

Public Abstract

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Title:Links between Language, Gesture, and Motor Skill: A Longitudinal Study of Communication Recovery in Adults with Broca's Aphasia

In this study, a group of six adult men with post-stroke Broca's aphasia and a matched group of men with no neurological illness (NNI) completed an object description task in speech only, speech plus gesture, and gesture only conditions. Participants with aphasia were seen at monthly intervals for 6 months beginning at 1-2 months post-onset. Communication recovery patterns were compared to those with NNI.

Participants with aphasia demonstrated significant improvement in language over the 6-month period. However, their speech was still significantly poorer than that of the NNI group, and their gesture productions differed in a number of ways. These findings are suggestive of re-organization in language and gesture during the 6-month recovery period following cerebrovascular accident. They are discussed in terms of the integrated nature of processes underlying speech and gesture and potential clinical implications of gesture use as an index of language recovery in Broca's aphasia.