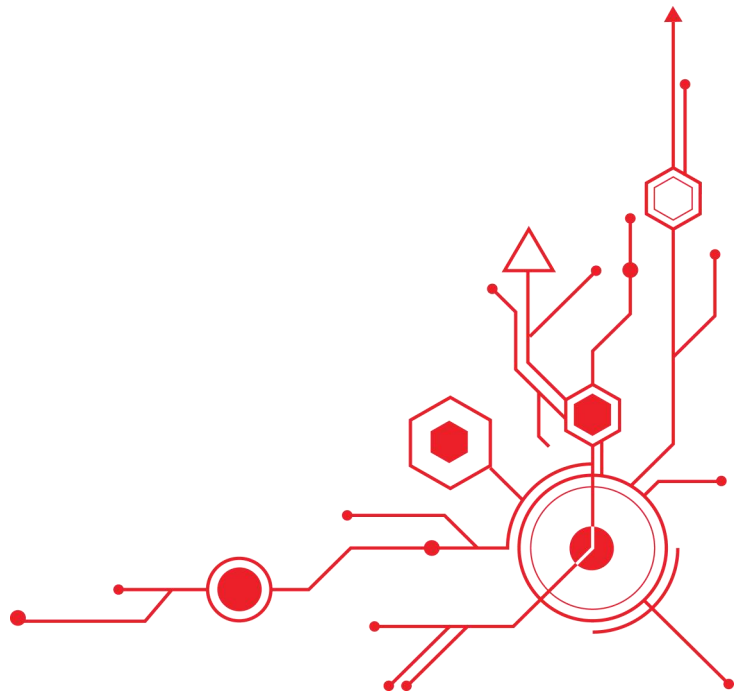




EVALUATION OF DAS ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERACY DIVISION



DAS Main Literacy Programme (MLP)

"To map the way for young dyslexics to live a life of beauty and promise through a comprehensive, high quality service provided by inspired professionals"

Curriculum Framework - MLP provides a comprehensive and quality curriculum to support dyslexic students facing literacy challenges in a positive learning environment, engaging parents and other stakeholders to ensure the success of our students.

MLP Learning Components

- ◆ Language and Vocabulary
- ◆ Phonemic Awareness
- ◆ Phonics
- ◆ Morphology
- ◆ Reading Fluency
- ◆ Reading Comprehension
- ◆ Writing

MLP Learning Principles

- ◆ To promote and facilitate reading and spelling development
- ◆ To equip students with the essential comprehension skills needed to draw inferences
- ◆ To accentuate the importance of reading fluency through the deliberate planning of reading tasks that takes into account students' reading fluency and accuracy
- ◆ To emphasize vocabulary development of sight and high frequency word through instructions leveraging on Edu-Technology
- ◆ To develop diverse localised manuals, materials and resources to cater to the learning needs of students

MLP Teaching Resources

- ◆ Language and Vocabulary pack
- ◆ Phonemic Awareness and Phonics pack
- ◆ Morphology pack
- ◆ Grammar for Writing pack
- ◆ Advanced Writing pack
- ◆ Listening/Reading Comprehension pack

DAS Main Literacy Programme (MLP)

All you need to know about MLP

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BACKGROUND OF PROGRAMME

The Dyslexia Association of Singapore's (DAS) mission is to help dyslexics achieve.

DAS has adopted the Professional Practice Guidelines (PPG) definition of dyslexia which recognises it to be a specific learning difficulty of language learning and cognition that primarily affects accurate and fluent word reading and spelling skills with associated difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and processing speed (Ministry of Education, 2011). In order to access the Main Literacy Programme (MLP)- formerly known as the MOE-aided DAS Literacy Programme (MAP), students would require a diagnosis of dyslexia by a registered psychologist to receive support and intervention at the DAS.

MLP offers intervention, taught in accordance to Orton-Gillingham (OG) principles, which is language based, cognitive, structured, sequential and cumulative, multisensory, diagnostic/prescriptive and emotionally sound. It aims to skill dyslexic students in the areas of phonics/phonemic awareness, reading, comprehension, spelling and writing.

MLP focuses on these elements:

- ◆ the recommended areas of instruction for learners with dyslexia (*National Reading Panel, 2000; Rose, 2009*)
- ◆ individualised group lessons taught in accordance to the Orton-Gillingham (OG) principles (*Ritchey & Goeke, 2006; Rose & Zirkel, 2007*) and modified in view of institutional and funding limitations
- ◆ a suggested framework of information bearing in mind cultural sensitivities and emphasising conceptual teaching of language components as "[k]nowledge organisation is one element that has been used to differentiate novices from experts" (*Ridgeway & Dunston, 2000*)

In the year of 2017, MLP has provided intervention for over 3000 students.

OUR VISION

Acquisition of literacy skills is far more than just being able to cope in school, it is to manage and live life with possibilities. MLP not only looks to provide learners with literacy skills but as an important by product of its intervention, MLP looks to instil them with the belief that they indeed can and deserve a future that is as beautiful as a child's dream and is full of promise – a potential that is not limited by their dyslexia but instead enhanced by it, once they've been given the tools to overcome its challenges and by identifying and nurturing their talents.

Given the responsibility of enabling our learners to achieve and to put this simply, recognising what is at stake if it doesn't, MLP has set itself very high goals and continuously looks towards enhancing its service, both in coverage of knowledge and skills as well as in quality. Not to be forgotten, the dedicated team of MLP educational therapists are reminded of the value of their roles in the lives of the learners and through their commitment to the cause, help them form these dreams and make them a reality.

*To map the way for young dyslexics to live a life of beauty and
promise through a comprehensive high quality service, provided
by inspired professionals.*

Hence, MLP's vision remains consistently clear:

PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

MLP comprises three main functions: Admissions, Curriculum Development and Enhancement and Quality Assurance. The main roles of the various departments are summarised below:

♦ Admissions

A team of psychologists from the SpLD Assessment Services Division participate in screening of learners to enable identification of at-risk students. Upon receipt of applications from parents, schools and other professionals supporting learners, specialists and educational psychologists conduct assessments to formally diagnose the needs of the learners, and subsequently, make placement referrals for intervention. A team of administrative staff support the referral process as well as bursary needs of students who may require financial assistance.

♦ Curriculum Development and Enhancement

A team of experienced senior and lead educational therapists regularly evaluate the current curriculum and its relevance based on profiles of students and recommended intervention by the Admissions team. Further development, implementation and enhancement of the curriculum are based on these evaluations and proposals for additional programmes within the curriculum are also considered so that all students equally benefit from MLP.

♦ Quality Assurance

A team of educational advisors conduct needs analysis, and assist with the development and support of educators through broad based support as well as intensive remediation guidance. The evaluation of educator performance and formulation of further training to groom educators further ensures that the educators are able to effectively translate the curriculum to meet the needs of their learners. Additionally, through progress monitoring of students and their graduation, this department keeps its view on the quality of the programme through the learners.

BANDING

In 2013, MLP introduced banding as a way to ensure that:

- ◆ Student's learning needs are matched with the level of teaching within the MLP curriculum
- ◆ Educational targets are set at the start of the intervention and adjusted as the student progresses through the MLP curriculum
- ◆ Teaching is more responsive to the student's changing literacy profile and so that measures can be put in place to address any lack of response to intervention
- ◆ Programme evaluation can occur and quality assurance standards can be met
- ◆ Student's exit from MLP is based, in part, on his / her progress from his / her initial banding

In grouping existing students, psychologists utilised available information from the students' psychological reports to position them as best benefiting from either the Band A, B or C curriculum - in other words, what are the more urgent requirements in the provision of intervention for that child. Within each band, there are three levels of literacy learning, making it nine levels in total. Each year, MLP monitors and seeks to understand the needs of students who are referred to its programme, knowing that each dyslexic student is different at different stages in their educational journey and some may require more intensive forms of support (e.g. speech and language therapy) or a different emphasis of teaching (e.g., more language based work versus more literacy based work).

For instance, Band A covers emergent literacy skills and students who are assigned to be in this band typically have language or cognitive weaknesses that co-occur with their dyslexia. They often show emergent literacy skills, such as having some awareness of the alphabet, how letters are formed, how text goes across the page from left to right and being able to read and spell some basic words. These students need support in boosting their listening and speaking skills while improving on their literacy foundations. They may also need a slower pace of learning, with more opportunities for repetition.

Band B, on the other hand, covers functional literacy skills and students who are placed in this band would likely have fairly developed language skills but significant

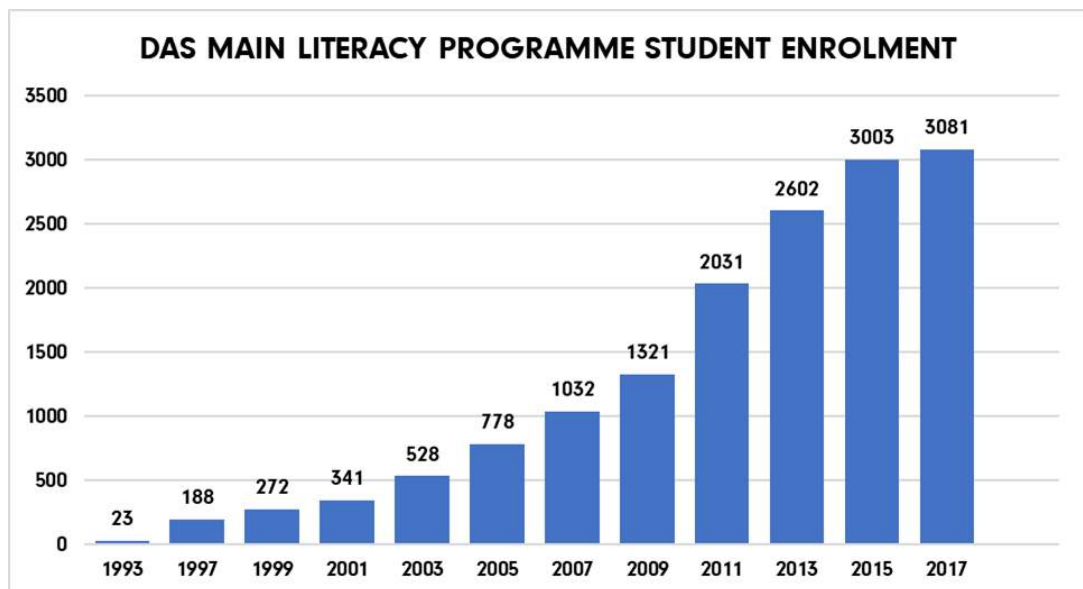
basic literacy difficulties. They may have some reading and spelling skills of familiar words but struggle with understanding and applying letter-sound correspondence rules in reading and spelling new words. They also have reading fluency, reading comprehension and paragraph writing difficulties.

Band C covers functional to advanced literacy skills and students who are placed in this band would likely have fairly developed language skills and some functional literacy skills but continue to struggle with reading fluency, reading comprehension and composition writing.

MLP... IN NUMBERS

STUDENT ENROLMENT

At the end of 2017, MAP enrolment stood at 3081, with a waitlist of 136 students.



DAS ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERACY PROGRAMMES

www.das.org.sg/services/about-our-services/english-language-literacy-programmes.html

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Main Literacy Programme: Educational Technology—EdTech

Today, more than ever, the role of educational technologies is of great importance and it is becoming commonplace in the area of education to harness the interest of students and add value to the learning objectives.

Technology integration for digital literacy and the 21st-century skills of critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration and communication and information literacy have become increasingly important. By using technology, these skills can be imparted to the learners. However, to do this effectively, pedagogical models need to be used.

Some of the main guiding pedagogies employed by MLP EdTech are TPACK and SAMR models. The TPACK - Technological, Pedagogical and Content Knowledge - is about designing lessons incorporating technology to support the arranged content through a pedagogically supported approach (Figure 1).

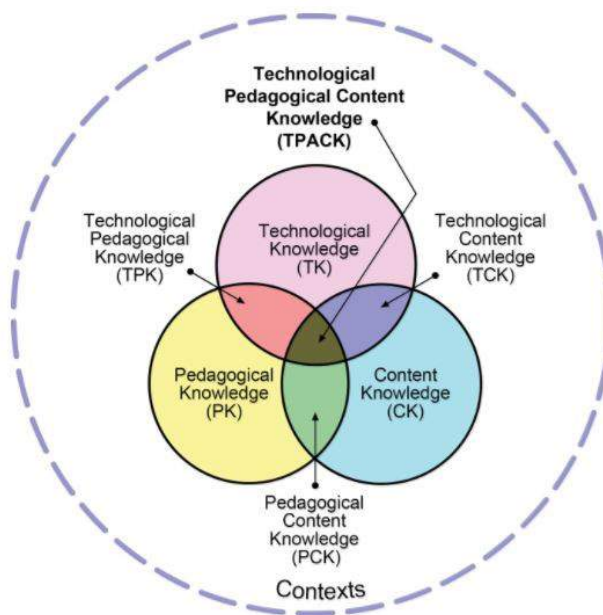


Figure 1. The TPACK, Hos-McGrane, M (2011)

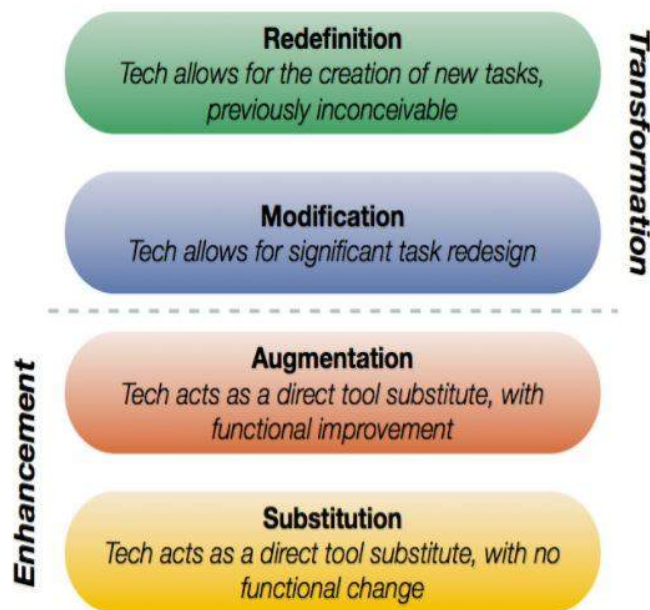


Figure 2. SAMR Model (Puentendura, 2006)

The SAMR model (Figure 2) on the other hand facilitates the practical aspect and scales the various levels of use of educational technologies into four broad levels so that educators can know the level of their technology integration in the lesson (Substitution, Augmentation, Modification and Redefinition) and how they can further elevate the activity.

The MLP EdTech Team is focused on the application and study of educational technologies and how it enhances skills and cognitive characteristics in both educators and learners. The team thus pilots and leads initiatives with educational technologies such as studying users' perceptions on uses of iPads in the MLP classrooms, the impact of Mimio Teach Smart Bars on educators and dyslexic learners, and the formative approach to the digitalisation of MLP's Curriculum-Based Assessments.

EdTech in MLP is at its beginning stages but the bigger plans are on the way to ensure that not only traditional learning methods are modernised but also that the use of educational technologies is purposeful to student-oriented learning.

Main Literacy Programme: Parents as Partners

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

DAS has always viewed parents as partners. Parents entrust their children with us and we want to connect, converse and converge with them. This partnership and shared responsibility helps us provide a more holistic support to the students.

Supportive parents are important for students to succeed. In the MOE work plan seminar in 2015, Mr Heng Swee Keat (Heng, 2015) stated the following:

“When parents, teachers and the community work together, we multiply our efforts to make every student an engaged learner. We multiply the domains in which our children can find success... indeed we create new pathways to success.”

In general, all our Educational Therapists conduct regular meet ups and contact with parents. At the beginning of 2015, we started increasing our contact time with parents so that we can exchange pertinent information on a regular basis.

Communication with parents takes place on a monthly basis and it is either in person or in any one of the following manner:

1. Phone call
2. Whatsapp messages
3. Videos
4. Images on what the child is doing in class
5. Emails
6. Notes to parents

In 2016, we developed a parent Engagement framework to help our Educational Therapists communicate with parents. We also conducted training for them on how they can use the framework to improve how they connect with parents.

The following is a brief on how we have used parent-teacher communication to engage parents. The framework is adapted from Epstein's (Epstein, 1995) six different types of parent involvement.

1. **Parenting**
 - a. Providing suggestions on how their child can be supported at home in areas like behaviour management and motivation
 - b. Providing training and support for parents through talks and workshops
2. **Communicating**
 - a. Developing effective home to DAS and DAS to home as well communication to and from MOE schools.
3. **Learning at Home**
 - a. Educational Therapists share tips with parents on what the students have done in the classroom and how parents can support them at home to practise these skills.
4. **Collaborating with Community**
 - a. We conduct activities through our Parent Support group – like PAWS for Reading, Behavioural management talks and etc
5. **Volunteering**
 - a. Allowing parents to volunteer at our different learning centres to help in the library, act as chaperones for student in our learning, steering the Parent Support Group and etc
6. **Decision Making**
 - a. Encouraging all our students' parents to join our Parent Support Group to become advocates of their child's learning

CLIENT SATISFACTIONS SURVEYS

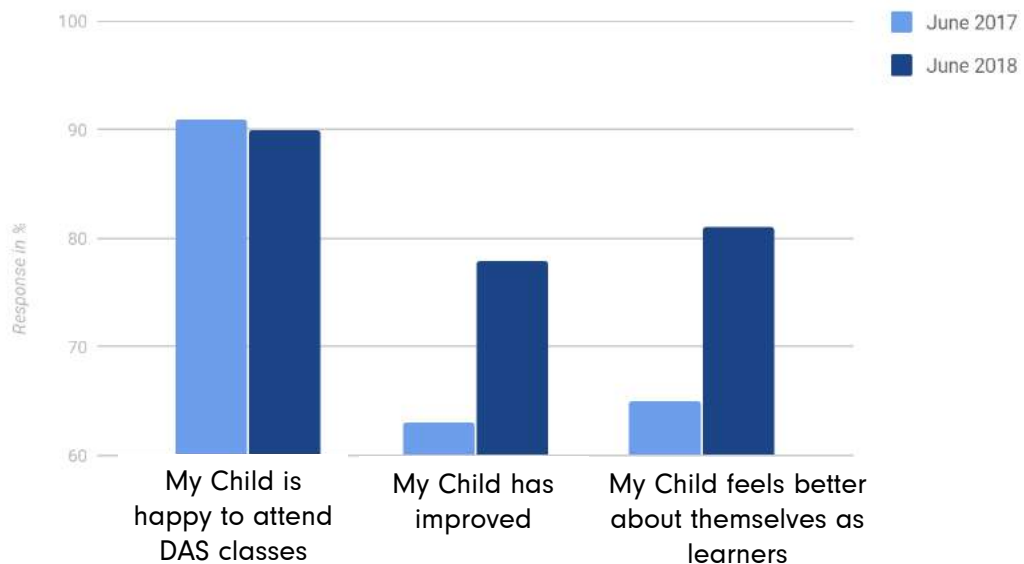
In 2017, we started conducting Client Satisfaction Surveys on a bi-annual basis. These are the results from this survey. In total, we had about 477 participants for the survey.

In the area of **Educational Service**, 97 percent of our parents are aware of why their child attends the programme. 71% of the parents have an awareness of what our educational programme covers and 69 % of the parents felt that their child has improved in his / her studies after attending DAS classes.

In the area of **Customer Service**, 87% of the participants confirmed that they obtain regular updates from their Educational Therapist,

In the area of **Child Well-being**, 92 percent of our students were happy to attend classes at DAS, 75% of our students feel better about themselves as a learner. 62 % of our parents were aware about the existence of the DAS Parent Support Group. From the results, it is encouraging to note that that 92 percent of our students are happy to attend DAS classes. We are glad that our students are experiencing a joy of learning. One area that we will be working on is to help our students to transfer the skills that they have learnt at DAS to their school. We are also increasing our efforts to expand the Parent Support Group to empower parents.

PARENTS' POSITIVE FEEDBACK ABOUT MLP CLASSES



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- Heng, S. (2015). Keynote address by Mr Heng Swee Keat, Minister for Education, at the Ministry of Education Work Plan Seminar: Ministry of Education, Singapore. <http://www.moe.gov.sg/media/speeches/2012/09/12/keynote-address-by-mr-heng-swee-keat-at-wps-2012.php>. Accessed.

Main Literacy Programme: Intensive Remediation (IR)

Intensive Remediation (IR) is a support system under the Main Literacy Programme (MLP) that focuses on helping Educational Therapists (EdTs) who have challenging students under their charge so that they are more able to teach and guide these students to achieve progress in literacy as well as show improvements in behaviour. An IR status will be conferred on such a student after an observation is conducted by an Educational Advisor (EA) who will then provide suitable advice and suggestions to the EdT on what can be done to improve the student's learning in addition to managing the class better.

Once a student is placed on IR, he/she will be monitored for progress every 6 months. This is done through an observation by an EA where another round of discussion is conducted and new strategies shared, if needed. 'Challenging' students are defined by their lack of ability to attend to literacy tasks given in the classroom and/or having behaviours that may cause disruptions to the student's own learning and/or to the learning of other students in the class.

EdTs with such student(s) may be able to conduct lessons for him/her in a smaller class setting after an IR status is conferred on the student by an EA. Additionally, such student(s) could also be highlighted by a psychologist who reviews the case or a preschool EdT who has taught this student at the preschool level. In 2017, the total number of students on IR increased, as shown in the table below:

Table 1: Students in the Intensive Remediation Programme

IR 2017	JAN TO MAR 2017	MAR TO JUNE 2017	JUNE TO SEP 2017	OCT TO DEC 2017
Total	37	45	50	52

"Challenging students are defined by their lack of ability to attend to literacy tasks given in the classroom and/or having behaviours that may cause disruptions to the student's own learning and/or to the learning of other students in the class."

In seeking to understand the reasons for this gradual increase, the applications and feedback following observations were reviewed. The noted reasons include:

- ◆ There were more challenging cases in terms of behaviour and cognitive profiles
- ◆ More students with varied co-morbidities are being placed together in the same class
- ◆ Students' prolonged stay in IR due to the complexity of their profiles

The IR team under MLP will continue to monitor this with the intention to improve the management of students with complex profiles. In recognising the increasing co-morbid needs that our Edts encounter, DAS also intends to implement an SpLD Committee to review the needs of the students and teachers, while ensuring that the curriculum continues to be relevant to support such learners and has the necessary resources to carry out the intervention effectively.

OBSERVATIONS OF IR STUDENTS BY AN EDUCATIONAL ADVISOR - SUCCESS STORIES

STUDENT W

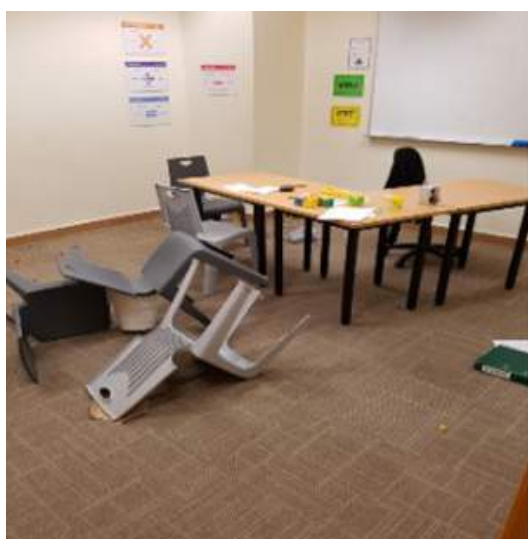
Student W is a student with autism and dyslexia. When he joined DAS in 2011, he displayed some behaviours that are typical of such children, for example preferring to have a familiar routine and getting extremely upset if there are changes to his normal routine, not being aware of other people's personal space, or being unusually intolerant of people entering his personal space, and seeming to talk "at" people, rather than sharing a two-way conversation. Additionally, Student W has reading and spelling difficulties as well as a weak working memory which are typical traits of children with Dyslexia.

Upon his enrolment, Student W was placed in a class with other classmates. With his strong headed nature, he was not able to get along well with one of them. In-class discussions and interactions did not go well and this was not merely a social issue as it had impeded his learning as well as that of others. In view of his low literacy skills (he was still having difficulties with Dolch List 2 words at P4 level) and social skills, he was placed on the IR as it was thought that he would greatly benefit from a 1-1 setting where strategies for the teaching of phonics and social skills could be specifically tailored to him. This, however, was meant as a short-term plan until Student W was able to show some proficiency in reading and spelling as well as

demonstrate some positive social interaction skills for another student to be placed in his class.

As his progress in these areas was monitored and discussions with his EdT occurred regularly, another student was placed in Student W's class. This enabled his EdT to work on his social skills further; this time, his interaction skills and behaviour towards a classmate was the main focus of his remediation as he had shown commendable improvements in his literacy acquisition. Although things were not always smooth in the classroom, the EdT was able to cater lessons that were suitable for both Student W and his classmate.

I have observed Student W from the start, tracking his progress in literacy and social skills. Currently, Student W is a Sec 2 student who was recently selected to be a member of his school Student Council. Student W has indeed come a long way such that he and his EdT no longer need the support from IR!



STUDENT R

The difficulties that Student R faced when he first started class at DAS were in the areas of behaviour, literacy as well as speech and language. As Student R was weak in his literacy acquisition, he had a tendency to avoid spelling and excessive writing, often saying he was "not good at it" despite the encouragement and assurance given by his EdT that she would guide him. Student R was not motivated to work on his own tasks when his EdT had to attend to other students. In addition, when he was

unhappy, he would throw tantrums by kicking the chair or table repeatedly, wailing and crying loudly, and refusing to undertake any tasks. His hyperactivity and impulsive behaviour would result in him inflicting harm on himself, others and damaging properties.

In view of these behaviours which were disruptive to the other students in the class, an EA had suggested that Student R be given the IR status and placed in a 1-1 setting. Besides imparting Student R with the necessary literacy skills, the goal was also to work on his behavioural and emotional aspects, such as managing his frustrations and task avoidance towards learning. When the 1-1 lessons began with

Student R, the EdT found that she was able to engage him better at learning as he was less resistant and hardly showing any tantrums. Behavioural strategies such as the point-reward system were also working more effectively as Student R was more motivated to complete and undertake tasks given to him. This 1-1 setting allowed the EdT to build stronger rapport with Student R who was also experiencing some family issues at that time. The regular interaction with his EdT gave Student R an emotional booster which was somewhat lacking at home.

As Student R's motivation and compliance improved, so did his literacy acquisition. He was more able to tackle reading, spelling and writing with guidance from his EdT. Last year, he was presented the Elias Star Award for demonstrating his school's value of "Excellence" and for making good progress in his Prelim Exams, he received a special mention by the school principal for showing improvement in his academic results. It was shared with the entire school that Student R was realising his potential with hard work and practice and that he was also focused in class and self-motivated.

Student R is currently a Secondary 1 student who excels in Maths. Due to the progress that has been observed in Student R, his IR status was recently lifted off. Both his EdT and I hope that he will continue to advance further.

Social Learning and Technology

The Educational Technology team, known as EdTech at DAS, explored instructional strategies at a deeper level, targeting the concept of workplace learning for English Language and Literacy (ELL) Educational Therapists (EdTs). The idea of workplace learning stems from the theory of social constructivism in the 1960s (Vygotsky, 1978). The underlying principle is that learners learn most effectively by engaging in materials that are carefully selected for collaborative activities under the supervision of instructors, subject matter experts (SMEs) or leaders (Vygotsky, 1978). Collaboration is the most important characteristic of workplace learning. While instructors help to facilitate group interactions, learners have the option to self-select what they need to or want to learn.

A large body of critical analyses and research later indicated that learning is not an individual acquisition activity, but a social discourse (Hanson & Sinclair, 2008; Jonassen, Howland, Moore, & Marra, 2003; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Many studies strongly suggest that collaborative learning has proven to be more effective than individualistic learning in contributing to motivation, in raising achievement, and in producing positive social outcomes (Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 2000; Slavin, 1995; Snowman, McCown, & Biehler, 2009).

In the new digital age, Siemens (2004; 2005) and Downes (2007) proposed the connectivism theory, where social learning is integrated with both educational and social media technologies. In the world of social media proliferation, learning is not an internal, individualistic activity. Rather, learners gather information from connecting to others' knowledge using social and collaborative platforms. One of the principles of connectivism is that capacity to learn is more critical than prior acquired knowledge (Siemens, 2004).

The responsibility of a teacher is not just to define, generate, or assign content, but it is to help learners build learning paths and make connections with existing and new knowledge resources (Anderson & Dron, 2011). Social learning theories, especially connectivism, provide insights on the roles of educators in this social networked environment.

M-LEARNING WEEK

With that in mind, the M-Learning week was launched in April 2017 for the participation of all ELL EdTs. During this week, EdTs had to make 5 posts (one per teaching day) on Google Plus and have their peers comment or show their appreciation through the social platform. Google Plus is a feature of Google Suite that the DAS has been using for official emails, calendars and many more services. From experience, we note that M-Learning Week allows EdTs to showcase their integration of educational technologies into their lessons. While most of them feature the technologies used in lesson delivery, some posts were about administrative tools that teachers can use, such as reward systems. Over the past 2 rounds of M-Learning weeks, the EdTech team has seen an increase in the number of sign ups for competitive participation, which suggests that they are gaining familiarity and confidence in the use of technology.

This approach to social learning makes learning fun, easy and social. Instead of reading or sourcing for ideas externally, EdTs can gain more ideas from their colleagues and because the ideas are from peers, the process of adaptation is minimal as compared to adapting from resources externally; as those materials may not be designed with a dyslexic learner in mind and of the DAS context.

APPY HOUR

While M-Learning week provides a platform for EdTs to showcase what they have been doing, Appy Hour on the other hand allows the EdTech Team to put together some recommended tools for the EdTs to get to know. First, the recommended tools would be provided to the EdTs and they could give these tools a try in the following weeks. Subsequently, the EdTech representative and the EdTs would come together in their learning centre to discuss what worked, what didn't and to what profile of students the particular tool would work best with. This approach to informal workplace learning is directly related and beneficial to their work and provides ideas, insights and enhances communication despite the level of tech integration (beginner, intermediate or advanced tech user).

The EdTech team is also looking to design sets of e-learning modules in collaboration with the Staff Professional Development (SPD) team and the Curriculum Team (C.T.). Having designed our very first draft module on correction procedures for spelling activities, the team has greater insights on the required features and is in the process of getting feedback from team leaders. Having e-learning packages for new EdTs and experienced EdTs will help to facilitate anytime, anywhere learning with progress tracking options for line managers to monitor progress through the learning management system (LMS). Providing targeted information with ample practice and some assessment questions to assess

learning, the learner would be able to learn at their own pace, repeat any component as much as they need to and forward their questions to their educational advisors or relevant team for clarification. This reduces the need to have face to face exchange of information or knowledge, especially for those that can be shared through direct instruction. Thus, the face to face time can be used for higher order application questions which require teamwork or collaborative activities to enhance learning. For the experienced EdTs, e-learning would be for refresher modules, as advised by the respective educational advisor.

The DAS EdTech Team's core mission is to seek innovative teaching and learning practices that leverage on technologies to better engage the 21st century learners. In a broader sense, learning from and learning with educational technologies are the building blocks of EdTech's conceptual framework when integrating educational technologies into teaching and learning practices. Learning from educational technologies lean towards behaviourist theories whereas learning with educational technologies stems from constructivist and social constructivism paradigms. While learning from computers can assist students to better their performance on basic skills, learning with computers can facilitate the higher-order thinking and learning (Jonassen, 2000; Lim & Tay, 2003). To put these in perspective for the educator, the SAMR model is frequently spoken about to help educators self-evaluate their instructional designs such that they are able to elevate their designs as well as set lesson objectives at transformation levels of the model instead of the enhancement levels.

The incorporation of educational technologies into teaching and learning is one of the most important challenges for educational institutions today. Can EdTech help to meet the educational requirements of the 21st century learner? and Why should educational technologies be used in teaching and learning? are just two out of the numerous questions that are thrown to EdTech leaders almost all the time. Integration of educational technologies in the classroom is not new for it may be as old as the days when radios were used for listening comprehension and televisions were used for show students moral education videos.

While working with learners with learning differences, it is important that service providers and educators effectively integrate such tools to provide a sense of wholeness or completeness where all necessary elements are seamlessly integrated to make the learning experience whole. Instead of merely placing the hardware's in the classrooms, the employment of these should be pedagogically sound and be leveraged for beyond information retrieval purposes. Educators and leaders should understand that while educational technologies may not be essential in all lesson components, generally, it is most facilitative in increasing flexibility of instruction delivery, increasing access and facilitating differentiated instructional approaches.

Reading Comprehension Focus Group - For our Teachers to Teach our Students

The Reading Comprehension (RC) Curriculum is consistently updated to better tailor to the learning needs of the learners across the different bands and different levels (primary and secondary levels), where the emphasis is on the skills required for them to cope with the RC demands in schools. Apart from that, in the recent enhancements made to the RC curriculum, it also focuses on reading and question interpretation skills where learners are taught to interpret the various question patterns and their target skills, to further guide them in answering the required questions.

The enhanced RC curriculum was rolled out in Term 4 of 2016. With any enhancements made to the curriculum comes the necessity to train and provide in-house support to the Educational Therapists (EdTs) to ensure that they do not only acquire the content knowledge and skills but also the confidence and competence to plan and deliver lessons that are relevant, meaningful and beneficial to the learners.

Three mass training sessions were organised and conducted for all EdTs, emphasising the key essential reading comprehension skills that are aligned to the Ministry of Education's English Language Syllabus 2010. The process of teaching and scaffolding those skills using explicit and concrete explanation and techniques were also highlighted to help guide the learners towards independence and success. Further, the sessions were also video-recorded and shared with the EdTs to allow them to review and watch the videos at their convenience.

The RC resource materials designed were also presented in a structured, sequential and cumulative manner to facilitate the teaching of reading comprehension. The materials developed do not only emphasise the use of relevant and localised content with appropriate teaching principles, the topics of interest as well as the levels of difficulty within each band were also duly considered.

Ongoing support by the Curriculum Team is provided to the EdTs through platforms such as focus group and consultation session. Moreover, on the ground support by a team of Educational Advisors is also made available to the EdTs whenever they encounter challenges implementing and/or delivering the enhanced RC curriculum.

Recently, the Curriculum Team concluded a total of 4 focus group sessions held for all EdTs from the different clusters. The intent of the focus group sessions is not only to provide an avenue for the EdTs to share their feedback and suggestions in small group settings for more targeted interactions and discussions but also to take the opportunity to review and address any gaps highlighted by the EdTs. Thus, in order to ensure that the focus group sessions benefitted the EdTs and targeted their areas of needs, they were asked to complete a pre-focus group survey prior to attending the sessions.

The results for some of the survey questions have been highlighted and presented in the following graphs based on two broad classifications:

- 1) EdTs' perceptions and sentiments towards the enhancements made to the RC curriculum
- 2) Areas that EdTs still want more support in

Apart from getting the EdTs to rate their responses on a likert scale of 1-5, (with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree), some of the questions also required them to state their reasons, to provide a qualitative understanding of their responses.

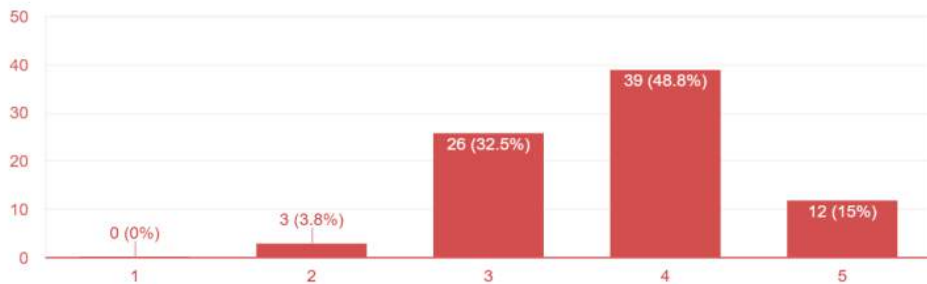
1) EdTs' perceptions and sentiments toward the enhanced RC Curriculum

After having implemented the enhanced RC curriculum for at least six months, it is pertinent to gather feedback on whether the enhanced RC curriculum:

- ◆ includes skills that are relevant to the learners' varying profiles and learning needs
- ◆ provides more support to learners in reading comprehension

Do you find the Reading Comprehension skills relevant to the learning needs of students in each band?

80 responses



Reading Comprehension Resource Materials

Figure 1. Reading Comprehension Resource Materials

In Figure 1, based on a total of 80 respondents, 63% of EdTs (summing up those who agreed and strongly agreed) felt that the RC skills in the enhanced curriculum are relevant to the learning needs and profiles of learners in their classes. In other words, the enhanced curriculum as well as the materials developed support learners in their reading comprehension regardless of their literacy proficiency and needs.

Even though the enhanced RC curriculum was only implemented for less than a year at the time of the survey, the curriculum team wanted to obtain some preliminary results on whether or not the EdTs feel their learners have improved in their reading comprehension ability.

From Figure 2, it is heartening to know that none of the EdTs reported 'no improvements'. On the contrary, 21.3 % of the EdTs reported positive results while majority of them (78.8%) reported that their learners have somewhat shown some improvements. The results could suggest that given more time to implement the enhanced RC curriculum, the EdTs would observe more substantial progress in their learners' reading comprehension.

Do you feel that your students have improved in their Reading Comprehension after the implementation of the enhanced curriculum?

80 responses

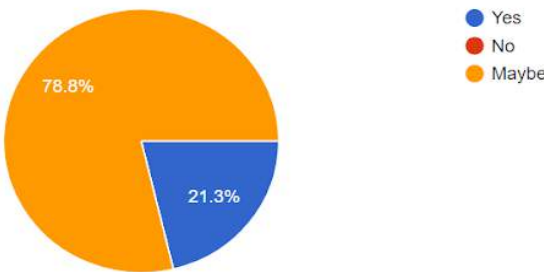


Figure 2. Reading comprehension improvement after implementation of enhanced curriculum

Some of the qualitative responses extracted (from the survey) and reflected in the table below also yielded encouraging feedback from the respondents.

READING CURRICULUM FEEDBACK FROM EDUCATIONAL THERAPISTS
"They (students) are more confident and are more able to apply the skills taught to them."
"better awareness in tackling questions"
"Have only covered a couple of skills, unable to track overall improvements yet. But I am confident over time they (students) will improve."
"Students are showing progress."
"Application of skills is not consistent, but there have been improvements when identifying types of questions."
"Yes in my class and It would also be encouraging if my students are able to transfer and apply the skills acquired in their school work."
"There is more structure in the teaching of RC concepts now. A single concept can be reiterated over a few lessons for better understanding."

2) Areas of gaps that EdTs still need more support in

Apart from providing a platform for the EdTs to come together, share their thoughts and feedback, as well as provide suggestions on ways to further improve the RC curriculum, the focus group also aimed at supporting the EdTs on areas that they still feel inadequate in. Hence, in order for the focus group sessions to be targeted and meaningful for the EdTs, the following questions were included in the survey:

1. Which skills do you feel most confident teaching them to your learners?
2. Which skills do you feel least confident teaching them to your learners?

The reason for including two extreme ends of the question was to ensure that the respondents chose their responses thoughtfully thereby, providing more objective responses.

Which skills from Phase 1 curriculum do you feel most confident implementing? (You may choose more than 1 option.)

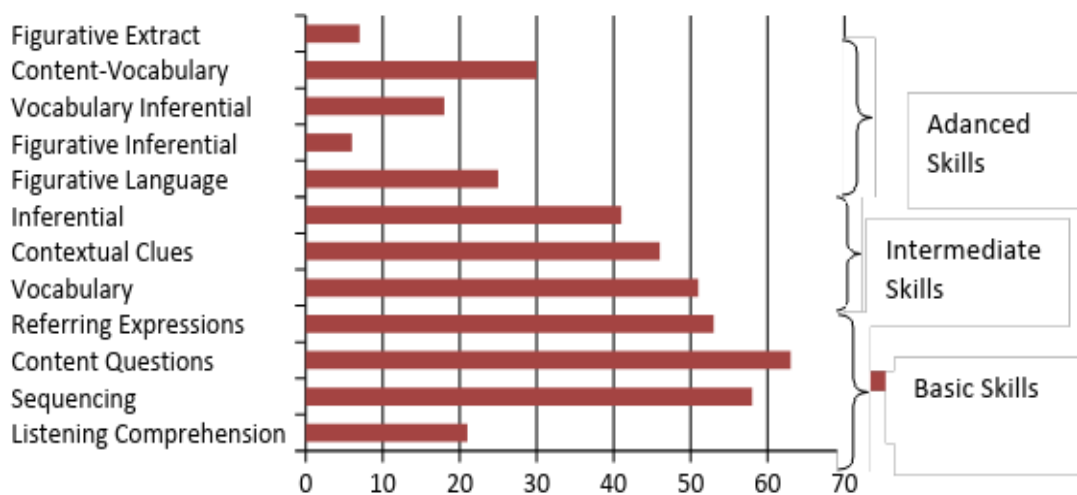


Figure 3. Most Confident in implementing

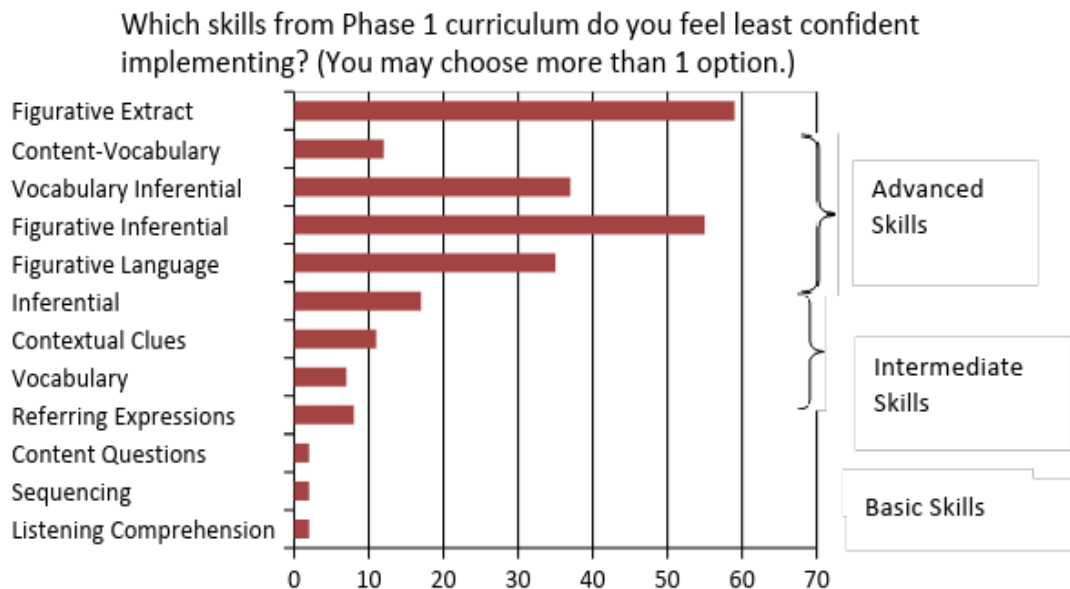


Figure 4. Least Confident in implementing

The comprehension skills were classified into three main categories- basic, intermediate and advanced comprehension skills. Figures 4 and 5 showed that the majority of the EdTs felt most confident when they plan and teach the basic level comprehension skills followed by the intermediate ones. Their confidence starts to dip when it comes to planning and teaching the more advanced comprehension skills, namely figurative language which is far more complex and abstract in nature.

Additionally, the EdTs also struggle with guiding the students to comprehend what they read in a concrete, explicit and systematic way that would aid their comprehension- annotation. In other words, how to scaffold and guide the students to annotate and what to annotate are some of the difficulties faced by the EdTs.

Hence, the focus group sessions included demonstrations and activities that highlighted the process of annotation to help the EdTs better scaffold students' capacity to notice textual details which in turn support the reading process as well as raising their awareness on the various types of textual features critical to the reading process and the teaching of Reading Comprehension.

Following the focus group sessions, a post focus group survey was administered to collect feedback on how the EdTs felt about the sessions and more importantly, to gather information on how their learners have benefitted from an explicit and structured way of teaching reading comprehension.

READING COMPREHENSION FOCUS GROUP SURVEY FEEDBACK
"The illustrations and demonstrations provided were instructive."
"I have a better understanding on how to demonstrate to my students. To be able to guide them on how to identify question types will help them in their exams."
"The training session was not just about content sharing. A lot of emphasis was on hands-on and practical aspects. This improves the confidence of educators."
"Learnt the skills on how to scaffold during the session and gained better understanding in teaching Reading Comprehension through the focus group."
"I have a better understanding of how I can teach the skills to my lower and higher functioning students."
"The session helped in reaffirming the teaching and delivery methods that I have been practising."
"Most of my students are unable to sequence events, infer or relate text back to the questions. The session provided me with more ideas about how to scaffold, plan and execute those areas."
"clear demonstration during the focus group session"

All in all, the feedback received was positive and encouraging. The following table details some of the feedback extracted from the post focus group survey.

Organising such focus group sessions with clear intentions not only creates a platform for the EdTs to get together and share good practices, it also provides opportunities to address any gaps in content knowledge and skills that the EdTs may have. Further, the enhancements made to the RC curriculum coupled with the continued support received through such training aim to increase EdTs' competence and confidence.

Learning and Growing Together: Bringing our Professionals Together as a Community of Practice

REGISTER OF EDUCATIONAL THERAPISTS (ASIA) (RETA)

RETA is an initiative by the Dyslexia Association of Singapore to bring together practitioners in the field of specific learning differences while at the same time recognising their professional status and endorsing their qualifications.

RETA has three advisors representing both the local and international needs and standards. They are:



PROFESSOR ANGELA FAWCETT

Registrar, Register of Educational Therapists (Asia)
Research Consultant, Dyslexia Association of Singapore

Angela is a leading international researcher into dyslexia and other learning differences, with a range of theoretical and applied contributions. Angela is now Emeritus professor at Swansea University, following her retirement in January 2011 and also holds an honorary professorship at Sheffield University. She was awarded a 2-year Leverhulme Emeritus fellowship until March 2014, to complete her research projects in Wales. She is one of the co-authors of the Dyslexia Screening Test (DST) and her visit to India in July 2012 to lecture at the World Education Summit generated 45 articles in the press on the launch of the DST-J India. Angela is Academic advisor to DAS, and editor of the APJDD.



MS GEETHA SHANTHA RAM

Director of SpLD Assessment Services, English Language and Literacy Division, and Staff Professional Development

Geetha Shantha Ram is the Director of the English Language and Literacy (ELL) Division, which includes the Main Literacy Programme (MLP) and has led programme enhancements for the DAS through the Essential Literacy Approach and the current integrated MLP curriculum. Besides ELL, Geetha oversees SpLD Assessment Services and the Staff Professional Development division. Formerly, the Assistant Director of the DAS Academy, Geetha trained Allied educators, parents and other professionals and continues to present at conferences, most recently at the 2018 British Dyslexia Association international conference.

Geetha has a Masters in English (NUS), a Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (Distinction) (LMU) and is currently pursuing a doctorate in the area of giftedness and Specific Learning Differences. With over 10 years of experience supporting children and adults in the area of dyslexia, Geetha constantly aspires to provide a quality service to dyslexics that searches for and realises their true potential and provides them with a view to appreciate their own unique gifts.



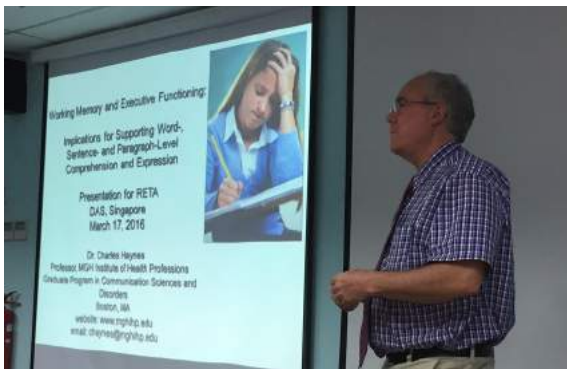
DR KATE SAUNDERS

Chief Executive Officer,
British Dyslexia Association

Dr. Kate Saunders is the former Chief Executive Officer of the British Dyslexia Association, having taken retirement in February 2018. Kate has over twenty years of experience in the field of dyslexia and special educational needs, having worked as a Senior Specific Learning Difficulties/Dyslexia Advisory Teacher, Special Educational Needs Coordinator, chartered psychologist and lecturer. Kate has a Ph.D. in Education. She was co-editor of 'Dyslexia Friendly Schools – Good Practice Guide' published by the British Dyslexia Association and co-author of 'How Dyslexics Learn', published by PATOSS (the Professional Association of Teachers of Students with SpLD).

RETA, as a community of practice, enables members to access training and events such as focus group meetings and case management discussions, which are excellent platforms for collaborative practice and knowledge sharing.

These sessions often have invited guests as well as respective RETA members and the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) Educational Therapists.



2016

17 March 2016

Working Memory and Executive Functioning by Dr Charles Haynes

Presentation that covered the importance of multi-sensory teaching and the strategies one can use to help build up a child's expressive and language skills



8 April 2016

Case Management Session by Hani Zohra Muhamad and Angela Fawcett as moderator

A sharing session on 2 cases of students at the DAS who are on the Intensive Remediation Programme (IR) and how the programme supports them.



24 June 2016

Case Management Session by Christabel Hong

A sharing session on 2 cases of students who cannot read and write and their difficulties coping as well as methods and approach used for intervention.



29 December 2016

Risk Assessment Talk by Justin Peter

Presentation covered:

- ◆ Web of problems
- ◆ 8 assessment domains, i.e. Family, Peer, Education, Leisure Time etc.
- ◆ Theories to inform assessment



2017

16 February 2017

Integrated Assistive Technology System (IATS) by Mohamed Samunn

A sharing on how a 17-year old boy with special needs, who attends an international foundation program in one of the private universities in Singapore uses the IATS to manage his learning needs.



20 June 2017

Case Management at UnITE SpLD 2017 by Hani Zohra Muhamad, Vishnu Ragunathan, Ang Seow Li, Stephanie Ong, Steven Sim, Serene Low, Shakthi Bavani and Angela Fawcett as moderator

A sharing session on different case experiences by the DAS Educational Therapists on their students who are on the Intensive Remediation Programme (IR) and how the programme supports them, the methods and strategies used and their progression.





20 November 2017

Teaching Today's Learners on Their Terms by Soofrina Binte Mubarak

Presentation on using digital native to teach students and the sharing on instructional strategies an educator needs to employ to engage students - the methods used to teach and/or facilitate students learning in their own terms.



21 June 2018

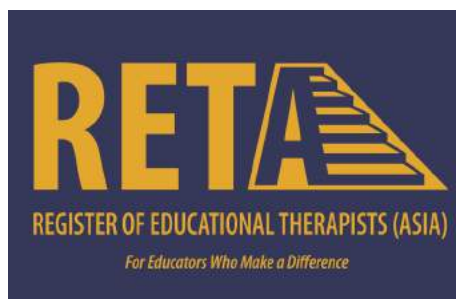
Case Management at UnITE SpLD 2018 by Sujatha Nair & Hani Zohra Muhamad and Angela Fawcett as moderator

A sharing session on strategies and methods to use when managing the behavioural needs of students with special learning needs and the type of support to provide them with.

Currently, we have a total of 120 RETA members as at end of April 2018:

- ◆ Affiliate Member – 1
- ◆ Associate Member – 1
- ◆ Associate Member Plus – 21
- ◆ Member - 44
- ◆ Associate Fellow - 33
- ◆ Fellow -20

To find out more about RETA and become a member, please visit www.reta.sg.



REGISTER OF EDUCATIONAL THERAPISTS (ASIA) - RETA

WWW.RETA.SG

Centre Management Teams (CMT): A Move Towards Collaborative Support Across Functions at DAS.

In 2016, a new innovative structure within each centre was formed. This structure is known as the "Centre Management Team" (CMT). The teams were formed to help support the operation of the Learning Centres and also to enhance inter-divisional communication and collaboration.

The teams consist of a Centre Manager, a Specialised Educational Services representative and an Educational Advisor.

As with all new teams, a mind-shift was needed. The CMT went through the phases of team development outlined by Bruce Tuckman (Teambuilding.co.uk, 2015) - Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing.

At the Forming stage, when the idea of CMT was first mooted and the groups formed, there was no clear definition of each individual's roles as yet. The challenges the group faced at this stage were not being able to find a common time to meet, and confusion among members on what type of discussions should be brought up during CMT meetings.

Next came the Storming stage, where tolerance and acceptance were needed as slowly the groups started evolving. With the formation of the CMT there was input and advice coming from individuals and trust needed to be established. Feedback and team communication processes were slowly evolving.

During the Norming stage, ground rules and the importance of cohesiveness and co-operation were ironed out. The team started tapping on each other's strengths and area of expertise. Communication started getting smoother.

Currently the CMT groupings are at the Performing stage - structures and processes are in place. CMT meetings occur at regular intervals, i.e. once a term. Ad-hoc meetings are set as and when there is a need for inputs or advice from other team members.

At the 1 year interval, a survey was initiated and conducted by the Centre Managers to find out the efficacy of CMTs. The survey was sent to all CMT members. A total of 30 out of 33 participants responded and the following are some candid comments that were received.

FEEDBACK FROM THE CENTRE MANAGEMENT TEAMS

Collaboration between teams, and problem solving when possible. Listening to feedback from others and improvising accordingly.

I think the CMT is most helpful when we are coming together to resolve centre-related issues such as placement. It is useful because we get to see the same issue from different perspectives and it guides our decisions better.

Understanding the challenges of each program and section in the centre and our complementary roles in supporting our students. Understanding each other helps us work together better as a team.

- 1) Sharing of valuable feedback of the running of each programme.
- 2) Able to resolve standard issues and other issues.

Allowing colleagues from other divisions/departments to understand the challenges faced by LC. This will hopefully create some awareness when new initiatives are implemented.

Platform for all to come together and air out thoughts and clarify doubts hearing the expert voice and different viewpoints.

It is a good platform to discuss issues that CM may encounter at centre level such as:

- ◆ placement for different programmes
- ◆ recommendations on how to support newer EdTs when they have difficulty managing classes or difficult parents (supported by EA)
- ◆ manpower issues (long term MC relief teaching / events)

Providing Support for our Learners as well as our Educators



The Educational Advisors helped in the following areas at CMTs :

PLACEMENT SUPPORT

When new students come into the programme, the Centre Manager will look into grouping them and placing them into Edts' time tables. However, owing to the diversity of profiles, Educational Advisors give their educational inputs on suitability of the selected classes. The placements will take place and classes will commence. This step ensures a best fit and minimises delays in intervention.

BROAD BASED SUPPORT

When groupings of students are done, it is based on psychological profiles of students. However, as lessons progress certain behaviours might surface and classroom learning might be affected. When this occurs, the Edt can request for an observation by the EA to provide them with advice on how to manage the class. Areas where the EAs provided advice include differentiation, behavioural modification and curriculum support. Once advice is given, the EA will review with the Edt at timely intervals to check on the progress of the students.

The Educational Advisors have also worked with outside agencies to help our students in their learning, i.e. some students come from a children's home and the Advisors have visited these homes to speak to the caregivers and counsellors to provide a more holistic support for students.

CENTRE SHARING

For 2017, Educational Advisors conducted "satellite" training for Edts. "Satellite" training within the learning centre was necessary to facilitate small group discussions.

The range of topics that was covered for 2017 were the following:

1. Quality Parent Communication Reports.
2. Meeting Parents - the importance of engaging parents as partners in their child's learning journey was highlighted.
3. Withdrawal Processes - It is our intention to have all our students leave DAS as graduates. We have a programme in place to support all learners and we want to ensure that our students reap these benefits to the fullest.

EDUCATIONAL THERAPIST SUPPORT AND TRAINING

For new Educational Therapists, there is a structured mentoring framework which has been in place since 2004. EAs mentor new Edts by providing them guidance, support and advice for the duration of their mentoring period. They help these new Edts to translate theoretical knowledge to practical aspects in the classroom. For senior Edts support is given in areas like curriculum and instructional planning, personal development (i.e. how to attain 50 CPD hours) and other ad-hoc support.

These are some comments that the EAs received from the mentees :

COMMENTS ABOUT EDUCATIONAL ADVISORS SUPPORT

I like that there's always someone for me to approach, officially. Any issues can be discussed openly and extensively. First, know your students as good rapport will lead to greater co-operation. Second, an enjoyable class is a memorable class, use games to plan meaningful activities..

Mentors were a great wealth of knowledge. It was reassuring having a mentor to fall back on whenever I needed help at work.

1. Gained greater understanding on how to plan lessons for different bands
2. Learned good strategies for managing specific problems and behaviours having someone to ask the questions we have. Learning how to teach certain concepts based on the past experiences of others.

I liked the fact that I was able to share difficulties with mentors without being judged. I liked the fact that they taught me how to differentiate for differentiate lessons for my students.

1. Strong social support was given by my mentors.
2. They were willing to share their own resources and gave me guidance on certain classroom behaviours. E.g. (creating hopscotch for students to do their spelling).

I liked that I've a mentor whom I can approach when I face any difficulties.
Two takeaways:

1. To always have a heart for the students.
2. Plan and execute my lessons at the students' pace (not at mine).

Overall, the mentoring approach to supporting teachers has proven to be beneficial for our new EdTs to prepare them and provide them with the confidence required to manage and excel in their teaching.



DAS Educational Advisors

ANNUAL AUDITS

At DAS, our emphasis is on quality remediation and in order to attain this all Edts have to undergo annual audits to ensure that their lesson planning and delivery is in line with stipulated guidelines. All Edts are expected to attain competent status for both their lesson delivery as well as documentation audit.

Edts who do not receive competent status for their audit will be provided support and advice in the areas of weakness. In 2017, 77% of our Edts attained an exceeded target for their lesson delivery audits and none of the Edts required a repeat audit.

MLP Evaluation Project – 2 years (PEP)

BASED ON FINAL REPORT FROM TEMASEK POLYTECHNIC (2018)

The DAS Main Literacy Programme (MLP) provides a comprehensive and quality curriculum to support students with dyslexia develop and strengthen their literacy skills, and is designed for the local context. MLP curriculum integrates key essential learning components that are crucial in remediating students with learning difficulties. Its key essential learning components include Language and Vocabulary, Phonemic Awareness and Phonics, Reading Fluency, Reading Comprehension, and Writing.

Programme evaluation is an important component of any successful intervention programme. Successful intervention programmes provide evidence that they do indeed produce what they profess. Intervention that support students in addressing their learning difficulties would require a process of monitoring the students' progress as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme.

In 2015, MLP collaborated with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Temasek Polytechnic to develop multiple sets of the of programme evaluation literacy tool used by MLP. In 2016, the interim results of the programme evaluation using these tools were reported in the DAS Handbook. This year, this write-up seeks to report the final results of this collaboration.

The monitoring tools developed through the MLP-TP Programme Evaluation Project (PEP) covers 3 areas of literacy – reading, spelling, and writing. Parallel forms were also developed and used for all the tasks across the sessions. The selection of words on the reading and spelling tasks were based on the MLP's word bank, with phonetically regular words graded in difficulty level according to its scope and sequence.

Table 1 shows the different tasks, what they measure, and what the participants were required to perform.

Table 1. Programme Evaluation Tasks

TASK	TASK REQUIREMENTS	WHAT THE TASK MEASURES
Reading Task	To read a list of 18 words presented in isolation as quickly and accurately as possibly within 3 minutes	Reading fluency and accuracy
Spelling Task	To spell a list of 18 words read out by the tester in the following 3 ways: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sound spelling: Sound out phonemes that make-up the word 2. Letter spelling: Spell the word verbally 3. Written spelling: Write down the spelling of the word 	Sound, letter, and written spelling ability
Writing Task	To write down as many sentences as they can regarding a picture shown to them, within 5 minutes	Writing competency skills

In total, 82 students who were enrolled into the DAS MLP were recruited into the study. These students aged 7 to 9 years old were categorized into 4 age-categories upon admission - Group A (7-7.5 years old), Group B (7.5-8 years old), Group C (8-8.5 years old) and Group D (8.5-9 years old). Students were assessed using these tools upon admission into the DAS MLP, and every 3 months thereafter for a period of 12 months.

The study adopted an age-controlled design as participants may not be receiving intervention concurrently, and it was unethical to delay the intervention for participants as a means of control. This meant, for example, that students in Group A (7-7.5 years old) after 12 months of intervention (where their age range would then be 8-8.5 years old) were compared to students in Group C (8 - 8.5 years old age group) with 0 months of intervention.

Comparisons were made for intervention periods of 6 and 12 months. The results of the study revealed the following:

1. Early intervention is most helpful in improving students' reading accuracy and fluency
2. MLP was effective in improving students' reading fluency and accuracy and strengthening phonemic awareness and phonics
3. Apparent gains in sound spelling were noted only upon a longer duration of intervention (12 months, as compared to 6 months), whereas no significant improvement was found in letter spelling, written spelling and writing within the time frame of this study (12 months). It may be that more significantly positive results will only be apparent if the students' progress were tracked over a longer period of time.

Overall, the results of the study showed that MLP had been effective in improving the phonological aspect of language skills (which is important in the building of the foundational literacy skills), and some aspects of literacy skills of students with dyslexia within the duration of this study (12 months). Intervention had also been more effective for individuals who received intervention at an earlier age and for those who received a longer duration of intervention. This indicates the need for parents and students to work hand in hand with the DAS for a number of years for more complete progress in their literacy attainment.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



GEETHA SHANTHA RAM

Director of SpLD Assessment Services, English Language and Literacy Division, & Staff Professional Development

Geetha Shantha Ram has led programme enhancements for the DAS through the Essential Literacy Approach and the current integrated MLP curriculum. Besides ELL, Geetha oversees SpLD Assessment Services and the Staff Professional Development division. Formerly, the Assistant Director of the DAS Academy, Geetha trained Allied educators, parents and other professionals and continues to present at conferences, most recently at the 2018 British Dyslexia Association international conference.

Geetha has a Masters in English (NUS), a Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (Distinction) (LMU) and is currently pursuing a doctorate in the area of giftedness and Specific Learning Differences. With over 10 years of experience supporting children and adults in the area of dyslexia, Geetha constantly aspires to provide a quality service to dyslexics that searches for and realises their true potential and provides them with a view to appreciate their own unique gifts.



LIU YIMEI

Registered Psychologist

Yimei joined the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) in 2007 with a Bachelor of Social Sciences (Hons) from the National University of Singapore. She recently completed the Master of Arts (Applied Psychology) from the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, and is now a Registered Psychologist with the Singapore Register of Psychologists, Singapore Psychological Society. Other than conducting assessments as part of an investigation process for learning difficulties, she is also involved in the training and supervision of new psychologists at the DAS. Yimei has a keen interest in the area of dyslexia and Chinese. She obtained an Advanced Diploma in Chinese Language Teaching from the KLC International Institute and participated in the initial development of the Chinese Programme at the DAS. The research also brought her to presentations at conferences such as the International Dyslexia Association Conference and the International Symposium on Bilingualism.



SUJATHA NAIR

Assistant Director, Quality Assurance, DAS English Language and Literacy Division

Sujatha joined the DAS in 2006 as an Educational Therapist and has over the years held the positions of Centre Manager and Resources Manager. Sujatha attained a Master of Education from The University of Adelaide in 2015 and a Bachelor of Business in Accountancy from Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in 2001. Her other qualifications include a Cambridge International Diploma for Teachers and Trainers (Dyslexia) and a Diploma in Management Studies (SUSS). Sujatha is also a member of the Register of Educational Therapist Asia (RETA).



SERENA TAN ABDULLAH

Assistant Director, Curriculum Development & Implementation, DAS English Language and Literacy Division

Serena Abdullah is the Assistant Director with the English Language and Literacy (ELL) Division overseeing the development and the implementation of the curriculum at the DAS. She is also a Lead Educational Therapist who enjoys working and teaching children with learning difficulties. Her love and passion for teaching has led her to continuously seek new and innovative teaching methods to bring out the potential and self-confidence in her learners. She graduated with a Masters in Education (Curriculum and Teaching) from Nanyang Technological University/National Institute of Education (NTU/NIE) and has obtained a Cambridge International Diploma for Teachers and Trainers.

She hopes to continue enhancing the curriculum to ensure that learners from diverse backgrounds or those with varying learning needs benefit and learn effectively in class. Serena believes that every child progresses at their own pace but the process they take to reach the finishing line is



HANI ZOHRA MUHAMAD

Lead Educational Therapist and Educational Advisor

Hani Zohra Muhamad is a Lead Educational Therapist and an Educational Advisor (EA). Hani joined the Dyslexia Association of Singapore in 2006 and has over the years been teaching and working with students with dyslexia and other co-morbidities such as ADHD and SLI. As an EA, Hani contributes to the mentoring and training of new educational therapists, as well as support colleagues with challenging students. Hani holds a Masters Degree in Education (Special Education) from Nanyang Technological University (NIE-NTU), a Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Management from University of London (UOL) and a Cambridge International Diploma for Teachers and Trainers (Dyslexia). Hani is also a member of the Register of Educational Therapist Asia (RETA).



MANMEET KAUR

Staff Professional Development Executive and RETA Administrator

Manmeet Kaur joined DAS in 2013 as an Administration Officer for the Staff Professional Development (SPD) Division and was promoted to an Executive in 2015. Throughout her time, she has supported the SPD Division on staff training needs and assisting the Educational Advisors with administrative support. She organises the yearly DAS Teams Teaching Teams event since 2014. In 2015, she took on two other portfolios Administrator for RETA (Register of Educational Therapists Asia) and Research Coordinator. She has been on the UNITE SpLD Committee, assisting with the conference administrative needs since 2016 and always looks forward to assisting DAS colleagues to find the best professional development options so that they can provide quality services to DAS clients.



