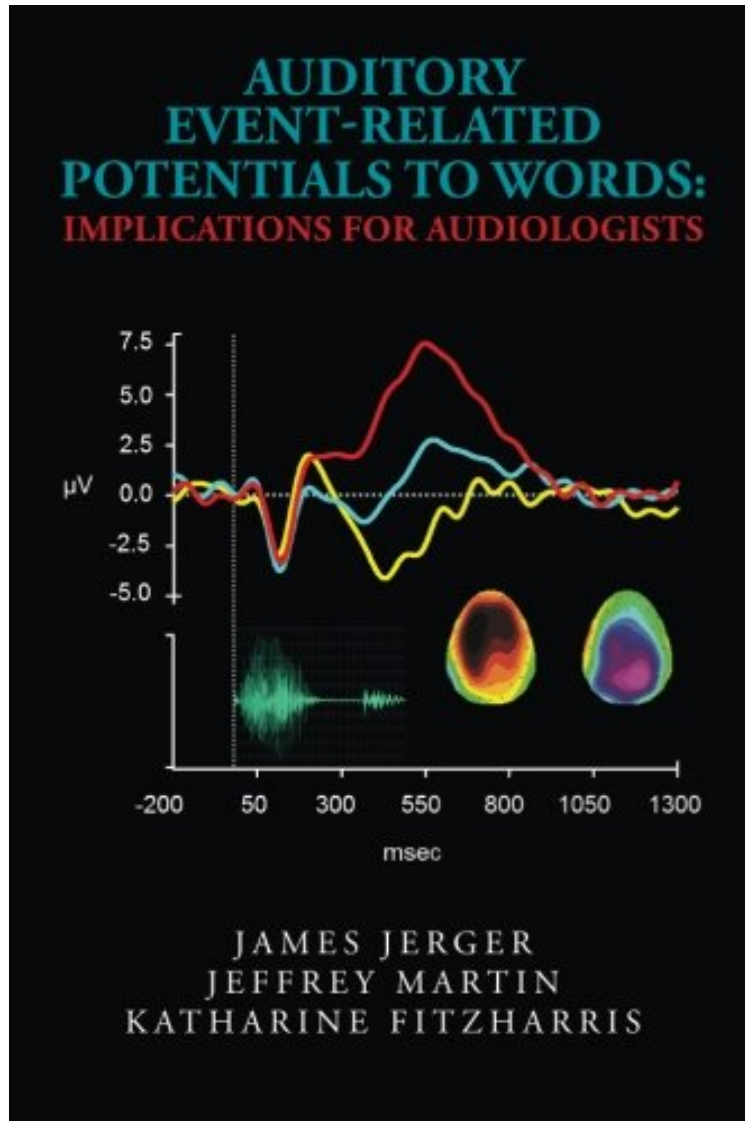


Auditory Event-Related Potentials to Words: Implications for Audiologists

James Jerger, Jeffrey Martin, Katharine Fitzharris
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In this text, James Jerger, PhD, Jeffrey Martin, PhD, and Katharine Fitzharris, AuD, present convincing study results for the purpose of broadening audiologic evaluation to include auditory event-related potentials (AERPs). During a typical word understanding evaluation, the tester presents a word, and the subject repeats it back. The resulting score is a useful tool for measuring loss in audibility, but it fails to consider the listening effort required to achieve that score. The authors propose that recording the subjects electroencephalographic brain activity during the test evokes potentials that permit estimation of the listening effort expended. These AERPs will help scientists reach a better understanding of the interplay among the many ongoing serial and parallel processes involved while actively listening to words. Their scientific illustrations reveal the AERPs ability to broaden the evaluation beyond the simple percentage of correctly repeated words to a more nuanced estimation, including the listening effort expended in the detection of the onset of a word and the evaluation of its semantic meaning. From this research, audiologists will find that there is a much wider array of data output to be gathered from a simple test that clinicians have employed for over half a century.

About the Author James Jerger, PhD, is an award-winning audiologist, Distinguished Scholar-in-Residence in the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences at The University of Texas at Dallas, and founder of the American Academy of Audiology. His many awards include the Life Achievement Award of the American Auditory Society and the Presidential Award of the American Academy of Audiology. Jeffrey Martin, PhD, is a clinical assistant professor in the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences at The University of Texas at Dallas, the head of audiology at the UTD Callier Center for Communication Disorders, and a fellow of the American Academy of Audiology. Katharine Fitzharris, AuD, is a PhD candidate and teaching and research assistant in the Topographic Brain Mapping Laboratory at The University of Texas at Dallas. Their current research interests led to their collaborative work, Auditory Event-Related Potentials to Words, which is a study of the clinical evaluation of auditory disorders and auditory evoked potentials.