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**Better Conversations**  
with primary progressive aphasia

**Communication Partner  
Training in PPA**

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(Supervised by Dr Suzanne Beeke and Professor Aimee Spector)

**NHS**  
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**5p DAILY EXPRESS**

**BURIED ALIVE: COUPLE  
FOUND DEAD IN CAR TEN  
DAYS AFTER LANDSLIDE**

**BRITAIN'S  
ECONOMY  
BOOSTED  
AT LAST**

**PILL TO BEAT  
ALZHEIMER'S**

New treatment  
will stop disease  
for three years

**KATE, WILLS AND HARRY'S  
PRINCELY SUM FOR CHARITY**

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**dementia**

Article:

**Speech and language therapy  
for primary progressive  
aphasia: Referral patterns  
and barriers to service  
provision across the UK**

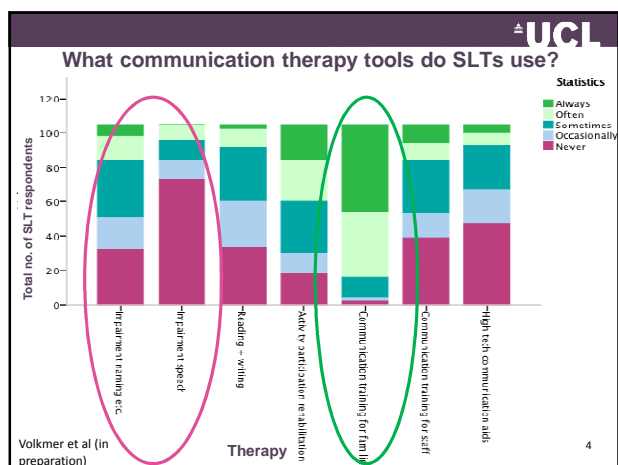
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**SAGE**



**Conversations: Barriers in PPA**

Person with PPA	Conversation partner
Reduced topic initiation	Correcting their partners errors all the time
Not recognising when conversation goes wrong	Creating 'learning events' or using 'test questions'- asking questions which both people in the conversation know the answer to but may not currently have the language.
Increased pause lengths	Perception of communication behaviours as being 'on purpose'
Lots more false starts and hesitations	Speaking on behalf of the person with PPA.
Inappropriate changes of topic	
Reduced awareness of the listener	

Summarised from Volkmer, A. Chapter 6 Therapy and management: conversation partners in Volkmer, A. (2015) Assessment and Therapy for Language and Cognitive/Communication Difficulties in Dementia and Other Progressive Disorders. J&J Press, UK.

**Conversations: Impact of barriers**

The following quotes are from the relatives of people with PPA describing **barriers** in conversation:

We had a occasion on our last trip, when the waiting staff **thought her lack of response was rudeness**. This, got around. Fortunately, one waiter, came up, spoke quietly to us. He said, I know what the problem is, un I said yes, and everybody suddenly became understanding. Because, she can't define the menu for herself.

James, husband of Gwen

When I am there **she asks him "what were we doing today?" "What did you have for your lunch?"** Now, he knows what he did and he knows what he had for his lunch, so I can see he is becoming a bit upset and **frustrated** by these questions. I just try to distract him from that and to try and make him laugh to cheer him up. The staff mean well, and they are trying to draw out something from him, but it's not functional communication. It's just putting pressure on him

Clair, sister of John talking about the staff at the respite centre he attends

**Conversations: Impact of facilitators**

The following quotes are from people with PPA describing the **facilitators** in conversation:

An she said which one do you want? I said I don't know and **she put them all out** and I said that's it.

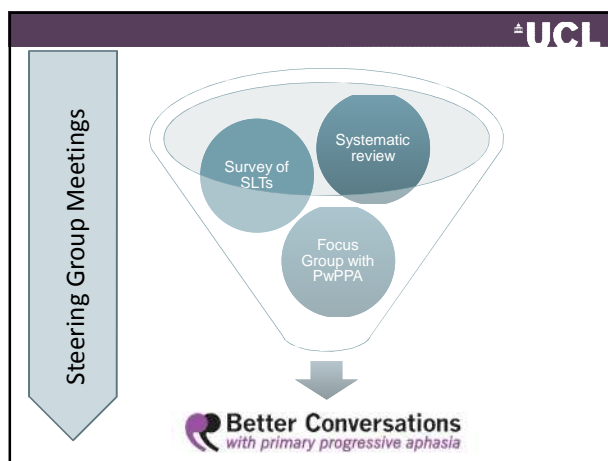
Christine, describing an interaction with a shop assistant where she is trying to buy macarons

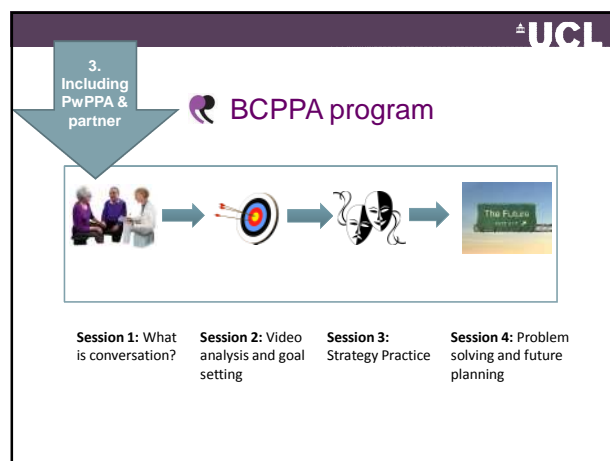
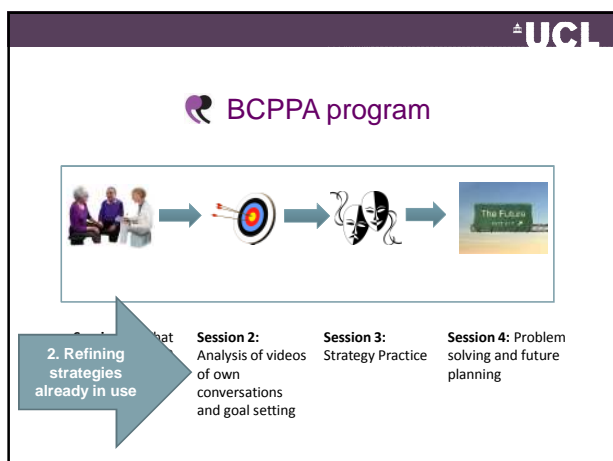
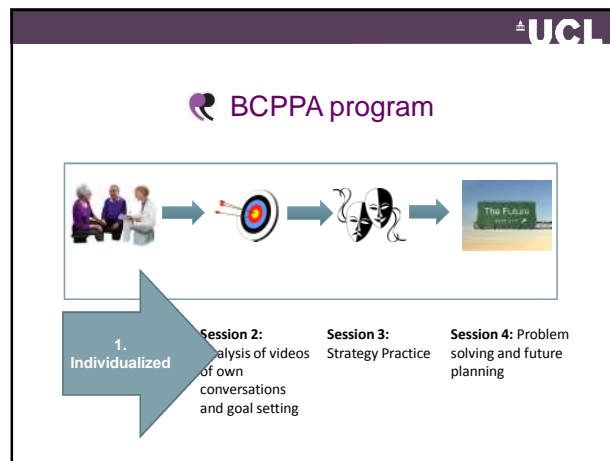
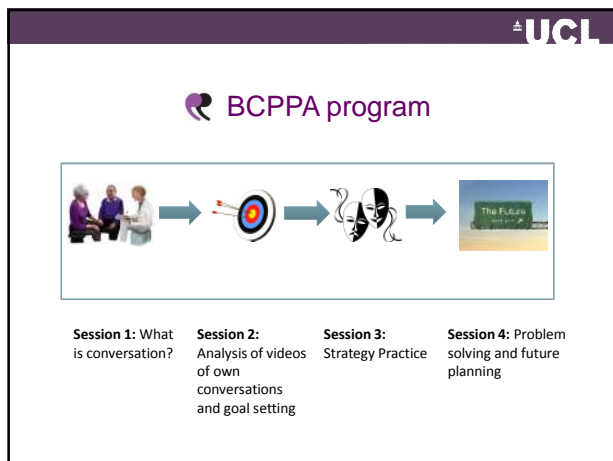
I've had a thing, when you were talking and telling what you were doing, I think I started doing what I am doing now. Um, I, I was saying, um, saying, perhaps in the kitchen, (pointing), this way round. Um, and, er...where's the **(makes a tap turning motion)** thing?

Bob, describing how he uses gesture in conversation

And, uh, an sometimes I will know, there's three of them about you know, talking to me, talking, then that's very nice. An I say, **right ok... what is that word please?**

Jennifer, describing successful strategies she uses in a conversation with her children





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Session 1: What is conversation?

4. Session plans and handouts

Module 5.0 Session 4 Home based task 6

Ideas for the future:

WHAT YOU USE	What might be useful in the future?
Gesture	
Giving time	
Checking	
Reducing distractions	
Shorter sentences	
Writing/sketching	

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COURSES

5. Sharing knowledge across the discipline

Better Conversations with Primary Progressive Aphasia

Progress: 3 / 19 34%

Beeke, S., Sirman, N., Beckley, F., Maxim, J., Edwards, S., Swinburn, K. & Best, W. (2013). <https://extend.ucl.ac.uk/>

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### Identifying barriers and facilitators in conversation with people with PPA

Which ones:

- help the most
- appear frequently
- cause distress
- look like teacher-pupil talk
- disrupt the flow of conversation

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- INSERT VIDEO CLIP of a barrier - 38 second video clip

- Insert video clip of a facilitator – 2 min video clip

Volkmer et al. *Pilot and Feasibility Studies* (2018) 4:158  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s13074-018-0249-6>

Pilot and Feasibility Studies

#### STUDY PROTOCOL

Open Access



The 'Better Conversations with Primary Progressive Aphasia (BCPPA)' program for people with PPA (Primary Progressive Aphasia): protocol for a randomised controlled pilot study

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Watch this space!



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Assessment and Therapy  
for Language and Cognitive  
Communication Difficulties  
in Dementia and Other  
Progressive Diseases



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rarementiasupport.org

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