

Judit Kormos, Anne Margaret Smith. *Teaching Languages to Students with Specific Learning Differences*. Multilingual Matters: Bristol, Buffalo, Toronto 2012, 232 S.

The long awaited book *Teaching Languages to Students with Specific Learning Differences* by Judit Kormos and Anne Margaret Smith is intended to help second and foreign language teachers to work effectively with students manifesting educational difficulties of various kinds. The authors take an inclusive and practical approach to methodological implications that Specific Learning Differences (SpLD) may have for language students.

Judit Kormos is a senior lecturer at the Department of Linguistics and English Language, Lancaster University. Her research interests are: psychological aspects of second language learning, language learning motivation, self-regulation and learner autonomy in foreign and second language contexts, language learners with Special Educational Needs. She was the chief investigator of a project exploring language learning processes of dyslexic and Deaf students in Hungary. She also works on a European Commission sponsored Lifelong Learning teacher training project in the field of dyslexia and language learning. Last but not least, she is the editor of the volume *Language Learners with Special Needs: An International Perspective* (2008).

The coauthor Anne Margaret Smith is a specialist tutor and assessor for students with Specific Learning Differences. Her PhD combined her experience in English Language Teaching (ELT) and Learner Support and explored how the issue of inclusive education is addressed in teacher training and education for EFL teachers. She set and runs a company *ELT well* whose aim is to support teachers in their work with students having learning difficulties or disabilities.

Kormos and Smith's publication *Teaching Languages to Students with Specific Learning Differences* is divided into nine chapters. It starts with a premise that in order to work successfully teachers should have an understanding of SpLDs and know how they affect second language learning processes. Thus, the book begins by exploring a range of discourses (medical, legal, social, inclusive) reflecting different *Views of Disability in Education*.

The second chapter attempts to answer *What Is Dyslexia?* It provides a historical overview of dyslexia research as well as a broad outline of the strengths and weaknesses of dyslectic learners. The reason the authors devote so much space to this type of Specific

Learning Differences is that, among other SpLDs, it is dyslexia that has the most significant impact on language learning.

The next chapter presents *Associated Learning Differences*, since according to the UK definition, Specific Learning Differences include dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Additionally, due to its high frequency among dyslectic students, the authors have decided to describe the Asperger's Syndrome. Moreover, a brief characterization of Specific Language Impairment (SLI) is provided, as it has similar effects on reading as dyslexia.

Chapter number four deals with *Cognitive and Emotional Aspects of Language Learning* mainly in foreign classroom settings. It discusses the processes involved in language learning and provides an overview of language learning difficulties which students demonstrating SpLDs may experience when it comes to vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, listening, oral production.

The next chapter *Identification and Disclosure* highlights that very often it is not straightforward to disentangle general difficulties from specific ones. Still, there are some indicators that teachers ought to be alert to that may indicate the presence of Specific Learning Difficulties, and in this section these are explored.

Accommodating Differences, the sixth chapter, discusses the problem of adjustments that may be needed to enable all students to access the curriculum on an equal footing with their peers who do not manifest SpLDs. This chapter takes the following issues into account: environment, curriculum, communication, classroom management, developing learning skills.

The most practical chapter outlines multi-sensory *Techniques for Language Teaching* that can enhance the success of second (SL) and foreign (FL) language students with Specific Learning Differences. This section describes the multi-sensory structured approach in detail, thus may be particularly interesting from the point of view of SL and FL practitioners.

The authors recognize that it is only recently that the issue of accessibility of language proficiency tests (often being prerequisites for universities or jobs) for students with disabilities has been raised in the European Union. At the same time, classroom-based assessment might have important consequences for learners, i.a. emotional and motivational. Therefore, the penultimate chapter aims at finding the balance between fair and valid *Assessment* procedures for students with Specific Learning Difficulties.

Finally, it has been observed that learners should be encouraged to progress either to the next level of education or into the workplace. The conclusive chapter is thus devoted to *Transition and Progression*, in which language development plays a vital role.

Summing up, the book by Kormos and Smith places issues of language teaching for students with Specific Learning Difficulties in a broad educational context, offering practical guidance on methodologies and classroom management. It also discusses discourses of the field, the identification of SpLDs and facilitating progression. Taking all these factors into account, the volume may be recommended to all professional groups who deal with *Teaching Languages to Students with Specific Learning Differences*.

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