

Thursday, September 21st, 1.30pm ET

Presentation in Zoom, accessible via the C-STAR website:

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The Benefit of Strengthening Phonological Skill in Aphasia/Alexia/Agraphia

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Aphasia due to left perisylvian damage is often characterized on the basis of spoken language skills with little attention given to written language abilities. A close examination of central and peripheral processes that support language confirms a common underlying impairment of phonological skill that affects both spoken and written language. We will review the findings from a large cohort of individuals with aphasia/alexia/agraphia (n=87) due to damage in the region of the left middle cerebral artery and explore the benefit of strengthening phonological skills in a subset (n = 47). Treatment outcomes provide compelling evidence that sublexical phonological skills (e.g., knowledge of sound-letter correspondences and the ability to blend component sounds to produce words/nonwords) are necessary for adult literacy and also support spoken language performance. We will share outcomes from a phonological treatment sequence that document significant improvement of phonological skills, impressive generalization to reading and writing at single-word and paragraph levels, and improved lexical retrieval and overall language performance. As expected, outcomes were moderated by initial severity levels and the limitations of impaired sensorimotor skills, but there were clear functional benefits derived from strengthening the underlying phonological skills. We contend that it is worth the effort to address the common phonological deficit in individuals with left perisylvian damage.

The online lecture can be followed online from your computer, tablet or smartphone, in Zoom. The zoom link is accessible via the C-STAR website: <http://cstar.sc.edu/lecture-series/>

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