Child Language Doctoral Program

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The doctoral program in Child Language offers a specialized degree in this interesting area of study. The program crosses traditional academic boundaries to give students the theoretical, empirical, and methodological competence necessary to study basic and applied issues in language acquisition. This multidisciplinary program is a cooperative endeavor of faculty members from the Departments of Applied Behavioral Science, Clinical Child Psychology, Linguistics, Molecular Biosciences, Psychology, and Speech-Language-Hearing: Sciences and Disorders. In addition, the Child Language Doctoral Program has faculty specializing in genetics of language and speech, and in quantitative methods.

Students study 4 areas:

1. Core theoretical and experimental work on language acquisition,
2. Relevant methods and theories in linguistics and psycholinguistics,
3. Theoretical perspectives on developmental psychology, and
4. The nature of disordered language development and methods and techniques for language intervention.

In addition, new areas of study are offered in genetics of language acquisition and impairments, as well as quantitative methods.

Each student is advised by a support committee of 3 faculty members. Enrollment in a proseminar in language acquisition is required of all students in addition to participation in research activities. Opportunities for individual research projects include the projects of participating faculty members and the research teams of the Schiefelbusch Institute for Life Span Studies, the Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic, and the clinical/research facilities of KU Medical Center.

Graduates are candidates for teaching and research positions, clinical positions providing service to communicatively disabled persons, and research work in business and governmental sectors.

Faculty

We are a cross-disciplinary program and our faculty (https://cldp.ku.edu/faculty) is involved in research spanning many diverse fields of study. Our portfolios are dynamic and growing, so you will be directed to our most recent information.

An internationally recognized scholar leads the program activities: Mabel L. Rice (https://cldp.ku.edu/mabel-l-rice) is the Director and Graduate Advisor.

Courses

CLDP 709. First Language Acquisition I. 3 Hours.
Introduction to the study of language acquisition: the significant findings, the basic methodological procedures, and some of the more recent theoretical accounts. Not open to students who have taken LING 425. (Same as LING 709.) Prerequisite: LING 700 or equivalent course. LEC.

CLDP 739. First Language Acquisition II. 3 Hours.
A second semester course in child language which explores the acquisition of morphology, syntax and the ways in which morphology and syntax interact in linguistic theory and language development.

Topics covered in the course include agreement, case, null subjects, question formation, pronoun binding, quantification, and control. (Same as LING 739.) Prerequisite: LING 709 and LING 725 or permission of the instructor. LEC.

CLDP 782. Research Methods in Child Language. 3 Hours.
A survey of methods for studying phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic change during language development. Methods include: diary interpretation, language sample analysis, probe elicitation tasks, and clinical assessment. (Same as LING 782 and PSYC 782.) LEC.

CLDP 799. Proseminar in Child Language. 2 Hours.
A review and discussion of current issues in children's language acquisition. May be repeated for credit. Graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. (Same as ABSC 797, LING 799, PSYC 799 and SPLH 799.) (Formerly HDFL 797.) LEC.

CLDP 822. Seminar in First Language Acquisition. 3 Hours.
Critical examination of recent theoretical issues and empirical findings in the study of first language acquisition. (Same as LING 822.) Prerequisite: LING 709 or consent of instructor. LEC.

CLDP 852. Concepts in Human Molecular Genetics. 3 Hours.
This is a lecture course providing concepts in human genetics, fundamentals of gene pathways, Mendelian and non-Mendelian transmission of genetic diseases, gene regulation and expression, genotype/phenotype correlation, characteristics of human genome, Microarray and DNA cloning. The major goal is to introduce a breadth of genetic concepts to students and at the same time provide recent developments in human genetic research. Students are expected to actively participate in discussion of readings from text books, review articles and research papers. There will be at least 3 lab days to demonstrate methodologies like DNA purification from saliva, polymerase chain reaction and DNA electrophoresis. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. LEC.

CLDP 854. Principles to Study Genetic Disorders. 3 Hours.
This course explores the fundamentals of disease gene identification methods and tools that are effective to explore the genetic components of inherited disorders. Fundamentals of pedigree based genetic analyses will be covered, along with Mendelian and non-Mendelian inheritance patterns, gene mapping methods, population allele frequencies, heterogeneity, microarray expression, DNA sequencing, recent development in disease gene identification, online human genomic databases, genetic variations, pathogenicity and bioinformatic tools. Recent topics like gene editing, personalized medicine, and pharmacogenetics will be discussed. There will be at least 3 lab days to demonstrate DNA quantification, polymorphism, Sanger sequencing and bioinformatic tools like oligo design, prediction of pathogenicity of protein coding SNPs, and browsing human genome databases. Prerequisite: Fundamental course on genetics and consent of instructor. LEC.

CLDP 856. Epigenetics of Behavioral and Developmental Disorders. 3 Hours.
This course will include discussion of the epigenetic mechanisms involved in behavioral and developmental disorders. The topics reviewed will be DNA methylation, histone modification, genomic imprinting, neurogenesis, epigenetic control of gene expression, non-coding RNAs, prions, microbiota and epigenetics, influence of environment, life style, diet and exercise on gene regulation and cellular pathways. The topics of pharmacoepigenetics, personalized epigenetics and future perspectives of epigenetics in human health will be covered. Recent development in epigenetic research will be discussed. Prerequisite: A basic course on genetics and consent of instructor. LEC.
CLDP 874. Research Practicum. 1-3 Hours.
Master’s level. Application of research methodology in a laboratory situation. Emphasis is on direct participation in designing and conducting an experimental investigation on topics related to child language acquisition and disorders, including quantitative methods. May be repeated for up to a maximum of 3 credits. Prerequisite: SPLH 660 or equivalent research methods course. LAB.

CLDP 876. Independent Study in Problems of Child Language. 1-6 Hours.
Investigation of special topics by individual master's level students. Paper required. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. IND.

CLDP 880. Seminar in Child Language. 1-3 Hours.
A seminar devoted to factors affecting children’s language acquisition and language impairments, with some attention to theoretical formulations, causal pathways and mechanisms of change. Topics may vary. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. SEM.

CLDP 898. Investigation and Conference (Masters). 1-6 Hours.
Directed research and experimentation for M.A. students in some phase of child language acquisition/disorders. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. LAB.

CLDP 899. Master's Thesis. 1-6 Hours.
Development of Master's Thesis in the area of child language acquisition and/or disorders. Graded on a satisfactory progress/limited progress/no progress basis. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. THE.

CLDP 944. Multilevel Models for Longitudinal and Repeated Measures Data. 3 Hours.
Applications of the multilevel model (hierarchical linear model, general linear mixed model) for analyzing longitudinal and repeated measures data, including analysis of growth curves, within-person fluctuation, repeated measures research designs with crossed random effects, and simultaneous prediction of multiple sources of variation. Prerequisite: Instructor permission LEC.

CLDP 945. Advanced Multilevel Models. 3 Hours.
Advanced applications of the multilevel model (hierarchical linear model, general linear mixed model) for examining multiple sources of variation, models for crossed sources of nesting, three levels of nesting, heterogeneous variances, multivariate outcomes, and non-linear outcomes. Prerequisite: Instructor permission. LEC.

CLDP 948. Latent Trait Measurement and Structural Equation Models. 3 Hours.
Contemporary measurement theory and latent variable models for scale construction and evaluation, including confirmatory factor analysis, item response modeling, diagnostic classification models, and structural equation modeling. (Same as EPSY 906.) Prerequisite: EPSY 905 and instructor permission. LEC.

CLDP 964. Seminar in Child Language. 1-3 Hours.
A seminar that considers advanced research problems in investigations of child language and language impairment, diagnosis, longitudinal development, change over time, and causal factors. Paper is required. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. SEM.

CLDP 974. Research Practicum. 3 Hours.
Application of research methodology in a laboratory situation. Emphasis is on direct participation in designing and conducting a study related to child language acquisition or impairments, and analyzing outcomes. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. LAB.

CLDP 975. Directed Teaching: Child Language. 1-3 Hours.
Provides experiences in classroom and laboratory instruction under supervision of graduate faculty. Variable credit to reflect amount of instructional responsibility assumed. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. IND.

CLDP 982. Issues in Scientific Conduct. 3 Hours.
Lectures and discussion on issues in the conduct of a scientific career, with emphasis on practical topics of special importance in behavioral science. Topics will include the academic and scientific roles of behavioral scientists, establishing a research lab, communicating research findings, tenure processes, gender equity, ethical conduct, and good scientific citizenship. Discussions will highlight important case studies. (Same as PSYC 982 and SPLH 982.) LEC.

CLDP 998. Investigation and Conference. 1-8 Hours.
Directed research, experimentation, and/or quantitative analysis for Ph.D. students in topics related to child language acquisition, language impairment, diagnosis, causation, or treatment. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. LAB.

CLDP 999. Doctoral Dissertation. 1-12 Hours.
Doctoral Dissertation in topics related to child language acquisition, language impairment, diagnosis, causation, or treatment. Graded on a satisfactory progress/limited progress/no progress basis. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. THE.