Dear school principal or other administrator,

I am a faculty member in the Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders at New York University. I am writing to ask permission for a member of your staff to assist with a research project investigating speech therapy for “r” errors. Many children have difficulty producing the “r” sound, and some are not able to eliminate their errors even after years of speech therapy. We are testing different types of therapy for “r,” including therapy using a newly developed iPad app. We want to find out if our methods can help people make a better “r” sound.

I am inviting school speech-language pathologists to help me test our new app for “r” therapy. The speech-language pathologist will be invited to identify children in the school who might benefit from this therapy. They will then send home informational materials for the children and their families to consider. Interested families can then contact me directly or through the speech-language pathologist.

The cooperating speech-language pathologist will guide participating children through a standard protocol to test and treat the “r” sound. For the duration of the study (a maximum of 15 hours over approximately 11 weeks), this protocol should replace any “r” therapy the child is currently receiving. The study has three phases. In the first phase, the speech pathologist will record participants producing “r” in various contexts without any feedback. In the second phase, participants will receive intervention for the “r” sound. All therapy will be provided on an individual basis by the speech-language pathologist, using our “r” therapy app. In the final phase, participants will again produce “r” in various contexts without feedback. Participants may be asked to come back for one follow-up session one month after treatment. All services will be provided at no cost to participating families. Therapy will take place in the setting where the child typically receives his/her speech therapy services, or another quiet room.

I am looking for children between 7 and 15 years of age who have difficulty producing correct “r” sounds and who have not made progress through regular speech therapy. Participating children must be native speakers of English who do not have problems hearing or understanding language.

There are no known risks associated with participation in this research beyond those of everyday life. Participants’ privacy is very important to us, and information that could be used to identify participating children (such as name or birthdate) will not be disclosed to anyone outside of the study. Audio recordings will be shared only as expressly permitted by the clinician, child, and the child’s family. Participation in this study is completely voluntary, and participating children/families will be free to withdraw at any time.

We hope that both participating children and cooperating speech-language pathologists will benefit directly from the opportunity to try out this new approach to “r” therapy. We also hope that our study will help other people with “r” errors get more effective treatment.

If you agree to permit speech-language pathologists in your school/agency to assist with this study, please sign below. Feel free to contact me at tara.byun@nyu.edu with any questions. Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Tara McAllister Byun, Ph.D., CCC-SLP

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Signature of School Principal

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Signature of School Principal

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