
Book Reviews

Évaluation des ouvrages écrits

Childhood Language Disorders in Context: Infancy Through Adolescence

Nickola Wolf Nelson

Publisher: MacMillan Canada

Available from: MacMillan Canada, 200-1200 Eglinton Ave. E., Don Mills, ON M3C 3N1

Cost: \$80.00

Reviewer: Judy Hunt, Halifax Regional School Board, Nova Scotia

The author's ultimate purpose is to find ways to facilitate language learning when it does not proceed naturally. The intended audience is the graduate student and upper level undergraduate in speech-language pathology or special education. It is intended for those students who have some background in linguistics and in normal and disordered language acquisition. It is also designed to serve as a resource for practising professionals and parents.

The book is organised into two parts, the first part consisting of six chapters, the second part, of three chapters. Information is clearly categorised, well integrated and cross-referenced. The conceptual framework is plainly stated and dominant themes are maintained throughout. The theme that problems and solutions are not just within children predominates throughout the text. The author constantly reminds the reader to ask questions not only about the child's abilities and impairments, but also about the needs and opportunities for communication that arise in important functional contexts.

While the author takes a strongly developmental perspective, social interaction is considered an essential part of every therapeutic plan. Within this frame of reference, the team process is discussed, which includes parents, teachers, peers and siblings. Practitioners are urged to prepare for a change toward this broader, more contextual approach and are presented with philosophies that are currently guiding such changes in business, health, and education. Collaborative consultation emerges as an important model for assessment/intervention.

In Part 1, the conceptual framework of the book is explained and language, speech, and communication are defined. The five sub-systems of language are reviewed (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics). Issues related to bilingualism, dialect, and multicultural sensitivity are addressed. Six theories of language acquisition are described (biological maturation, linguistic rule induction, behaviourism, information processing, cognitivism, and social interaction). These are integrated into a discussion of causes of, and contributing factors to, language impairment, organised under three headings (central processing factors, peripheral sensory and motor factors, and environmental and emotional factors). Finally, an overview of issues related to language assessment and intervention is provided and closely integrated with the six theories of language acquisition.

Part 2 of the book consists of three parallel chapters which discuss the communicative abilities, needs, and opportunities of children at three periods of language development: early (infant to toddler); middle (pre-school

to early elementary); late (late elementary through adolescence). The language characteristics of each period are described. Assessment and intervention are discussed. Both structured and naturalistic assessment and intervention approaches are proposed.

Special features of the book, such as personal statements by parents, teachers, and children, assist the reader in interpreting and applying the information. In addition, useful appendices are included. Appendix A is a bibliography of formal tests, listed by early, middle and later language stages. Appendix B presents a developmental checklist for use in assessment in four domains: cognition, receptive language, expressive language, and social interaction and play. Appendix C presents the scoring criteria for the Black English version of the Developmental Sentence Scoring (DSS) procedure (Lee, 1974).

This book is highly recommended to graduate students as well as practising professionals who serve children with language disorders and who may supervise students or teach child language courses. Parts of the book may be useful to parents, if guidance and interpretation are available.

Reference

Lee, L. L. (1974). *Developmental Sentence Analysis*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Language of the Elderly

Jane Maxim and Karen Bryan

Publisher: Whurr Publishers Ltd., Great Britain

Available from: Login Brothers Canada, 1-800-665-1148

Cost: \$78.50

Reviewer: J.B. Orange, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario

Maxim and Bryan's book was a long time in the making. Advertised for publication as early as 1990, the book was published only more recently. The volume is from a series titled *Studies in Disorders of Communication*, which is edited by the internationally known and well-respected group of professors David Crystal, Ruth Lesser, and Margaret Snowling. The objective of the book is to present a balanced and comprehensive perspective of the changes in language processing and performance in older adults.

Multidisciplinary audiences would derive benefit from portions of the book, especially students in graduate level seminars on aging. Undergraduates in psycholinguistics and linguistics might appreciate three chapters in particular, as they focus primarily on intra-sentential morphosyntactic features in a sample of normal older adults who participated in a study of language and aging.

The 10 chapters of the book comprise four separate divisions, although they are not clustered into titled sections. Like its North American counterparts on communication and aging, this book begins with two chapters that summarize current epidemiological trends in aging in several developed countries (e.g., United Kingdom, Australia, USA), biological and medical aspects of aging and communication, and linguistic and cognitive processes associated with

language changes in older adults. Cognitive and linguistic theoretical frameworks used to understand language production and processing are discussed in these opening chapters. The influence of the cognitive neuroscientists of Great Britain is clearly evident in the chapters and provides refreshing perspectives on how researchers and clinicians interpret language performance in older adults.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 contain discussions of the variations in occurrence of fundamental and complex grammatical structures in the language of the normal elderly and profile some of the variability using LARSP analyses (Language Assessment, Remediation, and Screening Procedure). Identified as a discussion of linguistic features of conversation, the material in the chapters has less to do with the targeted genre and more to do with micro-analyses of morphosyntactic structure of discourse in general (e.g., clause elements, MLU, conjunctions, and noun and verb phrases). Chapter 5 contains profiles of the discourse of eight older adults that serve to illustrate the variability in grammatical performance in the normal elderly.

Chapter 6 attempts to address the language profiles of individuals with various types of dementia including Pick's disease, vascular-related dementias, and dementia associated with subcortical pathology (e.g., Parkinson's and Huntington's diseases), while Chapter 7 outlines the language pathology in Alzheimer's disease. Chapter 6 suffers from a less than comprehensive and current examination of the language features of various forms of dementia. A brief overview of various dementia pathologies is not well integrated into the main theme of the chapter. The discussion of the language of individuals with Alzheimer's disease in Chapter 7 lacks the detail and breadth found in other scholarly work.

The final three chapters review current service delivery systems in the United Kingdom, speech-language intervention programs for the elderly, and future considerations for the care of older adults, respectively. Like a majority of the preceding chapters, all three suffer from too little detail, especially on contemporary issues of speech-language assessment and intervention. For those readers who wish to obtain a survey of older adults' language, then sections of this book may be suitable. For others who are seeking an in-depth analysis of current clinical perspectives, several North American sources are likely to be more appropriate.

Narrative Discourse in Neurologically Impaired and Normal Aging Adults

Hiram H. Brownell and Yves Joanette

Publisher: Singular Publishing Group
Available from: Login Brothers Canada, 1-800-665-1148

Cost: \$94.25

Reviewer: Barbara Purves, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia

Narrative Discourse in Neurologically Impaired and Normal Aging Adults is intended to provide the reader with a collection of studies representing a range of approaches taken when studying narrative capacities of different groups. The book is based on a symposium entitled "Narrative and Discourse Processes", organized by the editors as part of the second annual Theoretical and Experimental Neuropsychology (TENNET) Conference held in Montreal, Quebec in May,

1991. According to the editors, the book is intended for audiences in neuropsychology, speech-language pathology, cognitive psychology, linguistics, and more generally, for students and researchers in any branch of cognitive science.

The focus on narrative discourse, in contrast to other texts about a variety of discourse types, permits a broader selection of topics about narratives. These topics include new applications of existing cognitive models, approaches from different perspectives such as semiotics, and studies of narrative discourse in a variety of populations.

The preface provides an excellent overview of the content and organization of the book. The chapters are grouped into four sections, with those in the first section presenting theoretical considerations and those in the subsequent sections discussing the narrative capacities of different populations. These include, in order, healthy elderly, focally brain-damaged patients, and patients with dementia.

The three chapters of the first section, particularly the first which concerns levels of approach to discourse abilities illustrated through story comprehension, are intended as an introduction to the remainder of the text.

The second section on healthy elderly contains four chapters investigating the effects of normal aging on narrative discourse. Three chapters focus on aspects of discourse processing including text recall, discourse comprehension and working memory, and a neuropsychological approach involving studies of on-line brain imaging. The fourth chapter provides a sociolinguistic longitudinal approach to the effects of aging on discourse.

The third section of the book contains six chapters. Two chapters

focus on patients with aphasia, including comprehension of narratives in listeners with aphasia and a study of narratives by Polish-speaking aphasics. Two chapters discuss more than one patient group, with a comparison of discourse production by different participant groups and a review of studies of contextual and thematic influences on narrative comprehension by patients with left and right brain damage. One takes a case study approach to conceptual processing of discourse and the other discusses narrative production in terms of other cognitive abilities.

The fourth section of the book includes two chapters. The first investigates narrative schema in patients with dementia of the Alzheimer's type (DAT). The second studies the narrative abilities of patients with dementia from a broader perspective.

This book is an excellent reference text for the clinical speech-language pathologist seeking a richer understanding of the complexities of narrative abilities in adult populations. While it is not intended as an introductory text, the chapters serve as entry points to the relevant literature. The studies of different populations, both healthy and brain-damaged, ensure clinically useful information. Application of this information to clinical practice, however, is left to the speech-language pathologist, as this is not the focus of the book. Such applications could include evaluation of published assessment materials in terms of the concepts discussed, analyses of narrative productions using the various frameworks presented, or differentiating the effects of normal aging from disease processes in specific patients.

Musicians and the Prevention of Hearing Loss

Marshall Chasin

Publisher: Singular Publishing Group
Available from: Login Brothers
Canada, 1-800-665-1148

Cost: \$57.95

Reviewer: Gordon Whitehead, Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Clinic, Halifax, Nova Scotia

Musicians and the Prevention of Hearing Loss, by audiologist Marshall Chasin, is an unusual, interesting, and current publication. This 184-page paperback is written primarily for audiologists, but also very much for musicians. This review is written from an audiological perspective.

The book is a good basic primer for such topics as how the ear works, hearing loss, acoustics, audiological assessment, and prevention of hearing loss. In contrast to the usual audiology text, however, the above-noted topics are related not to general application, but to the needs of musician clients. The book is also an excellent source of information on musical instruments and their specific physical acoustics, musical performance-room acoustics, hearing protection requirements peculiar to musical experiences, assessment of the hearing and health care needs of the musician, and clinical and environmental hearing loss prevention strategies relating to the musical environment. The appendices contain useful information and the bibliography is quite comprehensive.

Marshall Chasin, well-known in Canadian audiological circles, has written a book that is both enjoyable to read and informative. Audiologists with clients who are musicians and who have more than a passing interest in music owe it to themselves and their clients to read this book.

Literacy and language analysis

Robert J. Scholes, Ed.

Publisher: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Available from: Copp Clark Longman, 1-800-815-9417

Cost: \$74.95

Reviewer: Patricia L. Cleave, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia

Literacy and language analysis is a collection of chapters which share the central theme that written language is not merely a transcription of oral language but rather a related but distinct system. Furthermore, it is argued by the various authors that literacy enhances language awareness and affects how an individual analyses oral language. Thus, literacy is seen as an important but often ignored factor in the development of linguistic theories. This book is intended for people who are interested in the relationship between oral and written language and the impact that written language has had on linguistic theory.

Following an introductory chapter, the book is organized into sections dealing with literacy and various aspects of language: the phoneme, morphology, and the sentence. There is also a section entitled "Literacy and the Context of Language".

There are three chapters devoted to the relationship between literacy and the phoneme, which demonstrate that learning to read makes a person aware of the fact that sentences are made up of words and that words are made up of sounds. This is a familiar area for speech-language pathologists who

work on emergent literacy or literacy skills. In the first chapter, Linnea Ehri reviews her research on reading and spelling development and how familiarity with English orthography influences phonological awareness and even pronunciation. Ehri's position on sight vocabulary is the most provocative one in her chapter: "Contrary to traditional views that sight words are learned as non-phonological, visual, rote forms, my theory and evidence suggest that sight words are learned by the application of systematic knowledge about grapheme-phoneme correspondences" (p. 21). The evidence she cites comes from her work with children which suggests that sight words are learned by determining the correspondence between the letters in the written form of a word and the sounds of the spoken form. She then discusses stages in learning to read and spell as documentation of the development of the grapheme-phoneme correspondence rules in young children. The second chapter, written by the book's editor, Robert Scholes, reports on his studies with English-speaking college students which demonstrate that the phonic analysis of a word is affected by the written form. The final chapter in the phoneme section reviews work done with speakers of two different Indian languages involving both literate and non-literate speakers. Given that the Indian writing system is "semi-syllabic", rather than alphabetic like English, the results help clarify the influence of an alphabetic system in phonological awareness. The authors conclude that sensitivity to rhyme and syllable develops more naturally than sensitivity to phonemes and does not require experience with an alphabetic system.

The influence of literacy on morphology and syntax are less familiar areas for speech-language pathologists. In the chapter entitled "On the Orthographic Basis of Morphology", Scholes argues that "consciousness of words and word structure is one (of many) consequences of literacy" (p. 73). Citing work from historical linguistics and current work with children and non-literate adults, Scholes argues that people's concepts of words and inflections are the result of their exposure to written language. The chapters in the section on "Literacy and the Sentence" present evidence from English and Indian languages which suggests that literacy affects grammaticality judgments. Many of the tests which speech-language pathologists use with school-age children involve grammaticality judgments. Thus, the influence of literacy on the ability to make grammaticality judgments has particular relevance for our field. There is also a chapter by Jim Miller which outlines the syntactic difference between spoken and written language. The pragmatic differences between oral and written language is the focus of a chapter by Paul Georg Meyer.

Literacy and Language Analysis presents an interesting view about the influence of written language on oral language that goes beyond phonological awareness. The inclusion of cross-linguistic research involving non-alphabetic languages and evidence from historical linguistics is a strong feature of this book. For anyone concerned about the theoretical relationship between oral and written language, this book is interesting reading.