Project Title: Investigating oral narrative developmental outcomes for children who participated in the Launch to School Treatment Trial	**Code: FHS6**
Host School / Institute: Faculty of Health Sciences	**Address:** Liverpool Hospital, South Western Sydney Local Health District, Liverpool

Certificates & Clearances required: Yes
*Vaccination Certificate *Working with children clearance *Police clearance
Information on how to obtain certificates, where necessary, will be given to successful applicants.

Primary Supervisor: A/Prof Natalie Munro

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Co-Supervisor/team: Jennie Cusiter- Paediatric Team Leader Speech Pathology, Liverpool Hospital. Kate Short, Speech Pathologist, Liverpool Hospital & PhD candidate.

Project Type: Clinical; Data Analysis

Project Category: Speech Pathology; Paediatrics/Child Health

Skills / Attributes of a successful student: The student will be motivated to join the speech pathology research HUB at Liverpool and the Speech Pathology faculty at the University of Sydney. They will have an interest in the process of research from data entry, to management to analysis. The student will understand basic computer programs and a keen eye for detail and a reasonable understanding of English grammar. A student who is studying Speech Pathology or linguistics is desirable.

Project Keywords: Language Disorder; Narrative; Transcription; Clinical Data Sample; Treatment outcomes

Project Description: Language disorder impacts a child's ability to understand and use oral language. It affects 20% of 4 year old children across Australia, which is equal to the rate of childhood obesity. Language disorder has a significant impact on a child's life and is known to increase the risk of literacy failure, unemployment, and poorer health outcomes. Liverpool Hospital Speech Pathology has developed an innovative program to reduce the impact and negative sequelae of language disorder. Launch to School (L2S- https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-02-21/launching-to-school-speech-pathology-transition/9467924) is an 8 session group program targeting language and pre-literacy skills necessary for reading acquisition at school. A large clinical control trial was conducted over 2 years (2015-2017) to evaluate the program's effectiveness. One of the most critical outcome measures to evaluate the impact of the program is a child's ability to tell a story or narrative. Language sampling is widely acknowledged as part of the gold standard for language assessment however is frequently not used by clinicians due to a perceived lack of time efficiency in the process. To evaluate the narrative outcome measures of the control trial and to advocate change in speech pathology routine practice we offer this exciting project for an applicant who ideally has engaged in studying Speech Pathology or Linguistics.

This project involves transcribing, and analysing a subset of language samples taken as part of the L2S Treatment Trial. It will provide the applicant with significant experience in language transcription and analysis. A software program (The Systematic Analysis of Language Transcripts; SALT) will be used to increase efficiency of analysis. Once skilled, this would encourage transferability of this computer-assisted analysis to clinical practice. This training would therefore be highly desirable for students when applying for new graduate clinical or research positions. On project completion the applicant will have a thorough understanding of the language sampling tool, be competent in language transcription, and become efficient in grammatical analysis. For the duration of the project the applicant will work within both the Liverpool Speech Pathology Research HUB based at Liverpool Hospital and the Kids Talk Lab based at the University of Sydney. The applicant will work closely with speech pathology clinicians, researchers and university academics. Additionally the Launch to School Program will be in progress during the project period creating an opportunity to observe it.