Seminars in Hearing and Communications Sciences (SHACS) present:

“Assessment of auditory processing abilities in adults”

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Audiology and audiologists face many challenges in the current business and clinical climate. One way to address this on several fronts is for clinical approaches to move beyond the audiogram and to begin to routinely apply behavioral tests of hearing ability that specifically and reliably assess the integrity of the entire auditory system. Currently, this is a serious challenge as there is no proven way to dissociate dysfunction in various parts of the auditory system in a cost-effective, rapid and reliable manner.

This talk will describe a set of automated measures of auditory processing ability that have been successfully related to age and/or hearing loss in the laboratory and that are currently being implemented for calibrated testing on a tablet computer using inexpensive headphones and standard audio hardware. The areas in which these tests are being translated from the laboratory into a format appropriate to the audiology clinic, the general medical practitioner’s office, or even the home are 1) spectrotemporal modulation sensitivity; 2) temporal sensitivity assessed both monaurally and binaurally; 3) spatial release from speech-on-speech masking; and 4) auditory attention and working memory.

This talk will describe the laboratory evidence behind these tests and the ways in which clinical versions are being developed and evaluated, as well as the vision of a future in which such tests – and similarly designed auditory training programs – are associated with strong clinical evidence and effective rehabilitation procedures and are routinely used by clinicians and patients alike.

SHACS is a collaboration between the UW Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences and the Virginia Merrill Bloedel Hearing Research Center (VMBHRC).
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