

PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT FOR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS

The University of Melbourne
Melbourne Graduate School of Education



PROJECT TITLE: Complex language development in children who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH)

We would like to invite you and your child to participate in our project investigating the development of complex language in children who are deaf or hard of hearing. This project will look at children's development of complex grammar that is required for literacy and academic success. The aims of this study are to better understand how children who are DHH develop complex language structures and which ones are more difficult for them to learn. This can help us learn what types of intervention may be most effective in helping children who are DHH develop complex language structures. The investigators are Associate Professor Tricia Eadie, Sharon Klieve, Associate Professor Suze Leitgo and Professor Lorraine Graham from the Melbourne Graduate School of Education.

What do we aim to do?

This research project will investigate the language of school-aged children who are DHH and use oral communication. While recent research does show improved outcomes for children who are DHH compared to earlier research, they also show that many children who are DHH still experience challenges with achieving age-appropriate language.

Complex language in particular seems to be a continued area of challenge for children who are DHH. The development of complex grammar is necessary for understanding and expressing complex ideas and important for successful literacy development which, in turn, impacts academic success.

This research aims to develop a better understanding of complex language development in children who are DHH, leading to better identification of children who are at risk of difficulties.

This research also aims to inform the design of effective interventions to support their complex language development.

How will we do this?

During this research project, eight and nine year old children who are DHH, their peers with typical hearing and language development and younger children with typical hearing and language development will participate in a range of language activities and assessments. Comparing children who are DHH to age-matched peers can help determine if children who are DHH are experiencing greater difficulty than would be expected for their age. Including younger children can help us work out if children who are DHH show more difficulties than would be predicted from their language abilities, which may be more similar to younger children.

If children who are DHH do show greater difficulties with complex grammar then a small number will be invited separately to participate in a short trial intervention program with goals based on their assessment results.

What will you be asked to do?

As the parent of a student who is DHH you will be asked to:

- Give permission for your child to be involved in this study. This will include;
i. Participating in four 30-minute assessment sessions over two weeks with an experienced dual qualified teacher of the deaf / speech pathologist
- Agree to researchers accessing information on your child's hearing loss results

What will your child be asked to do?

- Your child will be asked to
i. Take part in four 30-minute assessment sessions over a two week period administered (online via google meet) by an experienced dual qualified teacher of the deaf and speech pathologist
These assessments will include

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- and retelling short stories, telling
 - ing a favourite game explain
 - ding to pictures about challenging social situations and discussing possible solutions. respon
 - ng pretend situations acted out with toys by the researcher to elicit sentence responses watchi
 - ng their level of understanding of verbs that are used in the previous task. checki
- Additional short formal tests will include short assessments that assess
- ve vocabulary, recepti
 - g and short term memory, workin
 - bal intelligence nonver
 - to formulate and repeat sentences. ability

How will the confidentiality of your information and your anonymity be protected?

Please be assured that information collected from participants will be available only to the researchers involved in this project. Electronic data will be stored in digital copy in a password protected file on a computer at the University of Melbourne and any hard copies will be kept in a locked facility at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education. All files will be destroyed no earlier than five years after the final publication based on the data from this research.

The confidentiality of personal details or information provided will be maintained subject to legal requirements. The data will not be of a personal nature and will comprise of profiles of language and cognitive skills. Only group data will be reported for the initial studies so individual participants will not be identifiable. We consider this important as we intend to present results at educational conferences, in academic journals or books, and use them to support teacher training programs.

Is this an approved study?

Yes: this research has been approved by Human Research Ethics Committee of The University of Melbourne

Risks and benefits

As this project is based on the kinds of educational experiences that are common in schools, we believe that this project is of very low risk. The assessments are regularly used in educational settings and the researchers are trained teachers or speech pathologists with extensive experience in assessment and intervention with a range of children including children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Benefits from this project will include

- A better understanding of complex language development in children who are DHH and types of difficulties
- The development of an assessment protocol targeting complex language
- A better understanding of how vocabulary, perception and memory impact complex language abilities in children who are DHH.
- Better guidance and information around evidence-based practices that facilitate the development of complex syntax for children who are DHH

The research team will send you a summary of your child's results if you tick the required box on the consent form. If you would like us to provide your child's school with the results, please tick this box on the consent form. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's summary you may contact the researchers to discuss the results.

What do I have to do to participate in the study?

Participation in this research study is voluntary. If you are happy for your child to participate in four 30 minute assessment sessions to investigate their complex language development, please contact Sharon Klieve on [0432932558](tel:0432932558) or via email at

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sklieve@student.unimelb.edu.au to get more detailed information. Please note that you or child, are free to withdraw from the study at any time and that declining to participate will in way affect access to any other services. Any unprocessed data can also be withdrawn at time.



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How do I get further information?

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of The University of Melbourne. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact

The Manager, Human Research Ethics,
Office for Research Ethics and Integrity,
University of Melbourne, VIC 3010.

Tel: +61 3 8344 2073 or Fax: +61 3 9347 6739 or

Email: HumanEthics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au.

All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.

If you have any additional questions for the researchers, please call or email us at any time.

Kind regards,

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