Aphasiologists have accumulated a sophisticated understanding of the language impairments among English speakers. Research in the field of cognitive neuropsychology has improved our knowledge about how language becomes impaired in English speakers following brain damage by generating conceptual frameworks for understanding why language impairments occur. A large proportion of the research evidence that supports these models comes from studies of patients who have acquired problems in spoken and written naming (anomia), reading (dyslexia) and writing (dysgraphia). The ultimate aim of this research is to enhance the lives of patients with aphasia by improving diagnosis of language impairments and by development of innovative rehabilitation strategies.

The aim of this publication is to describe communication disorders in patients who speak Cantonese, French, German, Hebrew, Mandarin, Spanish and Turkish. These languages were selected because they differ on critical linguistic dimensions (grammar, orthography, phonology) and although each dimension is important for understanding the disorders of communication in each language, the focus of this book is selective disorders of reading and writing. The sample of languages discussed here also offers the opportunity of new insights into how different language environments – in terms of the script that has evolved in the environment – can have impact on brain function. This is an important question in cognitive neuroscience.
Contents:

Introduction
Acquired disorders of reading and writing: Cross-script comparisons
B.S. Weekes

Deep dysgraphia in Turkish
I. Raman and B.S. Weekes

Acquired surface alexia in Spanish: A case report
A.R. Ferreres, M. Martínez Cuitiño and A. Olmedo

Acquired dyslexia in Spanish: A review and some observations on a new case of deep
dyslexia
R. Davies and F. Cuetos

Frequency effects with visual words and syllables in a German dyslexic reader
P. Stenneken, M. Conrad, F. Hutzler, M. Braun and A.M. Jacobs

Multiple levels of letter representation in written spelling: Evidence from a single case of
dysgraphia with multiple deficits in French
M.-P. de Partz, A. Lochy and A. Pillon

Letter form as a constraint for errors in neglect dyslexia and letter position dyslexia in
Hebrew
N. Friedmann and A. Gvion

Acquired dyslexia and dysgraphia in Chinese
W. Yin, S. He and B.S. Weekes

Whole-word phonological representations of disyllabic words in the Chinese lexicon: Data
from acquired dyslexia
S.-P. Law, W. Wong and K.M.Y. Chiu

The selective impairment of the phonological output buffer: Evidence from a Chinese patient
H. Shu, H. Xiong, Z. Han, Y. Bi and X. Bai

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