This VASES was developed in response to language-based self report measures, which are often unsuitable for people with acquired communication impairments. The purpose of the scale is to monitor mood and self esteem over time following a stroke and for evaluating interventions. It is published by Speechmark (http://www.speechmark.net/search/vases originally Winslow Press, Oxon. UK) and a second edition has recently been published in 2011.

The scale uses picture material to support the understanding of the items on the scale and was one of the first scales to use this method. The picture material makes it particularly useful for early stage stroke patients who may have difficulty with written language. The test can be used at a later stage in order to determine change in self esteem, it can help guide the therapist in planning care aims and it can provide an opportunity for a patient to talk about their feelings. It can serve as an outcome measure in evaluative research with aphasic speakers and can demonstrate change over time.

In 2006 it was translated into Norwegian and Shelagh Brumfitt gave an invited seminar to introduce the VASES to an audience of speech and language therapists from Norway and Sweden in October 2007.

A Review of VASES was written in 2000 (Worrall and Cruice, 2000 Aphasiology Vol 14 No 11 1153-1154)

‘VASES will be of interest to researchers and clinicians alike. This is an important step in aphasia research and service provision, acknowledging the aphasic person’s right to independence of autonomy and decision making, concerning their own life’

Some later research has shown the following outcomes:

1) The VASES has been used to show differences in self esteem between stroke survivors in an acute rehabilitation setting with a matched control group (Vickery, Sepehri, Evans, 2008)

2) It can be used as a baseline measure post stroke in an acute setting (Brumfitt & Barton, 2006)

3) It has been used to compare other scales in their development and validation of a pain scale (Jackson, Kersten, Turner-Stokes, 2006)

4) It can be used as an outcome measure post behavioural interventions (Clegg, J; Brumfitt, S. M; Parks, R; Woodruff, P, 2006)

The VASES has been sold worldwide and used in many different speech and language therapy contexts and other health professional fields. In some speech and language therapy services it is used to inform staff about patient well being in the very early stages post stroke and then followed up at six months to determine change.