

Studentship 1: Transition to adulthood with speech difficulties

Supervisors: Professor Yvonne Kelly, Dr Noriko Cable

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 have poor psychological outcomes (Schoon et al, 2010; Law et al, 2009) in their adult lives. However little is known about the prevalence of children with speech problems, social inequalities in access to speech therapy (cf. Sacker et al, 2001), and transition to adulthood over time.

The aims of this project are: (1) to understand the needs of children with medically diagnosed speech difficulties for making a successful transition to adulthood and (2) to identify the role played by socioeconomic factors in the transition process to successful adulthood.

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 needs for and access to speech therapies between the cohorts
- 3) Compare effects of needs 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 wellbeing, obtaining academic qualification and employment, and partnership in the two cohorts.

Data for this study will be taken from the British cohorts born in 1958 (National Child Development Study, NCDS) and in 1970 (1970 British Cohort Study, 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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