

Student Name: McKayla Mortimer
Faculty Sponsor Name: Yvonne Rogalski

An Overview of Acquired Apraxia of Speech

This presentation is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the current research related to the pathophysiology, symptoms, and treatment of the motor speech disorder, apraxia of speech (AOS). This overview is designed to provide speech-language pathologists with the information necessary to best support their patients presenting with AOS.

Apraxia of speech is a motor speech disorder that results in the inability to program the motor movements necessary to produce speech. It is most often caused by a left middle cerebral artery cerebrovascular accident and is usually found concomitant to aphasia (specifically Broca's aphasia). The exact neuroanatomy of AOS has been highly debated in the literature because it is so rarely a pure diagnosis without the presence of aphasia or dysarthria. Apraxia of speech is diagnosed through a motor speech evaluation that usually involves a checklist-type assessment where the patient is required to perform certain speech and non-speech tasks. Although there are no medical or surgical treatments for AOS, several types of behavioral treatment exist that have proven to be effective. The most salient obstacle in the treatment of AOS is that it is so often diagnosed with aphasia, which is most often the main focus of treatment.

Speech-language pathologists take on the responsibility to implement the different behavioral treatments available to patients diagnosed with AOS. These treatments focus on either the prosodic features of speech, articulatory-kinematic aspects, improving performance of articulatory gestures with biofeedback, or the intersystemic reorganization via manual gestures. A recent treatment, known as Combined Aphasia and Apraxia of Speech Treatment (CAAST), has been developed to address the concomitance of aphasia and AOS. This presentation will provide a comprehensive, evidence-based look at the behavioral treatments for AOS that can be utilized by speech-language pathologists.