



**McGILL UNIVERSITY**  
**Faculty of Medicine**  
**School of Communication Sciences & Disorders**  
**Fall 2018**

**SCSD 637**  
**Developmental Language Disorders I**  
**Number of Credits: 3 Credit**  
**Course Time: Monday 9 to 11**  
**Labs Wednesday 11:15 to 12:15 pm**  
**Location: SCSD, Room 862**

**Instructor: Elin Thordardottir, Ph.D. Speech-Language Pathologist/Audiologist**  
**Office: SCSD, Room 868; Office Phone: 514-398-5356**  
**Office Hours: By appointment (set up by phone or by email)**  
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**Lab instructor: Eve-Julie Rioux, M.Sc, Speech-Language Pathologist**

**COURSE OVERVIEW:** Communication Sci & Disorders : The nature of developmental language disorders and the assessment of language competence and performance in both speaking and non-speaking children will be studied.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

**ROLE 1: CENTRAL ROLE/CONTENT EXPERT**

<b>Foundational Principles</b>	
<b>Apply specialized knowledge of typical and disordered language development from infancy to young adulthood to plan and interpret diagnostic assessment protocols.</b>	
Identify the main tenets of major theoretical accounts of the nature of Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) and their relationship to clinical identification of DLD and long term prognostic outcomes. .Describe the manifestation of DLD in English speaking and bilingual children and adolescents.	Class discussion, midterm, final exam
Identify the main current assessment methods for DLD and the factors that impact their validity, reliability and diagnostic accuracy.	Class discussion, midterm, exam, assignment

**ROLE 1: CENTRAL ROLE/CONTENT EXPERT**

<b>Assessment of Developmental Language Disorders</b>	
<b>Develop an assessment strategy to evaluate language disorders</b>	
Identify and justify the aspects of language to include in an assessment plan to differentially diagnose DLD at various ages. Identify specific assessment tests for diagnostic evaluation and	Class discussion, exam, Assignment 2

intervention planning.	
Correctly administer and score a selected set of standardized tests and spontaneous language assessments	Lab exam, Assignment 2

### ROLE 2: COMMUNICATOR

Oral and Written Communication	
Communicate expert knowledge in a clear and concise manner	
Present key expert information on a particular DLD in a reference book style (highly organized, informative, yet succinct	Assignment 1

### ROLE 3: COLLABORATOR

Collaborate with Other Professionals (classmates)	
Interact according to differing roles and responsibilities of team members	
Collaborate effectively and respectfully with other team members to effectively administer standardized language tests Provide appropriate feedback to peers	Lab exercises, class discussion

Relationships with Other Professionals (Classmates)	
Respect personal and professional differences and support positive team dynamics	
Contribute actively to group work and class discussion. Respect and support classmates	Lab exercises, class discussion

### ROLE 4: ADVOCATE

Client Advocacy and Public Education	
Advocate for resources to enhance service provision by critically appraising policies	
Identify and critically appraise the foundations/justification for current policy on the identification of DLD, the diagnostic labels currently in use and how they relate to criteria for allocation of services.	Class discussion, midterm and final exam

### ROLE 5: SCHOLAR

Evidence-Informed Practice	
Locate and appraise research and other evidence critically in order to inform clinical practice	
Locate through a literature search and	Assignment 1

synthesize key information on a particular DLD..	
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**INSTRUCTIONAL METHOD:**

This course uses a mixed method of lectures and hands on lab exercises. Students are encouraged to read assigned reading before each class to be able to participate actively in the discussion. Students are encouraged to ask any questions and relate their experiences relative to the class discussions..

**REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:**

**There is no textbook for this course. Readings consist of various articles and chapters which are listed below. In each case, the readings provide background material or in some cases in-depth coverage of aspects of the topic of the class for which they are assigned. All reading materials under the heading “Readings:” are obligatory and can be the subject of exam questions.**

**OPTIONAL COURSE MATERIALS**

Readings listed under the heading “Supplementary Readings” are optional. You may find them interesting now or at a later time. These readings will not be the subject of exam questions.

**COURSE CONTENT**

This course is concerned with language impairment in the developmental period (birth through adolescence to young adulthood), focusing on the nature and manifestations of such impairments and on methods used to assess them. The course addresses the theoretical and practical underpinnings of assessment methods and diagnostic criteria and discusses the significance of research findings on language disorders in children for theories of language development and for clinical decision making.

After taking this course, students should 1) have a good idea of what language impairments look like in children from preschool age through adolescence, 2) be able to plan clinical assessment of language disorders in children, administer several language tests and know how to report assessment results, and 3) should be familiar with current research issues in this area and understand how they relate to clinical issues.

The first part of the class focuses on the clinical assessment of various aspects of language using standardized tests and language sampling methods to assess vocabulary, morphology, syntax and conversational and narrative skills. For each skill assessed, findings on that skill in typical and disordered language development will be discussed, together with the clinical applicability of each measure (diagnostic accuracy for the identification of DLD, planning of treatment), . This part includes a discussion of the goals of assessment (screening, diagnostic assessment, selection of

The second part of the course is concerned with the theoretical underpinnings of DLD, including major accounts of presumed underlying causes. The course also addresses cultural diversity and its implications for the assessment of language impairment in bilingual and multilingual children.

Date	Topics and Readings
Sept 10	Introduction – logistics of course  Language disorders in children – an introduction Assessment of language disorders – purposes of assessment  <i>Readings:</i> McCauley, R, (2001). <i>Assessment of language disorders in children</i> . Ch. 1, pp, 1-16.

	<p>Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.</p> <p>Tomblin, J.B., &amp; Records, N. (1996). A system for the diagnosis of specific language impairment in kindergarten children. <i>Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research, 39</i>, 1284-1295.</p>
<b>Sept 17</b>	<p>Assessment of language disorders using standardized tests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Properties of tests</li> <li>Administration</li> <li>Scoring – score conversion and reporting</li> <li>Introduction to PPVT and EVT</li> </ul> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <p>McCauley, R. (2001). <i>Assessment of language disorders in children</i>. Ch. 4, pp, 78-109. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.</p> <p>Hutchinson, T. (1996). What to look for in the technical manual: Twenty questions for users. <i>Language, Speech and Hearing Services in Schools, 27</i>, 109-121.</p> <p>Plante, E. &amp; Vance, R. (1994). Selection of preschool language tests: A data based approach. <i>Language, Speech and Hearing Services in Schools, 25</i>, 15-24.</p> <p><b>Supplementary readings:</b></p> <p>Language assessment test manuals available in Beatty Hall.</p> <p>Gray, S., Plante, E., Vance, R., &amp; Henrichsen, M. (1999). The diagnostic accuracy of four vocabulary tests administered to prechool-age children. <i>Language, Speech and Hearing Services in Schools, 30</i>, 196-206.</p> <p>Merrell, A., &amp; Plante, E. (1997). Norm-referenced test interpretation in the diagnostic process. <i>Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 28</i>, 50-58.</p>
<b>Oct 4</b>	<p>Naturalistic assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Language sampling – how to collect a language sample</li> <li>SALT analysis – how to, theoretical basis and interpretation</li> </ul> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <p>Miller, J. (1981). <i>Assessing language production in children: Experimental procedures</i>. Austin, TX: Pro-ed. Chapter 2: Procedures for analyzing free-speech samples: syntax and semantics (pp. 21-27 and 32-40).</p> <p>Heilmann, J., Miller, J. &amp; Nockerts, A. (2010). Using language sample databases. <i>Language, Speech and Hearing Services in Schools, 41</i>, 84-95.</p> <p><b>Supplementart Readings:</b></p> <p>Elin Thordardottir (2016). Long versus short language samples: A clinical procedure for French language samples. <i>Canadian Journal of Speech Language Pathology and Audiology, 40</i>, 176-197.</p> <p>Leadholm, B., &amp; Miller, J. (1992). <i>Language sample analysis: The Wisconsin guide</i>. Madison, WI: Wisconsin department of public instruction.</p> <p>Nippold, M., Mansfield, T., &amp; Tomblin, J.B. (2008). Syntactic development in</p>

	<p>adolescents with a history of language impairments – A follow up investigation. <i>American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology</i>, 18, 241-251.</p>
<b>Oct 15</b>	<p>Naturalistic assessment continued          Syntactic analysis</p> <p>Narrative analysis          Introduction to ENNI          Other narrative contexts</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>          ENNI administration and scoring instructions (on internet – ENNI, University of Alberta)          SALT manual: Analysis of complex syntax          Hadley, P. (1998). Language sampling protocols for eliciting text-level discourse. <i>Language, Speech, Hearing Services in Schools</i>, 29, 132-147.</p>
<b>Oct 22</b>	<p>MIDTERM EXAM (1 hour)</p> <p>Assessment of pragmatic skills          Assessment of verbal memory and executive function</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>          Fujiki, M, &amp; Brinton, B. (2014). Social communication assessment and intervention for children with language impairment. In D. Hwa-Froelich (Ed.), <i>Social communication development and disorders</i>, Ch. 6, pp.141-170. NY, NY: Psychology Press. READ TO PAGE 238          Dollaghan, C., &amp; Campbell, T. (1998). Nonword repetition and child language impairment. <i>Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research</i>, 41, 1136-1146.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Readings:</b>          Adams, A-M., &amp; Gathercole, S. (2000). Limitations in working memory: implications for language development. <i>International Journal of Language and Communicative Disorders</i>, 35, 95-116.          Ellis Weismer, S., Tomblin, B., Zhang, X., Buckwalter, P., Chynoweth, J., &amp; Jones, M. (2000). Nonword repetition performance in school-age children with and without language impairment. <i>Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research</i>, 43, 865-878.</p>
<b>Oct 24</b>	<p>Language impairment in young children- late talkers.</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>          Rescorla, L. (2011) Late talkers: Do good predictors of outcome exist? <i>Developmental disabilities Research Reviews</i>, 17, 141-150.</p>

<b>Oct 29</b>	<p>Language impairment in school-age children and adolescents</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  Reed, V. (2012). An introduction to children with language disorders. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Boston, MA: Pearson. Chapter 5, Adolescents with language impairment, pp. 168-217.</p>
<b>Nov 5</b>	<p>Language impairment in children with other identified conditions  Children with cognitive impairments – Down syndrome and Fragile X  Children with visual and hearing impairment  Children with cerebral palsy  Gifted children</p> <p>Reed, V. (2012). An introduction to children with language disorders. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Boston, MA: Pearson. Chapter 11, Language and other special populations, pp. 412-436.</p>
<b>Nov 12</b>	<p>Developmental Language Impairment as the primary disorder  Primary/Specific language impairment.- what is it? Nature and possible causes  Major theoretical frameworks.</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <p>Leonard, L. (2014). <i>Children with specific language impairment</i>. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">PART IV Theoretical Issues:  9: SLI as a deficit in linguistic knowledge  10 Processing limitations and SLI.  6 The genetics of SLI</p> <p>DSM-V – Language Disorders (Available on-line through library)</p>
<b>Nov 14</b>	<p>Putting it all together  Interpretation of assessment findings  Diagnostic criteria  Diagnostic accuracy</p> <p>Bishop, D.M.V., Snowling, M. Thompson, P. Greenhaigh, T., CATALISE consortium (2016). Catalise&gt; A multinational and multidisciplinary Delphi consensus study. Identifying language impairments in children. PlosOne, July 8 2016, DOI: 1-.1371/journal.pone.0159753, pp. 1-26</p> <p>Adams, C. (2014). Assessment and intervention for children with pragmatic</p>

	<p>language impairment. In D. Hwa-Froelich (Ed.), <i>Social communication development and disorders</i>, Ch. 8, pp.220-252 NY, NY: Psychology Press. READ TO PAGE 156</p> <p><b>Supplementary Readings:</b>  Bishop, D.V.M. (2014). Ten questions about terminology for children with unexplained language problems. <i>International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders</i>, 49,.381-415.</p> <p>Bishop, D.M.V., &amp; Hayiou-Thomas, E. (2008). Heritability of specific language impairment depends on the diagnostic criteria. <i>Genes, Brain and Behavior</i>, 7, 365-372.</p>
<p><b>Nov 19</b></p>	<p>Primary/Specific language impairment - continued.  Major theoretical frameworks.</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  Gritter. M. (2012) . Language and children with auditory impairment, Chapter 8. In Vicki Reed, Ed.. <i>An introduction to children with language disorders. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition</i>. Boston, MA: Pearson. pp. 168-217 on central auditory disorders , pp325 to 338.</p> <p>Conti-Ramsden, G. &amp; Botting, N. (1999). Classification of children with specific language impairment: Longitudinal considerations. <i>Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research</i>, 42, 1195-1204.</p> <p>Elin Thordardottir (2016). Morphological errors are not a sensitive marker of language impairment in Icelandic children age 4 to 14 years. <i>Journal of Communicative Disorders</i>, 62, 82-100. <i>FOCUS ON INTRODUCTION</i></p> <p><b>Supplementary Readings:</b>  Nation, K., Clarke, P., Marshall, C., &amp; Durand, M. (2004). Hidden language impairments in children: parallels between poor reading comprehension and specific language impairment? <i>Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Disorders</i>, 47, 199-211.</p>
<p><b>Nov 21</b></p>	<p>Language impairment in bilingual children  Assessment of culturally diverse populations.  Assessment of bilingual children</p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  Bedore, L. &amp; Pena, E. (2008). Assessment of bilingual children for identification on language impairment: Current findings and implications for practice. <i>International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism</i>, 11 (1), 1-28.</p> <p>Elin Thordardottir (2014). Effects of exposure on vocabulary, morphosyntax and language processing in typical and impaired language development. In J. Paradis &amp; T. Grüter (Eds), <i>Input and Experience in Bilingual Development</i>, John Benjamins: TiLAR (Trends in Language Acquisition Research) series</p> <p><b>Supplementary readings:</b></p>

	<p>Heath, S.B. (1983). <i>Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms</i>. New York: Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Stockman, I. (2000). The new Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III: An illusion of unbiased assessment? <i>Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools</i>, 31, 340-353.</p> <p>Kohnert, K. (2010). Bilingual children with primary language impairment: Issues, evidence and implications for clinical actions. <i>Journal of Communication Disorders</i>, 43, 456-473.</p>
<b>Dec 3</b>	<p>Language impairment in bilingual children - Continued  Assessment of culturally diverse populations.  Assessment of bilingual children</p> <p><b>Reading:</b>  Elin Thordardottir &amp; Brandeker, M. (2013). The effect of bilingual exposure versus language impairment on nonword repetition and sentence imitation scores. <i>Journal of Communication Disorders</i>, 46, 1-16.</p>

**EVALUATION:**

Class attendance is required and reasons for absences should be discussed with the professor. Students are encouraged to participate in class discussion, to ask questions and share ideas. The classes are an important time of learning – students are asked to devote that time to the class and to refrain from other activities during that time.

Grading will be based on completion of the following:

- 1) Assignment 1: Fact sheet. 15%
- 2) Assignment 2: Language sample analysis,,20%  
A minimum grade of 85% is required to pass this assignment – those getting a lower grade will need to repeat the assignment.
- 3) Labs (15%)
- 2) Midterm exam (20%)
- 2) Final exam (30%).

Assignment	Date	Sub Roles Targeted	Expected Performance Level
Fact sheet	Oct 15	Library literature search, locate and synthesize information, present in coherent, clear and accessible	Advanced beginner/competent.

		format. This assignment includes a session with a McGill librarian	
Language sample analysis	Nov 14	Collect a language sample, perform analyses of length of utterance, morphology and lexical diversity, and of syntactic complexity	Advanced beginner
Midterm exam	Oct 22	Foundational principles of language development and language assessment	Advanced beginner
Final exam	TBA	Foundational principles of language assessment (monolingual and bilingual), and of major theories of the nature of DLD. Application of foundational principles to clinical case studies	Advanced beginner
Lab exam	Nov 26 and 28	Administration of selected standardized tests	Advanced beginner/competent

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### Language of Submission

*In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.*

### Additional Statements

- “The University Student Assessment Policy exists to ensure fair and equitable academic assessment for all students and to protect students from excessive workloads. All students and instructors are encouraged to review this Policy, which addresses multiple aspects and methods of student assessment, e.g. the timing of evaluation due dates and weighting of final examinations.”
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- “*As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the Office for Students with Disabilities, 514-398-6009.*”
- “In keeping with McGill's preparedness planning strategies with respect to potential pandemic or other concerns, the Administration suggests that all course outlines contain the statement: “In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.”

- Additional policies governing academic issues which affect students can be found in the McGill Charter of Students' Rights (see the [Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)).
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- Guidelines for the use of mobile computing and communications (MC2) devices in classes at McGill have been approved by the APC. Consult the [Guidelines](#) for a range of sample wording that may be used or adapted by instructors on their course outlines.