

Morris, B. (2007). Murky waters: English speakers of other languages with learning disabilities. In C. Fraser & L. Ayo (Eds.), *Anchoring our practice: Perspectives, partnerships, projections: Refereed proceedings of the 2006 Association of Tertiary Learning Advisors of Aotearoa New Zealand Conference*. (pp. 101-116). Auckland: ATLAANZ.  
ISBN: 978-0-9582889-0-3

## **Murky waters: English speakers of other languages with learning disabilities**

Barbara Morris  
Wintec  
New Zealand

### **Abstract**

Based on Monarez's (1992, as cited in Root, 1994) claim that there are 5 to 15% of all students across cultures with learning disabilities, it can be presumed that many English speakers of other languages (ESOL) present with a learning disability (LD) as a reason for their difficulties in coping with tertiary education. Issues surrounding ESOL LD are complicated by the multitude of inconclusive, interdisciplinary interpretations of etiology, definition, and assessment of LD. The aim of this article is to attempt to clear some of this mist of uncertainty by exploring both concepts in an attempt to identify those characteristics that arise from cultural difference inherent in ESOL learners and those that closely resemble the characteristics of LD. Once these are better understood it is then possible to focus on the learner's strengths and potentials for success, strengthening learning centre involvement in the success and retention strategies employed in New Zealand tertiary education today.

### **Introduction**

As growing numbers of ESOL speakers visit or live within New Zealand shores, so do the numbers within tertiary education. This in turn has given rise to both mainstream and English language school tutors referring international students to learning centres. These students have presented their tutors with a puzzling dilemma: some of these students seem bright enough but have considerable trouble learning and/or completing their programmes. Some of these students present with underlying characteristics indicative of a LD. This presents problems for the learning centre staff because often they may not be trained or equipped to assess, identify or know how to intervene in such circumstances. To add to the dilemma, LD as a concept, in the western world, is fraught with uncertainty and professional dissention. Consequently, exploration of ESOL LD presented challenges that inspired a desire to find professional guidance for supporting such a potentially large group of students now and in the future.

The opening case study introduces the complexity of the concepts of ESOL and LD. Exploring both concepts individually reveals the difficulties of their co-existence, emphasising the importance of learning skills tutors' early identification, assessment and intervention.

### **Case study: ESOL LD**

He walked into the office, cheerful and confident, really believing that he had paid for his course and would pass. A phone call from his frustrated classroom tutor, 5 minutes earlier, had portrayed a very different picture; the tutor had not been able to communicate to this ESOL student, that despite having a potentially well paid job in Auckland upon successful completion of the degree, success was not guaranteed unless the final 5000 word, self directed project was completed on time. The project supervisor had given up on the student after: 8 months of nothing written other than 'some scribbling on scraps of paper' that constantly got lost; not being able to get him to any meetings on time (if at all); the general persona that there was nothing wrong and that it was the tutor's role to teach him and

get him through the course requirements. The International Learning Skills Tutor had been unable to break down the barriers and progress had been negligible. His lack of progress meant that his failure seemed inevitable!

He was the first of several such international students, over the last three years, who graced my presence because all other efforts had failed. These experiences aroused a personal curiosity because many such students displayed characteristics that are traditionally, within western society, associated with learning disabilities. Because of cultural differences, traditional assessment and identification methods produced inconclusive results although the underlying manifestations seemed to indicate that such conditions co-existed. Reflection on this and similar experiences created a desire to find answers as to how such students could be identified early in their courses thus reducing the last minute anxiety for all (both students and tutors) and was to provide new insights, and an international perspective, on a life long interest in LD.

## **Background**

During 2003, the New Zealand Ministry of Education, in the Adult ESOL strategy, noted that 50,700 residents' spoken English was not strong enough to carry on a basic conversation about everyday things and that 200,000 - 210,000 adults from non-English speaking backgrounds had less than adequate levels of literacy. In April 2006, the Ministry also noted that there were 54,025 visiting international students within the New Zealand education system (Ministry of Education, 2006). Such statistics indicate that currently approximately 250,000 internationals living in New Zealand have the potential for learning issues. Monarez (1992, as cited in Root, 1994) suggests that between 5 to 15% of the population, across all cultures, have learning disabilities which potentially equates to a least 12,500 – 37,500 ESOL in the aforementioned group.

The New Zealand tertiary education sector "is committed to ensuring that all New Zealanders achieve their potential in life, ... are able to engage in critical analysis of the world around them", and that it is the responsibility of the education sector to match the diversity of learner needs to appropriate provisions (Ministry of Education, 2003, pp. 6-7). In theory, all learners can expect that the tertiary system will meet their needs. Studies in this area are deemed not only necessary for student success and retention but also for meeting the requirements under the Ministry's guidelines. However, research has revealed difficulties associated with identification of not only ESOL LD but with LD itself, as worldwide, the LD concept presents real problems in areas of determining what it is. There is a consequential lack of unified definition, assessment and identification processes.

## **Learning Disabilities (LD)**

A review of the literature reveals that at least seventeen definitions have arisen from between 1962 to the present day. Definitions vary according to the writer's discipline and the need to meet specific political requirements for funding and accommodation of learning issues (Bradley, Danielson, & Hallahan, 2001; Learning Disabilities Association of Canada, 2005; Lerner, 2006; Lyon, 1996; Payne & Irons, 2003; Stevens & van Werkhoven, 2001; Tsuge, 2001; Vogel, 1998).

The conceptual development of learning disabilities has traversed many approaches, theories and disciplines. Figure 1 summarises this fragmented and often conflicting field.

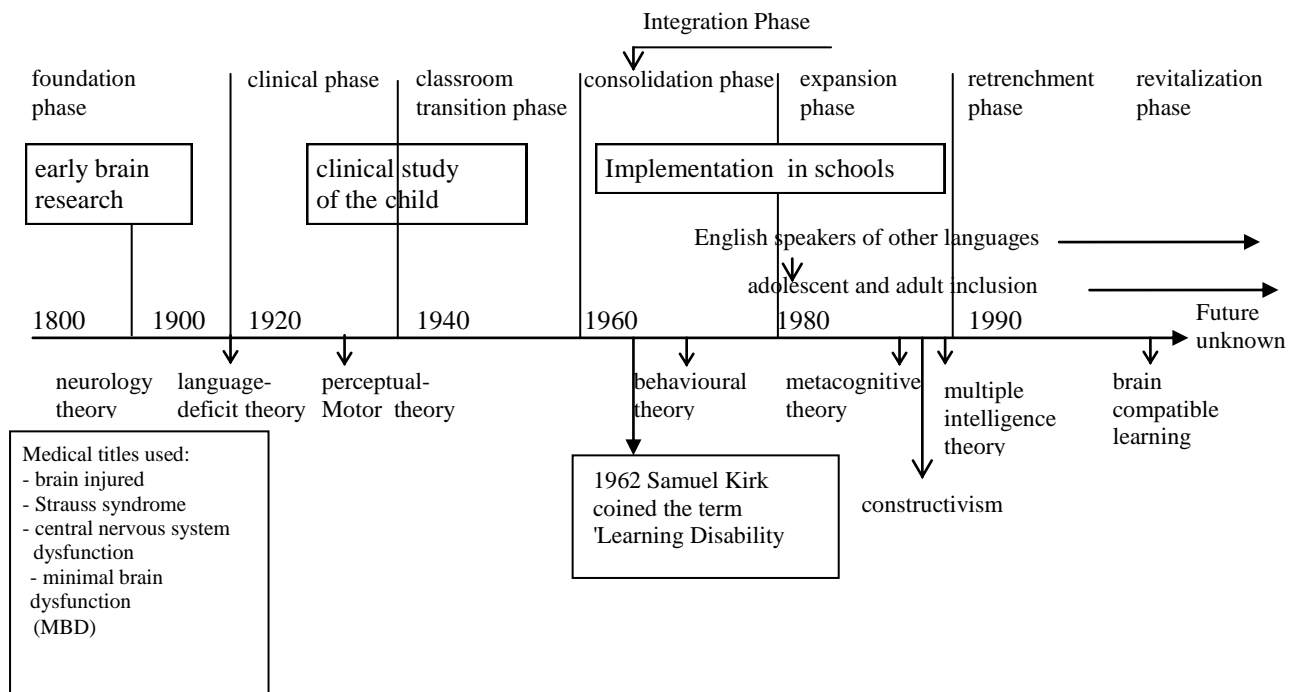


Figure 1. Time line: Learning Disabilities historical phases and theoretical perspectives (Adapted from Artiles & Ortiz, 2002; Bender, 2004; Lerner, 2006).

Shaywitz (1996, as cited in McLoughlin, Leather, & Stringer, 2002) attempts to simplify matters, describing LD as "an unexpected weakness in a sea of strengths" whereas Ysseldyke, et al. (1983, as cited in McLoughlin et al., 2002) suggest after five years of trying, that describing LD with any precision is impossible and that it "can best be defined as whatever society wants it to be, needs it to be, or will let it be at any point in time" (p. 89). The importance of recognition relates specifically to how the assessment provides the entrance to further accommodations and services.

Despite the dissension in the field, what has emerged from amongst the definitions is a set of generally agreed commonalities:

1. That LD exists throughout the life span
2. The recognition of intra-individual difference and its heterogeneous nature
3. That it appears to be a central nervous system dysfunction/difference
4. The learning problems are associated with learning processes
5. There is linkage to academic learning issues
6. There are frequently other conditions linked to LD
7. There are co-existing (co-morbidity) or excluded disabilities

(Myers, 2007).

The use of these seven commonalities as descriptors is not without critics but it does provide a foundation for determining an understanding of what LD is.

Essentially, LD is a learning difficulty/difference that can occur within any person, at any age. It is seen as specific, unexpected, uneven underachievement, manifesting itself in any subject area/s (while not in others). It is not caused by other disabilities such as loss of sight, hearing, etc., but can co-exist with them; it is intrinsic to the individual and can be demonstrated through a variety of differences/impairments in processing information as demonstrated in Figure 2 (Brinckerhoff, Shaw, & McGuire, 1993; Vogel & Reder, 1998; Walcot-Gayda, 2004).

Both historic and current research shows clearly there are two factors that have heavily influenced this field of study for adults. Firstly, the assessment and intervention processes are largely child-based and

the idea of LD being a life long consideration is relatively new. Secondly, the bulk of this research is heavily reliant upon the US experience and modernistic approaches which are based on the demand for empirical evidence in an attempt to determine eligibility for education-based intervention.

The development of assessment tools has been directed by the differing historical perspectives (figure 1), making "[t]he assessment and diagnosis of traditional college-age students and adults with learning disabilities ... one of the most controversial topics in the area of postsecondary ... services delivery" (Brinckerhoff et al., 1993, p. 90). The assessment has elements of each of the seven phases (figure 1) and it is almost as if there is an attempt to cover all options with no finite answers provided as to who has/has not got a LD. This has resulted 117 different possible tests (Lerner, 2006) with 76 specifically for adults (Brinckerhoff et al., 1993).

Aptitude tests (IQ tests) have come under the closest scrutiny because the results are inconclusive, especially for ESOL learners, as such tests are greatly affected by life experience, culture and native language, and often ignore the unique learning characteristics of the individual with LD (Lerner, 2006). Their focus is on learned skills not potential skills (Seigel, 1999 as cited in Wong & Hutchinson, 2001). Brinckerhoff, et al. (1993) as well as Ross-Gordon, Plotts, Joesel, & Wells (2003) have suggested that today, the assessment process has become so complex that the resultant reports generated are almost too complicated and overwhelming for either the prospective teacher or the adult with the learning disability to fully understand.

There are many reasons why an ESOL student may have difficulties making progress in a tertiary learning environment. It may be that their literacy levels in their first language (L1) are limited or absent; a mismatch of transferable skills between languages; a lack of efficient study habits; stress or trauma associated with the reasons for moving to an English speaking country; cultural disharmony; sporadic attendance in class; or the lack of opportunity to practise the skills learnt outside of the classroom, etc. Intervention may involve the need for counselling and support to help with adjustment and/or to change personal behaviours that are hindering progress (Learning Disabilities Association [LDA], 2002).

The need to identify and understand ESOL LD is twofold. Firstly, for the student, it can: provide an explanation for the difficulties with learning English; guide their understanding of their preferred learning style; and identify other contributing factors such as home sickness or visual/hearing impairments which may provide the basis for further referrals. Removing personal responsibility for causation often has a positive impact on the learner's self esteem. Secondly, for the tutors (both classroom and learning support) it provides foundations from which to raise awareness of causes and intervention/accommodations. Many tutors lack training in working with culturally and linguistically diverse learners - even fewer in LD and as the diversity of students intensifies, such knowledge is imperative for successful classroom experiences for both tutor and learner (Artiles & Ortiz, 2002; Schwarz & Terrill, 2000).

## **Cultural Difference**

Working through situations such as the case study quoted above, has raised awareness of the importance of understanding how cultural beliefs and ways of knowing frame the learning experience. ESOL students bring with them not only a different culture and language but different learning processes for language learning. Identifying LD within ESOL students presented far different challenges than anticipated. The focus on Asian students in the next section of this paper, more specifically Chinese students, is deliberate as these were the students who mainly influenced personal learnings. Therefore, the discussion that is presented here has at least one major limitation: it necessarily reflects the viewpoint of a middle-class European female with all the cultural bias that this entails.

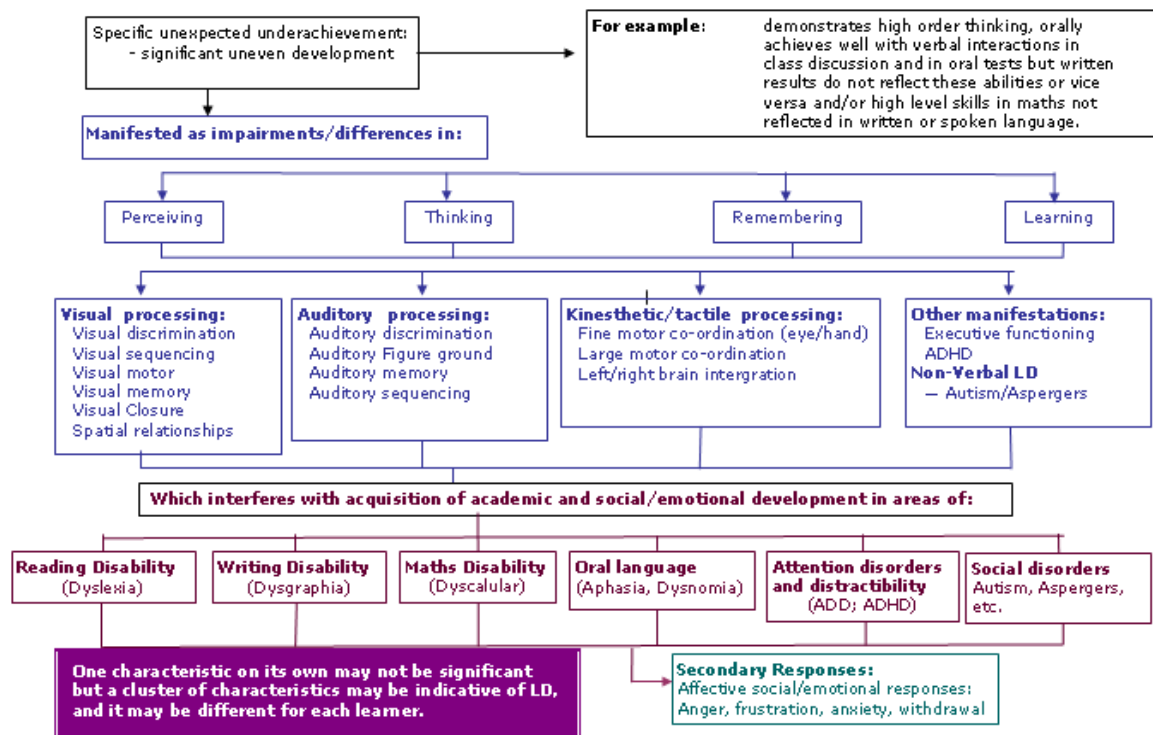


Figure 2. Specific learning disability in adolescents and adults (Adapted from Brinckerhoff, et al., 1993; Vogel & Reder, 1998; Walcot-Gayda, 2004).

To understand how cultural difference impacts on adult education, there has to be a basic understanding that culture provides the blueprint for all beliefs, values, attitudes, role expectations and practices of a group of individuals who share a common worldview. Furthermore, such a worldview has been handed down through generations, and is reinforced and perpetuated by the language of that culture (Hofstede, 1986; Pitt, 2005) for both teacher and learner.

Culture is dynamic as it constantly changes through contact with other ideas and other cultures but generally the foundations provide the basis for life within the culture (Cheng, as cited in United States Department of Education [USDOE], 2003; Li, n.d.). Since the first contact between cultures, cross cultural learning differences have arisen and often, because each is so engrained in its own culture, "cross cultural learning situations can be fundamentally problematic for both [tutor and student]" (Hofstede, 1986, p. 302). Consequently, what is considered a successful pedagogy in one culture may lack transferability to another.

Although a simplification, Ziegahn (2001) identifies five main dimensions of culture that impact on the adult learning context and which are considered the cause of many misunderstandings and tension. Firstly, *individualism versus collectivist thinking*; this emphasises differences in personal action and motivation. Individualism focuses on actions for personal gain whereas collectivist thinking centres on the importance of community. One perspective admires self reliance and individual autonomy, the other looks to the importance of group efforts in harmony, where everyone knows their place in society. Secondly, *monochronic time versus polychronic time*, where personal interaction can be sacrificed to scheduling for efficiency, or where involvement with people and completion of activity is valued rather than preset schedules. Thirdly, *egalitarianism versus hierarchy*, where fairness and equality of opportunity for all are valued (although this is often more a social ideal than reality), rather than open acknowledgement of innate differences and inequalities. Fourthly, *'action' orientation versus 'being' orientation*; this often involves sacrificing personal interaction and moving straight to action, rather than taking time to appreciate the moment. Lastly, *change versus tradition*, where the

culture looks to the future while resisting a historical perspective or alternatively reflecting on the lessons of history as an important guide to the future.

Where student and tutor cultures arise from opposing dimensions, conflict can arise. Consequently, it is not enough for the tutors from the dominant culture to just value diversity at personal, educational and social political levels, there is a need to know how to adjust instruction and communication so that all students "feel visible and valued" (Li, n.d, p. 1).

Hofstede (1986) further identified four cross communication teaching/learning factors that are influenced by cultural difference. Firstly, how the student and teacher are viewed socially within each society. Secondly, differences in expected patterns of tutor/student and student/tutor interaction. Typically roles played are rooted in values and "lead to feelings of good and evil, right and wrong, rational and irrational, proper and improper" (p. 305) often not associated with cultural relativity. These lead to premature judgements and are evident in virtually all cross cultural learning/teaching situations. Thirdly, differences in profiles of cognitive abilities between populations from which tutor and student are drawn. "Cognitive abilities are rooted in the total pattern of a society. In China, the nature of the script develops the ability for pattern recognition; it also imposes a need for rote learning" (Redding, 1980, p. 212). Where cognitive ability profiles differ between what the student and teacher are accustomed to, it can be educationally problematic and require different teaching methodology. Fourthly, the difference in relevance of curriculum in the two societies. Hofstede (1986) asks how useful it is for Chinese students working and studying in Beijing to know British organisational behaviour (unless they are working in the export industry)?

Ballard and Clanchy (1997) summarise the impact of these differences into four discrete approaches to teaching and learning: attitudes to knowledge; learning approaches; teaching strategies and learning strategies (Figure 3). The *reproductive* approach links most closely to what Asian students bring with them to western society. The *analytical* approach seems strongly related to graduate levels in western society whereas the *speculative* links most closely to postgraduate studies. What these models seem to present is that the base structure and attitudes to government, knowledge/power relations, comfort with structured/unstructured learning situations, the power of teachers/learners, and learning behaviours that are rewarded or admonished, are culturally based and impact on cross cultural learning.

Siegel (as cited in United States Department of Education, 2003) stated "that each language of origin has a unique impact on the ESL student" (p. 16). An example of how this impacts on learning could be related to the different graphical representations of language not just the Chinese/ Asian ideograms versus western alphabetical systems, but also the directionality of written language and the transferability of language learning from one cultural context to another: two characteristics often associated with LD. Pitt (2005), an American teacher, stated that when learning Chinese characters her "L1 (first language) often seemed to be a stumbling block rather than an advantage" (p. 106) because her approach was based on her previous successful language learning style, her concept of progress and her knowledge about literacy. The discovery that previous assumptions were completely misguided made her very uncomfortable. The reverse is also true when moving from Chinese to English or other languages with different written forms.

The understanding of the importance of firstly recognising our own values while appreciating that students may not share them, is crucial to unlocking our own "prejudice and bias, our stereotypic behaviours and their impact on our actions and to 'hear' [the student's] needs over our own preconceived beliefs" (Chew-Ogi, 2002, p. 93).

The challenge for many Asian American students is that they come to institutions that value individual achievement and survival of the fittest. However, the voices from their hearts tell them that they are pursuing higher education to bring honour to their family by what they learn from elders at the college and university. Asian American students are looking for guidance, but few members of

the institution understand the cultural conflicts that these students encounter on campus (Chew-Ogi, 2002, p. 94).

Student failure in these circumstances, whether it is because of intellectual, physical emotional or LD reflects not only on the learner but on the whole family and may, if not approached sensitively, bring disgrace. Related discussion could cause complete communication breakdown. The importance of 'saving face' for the student is a particularly significant example in relation to the importance of understanding cultural differences and of how communication can cement a relationship or function as a barrier (Matsu & Ting-Toomey, 1992).

## **ESOL LD**

Existing literature has provided a starting point for the identification of ESOL LD. Burnette (2000) suggested utilising the same basic process as for L1 LD with the addition of L2 translators/interpreters. Others such as Schwarz and Terrill (2000) suggest a more relaxed approach utilising interviews, tutor-answered questionnaires and portfolio development. Barrera (as cited in USDOE, 2003) raises the importance of curriculum-based assessment. Vogel and Reder (1998) suggest the use of questionnaires which are "validated with the student [for] without this important step, the process is seen as biased and subjective" (p. 116). Underlying non-linguistic information processing skills (*manifestations*, figure 2) are one area that Kohnert (as cited in USDOE, 2003) believes hold promise as identifiers.

The literature offers both support for and rebuttal of each of the systems (Abrams, Ferguson, & Laud, 2001; Burnette, 2000; Henning, 2005; Learning Disabilities Association, 2002; Warner, Dede, Garvan, & Conway, 2002). Problems with existing assessment tools relate to cultural and linguistic issues resulting in conflicting ideas about the appropriateness of English as the tool but this also causes concern as where tests have been translated, there are often validity issues. Taking into account the number of languages, the size of the task of ensuring equity would be enormous, if not impossible, as would finding the personnel to meet the linguistic requirements. Where tests have been in L1 language; they are producing results that suggest that LD may look different in different languages, therefore questioning the usefulness of such practices (Schwarz & Terrill, 2000).

Questions used, whether in informal assessment or questionnaires, frequently require cultural knowledge which L2 learners may or may not have. Other assessments such as oral vocabulary tests frequently are more a test of English, than vocabulary. Phonological processing tests may be affected by elements in the learner's first language and discussion about previous education and life experience may be culturally uncomfortable and lead to unreliable answers (*ibid*). Rooney (2002) stated that "one instructor reported that it took her almost a semester to break down the student's cultural 'wall of politeness' so he could open up about his needs" (p. 10).

There are serious concerns about cross cultural assessments that use traditional assessment tools such as IQ and standardised assessments (Abrams et al., 2001; LDA, 2002; Burnette, 2000; Henning, 2005) and that the length of exposure to English is a major consideration. It is interesting to note that exposure to English for a period of 7 - 10 years usually produces L2 English efficiency. It is equally notable that L1 children with LD are not usually formally assessed until they are 7 or 8 years old (E. Rutherford, Speld/educational psychologist, personal communication, August 8, 2006) due to LD characteristics being part of the normal development of a L1 English speaking child. Also noted is that the natural trajectory of learning in other cultures has little written documentation. Is it possible that there is a correlation between these factors?

It has also been noted that LD affects the acquisition of language skills; ESOL students with LD will be challenged when trying to master the mechanics of a new language but may manage the content. This has been demonstrated aptly with many of L1 LD participants in studies, who demonstrate higher levels in comprehension than reading (Schwarz & Terrill, 2000).

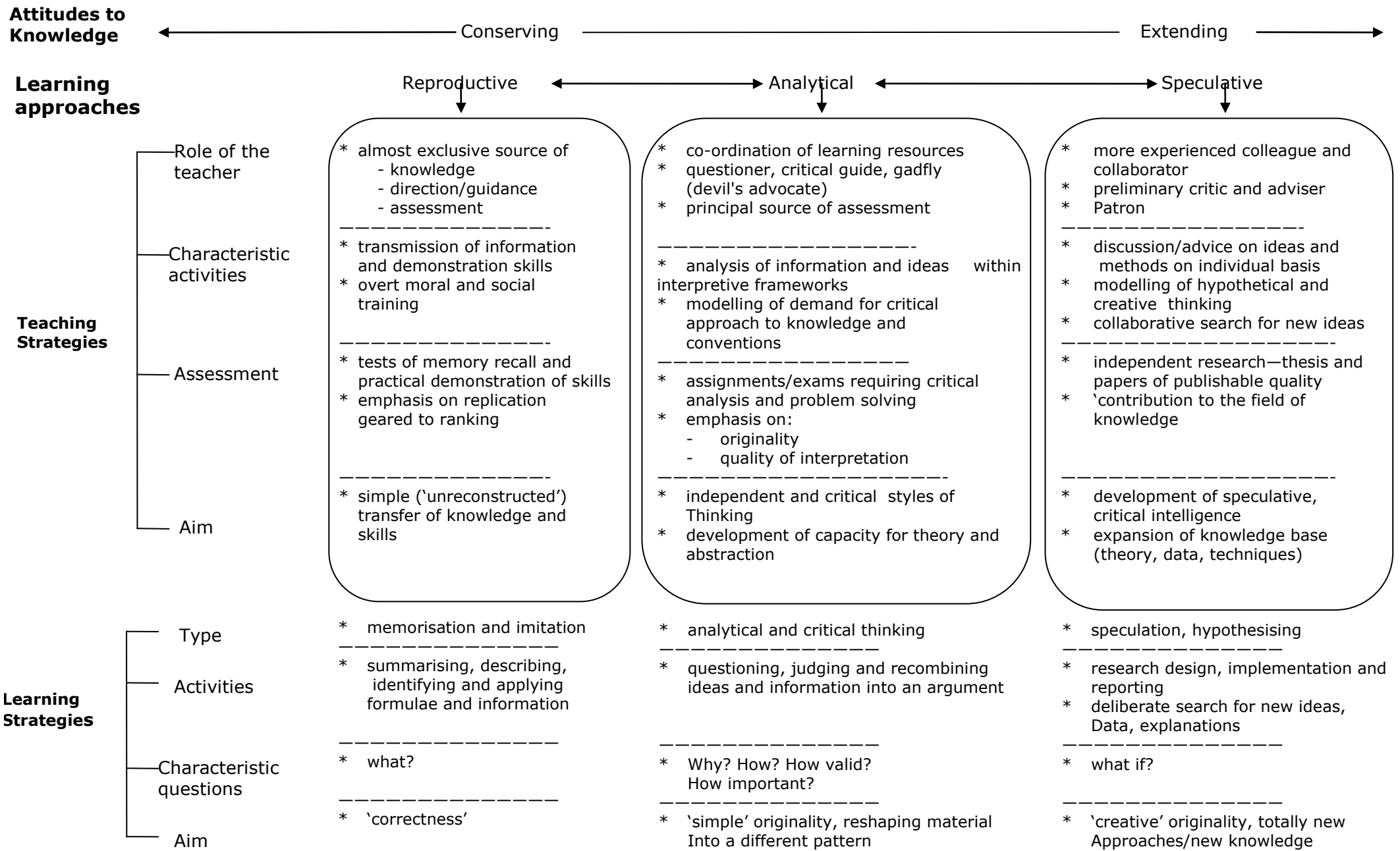


Figure 3. Influences of cultural attitudes to knowledge on teaching and learning strategies (Ballard & Clanchy, 1997, p. 12)



What does become apparent is that working from the known to the unknown may reveal a way through this maze. What is already known relates to the moving from one culture/language to another as mentioned previously, and if barriers can be recognised and lowered, this may help. LD affects specific areas of the learning process (Figure 2) and these are manifested in outputs such as reading and writing which become apparent in the tertiary classroom.

Schwarz and Terrill (2000) have suggested the following questions may guide identification:

1. Has the problem persisted over time?
2. Has the problem resisted normal instruction?
3. Does the learner show a clear pattern of strengths and weaknesses inside and outside the classroom?
4. Does the problem interfere with the learning or a life activity in some way to a significant degree? (p. 2).

They further suggest that if the previous questions were answered affirmatively that identification should be confirmed through the use of:

1. interviews (with the aid of an interpreter) encompassing "educational and language history, social background, learner's strengths, and the learner's perception of academic problems" (p. 2)
2. a portfolio to include measures of progress, samples of reading and writing, other classroom work, attendance data, teaching methods and materials and with the learner, a report of their success (or lack of success), and autobiographical information
3. results of recent vision and hearing testing to rule out sensory problems.

This framework, the authors argue, should provide a useful profile that assists the monitoring of learning behaviours, progress and guidelines for appropriate support. This is an approach that personally has appeal as it avoids many of the pitfalls previously mentioned.

Maybe the answer is something much simpler, such as looking for the answers in the non linguistic (executive functioning) characteristics of LD (Figure 2) or a combination of these? What is clear is that it is not as simple as looking at "an island of competence in a sea of weaknesses" (Brooks, as cited in Root, 1994, p. 2).

Alternatively, it may be that a 'definitive identification' of an ESOL LD learner, may be virtually impossible at this point in time (Rance-Raney, 2000, as cited in LDA, 2002).

For the student in the opening scenario, the LD assessment used involved an interview; classroom observations; a basic mix of standardized diagnostic tools (content understanding was undertaken). The process targeted personal and classroom goals through his strengths (he could write 500 words and not lose track of what he had written). Intervention addressed identified underlying weaknesses such as his sequencing and organisational skills which impacted on everything from his time management, to organising the essay, to spelling. Enquiring about his progress in his home tongue revealed only embarrassment. He passed his project with a 'C+' but the tutor noted that if the guidelines throughout the process had been met a 'B' would have been achieved.

The journey of assisting such learners has only just begun but experiences like this one have provided guidelines for the process now in place. A concluding thought in relation to identification processes - no matter what the assessment process looks like, no matter which tools are used, irrespective of what any assessor believes about any assessment process, none of these are as important as the student and guiding them to achieve their goals. All too often the assessment process is determined by the rules surrounding accommodations. My own belief is that this is a shame, for in my 20 years of working in tertiary education, I have never found any person who wanted to use a reader/writer who hadn't really needed to - because it can be a most frustrating experience.

## Conclusion

The broadening and sharing of learning skills tutors' studies are crucial to the services they provide, not only for policy purposes but for the betterment of students. Such actions can and do have a positive effect on both student and institutional success and retention. Reflecting on current practices relating to identification and assessment of ESOL LD has identified the disparity and complications within the current assessment processes, suggesting that maybe it is appropriate to consider abandoning or at least being very selective about how this area is approached. The inclusion of Schwarz and Terrill's (2000) five questions are a welcome addition to the assessment process as they highlight the differences between assessing L1 and L2 students with LD and also the importance of probing unexpected underachievement. If LD is suspected in any learner it is important to provide multiple assessments to determine an appropriate intervention process, for as Ysseldyke and Algozzine (1997,) suggest, "there is no recipe for assessment – no single battery of tests, form of observation, or specific rating scale that can tell us everything we want to know about any student. .... Only if all students had the same kinds of problems could there be one right way to assess them". Assessment must be flexible and "tailored to the individual and to the nature of the instructional setting" (p. 349). The addition of ESOL to LD has had a huge impact on the existing confusions within the LD experience creating far 'murkier waters' than LD ever did on its own.

## References

- Abrams, J., Ferguson, J., & Laud, L. (2001, November). Assessing ESOL students. *Educational Leadership*, 62-65.
- Artiles, A. J., & Ortiz, A. (Eds.). (2002). *English language learners with special education needs: Identification, assessment, and instruction*. United States of America: Delta Systems.
- Ballard, B., & Clanchy, J. (1997). *Teaching international students: A brief guide for lecturers and supervisors*. Australia: IDP Education.
- Bender, W. N. (2004). *Learning disabilities: Characteristics, identification and teaching strategies* (5th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Bradley, R., Danielson, L., & Hallahan, D. P. (Eds.). (2001). *Identification of learning disabilities: Research to practice*. New Jersey and London: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.
- Brinckerhoff, L. C., Shaw, S. F., & McGuire, J. M. (1993). *Promoting postsecondary education for students with learning disabilities: A handbook for practitioners*. Texas: Pro-ed.
- Burnette, J. (2000). *Assessment of culturally and linguistically diverse students for special education eligibility*. Arlington, Virginia, USA: Council for Exceptional Children: Information Centre on Disabilities and Gifted Education. (Eric Documentation Reproduction Service No. E604).
- Chew-Ogi, C. A. Y. (2002). Epilogue. In J. H. Schuh (Series Ed.) & M. K. McEwen, C. M. Kodama, A. N. Alvarex, S. Lee. & C. T. H. Liang, (Eds.). *Working with Asian American college students: No. 97. New directions for student services*, pp. 91- 96. Massachusetts, USA: Jossey-Bass.
- Henning, M. (2005). Cross-cultural usefulness of assessment tools used to identify the presence of a learning disability. In E. Manalo and G. Wong-Toi, *Communication skills in university education: The international dimension* (pp. 239-251). Auckland, New Zealand: Pearson Education.
- Hofstede, G. (1986). Cultural differences in teaching and learning. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 10, 301-320.

- Learning Disabilities Association. (2002). Diagnosing learning disabilities (LD) in the English as a second language (ESL) population. *ABE NetworkNews*, 2(4), 1-4.
- Learning Disabilities Association of Canada. (2005). *LD defined: Official definition of Learning Disabilities*. Retrieved on July 8, 2005, from [http://www.ldac-taac.ca/Defined/defined\\_new-e.asp](http://www.ldac-taac.ca/Defined/defined_new-e.asp)
- Lerner, J. (with Kline, F.) (2006). *Learning Disabilities and related disorders: Characteristics and teaching strategies*. Boston: Houghton Muffin.
- Li, M. (n.d.). *Roles, expectations and pedagogical awareness: Cultural influences in Chinese university classrooms* (Working paper). Wellington: The Open Polytechnic.
- Lyon, G. R. (1996). The Future of Children. *Special Education for Students with Disabilities*, 6(1), 54-76.
- Matsu, B., & Ting-Toomey, S. (1992). Cross-cultural face-negotiation: An analytical overview. In *Pacific region forum on business and management communication*, at the David See-Chai Lam Centre for International Communication on April 15, 1992. Retrieved on October 8, 2006, from <http://www.cic.sfu.ca/forum/ting-too.html>
- McLoughlin, D., Leather, C., & Stringer, P. (2002). *The adult dyslexic: Interventions and outcomes*. London: Whurr Publishers.
- Ministry of Education, (2003). *The Adult ESOL Strategy*. Wellington, New Zealand: Author.
- Ministry of Education, (2006). *Key indicators for export education levy for trimester 1 (1 Jan to 30 April)*. Retrieved October 18, 2006 from [http://www.minedu.govt.nz/web/downloadable/dl11339\\_v1/key-indicators-for-export-education-levy-for-april.xls](http://www.minedu.govt.nz/web/downloadable/dl11339_v1/key-indicators-for-export-education-levy-for-april.xls)
- Myers, R. (Ed.). (2007). *About learning disabilities*. Retrieved April 20, 2006 from [http://www.childdevelopmentinfo.com/learning/learning\\_disabilities.shtml](http://www.childdevelopmentinfo.com/learning/learning_disabilities.shtml)
- Payne, T., & Irons, E. (2003). *Learning disabilities resource package: Tools for assessing learning disability and supporting students with learning disability in Australian universities*. Canberra: Australian Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts.
- Pitt, K. (2005). *Debates in ESOL teaching and learning: Culture, communities and classrooms*. London: Routledge.
- Redding, S. G. (1980). Management education for orientals. In: B. Garratt and J. Stopford, (Eds.), *Breaking down barriers: Practice and priorities for international management education*, (pp. 193–214). Westmead: Farnborough Hants .
- Rooney, G. (2002). *Providing support services for college students with learning disabilities who are not native English speakers: The challenge of the LD/ESOL student*. Milton, Massachusetts: Curry College. (Eric Document Reproduction Service No. ED469337).
- Root, C. (1994). A guide to learning disabilities for the ESL classroom practitioner. *TESL-Electronic Journal*, 1(1), 1-6. Retrieved on April 12, 2005, from <http://www.kyoto-su.ac.jp/information/tesl-ej/ej01/a.4.html>
- Ross-Gordon, J. M., Plotts, C. A., Joesel, J. N., & Wells, R. (2003). Assessment of adult learning disabilities: Multiple perspectives. *Adult Basic Education*, 13(3), 131-145.

- Schwarz, R., & Terrill, L. (2000). *ESL instruction and adults with learning disabilities*. [Washington, DC]: National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education.
- Stevens, L. M., & van Werkhoven, W. (2001). Learning disabilities in the Netherlands. In D. P. Hallahan, & B. K. Keogh, (Eds.). *Research and global perspectives in learning disabilities: Essays in honor of William M. Cruickshank*, pp. 273 - 290. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Tsuge, M. (2001). Learning disabilities in Japan. In D. P. Hallahan, & B. K. Keogh, (Eds.). *Research and global perspectives in learning disabilities: Essays in honor of William M. Cruickshank*, pp. 255 - 272. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- United States Department of Education. (2003). *National symposium on learning disabilities in English language learners: Symposium summary* (Report US Department of Education Contract No. ED-03-PO-2945). Retrieved April 19, 2006 from <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oesers/products/ld-ell/ld-ell.doc>
- Vogel, S. A. (1998). Adults with learning disabilities: What learning disabilities specialists, adult literacy educators, and other service providers want and need to know. In S. A. Vogel, & S. Reder, *Learning disabilities, literacy and adult education*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brooks.
- Vogel, S. A., & Reder, S. (1998). *Learning disabilities, literacy, and adult education*. Baltimore: Paul H. Books.
- Walcot-Gayda, E. (2004). *Fact Sheet: Understanding learning disability*. Retrieved May 3, 2006 from [http://www.ldac-taac.ca/indepth/background\\_understanding-e.asp](http://www.ldac-taac.ca/indepth/background_understanding-e.asp)
- Warner, T. D., Dede, D. E., Garvan, C. W., & Conway, T. W., (2002). One size still does not fit all in specific learning disability assessment across ethnic groups. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 35(6). Retrieved on May 25, 2006 from Academic Search Elite Database.
- Wong, B. Y. L., & Hutchinson, N. (2001). Learning disabilities in Canada. In R. Bradley, L. Danielson, & D. P. Hallahan, *Identification of Learning disabilities: Research to practice*, pp. 187 - 216. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Ysseldyke, J. E. (1997). Assessment: Current directions and misdirections. In J. L. Paul, M. Churton, W. C. Morse, A. J. Duchnowski, B. Epanchin, P. G. Osnes & R. L. Smith, *Special Education Practice*. USA: Brooks/Cole Publishing.
- Ziegahn, L. (2001). Considering Culture in the Selection of Teaching Approaches for Adults, *Educational Resources Information Centre Database*. Retrieved on April 27, 2003 from <http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed459325.html>