



Dyslexia International – Tools and Technologies ASBL

building learning abilities

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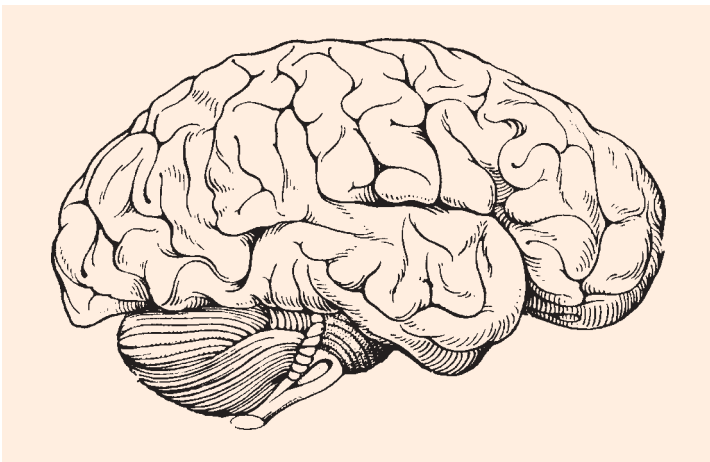
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Newsletter

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The Brain Makes Waves



Mind maps: The right cerebral hemisphere
Illustration from Professor Dr Dirk Bakker's article 'The Brain and Dyslexia' in *Language Shock – Dyslexia across cultures* (see page 3).

The brain is in the spotlight this Spring with a series of events and articles focusing on this phenomenal organ.

- D-I-T-T is delighted to welcome world-renowned brain specialist Baroness Susan Greenfield to Brussels this May. For information on how to obtain free tickets to her talk 'The Brain of the Future' see page 2.
- A mind-boggling exhibition is thrilling visitors to Brussels, with a series of interactive exhibits guaranteed to delight and fascinate children and adults alike. See page 3.
- Find out what top brain-man and D-I-T-T adviser Dirk Bakker thinks is the connection between the brain and dyslexia. See page 3.

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

Contents

'The Brain of the Future' 2

Making Sense of Mind Matters 3

Science and the Brain 3

Projects 4

- Fighting the dyslexic's corner in Europe
- Download *Language Shock* Guide for free
- Smoother school transitions with Pack
- Next steps on the Roadmap to Success

Profile 6

- Numbers man Steve Chinn

What Works 7

- Top tips from Luxembourg
- The best of teacher training
- Web site news

Announcements 8

- including:*
- Judith Stansfield to visit Brussels
 - Spanish fly flag for education
and more...

Money Matters 10

Reflections 11

'The Brain of the Future'



Brain story:
Baroness Susan Greenfield

Top scientist Baroness Susan Greenfield's visit to Brussels this May to talk at European Parliament prompts D-I-T-T Communications Officer June Davey to consider the impact of the professor's work on our understanding of the brain.

Mapping the human genome, designer drugs and brain transplants will be put under the spotlight by leading neuroscientist and Professor of Pharmacology Baroness Susan Greenfield at her talk at the European Parliament next month.

D-I-T-T has invited the world-renowned neurobiologist to talk to an audience including students from Brussels's multi-lingual schools on 7 May.

The first female director of the Royal Institution, Baroness Greenfield will present 'The Brain of the Future', with interpretation into French and German. The topic is especially relevant to young people as members of the generation that will carry forward new inspirations, ideas and impulses.

Baroness Greenfield is an enthusiastic example of Pope's exhortation that 'the proper study of mankind is man.' She sees the twenty-first century as 'the century of the mind.' Her work assures us that the intricacies of the brain, our most mysterious organ and the physical basis of consciousness, will prove as inspiring as the exploration of space in the twentieth century, or of new worlds in earlier epochs.

'The brain is everything you are,' says Professor Greenfield. She has published her own theory of consciousness: *Journey to the Centres of the Mind*. Other publications include: *Brain Power* and *The Private Life of the Brain*.

It is intriguing that she read psychology and philosophy at Oxford before writing her PhD on pharmacology. Her vitality and versatility have a special appeal for the young and the young at heart. Who can fail to identify with her hope for the future that 'people will respect individuality in others and celebrate it in themselves'?

In 1994, Professor Greenfield became the first woman to give the Royal Institution's Christmas Lectures, entitled 'The Greenfield Insights.' She is tireless in her efforts to foster public understanding of, and enthusiasm for, science. In 1998 she was awarded the Michael Faraday medal from the Royal Society for her contribution to this field.

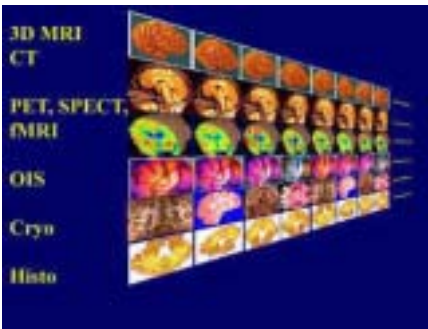
The connection between D-I-T-T and studies of the human brain is intimate, as dyslexia is a neurologically-based disorder. D-I-T-T's mission is to bring full awareness of dyslexia into the educational systems, to celebrate diversity, encourage recognition of the advantages of the ways our brains work differently, and to improve educational opportunities by making effective learning assessment and teaching assistance readily available.

'The Brain of the Future' will be presented in Room P3C050, the European Parliament, Paul-Henri Spaak entrance, 1000 Brussels on 7 May 2002, 17.00–19.00.

Admittance is free but strictly by ticket only, available from D-I-T-T on +32-2 537 7066.

NB Ticket holders must be at the Parliament by 16.15 to go through security checks for 17.00 start followed by questions 18.00–18.30 and book-signing before departure at 19.00.

Making Sense of Mind Matters



3D Brain Mapping
© 2001 LONI (UCLA Laboratory of
Neuro Imaging)
www.loni.ucla.edu

A challenging hands-on exhibition aimed at highlighting how the brain works is currently the star attraction at the Museum of Natural Sciences in Brussels. Free tickets are being offered for teachers.

Over 70 experiments and 12 multimedia kiosks are on display at 'Brain in Action', a fun and educational show exploring the world of neurones, which is open until June this year.

Tackling such questions as: 'How heavy is the human brain?' and 'Do animals think like us?' the exhibition promises to be a feast for all senses. Visitors are invited to test their capabilities by recognising or touching objects, solving brain-teasers, interpreting ink spots, memorising a succession of images, learning how to disregard pain and finding out which is their dominant eye.

Divided into four main areas, the first focuses on the animal brain and has been produced in conjunction with the French Natural History Museum in Paris. The three other sections, homing in on the human brain, were created and developed by the Danish Science Centre Experimentarium.

'Brain in Action' is at the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences Museum, 29 Vautierstraat, 1000 Brussels, until 2 June 2002. Tickets free for teachers with proof of ID. For more information call 02-627 42 38 or visit www.natuurwetenschappen.be or www.naturalsciences.be.

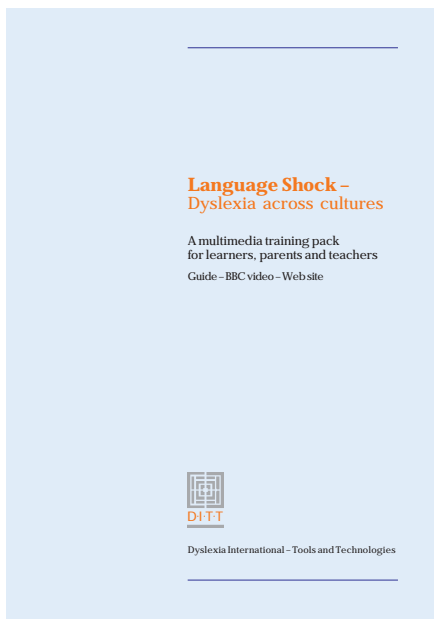
Science and the Brain

Tackling some of the most baffling questions surrounding dyslexia, Professor Dirk Bakker's article 'The Brain and Dyslexia' is featured in the *Language Shock – Dyslexia across cultures* multimedia pack that D-I-T-T distributes widely and which is receiving on-going acclaim as an information and training tool.

The Professor-Emeritus of Child Neuropsychology at the Free University, Amsterdam, and D-I-T-T Scientific Advisory Committee Member, presents what he terms as his survey of the scientific approach to dyslexia. Using the brain as a starting point, he takes on key questions including:

- What is special about dyslexics' brains?
- What is the origin of this special feature?
- How does this special feature manifest itself?
- What intervention is appropriate?

For more details see the *Language Shock* Guide. The e-book version will shortly be available to download from our Web site www.ditt-online.org. The latest printed version in Portuguese was published this month.



Title-page of the English e-book

Download *Language Shock* Guide for free

Essential advice and information on overcoming learning difficulties will soon be available at the click of a mouse.

D-I-T-T is about to offer e-book versions of the Guide to *Language Shock – Dyslexia across cultures*.

The e-books will be available free for visitors to the Web site to download. The first versions to be available will be in English, French, German, Spanish, and Portuguese, with Italian, Dutch and Scandinavian languages to follow. The text has been updated, and the non-English versions have additional articles contributed by local experts.

Designed for ease of reading on-screen, the e-books have a pale blue background to reduce glare, and the headings are picked out in colour for easier navigation through the text. This is an easily-accessible reference resource, boosted by the ‘bookmark’ and text-search facilities within the Adobe Acrobat Reader. The e-books are being designed by D-I-T-T volunteer typographic designer Pauline Key-Kairis.

Fighting the dyslexic’s corner in Europe

Raising awareness through lobbying for recognition of dyslexia and adapted teaching is one of D-I-T-T’s primary goals. One recent initiative is planning extracts from the *Language Shock* video, shown on BBC 2 in 1999, to go on-line on the D-I-T-T Web site.

D-I-T-T’s professional volunteer team has been working hard to get dyslexia awareness higher up the agenda of all Ministries of Education by lobbying for recognition of specific learning difficulties and the need for adapted teaching if dyslexic learners are to succeed.

– *MEPs leafleted*

In October 2001, Alessandro Goodwin worked with other D-I-T-T volunteers to distribute complementary copies of *Language Shock – Dyslexia Across the Cultures* in English, French and German to all Members of the European Parliament Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport. At the same time all MEPs were leafleted with an information sheet defining dyslexia and with the headings:

- How can you reduce the chances of social exclusion for 37 million European citizens?
- What is Dyslexia?
- How does it impact on society?
- What statistics back this?
- What is being done?
- What percentage of any population has Dyslexia?
- Where can you find out more? How can you help?

– *Television networks targeted*

Featuring D·I·T·T Patron, HRH Princess Margaretha of Liechtenstein, an 8-minute promotional film on dyslexia and language shock was produced in February 2001. It was made available to 800 television networks across Europe and North Africa at the time and now goes out on a demand through the European Broadcasting System (EBS). It is currently available in English and German. Other language versions follow.

Smoothen school transitions with the Pack

The *Language Shock* multimedia pack helps build bridges between parents and teachers. One enthusiastic parent says, 'It saves explaining each time. I just hand each new teacher a pack Guide and say "Please read this".' The latest video viewer was amazed – 'At last I understand why my husband cannot tell his left from his right and cannot take in more than one direction at a time!'

Order your copy from our Web site or contact the D·I·T·T office on +32-2 537 7066.



New chapter:
The Portuguese edition

– *Added bonus for new pack production in Portuguese*

The long-awaited Portuguese edition of the *Language Shock* Guide has been published – with a whole new chapter.

This latest edition of the Guide includes an article written by Portuguese academic, Dr Rui Alexandre Alves. Manolo Santos will volunteer his time to take the lead narrator voice at the recording studios in Brussels early in April to complete the Portuguese version of the full Pack.

Thanks to the hard work of the Portuguese volunteers now long associated with the project, Sylvia Camillo and Maria Henriques in particular, the full new Portuguese version is almost ready for distribution.

D·I·T·T is indebted to Femmes d'Europe aisbl for their generous sponsorship which has made the whole production possible, and also to the Project Manager, Daniel Ofori, who is organising studio work, labelling, press and packing, as well as distribution to Portugal, Brazil and the other Portuguese-speaking communities currently requesting the Pack.

Next steps on the Roadmap to Success

24 Tintin story lines are currently being researched by volunteers aged 8 to 16. Mr Dufour, a professional artist and himself dyslexic, has completed his research and listings of illustrations.

Roadmap to Success is at the data collection stage – experts are being consulted and structures evaluated. The project will be developed as an integrated multimedia package with CD-rom and interlinking Web site facilities for which funding has been found.

An application for funding for the CD-rom element was re-submitted to the Commission Department for Education and Culture at the end of January. If successful, the official start date will be June 2002. A schedule taking this into account is already in place. Gudrun Dziallas, Board Member working as project manager consultant, devised the first outline for the CD Rom after consultation with local special education teachers in Brussels. D·I·T·T hopes to announce the post of a project manager/coordinator soon.



Mover and shaker:
Beacon School head and author
Steve Chinn

Numbers man leads the way in excellence

Educationalist Steve Chinn is blazing the trail in the dyslexia world. His school, Mark College, was the first ever to be awarded the Independent Schools' Association Award for excellence.

The Somerset-based secondary school for dyslexic boys, founded by Dr Chinn who is also Principal, has the coveted Beacon School status, as well as Department for Educational and Skills (DfES) approval and Highly Effective Certificate.

With over thirty years' experience of teaching, Dr Chinn has taught science and mathematics in mainstream schools and has been Headmaster of three schools specialising in provision for dyslexia (two in the UK and one in the USA).

The mathematics supremo has also chaired the Council for the Registration of Schools Teaching Dyslexics (or CreSTeD), a charity he co-founded, which produces a Register of schools that offer help for dyslexic pupils and have met a specific criteria (www.crested.org.uk).

His book, *Mathematics for Dyslexics: A Teaching Handbook*, co-authored by J. Richard Ashcroft and published by Whurr, is considered a classic. *What to do when you can't learn the times tables*, available in book or CD-rom form, takes an innovative approach to addressing a very commonly experienced difficulty for dyslexics.

Steve has lectured on maths and dyslexia around the world. He chaired the third BDA International Conference in 1997 and is also a member of the DfES advisory group on independent and State school partnerships.

Along with Mark College Head Teacher, Julie Kay, Steve devised and delivered the first BDA-recognised teacher-training course on numeracy and dyslexia at Mark College. The course also leads to three Masters (M level) modules at MMU, UK. One of his current projects – working with colleagues in Ireland and the Netherlands and funded by the European Commission Comenius programme – focuses on behaviour management and social skills.

When taking a break from number-crunching and school, Steve enjoys gardening, walking and travel.

Dr Steve Chinn is an Honorary Member of the D-I-T-T Board of Directors. To contact him e-mail stevechinn@enterprise.net or visit the Web site www.markcollege.somerset.sch.uk



'Do's and 'Don't's':
Dyspel's new book

□ Top tips from Luxembourg

Book watch: 'Dyslexia – Strategies for Success in Schools' by DYSPEL is reviewed for D·I·T·T volunteer by Dr Daniel Ofori

How do you help the bright child who doesn't seem able to learn? In this new book by the Luxembourg organisation, Dyspel, teachers and parents are offered important advice on how to stop dyslexic children falling into a downwards spiral of failure, frustration and underachievement.

It looks at the range of specific difficulties children may be facing in the school environment and explores the possible causes of dyslexia, tracing its different manifestations and associated problems when allied with multi-lingualism.

The positive effects of the 'dyslexia-aware school' when it comes to students' performance is strongly emphasised.

The book identifies the main areas of difficulty for dyslexic children, including literature and language, maths, memory, organisational problems and low self-esteem.

Stressing the need for early identification and diagnoses, the book also suggests various theoretical and practical tips, including a series of 'do's and 'don't's for students, teachers, parents and policy makers.

DYSPEL maintains that the strategies described in its new publication are tried and tested and have been shown to lead to improved learning for all children. The striking layout with English, French and German alongside, makes it a truly multilingual experience in itself – a must for all, and especially relevant to European teachers.

DYSPEL asbl is a dyslexia and special needs support group for parents, teachers and professionals in Luxembourg run entirely by volunteers. It can be contacted at 12 am Daerchen, L-5336 Moutfort or call +356 35 05 39.

□ The best of teacher training

Congratulations to Susan van Alsenoy, Chair of the Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas (FAWCO) Educational Support Committee! This compilation of expert advice from both sides of the Atlantic has had rave reviews from top professionals and on the senco forum.

D·I·T·T rates Susan's findings as indispensable for all teachers who are serious about wishing to attune their teaching to the learners needs.

The project, advertised in former issues of the D·I·T·T, is now published on <http://www.fawco.org/> where it can be viewed and downloaded free.

❑ Web site news

❑ Fancy talking to the dragon of Star Tower or browsing through Paddington Bear's pictures of Peru? Then go to www.mape.org.uk.

This ICT in Primary Education site uses publications, software, reviews and events to offer support with issues like the curriculum, e-mail and the Web in the classroom, and guides to building ICT into development planning.

❑ Here is a fun and free site aimed at teachers of primary school youngsters, their parents and children themselves – www.study-pro.com. It has been developed in conjunction with the UK's Department of Education and Skills, and gets the thumbs up from D·I·T·T.

Dyslexic consultant Peter Hill is a gateway to dyslexia assessment, staff development and one-to-one dyslexia support and study skills tuition in the UK.

For more details contact peter@study-pro.com or call +44 1527 500324 or 7751 792711.

Announcements



Dyslexia expert and BDA special needs consultant:
Judith Stansfield

★ Judith Stansfield to visit Brussels

Computer software will be put through its paces this month when dyslexia expert Judith Stansfield visits Brussels.

Tickets to see a presentation by Judith Stansfield, independent SEN and ICT consultant on 'Dyslexia and the computer – ICT for assessing and assisting' at the D·I·T·T office on Saturday 20 April are now on sale.

The day is planned as follows:

- 10.30 – 12.30
Using the computer to assess for dyslexia – an overview of current systems and a case study of a pragmatic approach to accessing ICT needs of children with disabilities.
- 13.30 – 15.30
ICT Solutions for supporting the learning of children with specific learning difficulties.

Formerly an advisory teacher for SEN and ICT in Cleveland, Judith reviews and edits for the BDA Computer Committee and is Chair of the NASEN ICT standing Committee.

She is currently involved in assessing the ICT needs of children with SEN to facilitate their access to the full curriculum. In addition, she produces SEN ICT materials, and mentoring for distance-learning for several NOF providers as well as speaking at national and international conferences and events.

Tickets to 'Dyslexia and the computer – ICT for assessing and assisting' on Saturday 20 April 2002 at 1 rue Defacqz, B-1000 Brussels (map available from D·I·T·T) cost 10 Euros, snack lunch 5 Euros. For more details contact D·I·T·T on +32-2 537 7066.

★ Annual General Meeting

D-I-T-T's AGM will take place on 7 May 2002, 13.45–14.30, at 1 rue Defacqz, 1000 Brussels.

It will be preceded by a meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee (11.00–13.00) on evaluating the objectives and criteria for input into the *Roadmap to Success* CD-rom and interlinking Web site facilities.

★ Watch out for a personal account by Susan van Alsenoy on the **Denver, Colorado Learning Disabilities Association of America February Conference** in the D-I-T-T Summer Newsletter.

D-I-T-T was represented at the recent Learning Disabilities Association of America conference in that took place in Denver, Colorado by educationalist and researcher Susan van Alsenoy.

★ Communications giant and D-I-T-T funder, Cable & Wireless, is hosting the '**Childnet Awards**' ceremony in conjunction with a fellow community partner Childnet International in Paris on 4 April 2002, where D-I-T-T has been invited to have a stand.

For more details log on to www.childnetawards.org/francais.

★ D-I-T-T volunteers attended '**Innovation and excellence in school: Moving Europe ahead!**' seminar at the European Parliament, Brussels in February, hosted by European Schoolnet. For full details, see their Web site www.eun.org/ahead.

★ Spanish fly flag for education

The Spanish have earmarked education as a special priority during their presidential term at the European Union.

According to Agency Europe earlier this year, the Presidency's Programme pledges to pay special attention to the following matters:

- supporting the transparency of the educational processes, as well as quality evaluation. The goal is to achieve increased system quality and greater mobility between systems;
- boosting the teaching of a second and third EU language;
- increasing cooperation among educational establishments at all levels;
- and improving the training of teachers and trainers.

★ Brush up LASS skills in London

Computer assessment specialists Lucid are holding a teacher training event on LASS in London this month.

The event will cover CoPS cognitive profiling system designed for screening four- to eight-year-olds, the LASS Junior multi-purpose assessment system for eight- to eleven-year-olds and LASS Secondary, a general purpose secondary schools assessment for SEN including dyslexia and for monitoring students' progress in literacy development for eleven- to fifteen-year-olds.

The programme also includes examination of case studies of pupils with different profiles and various learning problems. According to Jo Horne, of the University of Hull's psychology department, the emphasis will be on interpreting results and developing effective educational support strategies.

For more details or a free demonstration CD of all three assessment programmes for teachers contact Lucid on +44 1482 882121 or www.lucid-research.com.

★ September teacher training

Teachers can sign up for a postgraduate certificate for teaching multilingual children or adults with specific learning difficulties in Luxembourg this Autumn.

The course, which is run in conjunction with Manchester Metropolitan University and the Centre for Inclusive Education and Special Education Needs (CIESEN), qualifies for 60 points under the CAT/ECT scheme and can lead to accreditation by the British Dyslexia Association.

Aimed at teachers with three or more years of experience, as well as other professionals, the one-year course includes 36 three-hour weekly sessions and 30 hours of supervised teaching practice in English, French, German or Italian.

The course aims include understanding the nature and causes of specific learning difficulties, identification and assessment, and the development of teaching skills using both structured and multi-sensory teaching approaches.

For more details and application forms contact:

Felicity Patterson at felplux@cs.com or call +352 26 36 06 22, or

Carol McCarthy at mccarth@pt.lu or call +352 35 97 68.

Money Matters

⌘ Femmes d'Europe

Femmes d'Europe aisbl has generously donated 10,000 Euros to produce the much in demand Portuguese version of the *Language Shock – Dyslexia across cultures* Pack.

⌘ Cable & Wireless (C&W)

The first payment from our new funders, Cable & Wireless, has just been received. Our new sponsors will also be partnering us in developing the project through Web links, press and promotion. We are regularly in touch with the Cable & Wireless team via a monthly teleconference from D·I·T·T headquarters.

Reflections

☉ An extract from 'The Misunderstood Child' by Larry B. Silver, clinical professor of psychiatry, Georgetown University School of Medicine and member of the Foundation for Children with Learning Disabilities (now the National Center for Learning Disabilities). Contributed by Gudrun Dziallas:

... Let no child be demeaned, nor have his or her wonder diminished,
because of our ignorance or inactivity.
Let no child be deprived of discovery
because we lack the resources to discover his or her problem.
Let no child – ever – doubt self or mind
because we are unsure of our commitment.