The Talking DLD Podcast Transcript

www.thedldproject.com

S04 E02 – School & DLD

Watching a child struggle at school has to be one of the hardest things to witness. In this episode of The Talking DLD Podcast, we're joined by Professor Pamela Snow and Dr Charlotte Forwood who will help us understand how DLD can affect academic achievement.

00:00 - Nat (Host)
Talking DLD Developmental Language Disorder One in 14. Dld.

00:08 - Shaun (Host)
The DLD Project.

00:10 -
The Talking DLD Podcast.

00:12 - Nat (Host)
Brought to you by the DLD Project.

00:16 - Shaun (Host)
Hi everyone. It's Shaun here. In this episode I'm talking about one of my favourite topics, which is academic achievement and DLD, with Professor Pamela Snow and Dr Charlotte Ford. Welcome everyone. I'm so excited to talk to both Pam Snow and Charlotte Ford in one podcast, which has taken a little bit of coordinating. I'm so pleased that you've been able to join me today, Pam and Charlotte Welcome.

00:37 Pam (Guest)
Thank you, Sean, it's lovely to be here.

00:43 - Charlotte (Guest)
Thank you, I might throw to you, Pam, you're a bit notorious.

00:46 - Pam (Guest)
I'm sure people know about you.

00:48 - Shaun (Host)
Many people listening will probably know about you, but I might get you to tell us a bit about yourself and your connection and then we'll throw to you Charlotte. How does that sound?

00:55 - Shaun (Host)
Thanks Shaun. Well, hi everyone.
My name is Pam Snow. I'm a professor of cognitive psychology in the School of Education at La Trobe University. I'm based at the Bendigo campus. My original training was in special language pathology. I'm also a registered psychologist.

01:14
I've had an interest for a very long time in the interface between language competence, making the transition between language and language I've had a lot of transitions successfully to reading in the first three years and then beyond and also psychosocial well-being. And I know a lot of people would be familiar with the research that I've been very privileged to do over the last couple of decades on vulnerable young people young people in your justice, young people in the state care system and students in flexible alternative education settings and I've seen that in a nutshell, that research really crystallised for me the importance of getting it right in what we do in particularly tier one mainstream classrooms to lift the entire curve. We can't lift the tail of the curve unless we lift the curve and hence I guess that's culminated in the work that I'm currently doing at La Trobe University with my colleague, associate Professor Tanya Seary, in the establishment of the Solar Lab, the Science of Language and Reading Lab.

02:29 - Shaun (Host)
Charlotte I might throw to you now and I feel like Charlotte is a part of the DLD project team as a collaborator but if you tell our listeners a little bit about your background and your connection to DLD, Thank you, Sean.

02:43 - Charlotte (Guest)
Hi everyone, I'm Charlotte Forward. I am a speech pathologist and also a teacher. I currently work on the Director of Learning Design and Development at Campbellville Girls Grammar School in Melbourne, and I'm also a lecturer in the Department of Learning Intervention in the Melbourne Graduate School of Education. That's a very part-time role and my journey with DLD started a long time ago as a teenager. My mum at the time was a special ed teacher and she was working at a school called St Michael's School in Lonseston in Tasmania, which was a school for children with language disorder. So I lived and breathed at home, I went on camps, I did work experience with a speech pathologist who was also a teacher a New Zealander and so that's where I decided that I would be who I am today.

03:34
I've been very privileged to work in the government sector, in special schools, in independent schools in Australia and the UK and, in particular, Morehouse School in the UK, where my head of department was Carol Everingham, who is an extraordinary advocate for DLD and has been a mentor for me, and I also had the opportunity to work with Becky Clark,

who set up the first International Raddle Day, and also Sue's Nebels. So for those of you who work in that field. You would know how privileged I am to have made those connections right at the start, I think, for me I've always been interested in how that speech pathology and teaching both of those hats can work together and how you can get the best out of both professions, and particularly in the area of DLD. So my experience is very much more on the ground. How do things look in the school? I've pretty much always been based in schools with my work.

04:38 - Shaun (Host)
Fantastic and I love that you've got A, that family connection that's carried you through connections with, as you've mentioned, some very amazing people in the DLD space and you continue to put your hand up all the time to raise awareness of DLD. So thanks, charlotte, for the work that you're doing. I should probably throw my true sense worth in here that I feel so excited that we're talking about academic achievement at DLD today because, as you know, for me it's a passion, a topic close to my heart, because it's the topic of my PhD. So, whilst I will be interviewing you, I will apologise up front. I'm sure I will chime in. Please do, because it's such a fantastic area to be working in.

05:20
I feel really privileged to be able to work in this space because I think, pam, something you've resonated with you said that resonated with me was this idea that you know supporting everybody and I think that you know this will come through today talking about the fact that we can't just focus on one population. There's systemic discussions that need to take place to make sure that we're doing the best for everything, because actually language permeates all aspects of schooling. Which brings me probably to our first question today. At the DLD project, we get contacted really frequently from parents who are concerned about their child's performance at school. You know it's nothing worse than opening up the report card and all of a sudden you're seeing that your child is struggling or failing with something. So I guess, why do you see children with DLD struggling at school? You know what's underpinning this difficulty with learning. I'll go to you Pam.

06:18 - Pam (Guest)
Okay, well, I think I'm just thinking back to that famous James Britton quote from 1970, that learning floats on a sea of talk. Classrooms are highly verbal places. Learning is verbally mediated. Social relationships are verbally mediated. Reading is a language-based task. Reading and writing and spelling they're all language-based tasks. So if you're starting from behind for any reason with respect to your language skills, you're going to find it very hard to transact the business that goes on in the classroom.

07:06
Academically and socially, I think a distinction that has become more emphasised in recent years and serves us very well is the idea that oral language abilities are biologically primary and reading, writing and spelling are biologically secondary skills, reflecting the fact that as humans, we've probably had spoken communication, I think you know, for a couple of hundred thousand years. We've had writing systems for around five thousand years. So, as Steven Pinker, a Harvard psychologist, says, we have a language brain. Importantly, we don't

have a reading brain. I metaphorically think of the brain as putting its hands on its hips and saying now listen you people, I can do this reading thing, but you're going to have to really help me. Oral language I'm much better at it's not said and forget and that's important but you're going to need to really help me with this reading thing.

08:17
So I think when we start to think about that biologically primary, biologically secondary distinction, that's really helpful, and I think teachers find that a very helpful framework, and it kind of creates some light bulb moments. For, you know, oh, that's why so many kids find it hard to learn to read and write, because it's not something that we've evolved to, just naturally do. It's hard, like we haven't evolved to play the violin or to play chess. We can learn those things, but we need to be taught.

08:49
There's an important caveat on all of this, though, when we talk about oral language being biologically primary, and that's the fact that it isn't said and forget, so it doesn't just happen. Adults spend a lot of time. Your parents and preschool teachers and other family members spend a lot of time in those serve and return interactions or we hope that that's what's happening Building vocabulary, expanding and extending on children's utterances, explaining idioms. I mean, yes, it's biologically natural, but there's an awful lot that happens in the interpersonal space and a lot of scaffolding from adults, and, again, we know that some children get the benefits of that scaffolding more than others, perhaps in the preschool years. So this is like fluoride in the water. I think when we're thinking about language and learning, we can't really separate them.

09:51 - Shaun (Host)
And Charlotte, you've obviously worked up close and personal in schools with children, you know with the DLD. Do you have anything you'd like to add around the voice of the environment and how children with DLD might find school a bit tricky?

10:08 - Charlotte (Guest)
I think if you're looking at from an academic perspective, as students move through school the language becomes more complex and more abstract. So for example, if you've got a student, let's say they're in year seven and they're looking at evaporation and condensation, it's much easier for them to learn the verb for it. So evaporating is easier for them to learn than the term evaporation. So if we're using the nominalization of words more often, they're more likely to misunderstand or just not understand at all. So sometimes it's quite subtle. So I do quite a lot of work with teachers to say what are the language features of the subjects that you teach, particularly in secondary school, what are the language structures, and so when they can have an understanding of their own space that they're working in, they then are in a better place to actually make adjustments. So they're actually making sure that hopefully all of the students in their class have access to the language, but particularly the students with DLD. So I guess that's one thing, that complexity.

11:14
As Pam touched on, the social interactions. And again, as you move through school those social interactions become they. Actually I find that they'll become faster. So particularly

teenagers just swap between topics all the time and so if you're a slow language processor. By the time maybe you've thought of a good response. They've actually moved on to something else. So if you do say something, it can perhaps come across as just not appropriate to the setting and that in itself can cause some friendship issues. So there's the academic side of DLD but, as Pam said, there's also the language that underpins all of the social interactions that take place.

11:56 - Shaun (Host)
Pam, you've looked at some modelling around this and I was going to throw back to talking about your language house. If you'd like to elaborate a little bit more on, I guess, how you visualise this in your work that you do and communicating that with teachers and others.

12:12 - Pam (Guest)
Sure Well, a language house, and I know some listeners will be familiar with it. But, sean, you kindly said that you can provide a link and that's in an open access paper. I guess my purpose in writing that paper and using the language house model, which is something that's been evolving for me over the years, is to try and zoom out and zoom in on what teachers are needing to deal with. So the language house model basically expresses the metaphor that when you build a house, you can't start with walls and you certainly can't start with the roof. When you build a house, you start with foundations, but even before you put foundations down, you've got to think about the ground that you're putting the foundations on. Now, in the case of the language house model, that ground is the kind of social and emotional nurturing environments that infants and young children find themselves in. Because that's it. You know, we perhaps don't talk about infant mental health as much as we should, but what happens in the first two years of life is critically important for the development of language. Obviously, self-regulation, empathy, emotional attunement, attachment Again, all of those things being very, very language based, very verbally mediated, lots of serve and return interactions, shared focus, pointing. You know there's an enormous amount that goes on in that first two years. That hopefully creates the basis then for that foundation of the first five years of oral language development. Now sometimes teachers say to me oh yeah, well, we can't do anything about that. We get kids in our classes who've come from very dysregulated, chaotic home environments where they're not being looked after by emotionally attuned parents and there's not a high level of responsiveness to the needs of children. And that's absolutely right. And I think what I've tried to do in the language house model, I guess, is acknowledge that, but not in a way that's intended to say oh well, biology is destiny and you know, the kind of home that you grow up in is what determines what becomes of you with respect to language, emotional, behavioural development and academic achievement.

14:46
Because when we get to the walls on one side we're looking at the ongoing development of oral language skills and pro-social interpersonal skills, and the influence of the home language and literacy environment is obviously quite strong there and that's the biologically primary, if you like. That still needs to be developed through explicit teaching, especially once children get to school. And then the wall on the other side is the transition to reading, writing and spelling. And here we're looking at the influence of the instructional environment, and there's a number of factors listed down the side of both walls that need to

be in play. And I think what I should have emphasised in that paper and I didn't and I now emphasise that when I do presentations is that the influence of the home language and literacy environment probably diminishes over time, particularly as children move through the secondary school years, but the influence of the instructional environment increases over time and we need to make it increase because the instructional environment, that's the lever that we do get to pull.

15:55
We can't and it's probably not a terrible thing in some ways we can't go into children's homes and directly influence the way their parents interact with their children. Sometimes we'd like to, sometimes I wince when I hear you know how little children are spoken to in public spaces by their parents. I don't say that in a judgmental way, I just you know it's parenting is hard, but we do get to pull the intervention leavers. You know, school is an intervention, education is an intervention. It's not just a child-minding service, it's actually intended to change life trajectories. So then, so they're the walls of the house that build up over many years through primary and secondary school years.

16:47
Then, before we put the roof on the house, we've got to put a nice, big, strong, structural beam which is social and emotional wellbeing, behavioural self-regulation, social cognition skills, that ability to read the play. You know Charlotte was talking a moment ago about how the interactions become more fast paced in social relationships. Topics shift, people crack jokes, they use idioms. You know it's a lot happening in that interpersonal space and our ability to read the play and to understand that what people say and what they mean can be completely different things for a range of reasons. Their skills that employers love. They're called soft skills, which is a terrible misnomer because they're not soft at all and they're not hard to. They're difficult to teach because they're quite nuanced from one situation to the next. There's quite a social cost when they're brittle, when little tears occur in the social fabric. But we know that there are strong connections between those social cognition skills, behavioural, emotional self-regulation and language competence.

18:02
And then, of course, the roof on the house in this model is that academic retention, academic success, school completion, being able to exit school into further training, higher education, something that gives you access to the social and economic mainstream, bearing in mind that we live in an economy, as do most people in first world industrialised nations, where artificial intelligence is marching into the unskilled workforce and replacing jobs.

18:36
Artificial intelligence, like self-checkout points in supermarkets, takes away unskilled jobs and replaces them with a smaller number of highly skilled jobs. So we cannot afford to have significant numbers of 15-year-olds exiting school with low literacy and low numeracy skills. Unlike when I'd left school I mean, you know, we still had a manufacturing sector in Australia people could go and get unskilled jobs that were secure and get a mortgage and be part of that social and economic mainstream. I think we really. You know, without sounding too melodramatic, I do think this is a quite significant social and economic and civic challenge for

us that the nature of the workforce is changing, but language and literacy skills are not going to be any less important for people to be part of that social and economic mainstream.

19:42 - Shaun (Host)
I love the language house modelling for me because, as a clinician but also as an educator working in schools, are trying to grapple with the fact that the academic achievement is really important, but it's not everything, and the fact that it sits at that pinnacle or the roof of the house helps, I think, with visualizing and I'm very happy to put this visual in the show notes that there's all of these underpinning skills that are important as well, and perhaps maybe through expectations or funding or service delivery modeling, whatever it might be, we've put so much emphasis on just the top component, when actually, you know, prosocial skills and you know a regulation and resilience and all of those things are very important to achieving that success.

20:34
Of course, teachers are really important in all of this and we know that educators are amazing at what they do. I sometimes think about standing in front of class of that many people and, you know, feeling intimidated by the role that they have in the education system. But what do you both think is the current level of awareness of DLD amongst teachers, but also pre-service teachers and I'm going to break a card and all seen here in podcasting and ask a double-barreled question in that do you actually think the teachers are receiving training around working with these neurodiverse students?

21:12 - Pam (Guest)
I'm going to throw that one to Charlotte first, because she's in the classroom.

21:16 - Shaun (Host)
Yeah. What are your thoughts, Charlotte?

21:18 - Charlotte (Guest)
I would say I can give you a little bit of data. It's just simple data from a program I was running last year. So I had, you know, teachers from over 20 schools and so at the start, when I asked the teachers, 17% of them had never heard of DLD. And there was a whole range of teachers in that space, from some fairly newly qualified teachers to teachers who were very experienced, and that 70% knew a little. So really that paints a little bit of the picture.

21:51
Anecdotally, my experience is that very few people still know about DLD and I'm going beyond the teacher space here too.

22:00
I was in a situation last year where I was, it was a social situation and I met a GP and I met a social worker. So I thought, well, I'll take the opportunity to just say have you heard of this? And neither of them had heard of DLD. And yet they were in work spaces where it was particularly important for them to have at least heard of it, even if they didn't know a lot about it. So I would certainly say there's a low level of awareness, but when teachers learn

about it they're really keen to know more and they want to know how to support the students in their classes. I would say, in terms of training it's not systematic, it's probably pretty hit and miss depending on where you do your training and perhaps even who lectures you in particular subjects. So I think that in some areas there'll be quite a bit on, say, adhd and other things, that maybe autism, but less certainly in DLD, that sort of space. That's my experience.

22:57 - Shaun (Host)
And certainly we've got papers by people like Jay and Macquarie on looking at awareness. They found about 20% of the general population you about DLD, compared to 90 plus on autism, dyslexia, adhd. So at the societal level, we've got low levels of awareness. And I've been thinking about oh, jadon Glaspy is the name that comes to mind and looking at her work of not just you know about DLD, but actually what is it and how do you identify and to do about it, and that was a really interesting study that she conducted as part of her research around. You know, actually we might even know the term, but what does it mean and what adjustments do we need to put in place? So I think that leads then, pam, you've got some amazing training opportunities for teachers and obviously experienced working with teachers. You know, do you see a bit of a change coming as we're talking about literacy and language through, you know, the training that you provide?

23:59 - Pam (Guest)
Oh, absolutely, sean, Tanya, ciri and I just started this week actually the latest iteration of our introduction to the Science and Language and Reading Short Course at La Trobe and we've got 850 people enrolled in that, which is fantastic. They're almost exclusively teachers. But I was just thinking, as Charlotte was talking about a question that we were asked after the first session online on Tuesday night by a secondary teacher who said there's a speech pathologist working in my school and the question was sort of in a nice way, saying how come all of these kids are suddenly being diagnosed with developmental language disorder? You know, we didn't know about this before. Now all these kids are getting this diagnosis. Sort of saying what's going on here, with a little bit of healthy skepticism, I suppose. And you know, is this a new, trendy diagnosis? I think it was maybe part of the subtext.

25:05 - Shaun (Host)
The new ADHD is what I get asked all the time.

25:07 - Pam (Guest)
Right, right, yeah, and we were in our responses. I guess we were explaining that language disorders have always been there. But children with language disorders have been hiding in plain sight and in the case of young people who also develop externalising behaviour problems, language disorders masquerade, really, as other things or they become camouflaged by other things, hidden by other things you know. So children will get a diagnosis of ADHD or of conduct disorder or of you know a range of other things before they'll get a diagnosis of language disorder. There was a famous study I'm sure you two are both aware of it done by Nancy Cohen and her colleagues back in the 1990s, when a sample of children I don't know whether they were all boys, but they were elementary school students in Toronto who were referred to a local child adolescent mental health service because of externalising behaviour problems, conduct, oppositional, defiant kind of issues,

and when they assessed their language skills they found that fully a third of them actually met diagnostic criteria for a diagnosis of language disorder.

26:33
This is back in the 1990s, before we had all the amazing advocacy work that's been done in the last decade or so, but so nobody had asked about their language skills, been curious about their language skills, been curious about the contribution made by receptive and expressive language difficulties to difficulties keeping up in the classroom, cooperating, being on task, following instructions all the things that we know that being a competent language user facilitates really for children in the classroom, both socially and academically. So the work of Courtney Norbury and her colleagues tells us that we should be expecting two children in every class of 30 to meet diagnostic criteria. So that also needs to flag up for us. I think that doesn't mean that there's 28 other kids who've got completely really good language skills. There's going to be some in the watershed area who we should also be concerned about. So these children have always been there. What's changed is our ability to see them identify them and increasingly, hopefully, address their needs.

27:56 - Shaun (Host)
Just tying that into sort of the thought around the work that teachers are doing. I think that Charlotte and I are currently working on developing a module for primary teachers that'll be released very shortly. Pam, you're doing all of this training with teachers, so there's obviously a need there. Teachers are looking for this information because they have questions, like your colleague at the workshop this week, around what is this and what's happening. So I think, as we see this increase in awareness, hopefully that will continue over the next several years, probably as long as I'm practicing, I imagine, will continue to be advocating, but there's going to always be that need gap isn't there until the pre-service teaching catches up in universities. I know, charlotte, you've got a great relationship in your work, that you're able to sort of integrate some of this as well, but it's actually that education and we're going to talk about this a bit later Education and speech pathology coming together, I think, is such a beautiful relationship that can help with supporting these children, identifying these children and supporting these children.

29:04 - Charlotte (Guest)
There was something that sort of prompted, as I was listening to you talk, pam, thinking about the diagnosis that some children get. We know that a lot of students are actually underdiagnosed, but for some it's who do they see first? So I often come across students who they've seen someone, they've been diagnosed with dyslexia and it's like great, that's the thing. It explains why I'm having some difficulties with my reading, for example. But then I discover that their language has never been looked at and so then having to step back and do that. So if I'm screening, and even if a student they might say, oh, can you just check their articulation or can you check their processing, I say, well, this is what I do.

29:45
I actually assess, screen all of these things so I can get a bit of an insight and a baseline. And so sometimes that's a little challenging. Particularly I'll come across students who perhaps they've been diagnosed with an auditory processing disorder and I then have to go back and there's a lot of discussion with parents about looking at the language and why the language

is impacting. So I think that's an important thing to note. It's so important, if you do nothing else, at least look at the language.

30:16 - Pam (Guest)
Absolutely. It's right under our noses. And, charlotte, listening to you speak, I'm reminded of a line in that paper by Nancy Cohen and her colleagues back in I think it was 1993. And I've quoted this so many times, I can probably still say it that they said children enter the service delivery system by virtue of what the key adults in their world see as the primary handicapping condition.

30:45
Now, if the adults in a child's world parents and teachers predominantly, predominantly disrupted by the child's behavior, then they're going to see that child is having a behavior problem and refer them off to a psychologist. And psychologists are not necessarily, they're like teachers. I guess they haven't necessarily learned about DoD, so they're going to do the usual things that they do. And a child who has behavior problems has behavior problems. But if we're not considering sounds cheesy, but if we're not considering the whole child, the whole picture, if we're playing with only a partial deck of cards and we start doing things like cognitive behavior therapy, which is very verbally mediated, to try and talk through triggers and self-regulation and all of that kind of thing, well then we're not on a hiding to nowhere, but we're making life unnecessarily challenging for everyone if we're not understanding the adjustments that are going to be need to be made to verbally mediated therapies for students who have weaker language skills. They can still benefit, I think, from those interventions, but we're going to need to make some adjustments to them.

32:08 - Shaun (Host)
And we're seeing some research Pam coming through just in the last couple of years on CB cognitive behavioral therapy for children with DLD the realization that we need to make some of these adjustments.

32:18
But you know, I'll say this for the potential policymakers listening in, the biggest challenge is, if you use the analogy of the elephant, you know the blind man feeling the elephant.

32:27
I always think about the speech pathologist probably being at the top end, the head end, you know, feeling around for language. If the speech pathologist isn't even in the room, it's never possible for them to actually help with identifying and finding that. And so we work in a system where speech pathologists it's like hit and miss, depending on whether you're in Queensland or New South Wales or whether you're in state or religious institute schools. You know. So there's a huge amount of variability in access to speech pathologists and if they're not there, they're not actually a part of the multidisciplinary team, and that service delivery becomes fragmented. You know we've got some amazing private practitioners working with schools, but it's very different to being embedded in school culture and a part of the work that schools do. So anybody's thinking about what they could do with their budget for 2023, 2024. You know, I think speech pathologists are well worth there, well worth the expenditure.

33:23 - Charlotte (Guest)
And I think on that, sean, actually I'd say and if you've got some money for it, try not to do everything with it, because it then all becomes diluted, but to, even though you want to do everything, think about what's a priority. So is it a priority at certain points in the school to screen, or is it a priority to really work with the class teachers, if you're in a primary school, about what's happening with your literacy program and the oral language component and the necessity for that systematic, explicit instruction? Because I think sometimes there can be good intentions and then not much happens, and so it's better to do a little bit well than trying to do a lot, in a sort of a watered down way.

34:10 - Shaun (Host)
I might jump into my next question here, particularly in the interest of time, because we've got a lot to talk about today. But what should families, teachers and maybe other professionals be looking out for to know if maybe a child with DLD is finding school or maybe even just a particular subject tricky there? Any sort of identifying markers for this I might throw to you, charlotte first, if that's all right, as I know you'll be watching this closely in your own work.

34:37 - Charlotte (Guest)
I think there's a whole range of things. So first thing is Pamela explained behaviour. So if you've got a student who there are some behaviour issues, there's always a reason for it. So go and have an explore about why that might be. It will be the students who sometimes they sit on the fringes so they might be listening into the conversations but they're not initiating or joining in the discussion. So maybe it's that there it might just be their personality. They might be a quiet child, but it might be that they're struggling to process the language. It's listening in for things like non-specific language. Are they often using words like thing and that and something which suggests maybe they've got a word finding difficulty thinking about the types of words they're using. Are they quite simple? Or the type of the sentences they're using? Are they able to express complex thoughts? So I guess there's some of the things.

35:32
Check out how they're getting over their friendships, particularly as they get a bit older and the language of the conversations is more nuanced and, as Pam said, you've got the idioms, you've got the jokes. And then it's where I see students saying that person was mean to me or friendships start to fracture, particularly around that year eight, year nine can often be appointed to be mindful and to, when a child saying someone's being mean, to try and see. Can you actually find out what was going on? Was it actually how they misinterpreted that conversation? I'd also see. How long are they taking to do things? Are they overwhelmed by tasks that come home? How are they getting on with following instruction? So, if you're in the classroom, are they perhaps only doing the first part of the instruction or the last part of the instruction? Or, as you notice their behaviour, are they relying on a peer to actually help them to get through things? So there's lots of different, I guess, little red flags in there, and they're just a few of them that I certainly share from my own experience.

36:39 - Pam (Guest)

I don't know that I have a lot to add to that. I guess, just thinking, though, about written work, there would be manifestations in how students with DLD write, and so if we're seeing those kinds of issues that Charlotte's highlighted in spoken language, then we're probably gonna see them even more in written language. But remembering that we're back to that idea of the biologically secondary, harder, more challenging set of skills, I was watching a video the other day about excuse me, a secondary student sitting discussing a text, and one of them commented how much they'd enjoyed that discussion of the text because they'd far rather talk about a book than write about it. And I thought, hmm, it's a double-edged sword there, because we'd probably all rather talk about something than write about it, because writing is harder.

37:50
So we need to be on the lookout for the kind of verbal hurdles, language hurdles, that students need to get over, even in following instructions, the language of instruction compare, contrast, synthesize, integrate, argue the verbs that are used in when students are asked to write essays, for example. There's often subtle shifts of meaning in those verbs and if you don't understand the shade of meaning in what that instruction is asking you to do, then you're gonna head off in the wrong direction. We often talk about vocabulary development, as we should, for all students, not just students with DLD. But excuse me, but again I think there's probably some nuances we can talk about there. I don't think we talk enough about the polysemous nature of words.

38:55
In English, many words have more than one meaning. The spelling doesn't change but the meaning can be completely different, even a lot of tier one words. So common high frequency words actually have a number of meanings. The example I often use is the word bank. So you know, children will even young children will have a sense of what a bank is a place where you take your money or a place that takes your money, depending on how you look at it. But they won't necessarily know that it's also the sides of a river and they won't necessarily know that it can be a verb that you can bank on someone or something. So often children, I think, will have a meaning of a tier one polysemous word stored in long-term memory. But that's not going to help them in spoken conversation or in reading comprehension if they can't flip through the index and find an alternative meaning for that word.

40:06 - Charlotte (Guest)
I think you've actually reminded me of some reading from Mary Ann Wolfe when she talked about when we read. As we're reading words, we're quickly going in and going which meaning of that word, like if bank was there, but if they haven't got the other meanings, they've only got one meaning for it, which then can lead to that misunderstanding of what they're reading.

40:25 - Pam (Guest)
Absolutely so. It's not that they don't know the word bank, that it's a completely foreign word, but what they've got stored in long-term memory isn't necessarily helping them to get to the meaning. Now a more skilled language user might be able to infer the different meaning from the context. A student with DLD may struggle to draw that inference about

the different meaning because their working memory is being more challenged by just keeping up, let alone doing that extra work.

40:59 - Shaun (Host)
One thing within the curriculum, then I'll put in a shameless plug for a systematic review that I published last year was that, when we actually look at the research, we're not actually researching children's performance across all the different subjects.

41:15
We actually don't know how these children are performing in history, geography, all of these others.

41:21
What we did see, though, was, as you'd expect, reading, writing, spelling, narrative skills or storytelling skills, and university skills were difficult, but what was a really fascinating find for me was I think we often think, with children with DLD, they're going to find everything hard, and actually what we found was it was a very heterogeneous population in that some children with DLD can actually perform in the average range in some curriculum areas, which was a little bit of a surprise for me, particularly when you start to break down things like maths.

41:55
Some children with DLD really love their maths, particularly symbolic maths, where you're doing numbers and additions and subtractions and all those sorts of things, because the language load is lower. The language load is there, but it's still. It's lower and probably more accessible, and science actually was something that children were performing in the average range on in some instances. So it was. You couldn't necessarily say children with DLD will struggle with everything. We still need to be discerning in the way that we, you know, look at their performance within the curriculum and say how much is their language impact in different areas, and I think that was a really helpful finding for me in the work that I'm doing with teachers.

42:35
Now to say may not be all areas but it will likely impact some areas and how do we support them, which brings me to.

42:43 - Charlotte (Guest)
What I found anecdotally is that often students will develop quite good glossaries and I think that part comes from teachers helping them to learn the meanings of words. But when it's about word associations, that's where I think some of the threads in their concept you know, their concept maps of words are quite fragile. So it's about making sure that you know if you've got a student knows what the word dissolve means. Then when they learn the more scientific word of solute, which is the word for something that can dissolve, you make sure that you really strengthen the connections. I see that when I'm doing formal testing, when you're using things like the word classes subtest of the self, but also when I'm actually looking at what students are doing functionally within their classrooms. That is a really big

area that's important for teachers to really focus on. I think that makes a really big difference building those connections between words.

43:43 - Shaun (Host)
Which leads nicely into if we've identified all of these problems, you know what are some of the possible solutions for supporting children in the classroom. You know how can we actually help kids with DLD succeed when they're at school.

43:59 - Pam (Guest)
Oh wow, how long have we got.

44:02 - Shaun (Host)
Well, I mean I, started talking at some of them.

44:04 - Pam (Guest)
Yeah, I think having teachers who are more knowledgeable and comfortable and confident is a good start. Having teachers working where possible shoulder to shoulder with speeches I think there's a lot of mutual benefit that can happen there. You know, having a doing a deeper dive into the language demands that are sitting in the curriculum. Like you were talking about maths a moment ago, sean, and it's interesting when you look at how maths problems are presented, this scenario based, you know, if you look at napple and maths problems, they're not just arithmetic sums. Like you know, when I was at school you were given a page of sums to do.

44:51
Now you know, in many ways that's nice, but does a math problem need to have a plot, a narrative arc and a subplot, a resolution, and you know which is all very verbal? Would it actually be easier for all students that'll understand students with DLD to achieve in maths if they weren't dealing with quite a heavy language load in how maths problems are presented? So there are opportunities, I think, to stand back and interrogate curriculum and pedagogy and we talk a lot about cognitive load. Should we be also be talking about language load in how we're teaching core concepts?

45:37 - Charlotte (Guest)
I'm glad you've mentioned cognitive load and language load, pam, because I jotted that as a note. With that going into the, I'll actually think every teacher should know about cognitive load theory. At the end of last year, at the end of a very long, busy year, on the very last day of having the staff, I actually ran a session with them and and I said you might wonder why, where I've got you here, you're tired, but it means I don't need to simulate you being overloaded and so I'm actually going to give you some different tasks to do so you can understand what it might be like for some of the students in your classroom, and to talk about and think about what are the things that lower that lowers the cognitive load. So I think that's a really useful thing for for teachers to know about. I think very much there's some really nice work coming out of QT. So with Haley tank ready and then you're in the team about, look at the language load in your written tasks, there's some very small things that you can do that make a difference. So just thinking about the white space that you provide and it's like if it is a mass task and there's a graph that you're responding to if the

questions continue over the page, replicates the graph over the page and it's not that. It's put some dot points, maybe some even little checklist, so they can make sure that they've done the different things it's about. So what do you? What are you wanting the students to tell you, and is it necessary for the language to be complex for them to be able to do that? So don't let the language stop them showing you their understanding.

47:17
I think that's that's really important. I think also in terms of the reading comprehension space, we know that in order to comprehend, you actually have to have some knowledge of what it is the you're reading. So I know there's lots of places that are doing some sort of democracy. You know, let's say, in your five you really wanting to explore things to do with democracy, for example. Well, let's make sure that we're actually building in opportunities in the earlier years to read and discuss some of the things that will be looked at in more detail and more depth when they hit your five. So I think that's important because I think sometimes we assess students reading comprehension but it's not really their reading comprehension skills. Were session assessing. It's actually their experiential knowledge.

48:02 - Pam (Guest)
Absolutely, and background knowledge is such a critical component as particularly students move up through the year levels. The three of us could sit and read an article on microbiology, but how much we would actually take away from that is going to depend on our background knowledge, the knowledge that we bring to the text that we're reading out. That determines our ability to form those, you know, those schema that we need to create as we're reading and to monitor our comprehension. This is probably a good time to give a shout out to OCA OCHRE, an Australian platform that's creating really high quality lesson plans and video video teaching segments for teachers to access to assist them to explicitly teach background knowledge on a wide range of topics across the curriculum. So I think a lot of teachers would like to teach more explicitly and would like to like the idea of a knowledge which curriculum, but discovery based learning, child led learning, has been so favoured in initial teacher education that it's quite hard for teachers very often to make that shift to something that feels very foreign explicitly teaching background knowledge.

49:40 - Shaun (Host)
So, having long conversations at the moment about inquiry based and explicit instruction in the DLD space, I think it's a lovely research piece that needs to come out. I feel very strongly that public explicit instruction is better for our kids with DLD, but they're existing in an inquiry based classroom more often than not, so how do you bridge that gap?

50:02 - Charlotte (Guest)
I was going to say with your question, I think with the different answers we're looking, saying there are actually different levels that we need to look at the solution. So there's the individual teachers, in terms of their own personal knowledge and understanding. There's the school based making sure that there's common understandings, common language, and then the systems that we exist in. So we're having to tackle them at different ways. You know, like the initial teacher education for our teachers who are already in in the schools. How do we support them through things like the solar program. So it's, it's quite I'm saying

the obvious. It's really complex. I'm teaching in the class. We want to do things now and sometimes they haven't got time to wait for the systematic things to be put into place.

50:49 - Shaun (Host)
I argue, then, that one of the simplest strategies we can do is make languages tactile invisible as possible.

50:56
I think when I've when I've looked as broadly as possible at strategy levels for what we can do, one of the biggest issues is, as soon as you say something, you use oral language, it disappears.

51:07
You know, you give it a verbal instruction in a classroom and so much of being a teacher in a classroom is providing verbal information is, how can we look at making languages tactile invisible, something you can interact with, something you can see, whether it's picture, a symbol and I'm the world's worst drawer, but that's one of the things that I try and do.

51:26
A lot of what I do is, you know, create some sort of visual representation of what we're doing, something we can map on a board, or something that we can add, to rub out, edit, because it creates something that then there's a reference point for language for you know, creating a daily schedule. You know, these are the things that we're going to do today. We can create flexible thinking by saying, well, this is a change in the timetable, so we're moving assemblies now at 10 not 12, so we're going to move this to, you know, by creating something as simple. As you know, this is a very visible language. You know this drawing or simple writing or whatever it might be, that actually represents it. That's something that I find teachers can very quickly take away while they're still seeking out further information, support as well.

52:14 - Charlotte (Guest)
So a really good resource. Sorry, Pam is using the project zeros thinking routines toolbox. Okay, because by setting up the structures and you're using particular language, it's really a great way to support all of the students in the class to be able to build their thinking skills, build the language that they need to develop those thinking skills as well.

52:39 - Pam (Guest)
That's really what I was going to say, charlotte, that this isn't just about supporting the learning of students with DLD, about supporting the learning of all students.

52:47
The students who are English language learners are going to benefit, for example, but you know, all students, one way or another, will benefit from that augmentation of information.

53:00
We need to be careful and going back to cognitive load theory that we're not making things overly busy for the sake of just adding in lots of extra information. But I think some mastery

of cognitive load theory helps us to work out how and where to put that augmented information in. I just would make a quick comment to, if I can, about explicit teaching versus discovery inquiry based learning. I think we need to be careful not to position those as a dichotomy, as an either or. I would say and I think you both would too that when we're initially teaching new concepts and skills to novices, explicit teaching is going to be the most efficient and the most equitable way to deliver that new content, so we can bring everyone up to some kind of equal footing and then we can use the discovery based, inquiry based learning once we've achieved those foundation concepts. But if we start with discovery, students are starting at very different points. Some will flourish and some will flounder, so it's not either or, but it's a more nuanced discussion about how we use them each to best advantage.

54:24 - Shaun (Host)
For those of you listening, that was Charlotte nine, which you can't see, but we were nodding along because, yes, absolutely, it's thinking about how do we best support and I think you know it's about supporting these strategies were talking about will actually support all this, and so we're not. We're not creating a divide, you know, class, or divide in need or label. It's actually saying that some of these things we're talking about I've run in classrooms alongside teachers and the teachers it is good teaching.

54:58
This is great. This works for everybody, right, you know, and it's just You're right, sean.

55:03 - Charlotte (Guest)
I sometimes get asked to work with. The teacher said like to make an adjustment, for a student is in my class, who's in my class, and that's great and we'll go through what we're doing and what we create. I say, well, let's just give it to everybody. This is actually the types of things we're adjusting will work for everyone, rather than sort of feeling that one student got something a little bit different.

55:22
There are times when you do need to do that for accessibility, but a lot of the time it's actually about thinking about what works best for all.

55:30 - Shaun (Host)
So, as you said, it's not just for a student with DLD when we've touched on this topic next topic already but I'll sort of just see if there's anything you'd like to add. And I've already said once and I'll say it again I really strongly believe education, speech pathologies is beautiful match made in heaven. I think that I love working in schools and I love working with my teacher colleagues. I think they're amazing people to work with. You know what can these two professions be doing to best collaborate? Sports students with DLD and Charlotte. You sort of neatly sit on the. You know the boundary here. I don't want to sort of add anything first before I throw it in.

56:08 - Charlotte (Guest)

I'd just say, ideally, if you can actually be employed, if you're a speech pathologist, if you can be employed by the school and you're part of that school community, it makes those conversations much easier.

56:21
Early in my career, at times where the teachers wouldn't meet with me because they were worried about parent might need to be billed for that time, and so it shifted when I became part of those staff that you also can go into the school, around the school, different classrooms, you can observe a student in different contexts or even go on camp. So you're getting that big picture. It's also an opportunity to understand the specialist skills that a teacher brings, the specialist skills that the speech pathologist brings, and where you meet in the middle, and to see how that really enriches that student learning and I would say it enabled when you work together. If you take a student-centered approach. It's a really lovely way to develop a very respectful relationship. Rather than going in and looking and trying to change a teacher's practice based on what you're seeing the teacher doing, saying let's look at this student, what do we know about this student, what's going to work for them, what are some things that we can do. That's a different way to actually evolve what's happening within classes and schools.

57:30 - Pam (Guest)
My take, I think, endorsing everything that Charlotte said, I'd like to see some upstream big picture changes. Double degrees in speech pathology and education, for example. I work in a university and I know how hard it is to do these things, so I'm not being flippant, but you've got to meet accreditation requirements for both professions and that men's extending students time at university, which means extending Hex, dits and what have you. But I do think there's an opportunity here. We've talked about it on and off at La Trobe. We know there's a large number of dual qualified practitioners out there because we've done research with them. But actually producing a workforce that has that flexibility to deliver tier one as well as being doing more tailored work, I think it's a workforce for the future that we need to be really, really looking at For me.

58:43 - Shaun (Host)
I'm just thinking about the fact that I went and you know I don't have my registration, my teacher registration but to be able to go and do you know, I went to my master's coursework in education simply because it provided me with the same language you know and to be able to come in and have that shared understanding about you know, what on earth do you mean by pedagogical practice? Oh, ok, this is what you mean, gosh, it was a really helpful way for me to get my head around it. I don't think many people know that you can do, you know, master's in education coursework and I just I didn't have the capacity. You know my dream I'd love to be a kindergarten teacher one day. That's sort of like a dream job for me. Charlotte's chuckling here for those of you who can't see, because I just I've been a print teacher once for one year.

59:33 - Charlotte (Guest)
That was enough. Oh, I love the early childhood space.

59:36 - Shaun (Host)

But I think you know there's a certain age and maybe I'm getting a bit too old and tired. But the language issue is an interesting one, isn't it?

59:45 - Pam (Guest)
Because we do speak slightly different languages, and you know it's ironic, we're talking about language today, so we do need to have that meta conversation about the language that different professions use. Ironically, we now have four speech pathologists on the academic staff in the School of Education at the Trope University, so I'm pretty confident that our graduate teachers will be getting a very good grounding in language. But we also need to be looking about what our pre-service speech pathologists are learning about pedagogy and curriculum.

01:00:21 - Charlotte (Guest)
It goes both ways, absolutely yeah, I just make an interesting observation that I don't know if it exists anymore, but I think in the 70s and 80s in New Zealand, if you wanted to train as a speech pathologist, you had to train as a teacher at the same time as well. So the person that I did my work experience was a New Zealander and that's what she had told me. That's how she had come to be in that space Fascinating.

01:00:48 - Shaun (Host)
Well, shifting from then, shifting from the educators and the students and the speech pathologists are thinking about our parents. Often they're faced with the need to constantly advocate for their child. What might they need to know around advocating for their child, working with their teacher, working with their school? And I'll put in an immediate plug we actually do have an advocating for your child at school resource at the DLD project that people can download and use. But I think it's helpful to talk this through Because there's legislative requirements and you know there's funding that's attributed through nationally consistent collection of data, those sorts of things that maybe families aren't aware of because they're a school language and I just appreciate your thoughts on you know how can we support our parents with knowing this information and then working with schools and their children?

01:01:43 - Pam (Guest)
I'll throw to Charlotte first, because she's working in a school.

01:01:46 - Charlotte (Guest)
Thank you, I think it's a two-way thing In terms of parents if they understand about the disability standards in Education Act, which is commonly called the Standards and also your you know Disability Discrimination Act as well, to understand the legal side of things, but there's also that ethical, moral side of advocacy as well.

01:02:07
The key thing, I'd say, though, it's about the relationships that are built with you and your teacher and you in the school. So I've often been someone who's, I guess, helped mediate behind the scenes, where I might have a parent who's sometimes a friend, who's not happy with what's happening at school and trying to help them, to have that conversation, which is going to be really productive. So, rather than to say I'm not happy about this, to say, you

know, in terms of my child, this is what I'm seeing. How can we work together to support them? I know this, I see this at home, but I don't know what happens in the classroom. You're the person in the classroom who knows this, so I think part of it is about the relationship building, and so, then, from that, hopefully, it's about being part of a multidisciplinary team that supports the students, so those individual members of the team can actually bring the expertise so we can build the social capital of the parents in particular.

01:03:09 - Pam (Guest)
Look, I don't have anything to add, I'll just make the comment, I guess, that it's hard enough for parents to advocate in the literacy space, where you know, arguably we know a lot more and there's more sort of albeit lumpy in some spaces knowledge out there in the community about reading difficulties. I think this is a particularly steep hill for parents to be asked to climb.

01:03:36 - Shaun (Host)
And I think the responsibility often falls to them. You know, of course, because they're the parent of the child, but also you have that parental responsibility. There's certainly parental guilt. I've experienced it myself. Any thoughts around what parents could actually be doing, maybe to support learning at home, Any tips or tricks we could be providing?

01:03:58 - Pam (Guest)
I always feel a little bit conflicted on this because there has been a lot of parent blame in the literacy space. So my comments come with that caveat that you know, particularly when it comes to reading, writing and spelling, it's not the job of parents to teach those things, it's the job of schools to teach those things. It's wonderful when parents can support and augment what schools are doing. Not all parents are in a position to do that for a variety of reasons. If parents are in a position to do so, placing a greater premium on talking conversation, not to the point where it feels really contrived and awkward at home, but maybe being a little bit more mindful of putting devices down and having conversation time, family conversation time, I think, especially with young children. Reading elaborate, beautiful books to children to expose them to more elaborate language, more complex vocabulary and sentence structures, to build their background knowledge, it's a nice thing to do.

01:05:19
I don't think, again, you know, if parents are in a position to do so, I don't think we should stop reading to children just because they can now read, because the books that we can read to children involve much more complex language and word structures and I think you know, in busy lives.

01:05:37
Sometimes the bedtime story or reading time might get dropped because kids can read for themselves. Now, some nights kids will want to read for themselves. That's fine, but and you know, talking about words, playing with words, talking about why a joke is funny, we know what a pun is explaining idioms, those sort of things. So making language a bit more elevated in terms of the extent to which it's noticed and talked about ironically at home is good, but we do need to remember that not all parents are in a position to do this work, and

you know there's a kind of a Matthew effect that we talk about in reading, that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, and that probably applies. We know there's a social gradient with respect to language skills as well. So I'm just always mindful that we need to be careful of how much of the heavy lifting we're asking parents to do.

01:06:39 - Charlotte (Guest)
I support everything that you say, pam. You know it's a tricky thing to just be there to say you need to go and do this. Each context is different and we have to come from that positive, that parents want the best for their students. That's the perspective that we're taking. I'd say, if there was something to add, I would say if you can develop some little routines, little routines can make a big difference. Whether it's a little routine for getting ready for school the next day, so it might be. It might even be something visual one, two, three because putting those routines in place builds that sense of confidence and it's one less thing to sort of think about and you have it forming as well. I mean it goes with like the routine that might be around bedtime. The routine always includes some sort of reading. Or in the mornings there might be a little routine.

01:07:29
Well, I actually had an after-school routine with my son where initially he'd come home and complain there would always be something that had gone wrong in the playground or whatever. So I tried to shift his thinking by saying to him what was one interesting thing you did or what did you like most? And I'd say you can tell me you liked your lunch most of all? That's fine. So he learned that that was the type of question I was always going to ask him, which meant that he reframed his language and his thinking. So then he always had something to share, that he was looking for, something that had gone well. It didn't mean that we didn't have conversations about things that didn't, so that was just a nice little routine that even now he's in his 20s, we still have these little conversations, which is really lovely. So, yeah, routines are, I think, vital, both at home and also at school, and they support everybody.

01:08:19 - Shaun (Host)
Yeah, and they help with things like building that resilience, that expectations, those things that you know end of the school day can be really exhausted and all of a sudden, parents, somebody saying to you tell us what you did today. And you're a little person with DLD who couldn't think of anything worse than talking about you know. So actually knowing that that's going to be built in, or a part of it, or you're going to say, well, I tend to feed my children first.

01:08:45
I found that you know food and then conversation has been an important part of our routine, even if it means meeting them at the school gate with a little snack, that glucose level increases and all of a sudden so does the language that sits with it. So you know, I think it's also listening to what you both said. I actually really want parents to take away from this actually removing some of the blame. I feel that parents often are still digesting at many points through their child's journey. Why do I have a child with DLD? Why, what did I do? What have I done wrong? And in fact it's not something that parents have done wrong.

01:09:26
In fact, we've got a lot of evidence to the contrary around the fact that you know this is a neurodevelopmental condition, that it's, as you said at the beginning, pam, languages you know, naturally primed or you know it's something that is acquired.

01:09:38
There's lots we can do, but it's actually not something that blaming ourselves will help with. So you know, to be able to think that you know doing these, you know it might be normal part of our day is actually is really beneficial. And I've given up on homework for my clients. My clients know that I will help them with building some strategies to what they're already doing, if that's what they want to do and if that's where they're at, then we'll work absolutely where they're at as a family. I'm not going to tell them how to parent their child. You know, let's work together to find solutions that work for everybody. So I'm conscious of time and I love our last couple of questions because I'd love to know what you would both hope to see in the future for students with DLD, maybe in Australia or around the world, if it's maybe research or clinical work, or even in service delivery modelling, what are your thoughts for the future?

01:10:33 - Charlotte (Guest)
It would be a very long list, but maybe I'll think of a couple of things, a couple. I work in the primary and secondary space but I'm very mindful of what happens to our students who do stay on for year 11 and 12, and the huge hurdle that we put in place for them if they want to continue on with some more education, because once they get to TAFE or uni there's lots and lots of ways that they're supported, but we don't support them in Victoria. It's BCE. We make it really difficult. So if a student has, say, anxiety, they can access some adjustments for that, so they can have a separate room and extra time. But if you have DLD, there's nothing in place for them and yet it's something that they have always had. So I would say that there needs to be we've tried to advocate for it but there needs to be a better understanding amongst the people who make those decisions about the impact that this has, and we haven't mentioned it here.

01:11:31
I don't think so. Difficulties with language are not linked to cognitive ability and sometimes, the way a student might be talking or writing, a teacher could potentially think they're operating at this level of understanding or skill. But in fact, if we set things up differently, we can actually see what they are thinking and it's the language that trips them up. So I think that there's a key thing in terms of how we assess, how we actually let our students and this is not just for DLD, this is actually for all of our students how do we let our students see the mastery, the growth, the progress in their learning, in whatever they're doing and there's certainly some projects going on to try and to do that. Yeah, probably for me, that's a really important area to be looking into.

01:12:22 - Pam (Guest)
Yes, again, fully agree, Charlotte. I think, going forward, I would want to be in a world where the people who need to know about DLD in particular, know about it Teachers, allied health professionals, health professionals, people in the justice system. We need to get the message out there about what it is and the high prevalence, what its impacts are and what

to do about it, so that we can shift our energies more to efficient identification and embedded supports that are part of business as usual. At the moment, I think a lot of the energies are rightly channeling into advocacy and information and elevating awareness and understanding, but going forward, I'd like to see a shift in where the focus needs to be. That will always be an element of that, but this needs to move into business as usual.

01:13:32 - Shaun (Host)
I think that both of you raised good points and I think that it's something to think about with, I guess, next steps, where are we going with moving from advocacy to action and how do we actually enact this change that we're hoping to see? And I think that part of that will come about through the work that both of you are doing in your school settings and university settings. But I think, hopefully, people listening in will feel like they can actually take some of this information and carry it forward as well, and I hope that that's one of the nice byproducts of having a podcast is you get to have these conversations and extend this discussion even further. So my last question At the DLD project, we focus where we can on self-care. We're having a pretty good start to the year. We've got some good habits in place at the moment and finding time to breathe in our busy days. You're both very busy people yourself. What do you do to look after yourselves, pam? I'll throw to you first, because I think I threw to Charlotte first last time.

01:14:35 - Pam (Guest)
That's a really good question. I don't know that I manage the so-called work-life balance thing as well as I could, but say in saying that I love my work, so it's not like I've got work over here and the rest of my life over here, I have a very big garden.

01:14:58
Well, I live on 2.5 acres. It's not all garden, some of it's moonscape, but I love working my garden. But being probably the thing that gives me the most joy is the time that I get to spend with my family my two adult daughters, who both live in Bendigo, and my 3.5 grandchildren. And I get to have some wonderful language development experiences, like recently when my 6-year-old grandson said to me well, he was 6 and his sister was 3, he said to me Nan, look at this picture I drew. And the 3-year-old in the background didn't even look up and said we don't say I drawed, we say I drew. There is so much in that little interaction for me as a speechy, as a mother, as a grandmother. So time with family, but especially grandchildren, is an absolute delight for me.

01:16:11 - Charlotte (Guest)
I like Pam, I love my work and I say it's a work in progress. To balance the work and the play, I will say I have excellent email protocols that I follow, so I'm doing one thing correctly. So I'm pleased to be myself about that.

01:16:27 - Shaun (Host)
I don't.

01:16:28 - Pam (Guest)
I think it is a tip, if you like.

01:16:30 - Charlotte (Guest)
That's dope. So, yeah, family is really important to me, although I have a scattered family, so it is often sometimes on FaceTime and things like that, but I really like to stay connected with my Far Flung family. I do like to walk my dog, so that's a way of making sure I've gotten out of the inside space, because I do like the outdoors, but I spend far too much of my time indoors and I'm very much a maker, so I've always been a maker. As a child, we had what you would now term as a maker space at home and I had a useful box with stuff that could be recycled, be in there and I'd be making. So my making ranges from baking things to making things, presents and cards for people, but I also dare I admit it here I like to play with Lego, and in fact, I have a colleague at work who we, when we have meetings, we actually build things with Lego while we discuss really important ideas, and it's amazing how creative you can be, charlotte.

01:17:34 - Pam (Guest)
You'd fit in very well in my family.

01:17:39 - Shaun (Host)
Well, thank you so much. I am going to have to wrap up there, because I think we could keep talking all day, but thank you so much for joining me on the Talking DLD podcast. Sure, this will be a very popular episode and it was absolutely jam packed with information, tips, tricks and strategies.

01:17:56 - Pam (Guest)
So thank you so much. Thank you, Shaun, and lovely to chat with you, charlotte.

01:18:01 - Charlotte (Guest)
Thank you to. I wonder, can I be naughty and add one little thing from Elizabeth week, who was one of the authors of the self, where she said students with developmental language disorder on the developmental language disorder train and they will always be on the train, but our job is to support them to move through to the first class carriage so they have a first class ride through life.

01:18:23 - Shaun (Host)
What a great metaphor and a great way to finish. So thank you so much, charlotte. That's amazing, and thank you for joining us today. Thank you, Sean.

01:18:34 - Nat (Host)
Well, I hope you had a pen in hand for that episode. So many juicy bits to remember the good thing it's a podcast. You can replay it if you missed anything. Thanks for joining us on the Talking DLD podcast with Professor Pamela so and Dr Charlotte forward. If you don't know already, the DLD project actually offers a what is language, what is DLD, free on demand workshop with Sean and Dr Charlotte forward. You can get it online right now at our website and we have a new module coming out very soon with Dr Charlotte forward. There were so many amazing resources discussed in this episode. Make sure you check them out at thedldproject.com. Just go to the podcast tab, find this episode, school and DLD and you'll find all the links there. Thanks for joining in.