



McGill

Faculty of
Medicine and
Health Sciences

School of
Communication Sciences
and Disorders

SCSD 637 Developmental Language Disorders 1
Number of Credits: 3.0 Credits
Course Time: Thursdays 10:00-12:00pm
Lab: 6 2-hour labs TBD
Location: SCSD, Room 862

Instructor: Stacey Knecht, M.SC (A), S-LP (C) Office: N/A Office Phone: N/A
Office Hours: By appointment (set up by email)
Email: stacey.knecht@mcgill.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION/OVERVIEW:

This course will develop knowledge and skills about the nature of developmental language disorders. The assessment of language competencies and performance in both speaking and nonspeaking children will be studied.

INSTRUCTOR MESSAGE REGARDING COURSE DELIVERY:

This course will be delivered in class, unless circumstances make on-line delivery necessary.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES/COMPETENCIES:

UNIT ONE: Basic Requirements (Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology)

1.3.ii Infant, child, and adolescent development.

1.4.iii Cultural and linguistic factors that may affect clinical relationships, assessment, and treatment outcomes; including but not limited to race, ethnicity, and gender identity.

1.4.v The psychosocial effects of health conditions that may include a communication disorder (e.g., stroke, cancer), including the implications of acute versus chronic illness, stable versus progressive conditions, and congenital versus acquired conditions.

1.5.i Normal and abnormal communication behaviour throughout the lifespan in both auditory and visual modalities (e.g., sign language) in the following areas: phonetics and phonology, morphology and syntax, semantics, pragmatics, nonverbal communication, and sociolinguistics.

1.5.ii Methods of observation and analysis useful for describing in the description of communicative behaviour in the following areas: phonetics and phonology, morphology and syntax, semantics, pragmatics, nonverbal communication, and sociolinguistics.

1.9.vi Systematic evaluation of the reliability and validity of assessment procedures, and of treatment efficacy.



UNIT TWO: Knowledge Expert

2.3 Developmental Language Disorders

2.2.v Numerous neurological or developmental disorders that may accompany motor speech disorder (e.g., amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Parkinson disease, Down Syndrome) and their impact on assessment, intervention and prognosis.

2.3.iii Different theoretical frameworks relevant to spoken and written language disorders.

2.3.iv Characteristics of oral and written developmental language disorders for different age levels. These include phonologic, morphosyntactic, semantic, and pragmatic abilities in oral language, reading, and writing.

2.3.v Profiles of special populations at risk for developmental language disorders (e.g., autism spectrum disorder, hearing impairment, Down syndrome).

2.3.vi The impact of developmental language disorders on learning and educational achievement.

2.3.vii The impact of developmental language disorders on psychosocial development, and vocational opportunities of the client

UNIT THREE: Clinical Expert - Cross-Cutting Assessment and Intervention Standards

3.2 Plan, conduct, and adjust an assessment:

3.1.i Collect and review information from relevant sources (e.g., referrals, reports, consultation) to determine an individual's need for a speech-language pathology assessment.

3.2.ii Use principles of assessment to develop assessment plans (e.g., tools, strategies, resources, environment) that reflect background information about the client (including personal and environmental factors), known or suspected primary and concomitant disorders (e.g., medical, emotional), knowledge of normal and disordered communication or swallowing as well as risk factors for communication or swallowing disorders; modify this plan when appropriate.

3.2.iii Demonstrate knowledge of principles underlying clinical assessment, including standardized and non-standardized procedures and their advantages, disadvantages, limitations, representativeness, and applicability to the individual management plan.

3.3.i Analyze formal, informal, quantitative, and qualitative assessment results, including accurate scoring and interpretation of standardized tests.

3.7 Consider sociodemographic and sociocultural factors in all aspects of assessment and intervention, including but not limited to factors such as race, ethnicity, gender identity, and differential access to services by Indigenous and other underserved populations; and intersections among these factors, communication, and swallowing.



UNIT FOUR: Clinical Expert - Disorder-Specific Assessment and Intervention Standards

4.3.i Develop assessment plans that include the impact of monolingual versus multilingual language development

UNIT FIVE: Communication

5.1.v Participate respectfully in challenging conversations

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS: This course consists of class lectures, case discussions, practical activities, readings, a written assignment, midterm, final exam and lab participation.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT PARTICIPATION: Students are required to be prepared for in-class discussions, complete required readings and submit assignments within the given time frame. Students who are unable to do so need to inform the instructor promptly.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

Paul, R., Norbury, C. & Goose, C. (2024). Language Disorders from infancy through adolescence (6th ED): Listening, speaking, reading, writing, communicating. St. Louis, MO: Mosby.

This textbook is available at the McGill bookstore as well as from on-line bookstores and is available at McGill libraries (the 4th/5th edition is acceptable as well). Note that you will use this book also in SCSD 643 in the winter semester of 1st year. This book is fairly costly, but it is a very good resource on clinical procedures and clinical materials and so you may find it to be a good investment in particular if you plan to work with children.

Additional weekly reading will be posted on MyCourses.

COURSE CONTENT:

This course is concerned with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) 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 DLD looks like in children from preschool age through adolescence and into young adulthood, 2) be able to plan clinical assessments of DLD in children, administer several language tests, conduct naturalistic assessments and know how to report assessment results, and 3) be familiar with current research issues in this area and understand how they relate to clinical issues.

The first part of the course is concerned with the definition and theoretical underpinnings of DLD, including major theoretical accounts of presumed underlying causes. This part surveys a historical perspective, past and current controversies, and DLD in a local and global context.

The second 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, complex syntax, 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 and implications for planning of treatment). This part includes a discussion of the goals of assessment (screening, diagnostic assessment, intervention planning and assessment of intervention efficacy).

The third part of the course (and sections throughout the course) addresses cultural and linguistic diversity and its implications for the assessment of language impairment, in particular in bilingual and multilingual children, in the assessment of populations that speak different dialects of the same language and in the impact of socio-economic status on language development and DLD.

NOTE: “In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

Class/Date	Description	Course Materials
1- Aug 29	-Introduction: logistics of course -Developmental Language Disorders: an introduction -The move from SLI to DLD	Textbook Chapter 1: Models of child language disorders



2- Sept 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Developmental Language Disorder – nature and possible causes -Major theoretical frameworks 	Leonard, L. (2014). Children with specific language impairment. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.: PART IV Theoretical Issues: 9: SLI as a deficit in linguistic knowledge 10:Processing limitations and SLI. 6:The genetics of SLI
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Class/Date	Description	Course Materials
3- Sept 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Assessment of language disorders -Purposes of assessment - Assessment using standardized tests -Properties of tests -Administration of standardized tests -Scoring: score conversion and reporting 	Textbook Chapter 2
4- Sept 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Assessment using standardized tests - Diagnostic accuracy -Cut-off criteria & interpretation 	Textbook Chapter 7. Assessment and intervention for emerging language (focus only on assessment part of chapter, not intervention or management)



5- Sept 26	-Naturalistic assessment - Language sampling: how to collect a language sample - SALT analysis: how to, theoretical basis and interpretation	Class handout on Language Sample Analysis Miller, J. (1981). Assessing language production in children: Experimental procedures. Austin, TX: Pro-ed. Chapter 2: Procedures for analyzing free-speech samples: syntax and semantics (pp. 21-27 and 32-40). Heilmann, J., Miller, J. & Nockerts, A. (2010). Using language sample databases. Language, Speech and Hearing Services in Schools, 41, 84-95.
6- Oct 2 (Wed, 1-3pm) *Note the change of day and time for this class only.	IN-CLASS LSA (EPA) -Naturalistic assessment continued -Analysis of Complex syntax -Narrative Analysis	Class handout on Language Sample Analysis
7- Oct 10	MIDTERM	MIDTERM

Class/Date	Description	Course Materials
8- Oct 24	-Processing Measures used to identify DLD -Nonword Repetition -Sentence imitation	Textbook Chapter 8, Assessment of developing language
9- Oct 31	-Language impairment in young children -Late talkers	Textbook Chapter 11. Assessing students' language for learning
10- Nov 7	Language impairment in school age children and adolescents	Textbook Chapter 13, Assessing advanced language



11- Nov 14	-(Developmental) Language Disorder in children with other identified conditions -Children with cognitive impairments: Down syndrome, Fragile X, children with visual and hearing impairment, children with cerebral palsy, gifted children	Textbook Chapter 4. Special considerations for special populations
12- Nov 21	-Language impairment in bilingual children -Assessment of culturally diverse populations - Assessment of bilingual children	Elin Thordardottir (2014). Effects of exposure on vocabulary, morphosyntax and language processing in typical and impaired language development. In J. Paradis & T. Grüter (Eds), <i>Input and Experience in Bilingual Development</i> (pp. 141-160), John Benjamins: TiLAR series (Trends in Language Acquisition Research)
13- Nov 28	-Language impairment in bilingual children (continued) - Assessment of culturally diverse populations - Assessment of bilingual children	Textbook Chapter 5. Assessing language in a pluralistic society

ASSESSMENTS:

Assignment/Exam	Targeted Competencies	Due Date	% of Final Grade
In-Class Written Language Assessment Assignment (EPA)	1.3.ii; 1.5.i; 1.5.ii; 2.3.iv; 3.3.i	October 2, 2024	15



Midterm Exam	1.3.ii; 1.4.iv; 1.5.i; 1.5.ii; 1.9.vi; 2.3.ii, 2.3.iv,2.3vi	Oct 10, 2023	30
Final Exam	1.3.ii; 1.4.iii; 1.5.i; 1.5.ii; 1.9vi; 2.3ii; 2.3.iv; 2.3.v; 2,3.vi; 3.2.ii; 3.2.iii; 4.3.i	TBD (final exam period)	40
Lab Participation	1.3ii; 1.5i; 1.5.ii; 3.2.ii; 3.2.iii; 3.3.i; 4.3.i		15

MCGILL POLICY STATEMENTS

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. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.” (Approved by Senate on 21 January 2009)

Academic Integrity

“McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures” (Approved by Senate on 29 January 2003) (See McGill’s guide to academic honesty for more information). “The work submitted is expected to be your own. The use of technologies such as ChatGPT are prohibited and will be considered a violation of the Code of Student Conduct.” (McGill University)

“Instructor-generated course materials (e.g. slides, handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.”

Remote Teaching

“Instructional methods are subject to change based on public health protocols. In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change”.



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Additional Statements

Disclaimer: The instructor will notify students if any components of the class will be recorded. By staying in class (or on-line if the class is virtual) and participating in activities, the student consents to being recorded. Students who are uncomfortable being recorded can choose not to engage with the instructor during the recording or can choose not to attend the class and instead view the recording later.

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)