



Summer 2018

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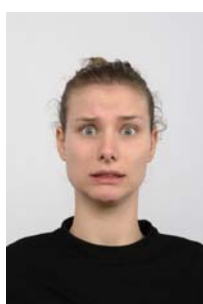
SCALES 2 is underway!

We are very excited to have been awarded a new grant from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to carry out a further two assessment points for SCALES. We will revisit the 499 children that we saw in Years 1 and 3 when they are in Year 6 and Year 8. This is a critical time for our children as it covers their transition to secondary school and the onset of adolescence.

As before, we are interested in how children's speaking, listening, attention and reasoning skills develop as they get older. We are tracking the impact of variation in language ability on variation in both education outcomes and social, emotional and behavioural well-being.

In particular, we want to find out how children use language to help manage their own feelings and behaviours, as well as to help them understand the feelings and behaviours of others.

We have different computer games that ask children to recognise how people feel from their facial expressions or their tone of voice. Can you describe these emotions?? Why might they feel like this?



OUR TESTING TEAMS

Our talented team of research assistants visit children in schools. They've all received training and have experience of working with children. They all have enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service, to ensure safe working with children. Most of them have Psychology degrees and a keen interest in children's development.

Our testing teams are based at UCL and at the University of Surrey. You can find out more about them here:

<http://www.lilac-lab.org>

Can you find the person who visited your school?



An eventful year

SCALES Principal Investigator and Lab Director Courtenay Norbury has been recognised by both a Fellowship of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists and a Prize Lecture of the Experimental Psychology Society for excellence in research. These events bring the importance of language to everyday life to wide audience. Congratulations Courtenay!



The SCALES team (Shaun, Jess, Courtenay, Lydia, Sarah, and Laura) celebrating Courtenay' Prize Lecture, April 2018

Lab News

Debbie Gooch joined the SCALES team in 2012 as the project co-ordinator. She has now accepted a permanent lectureship at the University of Surrey. She continues to work with us and will be focusing on how language helps children to develop better self-control. Congratulations Debbie Gooch!

Claire Sears has started her PhD, got married, and had baby Oliver over the past year! She will be re-joining us to work on SCALES as part of her PhD in January. Congratulations Claire and family!

Parent and teacher questionnaires—your views matter!

Both parents and teachers have also been busy completing our questionnaires to provide further information about each child's development of language, behaviour and social skills. This allows us to gain a fuller picture of their abilities, and any areas of concerns.

Around 40% of both teacher and family questionnaires have already been completed - thank you very much for all responses. The more responses we get, the more accurate our findings will be. We can interview families by phone and will be in touch over the summer.



If you have not yet completed the questionnaires, PLEASE do so. Each parent or teacher has their own personalised link to the questionnaire for their child. If you need us to send your link again, please email pals.scales@ucl.ac.uk.

What happens to SCALES data?

All publically funded studies, including SCALES, are now required to make their anonymised data openly available to other research teams. This increases the value of publically funded research, because it allows other groups to answer new and interesting questions of our data, without having to recruit and test new cohorts of children. It also increases confidence in science as people can check our analyses.

We will therefore be depositing the data from all SCALES assessments (from reception through to Year 8) on the UK Data Archive. We will also deposit language samples (e.g. transcripts of stories the children tell in relation to picture prompts) on the CHILDES database of children's language.

The data that we deposit is anonymised, meaning it contains no information that would enable individual children, families or schools to be identified. No names, contact details, dates of birth, school names, voice or video recordings are deposited. No other research team can contact you about the study. Please note though, once data are deposited we no longer have control over the data.

We write up our studies for publication, and give presentations to scientists, teachers, clinicians, policy makers and the general public. We try to blog about new papers, so anyone can understand what we've done and what it means. Keep an eye on the website for details:

<http://www.lilac-lab.org/publications/>

SCALES is making an impact!

Several policy documents have reported findings from the SCALES study and are raising awareness of the importance of oral language skills for school success. Courtenay attended a reception at the House of Commons to mark the publication of the Bercow Report. Nadhim Zahawi MP, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Education spoke to us about the need to ensure that all children start school with the best possible language skills. Courtenay has been appointed to advise on a joint project between the DfE and Public Health England aimed at improving language skills in the early years.

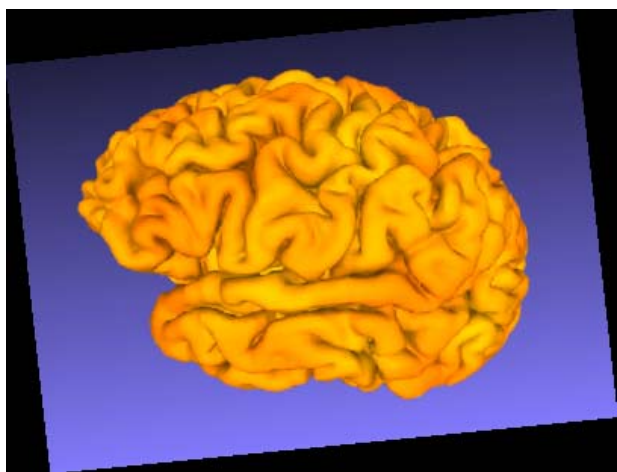
Findings from SCALES are contributing to these discussions about the sorts of language skills needed for school success, identification of children who need extra support, and how much progress in language we can expect children from across the range of abilities to make over the first years of school.

In February, the Times Education Supplement interviewed Courtenay about SCALES for an article about language in the classroom. Thank you for contributing to this important knowledge base!



Bercow: Ten Years On
An independent review of provision for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs in England

Be a BRAIN scientist in OXFORD!



Brain Organisation in Language Development

The SCALES team are collaborating with our friends in Oxford on the **BOLD** study. This is funded by the MRC and will be investigating how the brain changes over adolescence, with a particular focus on how these changes support language learning. Language gets much more complicated as we get older. Sentences have more complex grammar, which we need to reason, predict, and explain real and imagined events. Students rely more heavily on written texts for learning new words and ideas and many of these words and ideas are *abstract* (e.g. democracy). We used to think that most language processing occurred in the left hemisphere of the brain. The **BOLD** study will test new theories about how different areas of the brain are connected, and how these connections support learning and memory of new language. All SCALES children are invited as we know lots about your language development! **Contact: theboldstudy@gmail.com**

New funding



Chatrin Suksasilp is an undergraduate at UCL working with us on SCALES. He has been awarded a

Wellcome Vacation Scholarship! Over the summer, he will be assessing how older adolescents (i.e. undergraduates!) monitor and change their emotional reactions to situations. We will compare these findings to the SCALES cohort. This will give us an indication of what changes to expect as the SCALES children reach Year 8. Congratulations Chatrin!



Shaun Goh has been awarded a British Academy Visiting Fellowship, so that he can visit from Singapore and work with our lab. Shaun is a clinical psychologist. In 2013, he combined data from multiple sites across the world and found that children with early language disorders were at approximately twice the risk of behavioural and emotional difficulties. Still, this risk is small enough that the majority of children with developmental language

DLD 123!!



Check out the winner of the Charity Film Awards on our youtube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/RADLD>

At SCALES we are interested in the full range of child language abilities. Some of our children are highly skilled speakers, but others have struggled with speaking and listening. Some of these children have 'Developmental Language Disorder' (DLD).



DLD is common (two children in every class), but poorly understood. The team are working hard to raise awareness. Courtenay is a founding member of RADLD, which has many informative videos about how to support language development.

SCALES

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See you in Year 8

The move to secondary school and transition to adolescence is an important time for both learning and development. We can't wait to see the SCALES children growing into young adults and look forward to hearing lots of exciting stories about their new adventures at secondary school! We will spend the next year contacting secondary schools across Surrey (and further afield) to arrange our visits.

We will also be organising an event in 2018/2019 for children and families to say thank you and to share our findings. Look out for your invitation!

disorders don't have clinically significant mental health issues. By using the SCALES data, Shaun aims to better understand the mechanisms that link language and mental health among primary school children, and in turn contribute to the promotion of good mental health for all children, regardless of their language abilities.



from the SCALES team