

DIFFICULTY IN TEACHING DISABLED STUDENTS ENGLISH

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Annotation: The article explores the challenges faced by educators when teaching English to students with disabilities. It discusses various types of disabilities, including physical, intellectual, and emotional impairments, and how these conditions affect language acquisition. The article highlights the importance of using inclusive teaching methods, personalized learning plans, and assistive technologies.

Keywords: disabled students, English language learning, teaching challenges, inclusive education, assistive technologies, personalized learning, special education, teacher professional development.

ТРУДНОСТИ ПРЕПОДАВАНИЯ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА СТУДЕНТАМ С ИНВАЛИДНОСТЬЮ

Аннотация: Статья рассматривает проблемы, с которыми сталкиваются преподаватели при обучении английскому языку студентов с инвалидностью. В статье обсуждаются различные типы инвалидности, включая физические, умственные и эмоциональные расстройства, и то, как эти состояния влияют на усвоение языка. Особое внимание уделяется важности использования инклюзивных методов обучения, персонализированных планов обучения и вспомогательных технологий.

Ключевые слова: студенты с ограниченными возможностями, обучение английскому языку, трудности преподавания, инклюзивное образование, вспомогательные технологии, персонализированное обучение, специальное образование, профессиональное развитие преподавателей.

The term learning disabilities is defined in different ways in different countries. In Australia, the term refers to a small subgroup within the general area of learning difficulties. This subgroup involves students who have difficulties in specific areas as a result of impairment in one or more of the cognitive processes related to learning.

Learning difficulties are best summarised as neurologically-based processing problems. Typically, these processing problems affect the acquisitions of basic skills such as reading, writing or mathematics.

Having LDs does not mean that an individual cannot learn – absolutely not. It does mean, however, that a compensating strategy may be needed for teaching that takes into consideration the specific aspects of learning that the student has difficulties with. That is to say, students with LDs may need a more individualised and tailored approach to learning.

LDs vary amongst individuals and the term actually refers to a wide group of disorders. Some of the most common ones include:

- Dyslexia
- Dysgraphia
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity (ADHD)

It is very important to remember that LDs are **not** a sign of low intelligence. They are, in fact, in no way a reflection of intelligence level and many people with LDs possess above average intellectual capabilities. Identification is key to managing LDs as best as possible and giving students the most appropriate support in their learning.

Added vigilance for these signs is needed in developing countries in particular, since students are far less likely to have been identified as having LDs than in many Western countries where the systems and procedures of diagnosis are more rigorous. In fact, in some countries LDs are not even officially recognised.

Below are some of the most common and identifiable warning signs that a student may have LDs:

- auditory difficulties
- reading and writing difficulties
- motor difficulties
- memory difficulties
- attention difficulties

These specific areas of learning difficulties (known as learning disabilities) share the following characteristics:

- are considered to be intrinsic to the individual,
- can cause a person to learn differently,
- are not linked to intellectual impairment (except incidentally),
- may coincidentally exist with problems in self-regulatory behaviors, social perception and social interaction,
- are life-long
- result in difficulty accessing the curriculum unless educational adjustments appropriate to individual need are provided to prevent failure. In the American context a variety of definitions of the term learning disabilities have been proposed.

The American National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, for example, defines this term in the following way: Learning disabilities is a general term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual, presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction, and may occur across the life span.

Also in the USA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (2004, cited in Wright, 2005, p. 9) defines the term specific learning disability as “a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations”. In Canada, the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (2001) defines the term learning disabilities as follows: Learning Disabilities refers to a variety of disorders that affect the acquisition, retention, understanding, organization or use of verbal and/or non-verbal information. These disorders result from impairments in one or more

psychological processes related to learning, in combination with otherwise average abilities essential for thinking and reasoning. Learning disabilities are specific not global impairments and as such are distinct from intellectual disabilities.

Similarly, the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta defines the term learning disabilities as “a number of disorders which may affect the acquisition, organization, retention, understanding or use of verbal or nonverbal information”.

In the UK the term learning disabilities is used differently to refer to what is known in Australia and many other countries as intellectual disabilities which are out of the scope of this book; whereas the term specific learning difficulties (SpLDs) is used to refer to difficulties with certain aspects of learning. These SpLDs include dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia and dysgraphia (Department of Health, 2010).

Adults with learning disabilities have average, above average, or even exceptional intelligence. They may be highly artistic, musical, or gifted in a specific academic area. Their general intellectual functioning is not impaired and they are able to reason and make judgments at least within the average range. In other words, people with learning disabilities are not slow learners. They just learn in a different way. They learn inefficiently, due to inefficiencies in the functioning of the brain.

Students with learning disabilities are not aware of how their minds work and fail to use strategies that represent the dynamic processes underlying effective learning and academic performance.

More specifically, these information processing disorders manifest themselves in students' failure to:

- a) apply learning strategies,
- b) orchestrate among various strategies, and
- c) change strategies when they don't work, or make adaptations to them when necessary.

In simple words, having a learning disability means that the brain does not process information normally. This, of course, requires modeling effective cognitive processes through learning strategies instruction to help students with learning disabilities change their ineffective learning processes and employ effective ones in a reflective, purposeful way.

To help students with language learning disabilities overcome their own learning difficulties, instruction should take as its aim the improvement of the underlying processes and strategies these students depend upon to learn language skills as these skills are rooted in complex processes.

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