



UNITE SpLD CONFERENCE

Uniting Ideas in Teaching Excellence:
Specific Learning Differences 2018

21 to 22 June 2018

Lifelong Learning Institute
11 Eunos Rd 8, Singapore 408601

The UNITE SpLD Conference seeks to bring together parents, teachers and practitioners working with children with specific learning difficulties and special educational needs. This conference will be showcasing research that covers aspects of behavioural, literacy and social emotional support, intervention and assessment for children with special learning needs. Come and listen to our SpLD experts share their research. Research will be presented in short, engaging and entertaining sessions accompanied by poster presentations and the chance to talk directly with researchers who are making a difference in the Asian region.

Asia Pacific Journal of Developmental Differences
Vol. 5, No. 2, July 2018
Keynote Presentation—Conference Day 1—21 June 2018



Technology Advancing Education

Geetha Shantha Ram^{1*}

1. Dyslexia Association of Singapore

Abstract

Education has made great strides in the last decade with a deliberate effort to increase the access to and use of technology in the teaching of learners with Specific Learning Needs. International research has continued to demonstrate the benefits while shifting the conversation from a basic use of technology to a high quality and purposeful implementation of technology in learning environments. The Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) has gone through a similar transition in its efforts to provide support to learners with dyslexia and other SpLDs, aiming to address edutech use through Teachers, parents and students. This talk will review studies conducted and explore various edutech initiatives that the DAS has implemented in a bid to advance SEN educational potential.

Keywords: Education Technology, SpLD, dyslexia

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Asia Pacific Journal of Developmental Differences
Vol. 5, No. 2, July 2018
Keynote Presentation—Conference Day 1—21 June 2018



Profiling Children at-risk for Language, Literacy and Learning Difficulties in Heterogeneous Bilingual Populations

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Abstract

Early identification of language, literacy, and other learning is especially challenging in heterogeneous bilingual populations (Hammer et al., 2014; Kohnert, 2010). This is because young bilingual children need to be assessed in both their languages on a wide range of tasks in order to determine the most accurate picture of individual strengths and weaknesses. In Part 1, we will explain the theoretical background and the design of the tasks included in our CLAP (Cognitive Linguistic Assessment Profile) assessment battery which comprises Teacher and Parent report forms, and a series of linguistically and culturally appropriate tests with norms for three groups of 4 to 6 year-old bilingual children in Singapore (English-L1/Mandarin-L2, Mandarin-L1/English-L2 and Malay-L1/English-L2). The tests include measures of receptive and expressive vocabulary in two languages, sentence imitation, speech processes (articulation and phonology), short-term and working memory, nonverbal cognitive abilities, phonological awareness, reading and spelling skills, and socio-emotional processing. In Part 2, we will then present profiles for a selection of case studies conducted in local preschools, and explain how bilingual children's difficulties can be differentiated by teachers and clinicians before they decide which approach to intervention will be the most effective. These case studies will include children with English as a Second Language (ESL), Speech Sound Disorder, Intellectual Disability (ID), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), Developmental Language Disorder (DLD), as well as Dyslexia.

Keywords: Language Development; Early Intervention; Assessment Tools

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Exploring Assistive Technology to Support Students with Dyslexia. Introducing Possible Solutions.

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Abstract

In recent years, there has been an increasing number of assistive technology devices available to meet different disabilities. Many individuals with dyslexia have difficulty in reading, writing and spelling. The present pilot study explored the use of assistive technology to improve access to reading for individuals with dyslexia. OpenBook, Voice Dream Reader and Read2Go were considered. Under consideration are such features as text-to-speech with word tracking, font size adjustments, colour settings and word spacing. Given the scarcity of studies on the usefulness of these assistive technology solutions as a learning tool for students with dyslexia, three teachers of dyslexia were each engaged to participate in a pilot study. Teachers were asked to evaluate the features with a general assistive technology evaluation rubric. Additionally, teachers were also interviewed qualitatively on their perspectives on the features of the software. Findings obtained from the pilot evaluation will be discussed with reference to features documented in the British Dyslexia Association Style Guide and in the relevant scholarship to be dyslexia-friendly. Findings will also be discussed in the context of literature that claim a reading continuum positioning rather than reading deficit account for individuals with dyslexia.

Keywords: assistive technology, text-to-speech, print modification

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Relationships between language and literacy development and academic self-efficacy and resilience

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Abstract

Learning to read underpins success within educational settings: difficulties with reading impact on all areas of a curriculum where reading is the key to independent learning. Poor educational achievement can lead to negative feelings about education, to poor self-concept and to behavioural problems, which may impact negatively on general well-being: individuals with literacy learning difficulties are also more likely to experience emotional and mental health problems. The current research has been investigating such relationships between literacy and psychosocial development, as well as ways to support literacy learning while targeting factors associated with poor self-concept and negative behaviours in children who experience significant challenges in their literacy learning. The research has involved adults and adolescents with assessments of dyslexia, as well as early and late primary school children with evidence of reading/writing difficulties. In most cases, the data were consistent with relationships between academic self-concept/self-efficacy and measures of language and literacy as early as the children's first year of school. Such relationships were larger for students with language and phonological difficulties, suggesting that those with a broader range of difficulties may suffer negative impacts on psychosocial development more than others. Interventions targeted at slightly older primary grade students has looked at ways of building resilience to challenges in learning, as well as providing strategies for overcoming reading/writing difficulties and for maintaining self-efficacy and reducing off-task behaviours. These results will be discussed to inform further developments in intervention work that considered well-being as well as academic achievement.

Keywords: Dyslexia, self-concept, negative behaviours, resilience

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The Imagery-Language Foundation: Teaching All Children to Read and Comprehend

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Abstract

Based on 32 years of instructional experience with 45,000 at-risk readers, we know that the dual coding of imagery and language is critical for language comprehension and word reading (Lindamood-Bell Learning Processes, 2017). Imagery is a basic sensory-cognitive function connecting us to the language we hear and the print we read. There are two distinct types of imagery—symbol imagery and concept imagery—intrinsic to word reading, orthographic processing, and reading comprehension. This presentation examines the effect of imagery-based, sensory-cognitive instruction on word reading and comprehension in children with reading difficulties. A consistent, repeated finding is that students with reading difficulties have shown significant word reading and comprehension improvements with imagery-based sensory-cognitive instruction. Do these same improvements hold true for students diagnosed with dyslexia or autism spectrum disorders? Behavioral and neurological research validates the imagery-language connection resulting in lasting effects on word attack, word recognition, comprehension and specific areas of brain function in at-risk readers, including students with dyslexia or autism spectrum disorders (Eden et al., 2004, Oulade et al., 2013, Krafnick et al., 2015, Murdaugh et al., 2015, Murdaugh & Maximo et al., 2015, Christodoulou et al., 2015, Romeo et al., 2017). Supported by Dual Coding Theory (Paivio, 1979), key research findings, and 32 years of instructional experience, this session reveals that imagery is a primary sensory-cognitive power source that can be developed and brought to consciousness for reading independence in children, including struggling readers, and those previously diagnosed with dyslexia or autism spectrum disorder.

Keywords: Sensory-Cognitive Instruction, Imagery-Language Connection, Reading Intervention, Symbol Imagery, Concept Imagery

Also Presented as a Poster

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Madras Dyslexia Association (MDA) - a 25 years journey

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Abstract

Madras Dyslexia Association was formed in 1992, when there was very limited awareness on dyslexia and a minimal support system to help the children. Initial periods were spent in creating awareness amongst parents, teachers and public. Little later, the parents started looking for trained special educators. We started training of special educators and part time remediation outside school hours. When we saw no relief for severely dyslexic children we created the full time remediation centre. We ran this arrangement for quite a few years. We realised that we were hardly scratching the surface. Our federal state alone has nearly 2 million dyslexic children and 700,000 of them were educated in Tamil medium, which is the local language. India has 22 official languages. The problem is not purely academic and is life long. We started resource rooms in schools by training the school teachers, and monitoring these resource rooms for a period of two years and hand over this to the school. We created a kit for the special educators. We developed TVP to provide screening and remediation techniques for those learning in Tamil language. We created a kit for them also. We started setting up resource rooms in Tamil medium schools using TVP and kit. We realised the need for training large number of teachers. Hence we increased the frequency of our training. We started doing something. We realised technology is the solution and we decided to digitise our training programme. We developed a software to track the child and give the feed back on the methodologies used. We are creating software to help remote monitoring of the resource rooms. We understood that Dyslexia is life long and requires attention from birth to adulthood. We have started pre primary screening/remediation for children of less than 5. We are planning to start work with grown up dyslexics in the near future as we look for the newer challenges.

Keywords: MDA Evolution Meeting challenges Multilingual Volume

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Effectiveness of Reading Comprehension Instruction for Primary School Learners with Dyslexia

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Abstract

Reading comprehension not only involves the ability to read and recognise words, but also to be able to make meaning from what was read. Reading comprehension tasks can be a very challenging task to a learner with dyslexia as they experience difficulties in word recognition, a precursor to text reading. In addition, they also lack a knowledge of reading strategies to help them cope with their difficulties. Reading comprehension passages are an area which learners with dyslexia have great difficulties in when tackling the Primary School Leaving Exam (PSLE), a high-stake national examination to gain entry to secondary school. Chinese learners with dyslexia at Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) are taught comprehension strategies developed through incorporating Bloom's Taxonomy and Singapore primary school's textbooks. This study is set out to evaluate the effectiveness of the reading comprehension curriculum developed at the DAS using these reading comprehension strategies through a structured learning process of modelling, scaffolded practice and independent practice in increasing a learner's ability to answer reading comprehension questions. The questions set encompasses 6 types of questions, namely, knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation question types. Students in this study are aged between Primary 3 and Primary 5. Pre and post intervention survey will be done with the students. Their class work will also be collected for analysis. Feedback for classes are also collected from the educational therapists. The findings of the study would be used to inform current intervention and possible future developments in reading comprehension in Chinese for learners with dyslexia in Singapore.

Keywords: Chinese, Reading Comprehension, Structured Literacy

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Asia Pacific Journal of Developmental Differences
Vol. 5, No. 2, July 2018
Also Presented as a Poster



Effects of Executive Attention Deficits in Children with Dyslexia: Beyond Phonology in bilingual dyslexics

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1. Madras Dyslexia Association, India

Abstract

Reading is one of the cognitive tasks that require high alert states; many studies around the world demonstrate that frontoparietal regions of the brain are involved in the reading process. Parietal regions are also mandated to alert states, disruption of parietal regions leads to disruption of attention mechanism. Considerable evidence has shown that dyslexics have a disruptive attentional mechanism, which in turn influences the reading process. In our previous studies, we observed attention deficits among children with dyslexia (CWD). In this study, we explored the attention and phonological abilities of bilingual children with dyslexia. These abilities were examined with Attention Network Test (ANT) and phoneme awareness test (PA) respectively. Data were obtained from twenty-two children with dyslexia and compared with twenty-two age and IQ matched normal readers with an average age of 12 years (SD = 0.25 years). Observed the statistically significant difference in an ANT with no interaction effect. The group difference on alerting network implies an inability to enter into and maintain an alert state in activities that require high attention. The deficit on orienting network implies lesser or no reaction to the target cue, that in turn affected the performance. Finally, the deficit on the executive network implies an effort full control of attention, error monitoring and interface control. Therefore, a disruptive attentional mechanism in dyslexics could be one of the reasons for higher reaction times and lower accuracy compared to normal readers. Additionally, we observed a marginal difference in gender, which indicates a slight difference in performance levels of girls and boys. However, ANT male disadvantage was well pronounced, and the effect of gender was especially positive for boys who were dyslexic. But on word / non-word reading tests, we observed longer duration. To sum up, by directly addressing both attentional and phonological deficits with the same sample, it has been possible to test the applicability in rehabilitation contexts less frequently studied in the literature. Our results show a clear role of prominent attentional deficits and attenuated phonological processing. This deficit is not a general attention deficit; rather, it is specific to the process of alerting and executive attention. Consequently, strategies designed to enhance these attention networks should be considered while developing remedial training programs for children with dyslexia, to increase their success in academic and behavioral domains. At the same time, interesting venues for future research for the exploration of gender differences in dyslexia is apparent from these data.

Keywords: alerting- network, dyslexia, executive- network, orienting- network, and phonology.

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Asia Pacific Journal of Developmental Differences
Vol. 5, No. 2, July 2018
Also Presented as a Poster



Rolling out an evidence-based Intervention for struggling learners and providing professional development for teachers through a global partnership in India: A pilot project.

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1. The Hospital for Sick Children, Canada
2. Anjali Morris Foundation (AMF), India
3. University of Toronto, Canada

Abstract

We describe a pilot partnership between the Hospital for Sick Children's Empower™ Reading Program (Toronto, Canada), a set of research-based literacy programs for children with reading disabilities, and the Dr. Anjali Morris Foundation (AMF) (Pune, India), a leader in services for Indian students at risk for LD and in teacher professional development. In June 2016, 10 AMF teachers were trained by the first author in the Empower™ Reading Decoding and Spelling (DS) program, which focuses on foundational literacy skills. Implementation of this 110-lesson program was conducted at AMF with 60 struggling readers. Pre-, mid- and post-program results are available for 40 students who completed the program. Standard scores on the W-J Letter-Word Identification and Word Attack subtests demonstrate considerable improvement in decoding and word identification skills, with average standard scores on Letter-Word Identification increasing by more than a standard deviation, and by almost two standard deviations on Word Attack. By post-testing, students improved by an average of 28 test words on an experimental measure of multi-syllabic word reading. These positive results led to the scale-up of Empower's teacher PD starting in June 2017; 21 additional teachers from AMF and five schools are being trained and three AMF teachers are being trained in the Comprehension and Vocabulary Empower™ Program. Preliminary results of this expansion will be available by June 2018. This partnership may inform future literacy intervention practices globally, providing programming and teacher PD in low- and middle-income countries, and building capacity to help those who struggle with literacy learning.

Keywords: scaling up; global partnership; literacy; reading; struggling readers;

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Asia Pacific Journal of Developmental Differences
Vol. 5, No. 2, July 2018
Also Presented as a Poster



Resource Room – Remedial education for children with SLD within the school premises – the need of the hour.

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1. *Madras Dyslexia Association*

Abstract

Children with Specific Learning Disabilities need timely remedial support/ intervention in their school going years to optimize their academic performances lack of this support creates increasing discrepancy between their abilities and performances. Children fail to perform to their full potential despite being of average to above average intelligence. They flounder and is lost. Such remedial support is not easily accessible but when established within the school environment can make a vital difference to this scenario and is beneficial in multiple ways. This presentation advocates the inclusion of a Remedial center in the mainstream school to support the education process of a child with Dyslexia to ensure that no child to fall through the cracks. First it highlights how such a centre can create a Dyslexia Sensitive Educational Environment. It focuses on the need to identify and to provide remediation to the child with Specific Learning Disabilities within the school milieu. Then the paper uses case studies of SLD children in mainstream schools where MDA has set up resource room centres to demonstrate the positive impact of the project on critical stakeholders like the management of the school, parents and teachers and importantly details how the strategies used for teaching the students have universal implications and could valuably benefit all students in the classroom. The paper lastly discusses the process of setting up of such a centre. It presents evidence to show that running a remedial centre within the school campus is sustainable, scalable, replicable and is pivotal to supporting students with SLD in their critical years of learning.

Keywords: Specific Learning Disabilities, Remedial Centre Mainstream, Inclusion

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Dyslexia and learning – the triangle hypothesis as an explanatory framework for dyslexia.

Angela Fawcett^{1*}

1. *Dyslexia Association of Singapore*

Abstract

For many years, our research has been tracing the deficits in dyslexia to a problem in learning, in automatisisation, procedural learning and in delayed neural commitment, and this evidence has been presented internationally. Recently, we have argued that it is important to recognise the positive aspects of dyslexia, that can compensate for many of these deficits, the peak of the triangle in this new theory. In this talk, I shall introduce our latest hypothesis, and complete the triangle hypothesis of dyslexia, presented for the first time at this conference. The triangle hypothesis proposes a 2nd ongoing source of problems for learning in dyslexia, based on consistent mishandling of the learning issues, by lack of awareness of the manifestations of dyslexia in education. An emphasis on rote learning and a rigid approach, that fails to recognise learning differences, exacerbates and compounds the underlying problems, creating learned helplessness in dyslexic children, who may therefore never fulfil their potential. This theory suggests that early recognition and appropriate support is the best way forward to ensure that dyslexic children develop resilience, flourish and manifest their many strengths, rather than giving up the lifelong struggle for success. The talk will be illustrated with experimental findings and evidence from research over a 30-year period.

Keywords: procedural learning, automatisisation, delayed neural commitment, positive dyslexia, the triangle hypothesis,

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An Evaluation of the preference-based teaching approach for children with dyslexia and challenging behaviours

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Abstract

Dyslexia is characterised by difficulties in accurate and/or fluent word recognition, reading comprehension, written expression and poor spelling. Research studies have mainly focused on helping students' diagnosed with dyslexia through educational remediation. However, little research has been done on increasing on-task behaviour and attentiveness while reducing behavioural problems for students' diagnosed with dyslexia. In the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS), students' diagnosed with dyslexia tend to get disengaged in the classroom setting. This small-scale qualitative case study used a non-concurrent multiple baseline design across three participants and was conducted at DAS between August 2016 to March 2017. Its goal is to examine the effectiveness of a preference-based teaching approach. A preference-based teaching approach involves identifying student preferences within the classroom setting and designing teaching programmes for each student in consideration of these preferences. An evaluation of the preference-based teaching approach was carried out through a video observation of 15 teaching sessions and questionnaires. Analysis of the questionnaires revealed that the participants enjoyed the sessions and found the preference-based approach fulfilling. The video recorded sessions were analysed by the researcher and the Inter-observer agreement (IOA). The sessions revealed that all three students' performed 100% on-task behaviours and active engagement from sessions eight to 12. The study concluded that the preference-based teaching approach had an effect on the on-task behaviour and attentiveness level for all three students' diagnosed with dyslexia. The findings of this study can be used to improve teachers' lesson planning skills with the aim to increase students' on-task behavior and active engagement levels.

Keywords: preference, on-task behaviour, attentiveness, active engagement, classroom setting, inter-observer agreement (IOA), attentiveness hyperactivity disorder, dyslexia

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Effect of Exposure on self esteem of Dyslexics

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1. Madras Dyslexia Association, India

Abstract

Dyslexia has long been perceived to be a barrier for students not only in academic pursuits but in creative pursuits as well. This can be linked to the psychological trauma these students go through because of their academic shortcomings especially in traditionally study oriented societies in the Asia-Pacific region. A constant emphasis on their learning disability disheartens them and also imbues in them the idea that scholastic achievement is the only metric for meritocracy. The situation is worsened when these students in mainstream schools observe students around them. However, it has been historically proven that students with dyslexia often possess latent talents and skills in fields that are not necessarily academically oriented, that measure up, if not supercede those of other students. It has long been the belief of MDA that such talents in vocational and creative activities are what must be utilised and tapped if we are to create students who can go on to better themselves and the society around them. With this simple idea in mind, MDA launched Dyslexia Week, a festival for awareness and talent based competitions designed to unearth hidden talents amongst dyslexics. With a healthy participation of 450 students, the festival is now looking to collaborate with organisations around the world. Our message is simple: It is not how smart students are, it is about how they are smart

Keywords: Self esteem of Dyslexics

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Speech, Language and Communication Needs - Case Studies

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1. *Dyslexia Association of Singapore*

Abstract

Case Study 1: A six-year-old Kindergartner was occasionally difficult to understand due to speech that was not as clear as that of his classmates. He enrolled in speech-language therapy where he participated in fun and interactive activities focusing on correct placement and practice of the target sounds. The boy's marked improvement in speech made him much more intelligible.

Case Study 2: A seven-year-old student in Primary1 made speech errors which were either unusual or not appropriate for his age. Certain sounds, such as /k/, /g/ and /r/, were initially not stimulable. Through speech-language therapy, he was later able to produce these sounds either in isolation or in words through multisensory and visualization activities to learn correct placement and production of target sounds.

Case study 3: A seven-year-old Kindergartner diagnosed with moderate-severe language disorder possessed a limited vocabulary. During speech-language therapy sessions, a combination of direct intervention techniques was used to improve vocabulary acquisition in a small group setting. Results show an improved recall and understanding of words targeted, as well as a slight gain in non-targeted words.

Case study 4: A nine-year-old student in Primary 3 with language impairment presented with errors in in syntax. In speech-language therapy sessions, direct intervention in explicit teaching of sentence structure and the use of connectors were employed to facilitate improvement in both receptive and expressive language orally and in writing.

Keywords: Speech and Language Intervention

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Impact of Multiple Intelligences on the emotional wellbeing of the child with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)

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Abstract

Typically a child with Specific Learning Disabilities is pushed from pillar to post in the process of identification and remediation of their difficulties. This along with the constant focus on their negatives leaves the child emotionally stressed and unable to perform academically. A vicious circle of underperformance follows. This paper focuses on the use of Multiple Intelligences as a complimentary method in exploring the unique potential of these children and its impact on their emotional health. It primarily focuses on the methods used at HYDRA – a Multiple Intelligences based resource centre, where the unique natural potential and competencies of the SLD child are identified and nurtured. The paper starts with a short introduction to Dr. Howard Gardner’s theory of Multiple Intelligences. It will then take a look at why the use of Multiple Intelligences is vital for children with Specific Learning Disabilities. The practical aspects of how the process unfolds at HYDRA will be explored, through videos. Next it will take a detailed view at the impact this process has on the emotional wellbeing and self-esteem of the child, through a few case studies. Finally the paper aims to explore the further action points that can be taken in the use of Multiple Intelligences in creating a nurturing, harmonious environment that empowers and enables the child with SLD in realising his potential.

Keywords: Multiple Intelligences, Dyslexia, empower and enable, complimentary technique, Dr Howard Gardner

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The Development of Education for Students with Learning Disabilities in Taiwan

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Abstract

In Taiwan, the child with Learning Disabilities had been provided the special education service acted by the Special Education Regulations in 1977. The term, learning disabilities, is a broad term used to define the child who exhibits significant learning difficulties in one or more of these areas: listening, speaking, reading, writing or calculation. The current definition and identification was required in the Regulation of Students with Disabilities and Giftedness by the Ministry of Education in 2013. The education for the students with learning disabilities has been developed for 40 years. The Ministry of Education in Taiwan has been publishing national statistics pertaining to special education annually since 1999. Those data come from the national Special Education Transmit Net that collects special education related information across the whole country. This report will present the tendency analysis with the incidence rate, education placement, gender and related issues for the students with learning disabilities in Taiwan.

Keywords: Learning disabilities, Education, Incidence rate, education placement

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Music Teachers and Dyslexia: Perceptions, Understanding and Observations

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Abstract

Academic studies that focus on primary teachers' knowledge of dyslexia are relatively scarce; however some sources indicate that many teachers hold a number of misperceptions and varied interpretations of the nature of dyslexia and that these impact on expectations of classroom performance, (Soriano-Ferrer, Echegary-Bengoa & Malathesa-Joshi, 2015). Areas of deficits were identified in domains including general information, symptoms/diagnosis and effective interventions/ support. In music, there is a focus on sequencing, pitch, rhythm and links have been made between these and phonological awareness (Goswami, Huss, Mead, Fosker & Verney, 2012, Crispiani & Palmieri 2015). Overy (2003) refers to current theories suggesting that timing deficits may be a key factor and dyslexic children have been found to exhibit timing difficulties in domains such as language, music, perception and motor control. Thus, music teachers are a unique position to observe weaknesses and strengths in their students' performance, based on a secure, research based knowledge about dyslexia. In this presentation I will provide some background to this field and provide an overview of my findings in relation to the responses a small group of teachers made to a survey about their knowledge, perceptions and observations in relation to aspects of dyslexia. The intention is to use the findings to inform professional development programmes, providing music teachers with appropriate research and knowledge to support their observations and interventions.

Keywords: Teacher knowledge, non-language indicators of dyslexia, common misperceptions

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Going Beyond Instructional Technology Integration Models in Instructional Designs with EdTech

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Abstract

Almost every educational institution day is attempting to begin or already on their journey to incorporate educational technologies into the lesson designs. The instructional designers or educational technologists of these institutions would have had looked at various prominent instructional technology integration models such as the TPaCK, SAMR, RAT, TAM, TIP and TIM, some of which this presentation will cover in greater detail. The question remains though, on what makes a model valuable to instructional designers and educators. Instructional technology integration models are extensively used in trainings for educators as well as educational research in understanding and evaluating pedagogical integration of educational technology in educational institutions. Just as theoretical constructs are embraced and applied into practice and research, one should note that they are diverse and appear to be chosen under uncritical, tribalistic (Kimmons, 2015; Kimmons and Hall, 2016) or anarchic (Feyerabend 1975) ways. Some technology integration models have had the advantage of greater dispersion and thus seem more prominent such as the TPaCK. For example, the TPaCK is very popular amongst researchers whereas the SAMR model is more popular among instructional designers and educators but what is not as clear are 1) what are the elements underlying this dispersion of preference; 2) what characteristics of such models make them importable by various groups of users and 3) how these models should be adopted, adapted and critically assessed with regards to other models. Analytical discussions about such theoretical pluralism will limit advocacy for generalist theoretical constructs which most people in the field of educational technology are familiar with without ignoring those that we are not. This presentation will therefore critically analyse some of the instructional technology integration models, of which some come from the same theoretical constructs, to suggest how models can be brought together to create a unique approach for the educational institution. This is because the needs, focus and preference of each stakeholder (researcher, educator, policymaker, administrator, etc.) within the same institution is diverse and it is unrealistic to expect a single theoretical construct to meet these needs and objectives satisfactorily.

Keywords: technology intergration

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Case Management Discussion - Supporting Challenging Learners

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1. *Dyslexia Association of Singapore*

Abstract

Learning difficulties may arise from learning disorders such as dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), specific language impairment (SLI), dyspraxia, dysgraphia, sensory processing, auditory processing and many others. In addition, emotional and behavioural issues can also lead to barriers to learning. The situation can be made worse if a student diagnosed with any learning disorder displays emotional and behavioural issues. In an increasingly complex world, teachers have to be aware of which diagnosis is impacting more on the learning difficulties of students as this would suggest on how the learning needs are to be met and how a class with such students can be managed efficiently. Teachers teaching a class of various profiles of learners would find classroom management demanding as behavioural challenges surface. It is well-documented that a teacher will not be able to teach efficiently if he/she has to handle emotional and behavioural issues of students. At the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS), Educational Therapists (EdTs) with students who display challenging literacy and behavioural needs are supported by a group of Educational Advisors (EAs). These students are observed for their learning needs and strategies are implemented to mitigate their difficulties. Action plans and goals are set for the semester as a form of progress monitoring towards specific achievement. Case management discussions when done right, result in the most satisfying and comprehensive support for students and teachers, whose lives we aim to enrich and empower. With the benefit of a multidisciplinary team and their varied perspectives, we can plan, coordinate and review the care of our students.

Keywords: behaviour difficulties, dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), specific language impairment (SLI), dyspraxia, dysgraphia, sensory processing, auditory processing

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Phonological processing skills for typical and atypical readers in Singapore

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1. National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University

Abstract

Phonological awareness is a strong correlate and predictor of reading across languages (Melby-Lervåg & Lervåg, 2011; Kidd et al., 2015;). Difficulties with phonological processing are a hallmark of dyslexia (Snowling, 2000; Stanovich, 1988), leading to the predominant view of the phonological core deficit model for dyslexia. This is in spite of alternative multiple deficit models (Pennington, 2006). Moreover, most research on dyslexia is of Western origin, and has only recently broadened to other regions and contexts. Etiology and diagnosis often are founded upon the phonological core deficit view, but questions remain about the suitability of this emphasis across various contexts. In this study based in Singapore, we compare the performance of dyslexic children with typical child (aged 6-10) and adult (aged 19-34) readers on subtests of the CTOPP2. Phonological awareness tasks (blending and phoneme isolation), rapid naming tasks (for letters and digits), and a memory task (forward digit repetition) were administered to the groups, along with English word reading. Using ANOVA, we find that the groups did not differ on phonological awareness performance. For the rapid naming tasks, the adult readers performed better than the children, and the adult group performed better than the dyslexic children on the memory task. Correlational analysis showed that word reading was related to rapid naming and memory scores for the children altogether, while word reading by adults was related to phonological awareness as well as rapid naming and memory scores. Results are discussed with implications for diagnosis of reading disorders.

Keywords: Phonological awareness, rapid naming, phonological memory, dyslexia

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Getting Reading Right with SMARTER*phonics in Sarawak, Malaysia: Empowerment of Preschool children in English Language

Ong Puay Hoon^{1*}

1 Dyslexia Association of Sarawak, Malaysia

Abstract

Literacy is the ability to read, write and learn. Because of its “multiplier effect”, literacy helps eradicate poverty, reduce child mortality, curb population growth, achieve gender equality and ensure sustainable development, peace and democracy. In 1947, UNESCO recognized the acquisition of literacy as a fundamental aspect of an individual’s development and human rights (UNESCO, 1947). Its ‘Education for All’ movement is a global commitment to provide quality basic education for all children, youth and adults. An approximate three percent of the total number of primary school children in Sarawak was said to have failed to achieve the minimum criteria of English language in the Literacy and Numeracy Screening (LINUS) Test in 2016 (State Education Department, 2017). Although there has been no systematic research, it is suspected that a significant proportion of these failures has risk for dyslexia and/or other learning disabilities. The SMARTER*phonics program was developed by the Dyslexia Association of Sarawak to empower all emergent readers, with and without risk for dyslexia and other learning disabilities, with basic decoding and encoding skills in English. It is currently being adopted by all preschools in the state. This article presents the outcomes of a six-month implementation of SMARTER*phonics among 740 preschool children (aged 5-6 years old) in terms of comparative analysis of scores from pre- and post-tests. In addition, the post-test scores obtained by these children will be compared to a control group of 99 children who were not exposed to the program at the end of the school year. The outcomes point to the importance of phonics-based instructional programs which are structured, cumulative, specific and multisensorial to teach preschool children to read and write in English.

Keywords: Reading in English Language, SMARTER*phonics

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Asia Pacific Journal of Developmental Differences
Vol. 5, No. 2, July 2018
Also Presented as a Poster



Constructivist-oriented approach for Teaching and Learning for children with special needs in the mainstream primary school.

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Abstract

This is an autoethnographic inquiry into the quest to explore the impact of constructivist-oriented teaching on children with special needs in a mainstream primary school in Singapore. Situated in a social constructivist paradigm of inquiry and using a variety of qualitative methods for information generation, this research is two-fold. By employing information gleaned from multiple interviews with both students and teachers, the research explores the current issues and problems faced by this particular group of children in their learning in the mainstream classroom. Rising from the input of this initial generation of information, this research further explored the autoethnographical journey of the researcher as a teacher who started as a novice in constructivist-oriented teaching, illustrating the researcher's attempts to use the elements of constructivist-oriented teaching to resolve the issues and problems of children disabled in learning in her classes. The researcher's journey continued four years later, with her being a more experienced constructivist-oriented teacher. Her mode of teaching is grounded on Lev Vygotsky's social constructivist views, especially those articulated in his theory of dysontogenesis, which emphasises the empowerment of individuals rather than a focus on their impairments or deficiencies, suggesting how children with special needs should be offered the opportunity to maximise their potential. Information generated from this research is presented as an autoethnographical novel, which is a detailed appraisal-based description of the educational experience. This part of the research concludes that constructivist-oriented approaches offer a viable platform for the teaching of children with special needs, making them more enabled, although all educational stakeholders have to be adequately equipped to sustain such approaches. A framework is then proposed for teachers who can exercise multiple roles to effectively work with children with special needs.

Keywords: special needs, constructivist-oriented teaching and learning

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Executive functions and its relation with Dyslexia: exercises to improve planning and self-regulation

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1. Victor Center Macerata , Italy
2. Macerata University, Italy

Abstract

Difficulties in executive functions, with particular reference to neural circuits, whose functionality requires effective exchange between the hemispheres, forms the basis for our Cognitive Motor Training (The Crispiani Method) utilising cross pattern exercises as part of a larger research programme. Based on the prompt activation (incipit) of important early markers of executive functions such as planning the directionality from left to right, visual tracking, cognitive control, self-regulation, organization in space and time, inhibitory processes and monitoring the state of alertness, our children improve their performances and everyday living: walking, riding a bike and in many higher order functions, relating to school performance, and academic skills such as reading, writing and maths.

Keywords: executive functions, planning, self regulation, cross patterns exercises

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A Stitch in Time

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1. Madras Dyslexic Association, India

Abstract

KEY : Our main aim at Ananya is to identify the child who may be at risk for possible learning difficulties and to facilitate the child in the way best suited for him or her, without labelling him or her. There is a very old and powerful saying, 'a strong foundation is the key for a good building'. Education is not only about imparting what we know, but also about understanding the uniqueness in every child, and providing a fair chance for the holistic development of the child, depending on his strengths and needs. As the child grows, let's be involved and pay attention to the developmental progress and difficulties the child undergoes. We can nurture, support and provide resources to maximize the child's abilities, as early as possible, so that no vital links are left unnoticed. To acquire any skill, first the pre-skills develop. Then, with constant stimulation the skill is exhibited by the child appropriately. If there is a lag in the development of a pre-skill, then automatically there will be a lag followed in the areas connected to that pre-skill. It is extremely important to try and bridge this gap in order to pre-empt any future failure the child may face. The paper will focus on:-

1. The vitality of early intervention and why it should not be over looked.
2. The areas to look out for while conducting the informal assessment at the pre primary level.
3. How to make connections of the child's skills displayed today with the future development of his skills.
4. The possible cause of any academic delays.
5. How this timely intervention will provide a platform for the caregivers to make a unique structured plan and work towards the overall development of the child, thus bringing out the best in him and make school a happier place.
6. Early intervention to address learning delays can make a crucial difference in the child's life.

Keywords: Early intervention, holistic development.

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Full Time Pull out Remedial Centre Model for Children with Specific Learning Disabilities

Harini Ramanujam^{1*} and Meenakshi Sriram¹

1. Madras Dyslexia Association, India

Abstract

The paper presents the model of a full time pull out remedial centre, "Ananya" of Madras Dyslexia Association. MDA was started by a few parents and educationists 25 years ago to help children with Specific Learning Disabilities. This model caters to needs of SLD children who have a wide gap between their performance and grade requirements and need intense remediation on a full time basis which is typically unavailable in a mainstream school setting. In this model the child is "pulled out" from the school for a year or two. During his tenure at Ananya, the child is equipped with academic skills and executive functionary skills for a smooth onward journey in main stream school and life. At Ananya a team of experienced special educators, therapists, counsellors and parents work on specially crafted program that remediates difficulties even as it enables to bring about the holistic development of a child. Once the child has acquired the necessary skills, the parents are guided and mentored on a regular basis in the child's journey into the main stream environment. The paper concludes by elaborating how with years of working in this area, the centre has evolved into a "action research program" developing specialised resources, methodologies, continuous implementation with progress monitoring strategies for children with Specific Learning Disabilities

Keywords: Full time Pull out centre

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A 360 Post-Sec Pact - Know, Find, Learn

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1. Dyslexia Association of Singapore

Abstract

The post secondary landscape in Singapore has evolved over the past decade and increasingly, more attention is being paid to learners with dyslexia attending Institutes of Higher Learning (IHL). Existing policies and funding cover students with more “visible” disabilities but miss out on students with the hidden handicaps like dyslexia. Following consultations with various IHLs, it quickly became clear that to best support post-secondary learners with dyslexia, a holistic support model must be employed that combines raising of awareness, formal investigation of needs and training for teachers to identify and support learners in school.

This presentation shares a vision - a 360 Post-Sec Pact, which individuals and schools are encouraged to consider if they are keen to empower post-sec learners. This pact is based on a framework that effective intervention begins with internal awareness raising, a formalised and systematic screening and identification effort and teacher readiness. Besides elaborating on this pact, this presentation will share some identification tools such as checklists as well as metacognitive strategies aimed at improving self awareness and executive functions to begin this process with post-secondary learners.

Keywords: Post-secondary, Dyslexia, Support framework, Dyslexia awareness, Identification, Screening checklist Intervention, Executive Functions, Metacognition, Teacher readiness

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Exploring the effectiveness of the English Examination Skills Programme on struggling non-dyslexic learners

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1. Dyslexia Association of Singapore

Abstract

The effectiveness of sequential, cumulative and multisensory intervention programmes on learners with dyslexia has been proven in multiple academic literature. This study serves as a follow-up on a previous research which explored the classroom practices of the English Exam Skills Programme (EESP). In comparison between students with dyslexia and a control group, the study found significant progress in their grammar, vocabulary and comprehension components of their English examination paper after intervention. Aligning with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework, the EESP is postulated to benefit all learners, including struggling learners with or without a diagnosis of SpLD or any learning disorders, and are scoring below 65% in their school English Language examination papers. This study seeks to investigate the possible effectiveness of the EESP on a group of struggling non-dyslexic learners after a 20-week intervention.

Keywords: English Exam Skills, structured intervention, dyslexia, struggling learners, UDL

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Identifying dyslexic-type difficulties in English-Chinese learners in Singapore

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1. DAS Academy, Singapore

Abstract

With the increasing awareness of dyslexia in both monolingual and bilingual countries, there is a need for screening procedures that are valid for different languages and reliable to identify dyslexia differentiated from inexperienced second language learners. Although phonological deficit has been the consensus as being the underlying cause of literacy difficulties across languages and bilingual populations, other cognitive factors related to the different scripts of the languages should be considered for a more practical purpose of assessment development as well as a more appropriate educational support. Hence, there is a call for screening measures or analytical tools from a bilingual perspective that provides for a spectrum of dyslexic-type difficulties in two languages. The methodology follows the test development protocol suggested by Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998; cited in Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001), which involves a qualitative study exploring potential factors contributing to the construct under study, followed by the development of items, pilot testing, and finally a validation. The research is currently ongoing and the first phase has been conducted using qualitative case study approach. The objective of the case study is to identify the Singapore dyslexic-type difficulties bilingual learners have in either / both English and Chinese languages. Analysis of qualitative data adopts the grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) to present a framework to explain how dyslexia affects learning of English and Chinese languages and its symptoms manifested in each language. The findings will form the basis for the development of the bilingual dyslexia screening tool prototype, which will be constructed and validated in a follow-up study.

Keywords: bilingual, English, Chinese, bilingual dyslexia screening

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Test of the Double Deficit Hypothesis of dyslexia: Comparison in two Japanese writing systems

Fumie Shibuya^{1*} and Akira Uno¹

1. University of Tsukuba

Abstract

The Double Deficit Hypothesis (DDH; Bowers and Wolf, 1993), suggests that dyslexia results from a combination of phonological awareness and naming-speed problems. Papadopoulos, et al., (2009) reported that the degree of transparency in a writing system affects the level of dyslexia in Latin and Greek languages. In the present study, we investigated how the writing system affects the DDH using Hiragana and Kanji. Hiragana is quite transparent, while in contrast, Kanji is an opaque writing system. The participants were 564 children in elementary school from first to sixth grade. We conducted cognitive ability and reading tests of Hiragana and Kanji in all the participants. In Hiragana, four groups were found based on the scores in phonological and naming-speed test: double-deficit group (DD; $n = 1$), phonological deficit group (PD; $n = 4$), naming deficit group (ND; $n = 3$), and a group we could not classify based on DDH (Other; $n = 1$). On the other hand, in Kanji, three groups were found: PD ($n=6$), ND ($n = 1$), and Other ($n = 11$). We could not find DD in Kanji. We could find a single naming speed deficit group in both writing systems, however the DD group did not show the severest reading difficulty, in comparison with other groups in Hiragana, as would be predicted by the DDH. Our data suggested that the degree of transparency may not explain the results of dyslexia based on the DDH.

Keywords: The Double Deficit Hypothesis, the degree of transparency in a writing system, Japanese speaking children, Kanji and Hiragana

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Impact of DAS Maths Intervention: An exploratory case study of struggling primary school learners without dyslexia

Siti Aishah Shukri^{1*} and Sathi Manon¹

1. *Dyslexia Association of Singapore*

Abstract

DAS Maths has been helping our existing students with dyslexia since 2009 as a 3rd hour programme, conducted once a week. While the programme has been known to benefit our students with dyslexia (Yeo, Bunn, Abdullah, Bte Shukri & Oehlers-Jaen, 2015), there is little information on whether the same type of intervention would be of any benefit for non-dyslexic students who are also having difficulties in mathematics. This case study aims to investigate the impact of conducting the DAS Maths intervention on struggling learners without dyslexia and at the same time, explore the profile of these learners whose scores improved after going through the remediation. Two students of Primary 3 and Primary 5 were selected to undergo a 20-week intervention with a group of students with dyslexia in their own respective class. A pre and posttest at the start and end of each term were conducted and teachers were interviewed to state their observations about how their teaching instructions were received by the two students. The two students made considerable improvements which were parallel to their peers in the same class. The results showed that there are profiles of struggling learners without dyslexia who could also benefit from the DAS Maths remediation. Analysis on their profile is still in progress. Additionally, observations made by teachers will also have implications for future understanding of teaching practices.

Keywords: non-dyslexic, maths, intervention, remediation, primary school learners without dyslexia, struggling learners

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A Qualitative Study of Collaborative Practices between Allied Educators and Teachers in Mainstream Primary Schools

June Siew^{1*}

1. DAS Academy, Singapore

Abstract

Inclusive education in Singapore is relatively new (see Lim, Wong, & Tan, 2014; Tam, Seever, Gardner, & Heng, 2006; Weng, Walker, & Rosenblatt, 2015; Yeo, Ching, Neihart, & Huan, 2016). To support inclusion in mainstream schools, Allied Educators for Learning and Behaviour Support or AED(LBS) have been deployed to schools since 2005 with the responsibility of supporting children with mild special educational needs (SEN) such as dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or autism spectrum disorder (ASD) (MOE, 2016). To date, there is at least one AED(LBS) in each primary school and in 92 secondary schools (MOE, 2016). Yet, the number of children with SEN in mainstream schools is quickly rising (Lim, 2016). To allow effective penetration of SEN support, AED (LBS) increasingly need to engage the support of mainstream teachers to ensure every student can thrive in an inclusive classroom. In this context, collaboration between AED (LBS) and teachers becomes a cornerstone of successful inclusion in mainstream schools. In the absence of any local published studies which focus on collaborative practices between AED(LBS) and teachers in the local mainstream schools, this study seeks to examine the current collaborative practices between AED(LBS) and teachers and identify the factors that enable or impede these practices. It is anticipated that these findings can lead to improved practices in our relatively new inclusive education system. This is an on-going study and preliminary results will be presented.

Keywords: collaborative practices, collaboration, inclusive education, inclusive classroom, inclusion, allied educators

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Parent Advocacy - A Success Model

Tina Tan^{1*}

1. Society for Promotion of ADHD Research and Knowledge, (SPARK) Singapore

Abstract

As a representative of SPARK, I will be speaking on how parents can better advocate for their ADHD children in the school context in order to build a collaborative working relationship with shared expectations and reduced pressure for all parties.

Keywords: Parents, Coping, Collaboration, Success definitions, Pressure

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Evaluating the MOE-Aided DAS Literacy Programme

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1. Temasek Polytechnic
2. Dyslexia Association of Singapore

Abstract

Dyslexia is a learning disability that hinders the accuracy and fluency of word reading, spelling and writing, despite average or above average intelligence and adequate educational exposure (Peterson & Pennington, 2012; Thompson et al., 2015). Affecting over 700 million people worldwide, it is one of the most prevalent learning disability (Dyslexia International, 2014). According to Snowling (1980), most children with dyslexia have a phonological processing deficit, which is thought to hinder word recognition and interfere with the mapping of phonemes of spoken words and written letters. The phonological deficit hypothesis posits that dyslexics' difficulty in mapping sounds to their corresponding letters causes them to struggle with reading and recognizing words. Past studies found that interventions aimed at developing phonological awareness improved dyslexics' linguistic abilities. The Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) provides intervention through the MOE-Aided DAS Literacy Programme (MAP) to help students improve their phonemic awareness, phonics, morphology, vocabulary, reading fluency and comprehension, as well as writing abilities. The MAP adopts a holistic approach that caters to the profile and learning challenges of students accessing the programme, and is specifically designed for the local context. The present study evaluates MAP's effectiveness by tracking 83 students' (aged 7-9) literacy abilities over a period of 12 months. To overcome ethical and logistical constraints, an age-control study design was employed. Upon admission into MAP, students were categorized into one of four age-categories (7 - 7.5 years old, 7.5 - 8 years old, 8 - 8.5 years old, 8.5 - 9 years old). Students were assessed upon admission, and at 3, 6, 9 and 12 months after admission. For each assessment session, students completed a speeded reading task, a writing task and a spelling task (further divided into sound-, letter- and written-spelling subtasks). Parallel forms were developed and employed for all the tasks across the sessions. To evaluate whether MAP intervention improved different linguistic abilities, students in the same age range, but with different lengths of interventions, were compared. For example, students in the 7 - 7.5 years old age-group after 12 months of intervention (age range = 8 - 8.5 years old) were compared to students in the 8 - 8.5 years old age group with 0 months intervention. Comparisons were made for intervention periods of 6 and 12 months. Participants' performance for the different tasks were also tracked for each of the age groups. Based on the statistical analysis, three main findings emerged: (a) the MAP intervention improved performance in both reading and spelling tasks, but not the writing task; (b) improvements were more likely to be observed for younger participants; and (c) effects of MAP intervention were only apparent after 6 months. The findings will be discussed in the context of the existing MAP curriculum, and possible suggestions on improving it.

Keywords: Programme Evaluation

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Examining subtypes of dyslexia and their associated cognitive profiles - A pilot study

Deborah Tan Wen Li^{1*} and Liu Yimei^{1*}

1. *Dyslexia Association of Singapore*

Abstract

A pilot study carried out in two parts examined the prevalence of the subtypes of dyslexia and the cognitive profiles of Singaporean primary school students who were diagnosed with Dyslexia. Twenty-nine students with dyslexia and a control group of 29 students with no known learning difficulties participated in the first part of the study. Measures of phonological coding and orthographic coding were administered to determine if students with dyslexia belonged to either one of the six subtypes (pure or relative phonological dyslexia, pure or relative surface dyslexia, mixed dyslexia, or mild dyslexia). In the second part of the study, the deficits in orthographic or phonological coding of the 29 students with dyslexia were then correlated with various cognitive factors – phonological awareness, verbal short-term memory, rapid automatized naming (RAN), visual skills. Results in the first part of the study showed that about half (51.7%) of the dyslexic students displayed a dissociation in their phonological and orthographic processing skills. There were also dyslexic students who did not exhibit a clear dissociation between their phonological and orthographic skills - 31% of the dyslexic students showed relatively intact skills in both areas (mild subtype) whereas 17.2% had similarly impaired skills in both areas (mixed subtype). Results in the second part of the study showed positive correlations between phonological coding tasks and phonological awareness, verbal short-term memory and visual factors. Orthographic coding tasks only correlated positively with specific areas of visual skills. However, RAN did not correlate with both phonological coding and orthographic coding tasks.

Keywords: Dyslexia, subtypes of dyslexia, cognitive factors

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The emphasis on the explicit teaching of Reading Comprehension to learners on the DAS Main Literacy Programme

Serena Tan^{1*}

1. *Dyslexia Association of Singapore*

Abstract

Reading comprehension is defined as the “process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language” (Snow, 2002). Aside from experiencing difficulty in reading, spelling and writing, learners with dyslexia also struggle with comprehending text that involves higher-order thinking processes which is required of them to extrapolate meaning from the text and make sense of what they have read. Therefore, the explicit teaching of reading skills and textual features such as the employment of annotation is highly emphasised in the delivery of Reading Comprehension to learners at the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS). This presentation will also include a few sample comprehension questions taken from the Reading Comprehension curriculum pack, the corresponding section of text relevant to those questions to highlight the systematic process and structure put in place to guide and scaffold learners to understand the text better.

Keywords: Dyslexia, Reading comprehension,

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Working with Youths with extremely low language and literacy: A case study

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1. NorthLight School, Singapore

Abstract

This workshop aims to share strategies used to teach youths with extremely low language and literacy level. The sharing is based on experiences working with students from NorthLight School, a vocational school in Singapore which takes in students who fail their PSLE and who often experience a double whammy in life – they often come from disadvantaged family backgrounds and have learning difficulties such as dyslexia, ADHD, speech and language impairment or intellectual impairment. Very often, these youths have very low self-esteem and come with a huge dollop of emotional baggage towards learning. These teaching strategies are based on an adaptation of the Orton-Gillingham approach typically used to work with individuals with dyslexia.

Strategies shared will include:

- Teaching decoding of single-syllabic and multisyllabic words to youths who experience a great deal of frustration in their learning and who need to see quick success
- Touching the chords of their heart
 - - motivating learning through music
 - - building alliteration and semantic fluency via rhythm
 - - teaching decoding and reading using music
- Working with students with poor working memory
 - - teach students to remember information by:
 - a) getting them to use drawings to create meanings for themselves
 - b) teaching them to learn via association
 - c) helping to develop their access skills using mnemonics and stories
 - d) explicitly teaching chunking skills
- Use of assistive technology

Keywords: .Low language, low literacy, youths

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The effectiveness of family literacy programme on the early literacy achievement of Singaporean preschool children identified to be at risk of literacy difficulties

Weng Yiyao^{1*}

1. *Dyslexia Association of Singapore*

Abstract

Early literacy lays the foundation for the acquisition of conventional literacy skills. Lack of adequate literacy skills has a profound impact on later school success. Family Literacy Programmes (FLPs) is an intervention that promotes active participation among families to improve their child's literacy. This research explored the effectiveness of FLP on the early literacy achievement on Singaporean preschool children identified to be at risk of literacy difficulties. Two research questions were investigated: (a) Does FLP increase the early literacy attainment for preschool children at risk of developing literacy difficulties and are attending an existing literacy intervention programme?; and (b) What are parents' perceptions of the effectiveness of FLP? Participants included 8 parents and 9 preschool children from 4 to 7 years old enrolled in DAS Preschool Programme. Data sources for analysis included pre- and post-test before and after intervention, post-workshop questionnaire and interview data. The research concluded FLP was not effective in the early literacy achievement on Singaporean preschool children identified to be at risk of literacy difficulties. However, parents had a positive perception of the effectiveness of FLP. Although FLP did not improve early literacy score, it provided skills and knowledge for parents to teach and guide their child in home-based literacy activities. Future research could look into how the content of FLP can be designed to train and provide parents with literacy knowledge, skills and instructional strategies. In-depth and research-based evidence should be implemented to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of FLP.

Keywords: Early intervention, parent and family support, early literacy

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Our Literacy World: The Preschool Class at DAS

Wong Kah Lai^{1*} and Weng YiYao¹

1. *Dyslexia Association of Singapore*

Abstract

DAS preschool programme is designed for the Kindergarten One and Two preschoolers identified to be at risk of developing literacy difficulties. The small group remediation programme equips our students with learning strategies that can be applied to their classroom setting. Differentiated teaching strategies to teach literacy will also be shared. Through hands-on activities, this workshop will also showcase some of these literacy and differentiated teaching strategies that we adopt within our classrooms.

Keywords: Preschool, workshop, intervention

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The effects of font type on reading accuracy and fluency in Japanese children with developmental dyslexia

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1. Mejiro University, Japan
2. Tsukuba University, Japan

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to clarify the effects of different types of Japanese font on reading performance in Japanese speaking children with developmental dyslexia. Methods : Participants included 36 children with typical development and 23 children with developmental dyslexia from fourth to sixth grades elementary school student. We conducted rapid reading tasks and hearing of the introspectiveness. In this study, we used four kinds of stimuli: two scripts (paragraph and kana non-words) by two font types (Round-Gothic and Mincho style font). We asked participants to "read the words and paragraph as fast as you can without making mistakes". We analyzed duration time of reading, number of errors and self-corrections. After the reading tasks, participants were required to answer which font type was easy to read. Results : Typical development and developmental dyslexic group did not show significant differences in duration time of reading, number of errors and self-corrections between two types of font. On the other hand, the answer in subjective readability from the group with developmental dyslexia showed significant differences and children with developmental dyslexia had impression that Round-Gothic as the font easily to read. Discussion : In this study, Round-Gothic and Mincho style fonts did not improve reading performance for children with dyslexia. However, Round-Gothic style font tended to be recognized "readable font" subjectively by children with developmental dyslexia. Our results suggest that subjective readability for the Round-Gothic style font contribute to reduce mental burden of reading among children with developmental dyslexia.

Keywords: developmental dyslexia, font type, reading accuracy, reading fluency, readability

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Profile of Children with Expressive Language Delay in Zainab Hospital Pekanbaru, Indonesia

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Abstract

A language disorder is an impairment that makes it hard for someone to find the right words and form clear sentences when speaking. It can also make it difficult to understand what another person says. There are three kinds of language disorders. Receptive language issues involve difficulty understanding what others are saying. Expressive language issues involve difficulty expressing thoughts and ideas. Mixed receptive-expressive language issues involve difficulty understanding and using spoken language. The objective of the study is to identify characteristic factors related to children and their parents associated with expressive language delay. The study was conducted with all the children in Zainab Hospital Pekanbaru Indonesia diagnosed as expressive language disorder in 2017. Protocol for the Identification of Risk Factor for Language and Speech Disorders (PIFRAL) was used for this study. Descriptive statistics and student's t test were used to analyze the frequency and relationship between risk factors. The onset of the complaint occurred after [\pm SD] 41,76 \pm 12,108 months old and mostly are male gender (72.7%). Most of them (54,5%) whose mother had just completed high school and 60.6% of a mother in the category "doesn't work". Out of the 33 participants, 20 were the first child in the family (60.0%). Deleterious oral habits (64%) and bilingual (51.5%) were significant to incidence of expressive language disorder in that children. Conclusion: Most of children are the first boys. They are mainly raised by a mother with low levels of education and do not work. But many of them have bad oral habits, bilingual and this are significant.

Keywords: risk factor, expressive language

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“I Read and Write!” Evaluation a Multi-sensory Structured Language (MSL) Program for Arabic

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Abstract

“I Read and Write!” is an individualized, structured language training program and materials for teaching persons with moderate to severe difficulties with learning to read and spell in Arabic. The program is designed for use in a one-to-one or small group (two-three students) tutorial setting and focus on Modern Standard Arabic generic to the Gulf Region. Areas of literacy targeted are early reading skills (phonological awareness and letter awareness), decoding/encoding, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension, as well as written expression skills. While the material will be geared for Chall’s reading stages 1-3 (approximate reading and spelling grade levels K/1 through grade 7/8), The program’s broad skills goals will be indexed to key curricular benchmarks for Gulf region language curricula for grades 1-9; the purpose of doing this is to demonstrate the curricular relevance of the materials to teachers and school administrators throughout the Gulf, but the skills are relevant for all other Arab countries and learners of Arabic.

Keywords: Multi-sensory Structured Language (MSL) Program , Dyslexia, Dyslexia in other languages

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How I guide a child with language development delay

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Abstract

A 5 year old focus child who is currently studying in Kindergarten 1. Some learning activities are done one to one which focus on learning through engaging him in the activities and toys that the boy likes. Throughout the activities, I have followed this method:

- Constantly ask questions to assess and to check the child's understanding,
- Then prompt him if he cannot answer.
- After prompting, wait for 5 seconds for his response.
- Then praise him for attempting and answering correctly.

Activity 1:

Asks the child to talk about his cars that he is playing. Then tell him that I am writing down his story so that we could read his story again after I have written them down. He continues to say while I write down. After writing down we go through and read the story told by him. After a few rounds, try to point out a few words that he is not sure and after he has 3 familiarized, ask him if he would like to copy the story in his own handwriting. He complies and through this activity, he learns talking, reading and writing.

Activity 2:

Asks the child to pick up a book from a few pre-selected books that he likes. Then read together with the child. Pointing to the words one by one on each page of the book. Read together with the child. After a few rounds, asks the child to read, while helping him to point each word. Through this activity, he learns new words and reading a book on his own.

Keywords: Reading, Writing, Language Development Delay

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Association Between Screen Time and Expressive Language Delay Children in Zainab Hospital Pekanbaru, Indonesia

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Abstract

The use of interactive screen media such as televisions, smartphone and tablets by young children is increasing rapidly. The American Academy of Pediatric (AAP) recommends that children ≥ 2 years of age should have < 2 hours of screen time per day and that children < 2 years of age be discouraged from television watching. Recommendations for use by toddlers are crucial, because effect of screen time are potentially more pronounced in this group. Therefore, need to identify screen time factors that may have impact on language development. This study investigated the association between children's exposure screen time and expressive language delay. The source of data was collected in Zainab Hospital during 2017. The subjects of this study were children with expressive language delay. In addition, normal children were used as control subject. Linguistic ability were reviewing by language Milestone and Denver II, The data were analyzed by chi-square test. Odds ratios and 95% confidence interval were presented. There were 24 boys and 19 girls; mean $41,8 \pm 12,108$ month of the case group and 17 boys and 14 girls, mean $36,45 \pm 12,129$ month of the control group were enrolled. Children with ≥ 3 hours screen time had around 3.2 times (OR 3,167 95% CI: 1.139-8.806) more risk of expressive language delay. Children with expressive language delay spent more time screen time than normal children ($3,61 \pm 0,0609$ hours/day vs. $2,00 \pm 0,949$ hours/day; $p= 0,025$). Conclusion: children had screen time more than 3 hours /day were approximately 3,2 times likely to have expressive language delay than normal children.

Keywords: screen time, expressive language delay

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An Autoethnographic Exploration in the search for the Enhancement of Learning for Students with Special Needs

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Abstract

This is a longitudinal autoethnographic inquiry into the quest to explore the support for students with special needs in a mainstream primary school in Singapore. By employing information gleaned from multiple interviews with both students and teachers, the research explores the current issues and problems faced by this particular group of children in their learning in the mainstream classroom. Issues perceived by both students and teachers include problem in completing writing assignments, a lack of interest in the subject matter taught, as well as a short attention span during daily work. Rising from the input of this initial generation of information, this research further explored the autoethnographical journey of the researcher as a teacher who started as a novice in constructivist-oriented teaching, illustrating the researcher's attempts to use the elements of constructivist-oriented teaching to resolve the issues and problems of students with special needs in her classes. The researcher's journey continued four years later, with her being a more experienced constructivist-oriented teacher. Her mode of teaching is grounded on Lev Vygotsky's social constructivist views, especially those articulated in his theory of dysontogenesis, which emphasises the empowerment of individuals rather than a focus on their impairments or deficiencies, suggesting how students with special needs should be offered the opportunity to maximise their potential. Information generated from this research is presented as an autoethnographical novel, which is a detailed appraisal-based description of the educational experience. This part of the research concludes that constructivist-oriented approaches offer a viable platform for the teaching students with special needs, making them more enabled, although all educational stakeholders have to be adequately equipped to sustain such approaches. A framework is then proposed for teachers who can exercise multiple roles to effectively work with students with special needs in the mainstream classroom.

Keywords: special needs, constructivist-oriented teaching and learning

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Risk Factors Identification in Children with Expressive Language Delay in Zainab Hospital Pekanbaru, Indonesia

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Abstract

Speech and language development represent a meaningful indicator of a child's development and cognitive ability. Identification of children at risk for development delay may lead to early intervention services and family assistance at young age. This study investigated the risk factors of children and their parent related to the expressive language delay. The case-control study included 33 children with expressive language delay and 31 normal children. Expressive language delay was diagnosed by reviewing language milestone and Denver II. The following risk factors were identified by using PIFRAL (Protocol to Identify Risk Factors for Language Speech Related Changes). The differences of relationship between risk factors were tested by chi square test. The sample in this study was adjusted in 2 models. Model 1 was adjusted for due date above 37 weeks group. Model 2 was additionally adjusted for birth weight above 2500 grams group. The significant risk factors in model 1 were effects of maternal education's level ($p= 0.011$), positive family history ($p= 0.010$), jaundice ($p= 0.036$), deleterious oral habit ($p=0.0001$), time spending with mother ($p=0.0001$), and speaking more than one language ($p= 0.005$). In model 2, the significant risk factors were effects of maternal education's level ($p= 0.037$), deleterious oral habit ($p=0.0001$), time spending with mother ($p=0.0001$), and speaking more than one language ($p= 0.005$). Based on this study, the significant risk factors for children with expressive language disorder in a term and normal birth weight were deleterious oral habit, time spending with mother, speaking more than one language and maternal education's level.

Keywords: expressive language delay, risk factor

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Developing A Dyslexia – Friendly Environment in classroom

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Abstract

This paper is aimed for teachers who have heard the term dyslexic, know they may have students within their class who possibly could be dyslexic but have no further knowledge of how to adapt their teaching style to assist them. The presentations introduce teacher to dyslexia, and shares ways teachers can adjust their teaching, taking very little additional time, to include dyslexic students and at the same time reach many other students with learning difficulties. The presentation details components of a creating an environment which embraces the use of the word dyslexia; promotes a clear and practical valid understanding of dyslexia for young teachers. A dyslexia-friendly classroom environment encourages dyslexic students to follow their strengths and interests. This paper identifies how the “classroom” and “institution” can be made dyslexia friendly, thus creating an inclusive learning environment. When teachers use the strategies they not only help dyslexic students learn, but engage and improve learning for all students in the class. Additionally, a dyslexia-friendly environment allows educators to be alert to problems and identify children who might be dyslexic. This paper shares guidelines about the changes we can make in the physical environment, adapting new strategies to implement in our classroom. Help the teacher to choose the right tool that fit each student’s needs as a learner. Whilst this paper is aimed at supporting dyslexic individuals, many of the strategies suggested here would be equally appropriate for those who are not dyslexic as well as those who are. The aim here is to suggest a range of approaches and strategies that can be adapted to suit the needs of many individuals.

Keywords: Friendly Environment in classroom, Practical understanding of dyslexia, adapting new teaching strategies.

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The effectiveness of memory games in improving reading fluency and reading comprehension of children with dyslexia

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Abstract

This research study examines the effectiveness of memory games intervention in improving reading fluency and reading comprehension of children with Dyslexia. A total of 22 students diagnosed with Dyslexia participated in the research study. First, it was examined whether there are any transfer effects to reading fluency and reading comprehension on children with Dyslexia after going through the memory games intervention. Next, it was explored whether the lower ability students made more improvements than the higher ability students. Unfortunately, the memory games intervention did not produce any results. The reading fluency and reading comprehension of children with Dyslexia did show significant improvements after going through the memory games intervention. However, the lower ability students did make more improvements as compared to the higher ability students. Even though no significant results were found in this research study, there are room for improvements that can be made to find out the true effectiveness of memory games intervention in improving reading fluency and reading comprehension of children with Dyslexia.

Keywords: Memory Games

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CERTIFICATE IN DYSLEXIA AND LITERACY TEACHING



1
Appreciate the literacy needs of a dyslexic child and acquire knowledge of the phonology and structure of the English Language.

2
Be equipped with skills to support persons with language processing problems associated with dyslexia.

3
A theoretical, practical and experiential learning for personal and professional development.

CERTIFICATE COURSE FEEDBACK

"Some of the english rules that I have never come across were introduced, and this has helped me to support my learner when needed." - Educator, 2015 April

"It helps parents of dyslexic kids to teach them in a more systematic way." - DAS Parent, 2014 August

"Gives me a very clear understanding to improving the language usage." - Educator, 2014 Aug

"It is useful for someone who needs to support her child as it answers the 'why' that surfaced during the learning process." - DAS Parent, 2015 April



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DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE (DAS)

Our Mission: Helping Dyslexic People Achieve

Our Goal: To build a world class organisation dedicated to helping dyslexic people and those with specific learning differences in Singapore.

Our Aims:

- ◆ To put quality first in delivering a comprehensive and effective professional service for dyslexic people and those with specific learning differences on a not-for profit basis.
- ◆ To provide an assessment service for individuals at risk of having dyslexia and/or specific learning differences.
- ◆ To provide educational programmes and other support services for individuals with dyslexia and/or specific learning differences.
- ◆ To raise public and professional awareness of the nature and incidence of dyslexia and specific learning differences.
- ◆ To enable others (teachers, parents and professionals) to help dyslexic individuals and those with specific learning differences.
- ◆ To assist and elicit financial and other support for people with dyslexia, those with specific learning differences and their families.
- ◆ To promote and carry out local research into dyslexia, specific learning differences and to disseminate results.
- ◆ To network with other organisations in Singapore and internationally to bring best practices to the DAS and Singapore.

DAS as a Social Enterprise

- ◆ We provide high-quality, professional, innovative and client-focused solutions to create and sustain services for the dyslexic community in Singapore and the region.
- ◆ We operate as a financially viable and cost-effective business which at the same time ensures that no dyslexic person is unable to access our services because they cannot afford it.
- ◆ We generate social returns on our investments through the development of a dynamic, motivated team of highly qualified and experienced professionals.
- ◆ We have a heightened sense of accountability to stakeholders through our professional management team.

Registered in 1991, the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) is today a vibrant voluntary welfare organisation with over 250 full-time staff who provide a wide array of services for dyslexics not only in Singapore but in the region. DAS Specialist Psychologists conduct assessment and diagnosis for preschool students to adults. DAS Educational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists and Specialist Teachers provide support for over 3,000 preschool, primary and secondary school students in 13 venues all over Singapore. Increasingly, DAS provides support for dyslexics who also suffer from other Specific Learning Differences such as ADHD, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia and Non-verbal Learning Differences.

The DAS Academy is a Private Education Institution (PEI) registered with the Council for Private Education (CPE). It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS). Like DAS, the Academy is also a registered charity with the Commissioner of Charities. DAS Academy delivers a wide range of workshops and courses including a Master of Arts in Special Educational Needs. DAS Academy provides the bridge that links professionals, caregivers and people with special needs.

DAS

MAIN LITERACY PROGRAMME



MAIN LITERACY PROGRAMME

EDU-TECHNOLOGY



WRITING



VOCABULARY (LANGUAGE)



PHONEMIC AWARENESS PHONICS

ch



cheese

ea



meat

ee



tree



READING COMPREHENSION



READING FLUENCY

LOCALISATION OF CURRICULUM

ADAPTED FROM THE NATIONAL READING PANEL



DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE
HELPING DYSLEXIC PEOPLE ACHIEVE

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Asia Pacific Journal of Developmental Differences

Guidelines for Contributors

Overview

The Asia Pacific Journal of Developmental Differences (APJDD) will be unique in addressing a range of special educational needs including dyslexia, autism, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, ADHD in the Asian context. The journal will cover theory into practice and will provide a showcase for research in the Asian context as well as highlighting research areas which have implications for further research within Asia and beyond.

Frequency of Journal

The Journal will be published twice a year in January and July.

Contributions Considered for the Journal

Primary consideration for publications will be given to manuscripts that are focused on developmental differences within the Asia Pacific region. Manuscripts will be peer reviewed and included in the journal on the following criteria:

- ◆ They contribute to the further understanding of developmental differences as well as the applications and implications in the educational, social and cultural environments.
- ◆ They include sound research methods, interpretation and validity of results
- ◆ They contain organised and clarity of writing
- ◆ They contribute to the local Asian context
- ◆ They should be original papers that have not been submitted to other journals or publications.

Submission of Manuscripts

All manuscripts are to be sent in electronic copy (MS WORD) as well as a PDF copy of the final edited document. PDF copy is required to verify the word copy and for publishing purposes. There is no need to submit hard copies of manuscripts.

Submissions are to be emailed to the editor at both email addresses below:

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Preparation of Manuscripts

It is expected that all manuscripts be submitted using the American Psychological Association (APA) standard of referencing and publication. APA style is detailed in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed), which offers sound guidance for writing with clarity, conciseness and simplicity. Authors should follow the APA style in preparation of their manuscripts.

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