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THE CHALLENGE OF FACING DYSLEXIC STUDENTS THROUGH CURRICULAR ADAPTATIONS

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Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and you help them to become what they are capable of being.

—Goethe

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ABSTRACT

For more than a decade there has been a constant struggle against educational exclusion. The Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been an entity that has provided support for the worldwide opening doors of schools to students who have any type of intellectual disability or learning difficulties. Within this group, there is at least one in ten students who is dyslexic and has the right to learn a second language. This work presents the option of overcoming this difficulty and at the same time, aims to provide a tool for teachers in order to face dyslexics successfully through adaptations to the curriculum. This study is supported by the research done by different authors. In addition, a clear definition of dyslexia, its causes and the symptoms developed, but also facts and not myths are detailed in relation to this learning difficulty. Moreover, this work contemplates different adaptations that can be made in the classroom, in terms of the didactic resources used by the teacher and the materials used by the dyslexic student. This work also attempts to describe the evolution that has occurred in the study of the learning of dyslexics as well as the adaptations that include the time and space that must be provided both in the classroom and in the curriculum documents such as worksheets, written activities and evaluations. Each of these adaptations is exemplified in the annexes. There is no doubt that this work leaves the door open for future research that will continue to join efforts for this vulnerable group of learners to be attended as required by our profession of educators.

Key words: *inclusion, dyslexia, learning disability, curricular adaptations*

RESUMEN

Durante más de una década ha habido una lucha constante contra la exclusión educativa. La Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura (UNESCO) ha sido una entidad que ha prestado apoyo a la apertura mundial de las escuelas a los estudiantes que tienen algún tipo de discapacidad intelectual o dificultades de aprendizaje. Dentro de este grupo, al menos uno de cada diez estudiantes es disléxico y este tiene derecho a aprender un segundo idioma. Este trabajo presenta la opción de superar esta dificultad y al mismo tiempo, pretende proporcionar una herramienta para que los profesores puedan enfrentar a los disléxicos con éxito a través de adaptaciones curriculares. Este estudio está respaldado por la investigación realizada por diferentes autores. Además, una definición clara de la dislexia, sus causas y los síntomas desarrollados, pero también los hechos y no los mitos se detallan en relación con esta dificultad de aprendizaje. Por otra parte, este trabajo

contempla diferentes adaptaciones que se pueden hacer en el aula, en términos de los recursos didácticos utilizados por el profesor y los materiales utilizados por el estudiante disléxico. Este trabajo también intenta describir la evolución que ha ocurrido en el estudio del aprendizaje de los disléxicos, así como las adaptaciones que incluyen el tiempo y el espacio que deben proporcionarse tanto en el aula como en los documentos curriculares tales como hojas de trabajo, actividades escritas y evaluaciones. Cada una de estas adaptaciones se ejemplifica en los anexos. No hay duda de que este trabajo deja la puerta abierta para futuras investigaciones que seguirán uniendo esfuerzos para que este grupo vulnerable de estudiantes reciba la asistencia requerida por nuestra profesión de educadores.

Palabras claves: inclusión, dislexia, discapacidad de aprendizaje, adaptaciones curriculares

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1 INTRODUCTION

When talking about education there is an instantaneous relationship with schooling. Beyond the classrooms, education is a mission that every teacher accepts when deciding to embark in this journey. Given the fact that everyone considers education as the way to succeed in life, this work seeks to address how to help those students with learning difficulties which may face some obstacles in the learning process.

Bearing in mind the previous point and considering that the list of learning disabilities is quite extensive, this work will be oriented to Dyslexia. Our primary goal would be to provide teachers some necessary modifications in the curriculum. Thus, it would be important to identify the learning and teaching areas that need to be modified in order to help dyslexics to succeed in the English Language classes.

Grant (2016), explains the difference between learning and learning disability. On the one hand, learning is the process of modification of the existing knowledge. It means that learning is the addition of new information to the previous one because he advocates that the human being always brings with him some knowledge. In other words, it means that his mind is never completely empty. On the other hand, learning disability involves the same definition but synthesizing specific types of information.

This research is structured into seven main sections, being the introduction the first part. The second section refers to the academic and personal justification. The third section contains the broad and specific objectives which are the central axis in this work.

The fourth section is developed with the theoretical framework which includes some subheadings that include information about Special Educational Needs background, relevant facts about dyslexia, the learning areas affected in dyslexics, an explanation about how a teacher may notice dyslexic students in the class, a brief summary of the difficulties that dyslexics face in the FL classroom, and a complete description of each type of curricular adaptation in order to get dyslexics learn a second language successfully, English in this case.

Within the overcoming frame, some curricular adaptations, the role of multiple intelligences, specific strategies, and some educational resources that can be applied in the classroom as well as the lesson plans can be found. The fifth section analyzes the methodology of the

design of the materials and the target group description. Besides, the proposal of this work is developed through the fifth section itself. Finally, the sixth section includes the conclusions of the complete research.

2 ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL JUSTIFICATION

In a classroom there is heterogeneity with the students, firstly because each one learns differently and secondly, each has a different level of knowledge in the subjects taught. In the case of English language learning, this process is usually a little manageable for regular students, but when there is a student in that group with a particular educational need such as dyslexia, this process certainly needs additional support. Indeed, it has been suggested that students with any learning disability are expected to receive an education according to their possibilities but within a general education curriculum (Marsh, 2008).

As an Ecuadorian English teacher, I have received a lot of information about teaching English as a foreign language and I manage some techniques and methodological strategies that I put in practice during classes with my students. However, when facing a dyslexic one, it is hard to achieve my goals as a teacher. The techniques and strategies need to be different and guided to help them in the English learning process.

The motivation for doing this work is to contribute to high-school Ecuadorian teachers who must face the challenge of teaching to dyslexics in the foreign language classroom. Due to the global inclusion in the educational field, it would be important to start considering in detail the necessary changes that must be applied to the curriculum in order to accomplish this aim.

It is clear that this work is justified because there is a need to teach English to students with dyslexia but unfortunately it remains partly unsolved, nowadays. Throughout this work, I would like other teachers, especially novice ones, realize the importance of how to choose the appropriate strategies, techniques, and/or methods with dyslexics in their lessons.

The primary purpose of this work is to benefit English teachers, students with dyslexia and therefore the institutions that host them in their classrooms. Even though there is ample information on the Internet on topics related to this study, for an inexperienced teacher, it would be very hard to deal with certain terminologies which are complex at the moment of facing dyslexics in the L2 classrooms. For that reason, this work will present a simple guide,

with easy steps to follow in order to use them under any circumstances since they do not even need economic investment.

3 OBJECTIVES

3.1 Broad Objective

Provide Ecuadorian teachers with Curricular Adaptations in the English Subject to face high schools dyslexics in the classroom.

3.2 Specific Objectives

- To provide guidelines for teachers to determine which level of dyslexia their students present
- To collect a set of strategies to teach English as a Foreign Language to high-school dyslexic students.
- To design a guide of specific curriculum adaptations to help dyslexics in the English Language learning process.

4 THEORETICAL FRAME

4.1 Special Educational Needs

Special Educational Needs is a legal terminology that refers to those learners who have difficulties in the knowledge acquisition process and the development of cognitive skills. This condition affects not only the academic areas but the emotional and social ones (Briggs, 2016:1).

In light of the evidence, this term has been used more frequently in the last few years. It is worth noting that for some educational institutions, the service for SEN (Special Educational Needs) students is, in some way, a kind of “advertisement” from which they can get more and more students which represents a lot of money, of course.

It appears that education is, perhaps for some people, a way of gaining money. Nevertheless, they are not considering at all that when offering this kind of service in terms of education to people with special needs, they can contribute in a positive but also a negative way in the lives of those learners. A teacher must take for granted that he/she plays an important role in the success or failure of each of his/her students.

In addition, it is also vital to highlight that a student may have difficulty in learning and not necessarily have a learning difficulty. Farrell (2003) explains that although the terms are similar, it is necessary not to confuse them. When a student has a learning difficulty, it becomes a Special Educational Need (SEN) learner.

4.1.1 History and Background

The term Special Educational Needs (SEN) was originated in England in 1978 as the basis of the report¹ developed by the Committee for Research on the Education of Children and Youth Handicapped led by Mary Warnock. In this report, the emphasis is placed on teaching with a traditional model which classifies students as deficient and non-disabled. With these results arises the necessity of two different teaching systems: *general* and *special*. One of the suggestions in this report is that an adaptation or modification of the general curriculum should be made and refer to "special" as an aid to students with learning difficulties associated with and not related to a disability (Salado, 2008:2).

However, the term of inclusive education was originated when the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2007 stated that an individual must participate in society.

Even though inclusive education appeared in the XX century, it is necessary to emphasize that special education has its actual birth in the IX century under the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948. Nowadays both areas are treated simultaneously, special education needs and inclusion (Werler, 2012:8).

It has been found that in the context of inclusive education, there are important new paradigms that promote the human rights of all children and adults; this situation forces governments to establish adequate policies in the educational centers. And of course, private centers probably will offer inclusion but public ones will not (Mitchell, 2006). For this reason, it is inaccurate to think that there are equal opportunities for students with learning disabilities.

¹ The report was originally called "Special Educational Needs". For further information, the following is available: <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/warnock/warnock1978.html>

Furthermore, it must also be noted that paradigms that arose in the past with the psycho-medical area focused on Special Education Needs (SEN) and socio-political one focused on the inclusion of those with SEN led to new approaches in which both psychologists and educators have taken into account the necessity to make schools more capable to face diversity (Mitchell, 2006). This position has generated these precepts:

- a. Implementation of effective schools and effective teaching.
- b. Train teachers in methodological strategies to manage diversity in the classroom.
- c. Consider a list of strategies to be implemented to be used enhancing equal opportunities for all learners.
- d. Seeing learning problems as opportunities.

Nowadays, the new standard of a permanent education is supported by the idea of the constant necessity of learning. Thus, education holds while human life exists. This theory is based on the natural intelligence that every person has. This kind of intelligence is an important tool to be considered by educators that do research about inclusion. Considering this, it is expected to teach students with SEN as well as regular students (López-Barajas, 2009:12).

Despite all the significant value that inclusion and students with educational needs represent in the last few years, there is still a lack of practice to help them in reality. Throughout this research, it has been noticed that a lot of work has been done to help not just dyslexics but also other cases of learning disabilities². However, there is no doubt that it is never enough. Consequently, there are still teachers who do not know how to face this situation in their lessons.

4.1.2 Inclusion in Ecuador

Ecuador is a country that has been currently improving its interest in inclusion. In 2008, the new Constitution of Ecuador³ promoted equity and inclusion for all Ecuadorians. It is from then on that public, and private educational institutions open the doors to students with Special Educational Needs. Ministerial agreements are generated requesting that the study

² For further information about Learning disabilities regarding types, classifications, and levels. The following link is available: <https://es.scribd.com/read/282546353/Learning-About-Learning-Disabilities>

³ In Spanish: *Constitución del Ecuador* (2008). For further information, visit the following link http://cancilleria.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/constitucion_2008.pdf

centers have to adapt their buildings to receive these students considering that inclusion refers to people not only with physical disabilities, but also learning disabilities.

It is undeniable that not all schools are eligible to receive this vulnerable group of children and young people, but it has been a good start promoting inclusion since the emergence of *Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir*⁴ which was transformed into a cross-cutting axis ⁵to enhance the values, interculturality, and to improve the condition of life of every Ecuadorian.

Bucchianico and Kercher (2016) indicates that in 2010 the National Institute of Statistics and Census ⁶ registered that 12.10% of Ecuadorians have some learning disability. The important fact is that these groups are already being addressed and what now corresponds is to train the teachers on inclusion issues.

4.2 Learners with Dyslexia

4.2.1 Definition, Causes, and Types

Talking about children, young students or even adults with educational needs is not unusual nowadays. During my years of experience in education, I have faced different learning issues, but dyslexia was one of the principal and most common to observe.

It cannot be argued that dyslexics may present some difficulties when reading and writing. As a matter of fact, this is one of the main characteristics by which they are “tagged”. However, there is hardly any doubt that dyslexia is more than just a reading and writing difficulty. Following this assumption, some researchers have made their conclusions about this learning disability and some of them are presented in the following paragraphs.

Davis & Brown (2010) have categorized dyslexia as a type of brain or nervous injury, while Orton (1920:66) defined it as a "cross-lateralization of the brain." His argument suggests that the left side of the brain affects the right side of the body. But this theory was disqualified, and he later launched a second theory indicating that dyslexia was a "mixed hemispheric

⁴ *El Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir tiene como objetivo auspiciar la igualdad, la cohesión, la inclusión y la equidad social y territorial en la diversidad. Para más detalles se puede visitar el sitio oficial <http://www.buenvivir.gob.ec/descarga-objetivo>*

⁵ In Spanish: *Eje Transversal. Se la define como una herramienta que recorre todas las disciplinas para apoyar los saberes con valores.*

⁶ In Spanish: *Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (INEC).* Este es el órgano rector de la estadística nacional y el encargado de generar las estadísticas oficiales del Ecuador para la toma de decisiones en la política pública.

domination" where he practically repeated his argument about the sides of the brain and the connection with the body.

The International Dyslexia Association ⁷(IDA) defines dyslexia as follows:

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected about other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. (Lyon, Shaywitz, & Shaywitz 2003: 2)

The previous paragraph shows that dyslexia is not caused by an external environmental fact, but it is considered a neurobiological issue, which means a problem in the learners' nervous system. It also states that dyslexia is not a lack of understanding, but a single word decoding or reading difficulty. Lastly, it seems to be that the consequences of those issues are focused on the phonological components of language and a limited vocabulary acquisition.

As it is shown in Figure 1, there is a comparison of three definitions of dyslexia, and each of them shows different origins for the dysfunction/disability.

Diagnostic element	International Dyslexia Association (Lyon et al., 2003)	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual IV TR (APA, 2000)	National Institutes of Health (2007)
Etiology	Neurobiological	Not addressed	Neurological
Behavioral marker	Phonological processing skill insufficient	Reading accuracy, speed, or comprehension	Phonological component of language deficit
Comparison of reading difficulties to other abilities	Difficulties with single word decoding	Accuracy, speed, or comprehension substantially below age, intelligence, and age-appropriate education	Difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition
Other consequences	Unexpected relative to age, other cognitive academic abilities, and the provision of effective instruction	Oral and silent reading characterized by slowness and comprehension errors	Unexpected relative to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction
	Problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience		Problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience
			Impeded growth of vocabulary and background knowledge

Figure 1. Comparison of Dyslexia definitions (Christo & Davis 2009:56)

⁷ This definition was developed by Lyon, G. in 1994. After that, the concept was revised by the research committee of the International Dyslexic Association (2002). This new concept is presented in Lyon, G. R., Shaywitz, S. E., & Shaywitz, B. A. (2003). A definition of dyslexia. *Annals of Dyslexia*.

The National Institute of Health (2007) defines dyslexia as “a reading disability and also includes language-based learning disabilities. They state that when the learner has a problem when reading, they also have trouble with word recognition, spellings, handwriting, and reading comprehension” (Christo, Davis, & Brock, 2009:56).

In the same vein, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (2000) defines dyslexia as a reading disorder characterized by distortions, substitution or omissions in oral reading (Christo, Davis, & Brock 2009:57).

Considering that this work is a research within the educational and non-medical field, it is important to consider changing the perspective that dyslexia is a neurological problem. Rather than this, it should be regarded as a ‘*special gift*’. From this premise, Davis & Brown (2010) state that the ideal is not to remain in the negative but rather to consider the positive part that is going to be useful at the time of their learning. Dyslexia is the result of a talent for perception. Sometimes this ability becomes passive because it is integrated into the thought process. It means that the dyslexic does not even notice it because he/she was born with it and it seems to be as natural as hearing.

Even though dyslexia cannot be noticed at a glance, it may be perceived through written tasks done in the classroom. Davis & Brown (2010) claim that there are two ways in which thoughts arise in the human being: verbal and nonverbal. Verbal conceptualization refers to what a man thinks and then can connect ideas with the sounds of words. This type of thinking follows the language structures and therefore is linear. On the other hand, non-verbal conception means thinking with mental images of concepts or ideas. Since people make use of both types of thoughts but do not specialize in one, dyslexics potentiate their nonverbal thinking between three and thirteen years of age. It is one of the principal reasons why it is important to use visual aids when teaching dyslexics.

Regarding both conceptualizations, it is assumed that dyslexics think in a nonverbal form. For them, the representation of images when thinking is easier. It means that they have the ability to receive information and store it in their short memory. Nevertheless, the way they learn will be analyzed in the next section.

Beyond the way dyslexics think, it is crucial to identify the types of dyslexia that have been found by specialists. Some researchers have found two large types whereas others have found other categories. For instance, Stein (2001; in Poole, 2008) states that there are three categories: visual, auditory, and the combination of both.

Similarly, Boder (1973) in Poole (2008) found three types of dyslexia: dysphonetic, which refers to the lack of phonological awareness, dyseidetic, which refers to the difficulty of reading sight words, and dysphonetic-dyseidetic which is a combination of both.

On the other hand, some other theorists, such as Johnson and Myklebust (1967) (in Poole, 2008) classified dyslexia into two areas: visual and auditory. In the first case, they confuse similar words, such as **dig** and **big**. They also have problems with visual discrimination, letter reversals, and letter transposition. In the second case, dyslexics who are auditory cannot differentiate initial and final sounds, they cannot discriminate long and short vowel sounds, and they cannot remember the letter sounds.

An upshot of this is that even though there are several authors who classify types of dyslexia from different points of view, they all come to the central theme of '**reading deficit**'. It is evident that dealing with special students is a real challenge since they need extra support from their teachers. That is why it is necessary to emphasize that it is not an easy labor, but it is our responsibility.

4.2.2 Levels, and Symptoms

Regarding the types of dyslexia, it is important to emphasize that it can be developed in levels, such as from mild to moderate, from moderate to severe and from severe to profound. It is necessary to bear in mind that although a professional is the only person that can diagnose this learning issue, teachers must be aware of any unusual symptom a learner can show to suggest parents the possible situation.

Furthermore, it is recommended to take into account that it is almost impossible to detect which symptom is exactly in each range. That is why in this work a list of general symptoms according to the learners' age that is shown in the chart below has been included.

Warning Signs of Dyslexia

If a child has 3 or more of the following warning signs, encourage that child's parents and teachers to learn more about dyslexia.

In Preschool

- delayed speech
- mixing up the sounds and syllables in long words
- chronic ear infections
- severe reactions to childhood illnesses
- constant confusion of left versus right
- late establishing a dominant hand
- difficulty learning to tie shoes
- trouble memorizing their address, phone number, or the alphabet
- can't create words that rhyme
- a close relative with dyslexia

In Elementary School

- dysgraphia (slow, non-automatic handwriting that is difficult to read)
- letter or number reversals continuing past the end of first grade
- extreme difficulty learning cursive
- slow, choppy, inaccurate reading:
 - guesses based on shape or context
 - skips or misreads prepositions (at, to, of)
 - ignores suffixes
 - can't sound out unknown words
- terrible spelling
- often can't remember sight words (they, were, does) or homonyms (their, they're, and there)
- difficulty telling time with a clock with hands
- trouble with math
 - memorizing multiplication tables
 - memorizing a sequence of steps
 - directionality
- when speaking, difficulty finding the correct word
 - lots of "whatyamacallits" and "thingies"
 - common sayings come out slightly twisted
- extremely messy bedroom, backpack, and desk

- dreads going to school
 - complains of stomach aches or headaches
 - may have nightmares about school

In High School

All of the above symptoms plus:

- limited vocabulary
- extremely poor written expression
 - large discrepancy between verbal skills and written compositions
- unable to master a foreign language
- difficulty reading printed music
- poor grades in many classes
- may drop out of high school

In Adults

Education history similar to above, plus:

- slow reader
- may have to read a page 2 or 3 times to understand it
- terrible speller
- difficulty putting thoughts onto paper
 - dreads writing memos or letters
- still has difficulty with right versus left
- often gets lost, even in a familiar city
- sometimes confuses b and d, especially when tired or sick

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Figure 2. Warning Signs of Dyslexia (Barton, 2012:3)

Given the fact that dyslexia may be accompanied by other symptoms such as anxiety, stress, and depression, it is crucial to point out that this work is focused on the learning of dyslexic students with a mild to moderate degree. The severe degree is not considered because this level requires the direct intervention of medical specialists.

Dyslexics who feel stressed or frustrated because they recognize they are not at the level of their peers, begin to develop emotional problems that make them, most of the time, a risk to the rest of the class. Unfortunately, in their attempts and failures to be equal to others, it makes them internalize a fixed idea that they are useless. They even self-mutilate⁸, hence

⁸ This term refers to a variety of forms of intentional self-harm without the wish to die (Medical Dictionary)

these cases must be derived to the psychologists or psychiatrists and probably their learning will take place in special classrooms, rather than in the mainstream classes.

Davis Dyslexia Association (1992) explains that inconsistency is noticeable in dyslexics as one of the general characteristics of this group of learners. This association provides some advice for teachers regarding the detection of dyslexics in the classroom if there is no diagnosis of a specialist.

General performance:

- He/she is presented as a brilliant student, but does not spell any word and therefore presents problems of articulation.
- Usually, shows indifference to the issues being addressed.
- Always excused because he/she is late when copying.
- Always prefers to verbally participate instead of written form.
- Shows low self-esteem.
- Featured in art, music, and painting.
- S(h)e always interrupts class to tell stories because s(h)e knows his/her strength is to know them.

Vision, reading, and spelling

- Interrupts abruptly the fluency of the reading to indicate that he feels sick.
- Instructs the teacher he feels dizzy or confused when reading.
- Instructs teacher that letters move when reading.
- Tells the teacher that s(h)e cannot read and needs to improve his vision.
- Shows little understanding.

Hearing and Speech

- S(h)e says s(h)e hears things that nobody says in class
- Interrupts teacher's activities if he/she hears any sound
- Says uncomfortable sentences to express himself/herself

Writing and motor skills

- Shows difficulty in picking up pen or pencil
- Displays an uncoordinated stroke

- Runs with much difficulty
- He/she is confused with laterality
- Maintains fine and gross motor problems

4.3 Dyslexia and Foreign Language Learning

4.3.1 Barriers in the EFL Classroom

Over the time it has been known that the English language, especially in its linguistics, has a connotation of being one of the most difficult languages to learn. In the case of dyslexics, this fear increases because they are aware that when learning a language they will be evaluated precisely in the areas of reading and writing where their greatest weaknesses are. As a consequence, the English Language class needs to be modified to achieve the dyslexic's learning goals.

There are two main academic areas affected by dyslexia, which are Language and Maths. On the subject of Language, it involves reading, spelling, handwriting, and writing (Payne & Turner, 1999). At this point, it would be necessary to emphasize that this section will refer only to Language as well as other factors that may affect dyslexics' learning achievements.

Reid (2013) has suggested a list⁹ of some of the difficulties that are experienced by dyslexics in the FL classroom. This list is shown below:

Reading

- Difficulty in recognizing sounds in words.
- Reversing, omitting or adding letters.
- Losing the place when reading.
- Difficulty with the sequence of the alphabet.
- Poor word attack skills: particularly with unknown words.

Spelling

- Difficulty remembering spelling rules.
- Making phonological errors in spelling, for example 'f' for 'ph'.

⁹ The list provided in this work is not complete. In order to look for the complete list, see Reid, G. (2013). *Dyslexia and inclusion: Classroom approaches for assessment, teaching and learning*. London: Routledge.

- Letters out of sequence.
- Inconsistent use of some letters with similar sounds such as ‘s’ and ‘z’.
- Difficulty with word endings for example using ‘ie’ for ‘y’.

Writing

- Inconsistent writing style.
- Slow writing speed.
- Inconsistent use of capital and small letters.
- Reluctance to write any lengthy piece.
- Sometimes an unusual writing grip or sitting position.

On the other hand, it is noticeable that when the word **‘barrier’** comes to our minds, one of the first things to think about is Language. However, some authors such as Turner & Pughe (2003), Schneider & Crombie (2003), and Daloiso (2017) underline that a barrier may affect dyslexic learners due to some **‘environmental factors’**.

With regard to the last author, barriers are presented in three types: the moment in which the dyslexic first encounters a new material which may exaggerate their sense of frustration; The second barrier is how to process the information of the new material; and the last barrier is the moment of the practice when the dyslexic student does not know how to manipulate the new material.

It cannot be argued that one of the main problems that affects students’ behavior is the teachers’ attitude in the classroom. In fact, “affective factors such as attitude, style and means of presentation of the FL educator as well as physical classroom or home study environment can affect the students” (Schneider & Crombie, 2013:13). Unfortunately, at least in Ecuador, there is a lack of training in teacher education programmes regarding how to deal with students with learning disabilities in the classrooms.

4.3.2 Overcoming Dyslexia

After checking the definition of dyslexia and considering all the difficulties they usually face in the classroom, it is impossible not to ask ourselves what their possibilities are in order to learn a second language.

Undoubtedly, learning English requires the development of four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Naturally, it is clear that at least three of those skills will be difficult for dyslexics but not impossible to develop.

It is well-known that learning a new language implies rules; however, communicative skills can be used to support this issue. For Turner and Pughe (2003) teachers should take advantage of the multisensory way that dyslexics use to learn. In other words, dyslexics are mostly visual and kinesthetic. They love to manipulate objects and visualize significant information without words. For instance, a teacher can explain the use of commas and apostrophes with a simple chart, as follows:

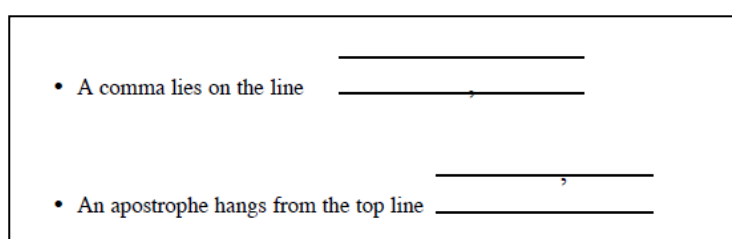


Figure 3. The Apostrophe and Comma. (Turner and Pughe, 2003:8)

Referring to dyslexia barriers, Daloiso (2017) suggests different types of interventions to overcome them. In addition to my previous comments, the three most important barriers are *the contact, the process, and the practice*. It is worth noting that those interventions refer to curriculum adaptations.

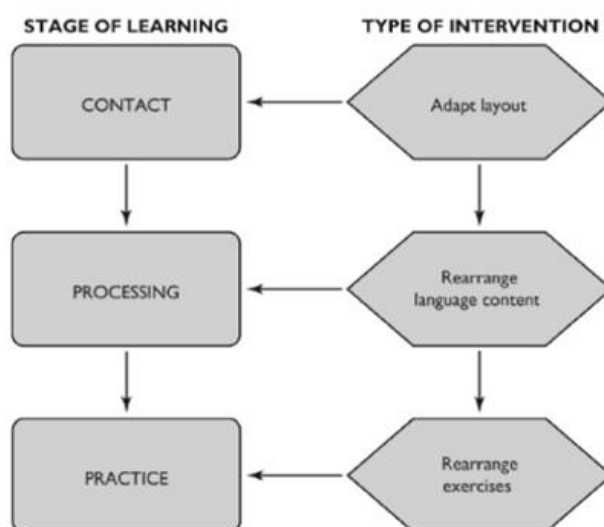


Figure 4. Types of Interventions to overcome barriers. (Daloiso, 2017:22)

Notwithstanding all the suggestions to overcome dyslexic barriers in the FL classrooms, it is also necessary not to forget the importance of creating a teacher-friendly environment in order to help them leave their fears behind. As a matter of fact, Turner & Pughe (2003) underline that “it is important to realize that there are many more strengths and weaknesses to consider when setting out to ensure that dyslexic learners have a positive experience in your classroom”. In order to keep this in mind, they have provided a *set of general principals*¹⁰ which can be followed by any teacher as it is easy to understand.

4.3.2.1 Curriculum Adaptations

It becomes apparent that teaching English to dyslexics is a challenge that demands a few modifications or accommodations to achieve effectiveness in the process of both learning and teaching. It might also be noted that some authors have defined those changes as *curriculum adaptations*.

To begin with, it would be necessary to have a clearer view of what curricular adaptations are. Thus, they can be described as the modifications that are made to a preset program to make changes in the educational environment, in the instructions and in the didactic resources that are used in the classroom in order to make students with a learning disability an active part of the class process, and at the same time be challenged to learn (Udvari-Soler, 1992 and Tiem, 1999).

.According to Schneider (2003), accommodations or adaptations are necessary in the foreign language classroom because they ensure that dyslexics can show their achievements. He also suggests that dyslexia is a lifetime condition, so the first accommodation is the attitude. Teachers’ positive attitude is the main ingredient in the English Classroom. Educators should realize that in every class they will face multiple levels of English Language knowledge and even regular students may not know how to pronounce some words in English. The same way happens with dyslexics in the class; the most positive attitude for dyslexics, the less resistance to the Language subject.

¹⁰ The complete list can be seen at Turner, E., & Pughe, J. (2003). *Dyslexia and English*. London: David Fulton.

Browning¹¹ (2005) has categorized nine types of Curricular Adaptations:

- a) **Quantity:** Teachers should adapt the number of activities, questions, vocabulary words, and exercises that the dyslexic will complete.
- b) **Time:** Provide more time to develop the activities.
- c) **Personal Assistance:** Teachers should increase the level of support to keep the dyslexic student on task or to reinforce specific skills.
- d) **Input:** Instructions given to dyslexics should be adapted.
- e) **Output:** Teachers should modify the student's response to the instructions provided.
- f) **Difficulty:** Allow the dyslexic to use resources that may approach the work.
- g) **Participation:** Teachers should make the dyslexic participate in all the activities in the classroom.
- h) **Goals:** It is necessary to adapt the goals expected when using the same material as the others in the class.
- i) **Functional Curriculum:** Teachers should substitute curriculum aspects if necessary. This is only for students with a severe disability. In this case, the rest of the class will work with different resources or skills while dyslexics should be focused on the development of a particular skill.

Once the English teachers becomes familiar with the types of curriculum adaptations, they could ask themselves how to make the modifications and when to implement them if they have a student with dyslexia in the classroom. In order to support teachers in some way, Pugach 1995 in McLeskey & Waldron (2000) provide essential and systematic steps for making adaptations to the curriculum:

- a. Set Goals.
- b. Identify the degree of difficulty of the student with the educational need through the report or diagnosis delivered by a professional.
- c. Associate the learning disability from low to severe with the modifications that will be taken into account.
- d. Design activities for the student with the educational need to develop in the classroom, that is, to make special worksheets.

¹¹ Substantially altered by Diana Browning Wright with permission from Jeff Sprague, Ph.D. from an original by DeSchenes, C., Ebeling, D., & Sprague, J. (1994). *Adapting Curriculum & Instruction in Inclusive Classrooms: A Teachers Desk Reference*. ISDDCSCI Publication.

- e. Consider the didactic resources necessary for the development of activities.
- f. Analyze the changes that the classroom must have.
- g. Plan and adapt the time to be allocated for activities
- h. Modify instructions for activities and tasks.
- i. Adapt the lesson plan.
- j. Maintain the sequence of adaptations for the next class plan design.

Making adaptations seems to be an easy process, but it demands differentiation of the necessities according to the level of dyslexia shown by learners and the subject that will be taught.

Keep in mind that curriculum does not always need to be modified. By providing multi-level instruction, you will find that adapting a lesson may not always be necessary. Differentiating instruction and providing multiple ways assess allows more flexibility for students to meet the standards and requirements of the class. At other times, the curriculum can be made more accessible through accommodations. Also, supports for one student may not necessarily be the same in all situations, e.g., a student who needs full-time support from a paraprofessional for math may only need natural supports from peers for English and no support for art. And, should not be determined by the disability label; instead, supports should be used when the instructional or social activity warrants the need for assistance. (Fisher and Frey, 2001:87)

The viewpoint of those who claim that having a student with learning difficulties is exhausting should not be accepted. Obviously, it is a challenge, since there is some “extra work” (e.g. adaptations in exercises) to do. Besides, we are not going to conceal that the teacher himself has to change his point of view. From the previous section, we know that it is vital to take into account how the teacher behaves and what his attitudes are in the classroom. However, it should never be considered as overwhelming.

There is no doubt that an essential key in every process there are researchers who are people devoted to their jobs and thanks to their discoveries or analysis, they may provide tools that teachers can use and make their labor easier. As discussed above, making adaptations seems to be quite simple, but without a light, it can be frustrating. That is why in figure 5, the process that needs to be considered when making adaptations will be shown.

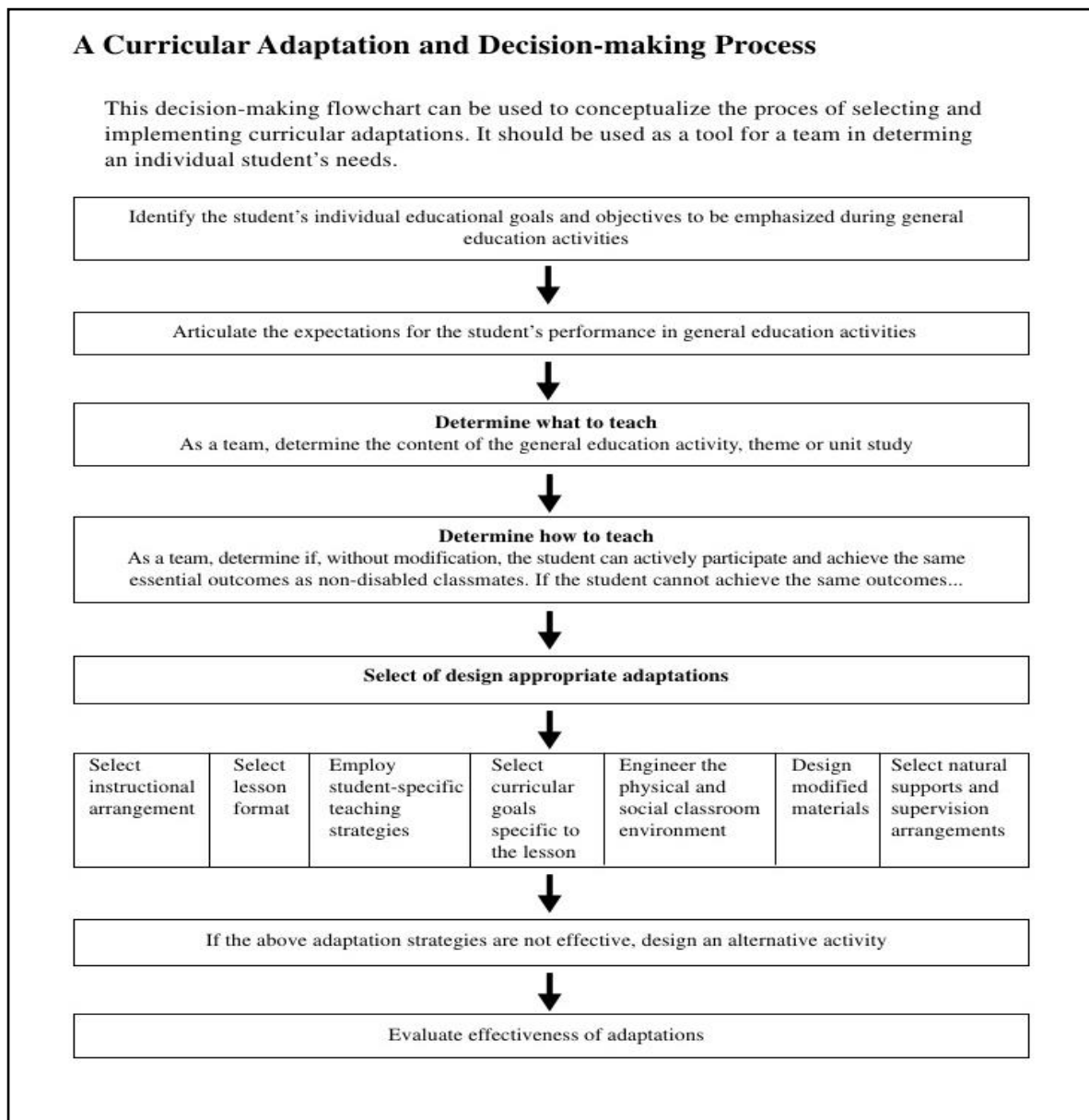


Figure 5. Curricular Adaptations and Modifications (Udvari-Soler, 1992 in Janney, 2000:23)

Simple changes, as Udvari-Soler (1992) mentions, could make a great difference. I will advocate the idea that teachers should change the mental scheme that having a child with learning difficulties is a nightmare; perhaps we are the nightmare for those students.

Janney (2015) proposes to educators to create a meeting table to coordinate the ideas that best benefit the students with educational needs in the classroom, in their homes when they have to do the tasks, and in the context in which they are developed. Teaching and learning for the

dyslexic does not have to affect the rest of the class so the teacher should take into account his/her colleagues' viewpoints or suggestions.

Throughout this work, beyond the objectives that are to provide curricular adaptations for students with dyslexia in a foreign language classroom, a hidden purpose would be to raise awareness about the importance of the teacher's role in the classroom. On the one hand, it seems that despite all the efforts, studies, books, essays, websites that can be found very easily nowadays, there is still a lack of *commitment* to our students.

On the other hand, other factors could be the reasons why teachers react in that way. Perhaps one of those factors could be that even though there is the theory, it is hard for a novice or inexperienced teacher to put that theory into practice. That is why in this work, teachers who have felt they have not been prepared enough, will find some examples of curriculum adaptations that have been taken and exemplified to help dyslexics.

The first recommendation is to consider that the lesson plan must be modified except in the aim, objectives, skills, and content as Marcillo & Sánchez (2015) explain:

Lesson Plan Areas	Examples
Time	• Provide extra time to complete tasks or tests. • Enable the development of a test into several sections or more days.
Setting	• Divide the class into small groups. • Monitor students closely. • Reduce visual and auditory distractions.
Didactic Resources	• Provide audio of texts in readings. • Provide copies about teacher's notes. • Reduce the quantity of exercises to copy from the board • Highlight notes in the class.

Instruction	• Minimize the difficulty of tasks. • Use worksheets if necessary. • Provide Tutor peers. • Read instructions twice.
Student Response	• Allow students to give oral responses.
Assessment, Grading and Testing	• Divide test into small sections. • Avoid spelling checking. • Highlight important words from the instruction. • Provide an example under each question.

Table 1. Curriculum Adaptations for Lesson Plans, following Marcillo & Sanchez (2015)

The material presented by these authors is worthy of being recognized as a contribution in the modifications within the framework of class planning.

As has been noted, dyslexics lack phonological, phonemic, auditory and discriminatory awareness and as a result, reading comprehension is difficult for them. Besides, the short-term memory does not help dyslexics to remember names, memorize vocabulary words or keep in mind grammar structures. Now, the solution to face dyslexics in the class is summarized in the use of *Multiple Intelligences*, *Didactic Resources* and *Strategies* to be applied in the classroom.

4.3.2.2 The Role of Multiple Intelligences in the Curriculum Adaptations

After checking all the definitions, types and levels of dyslexia along this paperwork, the basic idea about this learning disability has been clarified.

As discussed in the previous section, different types of accommodations have been suggested to help teachers have a clear view of what they can do to support their learners. Nonetheless, there is a theory that according to some researchers such as Thomson & Gilchrist (1997), Beryl (1998), Reid (2005), and Armstrong (2009) has been considered of great importance when referring to any learning disability; it is known as the *Multiple Intelligences Theory*.

To begin with, it is necessary to remember that human beings have two sides of the brain: left and right. Each side has its purpose. The left side is more logical whereas the right side is more creative. However, all these assumptions arise once the perspective that “intelligence

could be objectively measured and reduced to a single number or IQ score” was questioned and refused by psychologist Howard Garner. He suggested that the human being possesses at least “seven types of intelligence” (Armstrong, 2009:5-6). It might also be noted that, over the years, his theory has evolved and more intelligences have been added to the list.

Gardner (2006) underlines that educators should pay equal attention to gifts in intelligence beyond linguistic and logical mathematic. Gardner invites teachers to consider other skills in the artists, musicians, naturalists, designers, entrepreneurs, and others which contribute to the enrichment of society.

On the other hand, it would be worth to highlight that some theorists such as Skinner (1957) and Piaget (1952) ensure two different models by which students learn: behavioral and cognitive. The former refers to a process by which learning is produced as a response to a stimulus, while the latter regards learning as a mental information process. These processes involve effort in learning any regular subject, even more, when acquiring a foreign language.

From examining the findings, Gardner's contribution about multiple intelligences is connected to the *gifts*¹² of dyslexics. These gifts arise because the right side generates awareness of art, music, etc. In the case of dyslexics, their left side has been affected.

It is essential to emphasize that everyone is intelligent; every single person can do something. Certainly, it is unavoidable not to consider that sometimes learners may fail in the process, they can make mistakes most of the time, and they even may feel the desire to stop trying. However, once again, it is our sense of commitment that motivates us to engage and change our students' minds especially those who have that 'gift' called dyslexia.

Barton (2012) provides a list of gifts that I have related to the eight types of multiple intelligences because I consider that this is a valuable resource that this author offers to educators:

¹² The term gift in this work has been taken and inspired by http://davis-method.narod.ru/Gift_of_Dyslexia.pdf

Type of Intelligence	Dyslexics' gifts	Examples applied in the English Class
Musical	- artistic skill - musical ability	- Listen to songs, repeat the songs. Aim: Pronunciation practice - Listen to instructions and draw Aim: Practice vocabulary words through drawing
Bodily-kinesthetic	- athletic ability - mechanical ability	- Putting together pieces of a picture. Aim: Reinforce vocabulary words - Putting objects in specific places Aim: Practice preposition of places
Interpersonal	artistic skill	Being part of a group when preparing a presentation Aim: Talk about a topic in front of the class
Verbal-Linguistic	- curiosity - artistic skill	Acting as a character from a story. Aim: Structure oral sentences
Logical-mathematical	curiosity	Being the first one in answering questions about quantities Aim: Practice with numbers how much and how many
Naturalistic	- vivid imagination - creative, global thinking	Predicting the end of a story through a drawing Aim: Articulate sentences when describing pictures drawn by them
Intrapersonal	intuition	Comparing characters' attitudes with the learner's ones. Aim: Practice likes and dislikes
Visual-spatial	3-D visual-spatial skills	Making a collage Aim: Reinforce vocabulary words.

Table 2. Relation between Multiple Intelligences and Dyslexics' Gifts

At this point, it is necessary to note that even though everyone has the eight types of intelligences, some of them are more developed than others. Each person unconsciously puts those intelligences in competition depending on the need. In this way, this author does not categorize intelligences as strong or weak because he advocates that they can be stronger if they are well-developed. Therefore, the type of intelligence' status is temporary (Armstrong, 2009).

The previous author also considers that the development of any type of intelligence depends on three elements: the biological code that includes genetic factors, the person's background in his/her context, and the environment when he/she has grown up. Each of these components reinforces each intelligence. For example, a person can develop musical intelligence because someone from their ancestors may have been a singer. This can go from generation to generation.

It should also be emphasized that just as there are ways of developing the intelligences, there are ways of paralyzing them. Feldman (1982) made a study of the different experiences that paralyze the development of the intelligences, while Gardner (1986) was dedicated to share how they develop. For this reason, an educator must take into consideration that the turning point between crystallization and the paralysis of a type of intelligence is the way in which the gifts of his students are used. In the case of dyslexics, these gifts are necessarily produced because the left side of the brain is affected and this forces the development of the talents in music, painting, art, that is, the dyslexic becomes by nature in a creative human being.

4.3.2.3 Strategies

It is universally acknowledged that strategies are used in order to achieve a specific objective. In fact, several methods as well as theories, which have been mentioned in the previous section, have arisen over the years to increase the opportunities to learn something new.

Incidentally, at this point, it would be vital to bear in mind what it has been explained in section four about how it can be possible to have dyslexics who still fail in the L2 classrooms even though a lot of approaches and methods have appeared throughout the years. Honestly, one of the reasons why this is happening could be the lack of training that teachers receive. It is easy to give someone a book with a lot of methods, but it brings up to the question of how an inexperienced teacher can choose the appropriate strategy to help the learner.

First of all, the thesaurus dictionary on the web defines strategy as “a plan, a method, or a series of maneuvers or stratagems for obtaining a specific goal or result” (Dictionary, LLC, 2017). In the educational field, it is necessary to focus on methodological strategies because they are the combination of methods and techniques that are chosen to achieve someone’s learning goals.

Hodge (2000) has contributed with some strategies for educators who want to success in the teaching and learning process with dyslexics. They are shown below.

Within the classroom, the following aspects must be taken into account:

- Verify that the dyslexic student is sitting in the front row. If he does not want to occupy that site because he still lacks self-confidence with the classmates, it is necessary to assign him a companion tutor to guide him from the position of his preference.
- Write down in the upper right part of the blackboard a well-structured agenda of what is to be done during the class period. With this action, the dyslexic student will better process the information and this practice will be an exercise to transfer the new information from the short-term to long-term memory. Also, the outline on the board will reduce the level of anxiety of the learner.
- It is necessary that the teacher always works from the front, walk the room monitoring all students, but must return to face the student with dyslexia and must repeat any instruction that s(he) considers important. The idea is to stop and ask the student to repeat the above or ask if what has been said is clear. This exercise should be repeated as many times as necessary.
- You should check that the dyslexic student writes down the homework, if it is possible to him or herself, if not, it is recommended that the teacher writes the homework and records it in the student's schoolbook; but never let the dyslexic student memorize the

task because you have to keep in mind that he has short-term memory and when he gets home he will have forgotten it.

- You should consider that the task sent is for everyone, however, for the dyslexic learner, this task should be less complicated or should be separated into smaller sections for development over the course of the week.

Similarly, Morin (2014) shares some strategies that can be implemented in the English classroom:

- Give the instructions clearly, accurately and step by step.
- Ask any student to repeat directions given
- Include dyslexic students in all classroom activities
- Try to do small group activities
- Make a checklist to assess the progress of skills developed daily
- Use different colors to copy on the board. It will help dyslexics copying from the board easily.

For tasks and tests:

- Provide additional time so that the dyslexic student can understand the instructions.
- Allow them to answer questions in different ways, either with drawings or by choosing options, for example.
- Make the spaces longer to complete the answers.
- Verify that the task or test is well organized to avoid confusion when reading or interpreting what is written.
- Activities should be organized from the easiest to the most complex.
- Verify that each answer illustrates how to do it or at least one example for the student
- To be guided.
- Organize the worksheet problems from the easiest to the hardest.
- Allow the dyslexic's knowledge to be measured through different ways of responding, for example, instead of writing they can orally record the development of tasks.

As it is noticeable, the strategies are rather in the teacher's attitude. It means that they do not involve economic expenses; nevertheless, they are necessary to make modifications that take

a little effort of the daily routine to proceed in the development of the teachers' lessons. These methodological strategies should be recorded in the lesson plan as part of curricular adaptations when there is at least one dyslexic student in the classroom.

4.3.2.4 Didactic Resources

Didactic resources are instruments that facilitate the students' learning process because most of them activate their sensory organs and are a source of motivation for the development of critical thinking. Besides, they are also useful when learning in context; thus, they make the English learning process viable.

Durán (2008) considers that an appropriate use of didactic materials will stimulate students and beyond saving time, they promote learning as well as retention of knowledge. In his analysis, he classifies didactic resources into tangible (e.g. technological and concrete materials) and intangible (e.g. teachers' motivation).

Some people claim that dyslexics cannot learn English and reach the knowledge level as regular students. On the contrary, the National Institute of Child and Human Development (2007) claims that it is just a myth. In fact, there is a myth that English is an irregular language.

This is not true since we have a set of alternative ways of spelling the same sounds; unfortunately, it is not taught explicitly. Indeed, the way phonics is often taught involves paying too much attention to single letters and not the letter groups that go with sounds as well. Teaching dyslexics to read requires a different approach, one that stresses knowledge of spelling-sound relationships with a twist that tweaks the letter and sound processes to get connected in time in the brain (The National Institute of Child and Human Development 2007:22).

In 2001, Klein & McMullen wanted to help students who have struggles when reading. Their concern led them to create a reading card for dyslexics. Later, in the year 2011, Professor Joan Brennan improved that idea. The reading focus card to help students with dyslexia and ADD/ADHD was perfected by Meller Kelly in 2013, and it was transformed from a card to become a ruler.

The Reading Ruler is a flexible transparent colored plastic strip (205mm x 74mm) overprinted to divide the ruler into a 10mm transparent strip on one edge and 30mm transparent strip with tracking line on the other side. Discreet and portable, the reading ruler is made of a combination of opaque and transparent plastic that both underlines the text and highlights it in a colored tint. Simply read the text through either of the tinted plastic strips of your selected color and track down the page: broad strip for paragraphs; narrow strip for single lines (The Dyslexia Shop¹³, 2016).

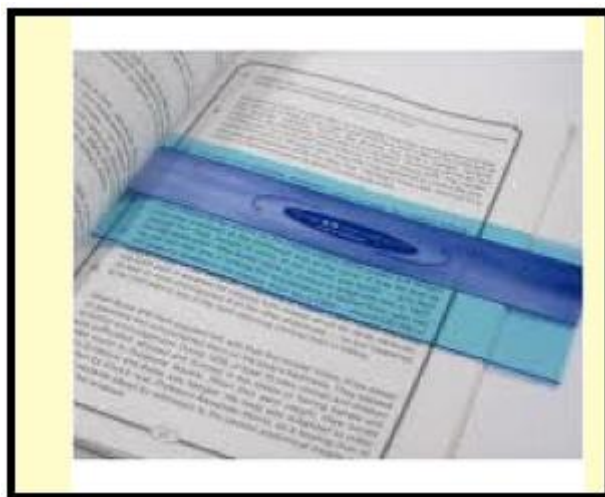


Figure 6. Crossbow Colored Reading Ruler (The Dyslexia Shop, 2016)

Besides, teachers also can make a same and different flipbook which consists of a series of pictures that can be related or can show an opposite meaning. They are used to encourage speaking, listening, and thinking skills.



Figure 7. Crossbow Colored Reading Ruler (The Dyslexia Shop, 2016)

¹³ As it is a website, there is no a page that can be provided. Thus, the following link can be used to look for more details <https://www.thedyslexiahop.co.uk/>

Another outstanding resource is an A4 lined whiteboard (see annex 2) that dyslexics can use to answer questions. As a matter of fact, dyslexics are allowed to draw to show their answers. Most of them have struggled when writing or drawing so they can easily erase the times they require.

In addition, a useful didactic resource that must be in the classroom is the relationship between colors and subjects. For instance, the dyslexic student should know that the blue color is for Science. Teachers should use that color in the timetable, too. That association of colors in the dyslexics' minds will help them to organize their ideas in a better way.

In the same vein, worksheets should be specially adapted to work with dyslexics. In the case of a reading comprehension, for example, teachers should provide a kind of graphic organizer which allows the dyslexic to write or draw to be able to analyze the story to be read.

A sequence graphic organizer could be useful, too. Dyslexics can draw what they understood about the development of a story. The perfect worksheets in these cases are shown in Annex 4.

Evidently, we have selected some of the massive amounts of didactic resources that teachers may use in their English classrooms to support their dyslexic students. Indeed, those resources have been carefully chosen because, as noted above, this work would consider two main factors: time and costs. This ensures that teachers cannot make excuses to put them in practice.

It is understandable that nobody wants to spend money on resources which perhaps are not part from our responsibility as teachers, but rather the educational institution itself. That is why practical and economical solutions are always the best choice since it is almost impossible to guess what kind of environment or resources a teacher may have in the institution s(he) is working. For that reason, there is no doubt that these didactic resources can be easily adapted to any situation.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The Target Group

The approaches in research about the English language learning have changed throughout the time. This work focuses on Ecuadorian high-school students with dyslexia as well as teachers who need tools to face the challenge of teaching English to these special learners. Based on this necessity, this research work offers a valuable guide to successfully teach English to students with a low to average level of dyslexia.

As explained in previous lines, not all dyslexics have the same degree of difficulty since there are levels from mild to moderate, from moderate to severe and from severe to profound. Besides, there are even dyslexics that also have attention deficit or hyperactivity.

Low to average dyslexia students are those who can learn English with some adaptations. This research cannot be focused on learners with severe dyslexia because they need another kind of help and not just curriculum adaptations.

5.2 The Designed material

Mascaró (2014) suggests that teachers should use dyslexics' creativity in the classroom. That is why it is recommendable to associate creativity with skills and multiple intelligences.

The guide that has been designed is a sample of suggestions, but in the near future, the English teachers have to design their methodological strategies for the development of their classes. In order to do this, it is necessary to share this guide with all the English staff so that it has the necessary support.

Once it has been coordinated with the authorities of the educational center, we suggest to meet the English area to analyze the guide, evaluate it and check that it is a friendly, simple, but above all, useful tool.

5.2.1 To Activity 1

Before the lessons, a set of preliminary actions is necessary to get prepared for the English class development.

Objective: Find out the learning style dyslexics have through the application of an oral survey.

Process:

- a. Have a previous time with each dyslexic student in order to ask them (orally) the necessary questions to define the learning style they have. (Annex 5)
- b. Talk to the whole class because everyone has to collaborate and understand why there will be some changes in the classroom. This sensitivity period is necessary for the harmony of the whole class.
- c. Adapt the environment according to the learning style the dyslexics have. Even though they are auditory or kinesthetic, they will need visual support.
- d. Paste a color A4 format paper on the right upper part of the board to help the dyslexic recognize where “homework” is going to be copied; place the dyslexics chairs in the first row; prepare the correspondent flash cards to support the new vocabulary or new structure that will be taught; design a special evaluation sheet; get at least two different colors of board markers; and add the adaptations to the lesson plan.

Instruments:

- a. Learning Style checklist
- b. A4 colorful format papers
- c. Flash Cards
- d. Special Evaluation Sheets
- e. Adapted Lesson Plan

5.2.2 Activity 2

Objective: Categorize special activities for the development of each skill in the English Language Class.

Process:

Apply the exercises to develop the Listening Skill:

Exercise 1

- Provide a white paper
- Ask the students to “listen and draw” the sentences they will hear.

- Verify that the dyslexic students explain what they have drawn.
- Count all the hits
- Repeat the exercise every time that the group learns a new list of keywords. (Annex 6)

Exercise 2

- Tell the students that they will observe two pictures
- They will hear a word that is part of the new vocabulary list
- Ask the dyslexics students to point out the correct picture
- Repeat the exercise every time a new word needs to be reinforced.

Exercise 3

- Students will receive a picture
- Students will listen to a description of the picture given
- Students have to cross out all the things that are not mentioned in the description.
- Repeat the exercise at least twice a week.

Instruments:

- a. Pictures
- b. Pencil

Apply the exercises to develop the Speaking Skill:

Exercise 1

- Provide two papers with pictures that guide to a dialogue
- Create a dialogue using the guide
- Repeat the exercise with the new Grammar structures.
- Count all the hits
- Accept even phrases. (Annex 7)

Exercise 2

- Provide a paragraph with most pictures instead of words.
- Ask the students to read the paragraph replacing the pictures by spoken words
- Accept synonyms if necessary.

Exercise 3

- Put a picture in the center of the board
- Circle the picture and draw a web (Annex 8)
- Persuade the students to mention and draw (or write) some words related to the picture.
- Add subcategories to each word.

Instruments:

- a. Pictures
- b. Board markers
- c. Pictures (to practice a verb tense, Annex 8)

Apply the exercises to develop the Reading Skill:**Exercise 1**

- Let the students express what they understand from context (Annex 9)
- Associate some pictures with the text read
- Ask for predictions about the end of the text read

Exercise 2

- Provide a sheet of paper with a graphic organizer
- Ask the students to draw or write in the graphic organizer with information about the reading
- Explain the students the importance of recognizing the beginning, middle, and ending of the stories read.
- Provide a set of sequence pictures to order events from a story.

Exercise 3

- Read a story while showing pictures or slides
- Ask simple questions about the text.
- Accept simple answers.
- Apply reading strategies such as inference, scanning, summarizing, or synthesizing.

Instruments:

- a. Pictures
- b. Text

Apply the exercises to develop the Writing Skill:**Exercise 1**

- Persuade the students to participate in class by writing monosyllables: yes, no, small, long, large, short, tall, up, down, among others.
- Persuade the students to classify adjectives and nouns in order to form small phrases: small class; tall man; an easy task.
- Persuade the students to write monosyllable verbs: do, work, write, read, go, is, are, am, come, cut, look, etc.

Exercise 2

- Ask the students to write sentences.
- Accept images in the place of difficult words. (Annex 10)
- Emphasize that even drawings, the order must be respected: adjectives (characteristics) and nouns.

Exercise 3

- Persuade the students to associate groups of words that begin with the same consonant or vowel sound by activating their multisensory skills. (Annex 11)
- Ask the students to write the phoneme at the beginning of some words
- Exhibit this task on the wall
- Repeat the exercise with phonemes at the end of a group of words.

Instruments:

- a. Worksheets
- b. Letters patterns

6 CONCLUSIONS

Dyslexia is a neurological condition that causes difficulties in reading and writing but this condition can be overcome to achieve the learning of a second language if correct modifications are made to the curriculum. Dyslexia can be detected since childhood, but adaptations are useful through all the years of studies from first grade to the university level.

Theorists have demonstrated that the methods for learning English are evolving, so support should be looked for in different theories such as Multiple Intelligence Theory, because they are relevant to the cognitive development of students with dyslexia. Although dyslexia affects the left side of the brain, there are other areas that dominate the right side and that can be a support for the dyslexic student to learn a second language without any problem. It should be noted that his or her oral communication will certainly be much better than written, but s(he) will learn the second language and will reach a high level while the adaptations to the curriculum are appropriate according to the age and the course in which the dyslexic is registered.

It is well-known that dyslexia occurs at different levels: mild to profound. Dyslexics who also have emotional problems should be treated by specialists in psychology or psychiatry. Therefore, curricular modifications are more adaptable to those with a mild to moderate degree. It is important to emphasize that dyslexia and intelligence are not linked. Most of dyslexics are outstanding in their scores and in their lives. Some examples would be Albert Einstein, Richard Branson, or famous Tom Cruise.

Modifications to the curriculum are practical adaptations that do not mean economic development. They refer to classroom interventions, teaching materials, and strategies that will help the dyslexic learn English successfully. Most adaptations are applied to time and space because dyslexics need more time to develop exercises, individual or group activities, and tests. When referring to the space it means not only the site in the classroom where the dyslexic will be placed but the space among lines in the written exercises or tests. They also demand organization in the presentation of written material so that worksheets and evaluations have to be prepared adequately.

The proposal presented in this document is a contribution to try to support equality in education. It is a proposal that inspires many educators to continue to add change-generating ideas so that students with a learning issue are viewed as an opportunity, but not as a problem.

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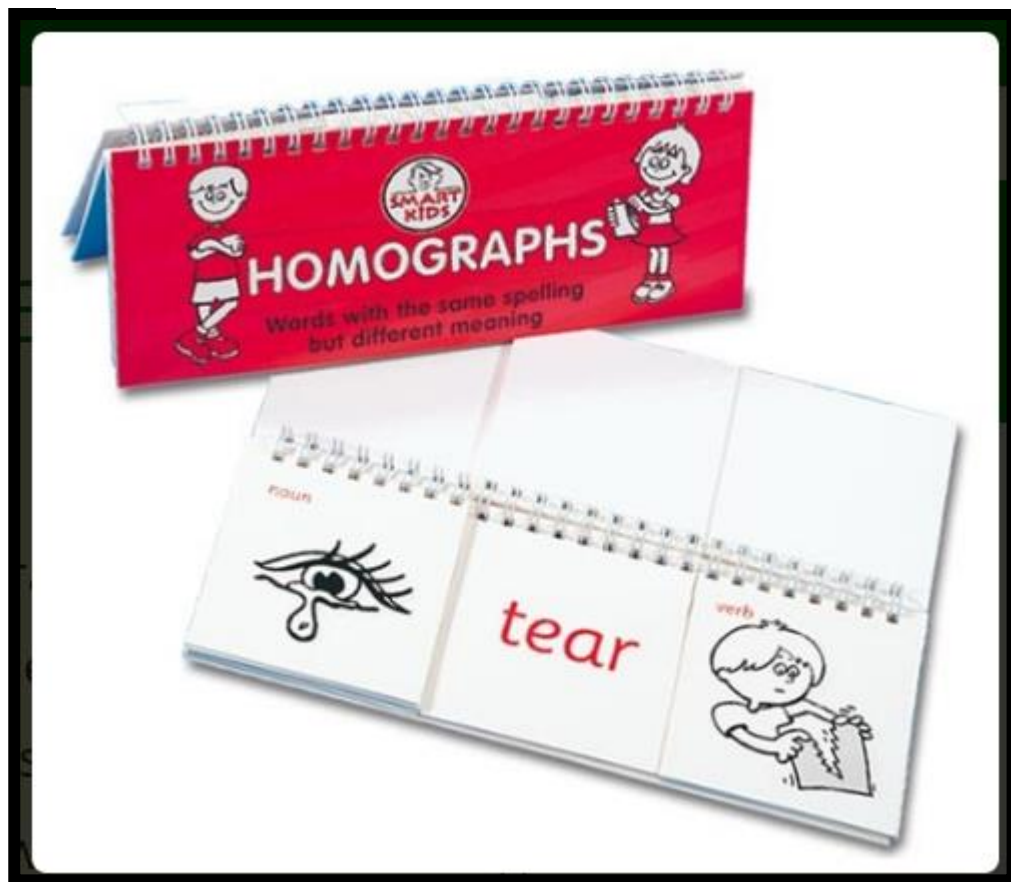
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ANNEXES

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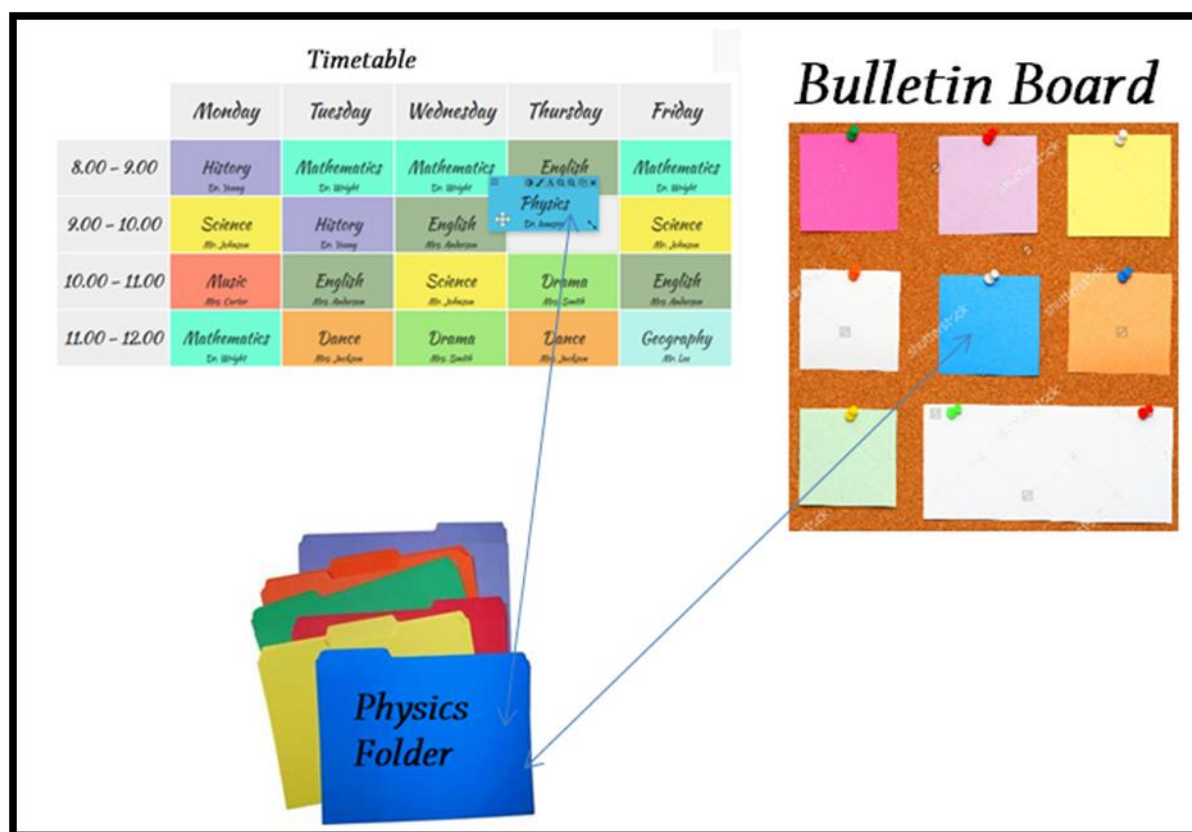
Annex 1. Example of a Flipbook



Annex 2. Example of an A4 lined whiteboard



Annex 3. Example of a color identification and relationship among folders, timetable subjects, and bulletin board notes

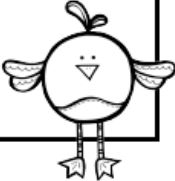


Annex 4. Example of a Reading graphic organizer

Spring Time Sequencing

Book Title: _____

Directions: Put the major events of the story you read in order.

First	Then
Next 	Last 

©Fourth and Ten, 2013

Title: _____	
Author: _____	
Characters	Setting
	
Problem 	Solution 

©Fourth and Ten, 2013

Learning Styles Inventory

TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTER

Answer the questions to the best of your ability. Mark a YES or NO response.

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. I prefer watching a video to reading. | YES | NO |
| 2. When I sing along with my CDs or the radio, I know the words to the songs. | YES | NO |
| 3. I have athletic ability. | YES | NO |
| 4. I can picture the setting of a story I am reading. | YES | NO |
| 5. I study better with music in the background. | YES | NO |
| 6. I enjoy hands-on learning. | YES | NO |
| 7. I'd rather play sports than watch someone play them. | YES | NO |
| 8. Reading aloud helps me remember. | YES | NO |
| 9. I prefer watching someone perform a skill or a task before I actually try it. | YES | NO |
| 10. I color-coordinate my clothes. | YES | NO |
| 11. I'm good at rhyming and rapping. | YES | NO |
| 12. Use phrases like: "I've got a handle on it," "I'm up against the wall," or "I have a feeling that..." | YES | NO |
| 13. I need to look at something several times before I understand it. | YES | NO |
| 14. I prefer having instructors give oral directions than written ones. | YES | NO |
| 15. I have difficulty being still for long periods of time. | YES | NO |
| 16. I use phrases like "I see what you're saying," "That looks good," or "That's clear to me." | YES | NO |
| 17. I'm good at figuring out how something works. | YES | NO |
| 18. I can understand a taped lecture. | YES | NO |
| 19. It's easy for me to replay scenes from movies in my head. | YES | NO |
| 20. I enjoy studying foreign languages. | YES | NO |
| 21. I would rather conduct my own science experiment than watch someone else do it. | YES | NO |
| 22. I would rather paint a house than a picture. | YES | NO |
| 23. I enjoy studying in groups. | YES | NO |
| 24. I prefer to have written directions to someone's home. | YES | NO |
| 25. I can look at an object and remember it when I close my eyes. | YES | NO |
| 26. I have musical ability. | YES | NO |
| 27. When I study new vocabulary, writing the words several times helps me learn. | YES | NO |
| 28. I can imagine myself doing something before I actually do it. | YES | NO |
| 29. I use phrases like "That rings a bell," "I hear you," or "That sounds good." | YES | NO |
| 30. I enjoy building things and working with tools. | YES | NO |

Scoring Your Inventory

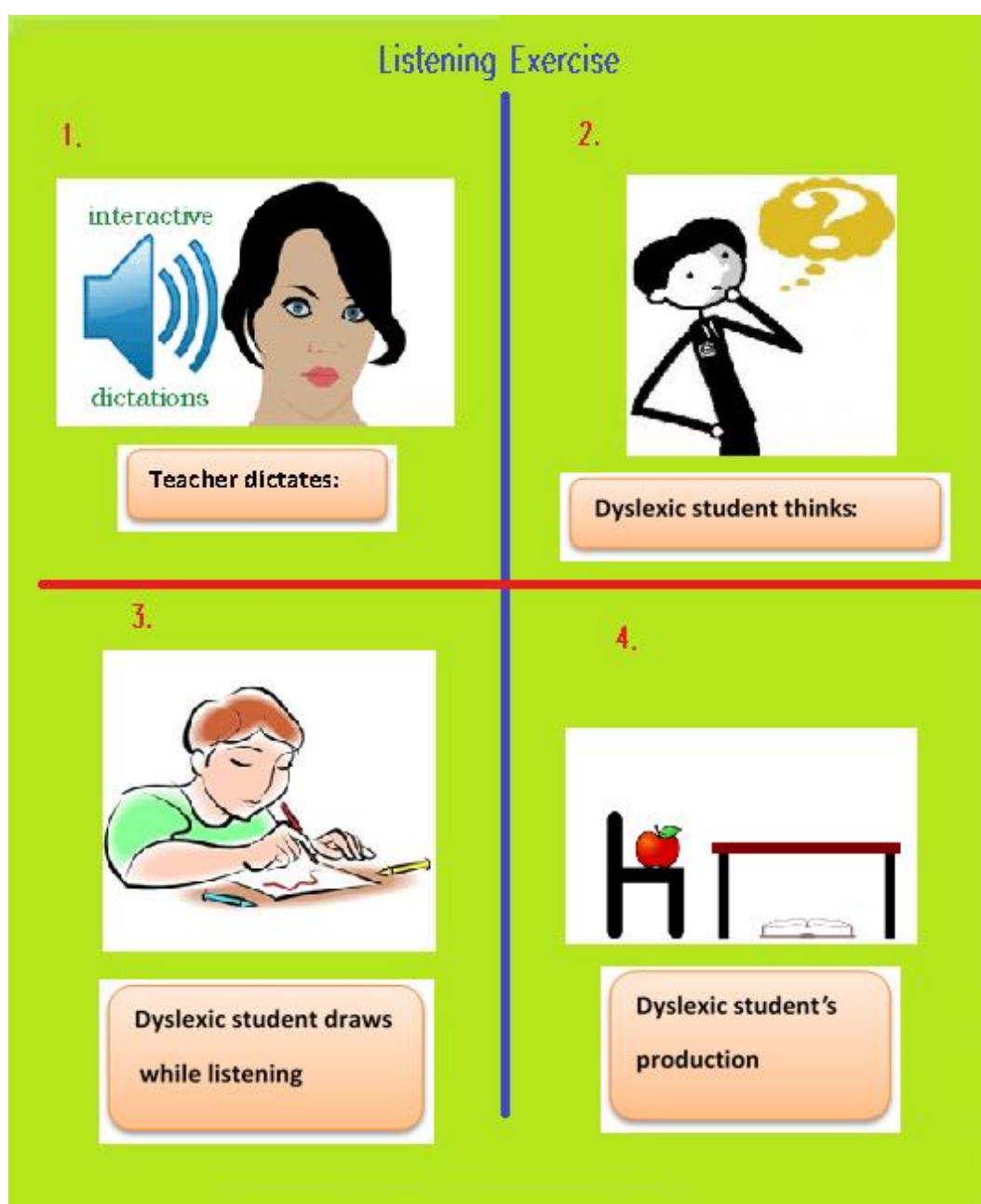
Tally your responses by adding up only the YES answers. Put the number of the question in the appropriate box. For example, if you answered questions number 9 with a yes, write 9 in the **VISUAL** box. If you answered number 11 with a yes, write number 11 in the **AUDITORY** box. If you answered number 7 with a yes, write 7 in the **KINESTHETIC** box. Add up the number of questions in each box and write a total for each one. This will determine your *preferred learning style*. Don't worry if a dominant mode doesn't emerge. You're a versatile learner! Use the knowledge you gain to create excellent study tools, the ones that are right for you. Chart your answers below.

Visual Style: Questions 1, 4, 9, 10, 13, 16, 19, 24, 25, 28
Auditory Style: Questions 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 20, 23, 26, 29
Kinesthetic Style: Questions 3, 6, 7, 12, 15, 17, 21, 22, 27, 30

Visual	Auditory	Kinesthetic
Total:	Total:	Total:

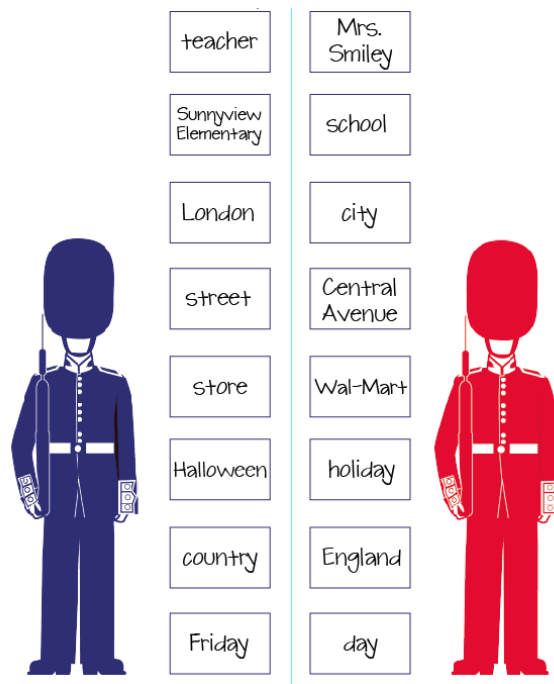
The highest score indicates your *preferred learning style*. If you have a high score in more than one area, you're using additional modalities. Remember that there are no wrong answers to this inventory. Everyone is an individual and has her own style of learning.

Annex 6. Example of Listening activities for dyslexic students.



Instructions for the teacher: Provide a sheet of paper, color pencils, an eraser, and a pencil.
Dictate: There is a table. There is a book under the table. There is a chair in front of the table. There is an apple on the chair.
Evaluation: Validate 1 point each hint.

Annex 7. Example of a speaking activity (oral dialogues) for dyslexic students.



Instructions for the teacher: Provide each student the same sheet of paper with the cue pictures to follow up a conversation.

Ask the student to answer the questions according to the word cards.

Possible dialogue:

S1: In which city do you live?

S2: I live in London.

S1: In which street do you live?

S2: I live in Central Avenue

S1: Which store do you like most?

S2: Wal-Mart

S1: And what about your favourite holiday?

S2: Halloween!

S1: In which country is London?

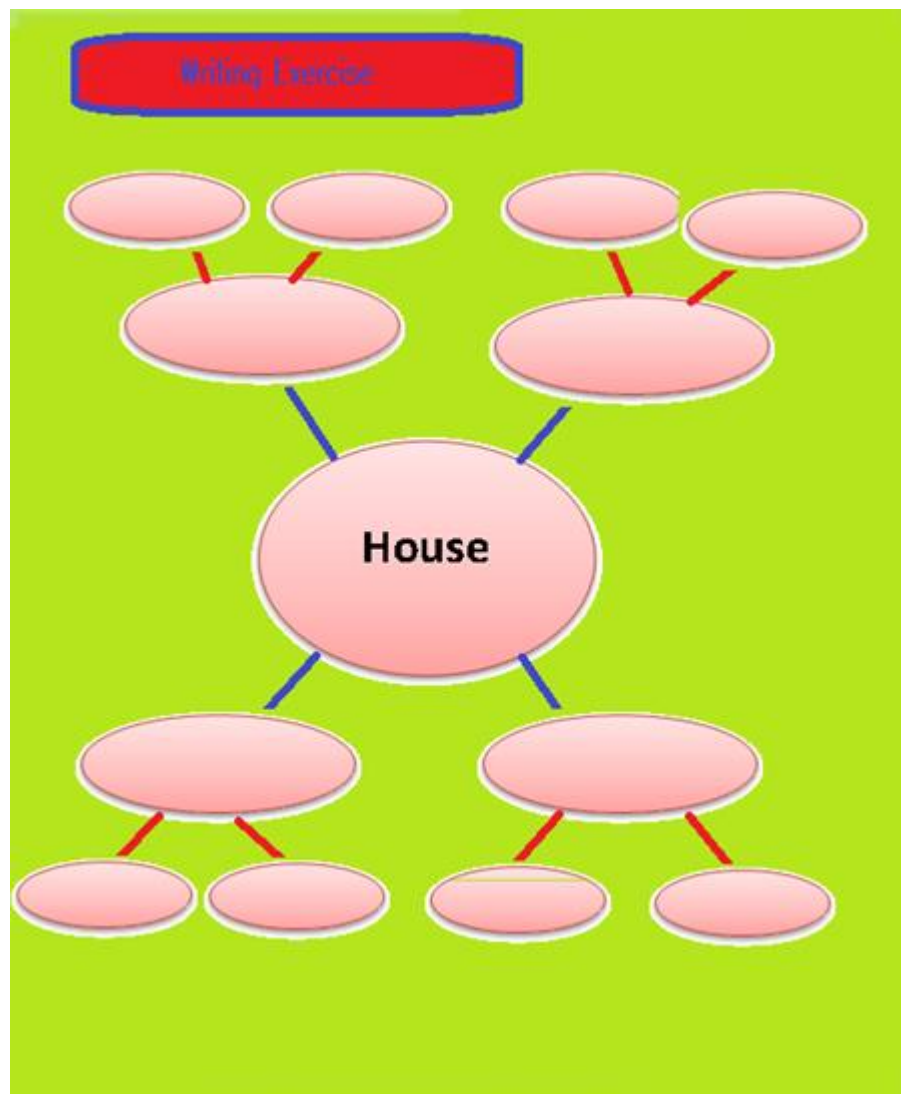
S2: In England

S1: Oh!, I see. What day is today?

S2: Friday

Evaluation: Validate each hint.

Annex 8. Example of two speaking activities for dyslexic students.



Instructions for the teacher: Paste a picture in the center of the board or write a single word. Read the word twice. Explain the students that “the house” is going to be described by using single words or pictures.

The student is supposed to fill in the bubbles with the parts of the house, first; and the objects found in each room, later.

Evaluation: Validate 1 point each hint.

Speaking: Practicing “Going To”



Examples:

- They're going to dive in the icy water.
- They're going to shiver for a long time afterwards.
- They're going to need warm clothes!
- The people are going to applaud.
- The girls are going to get sick.



Instructions for the teacher: Show the student each picture card. Give the first example and ask him/her to continue. Emphasize that “GOING TO” is used to make predictions.
First sentence: They are going to dive in the icy water.
Evaluation: Validate 1 point each hint.

Annex 9. Example of a reading Activity for dyslexic students.

Eating out

Are you looking for somewhere special to go this weekend? Do you want to try something new? Check out one of these hot new restaurants.

By Helen Carroll

This week's top recommendation



Last Days of the Raj

A centrally-located Indian restaurant, perfect for eating before or after the cinema or a show. In summer enjoy your meal in the beautiful garden. The most popular dishes are lamb and chicken cooked with mild, medium or hot spices. For brave customers there is extra hot!

Cheesy Bites

A restaurant that only serves cheese, but hundreds of cheeses from many countries and in lots of different forms. They serve reasonably-priced lunches but dinner can be expensive. Lovely food and a very elegant dining room, looking onto an amazing flower garden.

Fast Best

Fast food doesn't have to be junk food, as this café proves. Do you fancy a really good hamburger made with the best ingredients, or old-fashioned fish and chips fried to perfection, all on the table in super-quick time? Speed and quality are important here, and the prices aren't bad either.

Draw or write two facts about the reading.



Instructions for the teacher: Read the selection loudly, slowly, and clear. Point out pictures while reading, write on the board single words if necessary to emphasize the meaning in context. Ask some oral questions about the reading for the whole class, but be specific with the dyslexic students by asking to draw two pictures that summarize the selection.

Evaluation: Validate 1 point each hint. Avoid evaluating the quality of pictures. Focus on the message that pictures show.

Annex 10. Example of Reading activities for dyslexic students.

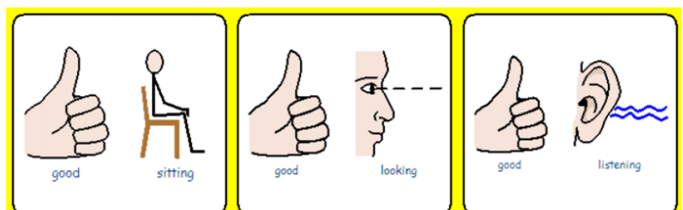
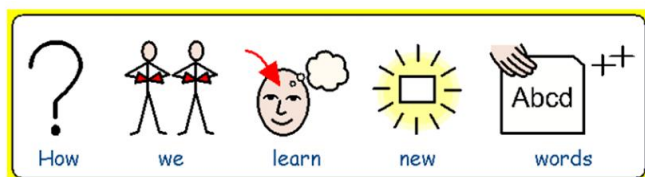
My  new 

I have a  new 

It is  . It is  .

It is  good  to have a

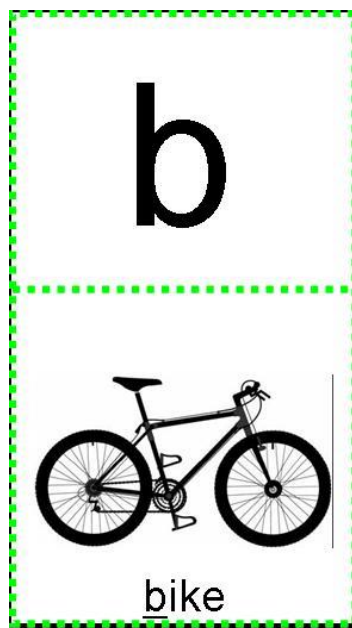
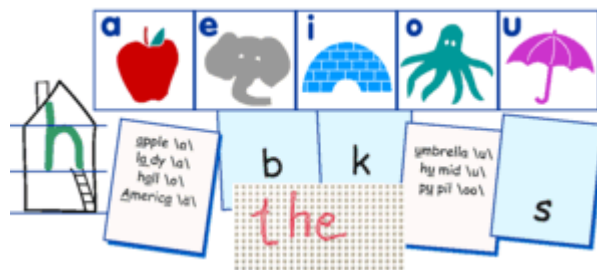
because I can go to the 



Instructions for the teacher: Design pictures for specific words or rules needed in the classroom.
 Use them every time they are going to be pronounced in the class.
 Ask the student to read the paragraph replacing the pictures by oral-words.
 Evaluation: Validate 1 point each hint.

Multisensory Skills Activation

Visual Reminders



Auditory Memory

- Sound/Symbol association
 - listen (hear) the sound and identify its name with symbol
 - listen/hear the sound and identify it with its symbol
 - say key word & sound
 - discriminate sounds



- Syllables
 - listen (hear) syllables in spoken words
 - discriminate number of syllables in spoken words
 - segment words into syllables
 - blend syllables into a word

Tactil Memory

- Tracing the letter with fingers
- Tracing the letter with pen
- Airwriting / Skywriting
- Backwriting
- Making the letter out of plasticine, play-dough, clay or sandpaper
- Rice Box



Kinesthetic Memory

- Feel articulatory (lips/facial) muscles move
- Drawing the letter LARGE on the carpet
- Body language: pantomime, gestures
- Body alphabet
- Sand / crayon writing
- Pantomime, gestures
- pat or tap out syllables
- Songs with movements

