7. The Effects of Word Characteristics on Children’s Spelling Accuracy
Student Investigator: Megan Gilliland
Mentor: Holly Storkel, Rouzana Komesidou

Purpose: The goal of this study was to examine how word characteristics, such as phonological neighbors, orthographic neighbors, and word frequency, influence spelling accuracy in school-age children.

Methods: Participants (N = 221) for this study were selected from the Templin Archive, a repository for data associated with a longitudinal study conducted between 1960 and 1972. All participants were within typical range of receptive vocabulary and cognition. We examined children’s spellings on 31 real words included in the Metropolitan Achievement Test administered in Grade 3. Responses were scored 1 if correct and 0 if incorrect or absent.

Results: None of the three word characteristics (phonological neighbors, orthographic neighbors, word frequency) significantly predicted spelling accuracy.

Conclusions: Further analyses will be conducted using a less stringent scoring that takes into account orthographically plausible responses.