

Abstract 96

An Analysis of the Agrammatic Speech of Persons with Aphasia in the Sinhalese Language

K.W.A. Asanka Gayani Weerasinghe
Speech and Language Therapist
asankaslt5@yahoo.com

Language impairment due to strokes can manifest as poor comprehension and expression of language, poor word recalling and word production. Aphasia is a broad term used for referring to these impairments. Expressive Aphasia shows Agrammatism or poor comprehension and/ or production of grammaticality as a feature which is the focus in this study. Accordingly a descriptive study was carried out using fifteen persons with Expressive Aphasia and a matched number of fifteen people paired with them from the normal population in order to observe the nature of Agrammatism in their speech production in colloquial Sinhala language. Objectives of the study were to describe the common syntactic patterns observed in the speech of Expressive Aphasia population, to describe the common syntactic patterns observed in speech of the matched normal population and to discuss differences in the grammatical output in speech between the normal population and the matched Expressive Aphasia population. Each participant answered three questions. Their speech was audio recorded and transcribed. The transcriptions were observed for pre identified features of Agrammatism through literature review. Length of utterance was the highest grossing feature to identify between the normal population (NNP) (5> words) at 98% and the population with Expressive Aphasia (PWAs) (<4 words) at 82%. Absence of/ poor inflection of verbs was the second prominent feature at 9% of the time for PWAs and 00% for NNPs. S+O+V word order emerged at 92% for PWAs and 98% for NNPs as the basic word order. Accordingly, in implementing Speech and Language Therapy services, assessment for expressive aphasia can include features of utterance length and verb inflection as areas to be assessed and in therapeutic intervention, utterance length and inflection (verbs) can be identified as main areas to work upon. Significance of this study is to improve the language Agrammatic problems.

Key words: agrammatism, aphasia, inflection of verbs, length of utterance, stroke