Middlebury Curriculum Workshop

Teaching the Whole Classroom: Research-based practice on Neurodiverse learners

Dyslexia

- 10-20% of population
- Improved visual-spatial skills (Leveroy, 2013)
  - Besides reading, can also affect speech, sensory processing, decision making, and impulse control (D'Mello & Gabrieli, 2018)
- Aural/visual cueing
  - Dyslexia-friendly fonts
  - Pair written forms with aural input
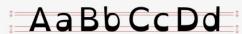- Long words – orally backwards by syllable
  - Entschuldigung

ADHD

- High-levels of creativity, capable of extreme focus (Sedgewick, Merwood, & Asherson, 2019)
- Task organizing and planning is the main effect
- Graphic organizers to plan the steps of a task (helpful for many groups!)
- Giving out the instructions of a task one by one, visually marking the progress
- Changing between communicative modes of skills between steps of a task

Autism Field

- No evidence that can't learn successfully (Conner et al , 2020;Howard, 2023)
- Strengths in vocabulary, memorization skills, visual learning, organization Damaris & Kleber (2023)
  - Teach conversational turns as vocabulary
- High tolerance for repetitive tasks, systematic information processing (Yphantides, 2021)
- spontaneous language, social, and conversational communication difficult (Conner et al., 2020; Yphantides 2022) – key aspect to SLA
  - Compensate with detail orientation
  - Explaining prior to arrival WHY conversation helps with acquisition – not just a forcing to be neurotypical
  - Frames for conversational turns
  - Sandwich a spontaneous conversation task between slices of solo preparation and solo analysis
- Pragmatic appropriateness can be difficult (Tager-Flusberg, Paul & Lord, 2005)
  - Chance in SLA to learn pragmatics assumptions as rules

Autism Field

- Typical language classroom can be a noisy, exhausting space
  - Acts of withdrawal to re-frame head space to engage in groupwork; affects re-integration into class (Yphantides, 2021)
  - Sending groups to different areas of the building or classroom to work
  - Larger classrooms, small class sizes (easy egress)
  - Explaining to other learners how a walking away from a group or class is not meant as act of anger
- Separating out the student or giving them alternate work can be isolating (although occasionally appropriate) – better to explain purpose of group work clearly

General Whole Classroom Toolkit

- Initial needs analysis for all learners at beginning of learning differences they had, and the compensating strategies they rely on outside of Middlebury
  - Check in before pledge (or periodically) to talk about strategies
- Project-based learning – Varied tasks combine in single project, celebrate strengths of students along the way
- Clearly defined purposes of social tasks
- Sentence frames, phrase banks
- One-on-one conversations in hallways and cafeterias
- Integrated Performance Assessments - Tests should include interpretive, presentation, interaction. Allow different strengths.
- Documentation of a learning difference through ADA office allows for differentiation of assessment, delivery

- Akbasli, S., Sahin, M., & Gürel, M. (2017). A Model to Manage EFL Learners with ADHD and Dyslexia. Journal of Education and Practice, 8(28), 201-214.

- Armstrong, T. (2010). Neurodiversity: Discovering the extraordinary gifts of autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and other brain differences. DaCapo Lifelong Learning Books.

- Conner, C., Baker, L. D., & Allor, J. H. (2020). Multiple language exposure for children with autism spectrum disorder from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, Bilingual Research Journal, 43:3, 286-303, DOI: 10.1080/15235882.2020.1799885 https://eric.ed.gov/?q=asd+AND+speak+AND+school&pr=on&id=EJ1278334

- Dal, M. (2008). Dyslexia and foreign language learning. In G. Reid, A. Fawcett, F. Manis, & L. Siegel (Eds.) The Sage handbook of dyslexia. (pp. 439-454). California: Sage.

- Howard, K.B. (2023) Supporting learners with special educational needs and disabilities in the foreign languages classroom. 38, 154–161. https://nasenjournals-onlinelibrary-wiley-com.proxy.mau.se/doi/epdf/10.1111/1467-96 04.12449

- Ha, Vu Hai, and Nguyen Nha Uyen. (2020). Classroom management techniques for teaching English inclusively to ADHD and ASD primary students in Vietnam. VNU Journal of Foreign Studies. 36(3), 53-68.

- Sedgwick, J. A., Merwood, A., & Asherson, P. (2019). The positive aspects of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder: a qualitative investigation of successful adults with ADHD. ADHD Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorders, 11(3), 241-253.

- Tager-Flusberg, H., Paul, R., & Lord, C. (2005). Language and communication in autism. In F. Volkemar, R. Paul, A. Klin, & D. Cohen (Eds.) Handbook of autism and pervasive developmental disorders. (pp.335-364). New Jersey: Wiley.

- Yphantides, J. (2022). EFL Teachers' Experiences with neurodiverse students and Self-efficacy for Inclusive Practice in Japanese Universities. European Journal of Applied Linguistics and TEFL, 11(2), 125-139. https://www.proquest.com/docview/2731481035/fulltextPDF/C50BA165BC4E49B4P Q/1?accountid=12249

- Yphantides, J. (2021). Supporting Neurodiverse Students in the EFL classroom: A Cross-border Challenge and Responsibility. English Scholarship Beyond Borders. Issue 1, Volume (7), 34-49. https://www.englishscholarsbeyondborders.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/JenniferYphantides.pd