

English as a foreign language for deaf and hard of hearing learners



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Knowing English is so natural for modern people that we cannot imagine we don't speak it. From an early age we sing English songs and rhymes, as children we watch movies whose characters speak English, we follow news on the Internet and new events in the lives of our foreign friends on social networking sites. We shop online, travel economy class and look for last minute deals. We use Teams and Zoom.

But not all of us hear our mother tongue and other languages around us almost constantly from early childhood. Have you ever wondered how people who are deaf or hard of hearing learn English?

Until recently, people with hearing difficulties did not learn foreign languages at all, but now almost everyone wants to and can learn foreign languages - from kindergarten through primary and secondary school to university.

Language teachers in Poland and other countries are constantly looking for new strategies and teaching methods to help deaf and hard of hearing students learn to read, write and sometimes listen and speak in a foreign language in the most effective way. This is being addressed by a new branch of knowledge - **SURDOGLOTTODIDACTICS**.

If you want to find out more:

English as a foreign language for the deaf
and hard of hearing persons in Europe
<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12153/1630>

Multilingual. Deaf and hard of hearing students i
n the process of language learning and teaching
<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12153/257>

Surdoglottodidactics. Language lessons
and activities for deaf and hard of hearing students
<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12153/492>

In this article you will find answers to the most important questions related to language learning for deaf and hard of hearing people.

Can deaf and hard of hearing people speak a foreign language?

People with hearing difficulties usually are able not only to read and write - but also to hear a foreign language to some extent - and speak it. This depends mainly on whether they speak their primary, national language. Anyone who speaks one language - can also learn to speak another. Both the results of scientific research and the personal experiences of our students confirm this.

You can read about them:

Strategies of oral communication of deaf and hard-of-hearing (D/HH) non-native English users

DOI: [10.1080/08856257.2019.1581399](https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2019.1581399)

Can deaf and hard of hearing people have a talent for language learning?

Hearing impairment hinders language learning (both native and foreign languages) but does not prevent people from achieving language proficiency. Some deaf and hard of hearing people - like their hearing peers - have great difficulty mastering grammar rules or vocabulary. Others are fascinated with language learning, enjoy learning languages and are very successful at it. They simply have a talent for learning a foreign language.

We encourage you to read Paulina's story:

Talent for foreign languages and hearing loss?

<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12153/464>

Are there special courses to prepare teachers to teach foreign languages to deaf and hard of hearing students?

A teacher working with deaf or hard of hearing students should complete a teacher training course to prepare for this specific job. You can read more about learning strategies in surdologottodidactics here:

English as a foreign language for deaf and hard of hearing learners: Teaching strategies and interventions

DOI: 10.4324/9781003162179

If you want to meet such passionate teachers from different countries, have a look at the IRG EFL DHH website

https://www.kul.pl/files/229/efl_dhh_people_2021.pdf

How can Cued Speech be used in English language learning?

The concept of *Cued Speech* can be compared to an application that helps you read visual segments of a speech stream from lip movements. The Cued Speech system consists of so-called locations, i.e. points near the mouth which are used to show vowels, and handshapes which accompany the pronunciation of consonants. Both the original – English - and later adaptations of the Cued Speech method perfectly reproduce the phonological subsystems of individual languages and enable deaf and hard of hearing people to recognize and differentiate between the vowels occurring in a given language.

The creator of the *Cued Speech* system is Dr. Richard Orin Cornett – an American physicist, professor at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC. Since the development of this unique method of assisting deaf people to communicate with hearing people and deaf people to communicate with each other in 1966, it has been adapted to over sixty languages and dialects, including Polish. The Polish adaptation, known as fonogesty, was developed in 1984 by Prof. Kazimiera Krakowiak.

You can read more about the Cued Speech method on the websites of organizations promoting this method in various countries and various language versions:

Cued Speech - American version
<https://cuedspeech.org/>

Cued Speech - British version
<https://www.cuedspeech.co.uk/>

Langue française Parlée Complétée (LPC) - French version
<http://www.lpcbelgique.be/>

Polish Cued Speech Method - Polish version
<https://www.facebook.com/Polskie-Stowarzyszenie-Metody-Fonogest%C3%B3w-574280275966624>

The Cued Speech method gives deaf and hard of hearing people the opportunity to learn an auditory language in a similar way to how hearing people learn their mother tongue and foreign languages. It allows visual immersion into the stream of speech. The combination of information from the movements of the hand with information from the articulatory movements of the mouth enables precise identification of sounds and provides clues about accent, pauses, intonation and other elements of language prosody.

You can read about this in the following texts:

Bemet L., & Quenin C. (1998). Cued Speech as a Practical Approach to Teaching Spanish to Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Foreign Language Students. Cued Speech Journal, 6, pp. 40-56.

Clark C., & Sacken J. P. (1998). French Cued Speech: Teaching French in a Mainstream College Classroom. Cued Speech Journal, 6, pp. 57-70.

Domagała-Zysk E. (ed.) (2006). Metoda fonogestów w Stanach Zjednoczonych i w Polsce. Wspomaganie rozwoju językowego dzieci i młodzieży z uszkodzonym słuchem. Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL

<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12153/493>

Podlewska, A. (2016). The Use of Cued Speech to Support the Development of Verbal Language Skills in English Language Instruction for Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Students. In: E. Domagała-Zyśk, E. H. Kontra (eds.) English as a Foreign Language for Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Persons Challenges and Strategies. (pp. 23-40) Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Watch the recordings and see how you can speak and sing effectively in English using Cued Speech!

Cued speech 'Spread the Word'
<https://youtu.be/YNVKgjiLEul>

Hansel and Gretel in Cued English
<https://youtu.be/V3VuXrQUqUA>

How Cued Speech works"
<https://youtu.be/jn4e9V3oigs>

Cueing Past Tenses
<https://youtu.be/obeBxe1NY3k>

The Phoneme Dance' with Cued Speech
<https://youtu.be/84ws7VUbwsA>

Cued Speech - 'Silent Night'
<https://youtu.be/PFus9jJ26mA>

Rabbit's Nap World Book Day
https://youtu.be/cT3mZtC_J7s

We invite you to follow the development of surdoglottodidactics projects:

https://www.kul.pl/english-for-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing,art_74431.html

<https://www.researchgate.net/project/Teaching-English-as-a-foreign-language-to-the-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing-students>

For more on the use of Cued Speech - also for learning foreign languages
- visit the Cued Speech Europe project website:

<https://cuedspeech.eu/pl/>



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