

Diagnosis and Treatment of Global Aphasia

Author: Michael Collins

Publisher: College-Hill Press, 1986,
Softcover \$24.50 (224 pgs.)

Reviewed by: Agnes Friesen, Ottawa Civic Hospital

The author's intent is described as an attempt to consolidate current knowledge about the abilities, diagnosis and treatment of globally aphasic patients.

The author works from the premise that traditional definitions of aphasia do not adequately reflect the uniqueness of globally aphasic individuals; severity alone does not adequately differentiate globally aphasic patients from those with other aphasic syndromes. In his terms, the traditional conceptual framework of aphasia slights or neglect not only the non-verbal limitations imposed by global aphasia, but also the influence of cognitive abilities in the recovery of communication, and the residual skills of the globally aphasic patient.

In his amended definition of global aphasia, he views those patients as globally aphasic where the acquired deficits are severe and such that there is little or no variability of performance across language modalities. He suggests that prognosis is frequently predicated on the degree of such variability in the early stages of recovery. The evolving or dynamic aspect of early aphasia is stressed.

The opening chapters, concerning the nature of the deficit in global aphasia, include an overview of those aspects, other than severity, which differentiate global aphasia from the other aphasic syndromes. Also included is a brief discussion of the potential role of the right hemisphere in the recovery of language following aphasia.

Subsequent chapters are devoted to evaluation and diagnosis, management considerations, predicting recovery and treatment. Much of the material in these chapters is as appropriate, and often more appropriate, for patients with less severe deficits than a global aphasia. The author acknowledges this. That the information can be of benefit to the practising clinician dealing with all types of aphasia is not to be denied; nevertheless, in the reading of these chapters, a sense of the intended focus of the book on global aphasia becomes vague at times. Chapter seven does deal explicitly with treatment programs designed for the globally aphasic patient. It includes brief descriptions or discussions of such programs as Visual Action Therapy; Promoting Aphasics' Communicative Effectiveness (PACE); the use of Blissymbols; and Voluntary Control of Involuntary Utterances (VCIU).

The book contains an extensive list of references, as well as numerous tables of treatment hierarchies, evaluation procedures and scoring systems.

By its very nature, the topic of the book does not readily lend itself to highly explicit statements or explanations. Nevertheless, the author does challenge clinicians

to re-examine the prevailing "attitude of therapeutic nihilism" concerning global aphasia, and to become more innovative and better clinical researchers in their efforts to help globally aphasic patients to communicate at least some of their experiences.

Tangled Tongue: Living With A Stutter

Author: Carlisle, Jock A.

Publisher: University of Toronto Press; (1985); 276 p.
Cloth \$25.00; Paperback \$9.95

Reviewed by: Carol Theoret-Douglas,
Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario

Jock Carlisle, a resident of Deep River Ontario, and severe stutterer for over 50 years, has written a humorous and thought provoking book entitled *Tangle Tongue: Living With A Stutter*. Written from a stutter's point of view, his purpose is to "cast some light on the mystery surrounding the causes of stuttering; the kind of people who stutter, and the difficulties they face everyday; the ways stuttering can be treated; and the responses of society to this strange erratic way of speaking".

Mr. Carlisle examines past and more recent literature in his attempt to understand this complex speech disorder. Numerous therapy approaches are discussed including Freudian analysis, elocution lessons, relaxation exercises, distraction devices, auditory feedback, the Edinburgh Masker, drugs, hypnosis, psychotherapy, conditioning and fluency shaping among others. Mr. Carlisle recounts personal incidents to show how frustrating stuttering is and how determined and hopeful one must be in order to control this difficulty.

Six people patiently waited to order their burgers, french fries, and cokes at Harvey's in Pembroke, Ontario. As my turn approached I felt the familiar tightening of my stomach muscles and adjusted my mind to handle the ordeal ahead. My wife, Joan, hovered in the background, encouraging but nervous. I soon found myself facing the smiling, uniformed girl at her microphone, and said, "Two chicken sandwiches, please, one with sauce, one without sauce, one portion of french fries, and two coffees. We'll eat them here." The girl smiled, repeated the order over the intercom, took my money, and wished me a nice day. "Next please!"

Joan joined me at the counter while the food was being prepared and, with a big smile and eyes flashing with pleasure, said, "Terrific! You did it! Did you see her face and watch her eyes? They didn't change! It worked!" It was the best fast-food lunch we had ever eaten.

Mr. Carlisle has included lists of references and addresses of organizations involved with stuttering research and treatment in North America, New Zealand, Australia, Europe, Japan, the Middle East, South Africa and Russia.

This book would be of interest to stutterers, family members, and others who wish to familiarize themselves with stuttering, it will also help readers to better understand this enigmatic speech disorder from a personal point of view.