

Research Round-up 2016: Report

Please see the attached powerpoint slides giving an overview of *ELT well* activity over the last year.

The participants felt that the **most pressing issues** affecting their work at the moment are:

- putting exam access arrangements in place for ESOL learners
- assessing ESOL learners, especially older learners who have little experience of formal education
- the problem of expecting dyslexic learners to memorize a lot of material for language exams without really understanding it, or being able to use it independently
- enabling students to access technology, when they do not have prior experience of computers, or sufficiently well-developed literacy practices to make the most of it

A wide range of resources and techniques were suggested in the **quick round-up** session, including:

- Touch type read and spell
 - speed typing programme based on the alpha-omega system
- ALLEFF (<http://www.allef.org.uk/>)
 - an organisation that sets up extended language exchanges for young people wishing to learn a language through immersion
- Dyslexia Assessment in Languages of India
 - a new assessment for dyslexia produced in 4 of India's 22 languages. The DST has also been adapted for use in India. This could also be useful in many schools in the UK, if there are assessors who can speak the languages
- Kinaesthetic spelling
 - a way of helping learners to feel the shape of words. This led to a discussion of other kinaesthetic techniques, such as ways of teaching phoneme production, for example using a mirror to help learners to see how their mouth is moving, and feel the changes as they make different sounds
- Doodling
 - using free drawing a means of settling and calming students before a lesson – especially when combined with different types of music to suit the mood we want to create in the classroom
- Individual whiteboards
 - to encourage students to have a go at answering, knowing that the answer is not permanent and they can erase any errors and have another go.
- Listening to music as an exam access arrangement
 - Along with rest breaks and fidget tools, this is an accepted way of allowing student with ADD to cope better with exams
- Polleverywhere (<https://www.polleverywhere.com/>)
 - A mobile phone app that allows learners to respond anonymously by send their answer to the interactive whiteboard, encouraging even the least confident students to have a go.

Research report 1:

International Students with SpLDs: Implications for Universities by Sharon Noseley -Kallandzhs

Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKis2pBK2N8>

Research report 2:

Attentional processing of L2 input and its relationship with working memory capacity by Bimali

Indrarathne Report to follow

Future directions in research

The participants discussed the need for assessment tools in different languages. Tests of working memory for use in Sri Lanka are perhaps on the horizon, but more are needed.

The lack of – and the need for – a valid test of ‘general cognitive ability’ for multilingual learners was noted.

One of the most persistent issues seems to be how to go about changing attitudes in the education system, both among subject tutors who still rely on the support staff rather than taking responsibility, and among people putting exam access arrangements in place. It would be interesting to find out more about what they think, and why, with a view to influencing policy as well as practice.

It was also thought that there might be some mileage in exploring the benefits of doodling / listening to different types of music in more depth.