



Newsletter

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Twenty-one today!



...the D-I-T-T *Newsletter*, that is, not its designer, Pauline Key-Kairis, pictured above. Recently redesigned, the *Newsletter* is always popular. If you have missed any and would like to download back-issues, they are all available on the Web site, thanks to Webmaster Dave Rowan:
<http://www.ditt-online.org/Newsletter.htm>

D-I-T-T's 5th Annual Forum

The European Parliament building
in Brussels



D-I-T-T has raised several key points concerning attitudes towards education at the European Parliament. It has highlighted the need for national governments and the EU to address the following questions:

- What does 'school failure' mean across Europe and beyond?
- Are schools failing to develop the abilities and skills of every pupil to a level sufficient to integrate into society?
- Do parents of children with learning difficulties have no alternative but to pay for the education to which their children are entitled?
- What happens if parents cannot afford private education?
- Why is illiteracy and dyslexia in prisons not being addressed?

Why not bring these questions to the attention of your own politicians and ministries?

EU citizens will find their Members of the European Parliament (MEP) at www.europarl.org

D-I-T-T's 5th Annual Forum was an opportunity to highlight the need for specialist teaching training in Europe. The conference was held at the European Parliament at the invitation of Dutch MEP Bert Doorn, and its two keynote speakers emphasised the importance of early diagnosis of dyslexia and the effectiveness of remedial treatments.



Bert Doorn, MEP

Dr Dirk Bakker of the Free University, Amsterdam, and Chair of D·I·T·T's scientific advisory board gave a presentation of his research on interventions to improve the reading of children at risk of dyslexia. Dr Bakker has developed a reading model that accounts for two types of dyslexic children: P-types, sometimes called 'spellers', and L-types, sometimes called 'guessers'. P-types are individuals who read slowly, in a fragmented fashion, and don't make many substantive errors. L-types are those who read fast and inaccurately and produce many substantive errors. Dr Bakker's research has shown that exercises that stimulate the right side of the brain can result in the improved reading performance of L-types. (See www.pits-online.nl/en/HEMSTIMeng.html)



Honorary D·I·T·T Board Member, Pauline Cogan, is researching a test battery for early detection of dyslexia at Trinity College Dublin for use in the Irish educational system. She brought attendees up to date with the latest developments and emphasised her belief in the benefit of early intervention. The conference's two main presentations were preceded by a demonstration of a cd-rom on provision in France for supporting parents and teachers of children with language difficulties by Patrice Couteret of the *Centre national d'études et de formation pour l'enfance inadaptée: Les troubles spécifiques du langage*. (See <http://www.cnefei.fr/Default4.htm>, or contact: CNFEI, 58-60 ac des Landes, 92 150 - Suresnes, France.)



The conference was opened by Mary Honeyball, MEP for London, who expressed her support for the work of D·I·T·T. All conference participants received an open letter addressed to the Chair and Vice Chair of the European Parliamentary Committee for Education and Culture that asked questions first raised at the Parliament 25 years ago. It is estimated that there are 45 million dyslexic learners in Europe.

There will shortly be an opportunity to view extracts from the conference, and listen to Pauline Cogan talk about her work to develop an early detection test, at www.ditt-online.org.

Information on the latest European Dyslexia Association's publication, *The Rights of Dyslexic Children in Europe* by the President and Vice President of the EDA, was circulated. For a copy, contact the D·I·T·T office – see also page 14.

Teaching & learning styles

The importance of the affective domain in teaching style in encouraging learning and growth - a testimony by Lord Richard Rogers, one of the most important living architects, speaking in *The Mystery of the Lost Letters* CD-ROM (see www.ditt-online.org).

Suicidal at the age of 10 and helpless with the effects of his dyslexia, he speaks of the turning point in the way in which he was taught which changed his life:

'I was sent to this school that had some sort of intuitive feeling for people like myself, which gave me the confidence to move forward – that gave me great confidence in everything in fact. I met a teacher who said "Go for it! Stop worrying about it. Sit down and write and stop worrying about the fact that no one can read it."

And the fascinating thing is that in one year I'd caught up the four years that I'd dropped behind by that time.'

Recommended in the 'What Works' section of D-I-T-T's Spring *Newsletter, Dyslexia and Learning Style* by Tilly Mortimore highlights teaching strategies that address deficits in different visual and audio oriented learners. Her ideas are based on extensive practical experience as a teacher of dyslexic children.

According to Joe Harkin of Oxford Brookes University, teaching methods, to be effective, must take into account the 'strong evidence that the affective domain is very important in successful interaction between teacher and student, alongside the factor referred to in Norway as "professionalism" coinciding with concepts of high standards and leadership.'

Citing the *Flexible learning in schools* report funded in 1990 by the Department of Employment, Joe Harkin says: 'The quality of the relationship between a teacher and a young person is a vital factor in encouraging learning and growth.' The relationship should contain neither 'that fear and contempt which used to stalk school corridors' nor 'the casualness which implies there is no distinction in role between teachers and students.' Evidence shows that improving the quality of human relations improves both the quality and amount of academic work produced and the attendance of the students.

Here in Europe, where country-by-country expectations of the teacher's role vary markedly, should we all ask ourselves whether we pay enough attention to the affective as well as the cognitive needs of learners? *Le Monde Education* (14 September 2005) questioned teaching that puts down the student: '*L'humiliation des élèves reflet des carences pédagogiques françaises.*' Philippe Meirieu, a teacher, believes that humiliating pupils is the last resort of the stressed teacher while Rick Lavoie, an American teacher-trainer subscribing to the child-centred approach, stresses the importance of not resorting to sarcasm, nor any other form of humiliation that depletes the child's morale. The child with difficulties already suffers from lowered morale and daily humiliation by simply by being alongside others who are faster and more successful.

Attention to environmental, emotional and social factors has a vital role to play in learning as well as ensuring encouragement and positive feedback. Dr Gavin Reid,



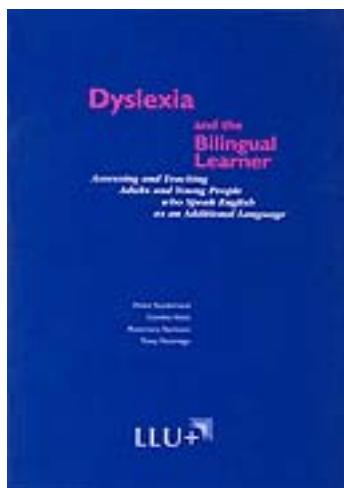
Senior Lecturer in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of Edinburgh, supports this view. His ideas informed the design of the 'Hall of Mirrors', the 'Dangerous Dungeon' and the 'Tower of Triumph' adventures with Tintin in the D-I-T-T *Mystery of the Lost Letters* cd-rom that encourages the user and awards a five- to ten-page print-out on individual learning style.

Dyslexia and bilingualism

Dyslexia and the Bilingual Learner – assessing and teaching adults and young people who speak English as an additional language by Helen Sunderland, Cynthia Klein, Rosemary Savinson and Tracy Partridge provides useful guidance. It is aimed at 'English Speakers of Other Languages' (ESOL) language support tutors who wish to learn about how dyslexia may affect their students, and dyslexia support tutors who are concerned about diagnosing and teaching bilingual learners.

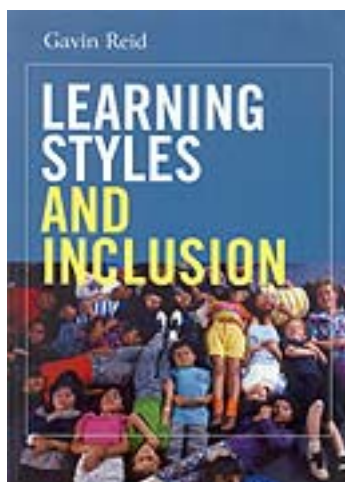
The majority of conventional dyslexia screening and assessment tools are designed for native-English speakers. *Dyslexia and the Bilingual Learner* provides useful guidelines for teaching ESOL students including:

- a checklist of questions that language support tutors should consider in determining whether they should refer students for dyslexia assessment
- teaching methods to maximise dyslexic learners' acquisition of English
- a description of the cultural and linguistic factors that may affect diagnosis, illustrated with numerous examples of how the features of other languages may influence the way English is approached by students
- a ten-page diagnostic interview form for bilingual students that can be printed out. It has been designed to reveal the history and learning experience of students and to identify characteristics that will help determine whether their learning difficulties result from an incomplete grasp of English due to linguistic, cultural and educational factors rather than dyslexia
- graded reading passages for analysing reading style and reading difficulties
- graded spelling dictations for analysing spelling strengths and weaknesses and approaches to spelling
- sample reports aimed at demonstrating the difference between features of dyslexia and factors due largely to linguistic, educational and cultural factors



- guidelines for ESOL and language support teachers, as well as guidelines for dyslexia support teachers
- a list of useful books and resources on dyslexia, language learning, literacy and ESOL teaching.

Review by Dr Vincent Goetry, researcher in bilingualism and reading development. Dr Goetry volunteered his services to D.I.T.T as a consultant this summer. He has studied reading development in the French-Dutch bilingual sector for a Ph.D at the Université Libre de Bruxelles and has completed a post-doctoral research project at Queen's University, Canada on literacy development in English-speaking children schooled in French immersion programmes.

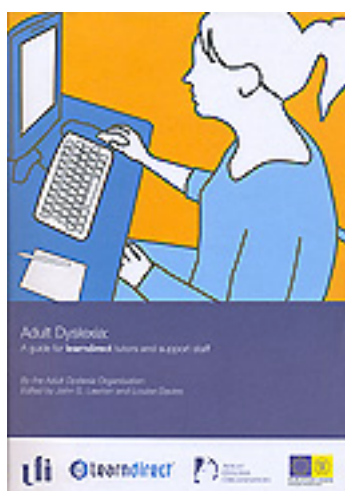


Learning styles

In his latest book, *Learning Styles and Inclusion*, Dr Gavin Reid earns top marks for clarity and easy access. Dr Reid makes a convincing case for allowing learners to develop independence and control over the learning situation. It is 'crucial for lifelong learning' he writes.

Adult Dyslexia Guide

This guide aims to be a practical resource to assist tutors, support staff and dyslexic students to get the best from each other. Its central message is that a dyslexia-friendly approach is essential for adult dyslexics but will also benefit many other learners. While the book presents several viewpoints on the nature of dyslexia, its identification, approaches to learning support, enabling technology and specialist areas such as English for speakers of other languages, it also encourages tutors to reflect on and develop their own practice. Key checklists are included as downloadable resources in PDF format.



The ideas included in this guide are based on work, over many years, by a large number of practitioners, students and dyslexia support groups. The *Adult Dyslexia Guide* was created in response to demand from learning centres for information and advice on supporting learners with dyslexia. Its contributors include Melanie Jameson, Charmaine McKissock and Lauraine Parkinson, E.A. Draffan, Ian Smythe and Martin Hinchcliffe.

Revised Adult Dyslexia Organisation screening

This ADO checklist was developed in conjunction with Professor Tim Miles (OBE) of Bangor University, following empirical research by Dr Ross Cooper of LLU+, London South Bank University. It does not attempt to record the talents, skills or potential linked with dyslexia. It is organised around some of the key difficulties experienced by people with dyslexia in terms of reading, spelling, memory, organisation and sequencing. A more formal assessment may confirm the presence of dyslexia.

For scoring and further information on how you may accurately carry out this first-level assessment, contact:

Adult Dyslexia Organisation
Ground Floor
Secker House
Minet Road
Loughborough Estate
London SW9 7TP

Helpline: 0207 924 9559

Admin: 0207 207 3911

E-mail:

dyslexia.hq@dial.pipex.com

Web site: www.adult-dyslexia.org

Please answer Yes or No. Do not miss any questions out. If you are in any doubt, answer whichever feels like the truer answer.

- 1 When using the telephone, do you get the numbers mixed up when you dial? Yes No

- 2 Is your spelling poor? Yes No

- 3 When writing down the date, do you often make mistakes? Yes No

- 4 Do you mix up dates and times and miss appointments? Yes No

- 5 Do you find forms difficult and confusing? Yes No

- 6 Do you find it difficult to take messages on the phone and pass them on correctly? Yes No

- 7 Do you mix up bus numbers like 35 and 53? Yes No

- 8 Do you find it difficult to say the months of the year forwards in a fluent manner? Yes No

- 9 When you were at school, did you find it hard to learn the multiplication or times tables? Yes No

- 10 Do you take longer than you should to read a page of a book? Yes No

- 11 Do you find difficulty in telling left from right? Yes No

- 12 Did you find it difficult to decide how to answer these questions? Yes No

Profile: One in Ten

One in Ten

*I am the one in ten,
A number on a list,
I am the one in ten,
Even though I don't exist,
Nobody knows me,
But I'm always there,
A statistic, a reminder,
Of a world that doesn't care.*

These are the opening lines of a song by British reggae group UB40. Though they relate to the experience of being unemployed in the UK in the early 1980s – one in ten people were out of work – they could just as easily express the feelings of being ‘there’, if unknown, and being disregarded by an unsympathetic world that many dyslexics experience. And, moreover, one in ten people is dyslexic. Far from adding to the dole queue, however, many enjoy successful careers as our new series of profiles ‘One in Ten’ highlights.

■ *D.I.T.T member Hugh Terlinden is the first of our ‘One in Ten’ profiles:*



The proud owner of a business selling a range of designer handbags and accessories, ‘L.A. Bel’, Hugh Terlinden, 31, is a ‘one in ten’. Originally from Hollywood, he holds an MBA from the United Business Institute, Belgium, and speaks several languages fluently.

But he has always had something to hide, he says. Before embarking on L.A. Bel – the range can be viewed in the

chic Châtelain area Brussels – and working with associate Audrey Hilbert, who is the designer, Hugh was employed in several administrative and managerial roles in Belgium, France and Holland. However, he never told his employers about his dyslexia, which was diagnosed during his schooling in the USA, where he received special tuition. ‘In Europe you cannot say you are dyslexic or they won’t hire you,’ he says, ‘but it showed up when I wrote e-mails. The French are very meticulous about spelling.’

By contrast, Hugh believes that the US is more aware of dyslexia and more likely to employ those who are dyslexic. Hugh says that if he were to take a job with a multinational company again, he would not mention his dyslexia but would go to the Human Relations department after six months. While he says that his condition presents many challenges, he says that you find ‘a way of getting around things.’

And finding alternative strategies for dealing with day-to-day life can have its advantages. ‘You become a better salesperson for selling the things that you can do,’ he says. He also believes that dyslexics learn to get along well with all sorts of people and are not afraid to make mistakes – ‘because you know you will anyway’ – an important quality when learning to speak a foreign language. He has learnt French, Dutch and Spanish without any written study, and he says that, unlike those who may have greater grammatical knowledge, he is not afraid to speak.

In fact, Hugh’s message to dyslexic students is not to be afraid. ‘If you don’t understand something, ask for it to be explained until you do. As someone said: There aren’t any stupid questions, only stupid answers,’ he says.

Hugh welcomes visitors to his shop; any D·I·T·T associate who pops in is sure of a warm welcome:

L.A. Bel
2 rue Armand Campenhout (Place du Châtelain)
1050 Ixelles, Brussels
<http://www.l-a-bel.com/>

■ *The next Newsletter will profile Maria Luisa Lorusso, a new member of our Scientific Advisory Committee. She was introduced by Dr Dirk Bakker, the committee’s chair. D·I·T·T is honoured and delighted to welcome Dr Lorusso, who works at the Department of Neuropsychology, Scientific Institute Eugenio Medea, Bosisio Parini, Italy.*

What Works

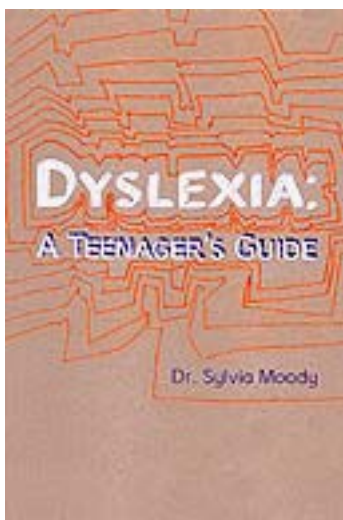
Effects of diet

Interesting research on the effects of food on behaviour was carried by Dr Richardson and her team: please visit, www.fabresearch.org. Thanks to Peter Horemans for bringing this important site to our attention.

The Dyslexia Research Trust charitable Web site (www.dyslexia.org.uk) also contains information about important new research, including John Stein's theory that a whole range of neurophysiological conditions and disorders, from dyslexia and dyspraxia to depression and schizophrenia, relate to problems with the magnocellular part of the brain's visual system and how signals are passed within it. People no longer consume enough essential fatty acids for the brain to function properly, and some inherit a vulnerability to Omega-3 deficiency.

Maths aids

Unicornmaths is a detailed, structured, cumulative maths development programme that addresses dyscalculia. It is designed to be used by specialist teachers and teaching assistants to remedy a lack of numerical understanding for individuals and small groups. It allows learning-support staff to move pupils through all the differing facets of number development at an individual pace. The programme identifies the underlying, interlocking concepts on which an understanding of number is based. Each separate area is introduced in a visual and tactile manner and then built up in small steps using a wide variety of resources and games. Extended practice and cyclical revisiting are an integral part of the programme. For details go to <http://www.unicornmaths.com>



Dyslexia and Teenagers

The author, Dr Sylvia Moody, is a chartered psychologist who specialises in the assessment of adults who have dyslexic difficulties. She began her career at the Dyslexia Institute, and now works as a consultant to educational establishments, private and public companies and government organisations, and is accredited by the Law Society as an expert witness. She is co-author of *Dyslexia in the Workplace*, published by Whurr.

Announcements



D-I-T-T representatives' comings and goings

- Don't miss the Christmas Show by the Young Vic: *Hergé's Adventures of Tintin* (for details, visit www.youngvic.org or www.barbican.org.uk). The Young Vic's annual storytelling show has been called 'the finest family event in town' by the London newspaper, the *Evening Standard*.
- Microsoft-funded Unlimited Potential courses that target the vulnerable dyslexic learner in search of employment – now available in French – continue to be run by Jerome Seloise of RealVision for D-I-T-T.
- Based on the 8-month pilot courses funded by Microsoft in 2003, D-I-T-T is currently producing instruction guidelines for the use of technologies that aid dyslexic learners. The training tool will draw on the experience of tutors who understood first-hand the challenges of dyslexia.
- Gudrun Dziallas, D-I-T-T Board Member and Rolf Dziallas attended the 15th *Kongress des Bundesverbandes Legasthenie & Dyskalkulie e.V. Legasthenie & Dyskalkulie in Wissenschaft, Schule und Gesellschaft*, in Berlin, 22–25 September.
- Gladys Barzin and Judith Sanson represented D-I-T-T at the *1er Salon de Logopédie*, in Brussels, 8 October.
- Carol McCarthy, D-I-T-T Board Member, with the generous support of Dyspel volunteers organised a D-I-T-T stand at the *Salon d'Enfance*, Luxembourg, 14–23 October. This was an excellent and useful week of events in which D-I-T-T was more than pleased to participate.



Lost in Cyprusspace!

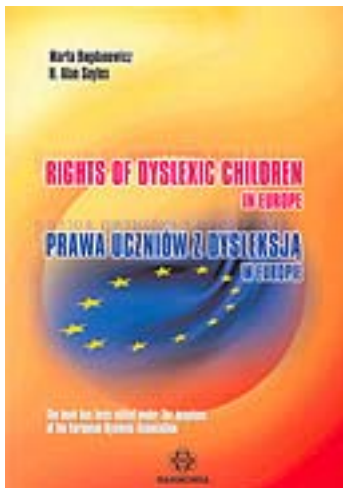
Have you just read 'Cyprusspace' or 'Cyberspace'? If you read 'Cyberspace', enter the world of dyslexia.

The 3rd *International Multilingualism and Dyslexia Conference*, which took place in Limassol, Cyprus in July, highlighted many factors that affect the learning processes.

Dyslexia is present in all languages, though it often takes different forms. The conference underlined the need for urgent action to improve the prospects of those diagnosed with the condition. It called for greater awareness among teachers, parents and politicians. Concerted efforts are needed to address the rights of children to an appropriate education as declared, for example, in the UN Convention or in the Salamanca Guidelines.

Multilingualism adds to the stress of combining speech and writing. With pupils that speak more than one language, teachers need to be all the more aware of the problems dyslexic learners suffer from: poor short-term memory, difficulties with organising written tasks, lack of phonological awareness, and poor time-management. The conference in Cyprus addressed some of these problems and was an important step towards better teaching practices.

Money Matters



- Support D·I·T·T by
 - Selling our notelet packs (pictured left)
 - Running a raffle for a signed Rood van Nistelrooy (see left) T-shirt, presented by D·I·T·T Board Member Minos van Joolingen.
 - Buying our Tintin cd-rom for Christmas
 - Running an art auction
 - Thinking up brilliant new fund-raising ideas and contacting admin@ditt-online.org

■ Dr Renate Hofmann has supplied 10 copies of *The Rights of Dyslexic Children in Europe* for D·I·T·T to make available for sale.

Order your copy through the D·I·T·T office or via:

Lernen mit Pfiff
Hietzinger Kai 191
1130 Wien
+49 (0)1 87 97 999

<http://www.lernen-mit-pfiff.at>

■ Grants are available under the EU Socrates programme to teachers in EU schools and colleges to attend a training course in another European country. For details, visit http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/index_en.html

Dyslexia – the Myth?

A recent documentary shown on British television has caused quite a stir. In a Channel 4 programme entitled 'Dyslexia – the Myth', Professor Julian Elliott of Durham University, current President of the International Association for Cognitive Education, expressed his controversial views. Many leading figures in dyslexia research have given their reactions to the programme:

- Donald Schloss, Chief Executive of the Adult Dyslexia Organisation, wrote: 'ADO and other dyslexia organisations are now fielding an increased number of calls from distressed parents and adults with dyslexia expressing their concern over this programme. We would hope that in future programme-makers take into consideration the considerable harm that can be caused when dealing with disabilities.'
- Dr Dirk Bakker, Chair of D-I·T·T's Scientific Advisory Committee, said: 'This happens with an estimated frequency of every ten years. I remember a fellow in Germany who said similar things years ago. Whether sugar should be called sugar is not the important question as long as the stuff is sweet. So, let's go ahead drinking our coffee and tea.'
- Professor John Stein of Oxford wrote: 'It was a very incoherent programme. But some of it was OK. Because it's difficult to diagnose, dyslexia doesn't exist? Rubbish! Cancer is difficult to diagnose, does that mean it doesn't exist? If reading or spelling is well below that expected from general intelligence, then dyslexia is a possibility. Stanovitch's argument that "garden variety poor readers" with low IQs are no different from dyslexic learners does not take into account visual, sequencing and attention problems.'

One in five entrepreneurs is dyslexic

According to a study carried out by the Cass Business School in London, one in five entrepreneurs has dyslexia. The study's authors speculate that the high rate of dyslexia among entrepreneurs may be explained by the fact that the skills developed in overcoming dyslexia are the same as those skills needed to successfully run a business. The findings have important implications for

the educational system. The author argues that given the high rate of dyslexia among entrepreneurs, teachers should make certain that they teach students about business and enterprise in such a manner that accommodates students suffering from dyslexia.

Discrimination law

Are people with dyslexia protected by the Disability Discrimination Act? The answer varies from case to case. If the difficulties are severe enough to impede efficiency in certain aspects of everyday life (for example, writing a cheque, filling in forms), then the Act may apply. In such an event employers could be asked to make adjustments including reallocating tasks, arranging appropriate training or supervision, modifying or tape-recording instructions, offering help with prioritising work, modifying or providing equipment to make work easier, and providing a quiet workplace. If the difficulties are mild and do not significantly affect daily life, the Act may not apply.

Mulling it over

Think about it – for five years Dave Rowan, D-I-T-T Webmaster, has generously volunteered his time and skills to help D-I-T-T - and all this on top of running a business.

How do you thank people like Dave – and D-I-T-T volunteer typographer, Pauline Key-Kairis, for that matter?

Right: highly applauded for the excellent work they put in, *stagiaires* Lisette Brooks (right) and Eloïse Lasalle (left) – budding marketing managers who helped promote D-I-T-T's latest cd-rom this summer.



Edited by Jon Eldridge