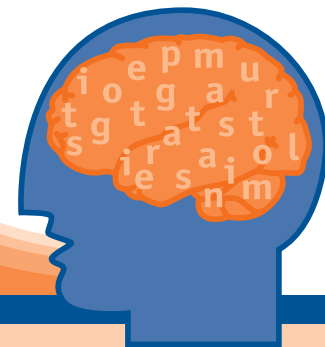


UF Aphasia Research LAB NEWS



Fall 2006: News and Updates from the University of Florida Aphasia Research Laboratory

Current Research Projects

Treatment Studies for persons with aphasia

Effect of Verb Network Strengthening Treatment (VNeST) on sentence production. This study aims to improve sentence production abilities in persons with aphasia, with a focus on assisting in retrieval of the words that make up a sentence. Evaluation and treatment is free of charge throughout the course of the study.

Effect of Verb Network Strengthening Treatment (VNeST) on sentence production in Spanish/English bilingual individuals. This study aims to improve sentence production abilities in persons with Spanish/English bilingual aphasia, with a focus on assisting in retrieval of the words that make up a sentence. Careful examination of improvement in both languages will be conducted by a bilingual clinician. Evaluation and treatment is free of charge throughout the course of the study.

Nontreatment Studies for persons with aphasia

Selective grammatical deficits in persons with aphasia. The aim of this study is to learn more about how nouns and verbs are selectively affected in aphasia. The knowledge gained from this study will assist in the development of future treatment studies. Payment for completion of this study is \$75.00.

Online examination of words. This study examines the ability to make decisions about words. Some additional testing is also conducted. The knowledge gained from this study will assist in the development of future treatment studies. Payment for this study is \$10.00 per hour for persons age 60+.

Online examination of words in Spanish/English bilingual individuals. This study examines the ability to make decisions about words in English and Spanish for bilingual individuals. Some additional testing is also conducted. The knowledge gained from this study will assist in the understanding of language processing in bilingual individuals and will assist development of future treatment studies for bilingual populations. Payment for this study is \$10.00 per hour.

Studies for persons without aphasia

Online examination of words. This study examines the ability to make decisions about words. Some additional testing is also conducted. The knowledge gained from this study will assist in understanding how language is processed. Additionally, the findings will assist in the development of future treatment studies. Payment for this study is \$10.00 per hour. Persons 18–22 years of age and 60+ years of age are encouraged to contact us about this study.



Lauren Bislick practicing the administration of a naming test on Jill Caballero

From the Director

The primary aim of the Aphasia Research Laboratory is to develop innovative treatments for aphasia (language problems) that result from stroke or other brain injury. Examples of language problems include but are not limited to difficulty “finding” or retrieving words, difficulty putting sentences together, difficulty understanding what others are saying, reading and writing difficulties.

Based on theoretical models of language organization and processing in the brain, treatments are targeted at the underlying deficit(s) that results in the language problems. The overriding goal of all treatments is efficiency, so that improvement on untrained items or tasks is observed. Improvement on items or tasks not trained during treatment is referred to as generalization. When generalization occurs, we know that the person receiving treatment is improving beyond what occurs during treatment sessions, which can indicate an increase in effective communication.

In order to provide appropriate treatment, it is important to understand the specific language problems being treated. To this end, the Aphasia Research Lab also conducts investigations to describe and define different aspects of aphasia. Investigations of normal language processing in persons without brain injury are also conducted, and the information gained is used in the development of treatment studies.

Aphasia can also occur in persons who are bilingual. In these individuals, both languages can be

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Standing: Lauren Bislick, Cynthia Lima, Christina del Toro, Andrea Rosales and Jenn Craig.
Seated: Kaitlyn Martin, Jill Caballero and Michelle George. Not Pictured: Alisa Kruzel, Liz Mikell and Jenny Paz.

Doctoral Students

Christina del Toro is a first year doctoral student in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD). She is working on two studies: 1) Selective grammatical deficits and 2) Effect of Verb Network Strengthening Treatment (VNeST) on sentence production.

Masters Students

Alisa Kruzel is a second year Masters student in CSD working on the Online examination of words study. Liz Mikell is a first year Masters student working on the Selective grammatical deficits in persons with aphasia project.

Undergraduate Students

Lauren Bislick is a senior doing an Honors thesis in the laboratory. She is also working on the Effect of Verb Network Strengthening Treatment (VNeST) on sentence production study. Kaitlyn Martin and Jill Caballero are seniors working on the Online Examination of Words project. Cynthia Lima (senior), Jenny Paz (senior) and Andrea Rosales (junior) are working on the Online Examination of Words in Spanish/English Bilingual Individuals project. Michelle George and Jenn Craig are seniors working on the Effect of Verb Network Strengthening Treatment (VNeST) on sentence production project.

Upcoming Presentations

del Toro, C.M.; Raymer, A.M.; Blonder, R.L.; Gonzalez-Rothi, L.J.; and Altmann, L. (November 2006). Changes in Grammatical Aspects of Aphasic Discourse After Contrasting Treatments. American Speech, Hearing and Language Association Conference, Miami, FL.

Edmonds, L.A.; and Kiran, S.K. (November 2006). Effect of Verb Network Strengthening Treatment (VNeST) on Sentence Production in Persons with Aphasia. American Speech, Hearing and Language Association Conference, Miami, FL.

Edmonds, L.A.; and Kiran, S.K. (November 2006). Effect of Verb Network Strengthening Treatment (VNeST) on Connected Speech in Persons with Aphasia. American Speech, Hearing and Language Association Conference, Miami, FL.

Edmonds, L.A. (December 2006). Effect of Semantic Naming Treatment on Crosslinguistic Generalization in Spanish/English Bilingual Aphasia. Center for Neurological Studies, Malcom Randall VA, Gainesville, FL.

Mikell, E.A.; Crosson, B.; Blonder, R.L.; Gonzalez-Rothi, L.J.; and Altmann, L. (November 2006). Generalization of Treatment Effects to Discourse Following an Attentional Treatment for Anomia. American Speech, Hearing and Language Association Conference, Miami, FL.

Student News

Jenn Craig, a senior in the Aphasia Research Lab, was recently accepted to attend a semester of study in Cadiz, Spain and received the UFIC Semester Study Abroad Scholarship for \$1000. ¡Felicidades, Jenn!

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affected after a stroke or other brain injury. The Aphasia Research Laboratory also conducts studies to learn more about bilingual aphasia. Treatment studies are available to Spanish/English bilingual individuals with aphasia. The main goal of the treatment is to encourage maximal improvement in both languages with consideration of how much each language was used prior to the incident causing aphasia. Evaluations and treatments are conducted by Spanish/English bilingual clinicians. Investigations of normal language processing in Spanish/English bilingual individuals without brain

injury are also conducted, and the information gained is used in the development of bilingual treatment studies.

This newsletter provides information about the various studies currently being conducted. Contact information is provided for those who may be interested in participating in any of the research projects. We are always seeking persons with or without aphasia, including Spanish/English bilingual individuals.

—Dr. Lisa Edmonds,
Director, Aphasia Research Laboratory

Aphasia Group

A new aphasia group is being formed in Gainesville by CSD professors Dr. Lisa Edmonds, Dr. Diane Kendal and Yvonne Rogalski, a doctoral student in Communicative Disorders. Interested? Contact us at the address below.

Contact Us

If you are interested in learning more about participating in a research study or want to contact the Aphasia Research Laboratory for any reason, please call 352-392-2113 x250 or e-mail Dr. Lisa Edmonds at edmonds@csd.ufl.edu.

www.clas.ufl.edu/users/edmonds