

Cued Speech Association UK Newsletter



Complete spoken language
through vision

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French/English Project

In France where Cued Speech (under the name LPC) is very widely used, a government grant has been used to work on various projects which harness technology to deliver services to LPC users.

The organisation responsible is DATHA and one of their early successes is the development of a popular and widely used teaching CD-Rom. French LPC-users had been asking for something similar in English and at the end of July visiting American tutor Tom Shull, web designer Andy Houghton, and Cued Speech Association UK Executive Director Anne Worsfold travelled to Paris at the invitation of DATHA president Anne Le Bigot, to look at various options.

Because Cued Speech is sound-based there are slight differences in different languages.

The idea initially under consideration was teaching English, and the English Cued Speech system, to French people who already knew LPC using an adaptation of the DATHA's original teaching CD-Rom. The team, which also included parent and DATHA activist Maryvonne Zimmerman, web designer Sylvain Beaujouan, and language teacher and parent Michel Francois, looked at various options and needs. It is expected that work on the new CD-Rom will take place over the winter.

However, a slightly different and very exciting idea also came out of the meeting – not to teach the system of Cued Speech - but to create a web-based resource with the aim of teaching the language of English through Cued Speech to deaf people world-wide.

This innovative project could not only be enormously valuable for deaf people in English-speaking countries but for deaf people who would like to learn English as a second language.

Personal Stories: Why I cue

Parent Catharine Seddon writes:

'I firmly believe that, without his early access to spoken language through Cued Speech, Theo's grasp of grammar and vocabulary and - against tall odds - his passionate desire to communicate, would not be nearly so impressive.'

'I want to tell you why I personally believe that CS ought to be available to all deaf children – as an addition, not an alternative, to British Sign Language (BSL)- because it offers something quite radically different to BSL. What CS offers deaf children is COMPLETE AND CLEAR ACCESS TO THE SPOKEN AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE OF THE HEARING WORLD.'

Just about 7 years ago, I gave birth to a profoundly deaf child. Like many hearing parents of deaf kids, I spent quite a while grieving and feeling lost. I kept thinking things like "isn't it tragic that he's never going to hear music or the sound of waves or his brother's funny voice?". It took me a while – perhaps a month or so – to pull myself together and think more positively: I asked myself what does this child need and how can I go about getting it for him? As soon as I was in that frame of mind, I enrolled for a fast-track BSL course and started signing with him as soon as I could because I knew that he needed communication in order to develop. I'd done languages at school and I picked up basic BSL quite quickly. For a while, I thought just continuing with BSL courses was going to be enough – for him and me both. But the more I thought and the more I looked into possibilities, the more I became worried for three very specific reasons:

First, I knew that I wasn't communicating naturally with my child – I mean not naturally for me as a hearing,

Continued overleaf

AGM

At the Management Committee Meeting prior to the Annual General Meeting committee members took a second look at the Annual Report and concluded that some very small changes to the text would improve the clarity of the document. The report which was approved at the AGM included these slight changes, none of which changed the meaning of the report. For details of the amendments please get in touch with the office.

Cued Speech Association UK
Making available information about and training in Cued Speech

Personal Story - why I cue - continued

speaking adult. What I could express in sign was really pretty basic for quite a while, and I realised that it would be years before I would be fully fluent. All the things I really wanted to do and had done with my first son – from baby nonsense talk through to funny rhymes and animal noises, through to stream of consciousness stuff as I was planning the week – I just couldn't DO in BSL. And I stress, this is no reflection on BSL which is a wonderful, rich and complex language. Rather, it was a reflection on the fact that BSL is not, cannot be and doesn't try to be a form of ENGLISH. It's a completely different language, just like French or Russian or Arabic.

Second – and I expect this is true of a lot of deaf children – the rest of my son's extended family weren't learning BSL. So I was fast becoming his sole channel of communication – translating what others wanted to say to him. Inevitably, this slowed the development of his relationships with people who should have been very important in his life.

The third thing that pulled me up short was what I found when I looked at possible schools for my son. I looked at mainstream and special; oral, BSL or fully integrated bilingual. Even in the best examples of each I found that most deaf children achieve nothing like the same qualifications as their hearing peers, despite being clearly as bright and as capable. And that's backed up by a lot of research: profoundly deaf children acquire spoken vocabulary more slowly; they don't achieve age-appropriate reading levels and they often struggle with the grammar of the English language. The more I thought about it, the more I realised the only reason that would be the case was because they weren't being given COMPLETE AND CLEAR ACCESS to the language of educational qualifications: written and spoken English.

It was then that a wonderful teacher for the deaf handed me a little advert in the back of one of the journals. It said something like "Want your deaf child to learn to read and write in English at normal rates? - then learn Cued Speech." She said "I don't know what

it is and I can't vouch for it, but why don't you look into it?". So I did. CS is not a language which you learn from scratch. Instead, it's a simple sound-based system in which eight hand shapes in four different positions close to the mouth, when used in conjunction with the lip patterns of normal speech make uniquely clear every single sound of the English language. So deaf kids brought up with CS pick up English language at the same rate as hearing kids but they do it visually rather than auditorily.



Catharine Seddon, pictured at our recent Summer School where she was tutor to the French group

It took me 20 hours start to finish to be able to cue any word in the English language, including all those daft things that I wanted to do with my son like "BAA BAA BAA; GOO GOO GOO; and funny rhymes and proper names of Disney characters, you name it – so within a week, I felt that, for the first time, I was able to communicate naturally with my deaf child. I didn't stop signing of course, but I just gave him both: the signs I knew (and continued to learn) but ALSO my normal manner of speech and jokes and songs and stories in the language that he would HAVE to acquire growing up in a predominantly hearing world.

In addition to his hearing problems, Theo also has cerebral palsy - a condition which, in many children, affects their ability to produce intelligible speech.

For 4 years, Theo's expressive language was, by and large, sign. But in the last 2.5 years, he has made huge strides towards becoming fully vocal. Although some people still find it difficult to understand him, the complexity and accuracy of his sentence structure never ceases to amaze and delight me. When I came home after the Cued Speech residential summer school this year, Theo's first utterance was "How was your course, Mummy? Did you have good students?" I firmly believe that, without his early access to spoken language through Cued Speech, Theo's grasp of grammar and vocabulary and - against tall odds - his passionate desire to communicate, would not be nearly so impressive. Of all the many therapies I have tried and systems I have learnt in order to help him, Cued Speech has undoubtedly been the most beneficial.'

Cued Speech

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



Summer School

Our 7th Summer School at The Royal West of England School for the Deaf in Exeter from 23rd - 27th July was well attended with 45 students and 12 crèche aged children and staff/helpers numbering 20. We had several students joining us from overseas, including the French class of 10 who were warmly welcomed.

The social programme began with a 'Bring Your Own Food/Drink to Share' style buffet on the Sunday arrival night for those staying on-site and on Monday evening table tennis replaced rounders owing to poor weather.

The sun came out for our yearly evening Boat Trip on the Tuesday which was a gentle amble along the canal through lock gates to a pub for refreshments. The



large play area is always a hit for the young children and the setting, right on the river front, is idyllic.

This year for the first time there was a successful 'Mix and Match' style to teaching the Improvers and Advanced classes with lessons taught by Cate Calder, Tom Shull and Anne Worsfold which enabled all students to choose various workshops and to join together for some subjects.



For our Administrator Marion (pictured left) this was her first Summer School, and she says: "I loved helping in the Children's Class, and joining in all the social events. The atmosphere was very friendly

and everyone seemed to have a good time. Now I can't wait for next year!"



The Children's Course artwork (pictured above).



The Cued Speech Cabaret at Buckerell Lodge on Thursday night was a highlight for many. Each class had the opportunity to perform a song or a sketch, and everyone took part with gusto showing their very impressive newly learnt cueing skills! Also taking to the stage and stealing the show was little Rhianne, a delight in pink, who was amazed to find her

Daddy, tutor Paul-Michael Coldham, also dressed in a pink frock and wearing pigtails in true Pantomime Dame fashion! (see photo above).

Several students took exams at the end of the week including parent Emma Smith who managed to pass both the Level 1 and Level 2 exams, having now attended several courses. Very well done Emma!

The 10 children who attended the Children's Course had a fun packed time apple bobbing (shown opposite), icing and decorating biscuits, making paper plate faces and Mr Potato heads -



many of these activities involved cueing skills. They also made a collage backdrop for their Cabaret piece on Thursday night of London Bridge to accompany their song which was much enjoyed by everyone.

Next year's Summer School at Exeter will take place between 4 - 8 August.

Early booking is advisable as on-site accommodation will be limited.

It is a great opportunity to meet up with other cuers, including parents and professionals. Many new friendships are made each year.

Join us if you can!

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Forthcoming courses 2007/08

Course Dates	Location	Level
Fridays, 2 November for 5 weeks 1.30 - 3.30 p.m.	Exeter	<i>Foundation</i>
3 & 4 November 2007 2 days, 9.30 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Glasgow	<i>Improvers</i>
10 & 11 and 17 & 18 November 4 days, 9.30 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Glasgow	<i>Foundation</i>
Commencing 24 November Weekly classes	Widcombe School	<i>Foundation</i>
Mon 26 - Thurs 29 November 4 days, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.	London	<i>Foundation</i>
Fri 30 Nov & Saturday 1 Dec 2 days, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.	London	<i>Improvers</i>
<u>2008</u>		
Sat 26 Jan & Sat 16 Feb 2008 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. with distance e-learning between dates	London	<i>Foundation - 2 days with additional distance e- learning</i>
Mon 7 - Thurs 10 April 4 days, 9.30 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Exeter	<i>Foundation</i>
Mon 7 & Tues 8 April 2 days, 9.30 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Exeter	<i>Improvers</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. To book a place 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 in the last quarter included:

9/10	July	Mary Hare Conference, Newbury
10	July	Sight and Sound, Torquay
12	July	Great Ormond Street CI team
3	Sept	NDCS, Cardiff
5	Sept	NDCS, London
11	Sept	NDCS, Birmingham
19	Sept	Deaf Direct, Evesham
26	Sept	NDCS, Belfast
27	Sept	NDCS, Glasgow

Forthcoming presentations, Exhibitions and conferences:

14/16	Nov	Heads of Service
6	Nov	UKCoD Annual conference

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 1st December 2007.

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

