

# The LING Letter

*June 2024, Issue #7*

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I trust everyone is having a nice change of pace from the regular routines of teaching and learning in the Fall and Winter terms. Congratulations to our recent graduates!

While the focus of our activity shifts when classes finish, our attention never strays too far from our core mission. We've been busy filling part-time instructional positions; TA positions will be posted soon, if they haven't already been posted by the time you read this. We are happy to announce that both Dr. Hillary Ganek and Dr. Michael Karas will be returning for another year. They have been a massive boon to the department in terms of teaching and research. We are also especially grateful for the way they've both rolled up their sleeves in service to the Department. Universities can't exist without someone doing the service work needed to keep them thriving, so it is wonderful to have such supportive new colleagues.

Enjoy this Spring/Summer newsletter. It includes interesting personal highlights from Dr. Ganek as well as Undergraduate Students Julia Barr and Madelaine Micciola. Also be sure to look at the group graduation photo with those students we could find after Convocation. For those of you returning to Brock or going on to graduate school next year, enjoy your summer break. Make sure you find time to relax. We look forward to seeing many of you and many new students in September!

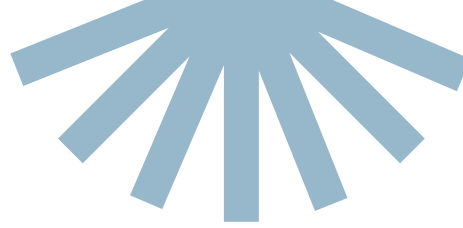
Ron Thomson  
Chair, Applied Linguistics

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# DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS



## Social Sciences Day

*On April 24, high school students visited Brock University for Social Sciences Day. Department representatives Mackenzie and Kelsey were joined by Dr. Lynn Dempsey to welcome the students to the Applied Linguistics session, titled: Communication Sciences & Disorders - A Crash Course! Students took part in a circuit of hands-on activities. They had the opportunity to explore the milestones of early language acquisition in a timeline-building exercise. They learned about language in the brain and experimented with the Western Aphasia Battery, an assessment tool for adults with language disorders. Finally, they were presented with symbols from the International Phonetic Alphabet and got the chance to transcribe their name onto their own nametags. The event was a huge success. We love engaging with prospective students in fun, interactive ways.*



Kelsey Cere on the left and Mackenzie Mcrae on the right, teaching highschool students about communication sciences and disorders.

## **Recently Accepted Paper**

*Dr. Hillary Ganek has recently had a paper accepted which is about the development of the first university level clinical speech language therapy training program in Ethiopia.*

*Ganek, H., Ab, A., Fikre, A. G., Abera, B., Demissie, H., Demissie, Y., Habte, M. G., Gravem, P.E., Hakosen, H., Haye, A. T., Holmefjord, A., Mollenhauer, C., Rose, M., Shepherd, T., Wadhvaniya, Z., & Eshete, M. (accepted). Experiences Establishing a New Speech Language Therapy Training Program in a Resource-Limited Setting: Lessons Learned. Accepted to the International journal of speech-language pathology. DOI: 10.1080/17549507.2024.2367518*

# DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS






LANGUAGE AWARENESS  
2024, VOL. 33, NO. 2, 201-223  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09658416.2023.2227559>

 **Routledge**  
Taylor & Francis Group

 Open access

## How long can naturalistic L2 pronunciation learning continue in adults? A 10-year study

Ron I. Thomson <sup>a</sup>, Tracey M. Derwing <sup>b,c</sup>, and Murray J. Munro <sup>c</sup>

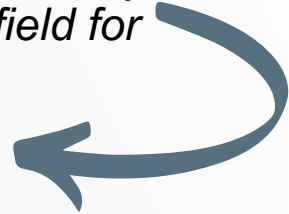
<sup>a</sup> Department of Applied Linguistics, Brock University, St. Catharines, Canada <sup>b</sup> Faculty of Education 6-102, Education North University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada <sup>c</sup> Department of Linguistics 8888, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, Canada

### ABSTRACT

We examined the naturalistic pronunciation development of two groups of L2 speakers over 10 years. Initially, 50 beginner ESL students participated in production tasks; despite attrition, the tasks were administered eight more times. Here we report listener judgements of accentedness, comprehensibility and fluency for the remaining six Mandarin and 12 Slavic language speakers at Year 10. Analyses of listener judgments of accentedness, comprehensibility, and fluency of utterances recorded at the 2-month, 1-year, 2-year, 7-year and 10-year points revealed that the Slavic language speakers improved in comprehensibility and fluency at each comparison point, while the Mandarin speakers' results were variable; there was improvement in comprehensibility from Year 7 to Year 10, but only after worsening at earlier points. The Slavic language group showed improvement in accentedness several times, whereas the Mandarin group showed no improvement in accentedness at any point. The data were examined for individual differences in learning trajectories. Interview responses and a survey of language use were compared to participants' trajectories. Some speakers showed steady improvement from Year 7 to Year 10, but the majority plateaued or regressed. We also elicited speakers' views of their progress. The results are interpreted through Complexity Theory and the Willingness to Communicate framework. Suggestions are made for research and teaching interventions.

*Dr. Ron Thomson was honoured, along with long term collaborators Dr. Tracey Derwing and Dr. Murray Munro, to have their latest article chosen as the “Editor’s Pick” for the prestigious journal Language Awareness. This selection was made because in the words of Editor Masatoshi Sato, the study will be “important for the field for decades to come”.*

*Read the full article [here](#)*



*For more department news check out this article*

*[Students share voices for Applied Linguistics project](#)*

***Thank you to our 2023-2024 Part-Time***

## ***Instructors***

*Carolyn Finney*

*Carolyn Windsor*

*Dr. Cassandra Chapman*

*Charlene Cratt*

*Christina Moreau*

*Gerry Turner*

*Glenn Ewing*

*Jackie Van Lankveld*

*Nate Shaftoe*

*Yarubi Diaz Colmenares*

*Dr. Yuko Watanabe*

# Faculty Spotlight

## *Dr. Hillary Ganek*



### **How was your first year at Brock?**

I had a wonderful first year at Brock! It was a pleasure working with all of the students. I hadn't had the opportunity to work closely with undergraduate students in the past and it was so exciting to get to introduce so many new concepts. As many of you learned this year, aural rehabilitation is a passion of mine and getting to build a course that brings more students to the subject was a blast! The staff and faculty have been so welcoming and supportive as I gain my footing and learn how everything works at Brock. It made thinking about the work week on Sunday night far less stressful!

### **What were your favourite moments?**

I know I'm probably supposed to say something flattering about my students and the faculty and staff, who are all wonderful. But, in actuality, my son, Raylan, just

turned two so this past year he's really started talking. As a speech-language pathologist, it's been super fun watching him progress through all the linguistic developmental milestones that we spend so much time talking about. It's also been fun to include examples from him in my lectures!

### **Did you have any challenging moments?**

As many of you are aware, I am still living in Toronto, which means that I commute to campus. What you may not know is that I do not drive - at all - so I take the bus. I understand this sounds especially daunting to people who drive but it's generally pretty easy. The bus goes from right downtown directly to campus. It's inexpensive (if I buy early enough, it only costs \$1!) and I can work instead of dealing with the traffic.

However, this past April there was a once-in-a-lifetime event that made my life difficult. There was a full eclipse, right over St. Catharines. I stayed in Toronto that day to avoid the crowds but I came to campus the next morning and planned to leave mid-day to miss the afternoon rush hour. Big mistake. Huge. The bus was completely packed. I'd never even had to sit next to another person before and now there were no free seats at all. Plus, the traffic was horrific. We were at a stand-still before reaching Hamilton, which really never happens. It took hours to get home. I am thankful that the next eclipse won't be for another couple of decades.

### **Do you have any projects that you are working on over the summer?**

I'm working on tons of projects over the summer and into the fall! I have a group of students helping me with a systematic review of interventions for hearing loss in low- and middle-income countries and I'm wrapping up some work determining the prevalence of pediatric hearing loss in Pakistan. I'm also working with a colleague at Columbia University in New York on a qualitative project exploring how mothers in the Hasidic Jewish community access speech and language service for their children with hearing loss. It's wonderful to be busy and to get to work with so many people in so many places.

### **What is your favorite hobby?**

The movies! I go to the movies all the time. So far, *Challengers* is my favorite this summer but there's a lot more to come. I'm looking forward to *Inside Out 2* and *Fly Me To The Moon* among many many others!

### **What is your favorite travel destination?**

Ooo! Tough one. I've been so lucky to get to visit a lot of places for work and for fun but there are still so many that I haven't gotten to yet. I would love to see Iceland or Argentina. Too many choices!

# Celebrating Graduates

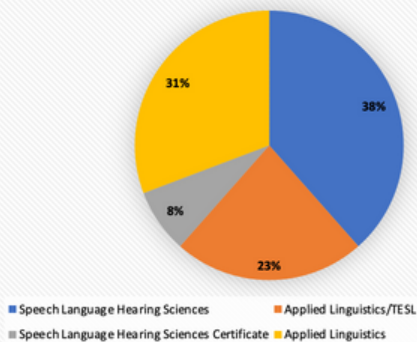


Pictured from left to right: Prof. Lynn Dempsey, Elizha Caragay, Danielle Bruce, Stella Wiens, Kelsey Cere, Madelaine Micciola, Julia Barr and Prof. Ron Thomson

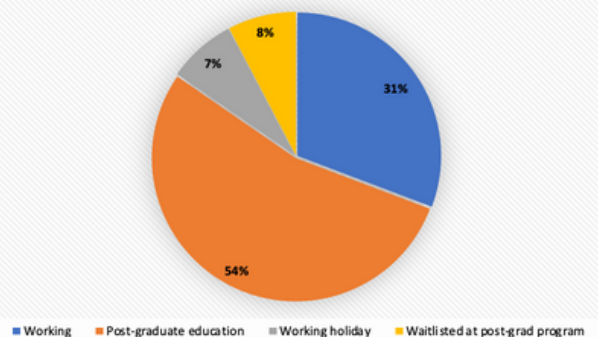
## Alumni Survey

See what our graduates will be doing next

What program are you in?



What are your post-graduation plans?



If you are a 2024 DALs graduate and missed your chance to fill out this survey, please follow this link to complete it today: [DALs 2024 Graduates](#)

# Undergraduate

## Features

### Julia Barr

1. Why did you study applied linguistics?  
While completing a high school co-op in an elementary school, I was able to observe a speech-language pathologist and a communication disorders assistant. During that time I became extremely interested in speech and language. When I learned about the program here at Brock, I knew it was perfect for me as it would ensure I was prepared for grad school.

2. Do you have any advice for current undergraduate students?  
My advice for undergraduate students would be to get involved and use the resources that both Brock and DALC provides. Going to office hours often and making connections with upper year students was very beneficial to me. I have also made many memories from joining LingNet and participating in activities within Brock, including intramurals.

3. What are your post-graduation plans?  
I will be attending Western University in the fall to complete a MCIsc in Speech-Language Pathology



### Madelaine Micciola

1. Why did you study applied linguistics?  
Once I attended the University fair and heard about the program, I knew it was the one for me. Applied Linguistics opened up the door to speech pathology which is a career that will allow me to help a variety of people in their everyday lives.

2. Do you have any advice for current undergraduate students?  
My advice would be to find what works for you in order to stay on top of things each week. For me, this was using a planner and calendar to mark out due dates to ensure I never missed one. Another piece of advice would be to book study rooms at the library with others in the program to work together and prepare for upcoming midterms and tests.

3. What are your post-graduation plans?  
I will be attending the University of Toronto in the fall to complete a MHS in Speech-Language Pathology.



# MA STUDENT PROJECTS

## Capstone Projects:

Supervisor: Dr. David Hayes

*Chuyin Chen*

*Evgenia McCormack*

*Ishrat Nadir*

*Le Vy Vu*

*Marcus Lew*

*Sandra Vanegas Orellana*

## MRP PROJECTS:


Name	Research Topic	Supervisor
Seth Amoah	Inquiry Regarding Strategies Utilized by ESL Teachers for Enhancing Grammar Instruction	Dr. Michael Karas
Nathaniel Apadu	Use of Non-Finite Verbs as a Predictor of Chinese EFL Writing Proficiency	Dr. Cheng Luo
Zahra Ghaffaricherati	The Relationship Between Phonological Working Memory and the Perception of Second Language Speech Sounds by Iranian Learners of English	Dr. Ron Thomson
Rezvaneh Jamshidi Nasirmahalleh	The Effects of Reverse Linguistic Stereotyping: Investigating Teacher Accents and Representations in Language and Learning	Dr. Ron Thomson
Nicholas Momot	Investigating the Grammar Errors of Spanish Learners of English	Dr. Andrew Lee
Nimali Weerasinghe	Sri Lankan Teachers' Instructional Practices; A Comparison Study of Country	Dr. Michael Karas



# Course Offerings

## LING 4P25

### Research Practicum:



This is a half credit course involving supervised participation in a faculty-directed research project. To participate, students must be approved for year 4 and have permission from the chair. Students are encouraged to reach out to professors throughout the summer to see who is involved in research and is available to supervise.

Continue to the next page to see what a few of our students had to say about their time in the research practicum course this past winter term





# RESEARCH PRACTICUM



*My goal for the Research Practicum, supervised by Dr. Hillary Ganek, was to access and interpret daylong recordings from a public database. I investigated whether there was a difference in exposure to noise as well as amount of parental input in the home environments of children with hearing loss compared to their typically hearing peers. Taking on a project like this taught me a lot of things about the world of research in a short time. I learned how to navigate statistical analysis software and design a research poster in a way that "told the story" of my findings. Ultimately, the research practicum allowed me to explore an area of interest in a unique and rewarding way.*

*- Kelsey Cere*

*During my research practicum, I had the privilege of being supervised by Professor Michael Karas. He provided various options for my practicum, allowing me to choose based on my interests and academic goals. This autonomy was a valuable opportunity for me to delve into a pathway within Applied Linguistics that I was passionate about.*

*For my research, I focused on a synthesis project for the TESL Canada Journal. This involved reading articles published in the journal from 1984 to the present day and extracting key trends and information for analysis, such as article focus, participants and more. After gathering the required information, Professor Karas and I would discuss the findings to ensure the research was conducted effectively. This project offered insight into the tedious work involved in research and allowed me to put into practice the research methods I had previously learned. Overall, LING 4P25 was a great exposure into the world of research methods, exposing me to diverse and interesting topics within Applied Linguistics. In all, this experience significantly enhanced my learning as a student and helped solidify my future career interests*

*- Elizha Caragay*

*Our research practicum was done under the supervision of Dr Lynn Dempsey. The research we participated in was about how Speech-Language Pathologists use picture books in their practice. We spent time conducting literature reviews which allowed us to become familiar with the topic. We contributed to the research by editing an existing survey and reviewing the ethics application. To end off the term, we produced a Knowledge Mobilization Tool (KMb) to inform others of what we learned. Our KmB was done through social media accounts consisting of short, attention-grabbing videos that highlighted the knowledge we gained. We feel that the research practicum was a very educational and positive experience. We had the opportunity to learn about what goes into the field of research as well as gain knowledge on a topic that we hadn't had much experience in before. We enjoyed having the chance to inform others of what we learned in a creative and fun way. All in all, the research practicum was a great addition to our university experience, and we highly recommend it to anyone that is interested.*

*- Julia Barr, Madelaine Micciola, Stella Wiens*

# STUDENT SUPPORT

## Course Registration

Fall and Winter course registration opened on June 25th for Year 1 students and will continue into July for upper-year students. For more information, visit [the Brock course registration page](#)

## TA Positions

Upper-year students interested in Teaching Assistant positions should watch the [Careers@brock](#) site at the end of June or early July to find LING TA posts. Alerts will also be posted on our social media accounts. Contact Arlene at [appliedling@brocku.ca](mailto:appliedling@brocku.ca) if you have any questions.

## Academic Advising

To see availability and schedule an academic advising appointment, please use the Microsoft Bookings link

<https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/AdvisingBAinSocialSciencesAppliedLinguisticsWGST@brocku.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/>



Email our Academic Advisor, Tayler Shannon at [tshannon@brocku.ca](mailto:tshannon@brocku.ca)

# Contact Us

### Department Chair

**Ron Thomson, Professor**

Office: MCD 450H

[905-688-5550](tel:905-688-5550) x5842

[ron.thomson@brocku.ca](mailto:ron.thomson@brocku.ca)

### Graduate Program Director

**Lynn Dempsey, Associate Professor**

[905-688-5550](tel:905-688-5550) x5168

[ldempsey@brocku.ca](mailto:ldempsey@brocku.ca)

### Administrative Coordinator

**Arlene Arch**

Office: MCD 450 F

[905-688-5550](tel:905-688-5550) x3374

[applied.linguistics@brocku.ca](mailto:applied.linguistics@brocku.ca)

### Graduate Program Assistant

**Mae Leong**

[905-688-5550](tel:905-688-5550) x5165

[GradAppLingTESL@brocku.ca](mailto:GradAppLingTESL@brocku.ca)



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