
APHASIA RECOVERY LAB

Hello Dear Friends—



The past two months have certainly been a roller coaster for all of us, haven't they?! The pandemic has affected us in strange ways. Words like "Coronavirus", "shelter-in-place", and "disinfectant wipes" are now frequent occurrences in our vocabulary. We have found creative ways to keep busy at home, maybe learned a new computer program to see our friends and family by video, and hopefully, still gotten some exercise via TV, computer, or some basic jumping jacks in your living room. (No pressure though)! Luckily, we have heard that everyone we know is staying safe and healthy, so we are very, very grateful for that.

We have missed you, and wanted to start this newsletter to stay in touch a bit more. Here you will find news about our Lab, some safety tips to keep in mind, and some worksheets and resources that you might find useful for keeping up your communication skills. Also, one of our new students, Anjelica Vance, has summarized her review of computer programs that are available for people with aphasia to use at home. Thanks, Anjelica, for doing that for us, and to Alexis for a great job on putting together this newsletter.

Over the past months of working from home, we have been putting together ways of being able to test our participants via video computer connections, using a program called "Zoom". It's the same one all the professors and students are using at Berkeley to keep classes going, so no one has to leave their home. So far, we are very pleased with this way of still getting to see all of you, and check in on how your recovery is going. We think this is a great way to keep things moving forward, and hope you will like it, too. Now, if we could just get the MRI scans this way, too, we'd be all set!

Enough for now. From all of us in the Aphasia Recovery Lab at UC Berkeley, we look forward to seeing you again by video or in person very soon. Please stay well!

Yours,

Nina Dronkers

Catch up with members of the lab—



Featured announcement: Dr. Nina Dronkers appointed UC Berkeley Adjunct Professor!

Dr. Nina Dronkers has been appointed Adjunct Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience in the Psychology Department. She will continue to lead the Aphasia Recovery Lab and to mentor her students. This year, she co-taught a Psychology Department Speciality Clinic for people with brain injuries and/or their caregivers.



Dr. Maria Ivanova will be giving one of the [C-STAR Lectures](#) on May 21st. The C-STAR lecture series offers biweekly lectures on aphasia, rehabilitation after stroke, neuroimaging and neurostimulation methodology, and the neurobiology of language. She will be giving a talk on lesion-symptom mapping, a technique we use in the lab to determine what areas of the brain support different language processes.



Research Assistant, Alexis Pracar will begin the PhD program in Cognitive Neuroscience at Berkeley in the Fall of 2020. She will continue to be mentored by Dr. Dronkers, who will step into the role of doctoral advisor.

The lab welcomed three new research assistants. Anjelica Vance (junior), Jessica Lawien (post-bacc student), and Sandhya Kannan (senior) (shown left to right). All three plan to pursue graduate studies in neuroscience after finishing up their studies at Berkeley.



COVID-19 Safety—

We hope you are staying safe during this time. Please follow the [CDC's guidelines](#) for staying safe from the coronavirus:



Know how it spreads. It spreads through respiratory droplets. Avoid getting close to people's mouths.



Wash your hands often.



Avoid close contact with people outside your home (6ft distance recommended).



Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others.



Cover coughs and sneezes.



Clean and disinfect.

The CDC recommends [limiting in-person visits to the pharmacy to protect yourself from COVID-19 when getting your prescriptions](#):

- Call in prescription orders ahead of time.
- Use drive-thru windows, curbside services, mail-order, or other delivery services.
- Try to make one trip, picking up all medicine at the same time.

[Ordering food and groceries online is a great way to stay safe:](#)

- Instacart and other online delivery services in some cities have reduced fees for seniors.
- Ordering food from local restaurants is a great way to support the local economy while staying safe. Pick up in-person or order from apps like [DoorDash](#), [Uber Eats](#), [Postmates](#), [Grubhub](#), [Caviar](#) and others.
- Be sure to wipe down the packaging from food deliveries.

[Walking outside is healthy but must be done safely:](#)

- Stay close to home and do not visit crowded areas.
- Do not walk outside if you feel sick.

Resources—

The [National Aphasia Association](#) is a wonderful resource. Here are a few things from their site that you can use today! Click the links to sign up.

- [One Aphasia Action](#)—daily activities you can do from home that will help you continue speech recovery during isolation.
- [Virtual chat group](#), Socialize with people with aphasia and their caregivers. Keep practicing your conversation skills! Check out the next one on May 20th.



The Aphasia Recovery Lab is looking into opening up our very own aphasia support group! The group will be accessible online and in-person. Check [our website](#) for updates and let us know via aphasialab@berkeley.edu if you are interested in joining.

Research Assistant, Anjelica Vance, put together a list of apps for iphone/ipad/computer use. The list is broken down based on the type of language difficulties one is trying to overcome and goals. It will be updated regularly. Please keep in mind that these are applications we have encountered, but are not necessarily being recommended by our Lab. We are not affiliated with the companies producing these apps. We are providing the list for informational purposes. We have not yet had the opportunity to comprehensively test any of them, but welcome your opinions!

Resources — Aphasia Apps

Category	Name	Description	Price	Who made it?
All language domains	Constant Therapy	Constant Therapy can help to improve cognition, memory, speech, language, reading, and comprehension skills; 65 task categories, 100,000 exercises, and 10 levels of difficulty. Uses speech recognition to help with verbal tasks.	\$24.99/month or \$250/year 2-week free trial	Boston University
Auditory Comprehension	Comprehension Aphasia App	This app focuses on auditory comprehension of yes-no questions and directions. This app has the option to turn on background noise.	\$19.99 one-time fee	The Virtual Speech Center
Anomia & Word Finding	iName It	For iPads* Designed to help individuals with difficulty recalling the names of common items found in the home. Uses different types of cues to practice.	\$14.99 one-time fee	Smarty Ears
Anomia & Word Finding	Little Story Creator	Use this app to create short stories to practice from. Caregivers or Speech-Language Pathologists can show mouth movements and read along with the reader.	Free	Grasshopper apps
Apraxia & Motor Speech Deficits	Small Talk Aphasia (oral exercises)	Provides basic oral motor exercises that are typical for speech therapy immediately following stroke.	Free	Lingraphica
Apraxia & Motor Speech Deficits	SmallTalk Consonant Blends	Provides a series of speech-exercise videos, each illustrating the tongue and lip movements necessary to produce consonant blends where two or three consonants are blended together, such as “bl” or “str.”	Free	Lingraphica

Apraxia & Motor Speech Deficits	EESpeech Basic	This pre-defined communication notebook facilitates basic and daily communication needs, and prevents communication breakdowns anywhere and anytime.	Free	Elite Express Solutions
Communication	MyTalkTools (+Speech)	Available in multiple languages, offers simple options for basic communication (pictures and categorical)	Free (+Speech \$179.99) (Workspace family/professional) \$74.99	MyTalk Tools
Communication	Communication Journey: Aphasia	Facilitates communication techniques, self-advocacy, directing care, and repair of communication breakdowns.	Free	Saltillo
Quarantine Apps	Runkeeper	Tracks workouts (walking, running, cycling, etc.) and has goals and training plans; guided workouts and one on one coaching	Free; in-app purchases and memberships available	ASICS Digital
Quarantine Apps	<30 Days	Offer 30-day fitness planning	Free	Bending Spoons

** The Aphasia Recovery Lab does not officially endorse any of these services.

Resources— Downloads!

Aphasia Apps



The apps list can be opened as a printable PDF if you [click this link](#). Let us know what you think about these!

Worksheets



[Click to open a printable PDF of the worksheet packet](#)

Description of worksheet activities:

Who said that?

Decide which famous person said these famous words!

2 Pictures 1 Word

The two pictures each represent a piece of the bigger word. Can you solve it?

Brainstorm!

For each category, think up three different answers. There are so many to choose from! Have fun.

What would you do if you won the lottery?

Feeling lucky? Talk about what you would do if you hit the jackpot. Choose some options from the pictures or come up with your own ideas. The possibilities are endless!

Food

First, fill in the blanks using the word bank. Then, think of items that go with the food/drink in the middle. Show off your culinary imagination!