

## Book Reviews Évaluation des livres

**Title:** Brain-Based Communication Disorders

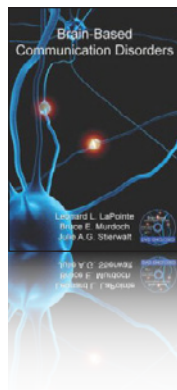
**Author:** Leonard L. LaPointe,  
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Julie A.G. Stierwalt

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**Cost:** \$98.50

**Reviewer:** Bjanka Pokorny,  
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### BRAIN-BASED COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

LaPointe, Murdoch and Stierwal's book is designed to introduce the reader to the "major clinically recognised types of acquired speech/language, cognitive, and swallowing disorders encountered by clinicians working with child and adult neurologic cases." Already in the preface, the reader is drawn to the fascinating history of brain and language disorders as the authors pay tribute to the groundbreaking work of Paul Broca. The reader's attention and interest are maintained throughout the subsequent twelve chapters, with each presenting a substantial but not overbearing amount of content.

Sprinkled throughout the book are engaging case studies of disorders that serve to flesh out the content of the different chapters. An additional benefit is the included DVD which features videoclips of a number of patients. As some language impairments are difficult to illustrate through writing, including a DVD to demonstrate the full extent of different disorders was a fantastic idea.

The first chapter entitled The Neurologic Basis of Speech and Language provides the reader with an introduction to the gross anatomy of the nervous system. The chapter concludes with an introduction to the speech and language centres of the brain. Chapter two, Basic Anatomy and Physiology of the Speech Mechanism, summarizes respiration, phonation and articulation. The discussion of the vocal tract is supplemented with detailed figures. Chapter three, entitled Neurological causes of Communication Disorders, includes developmental as

well as acquired aetiologies, with information on paediatric as well as adult populations.

Aphasia is the topic covered in the fourth chapter. An introduction to the characteristics and risk factors of aphasia precedes a discussion on assessment and treatment of this disorder. In chapter five, Nonfocal Brain Damage: Communication Disorders and a World of Other Problems, the authors discuss traumatic brain injury and the accompanying physical, cognitive and communication changes individuals can exhibit. The chapter concludes with an overview of treatment options.

Right hemisphere syndrome is covered in the sixth chapter. Historical perspectives are summarized as well as causes. This chapter includes numerous useful images depicting the performance of affected individuals on a number of cognitive tasks, which serves to further illustrate impairments of this group.

Next, the authors present a short chapter on Acquired Aphasia in Childhood, discussing clinical features and different aetiologies. The paediatric theme recurs in chapter nine, Motor Speech Disorders in Childhood, with an overview of the causes of acquired childhood dysarthria, such as traumatic brain injury and brain tumours.

Motor Speech Disorders in Adults: Dysarthrias and Apraxia of Speech are reviewed in chapter eight. The chapter concludes with an examination of assessment tools for motor speech disorders.

Acquired Neurologic Swallowing Disorders in Children and Adults is the title of the tenth chapter. The reader learns about the normal swallowing process before diving into a detailed discussion of clinical features and treatment options for swallowing disorders. This chapter is supplemented with videofluoroscopic images, demonstrating how swallowing disorders are assessed and treated.

The eleventh and twelfth chapters discuss Principles of Assessment of Child and Adult Neurologic Speech-Language Disorders and Principles of Treatment for Neurologic Communication Disorders respectively. Introducing the assessment tools at the end of the book turns out to be a logical step as it allows the learner to acquaint him- or herself with the necessary background knowledge in order to fully understand current treatment principles.

Certain helpful features that would make studying with this book significantly easier are absent. The authors fail to consistently provide chapter summaries and recommended reading lists. Furthermore, key concepts are not highlighted within the chapter text, nor is there a glossary at the end of the book. Finally, many of the illustrations that accompany the text are unusual and at times almost unrelated to the content of the chapter, such

as, to give but one example, an image of a hamburger (accompanied by a caption that specifies that the image shows a hamburger).

These criticisms notwithstanding, the book presents contemporary content about communication disorders and also provides some historical background. This allows student readers to gain a solid understanding of the development of the discipline across time. In summary, the authors have succeeded in covering a large amount of content and presenting it in a manner that would be easily understood by learners. ▶