



Dyslexia International – Tools and Technologies ASBL

building learning abilities

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B-1000 Brussels, Belgium
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Web site: www.ditt-online.org
E-mail: admin@ditt-online.org
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Newsletter

No.2, Winter 2000

Happiest wishes!



Illustration by Paule Zoller, founder member of the Brussels-based Adult Dyslexic Support Group

D-I-T-T volunteers work with leading experts, creating and promoting tools that enable dyslexic learners to succeed in a competitive world

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Patron: Her Royal Highness Princess Margaretha of Liechtenstein

D-I-T-T volunteers create and promote tools that encourage dyslexic learners in a competitive society

*In the European Year of Languages 2001
D-I-T-T is offering*

The Marcelle Napier Research Award

of € 5.000 (BEF 200,000 / £ 3.000)

The subject selected for this, our first award, is
*Evaluation and testing in a multilingual
environment – a model for Europe*

Applicants should be graduates in the area of education and psychology, recommended by and working under the supervision of their Professor

For application forms and information contact
D-I-T-T at the address above

Deadline for applications: 15 March 2001

Closing date for submission: 30 August 2001

Projects

Multimedia Pack

Professor David Crystal of the University of Reading writes of the Pack:

Language Shock is a 'first' in so many ways - an impressive blend of theoretical background and practical advice, an impactful multimedia perspective on dyslexia, a thoughtful consideration of the bilingual context, and an unprecedented resource guide to facilities throughout Europe. It is an important step forward in the growing concern to address dyslexic issues throughout Europe.

The full Pack is available in English, French and German; the texts for the Guide are now available in Dutch, Greek, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. Other language versions will follow. In January, a new team of outreach volunteers will be trained to ensure systematic distribution of the video and texts using our good contacts in all eleven EU official languages under volunteer manager, Tim Baker. D·I·T·T invites your ideas, energy and contacts for this important promotion. We have the professional product that still needs the professional backing (see our Action Plan below).

Roadmap to Success CD Rom

D·I·T·T will be setting up a series of 'Swop Shops' and a Forum on the Web site in 2001, to identify tools that will be included in our CD. If you want to be involved contact us at the address on page 1.

E-book Library

Invitations will go out in the New Year to local Brussels international schools. We need your help in cataloguing provenly effective software and multimedia packs for setting up our new e-book library for self-help learning and training and resources.

D·I·T·T Award

The first award will take the form of a grant of €5,000 (£3,000) to the candidate selected. A full-page poster compiled by Valerie Polding, researcher, is reproduced on the previous page. Please publicise freely. Professors throughout the EU will be asked, through our Scientific Advisory Committee, to nominate applicants.

Trilingual Belgium

With a population of less than eleven million, Belgium still boasts three official languages: French, Dutch and German. There are three Ministries of Education and educational provision is authorised at national, provincial and local level. All pupils are expected to be fully conversant with a second national language – which can present yet another critical challenge to the severely dyslexic learner at school, or those seeking employment, unless proper facilities are in place.

Over the next two pages we highlight current important initiatives dealing with the challenges of dyslexia.

In the Flemish-speaking sector...

A video, CD Rom project promoted by the non-profit organisation, 'Die-ùs-lekti-kus' [the phonetic version of the Dutch word for dyslexia].



Toon Cox, who will appear in the video, writes:
This new project will combine a video and a CD-ROM to be produced initially in Dutch, later in other languages.

The main aim of the video is the raise general awareness by showing the effects of dyslexia on the day-to-day lives of four young dyslexics from six years old to adult.

The Flemish Department of Education has been involved from the outset and will ensure the PACK is distributed to every Flemish school. CERA-Bank Foundation are the main sponsors. Other sponsors are sought, and an application is being made to the Foundation: "Koning Boudewijn Stichting"

Eureka School for dyslexic students is backing and developing this project, in association with the parent-association SPRANKEL, a scientific group related to the education inspectorate and secondary teacher training, Leuven University, politicians and financiers and a large support group.

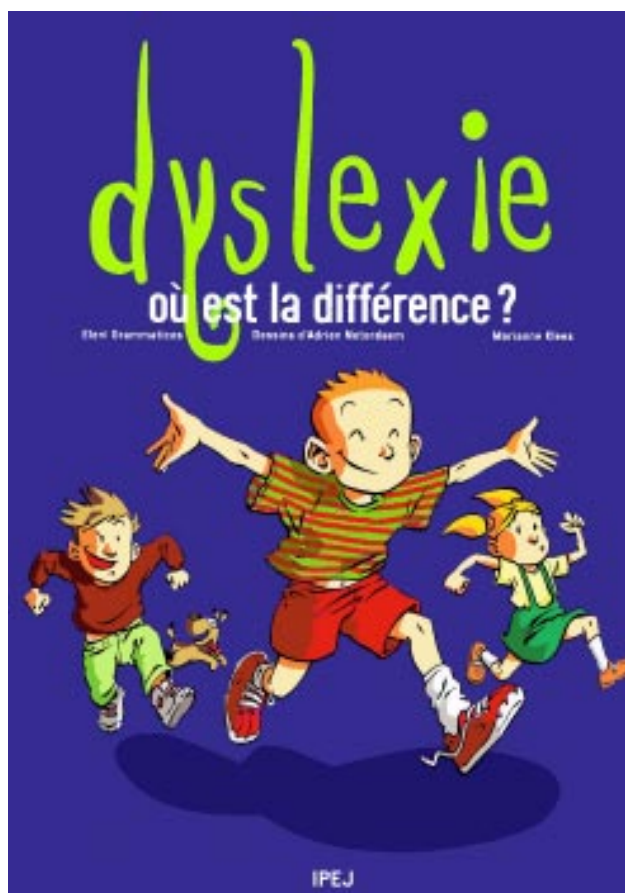
On April 21, 2001, at an information-day focusing on secondary education, the video will be shown for the first time. By October it is planned that the video should have reached every Flemish school.

In French...

A book for all primary schools: *Dyslexie – où est la différence?* has been widely publicised and acclaimed. It can be ordered from

Jean Pierre Gilot
rue Falise 37
B-1470 Baisy-Thy
Belgium
Tel: 067 780647
Fax: 067 780378
E-mail: jpgilot@hotmail.com

Alternatively, along with the Multimedia Pack, *Language Shock – Dyslexia across cultures*, it can be borrowed from any Belgian media library.





Dyslexie – où est la différence? was written by Eleni Grammaticos, neuro-linguistic and 'logoped' at Erasmus Hospital and President of the Association of Parents of Children with Learning Difficulties, who also appears in our Multimedia Pack BBC video, and Marianne Klees, D·I·T·T Board Member – see *Profiles* on page 6 for her biographical note.

The next edition of our Newsletter will feature Life stories: Elena, Alessandro and Cristos – our BBC video stars – how are they coping with their dyslexia now? What are their rights as dyslexic students in the UK and Belgium?

In German...

'High tech, high touch' is the slogan. Yes, chatting on the internet forums does open the mind and even create friendly support and intimacy. But Gudrun Dziallas, another distinguished Member of our D·I·T·T Board, who is a writer and a poet, has gone a step further. She is a founder member of a German-speaking support group which is cited as an example of good practice.



Gudrun writes:

It is now more than a year since the German support group had its first meeting when the German version of the Multimedia Training Pack was shown and dyslexia was discussed along with all kinds of learning problems. Living abroad can be a nightmare for families with children who 'don't fit into the system'. 'Kinderproblem – Problemkinder' was the cover story of *der Kontakt* last June, describing the group when Elizabeth Henseler was interviewed. Our group welcomes parents and professionals alike, breaks down isolation and helps parents to see the positive side of their children – to love, accept and admire them in their uniqueness even when they do not conform, whilst exchanging ideas with other parents and educators.

.....K.I.K?.....

(Kinder, Schule und Eltern in der Krise?)

Unsere

Elternsupportgruppe

für Kinder mit Lernproblemen
und besonderen Bedürfnissen trifft sich

an jedem zweiten Montag im Monat

im Katholischen Gemeindezentrum
Tervurenlaan 221 (Nähe Place Montgomery)
1150-Brüssel

von 20.30h bis ca 22.00h

**Alle Interessierten sind herzlich
willkommen**

Die Selbsthilfegruppe tauscht Erfahrungen und Adressen von Hilfsangeboten aus und diskutiert über Probleme und Fragen, die sich aus der besonderen Situation in Brüssel ergeben.

Auskunft über die Informations- und Beratungsstelle für Deutschsprachige (IBS)

Pauline Key-Kairis



Pauline finally did step forward with an offer to do a profile – or was she pushed? A native of Manchester, she came to Belgium with her spouse for a two-year stay ten years ago, and is responsible for the D·I·T·T ‘look’.

I took an unusual route into an obscure branch of graphic design – abandoning fine art for typography at Reading University. My first job was with a tiny design group in London, working on everything from insurance forms to posters to the cap-badge of a rather bemused doorman. I then spent a few years working at the Tate Gallery (best job in England!) mostly doing exhibition catalogues and posters. Although I am very proud of being the first person ever to package a jig-saw puzzle in a tube, what I still like best is designing books. No, not the covers – the insides. Strange people, us typographers.

A few years on I went back to Reading to help teach the next generation – I do wonder what they learned, but it was fun. Then I met my husband, Pericles, and, to the horror of all my friends, announced my intention of giving it all up to be a vet’s wife in Naxos. Interlude of Greek grammar, Greek dancing, painting, machine knitting and crochet. But it didn’t last – the minute I mastered basic Greek I was whisked over to Belgium, wishing I could remember some basic French. Still trying. Failing miserably. I did work at Vesalius College (VUB) for a while, but now have a totally self-indulgent existence: a bit of design, a bit of arts & crafts, a bit of DIY ... bliss.

Marianne Klees



Marianne will be helping with the first part of our CD Rom looking at profiling and self-evaluation

We are honoured to have Marianne Klees, co author of *Dyslexie – où est la différence?* as one of our nineteen Board Members. Marianne graduated in Psychology from the University of Brussels and trained in speech therapy and remedial teacher in dyslexia, dyscalculia and dysphasia. She went on to teach at the Faculty of Psychology at the University of Brussels and in various special education programmes throughout Belgium. From 1958 to her retirement in 1998, Marianne worked in the Psychology Department of the Paediatric Clinic of Brussels University Hospital Child Guidance Centre. She has 40 years working experience in educational testing and guidance psychology.

Her primary research interests lie in learning disabilities: she has created and supervised experimental classes for children with severe dyslexia, dyscalculia and dysphasia in Belgium and is currently involved in setting up a pilot special education programme in the Lebanon. She has published numerous articles, two books and collaborates in international scientific organisations.

What Works

❑ from the authors themselves

- **for the mechanics of reading:** Keda Cowling, author of *Toe by Toe*, recommends this manual as designed ‘to meet the needs of dyslexics of all ages who are struggling to gain literacy’. E-mail keda@toe-by-toe.co.uk
- **for news of the latest updates on textHELP:** e-mail alan@texthelp.com
- **for dyscalculia:** Jan Proustie, the author and a sufferer from dyscalculia, recommends *Mathematics Solutions – an Introduction to Dyscalculia*. Part A available, Part B for 31 January 2001. Contact jan.proustie@virgin.net. See also *Mathematics for Dyslexics* by J.Richard Ashcroft and Dr Steve Chinn, D-I-T-T Board Member, and Steve Chinn Web sites.

❑ **for special-education teachers keeping in the swim:** join SENCO-forum automated e-mailing discussion. Send the following message – ‘subscribe senco-forum’ – with blank subject and no signature, to: majordomo@ngfl.gov.uk

❑ **for raising awareness:** *Language Shock – Dyslexia across cultures* Multimedia Pack – of course! Contact: www.ditt-online.org

A Finnish mother writes: ‘I am very thankful that this video is available. It is truly marvellous that it is made in such a way that it can help teenagers understand themselves and take heart from its message.

‘My son, who is 16 years old, never learned to spell well and was always a poor reader. But then he was exposed to four languages by the age of 9 – even more later on. He is both left- and right-handed, depending on the task. Many teachers told us that he was ‘very bright’; others found him hopelessly forgetful and lacking in ambition. The tests he had at 13 showed nothing more than ‘poor speller and reader’. From then on he felt sure all tests were a waste of time – until, that is, I borrowed a copy of the video *Language Shock – Dyslexia across cultures*. He watched this attentively and said afterwards that he could recognise himself in it. Sure enough, seeing this video has changed his whole attitude. He talked to other dyslexic school mates and then he himself wanted to be tested. This time his test showed him to be dyslexic but very bright. His self-confidence was restored. He now tackles his schoolwork with a positive attitude and he has regained his motivation.’

❑ for and by children and young people with dyslexia:

- by 11-year-old Barnaby: www.iamdyslexic.com
- more recently: www.dyslexicfriends.co.uk
- and the site for teenagers (per SENCO-Forum): www.dyslexia.net.co.uk

❑ **for essays or note-taking - mind mapping?** Try www.mind-map.com – useful for a large proportion of dyslexic learners.

❑ **for schools - The Dyslexia Friendly Schools Pack:** price £5 available from BDA: www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk

❑ **for information on Ministerial provision for dyslexia in EU countries:** visit www.ditt-online.org

Announcements

★ D·I·T·T is honoured and delighted to welcome Her Royal Highness, Princess Margaretha of Liechtenstein, as Patron.

★ 2001 – The Year of Languages

What is this? How is it organised at national level? What makes a project eligible for funding? Which languages will be covered?

Find out at <http://europa.eu.intcomm.education.languages.actions.year2001.html>

(or at the new simplified site currently being developed: www.eurolang2001.org).

★ D·I·T·T New Year Party

Members are invited to meet friends and colleagues from local European and international organisations in Brussels to share information on their 2001–2002 projects end January. Invitations follow.

★ AGM

In Brussels this year, with video-conferencing facilities, May 2001.

Reflections

☉ Tomorrow's Europe? Consulting parents?

In November 2000, the US House of Representatives Government Reform Committee, wrote Congress want to know the following – the challenges you face with your child's education:

- Do you have to fight for services?
- Do you feel your school is following the Individual Disabilities Education Act Laws?
- What kind of problems have you had?
- How much have you had to spend out-of-pocket ...?
- Do you have suggestions for Congress about the laws or about the schools systems?

Addressing some of these questions too, D·I·T·T will be presenting its own survey as a lobbying tool to the MEP Marie Therese Hermange, who is involved in planning a Conference on Dyslexia for Autumn 2001 at the European Parliament. Please add your voice!

☉ Sorbonne Conference

D·I·T·T members attended a recent conference at the Sorbonne where Monsieur Ringard gave his report on dyslexia,* the official recognition paper requested by the former Minister of Education. With the Ministry of Health and Education both represented, the occasion was described as a breakthrough and a historic moment for France. Over 500 people (parents and professional logopedes) attended.

*available in French and English at D·I·T·T offices/online

☉ What's in a name?

Yes, labels can be sticky. But if you are dyslexic, the label 'dyslexia' can be the means to getting statutory help and it is needed on a personal level for the relief of knowing you are not 'stupid' or 'disabled' (mindervalide), but simply otherwise-valued / otherwise-gifted – or *andersbegaafde*, as the Dutch so clearly put it.

The labelling debate rages on. For Boas Toorgeman it means insisting on the labels ‘disabled’ and ‘handicapped’ if legislation for learners with hidden handiaps and entitlements is to be secured. Boas writes in our next edition.

– What’s in the name Haneil? Plenty it seems. Welcome to our researcher’s new baby, Haneil, meaning: ‘angel of love and harmony, born in December’.

Money Matters

⊕ Action Plan

D·I·T·T is still searching for sponsors for our Action Plan, drawn up by Board Member, Ronald Baker, with Mike Gottlieb as consultant. The vision of reaching 83,000 teacher-training programmes needs to be translated into a feasible strategy. Yes, the Plan needs funding and yes, D·I·T·T still hopes to have the opportunity of working with the right sponsor. D·I·T·T urges everyone to help us in this quest.

⊕ D·I·T·T Bank accounts now in UK and Germany

Ralph Palim, our Treasurer, has set up banking arrangements in the UK and Germany, initially for ease of payment for products, sponsorship and membership fees. The accounts are shown on our Web site order form and Membership Application form.

⊕ Membership Fees

Please remember to fill in your Membership Application form – reproduced on the final page of this newsletter – and return to us with payment.

Thank you for your support.

Thanks to Lions Heraldic Brussels

Part of the proceeds from their 17th
Swimarathon will go to fund D·I·T·T
projects.

Can you swim?

Can you help us raise awareness?

Can you make up a team of 6–8 people
and contact to Susan Calamassi at
D·I·T·T?

Please do!

Edited by: Petra Zollner, Victoria Polding and Judith Sanson



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Membership of Dyslexia International – Tools and Technologies

Become a member of D-I-T-T and take part in our joint projects helping

- learners to learn
- teachers to teach
- parents to support
- education authorities to provide
- society to understand and encourage young people to succeed in education and employment

You will receive

- a quarterly newsletter
- invitations to our events
- our annual report with accounts
- an annual membership card



Please provide us with the following information (please write clearly):

Application for: Individual membership € 25 (£15) per year
Corporate membership € 100 (£60) per year
Sustaining membership € 500 (£300) per year

Name / contact name _____

Position _____

Company _____

Address including postal code _____

Tel (day) _____

Fax _____

E-mail _____

I am paying by cheque bank transfer _____ (please specify)

Date _____

Signature _____

Bank account details for subscription payment:

Belgium Account No. 310-1581288-80
Bank Brussels Lambert, Avenue Louise 487, B-1050 Brussels

United Kingdom Account No. 20153677, sort code 23-88-59
Bank Brussels Lambert, 6 Broadgate, London EC2M 2AJ

Germany BLZ 370 104 00, No.315 0013781
Bank Brüssel Lambert, Postfach 29 01 49, 50523 Köln