**PhD position, Australian National University**   
(from Carmel O’Shannessy)

**Seeking a PhD student to work on children’s acquisition of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages**

**Project: Language Contact and Acquisition**

How young children acquire languages is at the core of understandings of human language and cognition, yet relatively little is known about how young children learn Australian languages with their accompanying gesture and sign systems, and the role of young children in language contact and change. The research project ‘Language Contact and Acquisition’ is funded by the Australian National University Futures Scheme. Acquisition studies of traditional Australian languages and newer, contact languages are part of this project.

We are seeking a student to undertake a PhD funded by the project, based at the Australian National University under the primary supervision of Dr. Carmel O’Shannessy.

The student would undertake empirical study on child language acquisition in a chosen context. As part of the PhD dissertation, the student would build an audio and video corpus of child, peer and family interactions and address relevant theoretical questions. The specific topics of the dissertation would be negotiated but would align with one of the themes of the broader project.

The Australian National University offers generous fieldwork support and it is envisaged that the student’s data collection would be funded under the Futures Scheme. The student would be part of the vibrant postgraduate student cohort in Linguistics at the School of Literature, Languages & Linguistics at the Australian National University, and the ARC Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language.

Prospective students should be eligible to apply for a PhD in the Research School of Humanities and the Arts, supervised in the School of Literature, Languages and Linguistics, ANU either as a domestic or an international applicant (for more information see http://www.anu.edu.au/students/scholarships-fees/scholarships/anu-language-acquisition-phd-scholarship). Domestic applicants are asked to apply in the domestic scholarship round at ANU (due: Oct 31, 2019) as well as for this specific scholarship (due Nov 9, 2019).

Demonstration of the potential to work closely in a collaborative and culturally sensitive manner with families in remote **Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander** communities is essential. Students with a background in language acquisition, Australian languages, morphosyntax or gesture and sign would be especially suitable for this position, but anyone with an interest in this PhD is welcome to contact me for more information. Potential applicants are encouraged to contact me to discuss the project before applying.

Contact: Dr Carmel O’Shannessy, carmel.o’shannessy@anu.edu.au, +61 2 6125 4886

<https://www.anu.edu.au/study/scholarships/find-a-scholarship/anu-language-acquisition-phd-scholarship>