Expressive Language Quantitatively Compared
for Aphasic and Normal Adults
(Abstract)

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The Shewan Spontaneous Language Analysis (SSLA) system is designed to describe and quantify aphasic subjects' verbal expressive language using a picture description task. The SSLA measures 12 variables which include the three components of the language system as well as some general parameters of verbal output. Intra- and interjudge reliability measures are high, suggesting consistent scoring within and between judges. SSLA performance data were presented for an aphasic group (N=47) and a normal control group (N=10), comparable for age and educational level with the aphasic group. The aphasic subjects performed significantly more poorly than the normals on 10 variables. Of the 12 measured, 8 differentiated aphasic from normal performance with greater than 78% accuracy. Using the entire SSLA system, 20 (85%) of 23 additional score profiles were accurately classified as aphasic or normal. The three errors were false negatives; that is, aphasic subjects who were classified by the SSLA as normal. Therefore, the sensitivity of the SSLA was .769 and the specificity was 1.000.