

A feasibility study to investigate the usefulness of language analysis software in speech & language therapy

Speech and Language Therapists regard language sampling as an essential part of the assessment process because it provides the most clinically rich information about children's expressive language. However the process of transcribing language is time-consuming so most therapists rely on standardised formal assessments alongside their subjective impressions of a child's spontaneous language. This study piloted the employment of a Speech and Language Therapy Assistant who was trained to transcribe language samples using a computer program (SALTsoftware).

The results showed that the SLT Assistant could transcribe language reliably and efficiently using SALT, indicating that this would be a cost-effective service innovation. In contrast to subjective impressionistic language sampling which relies on 'rule of thumb', SALTsoftware is able to provide standardised scores for a range of vocabulary and grammatical measures. The computerised language transcriptions provided detailed information that would support meaningful target setting and objective outcome measurement.

Further studies are needed to determine the usefulness and reliability of computerised language sampling in measuring efficacy and to further develop software so that it more closely matches the needs of SLTs in clinical practice.

Funders:

North Bristol NHS Trust Product Innovation Seed Fund

Relevant Publications & Presentations:

Overton, S. & Wren, Y. 2014. Outcome measurement using naturalistic language samples: A feasibility pilot study using language transcription software and speech and language therapy assistants. *Child Language Teaching and Therapy*. 30(2) DOI: [10.1177/0265659013519251](https://doi.org/10.1177/0265659013519251)

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