

Âge et type d'aphasie

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Abstract

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According to many studies, Broca's (or non fluent) aphasic patients are younger than Wernicke's (or fluent). Different hypotheses have been proposed to explain this age difference. However, since the studies in which an age difference was observed have not controlled all the variables — such as schooling and handedness — that may have an influence on speech and language impairments following cerebral lesion, it is legitimate to ask whether or not the explanations proposed are of any relevance. Accordingly, the present study aimed to investigate the age difference between Broca's and Wernicke's aphasics while achieving better control over potentially confounding variables. The subjects (9 Broca's and 14 Wernicke's) were selected from a data base according to the following selection criteria: aphasia type, handedness, localization of lesion and etiology (first CVA). The two groups revealed to be equivalent for sex distribution and schooling; post onset time was superior to three weeks for all subjects but one. Results showed that the distribution of age between Broca's and Wernicke's group were significantly different: there was a small representation of Broca's aphasics in older subjects while Wernicke's aphasia occurred at all ages.

Key words : Aphasia ; age ; functional lateralization.

La littérature aphasiologique concernant l'adulte rapporte que l'âge moyen des aphasiques de Wernicke (ou fluents) est supérieur à l'âge moyen des aphasiques de Broca, et ce, d'environ dix ans. Certains auteurs ont, en effet, mis en évidence une différence d'âge significative entre ces deux groupes. C'est le cas de Obler, Albert, Goodglass et Benson (1978), Basso, Capitani, Laiacona et Luzzatti (1980), De Renzi, Faglioni et Ferrari (1980), Eslinger et Damasio (1981), Harasymiw, Halper et Sutherland (1981), Brown et Grober