

Studentship 1: Speech therapy and adult outcomes

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Children with language disorders are likely to experience poor social adaptation (i.e. non-employment and no partnership) (Clegg et al, 2005; Law et al, 2009; McAllister et al, 2012) or poor psychological outcomes (Schoon et al, 2010; Law et al, 2009) in their adult lives. However, little is known about changes in prevalence of children with needs for speech therapy, social inequalities in access to speech therapy (cf. Sacker et al , 2001), and their relationship with adult outcomes over time.

The aims of this project are to understand the needs of children with medically diagnosed speech difficulties in order for them to make a successful transition to adulthood and to identify the role played by parental socioeconomic status in the transition process.

Potential objectives for this project are to:

- 1) Compare prevalence of children's medically diagnosed speech difficulties between two birth cohorts in Britain.
- 2) Compare biological and social determinants of need for and access to speech therapies between the cohorts
- 3) Compare effects of need for and access to speech therapies on psychosocial adjustment in adolescence between the cohorts
- 4) Compare long term effects of speech problems and treatment on adult outcomes such as well-being, obtaining academic qualification and employment, and family formation in the two cohorts.

Data for this study will be taken from the British cohorts born in 1958 (NCDS) and in 1970 (BCS70). The children were medically assessed for speech problems (Speech test designed by Sheridan) at the ages of 11 for NCDS and 10 for BCS70, making the information relatively comparable.

References:

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