

Some Comparisons between Auditory and Reading  
Comprehension in Aphasic Adults  
(Abstract)

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The study of the relationship between auditory and reading comprehension in aphasia has resulted in inconsistent findings. This study was undertaken to resolve some of this inconsistency by testing two groups of aphasic subjects, utilizing identical tasks in the auditory and visual domains and employing a multidimensional scoring system sensitive to subtle qualities of response. In this study, the severity of impairment and quality of responses by fluent and nonfluent aphasic subjects was examined. The Revised Token Test (McNeil and Prescott, 1978) was administered in its standard auditory form and an experimental reading format. An equivalent 15-point multidimensional scoring system, sensitive to subtle qualities of response, was employed in both test versions.

Subjects were nine fluent and nine nonfluent aphasic subjects and nine normal individuals. The aphasic subjects were categorized as fluent or nonfluent according to their performance on the Boston Diagnostic Aphasia Examination.

Modality performance within groups and across groups was compared on two parameters: level of performance, as measured by mean subtest and overall score; and quality of performance, as measured by the numbers of scores received in each of the 15 categories.

Results indicated that the fluent and nonfluent aphasic groups differed significantly from the normal group on both test versions. However, the aphasic groups could not be distinguished from each other on the basis of their performance on these comprehension tests. Comparisons among the groups on the two test versions revealed that both aphasic groups scored lower than the normal group. The relationship between the modalities was similar in each of the three groups. The scores on the auditory version were always higher but were not found to be statistically different from the reading test. For both aphasic groups, the quality of response behavior was similar in each modality.

These results are interpreted to support the notions that: 1) the deficit measured by these tasks in these aphasic subjects is a supramodal one, crossing both auditory and visual modalities; 2) aphasic subjects as a group differ from nonaphasic subjects on both the RTT and the experimental reading version of the RTT; 3) the fluent-nonfluent dichotomy may be inappropriate for separating the auditory and reading comprehension abilities of aphasic subjects.

REFERENCES

McNeil, M. and Prescott, T., The Revised Token Test. Baltimore: University Park Press, 1978.