Role of linguistic parameters in AN and ON (separate *mixed model logistic regressions* for AN & ON)
 - Automatic within-app analysis of separate parameters for individual PWA (Chi-Square and Mann-Whitney-U tests)

Results

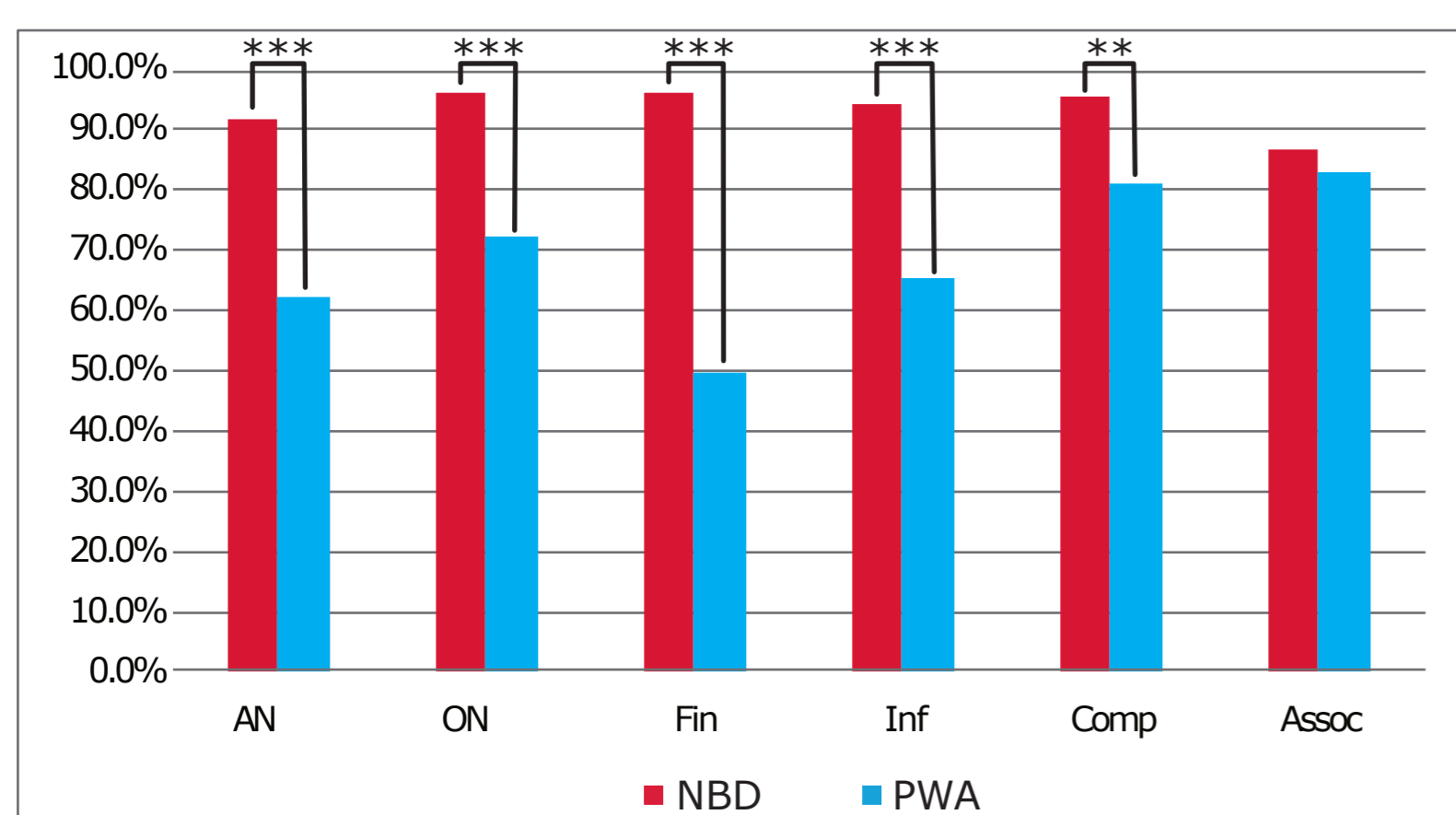


Figure 2. Difference NBD-PWA per subtest; **: $p < .01$; ***: $p < .001$

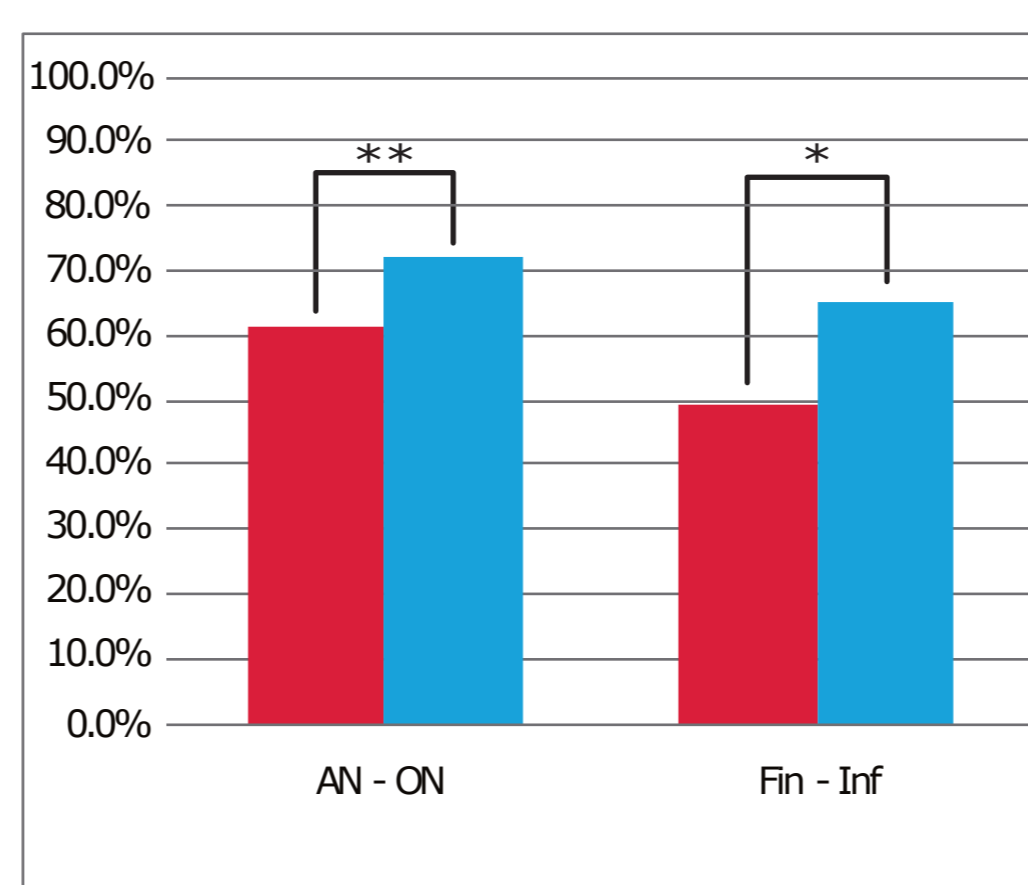


Figure 3. Task comparisons for PWA; *: .05, **: $p < .01$

Material

6 Tests:

- Action Naming (AN, n=50)
- Object Naming (ON, n=50)
- Finite insertion (Fin, n=20)
- Infinitive addition (Inf, n=20)
- Verb comprehension (Comp, n=40)
- Semantic association (actions) (Assoc, n=20)

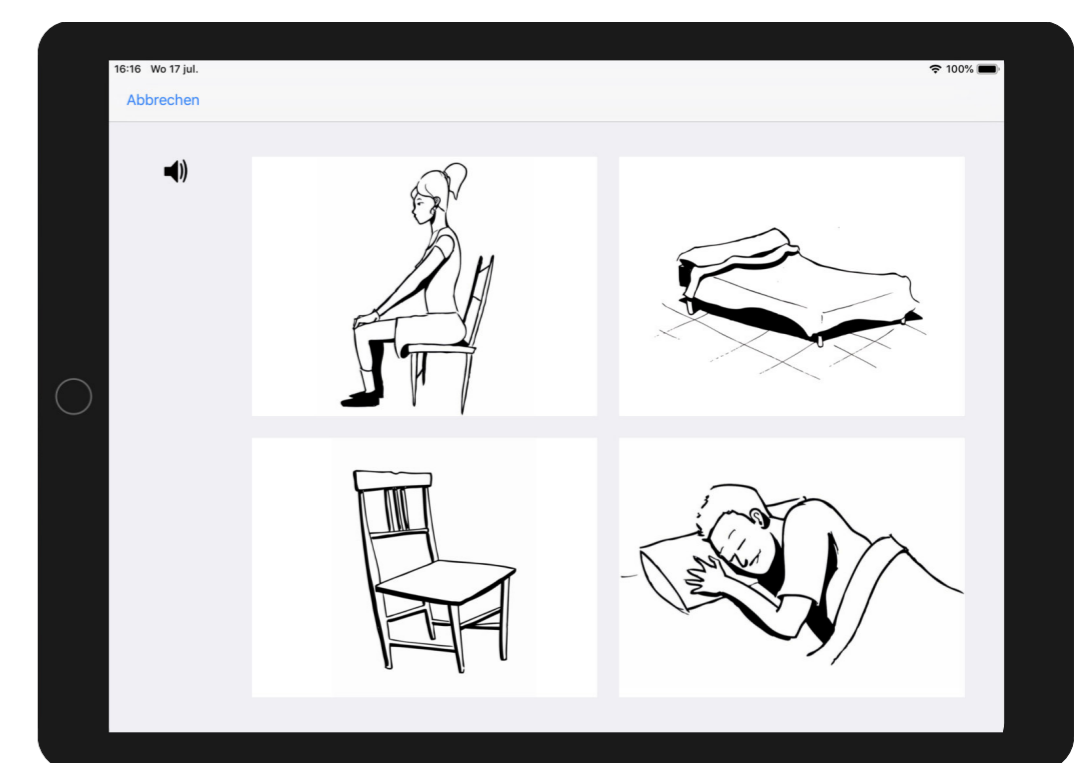
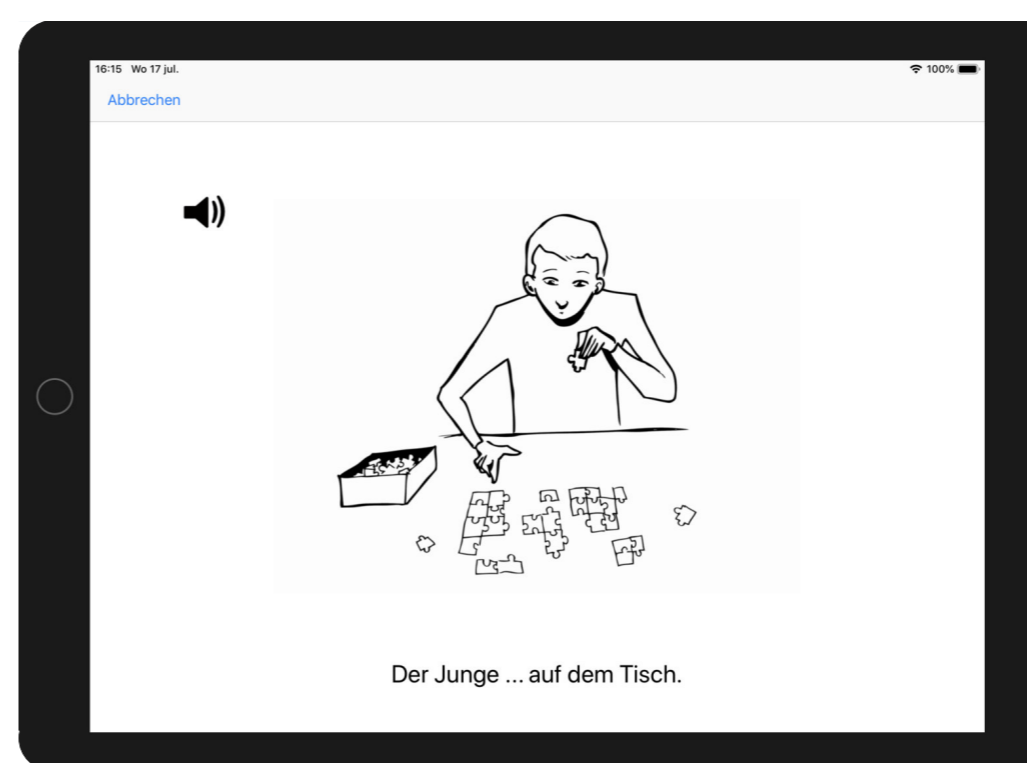


Figure 1. (a) Finite insertion task; (b) Verb comprehension task.

Controlled variables:

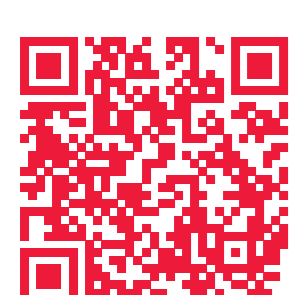
Lemma frequency, age of acquisition (AoA), imageability, length in phonemes, visual complexity, instrumentality*, transitivity*, animacy†, compound†
(*: only for verbs; †: only for nouns)

	Action naming	Object naming
Frequency	n.s.	n.s.
AoA	***	marg.
Imageability	***	n.s.
Length	**	***
Vis. complexity	n.s.	*
Instrumentality	*	-
Transitivity	*	-
Animacy	-	n.s.
Compound	-	n.s.

Table 2. Influence of parameters; *: $p < .05$, **: $p < .01$, ***: $p < .001$

Discussion & Conclusion

- PWA perform significantly worse than NBD (5/6 tasks) & they are worse in AN than in ON and with finite verbs than infinitive verbs.
- On group level, relevant parameters for AN are similar to those found by Bastiaanse et al. (2016): **AoA** and **imageability** (lower AoA & higher imageability are easier) and additionally **length**, **instrumentality** and **transitivity** (shorter, instrumental & transitive words are easier). For ON, only **length** and **vis. complexity** significantly influence naming (shorter & less complex items are easier).
- On an individual level, each separate parameter influences the performance of at least one participant in either AN or ON → **all included parameters contribute** to the diagnostic tool.



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References: Bastiaanse, R., Wieling, M. & Wolthuis, N. (2016). The role of frequency in the retrieval of nouns and verbs in aphasia. *Aphasiology*, 30 (11), 1221-1239.