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Agrammatism in Arabic Broca's aphasia

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Agrammatism is a language disorder characterized by morpho-syntactic impairments affecting the production and comprehension of connected speech. One characteristic of this deficit is the omission and/or substitution of grammatical morphemes in stroke survivors with Broca's aphasia. The studies of agrammatism show that not all morpho-syntactic elements are impaired to the same degree and that some of this variation may be due to language-specific differences. This study investigated the production of morpho-syntactic elements in 15 Arabic speaking individuals with agrammatism and 15 age-matched neurologically healthy individuals. Two experiments were conducted to examine the production of complementizer, tense, agreement and negation morphology in Arabic. The results indicated that the speakers of Arabic with agrammatism had marked dissociations in producing specific morpho-syntactic elements. The observed impairment patterns overlapped, in many respects, with those observed in other linguistic groups. The findings are discussed with respect to current theories of agrammatism, including both morpho-syntactic and computational accounts.

Biography

Yusuf Al-Bustanji is an assistant professor at United Arab Emirates University. He is a licensed and certified speech language pathologist specializing in Neurogenic Communication Disorders from The Ohio State University. He has over 20 years of experience in providing clinical evidence-based therapy services to individuals diagnosed with communication and swallowing disorders in acute care and rehabilitation centers at hospital settings.

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