

25 January 2013

Research Project: Reading and Dyslexia in Deaf Children

We have now completed the Reading and Dyslexia in Deaf Children study and we thought you might like to hear about some of our findings.

Our Research Assistant saw oral deaf children and hearing children with dyslexia around the UK. We visited deaf children in mainstream schools, resource bases and schools for the deaf. Some of the deaf children had a cochlear implant, others had digital hearing aids. All the deaf children were aged from 10 to 12 and were in their final year of primary school. The split between male and female participants was almost 50 / 50. The children were seen for 2 or 3 sessions and given a number of different tasks and activities. Our Research Assistant enjoyed meeting all the children in all the different locations around the UK.

Each child who participated in the study has helped us find out much more about the literacy and reading-related skills of oral children with a hearing impairment in their final year of primary school. We found that the tasks were successful with almost all the children we tested and, in addition, that the children enjoyed taking part. Please see the website for a comprehensive list of tests used. Moreover, when analysing the results, we did not find any significant differences between the literacy abilities of children with cochlear implants and those with digital aids. For this reason, we will be analyzing the data for the group as a whole, rather than for two separate groups. We will produce a range of scores based on the performance of the oral deaf children on these tasks so that we know what is good, average and poor performance for an oral deaf child aged 10-12. The range of scores in our sample is wide enough for us to be able to identify where poor performance on certain tasks might be associated with poor reading performance.

We have also been able to compare the deaf participants' results with those of a group of hearing dyslexic children to see whether a profile of strengths and weaknesses is comparable. These findings and the average scores we are producing for the oral deaf children will hopefully play a part in the recognition of those oral deaf children who find literacy more challenging than their deaf peers and help ensure that these children receive the most appropriate kind of support.

We are in the process of developing our range of oral deaf scores. Once these are complete, we plan to display the scores on the website: www.city.ac.uk/readinganddyslexia. Please keep checking the website for more details. If you would like information about your child's individual test scores, we should be able to provide you with this so please do get in touch with us. We will be presenting the project outcomes at an event for professionals involved in the project at The Nuffield Foundation in February 2013 and at the BATOD Conference in March 2013.



Following on from the success of this project, we are now starting a second phase of research focusing on the reading skills of deaf children who communicate using British Sign Language (BSL). There is no written form of BSL and so deaf signers face completely different challenges when learning to read English.

More information about the new project can be found on the website www.city.ac.uk/readinganddyslexia

For information about the upcoming events, please contact:

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