



NHS Newcastle and North Tyneside
Community Health



Therapy Symposium 2010 at Newcastle University 9th -10th September 2010

Conference Announcement & first 'Call for Abstracts'

The Therapy Symposium concentrates on what we as therapists actually do in treatment. It is a unique opportunity to hear about therapy approaches in detail and to take part in lively debates.

For more information about submitting a paper or poster for presentation at the Symposium, please contact Janet Moss at: aphasia@ncl.ac.uk, Tel: 0191- 222 8550

BAS Members Full Conference Fee: £115
Non BAS Members Full Conference Fee (incl. membership): £135
Students BAS members Full Conference Fee: £60
Students Non BAS members Full Conference Fee (incl. membership):
£70

Day rates available on request

Please note that as a member of BAS you can apply for the Conference Support Fund
(new two yearly deadlines 22nd January 2010 and 11th June 2010)

Registration will open in January 2010

The Social Evening on 9th September will be announced shortly

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BAS Biennial International Conference

The University of Sheffield, 9th-11th September, 2009

Conference Support Fund recipient BAS members **Jenni Crisp, Janet Walmsley, Emma Jones, Tracie Mallender, Lesley Anne Smith, and Judith Hancock** reflect on their experiences:



The three days of conference were filled with a continuing sense of brightness and air of positivity linked with a confirmation that BAS represents the cutting edge of aphasia, from innovative theory, impairment therapy, social models through to the reality of living long term with aphasia. It was a great opportunity for learning, networking and generation of new ideas to take forward

The conference programme comprised keynote speeches, presentations, poster sessions and discussions over a diverse range of issues related to aphasia, language and communication. Also within this packed programme was the presentation of two worthy awards, the AGM, a wine reception and the conference dinner.

In the welcome address, **Pam Enderby** drew our attention to the underpinning conference concept – to achieve a ‘coherent effort to understand aphasia’ with consideration for the life long consequences of aphasia, both for the person, their family and society.

Theories of brain recovery

Ian Robertson’s keynote speech on theories of brain recovery carried two main messages: that although behavioural interventions can be highly effective in changing brain function, they are at risk of becoming overshadowed by advances in pharmaceutical interventions and new technologies because they are not as easily understood at the systems, cellular and molecular levels. There therefore needs to be ongoing development of brain-based models of rehabilitation and the effects of behavioural interventions must be found to generalise across cases to be thought as effective as drug treatments. Secondly, a reminder that attention and arousal are central to cognitive rehabilitation and that input without active attention will impact negatively on success.

Auditory processing

Sophie Scott gave a fascinating overview of the Neural Basis for Speech and Sound Processing in her keynote address. She provided us with quite a different and broader perspective which, as aphasia therapists, we don't usually hear, and included research evidence from primates and impressionists! It was very interesting to be talked through scan evidence of high levels of responsiveness to speech in both the left and right hemispheres, and to see demonstrated so clearly that the left hemisphere's responsiveness relates to linguistic variables whereas the right hemisphere is more sensitive to other non-linguistic variables. Sophie ably demonstrated the complexity of neural processing of sound and speech, and the experiments she reported made use of highly specialised scanning techniques and very carefully constructed and tightly controlled speech/ sound recordings to disentangle linguistic and non-linguistic variables.

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Sentence processing

In her keynote speech, **Jane Marshall** summarised that therapy often does not tackle the complexities of verb meaning and that generalisation to untreated sentence forms is often difficult to achieve. She suggested that conceptualisation may be difficult for the aphasic person and therapy that targets event structure and supports the conceptual preparations for language may be beneficial when targeting verb and sentence processing. With some evidence suggesting that generalisation is stronger from complex forms to simple forms, Jane suggested that the verb and sentence skills that will yield the greatest communicative dividend be targeted in therapy in line with the patient's goals.

Vitor Zimmerer described a study in which some aphasic patients with agrammatism showed atypical behaviour in artificial grammar learning, or "sequence blindness", suggesting that agrammatism can involve damage to sequence processing networks.

Christos Salis described a treatment method guided by a model for spoken sentence production for written verb and sentence production, which resulted in improvement and maintenance of a patient's ability to write verbs and sentences with intransitive but not transitive verbs.

Lexical processing

Of the three seminars on lexical processing, the study reported by **Karen Sage** stood out. The study aimed to find out whether the number of words provided in anomia therapy affects how many words are learned and whether the degree of severity should influence how many words are selected. In a comparison of the gain in naming accuracy between a small and large set of words, the raw data suggests that across severities, more words are learned when a larger number is given. Perhaps now I will be less tentative when choosing how many words to provide in anomia therapy.

Semantic processing deficits

In his keynote address **Matt Lambon Ralph** made a clear distinction between semantic dementia, where impaired semantic memory leads to degradation in representations, and an acquired semantic impairment, where impaired cognitive and semantic control results in deregulated processing. Matt discussed the challenges of providing therapy for semantic dementia, reporting that there are very few papers published on this in comparison to those for aphasia.

Recovery from aphasia

The presentation by **Katerina Hilari** looked at stroke outcomes for people with and without aphasia following stroke, which showed that people with aphasia reported a reduced quality of life than those without aphasia, even when their physical abilities, activity levels and well-being are matched.

Architecture of the language system

David Howard presented a meta-analysis of assessment data from more than 400 participants collected from different datasets. The predictions of the study were as follows: a shared processing account would predict that accuracy in spoken word comprehension and spoken naming would show higher correlations than between written word comprehension and spoken naming. Results indicated no difference in the correlations thus challenging shared processing models.

Lara Harris reported on her PhD research about 'neighbourhood support' in irregular verbs – the idea that irregular verbs occur in clusters (keep/kept, sleep/slept, weep/wept, for example). She showed that untreated items within a treated neighbourhood improved, with the implication that our therapy on verbs should involve selected items from every neighbourhood.

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Social model and aphasia

In her keynote address **Carole Pound** provided an enthusiastic and down-to-earth update on the social model and aphasia. She described a recent increase in involvement of people with aphasia in shaping policy and in recent work aimed towards reducing the social impact for people living with aphasia by supporting active citizenship within communities.

Extremely insightful reflections were presented by **Sue Gilpin** who has lived with aphasia for many years. Her joint research with **Morag Bixley** stresses the need to include the views of people with aphasia in Speech and Language Therapy practice. As someone who has now made considerable progress in communication recovery, her views can help with our understanding of people with aphasia, who are less able to express themselves. The inclusion of the perspective of the person with aphasia is an essential element of a conference about aphasia. Listening to real life experiences of people with aphasia is to hear the experts.

Kate Mitchell's research in the use of narrative types and metaphor by people with aphasia explored the aspect of enabling those with aphasia to become expert storytellers on their own experiences. This expertise assists in understanding the experience of living with aphasia and may inform therapy approaches towards meeting patient needs.

Language processing and treatment

M. Tainturier presented her research into bilingual (Welsh/English) clients and whether there is generalisation from one language to another when treating orthography. Unfortunately for our bilingual clients, her research seems to show that there is no automatic transfer from one language to another, although this may depend on the type of deficit. This generated a lot of thoughts for me about the need for training interpreters in delivering therapy.

Sue Franklin reported on her research into error generation in conductive aphasia. She showed that clients don't show any evidence of phonological processes (as children do), but confirmed that errors can be highly inconsistent, and that clients can produce all phonemes. She also showed that treatment at this level can have a generalisation effect.

Ruth Herbert and **Lucy Dyson** reported on their work into noun syntax therapy, using a computer programme Sheffield Therapy for Anomia Rehabilitation to work on naming both mass/count nouns using noun syntax cues. She showed that treated items improved, as well as finding an increase in noun production in conversation. This seems highly applicable to our clinical settings, and I intend to include the syntactic structure of nouns in my own naming therapy.

Conversation and Aphasia

Claire Penn gave us a fascinating insight into the importance of intact executive functioning in the application of conversational strategies by people with aphasia and stated that bilingual speakers appear to have a cognitive advantage impacting on their ability to engage in conversational repair.

Suzanne Beeke described a current project driven by the lack of evidence for the efficacy of conversation therapy such as that delivered by SPPARC, where a novel conversation-focused therapy for agrammatism is being evaluated. She discussed the challenges of making the measures valid and reliable and how to reflect the individualised goals of therapy within those measures. This work is ongoing.



For further information
on the conference
programme, please see
our website
www.bas.org.uk

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Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation

Anthony Barker from the Department of Medical Physics at North Hallamshire Hospital in Sheffield started the second day with a beginner's guide to Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS). He brought humour to his subject whilst covering the history and background of TMS to date, plus the future applications in therapy and brain processing theory. He acknowledged that TMS is very 'fashionable' but stressed that as such it cannot be truly established until the method has featured in a medical soap opera – followed by a clip from a recent episode of 'House' where this treatment was being used!

Our second keynote speaker of the day, **Margaret Naeser**, had been invited from the Department of Neurology at Boston University to give us an insight into their research into using TMS to improve naming in non-fluent aphasia. The use of TMS to inhibit potentially maladaptive processing in the right hemisphere in order to facilitate naming was particularly eye opening. Professor Naeser presented promising results from a pilot study using Constraint Induced Language Therapy following TMS. It appears that this area of research is developing at speed and may be an incredibly valuable companion to behavioural therapy in the future.

We asked you to sum up the conference in three words – here are some of your responses

sociable excellent venue ... stimulating
Inspiring... fun ... vibrant... friendly ...
reassuring ... varied ... relaxed challenging
... practical... professional... practice-changing
... exhausting ... useful Informative ...
progressive... excellence ... motivating ...
fantastic ... thought-provoking accessible...
organised...

Thank you all for your comments. Some of you said that you would have liked to see more presentations that linked directly with clinical practice. This is exactly what the BAS Therapy Symposium aims to provide. The 2010 Symposium is on the 9th -10th September at Newcastle University. Registration opens 2010.

Would you like to go to an event but are finding funding difficult?

The British Aphasiology Society's **Conference Support Fund** can assist in providing funding for both BAS and non-BAS events for BAS members. There are now **two** yearly submission deadlines for applications.

Submission dates for the coming year are:

Friday 22 January 2010 and Friday 11 June 2010

Please visit <http://www.bas.org.uk/support.html> for full details.



Queen Margaret University
EDINBURGH



British Aphasiology Society

Research in Progress Meeting: Call for papers

Are you carrying out or planning to do research in an academic or clinical environment?

Would you like the opportunity to present your current work with an extended time for discussion and questions?

The next research in progress meeting will be held at **Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh** on **9 April 2010**.

We would welcome submissions from clinicians and researchers about ongoing or planned studies on *any* aspect of aphasia.

Presentations will be approximately 20 minutes long with a further 15 minutes for discussion.

Please email your abstracts (see guidelines below) to Helen Kelly hkelly@qmu.ac.uk by **19 February 2010**.

Abstract guidelines

Your abstract should be a maximum of 300 words in length and should include background information, the aims of the presentation, methods and procedures, results (if appropriate) and outcomes, and a conclusion (for planned studies, this may be a discussion of the next steps in the process). If you include references, please cite no more than six.

School of Social Sciences,
Media and Communication

Congratulations to the British Aphasiology Society 2008/09

Student Prize Winners!

BAS would like to congratulate Essay prize winner **Joanne Macleod** from Strathclyde University. Her essay was entitled **The wider benefits of impairment based interventions for word retrieval difficulties in aphasia: a discussion of generalisation.**

This year's Project prize winner is **Nicola McGreal** from Newcastle University. Her project was called **Fairytales, contemporary narratives and picture sequences: do they tell us the same things in aphasia?**

Congratulations also to Project prize runner up **Fiona Johnson** from UCL with her project entitled **Reconsidering formulaic expressions in aphasia: a conversation analytic case study of usage in interaction.**

We look forward to hearing more in a future newsletter.

BAS Committee changes

The committee sees some changes for 2009/10. **Martyne Chaston** has now left the committee, and we would like to thank her for all her time and hard work. We are very pleased to welcome **Paul Conroy** and **Suzanne Beeke** on to the committee as Publicity Officer and Conference Support Fund Officer respectively, Suzanne will be telling us more about her research and department at UCL in the next newsletter.

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Chair's Report

Sheffield, 9th September 2009

Events

This year's Research-in-Progress day took place in London hosted by UCL and the topic was 'Measuring change in Aphasia'. It was a very successful day and we would like to thank Suzanne Beeke and her team for organising the event. Thanks also go to Christos Salis from the BAS committee for facilitating the Research-in Progress meetings. The programme and abstracts are available as downloads from our BAS website (www.bas.org.uk). Next year's meeting will be hosted by Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh on the 9th April 2010. Helen Kelly will be organising this day. We are always looking for people/institutions to host this meeting. Please contact any member of the BAS Committee if you are interested in the future.

We also had a very successful Therapy Symposium last September in Norwich. The next Therapy symposium will take place in Newcastle on the 9th & 10th September 2010 and will be hosted by University of Newcastle in collaboration with NHS Newcastle and North Tyneside Community Health. Abstract and registration will be announced soon. Details can be found on the BAS website. Anyone interested in hosting this event in the future, please contact Claire Gatehouse.

The next BAS Conference will take place in Reading from 5th to 7th September 2011 and will be hosted by Christos Salis at Reading University. Please contact any member of the BAS Committee if you are interested in hosting this event.

The Society has been supported at numerous events, including this one, by our Conference Organiser NCORE and would like to take the opportunity to thank NCORE for their support.

Liaison

BAS is a member of:

- The Aphasia Alliance (<http://www.aphasiaalliance.org>): this is an umbrella organisation within which all voluntary organisations concerned with people with aphasia meet and share views. The focus of the group is to support initiatives in raising public awareness of aphasia. The full time publicity officer has left his post, but the Tavistock Trust will provide some administrative support in the future and Speakability has taken over hosting the website for the Aphasia Alliance. The Alliance is planning some themed meetings for 2010 in line with their objectives. Minutes from the meetings are available to BAS members via the BAS Chair.
- The UK Stroke Forum: this is a coalition of more than 20 organisations committed to stroke care and research. The fourth major multidisciplinary conference of the UK Stroke Forum will this year take place in Glasgow from the 1st to 3rd December 2009. Special rates apply for BAS members. See (<http://www.ukstrokeforum.org/events/>). For more information contact Melanie Derbyshire or BAS Chair.

Strategy meeting

BAS holds a biennial strategy meeting. This year's strategy meeting took place at Speakability on 29th January 2009, and the main topics for discussion were:

- Review of BAS objectives as stated in our constitution
- Identification of areas of successes and of development

We identified the following action points to follow up in the next two years:

- Encouraging the involvement of more disciplines working in the field of aphasia (e.g. in terms of participation at conferences; encouraging links with other disciplines concerned with aphasia nationally & internationally)
- Promoting the interests of people with aphasia and drawing upon their expertise (e.g. making research results more accessible for people with aphasia). This may be in conjunction with the Aphasia Alliance and as part of the UK Stroke Forum.
- Further development of the BAS website regarding signposting for guiding people with aphasia and their families, and incorporating contributions in Newsletter for people with aphasia

Prizes

Student Project Prize 2007/2008:

Claire Rossiter (University College London)

'Penguins don't fly. An investigation into typicality and its effect on naming in aphasia.' Supervisor:
Dr Wendy Best, University College London

Student prizes for 2008/2009 will be announced later this year and awarded at the Therapy Symposium in Newcastle next year.

Frauke Buerk

Chair British Aphasiology Society

9th September 2009

Events Diary

9th April 2010

BAS Research in Progress Day

Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh

27th-29th June 2010

14th International Aphasia Rehabilitation Conference

Montreal, Canada see www.iarc2010.org for more details

July 2010

Anomia Study Day

University of Sheffield

Check website for updates

9th-10th September 2010

BAS Therapy Symposium

Newcastle University

Check website for updates

5th-7th September 2011

BAS Biennial International Conference

Reading University

Check website for updates

Tell us what you think!

Have you been to a recent aphasia conference that you would like to tell us about?

Would you like to publicise an aphasia study group?

Please tell us if there is anything you would like to contribute to the BAS newsletter, or if you have any ideas on what you would like future editions to include.

Contact: newsletter@bas.org.uk

I look forward to hearing from you!

Research Round Up

Emma Eaton

Utilisation of abstract words in therapy for lexical retrieval

This study explores whether training abstract words can benefit retrieval of both abstract and concrete words in the same semantic category. Following semantic treatment of abstract items, 3 out of 4 people with aphasia improved on the abstract items, with generalisation to concrete items. 2 participants also had treatment on concrete items, but here there was no generalised improvement to abstract items. It is suggested that while concrete words are defined by visual/sensory characteristics and relationships with other concrete concepts, abstract words are defined by their relationships with concrete and other abstract concepts. Thus therapy focussing on strengthening semantic features of abstract words should facilitate the activation of both abstract and concrete items.

Kiran, S., Sandberg, C. and Abbot, K. (2009): Treatment for lexical retrieval using abstract and concrete words in persons with aphasia: Effects of complexity. *Aphasiology* 23(7), 835-853

Reverse imageability effects in semantic dementia?

There have been several reports of a reverse imageability effect (i.e. an advantage for abstract over concrete words) in semantic dementia. Damage to the anterior temporal lobes has been implicated. However, these effects could simply be the result of reporting bias. Indeed in this study, no reverse imageability effects were detected in the comprehension of 11 individuals with semantic dementia - all showed a normal advantage for more highly imageable items. This does not support the notion that the anterior temporal lobes are specialised for visual knowledge, but rather that their semantic systems are important for both the imageable and the abstract.

Jeffries, E., Patterson, K., Jones, R., Lambon Ralph, M. (2009). Comprehension of concrete and abstract words in semantic dementia. *Neuropsychology* 23 (4) 492-499

Aphasia and the comprehension of combined speech and gesture

This study investigates speech and gesture integration (e.g. the comprehension on the verb phrase "they paid" accompanied by a "writing" gesture as "they paid by cheque"). One individual with aphasia and 20 control participants looked at video clips of spoken verb phrases alone, gestures alone and verb + gesture combined. They then had to indicate their understanding of each clip. The person with aphasia was significantly less able to integrate speech and gesture, possibly because he relied more on his unimpaired gesture comprehension and less on his verbal comprehension. It is intended to extend this study and to consider the development of assessment tools to inform clinicians on the usefulness of gesture to aid comprehension.

Cocks, N., Sautin, L., Kita, S., Morgan, G. & Zlotowitc, S. (2009). Gesture and speech integration: an exploratory study of a man with aphasia. *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders* 44(5), 795-804