



Editorial Comment

Angela J. Fawcett, Editor-in-Chief

It is a very great pleasure to publish the 12th issue of the Asia Pacific Journal of Developmental Differences, now in its sixth year of publication, which is published by the Dyslexia Association of Singapore. The response to the previous issues continue to be extremely gratifying, and we intend to maintain these high standards in this issue and forthcoming issues.

In common with a number of other academic journals, we have now set up a scientific committee of reviewers to assist the editor and editorial board in the review process. We would like to thank the members of this scientific committee for their contribution in reviewing all the articles presented here.

In this issue, we again present seven articles representing international research on a number of important issues addressing theory and practice. The first article in this issue from Sharyfah Nur Fitriya, based on her Masters' thesis, addressed the important issue of keeping children with severe ADHD on task. The approach adopted here focused on preference-based teaching. Adopting a case study approach, the children were invited to compile a list of their preferred activities and interests, and these were used to focus their attention over several weeks of intervention. Following baseline measurements which indicated very low levels of engagement in these children, the project was able to achieve 100% on task performance after a few weeks, facilitating the learning of these difficult to teach children.

An interesting companion piece here is the article from Siti Mariam Binte Daud. Based on her Masters' thesis the article examines the experience of mainstream students with dyslexia in Singapore and their perspectives on inclusion. Both positive and negative results were reported and their conclusions indicated a need for greater awareness in teachers and the development of respect for dyslexia and its strengths and weaknesses.

Following the theme of comprehension, the next article from Tuty Elfira Abdul Razak in this issue focuses on the use of picture books to enhance comprehension in younger primary children struggling with dyslexia. Based on her Masters' thesis, this research shows that scaffolding the learning of this group pictorially can be particularly effective in providing support.

In the next section, a powerful case study on the adverse consequences of dyslexia in University is presented by Beckett and Glazzard. Based on the experiences of a mature student in social work, the article demonstrates the full impact of dyslexia when it is not adequately supported and misunderstood. The article reveals the bitter consequences and the devastation that can occur in these circumstances.

Interest in dyslexia in Indonesia has escalated in recent years despite the lack of standardised tests for use in screening and diagnosis. In the next article, Rexsy Taruna and colleagues present a new phonological awareness test, the CAPA, is constructed in Bahasa Indonesia and validated on over 100 children aged 5-6. The article and the associated test fill a very real need for the region and have been designed for use by speech therapists.

This is followed by an article from Mary Mountstephen, an experienced special-needs co-ordinator specialising in motor skills interventions, studying for a PhD at the University of Reading. Here she presents a commentary on the effectiveness of physical exercise in enhancing executive function in children with ADHD. The article is illustrated with examples of different categories of movement that have proved effective with this group. It is clear that just a few minutes a day of exercise incorporated into the curriculum can have a lasting impact for all children. This is particularly important at a time when in the UK there are complaints that play-time has consistently been eroded, cutting down the opportunity for interactions of this sort.

The final article in this issue presents a comprehensive study of teacher perceptions of the enhanced comprehension curriculum, designed to address the growing needs for secondary level input at the Dyslexia Association of Singapore. In this article, both qualitative and quantitative data are presented on teachers' perceptions of the usefulness of this new approach. This is an important article addressing a complex area of research, derived from the main literacy programme at the Dyslexia Association of Singapore, by Serena Tan Abdullah and colleagues. The results indicate that the majority of respondents found the new curriculum useful at all levels but their confidence in delivering this more advanced curriculum varied. This suggests that further support and training would be appropriate in line with best practice in the area.

It has been a pleasure in this issue to note the success of a number of members of staff from DAS in their research projects and to bring their findings to a wider audience.