

Cued Speech Association UK Newsletter



Complete spoken language
through vision

Summer 2009
Issue 40

Retirement of June Dixon-Millar and Chris Millar

June Dixon-Millar founded the Cued Speech Association in 1975. Both she and her husband Chris Millar continued to play an active part in the charity as members of the management committee. June continued to teach and to adapt Cued Speech into different languages and dialects. Together Chris and June created teaching materials and support materials for teaching children.

Both resigned from the management committee recently. June wrote: 'After 40 years of working with Cued Speech I now feel that I would like more time to relax with my family and pursue my other interests.'

The next edition of the newsletter will be a special addition to recognise June and Chris's work and to look back over the history of Cued Speech in this country; meanwhile we wish them all the best for a well-earned retirement.



June (right) visits the USA to receive National Cued Speech Association [USA] Pioneer Award from Association president Sarina Roffe.

Exchange visits with French cuers

The French Cued Speech Association (ALPC) are looking for cueing families with deaf children who would like to have a French penfriend - a friendship which, hopefully, could lead to exchange visits. Please contact Marie-Gabrielle Lassus at exchangelpc@alpc.asso.fr

Summer School

There are still a few places at our Exeter Summer School on 3rd - 7th August. Join us for top quality tuition, a wonderful crèche (with staff who use Cued Speech and BSL), an inspiring children's course and fun evening activities.

New information and resources

New web section - 'How to use Cued Speech'. Cued Speech users have told us that they would appreciate additional information about different ways in which Cued Speech can be used. We now have new information on our website about how to use Cued Speech in the home, in the classroom and in Speech and Language Therapy sessions.

Cued Speech Transliterator Tom Shull started work on the new resources during a period working in the Cued Speech office last summer. On his return to the USA to study Speech and Language Therapy he inspired other students to develop the resources as part of a project for the Language Disorders class at the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions.

The new resources - at www.cuedspeech.co.uk - will be invaluable to parents, teachers and Speech and Language Therapists and we are enormously grateful to the team: Janine Pedro (Team Leader), Caroline Shannon, Ashley Schuler, Ramya Shyam, Caitlin Schlauch, and of course Tom Shull, for their time and expertise. Thank you to them all.

Cued Speech in a South African Primary School. A video of the outstanding work of teacher Lynette Diederichs' (who is herself deaf) work with primary school children at Kwa Thintwa School for the Deaf in South Africa can be seen at the THRASS website: www.thrass.co.uk/newsboardindex.htm

Cued Speech for literacy. See an inspiring short video of young Alfie with cueing classroom assistant Wendy on our website: www.cuedspeech.co.uk.

Improve phonological awareness by over six years with only 114 hours of Cued Speech input

How can it be done? A full report of the work at Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education (ERADE) is now available on our website: www.cuedspeech.co.uk. Please contact the office if you would like a paper copy.

Inside pages - Read about Z. - under four years old with a reading age of seven and a half!

Cued Speech Association UK (CSAUK)
Making available information about and training in Cued Speech



A parent's story

Cued Speech, cochlear implants and astonishing literacy levels. A parent's story of a profoundly deaf three year old

'Z. at three years seven months has just had a reading test with an Educational Psychologist and has come out with a reading age of seven and a half!' If I hadn't witnessed it myself I'm not sure if I'd actually believe it possible. Undoubtedly Zed has a love of and talent for the written word, but I know this talent would not have been realised if he hadn't had access to Cued Speech.'

My little boy Z. was diagnosed as profoundly deaf at just eight days old. I have to admit that at the time I was absolutely devastated and overwhelmed. I had no experience of deafness and felt stripped of my ability to communicate with my darling baby. I never thought then, that I would be in the situation I am in now; marvelling at my little boy's progress and being able to communicate with him as easily and naturally as I can with my other two hearing children.

Before my son was born I had completed a level 1 BSL course and started to use as much as I could straight away with him. I was immediately aware however of the affect my limited knowledge was having on the quality of my communication and enrolled for a level 2 course as soon as one became available. I am now studying level 3 BSL and still I know I am far from fluent and this inevitably impacts on my ability to give my son a complete language. BSL is a beautiful language that I would love to become fully proficient in, but like any language it takes time and exposure to it to become fluent. With my little baby changing in front of my eyes daily I realised that if I hoped to give him a full language, time was not on my hands and I desperately searched the internet for additional ideas.

It wasn't long before I chanced upon Cued Speech. It seemed to be offering me everything I wanted for my son, my family and myself. It seemed almost too good to be true. So taking a leap of faith and holding on to 'nothing ventured, nothing gained' I gathered together

enough people for a level 1 course to be held in our home town. My little boy was just 3 months old and as I was breast feeding he came on the course too. I remember finding it quite emotional, for as the course went on I began to realise that Cued Speech really did have the potential to give me everything I had been looking for. I was actually going to be able to speak to him using my native language as easily as I could my other two children, albeit with a bit of practice to build up speed and fluency. I shed a few tears on that first course, the sense of relief and re-empowerment was quite immense.

To cut a long story short I went on to do an improvers and advanced course and from the time of my son being three months old I used Cued Speech as much as my ability allowed at that time. I also

continued to use as much BSL as my abilities allowed because I felt that it was an easier expressive language for very young children. Generally I would cue to him and he would sign back. The combination worked really well. It also meant that his brother just two and a half at the time could communicate with him with sign, whereas his older sister 13, learnt to cue.

Just after my son's second birthday he received a cochlear implant. I think this was when I really began to

marvel at what Cued Speech had given him. Just 5 days after 'switch on' he began to respond to sound that had simply not been accessible to him before. Within a couple of months he had literally mapped the new sound onto the Cued Speech that he was used to seeing. I found that day by day I was able to cue less and less. He was already completely familiar with seeing English through Cued Speech and quickly became used to hearing it. He didn't have to learn English from scratch. He had already internalised it. It was literally just a few weeks before he started talking and at just one year post implant had caught up the language gap and had age appropriate expressive and receptive language. I don't doubt that without Cued Speech he would not have been in that situation.



Z. with his brother



His mother writes: 'Z. visits the zoo and insists on reading every sign and fire extinguisher along the way...far more interesting than the animals!'

Cued Speech

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



A parent's story

A parent's story (continued)

At two and a half he started to notice letters and words around him and his big brother's 'Jolly Phonics' homework and school reading books. I put each written sound his older brother was learning on the kitchen wall and then added a cued graphic to each one too. By three years old Z. knew all his letter sounds and names; again he seemed to simply map the visual representation of a sound he had through Cued Speech onto a new visual representation of the written letter. By three years old he had started sounding out consonant-vowel-consonant words for himself and was able to read them. I remember being amazed at the time by what he was able to do; and again by what Cued Speech had given him easy access to. My amazement just continued to grow however as he quickly started reading more complicated words and over a period of six months zoomed through the 'Jolly Phonics' using Cued Speech. He has now become an amazing little reader far exceeding everything my two hearing children were able to do at that age.



When Z. was first diagnosed as deaf, one of my greatest fears was about whether he would be able to learn to read. Stories and books are such an important part of day to day life in my family; I feared that he would find them really difficult to access fully. As it turned out I really had nothing to worry about. Z. at three years seven months has just had a reading test with an Educational Psychologist and has come out with a reading age of seven and a half! If I hadn't witnessed it myself I'm not sure if I'd actually believe it possible. Undoubtedly Z. has a love of and talent for the written word, but I know this talent would not have been realised if he hadn't had access to Cued Speech.

Funnily enough I rarely use Cued Speech with Z. now as he really doesn't need it anymore; his implant is giving him a level of hearing I never thought possible and he had already learnt to understand and think in English long before he got his implant. The transition from a visual language to a spoken language was an easy and quick one for him to make. I guess the fact that I don't need it anymore is a testament as to how well it has worked for Z. Names available on request.

Literacy - What 'A parent's story' (above) tells us

By Anne Worsfold

In the 'Parents Story' above Z. learnt to read by tying in the phonemes (sound-based units) of language that he could see through Cued Speech, and later hear through his implant, with the letters of written English. He learnt to read using phonics. Because he also understood full sound-based language, first through Cued Speech and later his implant, he could **understand** the words and sentences he was able to 'de-code' with phonics.

Hearing children throughout the UK learn to read in the same way; by linking phonics with the language they know. These two main aspects of literacy, language comprehension and word recognition, were identified by a government report (the Rose Report) into literacy. In other words, children need both to understand the English language and to have the skill to associate the sounds of spoken English with the letters of written English.

No wonder deaf children who do not have Cued Speech have literacy problems! Their deafness cuts

them off from spoken language in its entirety and the phonemes which are the component parts of spoken language and so necessary for literacy.

On the other hand research shows that deaf children brought up with Cued Speech have reading levels which equal that of hearing children.

Looking again at the Rose Report it is easy to see why: Cued Speech gives access to complete, whole English language as it is spoken by clarifying the ambiguous or invisible lip-patterns of speech. Because it gives access to spoken language sound-by-sound it also gives access to phonics. It can be used on a whole language level and on a phonetic level. Deaf children brought up with Cued Speech entirely fit the Rose Report criteria of skills needed to be good readers.

Literacy levels years in advance of chronological age are common amongst children brought up with Cued Speech. Research shows that Cued Speech use will give full literacy; the puzzle is, why don't teachers offer it to all deaf children?

Cued Speech

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Courses and thanks to our funders

Course Dates	Location	Level
3-7 August	Exeter Summer School (residential with day-time crèche)	Foundation, Improvers, Advanced, English for French speakers and Children's Course
10 & 17 August	Manchester	Foundation
15 & 22 August	Central London	Foundation
21 & 28 August	Central London	Improvers
10 & 17 October	Lincoln	Foundation
The following are currently being arranged - please get in touch if interested.		
Autumn/Winter	Glasgow, Scotland	Foundation
Autumn/Winter	Exeter, Devon	Foundation & Improvers
Autumn/Winter	Manchester	Improvers
Winter	London	Foundation & Improvers

Learn to cue Some of our courses are designed to incorporate home study using our e-learning website: www.learntocue.co.uk. Others are stand alone courses requiring no additional work from home. The website can also be used independently but some face-to-face tuition is strongly recommended. If you do use the website please keep in touch with the office so that we can continue to help you. There is an accompanying e-learning booklet available to order free from our office. Contact Kim to book or for information about all courses at: kim@cuedspeech.co.uk.

Current course costs are: 2 day course: £100, 3 day course: £115, 4 day course: £130, 5 day course: £145. A discount, or occasionally free tuition, may be available for those with financial constraints. Non-residential courses are continually being arranged to meet demand, including bespoke courses for individual groups, sometimes at short notice. *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.*

Free or reduced price tuition may be available for those in the **Aylesbury** or **Northumberland/Tyneside** areas thanks to the generosity of the Aylesbury Rotary Club and The W A Handley Charity Trust.

Thanks to our funders

We are very grateful to a number of charitable trusts and companies which have helped us this year with funding to carry out our vital work. Special thanks go to:

- The Freemasons' Grand Charity, The Leathersellers' Company Charitable Fund and Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales for part funding our project to provide information about Cued Speech to all who need it.
- BBC Children in Need and The Foyle Foundation for part funding our training programme and to HSBC Global Education Trust for helping to fund our Children's Course at the Summer School for 3 years.
- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for their grant to carry out strategic development so that we can better meet the needs of our beneficiaries.

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 to as to make all the sounds of spoken language fully comprehensible to deaf and hearing-impaired people.

Cued Speech Association UK (CSAUK)

is a charity which was established in 1975 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.

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This Newsletter is produced quarterly. We welcome comments, articles and news of your events. Please send copy for the next edition by 1st September 2009.

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



