



NEWSLETTER

Issue 5– Summer 2021

Grant success !

BSLTRU is funded entirely through research grants. This funding enables us to carry out research which informs our work as speech and language therapists and contributes to the lives of those with communication or swallowing impairments and those who care for them.

Recent successes include funding from **Bristol Health Research Charity** to explore the impact of Covid-19 on surgery and speech and language therapy for children born with cleft palate and funding from **The Underwood Trust** to investigate the impact of wearing masks and using virtual meeting platforms for people who stammer. We are also celebrating the award of funding from **HEE East of England** to Lucy Southby to develop plans for an advanced fellowship application to the NIHR ICA scheme.



*Welcome to our
Summer Newsletter
for 2021*

Yvonne

Follow us on Twitter and Facebook to hear more about our work and opportunities as they become available. (see end of newsletter)

Meet our new members of staff



Lucy Southby from the Cambridge Cleft team at Addenbrookes Hospital joined us in November 2020 as a Senior Research Associate, focussing on supporting and undertaking work with The Cleft Collective cohort studies including the Speech and Language cohort.



Dr Jen Chesters from the University of Oxford who joined us in November 2020 as a Senior Research Associate is working on the Language Explorer clinical evaluation study and is also leading the team working on the Covid and Stammering study.



In February 2021 a paper **Seifert, M., Davies, A., Harding, S., McLeod, S., Wren, Y.** was published on the use of the Intelligibility in Context Scale (ICS) with children born with cleft.

This is a tool developed by Professor Sharynne McLeod, of Charles Sturt University Australia as a screening measure for children’s speech development. It has been validated in multiple languages against other measures of speech.

Intelligibility in Context Scale (ICS)
(McLeod, Harrison, & McCormack, 2012)

Child's name: _____
 Child's date of birth: _____ Male/Female: _____
 Language(s) spoken: _____
 Current date: _____ Child's age: _____
 Person completing the ICS: _____
 Relationship to child: _____

The following questions are about how much of your child's speech is understood by different people. Please think about your child's speech over the past month when answering each question. Circle one number for each question.

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1. Do you understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
2. Do immediate members of your family understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
3. Do extended members of your family understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
4. Do your child's friends understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
5. Do other acquaintances understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
6. Do your child's teachers understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
7. Do strangers understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
TOTAL SCORE =	/35				
AVERAGE TOTAL SCORE =	/5				

[Intelligibility in Context Scale - Multilingual Children's Speech \(csu.edu.au\)](http://csu.edu.au)

The ICS is included in the International Consortium of Health Outcome Measures for Cleft Lip and Palate, however no reference data were available to enable comparison between individual children in cleft clinics and the wider population of all children born with cleft palate.

With funding from **The Underwood Trust**, we used data from 412 children in the Cleft Collective to provide ICS scores (means and standard deviations) for children aged 3 with each of the major cleft types (cleft lip only, cleft palate only, and cleft lip and palate). The data are now available and can be used clinically to compare performance at age 3 for individual children, enabling decisions about prioritisation for intervention.



Yvonne Wren was interviewed on 28th April 2021 on Radio five live on the topic of the impact of the pandemic on children’s language development.
[BBC Radio 5 live - Colin Murray, with Mobeen Azhar](#)

Yvonne also wrote an article for the Telegraph in May 2021, in relation to children wearing masks in school.
[Read my lips: face masks in schools can damage our children’s development](#)



An interesting read from Yvonne Wren who wrote an article for The Conversation
19th May 2021



[How lockdown has affected children's speech – and what parents can do to help
\(theconversation.com\)](https://www.theconversation.com)

Christmas 2020 - Our virtual quiz!

The strangest Christmas party, but we had great fun.

*Thanks to Caitlin for organising,
and congratulations to our winner*

Yvonne

(It wasn't rigged honestly)



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