The Literacy Studies Ph.D. Program held its 3rd Annual MTSU Literacy Studies Conference on February 28, 2015. The keynote speaker was Dr. Laurie E. Cutting.

Dr. Cutting, Professor of Special Education, Psychology, Radiology, and Pediatrics at Vanderbilt University, is the principal investigator of NIH-funded research projects on reading comprehension, reading disabilities, and ADHD. She also serves as a Senior Scientist at Haskins Laboratories and is a member of the Vanderbilt Brain Institute and Vanderbilt’s Center for Cognitive and Integrative Neuroscience.

Dr. Cutting’s keynote address, entitled “Unraveling the Neurobiological Correlates of Reading Comprehension,” addressed the educational and neurobiological underpinnings of reading disabilities in adolescents, including basic characterization of the neural architecture of brain development and how that relates to education; what a child’s brain is doing while reading; and how utilization of cutting-edge neuroimaging techniques can predict who will respond to specialized educational interventions. Specifically, she presented fMRI imaging data that shows differences between the brain activity patterns of good vs. poor readers.
**Conference (continued)**

**Spoken Presentations**


Brasher, C., Cooper, J., Coggins, J., & Elleman, A. *Examining Two Reading Comprehension Assessments: Understanding the Relationship of Underlying Skills Among At-Risk Readers.*

Coggins, J., Cooper, J., & Kim, J. *Psychometric Analyses of Adolescent Reading Comprehension Assessments: Comparisons of Using Item Response Theory (IRT) and Classical Test Theory (CTT).*

Elleman, A. *Detectives and Explorers: Considering the Impact of Two Methods of Reading Comprehension Instruction Designed to Improve Inference Ability and Knowledge Development.*

Kim, J., & Fotidzis, T. *Differential Item Functioning (DIF) Analysis for the Second Grade ELL and Non-ELL Students on a Reading Comprehension Test.*

Kim, W. *Psychometric Calibration of an Eighth-Grade Reading Comprehension Test.*

Luo, D., Wu, D., & Gong, J. *Does Dialect Influence Children’s Mandarin Chinese Reading Comprehension Based on Reading Literacy Assessment in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region of China?*

Magne, C. *Relationship Between Music Abilities, Prosody Sensitivity and Reading Skills.*

Moon, H., & Magne, C. *Electrophysiological Neural Basis of the Noun/Verb Distinction in English Stress Homographs.*

Oslund, E. *A Multicomponent Model of Reading Comprehension in Adequate and Struggling Readers.*

Schrodt, K. *The Relationship Among Mindset Instruction, Kindergarteners’ Performance and Motivation in Writer’s Workshop.*

Statom, Y., & Harris, S. *Identifying Successful Literacy Strategies Implemented by Teachers in High Performing, High Poverty Schools.*

Steacy, L. *Word Learning Efficiency and Transfer in First and Second Graders At-Risk for Reading Disabilities.*

Thompson, P. *Scaffolding Emergent Literacy Skills in Pre-Kindergarten Through Writing Instruction.*

**Roundtable Discussions**

Barnes, Z. *Teachers Standing TALL for High Quality Literacy: What are the Critical Legislative Issues?*
Roundtable Discussions (continued)

Cooper, J., & Elleman, A. *A Comparison of the Effectiveness of Two Vocabulary Instructional Approaches: Mnemonic and Morphological Vocabulary Instruction.*

Gibson, N., Slaughter, P., & Sanders, A. *22nd Century Skills for 21st Century Teachers: Information Literacy and Pre-Service Teacher Quality.*

Hu, W. *Development and Validation of the Scale of Reading Attitudes Across Languages (SRAAL) with Rasch Model.*

Milligan, A. *Embedding Literacy Activities in Middle and High School Science Classes: Impact on Achievement and Motivation.*

Pickens, T. *The Psychometric Properties and Predictive Validity of Four High School English Language Benchmark Tests.*

Talbert, S. *Integrating Science and Literacy: An Examination of Research.*

Poster Presentations

Fotidzis, T., & Kim, J. *Item Validation for a 5th Grade CCSS Reading Comprehension Test for Special Education and Non-Special Education Students.*


Louden, P. *Predicting ADHD: Can ADHD be predicted from dyslexic students using executive function including working memory, rapid automatic naming, and processing speed?*

Pickens, T. *A Historical Analysis of National Literacy Initiatives in the United States.*

Rollins, A., & Wallace, K. *Text Complexity in Narrative and Expository Passages.*

In other news...

Publications by Program Students and Faculty


Program News

Students from the program won top awards in the COE competition at this year’s Scholars Week. Congratulations!!!

First Place — Kim, W. Psychometric calibration of an eighth-grade reading comprehension test.
Second Place — Brock, M., Otte, C., Moon, H., & Magne, C. Prosody sensitivity and reading skills: event-related brain potentials and individual differences.

Congratulations to Jennifer Cooper and Katie Schrodt for being named Outstanding Students in the Literacy Studies Ph.D. Program.

Congratulations to Jennifer Cooper for passing the preliminary examination.

On April 20, 2015, Jennifer Cooper and Katie Schrodt were named Outstanding Students in the Literacy Studies Ph.D. Program

Katie Schrodt
“The Relationship Among Mindset Instruction, Kindergarteners’ Performance, and Motivation in Writer’s Workshop”
Committee: Dr. Amy Elleman (Chair), Dr. Terri Tharp, Dr. Jwa Kim, Dr. Joanna Durham-Barnes

Penny Thompson
“Scaffolding Emergent Literacy Skills in Pre-Kindergarten Through Writing Instruction”
Committee: Dr. Amy Elleman (Chair), Dr. Jwa Kim, Dr. Robin Ridgley, Dr. Joanna Durham-Barnes

Kyungate Kim
“Model Comparisons Among Testlet Response Theories (TRT) on a Reading Comprehension Test”
Committee: Dr. Jwa Kim (Chair), Dr. Amy Elleman, Dr. Cyrille Magne

Melissa Brock
“The Relationship Between Prosodic Sensitivity and the Discourse Level and Reading Skills: An Electrophysiological Investigation”
Committee: Dr. Cyrille Magne (Chair), Dr. Aleka Blackwell, Dr. Amy Elleman, Dr. Jwa Kim

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

All students in the program are required to complete an annual self-evaluation. Click here to download the form. Due date: May 22.

All students wishing to be considered for a GA assignment must apply. Click here to download the application. Due date: May 22.

If you plan to register for the preliminary exam in summer 2015, registration is due the first two weeks of the semester.

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