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Marie's Quadrilateral vs. Broca's Area: Aphasiological History Reconsidered

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Overview

In this symposium, we remind attendees of the issues addressed in the Parisian Society of Neurology debates of 1908 via an annotated, edited half-hour re-enactment of the debates between the Déjérines and Marie, each with their supporters. That presentation is complemented by Prof. Nina Dronkers' paper on the respective roles that Marie's quadrilateral and Broca's area play in aphasia as they are understood today.

Presentation 1

The re-enactment is based largely on the 1992 paper by A.R. Lecours, F. Chain, M. Poncet, J.-L. Nespolous & Y. Joanette entitled “Paris 1908: The hot summer of aphasiology or a season in the life of a chair” (Brain & Language 42, 105-152.) That paper provided a lively summary of the three days of debate on the questions concerning the nature of aphasia subtypes and the roles played by Broca's area and the insula and regions subtending it, respectively, in aphasia. The Déjérines took the positions that Broca's area was the seat of articulated language, and that other areas were responsible for other types of aphasia, while Marie and his followers argued that aphasia was unitary and linked to what has come to be called Marie's quadrilateral, a space including parts of insula and subcortex subtending it.

Roch Lecours and his co-authors (1992) translated sizable portions of the original French record of the debate, providing engaging materials that Obler and her students Vogel and Blanchette edited down into a half-hour presentation that articulates the main points of the debate. Roles are included for Jules and Auguste Klumpke Déjérine, Pierre Marie, Klippel, André-Thomas, Ballet, Dupré, Souques, Brissot and Moutier.

PowerPoint presentations of photographs of the original speakers accompany the text, along with pictures of the brain areas discussed and summaries of speakers' points. (These were prepared by L. Campanelli, A. Vogel, J. Yoon and L.K. Obler for a session at the ASHA Convention in 2010, and are modified for the Academy of Aphasia audience).

References


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debates about language area: Broca's Area or the Insula? Paper presented at the ASHA Convention, Philadelphia, PA.