



British Aphasiology Society Biennial International
Conference

University of Manchester, UK

9th, 10th 11th September 2013

Keynote speakers:

Professor Linda Worrall

Professor Nina Dronkers

Dr Jenny Crinion

Dr Shirley Thomas

Professor Jane Marshall

Dr Audrey Bowen

Professor Matt Lambon Ralph

Book your place:

<https://www.meeting.co.uk/confercare/bas2013/>

Early bird registration closes 19th July 2013

For more information on how BAS can help fund your place,

see page 10

****NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITY******BAS Initiatives in Aphasia Seed Fund (IASF)**

The British Aphasiology Society would like to fund *Initiatives in Aphasia* - activities that involve and benefit people with aphasia and their family members/carers. Some examples might be: focus groups, support for events, new initiatives in aphasia, or pilot research. This list is not intended to be prescriptive. Such activities may be led by or organised with the involvement of people with aphasia, and will meet one or more of the following aims:

1. to promote knowledge of aphasia
2. to promote knowledge of aphasia therapy, and make its evidence base accessible
3. to promote and draw upon the expertise of people with aphasia
4. to share, discuss and collaborate on research with people with aphasia and their family members/carers

This scheme does **not** fund the purchase of resources for individual people with aphasia.

Seed funding of up to £1000 will be available per application and there will be two deadlines a year. The BAS Committee reserves the right to decide how many awards it will make in any one year.

The first deadline will be in **June 2013**. Full details of the fund can be found on the BAS website at www.bas.org.uk/SeedFund.htm

Join the BAS committee

Over the next twelve months, some committee members will be standing down completely and others will be standing for re-election.

We would like to invite interested members to be part of the BAS committee. If you would welcome this opportunity, or if you have a colleague who needs a nudge in this direction, then we would be delighted to hear from you. We are interested in attracting nominees at any stage of their career. This is a fantastic opportunity to acquire new skills as well as a chance to influence the development and direction of BAS. Post holders will be elected at the AGM in September (during the conference).

We look forward to hearing from you!

Research Round Up Spring 2013

Charlotta Saldert, Ellen Backman & Lena Hartelius (2013): 'Conversation partner training with spouses of persons with aphasia: A pilot study using a protocol to trace relevant characteristics'. *Aphasiology* 27, 3, p.271-292.

Although conversation partner training can be effective in improving communication in aphasia, there is a need for further research about effects of specific training programmes as well as about the relevant characteristics of the conversation partners who are to be candidates for training. This pilot study explored the applicability of an adaptation of a conversation partner training programme. In addition, a protocol for assessment of variables relating to the person with aphasia and the conversation partner that may be involved in changes in conversational interaction was examined. Three dyads with persons with aphasia and their spouses participated in this explorative study with a case-series design. The training outcome was monitored with measures of perceived functional communication and analysis of multiple video-recorded natural conversations obtained at baseline, post intervention, and at a 12-week follow-up. All three persons with aphasia and two of the spouses reported a slight improvement in the measure of perceived functional communication. The profiling of the third spouse indicated problems in attitudes to communication and also in aspects of executive function, and may account for the lack of intervention effects seen in the third dyad. The authors concluded that intervention with the adapted training programme may be effective. It might be argued that the outcome measures as well as other measures fulfill their purpose.

Marina B. Ruiter, Herman H. J. Kolk, Toni. C. M. Rietveld & Ilse Feddema (2013): 'Combining possibly reciprocally dependent linguistic parameters in the quantitative assessment of aphasic speakers' grammatical output'. *Aphasiology* 27, 3, p. 293-308.

This study is concerned with the grammatical output of aphasic speakers. This has often been quantitatively analysed in order to establish an effect of treatment. In many methods of quantitative analysis both *the number of utterances produced* and (their) *length* are calculated. The difficulty is that these parameters may show a trade-off effect (i.e., may be inversely proportional to each other). That is, when the amount of information to be conveyed remains constant, an increase in the number of utterances may be compensated by a decrease in their length (and vice versa). As a result, a lack of increase—or even a decrease—in one of both outcome measures may be incorrectly interpreted as a lack of effect of treatment. This study aimed to investigate whether combining the possibly reciprocal outcome measures *percentage of utterances* and (their) *length* into a single parameter increases the interpretability of the results obtained with a quantitative analysis of aphasic speakers' spontaneous speech. The study found that the parameter *percentage words produced in ellipses* was not only able to reproduce the results obtained in the previous study, but also seems to be more sensitive: it could identify significant changes in elliptical style in more participants than the two possibly reciprocal parameters could independently. In conclusion, the authors argued that their data obtained may be of relevance to aphasia researchers and therapists as the new parameter provides them with a more sensitive measure to establish the effect of therapy on aphasic speakers' grammatical output.

Carol Legg & Claire Penn (2013): 'A stroke of misfortune: Cultural interpretations of aphasia in South Africa.' *Aphasiology* 27, 3, p. 126-144.

Although cultural perspectives about illness influence the experience of illness and disability, shaping the nature of both formal and lay care, very little has been written about cultural understandings of aphasia despite a renewed focus on contextual influences. This study explored understandings of stroke and aphasia in a South African township. It described how stroke and aphasia were presented and understood by people living in this community, particularly those living with aphasia, their family members, and healthcare workers, and provide examples of how these individuals account for the sudden and long term consequences of stroke. The authors obtained their data from a broader ethnographic study of the social and cultural experience of aphasia in South Africa that involved a 3-year period of intermittent fieldwork in a township community on the outskirts of Cape Town. Participant observation of the everyday life of a group of five adults living with aphasia and interviews with participants, kin, and healthcare workers was carried out in various settings including homes, clinics, and an adult day care centre. The main finding was that causation emerged as an important discussion topic for people living with aphasia as well as for carers and health workers. These discussions were not limited to the search for a biomedical understanding, but reflected multifactorial understandings that were linked to cultural frameworks as well as daily circumstances and social realities. The authors concluded that as aphasia is experienced in a sociocultural context, there is theoretical and clinical relevance in using anthropology to explore the world of the adult living with aphasia.

Monica Blom Johansson, Marianne Carlsson, Per Östberg & Karin Sonnander (2013): 'A multiple-case study of a family-oriented intervention practice in the early rehabilitation phase of persons with aphasia'. *Aphasiology* 27, 2, p. 201-226.

This study aimed to design and evaluate an early family-oriented intervention of persons with stroke-induced moderate to severe aphasia and their significant others in dyads. The intervention was designed to be flexible to meet the needs of each participant, to emotionally support the significant others and supply them with information needed, to include Communication Partner Training (CPT) that is easy to learn and conduct for SLTs, and to be able to provide CPT when the persons with aphasia still have access to SLP services. An evaluation with three dyads was conducted no more than 2 months after the onset of aphasia. The intervention consisted of six sessions: three sessions directed to the significant other (primarily support and information) and three to the dyad (primarily CPT). The intervention was evaluated both qualitatively and quantitatively based on video recordings of conversations and self-assessment questionnaires. Results indicated that the importance of emotional support as well as information about stroke/aphasia was clearly acknowledged, especially by the significant others. All significant others perceived increased knowledge and understanding of aphasia and related issues. Communicative skills (as manifested in the video recordings) showed improvements from pre- to post-intervention. The authors concluded that their results corroborated the need for individualised and flexible family-oriented SLT services that are broad in content. Furthermore, the results support the early initiation of such services with recurrent contact. The usefulness of CPT this early in the rehabilitation process was indicated but is yet to be proved.

F. A. S. Bright, N. M. Kayes, C. M. McCann & K. M. McPherson (2013): 'Hope in people with aphasia'. *Aphasiology* 27, 1, p. 41-58.

Hope is important for health, recovery, and rehabilitation outcomes in a range of healthcare populations. Little is known about hope in people following stroke, and even less is known about hope in people with aphasia following stroke as they are commonly excluded from research in this field. In this study, the authors aimed to explore how hope was experienced by people with aphasia following stroke during the post-acute period of rehabilitation, and to identify factors influencing the experience of hope. An Interpretive Description methodology was used in which data were collected through semi-structured interviews with five people with aphasia. Supported conversation techniques were used to facilitate full contribution of participants. Data were analysed using a number of approaches—coding, thematic analysis, narrative construction, diagramming, and memoing. The study found that hope was experienced in two ways. *Simply 'having' hope* was a broad but passive sense of hope which appeared to be the primary, constant form of hope. *Actively hoping* was an active, future-oriented form of hope that was experienced intermittently by participants. The experience of hope appeared dynamic and complex and seemingly influenced by three primary factors: uncertainty about the future; viewing hope as double-sided; and a sense of disruption. These were in turn influenced by a person's past experiences, present reality and perceived future. The authors concluded that therapists should be aware of these factors. Suggestions for how clinicians may consider and address hope are provided and discussed.

Firle Beckley, Wendy Best, Fiona Johnson, Susan Edwards, Jane Maxim, Suzanne Beeke (2013): 'Conversation therapy for agrammatism: exploring the therapeutic process of engagement and learning by a person with aphasia'. *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders* Volume 48, Issue 2, p. 220–239.

This study reported results for a single case, one of a case series evaluation of a programme of conversation training for agrammatism which explored how a PWA is able to engage with and learn from the therapy, and whether this leads to qualitative change in post-therapy conversation behaviours. A 55-year-old man with chronic agrammatism and his wife took part in eight weekly sessions of conversation therapy, adapted from Supporting Partners of People With Aphasia in Relationships and Conversation (SPPARC). Conversation analysis was used to analyse: (1) pre-therapy conversation patterns, (2) how the PWA engaged and learned during therapy and the forms of facilitation that aided this process, and (3) qualitative change in post-therapy conversation behaviour. After therapy, the PWA showed increased insight and acceptance of the use of strategies such as writing and drawing in the face of conversational difficulty. However, use was prompted by his wife and was rarely spontaneous. The authors concluded that conversation training based around an experiential learning process is able to engage a PWA directly in learning about the effects of aphasia on conversation. However, increased insight did not automatically change conversation behaviour. One explanation may be that limited cognitive flexibility lead to problems with switching from one strategy to another.

**British Aphasiology Society****British Aphasiology Society Student Prizes 2013**

The British Aphasiology Society invites entries for the Student Project Prize and Student Essay/Case Report Prize.

This year in response to your feedback about the changing assessment methods for students we will be inviting both essays and clinical case reports related to aphasia. The project prize will remain unchanged.

The BAS Student Project Prize: £300 will be awarded for the best student project on any topic relating to acquired aphasia. The prize will be divided £200 to the winning student and £100 to his/her educational establishment. The project or dissertation should have been submitted as part of the normal examination procedure in the final year of an undergraduate or postgraduate course (masters level).

The BAS Student Essay/Case Report Prize: £150 will be awarded for the best essay or case report on any topic relating to acquired aphasia. Entrants should be undergraduate or postgraduate students (masters level). The prize will be divided on the basis of £100 to the winning student and £50 to his/her educational establishment.

Closing date for both prizes: Friday 19th July 2013. (Electronic submissions)

Guidelines for the student prizes are available on the BAS web page (www.bas.org.uk) or contact:

Jennifer Vigouroux (B.A.S. Student Prize Co-ordinator)
Speech and Language Therapy Department
Newcastle Hospitals Community Health
Denton Park Health Centre
West Denton Way
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE5 2QW
Tel: 0191 2295845
Email: jennifer.vigouroux@nuth.nhs.uk or prizes@bas.org.uk

The **British Aphasiology Society** aims to promote and support the knowledge and study of aphasia. It produces a regular newsletter, holds biennial conferences, therapy symposia and study days. Membership gives priority booking and reduced rate for these events and members can subscribe to some journals at reduced rates.

Membership information is available on the BAS web page www.bas.org.uk

2012 Student Prize Winner Project Summary

Belen Lopez, UCL

Brain training activities that claim to improve cognitive function and halt cognitive decline have increased in popularity in recent years. Not surprisingly, many people with aphasia take up brain training games (such as Sudoku and problem solving games) in attempt to aid recovery and improve impaired cognitive skills; although, the evidence of cognitive gains is limited. Social interaction has also surfaced as an important predictor for cognitive outcomes in the elderly, such that retrospective studies have revealed a link between people with greater social engagement with better cognitive functioning and a reduced risk of dementia. Despite the associative link, there is little evidence that the link is causal.

The project investigated the effects of social interaction and brain training activities on performance on verbal and non-verbal measures of memory and processing speed in people with aphasia. A repeated measures design was used in which seventeen people with aphasia participated in both the social interaction and the brain training exercise conditions. Baseline and follow up measurements of cognitive functioning were administered pre and post the two conditions and immediately following the conditions.

Cognitive gains in memory were observed following the social and brain training activities (in people with Broca's or conduction aphasia). All participants improved their verbal test scores following the social interaction condition; while participants with anomia aphasia also showed improvement in a non-verbal test following brain training exercises.

The study showed immediate effects of both conditions on cognition, particularly in memory, suggesting that brief periods engaging in social interaction and brain training exercises are sufficient to promote gains. Thus, participation in these mentally stimulating activities can occur outside therapy to aid rehabilitation.

Contact the BAS committee

<p>Christos Salis Chair Tel. 0191 222 8875 chair@bas.org.uk</p>	<p>Helen Kelly Website Co-ordinator website@bas.org.uk</p>	<p>Paul Conroy Publicity Officer 0161 306 0443 publicity@bas.org.uk</p>
<p>Heather Waldron Treasurer Tel. 0191 569 9009 treasurer@bas.org.uk</p>	<p>Rosie Patterson BASics file officer basics@bas.org.uk</p>	<p>Dee Webster Newsletter Editor Tel. 01623 785166 newsletter@bas.org.uk</p>
<p>Fiona Stewart Secretary Tel. 0191 565 9305 secretary@bas.org.uk</p>	<p>Tessa Ackerman Therapy Symposium Coordinator therapy-symposium@bas.org.uk</p>	<p>Lotte Meteyard Research Update Coordinator Tel. 0118 378 8142 Research-in-progress@bas.org.uk</p>
<p>Jo Lewis Membership Secretary membership-secretary@bas.org.uk</p>	<p>Suzanne Beeke Conference Support Fund Officer Tel. 020 7679 4215 Conference-support-fund@bas.org.uk</p>	<p>Melanie Derbyshire Speakability Representative Tel. 020 7261 9572 melanie@speakability.org.uk</p>
<p>Jennifer Vigouroux Student Prize Co-ordinator Tel: 0191 2295845</p>		<p>Alex Stirling Connect Representative alexstirling@ukconnect.org</p>

Want to know more?

A summary of our BAS committee meeting minutes can now be found on the website. Visit www.bas.org.uk homepage and click on the link under 'Membership Information'

We're sorry... In the last newsletter, we named the essay prize winner incorrectly. Instead, congratulations to our winner **Elizabeth Anderson** of Sheffield University!

Are you thinking of attending a conference? Do you need financial support?

BAS Events Grants support people attending the BAS International Conference or Therapy Symposium, usually up to a maximum of £200. **The Support Fund for Conferences (non-BAS)** supports members attending other conferences. You may apply for up to £400. Overseas members may only apply to attend UK conferences. Support for non-BAS conferences is only available to people who have been BAS members for at least a year.

Funding is available whether or not you are presenting work, but priority is given to presenters. Awards can cover registration, accommodation, travel expenses and other essentials.

The next deadline for submission is Tuesday 11 June 2013.

NOTE: Grants for attendance at the ***BAS International Conference 2013*** will be increased from the usual maximum of £200 to cover the **full cost of registration**. Visit <http://www.bas.org.uk/support.html> for full details.

The British Aphasiology Society
Research Update Meeting was held at the University of
Exeter on Friday April 19th, 2013

A full report to follow in the Summer newsletter!