

First Steps in Developing an Interdisciplinary Child and Youth Development Clinic

Alexandra Cross¹, Elizabeth Thornley², Colin King^{3,4}, Elizabeth Skirving^{1,3}, Lisa Archibald¹, & Victoria Schwean⁴

¹Communication Sciences & Disorders, ²Applied Psychology, ³Child & Youth Clinic, ⁴Faculty of Education

Who are we?

The Child and Youth Development Clinic at Western University is an interdisciplinary training facility for graduate students in

- School and Applied Child Psychology
- Clinical Psychology
- Applied Behaviour Analysis
- Social Work
- Speech-Language Pathology

Our Vision

- Children first for a stronger community
- Client- and family-first services

Interdisciplinary Practice

- Child development is variable
- Highly interconnected impacts of cognitive, language, affective, and learning disorders
- May contribute to increased likelihood of understanding child's needs and appropriate recommendations (Dunsmir et al., 2006)
- May lead to earlier identification of needs
- Identified by clients as a positive experience (Baggs et al., 1999)

Interdisciplinary Training

- Educational benefits: recognition of bias, critical thinking, ambiguity tolerance, understanding of ethical concerns (Repko, 2009)
- Promotes foundational knowledge integration of ideas across disciplines
- Prepare students for collaborative, interdisciplinary practice

References:
 Baggs et al. (1999). Critical Care Medicine, 27, 1991-1998
 Dunsmir et al. (2006). Educational Psychology in Practice, 22, 125-40.
 Repko (2008). Academic Exchange Quarterly, 12, 171-178.

Initial program evaluation

Purpose: To capture initial experiences in establishing an interdisciplinary training program within the first term of opening The Child and Youth Development Clinic

Personnel:

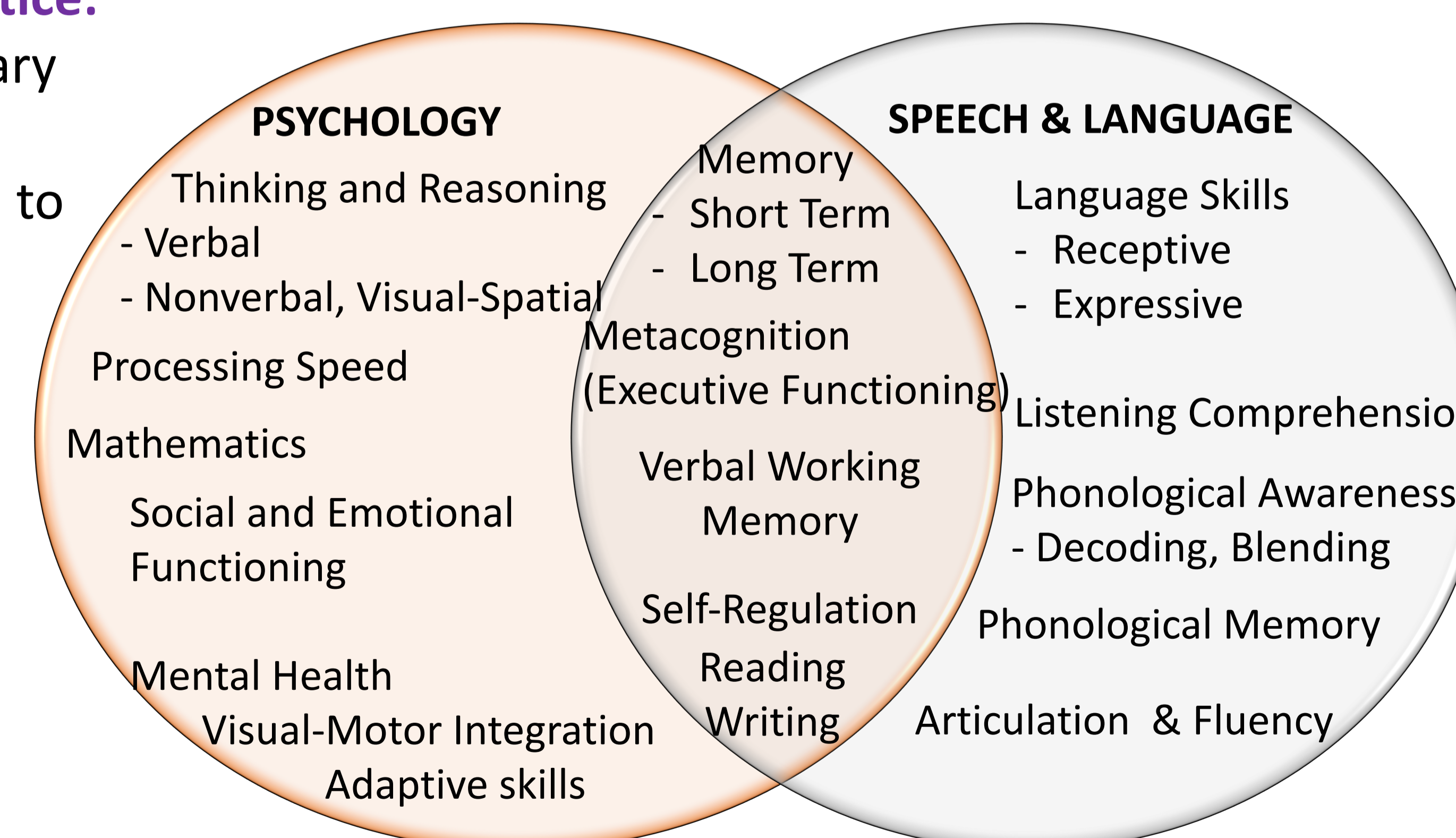
- Clinic Director: Clinical Psychologist
- Speech-Language Pathologist
- Involvement of 2 additional faculty members from Faculty of Education & School of Communication Sciences & Disorders, and a supervisor in Social Work
- Students: 15 students in Term 1; 28 students in Term 2

Cases Referred to clinic:

- Complex or individual areas of needs
 - Developmental, attentional concerns
 - Learning & achievement
 - Communication & language
 - Social-emotional or behaviour challenges
 - Social & adaptive skills
- Assessments completed to date:
 - 13 joint assessments
 - 26 discipline specific

Evolving practice:

Interdisciplinary service map individualized to each client



Initial student responses:

Ratings of knowledge (1=little; 5=very knowledgeable):

Student	Own profession		Other profession	
	Pre placement	Post placement	Pre placement	Post placement
SLP (n=2)	5	1	3	3
Psychology (n=4)	4	2.5	3.5	3.5

Ratings of interdisciplinary working (1=low; 10=high):

	How closely did you work together?		How much did it benefit the service?		How much of a hindrance was working together?	
	SLP	Psych	SLP	Psych	SLP	Psych
Planning	10	8.25	10	8.25	2	2
Assessment	9	8.75	10	7.75	1	3
Analysis	10	5.5	10	7.25	1	2.3
Report writing	9	5.5			3	4
Feedback	10	5.5			1	4.3

'I enjoyed discussing findings...it was valuable to discuss what constructs we [wanted] to explore'

'It was a great opportunity to explore theories & bounce ideas off each other.'

'We gained valuable knowledge about each other's professions.'

'...these types of consultation can often be done informally in the work room... may not always require testing from both SLP & Psychology'