

Aphasiology and linguistic theory in Romance languages

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The relationship between aphasia, an acquired language disorder due to focal brain damage, and linguistic theory has a long tradition. They have influenced and informed each other for almost a century. However, this relationship is not balanced. According to Garraffa & Fyndanis (2020), studies of aphasia have been informed by linguistic theory more often than the opposite and the majority of these studies have been framed within different versions of Generative Grammar.

To contribute to a change of trend, in this talk I will focus on data from aphasia that can inform Boye & Harder's (2012) ProGram theory, a usage-based theory of grammatical status that accounts for grammar in terms of communicative function emphasizing its role in combining and prioritizing information units, and on the implications this theory has for non-fluent deficits.

I will focus on two crucially distinct phenomena. First, I will discuss the adequacy of the ProGram theory to predict the pattern of performance of people with fluent and non-fluent aphasias. The case of prepositions and pronouns in Spanish and French will be examined in detail (Ishkhanyan et al., 2017; Martínez-Ferreiro et al., 2019).

Then, I will show how code-switching and code-mixing can be seen as constrained by lexical-grammatical factors consistent with ProGram (Martínez-Ferreiro & Boye, 2019). Data from Catalan-Spanish bilingual participants with non-fluent aphasias will be discussed.

References:

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