

An Optimality-Theory Analysis of Lexical Disorders in the Speech of Iraqi Aphasic Patients: A Case Study

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Abstract:

This study provides an investigation of lexical disorders noticed in the speech of Basri-Iraqi aphasics, via Prince and Smolensky's 1993 constraint-oriented approach of Optimality theory, OT for short. The work aims to describe and analyze the lexical processes found in the produced verbal output of the patients. The data is collected qualitatively by conducting interviews with three Basri aphasic participants from different districts of Basra, using an elicitation form. The results indicate that the language performance of aphasics is lexically impaired. The findings also confirm the applicability of OT to the data. Added to that, lexical impairments manifest themselves in the impairment of the phonological output lexicon of the lexical system. The work recommends creating a database of aphasics and their whereabouts so as to pave the way to other researchers who might be interested in the subject area of the study. This study might further be followed by studies that provide speech therapy and intervention strategies that would help aphasics regain their language.

Keywords: aphasia, lexical, disorders, Optimality theory.