

Cued Speech Association UK Newsletter



Complete spoken language
through vision

Winter 2007
Issue 35

Happy Christmas to all



Literacy, Synthetic Phonics and Cued Speech

Literacy – for hearing children – is very much in the news. Synthetic Phonics, a relatively new technique for teaching, is being used to improve low literacy rates amongst hearing children. Research showing a high level of success for Synthetic Phonics has convinced the government to promote it within schools.

Unlike most deaf children, those brought up with Cued Speech are just as able to benefit from this method as hearing children. But what is synthetic phonics? And how can it be used with deaf children?

Many people are familiar with the old phonetic method used for teaching reading: a child would be taught to associate a letter with a sound ('a is for apple') then look at a word like 'cat' and 'sound it out' c – a – t. This technique worked for regular words (words which sound how they are spelt) but had inherent problems because English is so irregular. A single letter can represent several sounds (e.g. the letter 'c' sounds like 'k' in the word cat but like 's' in the word city) and some sounds have many different ways of been represented (for example /aw/ /ough/ /oor/ /ore/ all can be used for the same sound).

Like the old phonetics system Synthetic Phonics also teaches children to associate sounds with letters or combinations of letters but it approaches the issue from the opposite direction. Synthetic Phonics teaches children to recognise the sounds first and then teaches the many different ways in which these sounds can be spelt. For example the children will be taught that the 'aw' sound can be represented by many different spellings. When taught in this way children who are trying to read a new word will have in their minds a selection of possibilities. The irregularities of English spelling – which damages the confidence of so many – are specifically taught and can thus be mastered.

But how can deaf children be taught to read by identifying the individual sounds within words if they cannot hear those sounds?

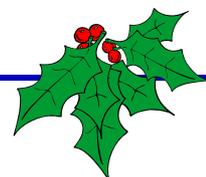
For many deaf children this is unfeasible. However Cued Speech can make this possible for two different groups of deaf children.

1. The first group, who have access to Cued Speech prior to learning to read, are in the most advantageous position. There are a number of pieces of international research and many case studies which show that children who have had early and consistent access to Cued Speech can understand sound-based language. When learning to read they can use exactly the same techniques as hearing children. Cued Speech children are familiar with each of the 44 'sounds' combined into words. Several pieces of research demonstrate that children with access to Cued Speech have reading ages which equal those of their hearing peers. These children are using their previous knowledge of sound-based language (but accessed visually through Cued Speech) to learn to read in the same way as hearing children.

2. The second group of children who can benefit from the combination of synthetic phonics and Cued Speech are those who do not have access to Cued Speech before school. Pioneering work at the Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education has introduced cued English to sign-using secondary-age pupils using adapted Synthetic Phonics materials. The use of Cued Speech simultaneously with Synthetic Phonics is giving pupils a real understanding of how spoken languages work and of the relationship between spoken and written English.

The following story illustrates students' leap in understanding through Cued Speech. Prior to the introduction of Cued Speech last year the group of secondary-age pupils at Exeter were asked how many sounds they thought made up the English language. Astonishingly, estimates varied from one million to several hundreds. When it was explained, using BSL, and then demonstrated through Cued Speech, that there were only 44 sounds pupils expressed great surprise – and said that therefore English was 'do-able'.

The inside pages contain an update on work at the Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education, where Cued Speech is used with the Synthetic Phonics system 'THRASS'.



Cued English at the Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education

Exeter School Up-date

The use of cued English at the newly named Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education continues to grow with innovative work by Cate Calder, the Cued Speech Association's part-time information officer, and Academy staff. Building on the success of an initial pilot study which ran from November 06 to July 07 the use of Cued Speech has now become a more established part of the curriculum and enjoys the privilege of a dedicated classroom!

Cate, pictured below, writes:

'Since the start of this academic year, my work has increased to 4 mornings a week in school and one afternoon dedicated to college age students. The main focus is on a core group of mixed age and ability students who attend a cued English session 3 days a week. All of these students were keen to continue the work after their involvement in the pilot study. The idea of mixing ages in one group was a new one and has proved very successful so far – the older students are excellent at coaching the younger ones and keeping them in line!



Cate Calder

'We are using the THRASS (Teaching Handwriting Reading and Spelling Skills) system to work on literacy levels. Thrass is a synthetic phonics system which gives students a 'map' of the phonemes and their main spelling choices. This will give them a base of 120 key words grouped into Vowel and Consonant maps. Students are learning their way around the map with impressive speed, they are able to sign, cue and cue-read (without lip-patterns!) about 50 of the words so far. They analyse each word and break it down into the consonant and vowel sounds. The concept that each sound has one cue but may have many different spellings has been a revelation.

'Two Teachers at the school and two Speech and Language Therapists are also working with other students to introduce CE and THRASS. And in addition to my core group, a few school students (ranging in age from six to sixteen) receive one-to-one sessions once a week from me.

'In addition a small number of college students receive a weekly session to help with vocabulary, lip-patterns and phonemic awareness. They all enjoy cue-reading and it would be so good to be able to give them more exposure. College staff are very supportive and 14 signed up to learn to cue, but sadly their time-table pressures have prevented this from happening so far.'

Research

'Another exciting development is the assignment of Laura Gratton as a researcher. Laura's assessment of the pilot study formed part of the final year of her degree in Speech and Language Therapy. Her remit is to closely follow the students' progress in four main areas:

1. *Receptive skills - lipreading with and without cues*
2. *Expressive skills - ability to cue words and show lip-patterns*
3. *Relationship to English – confidence and attitude*
4. *Literacy levels – individual phoneme awareness, ability to build up whole words from phonemes and break whole words down into phonemes, make appropriate spelling choices and widen their vocabulary.*

'Six students are involved with this study, four at primary age and two at secondary age. Baseline assessments were carried out in September 07 and the first batch of progress assessments will be done in early December 07. The outcome of this work will inform the decision to continue with cued English at the school in the future and it is expected that an academic paper will be published detailing the results. It has been difficult to find space in the students' already overburdened time-tables for cued English and progress is heartening considering the limited exposure they get.'

Current policy at the Academy is to aim for excellence in both English and British Sign Language. The goal for the students who are part of the cued English programme is for them to have access to unambiguous English through Cued Speech.

What do the students think? Quotes include:

"Why didn't I get this (cued English) when I was little? I used to watch people talking to me all day and it just went over my head. With Cueing I can see that the words are different." Ahmed aged 20.

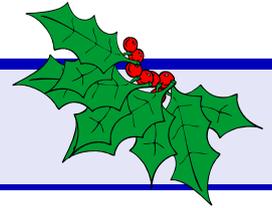
"I am good at this, it is easy!" 9-year old pupil.

Cued Speech

Giving access to spoken language for deaf babies, children and adults



Contact us!



Long-term plans for Cued Speech

Have your say about Cued Speech at an open meeting in London on Saturday 2nd February. As the National Awareness Campaign draws to an end the Association will be looking at plans for the future at a strategic planning meeting. The meeting will be chaired by Professor Harold Silver (our Lottery-funded external assessor) and attended by trustees, advisors and staff. It is also open to all members and former students – indeed anyone with a contribution to make.

The aim of the meeting is to discuss the Association's goals over a period of up to the next ten years and the means of achieving those goals. Topics are expected to include: the provision of information about Cued Speech, how we can best meet the needs of those who need to learn and use Cued Speech (including the role of e-learning), exams, Cued Speech Transliteration and plans for generating income.

Please let us know if you would like to join us on Saturday 2nd February.

Although all are welcome, we need to know in advance if you expect to attend in order to hire an appropriate room and to write to you with details. If you would like to attend please get in touch by 20th December 2007.

Terms explained: Cued Speech or cued English

When Dr R Orin Cornett named the system he devised 'Cued Speech' he accurately conveyed the idea that the speech of hearing people could be made accessible to deaf people by the addition of 'cues'. However it is not necessary to speak in order to use or benefit from Cued Speech, although it is normal to do so – especially with children, so that they can make best use of any residual hearing. The term cued English more accurately describes Cued Speech when it is used to make the English language (with or without actual speech) fully accessible.

Membership

It is subscription time again!

Thanks to all who have supported us through membership over the year. Our members are very important to us and we look forward to receiving your subscription cheques again. Reminder slips are enclosed.

E-newsletters

Save the planet! Tackle global warming! Save Cued Speech Association funds! Choose to have your newsletter delivered by email. Please get in touch and we can send this newsletter to you electronically.

Residential Easter or Summer School in north England

We are aware that our Summer Schools in Exeter are a long way for some people to travel and it has been suggested that residential beginners and improvers courses in north England - possibly Manchester - might be popular. If you are interested in a residential course in north England please get in touch and with sufficient demand we will arrange one.



Do you have any photos of cuers in action for our new website?

Calling present and future Transliterators

Do you use Cued Speech with a child in school? Have you been a Cued Speech Transliterator (CST) in the past?

We are planning to develop nationally recognised qualifications for CSTs and would like to know how many talented cuers there are - even if you do not want to take advantage of further training. Please get in touch if you are acting as a CST or have done so in the past.

Fundraising

An increase in demand for our work and the end of our Big lottery Fund award in March 2008 means that the Association has more requests for training from families but less money to provide it. Professionals pay a fee for training but it has long been the Association's policy to give free training for parents so that no child is denied the opportunity to benefit from Cued Speech. Funds are also needed to provide information for enquirers.

We are short of money for next year. Can you help us by fundraising? There are some ideas on the enclosed flyer.

Cued Speech

Giving access to spoken language for deaf babies, children and adults



Forthcoming courses 2008

Course Dates	Location	Level
<u>2008</u>		
Sat 26 Jan & Sat 16 Feb 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. with distance e-learning between dates	London (Ealing)	<i>Foundation</i>
Tues 25 & Wed 26 March 9.30 a.m. - 4 p.m. with e-learning	Sunderland	<i>Foundation</i>
Mon 7 - Thurs 10 April 9.30 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Exeter	<i>Foundation</i>
Mon 7 & Tues 8 April 9.30 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Exeter	<i>Improvers/Advanced</i>
Mon 4 - Friday 8 August 9.30 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Exeter	<i>Residential Summer School - all levels</i>

Do you want to learn to cue? Non-residential courses are continually being arranged to meet demand, sometimes at short notice. If you are interested, please get in touch.

Current tuition costs are: free to parents of a deaf child and to deaf/deafened people and £80 to others. There is a £5 teaching materials charge that applies to all.

For all course information and bookings please contact Kim, details opposite.

Every effort will be made to run all courses as advertised, but please note that the Association cannot guarantee that no changes will be made.

Presentations given & exhibitions attended included:

- 3 Nov Presentation by Catharine Seddon to 30 Lipspeaking teachers
- 6 Nov UKCoD annual conference and exhibition, Anne Worsfold
- 14/16 Nov Heads of Service conference and exhibition, Anne Worsfold
- 14 Nov Presentation by Catharine Seddon to 25 Speech and Language Therapist Students at Greenwich University.

Forthcoming presentations, exhibitions and conferences:

- 4/5 Feb 3 workshops on early years, primary and secondary, by Anne Worsfold at the SENCO Conference, Sunderland
- 8 March Workshop by Alison Paton and Tina Kirwin at the BAToD Conference, Boston Spa
- 8 March Workshop by Cate Calder at the BAToD Conference, Scotland
- 8 March Workshop by Anne Worsfold at the BAToD Conference, London.

Cued Speech - complete spoken language through vision

Cued Speech is a simple sound-based system comprising eight handshapes, used in four positions near the mouth, in conjunction with the lip patterns of normal speech so as to make all the sounds of spoken language fully comprehensible to deaf and hearing-impaired people.

Cued Speech Association UK

is a charity which was established in 1980 to provide information about and training in Cued Speech.

This is achieved by:

- providing tuition
- creating and making available teaching materials
- maintaining standards by examining
- collecting & disseminating information about international research and good practice
- creating and disseminating information
- working with other organisations and statutory bodies.

Contact details:

9 Jawbone Hill Dartmouth
Devon TQ6 9RW
Voice & textphone: 01803 832 784
Fax: 01803 835 311
E-mail: info@cuedspeech.co.uk
Web: www.cuedspeech.co.uk

Executive Director: Anne Worsfold
email: anne@cuedspeech.co.uk
Course Co-ordinator: Kim Fricker
email: kim@cuedspeech.co.uk
Project Secretary: Sue Tweed
email: sue@cuedspeech.co.uk
Information officers: Steve Culverhouse and Cate Calder
emails: steve@cuedspeech.co.uk and cate@cuedspeech.co.uk
Administrator: Marion China
email: marion@cuedspeech.co.uk
Accountant: Peter Allen

Charity No 279523 Company No 1477997

This Newsletter is produced quarterly. We welcome comments, articles and news of your events. Please send copy for the next edition by 20th Feb 2008.

Cued Speech was devised by the late Professor R Orin Cornett in 1966 and has been adapted into over 65 different languages and dialects.

