Discourse Assessment Macrostructure Tools

Macrostructure is zooming out and looking at the big picture. What's the overall effect? You could focus on macrostructure features such as:

✔ Organization of the discourse
✔ Cohesion and Completeness: Does it make sense? Is it easy to follow?
✔ The amount of info included: too little, too much, just right?
✔ The ease and efficiency of the discourse

How do you measure macrostructure features? Here are some options:

✔ Comment on the frequency of errors (or production) for any feature
✔ Give <u>your own</u> subjective interpretation of the ease / efficiency
✔ Give <u>the client's</u> interpretation of ease / efficiency ([Self Anchored Rating Scale?](#))
✔ Use a rating scale to categorize features of completeness. See a Coherence Rating Scale below adapted from Leaman, M., & Edmonds, L. (2020). Measuring global coherence in people with aphasia during unstructured conversation. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology.*

Interpretation of Global Coherence Scale from Leaman & Edmonds (2020)

Rating:	Description	Tally # of utterances:
4	On topic! Includes people, objects, and actions, with no inference needed.	Total x 4 = _____
3	On topic, but missing some substance (or includes a tangent), requiring a little inference.	Total x 3 = _____
2	Missed the point - it's tangential and focusing on the wrong aspect of the topic.	Total x 2 = _____
1	Totally off base - not related to the topic.	Total x 1 = _____

Total points / total utterances = average coherence rating

Discourse Assessment Microstructure Tools

Microstructure is zooming in and analyzing the smaller bits, such as:
- ✔ Word-retrieval informativeness in discourse (Correct CIUS / Total Words, # of word-finding challenges in a given time)
- ✔ Word-retrieval efficiency (CIUs per minute)
- ✔ Verb use in discourse (# or % in discourse task)
- ✔ Conjunction use to clearly explain relationships (first, behind, next, after) (how many were used?)
- ✔ Syntax (complete sentence structure, variety of sentence structure)
- ✔ Content / non-content words ratio
- ✔ Morphological Consistency (ex: possessives, verb form, prepositions)

How do you measure microstructure features? Well first of all, just pick 1 or 2 things to track (not all of them!). You can choose a measure to give you information about <u>informativeness</u> (like how much info they were able to convey) or <u>efficiency</u> (like how many content units they conveyed in a given time frame). Whatever is most meaningful for the client's clinical picture.
- ✔ Correct CIUs / Total Words, # of word-finding challenges in a given time
- ✔ CIUs per minute
- ✔ # or % of verbs used in discourse task
- ✔ How many conjunctions were used / in a certain time
- ✔ # of complete sentences relayed in a minute; variety of sentence structure in a discourse task
- ✔ Content / non-content words ratio
- ✔ % accurate for using possessives, prepositions, etc.

Boyle, M. (2011). Discourse treatment for word-retrieval impairment in aphasia. *Aphasiology, 25*(11), 1308-1326.