

# Dyslexia for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language

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## Trainer's Booklet

Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty that has an effect not only on literacy skills in students' first language, but also on foreign language learning. In order to ensure that dyslexic students successfully acquire necessary levels of foreign language competence, they need additional support.

Foreign language teachers often lack sufficient understanding of the nature of dyslexia and the difficulties it causes in foreign language learning and are not familiar with the relevant teaching techniques and methods to further the language learning processes of dyslexic students.

Therefore the preparation of teacher training materials for this target group of language learners is both timely and highly needed.

In this Comenius Project, seven partners from Poland, Hungary, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Germany and Austria developed a training course, self-study materials and a Moodle course for pre- and in-service teachers of English as a foreign language in order to raise their awareness of the foreign language learning needs of dyslexic students.

The training materials consist of ten units that cover a variety of theoretical and practical issues. Each unit comprises several tasks, further divided into steps, which acquaint foreign language teachers with a wide repertoire of useful teaching methods, techniques and tools so that the quality and effectiveness of foreign language teaching to students with dyslexia can be enhanced.

The present training course materials consist of a Trainee's Booklet, a Trainer's Booklet as well as a CD with additional materials.

For the self-study materials and information about the DysTEFL project, please visit:  [www.dystefl.eu](http://www.dystefl.eu).

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# Introduction

This course is designed to reflect the latest pedagogical principles in teacher training. Our intention was to develop a course that is built on the model of the teacher as a reflective practitioner (Wallace, 1991), who experiments with new learner-centered teaching methodologies, creatively adapts teaching methods, tasks and techniques to his/her context and then reflects on the outcomes of the learning and teaching processes. In this model, the trainer is neither a model nor a source of information, but a moderator and facilitator who helps to raise the trainees' awareness of the relevant issues, gives possible answers to questions and provides feedback on trainees' ideas and their output produced.

From these underlying principles it follows that our course takes a task-based approach to teacher training, which, as its name suggests, employs tasks to enhance learning and reflection. Therefore the course is not a simple depository of relevant information about dyslexia and language teaching as we believe such resources already exist in the form of books, journal articles and book chapters (e.g. Kormos & Smith, 2012; Nijakowska, 2010; Schneider & Crombie, 2003; Schneider & Evers, 2009). The teacher-training course in this booklet provides hands-on tasks and contributes to raising awareness of the needs of dyslexic students in foreign language classrooms.

Accordingly, each unit within the course follows the pattern of the reflective cycle, in which first trainees draw on their existing experiences, reflect on their current practices, attitudes, preconceptions and the context they work in. This is followed by an input-phase during which new ideas and relevant background information are presented. Next trainees perform a series of tasks evaluating existing tasks and materials, lesson plans etc., designing new instructional materials and aids that are appropriate for their own context, and finally they reflect on what they learnt in the course of the unit. Co-operation among trainees is encouraged through collaborative tasks. Through these tasks trainees are actively encouraged to reflect on their own experiences, attitudes and predispositions and at the same time gain input not only through materials and from the trainer but also from each other.

In language teacher education, the reflective approach is also used in pre-service teacher training with trainees who have limited teaching experience. We believe that in the reflective phase of each unit, trainees can draw on their previous experiences as language learners and they can critically evaluate their existing knowledge and pre-conceptions. Dyslexia is present in nearly every educational setting as the incidence of specific learning differences is approximately 10-15%. Therefore it can be assumed that trainees either know people around them who are dyslexic or have encountered dyslexic children/students in their classrooms. The language teaching methods recommended for teaching dyslexic students are also very similar to general „good practice“ in language teaching and to teaching young learners. This fact also underscores the viability of the reflective approach in our materials.

The materials in this booklet can be used in foreign language teacher education courses on site, including both pre-service and in-service teacher training provided by institutions of higher education (undergraduate and post-graduate levels), teacher-training workshops, summer schools and commercial teacher training courses (certificate- and diploma level courses). The targeted student population with whom the teacher trainees would be working is primary, secondary and young post-secondary language learners. The course materials were planned to give examples of age- and context-appropriate tasks for these learner groups.

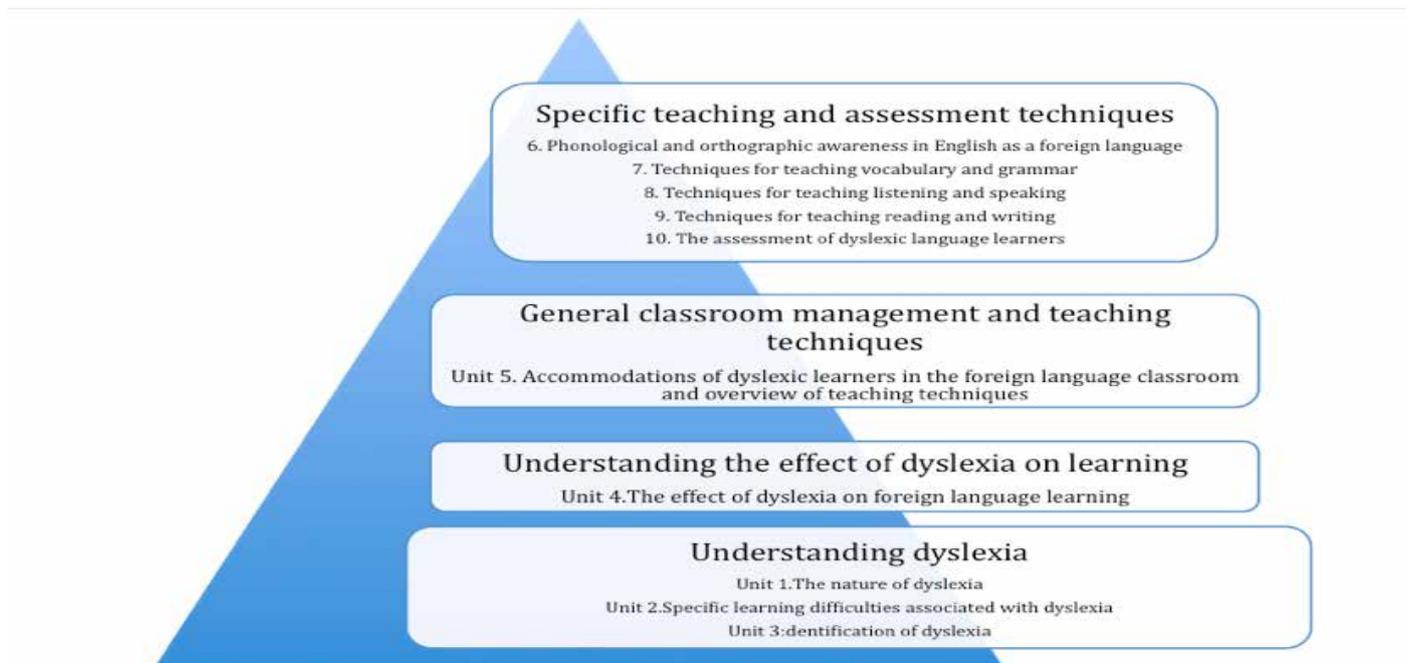
### *The overall content of the course: Theory and practice*

In order to raise the awareness of foreign language teachers of the needs of students with dyslexia when acquiring another language, to form positive attitudes to dyslexic language learners (in some contexts where negative attitudes prevail) and to facilitate the effective teaching of these students, foreign language teachers need both theoretical knowledge regarding dyslexia and need to acquire practical techniques for the classroom. Therefore we believe that successful teaching approaches cannot be developed without first laying the theoretical foundations and promoting the understanding of the nature of dyslexia and associated learning differences. Only by understanding the cognitive, emotional and social issues associated with dyslexia can informed pedagogical decisions be made.

Consequently, the course consists of four main topics (see Figure 1), which are covered in three modules. The first module consists of two topics; the first of which familiarizes teachers with the nature of dyslexia and the associated learning difficulties such as dyspraxia, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and dyscalculia and raises awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of dyslexic individuals. The second topic within the first module helps teachers understand the effect of dyslexia on the cognitive, emotional and social processes of language learning. The second module assists teachers in developing effective teaching approaches and classroom management techniques including the handling of behavioral problems that might be associated with Specific Learning Differences (SpLDs) and the course is concluded with the topic of specific teaching and assessment techniques.

Feedback loops from the second to the first and from the third to the previous two modules are included as specific pedagogical techniques and decisions need to be grounded in the understanding of the nature of SpLDs.

Figure 1. An overview of the content of the course



*The number, sequence and size of modules and time required to complete the course*

The complete course is planned to cover a period of one semester or one term and is designed to be flexible to match academic terms in different European countries. Therefore, the course is planned to consist of 10 units that can be taught over 10 weeks in countries/institutions where a term lasts for 10 weeks but also in 15 weeks in countries/institutions where the typical academic semester consists of 15 weeks.

Each unit is planned to cover a 90-120 minute long face-to-face session and should provide an additional 4 hours of outside classroom study time.

The following units are included, which constitute three modules that are built on each other.

**I. Foundations module**

1. The nature of dyslexia
2. Specific learning difficulties associated with dyslexia
3. Identification of dyslexia
4. The effect of dyslexia on foreign language learning

**II. General teaching principles module**

5. Accommodations of dyslexic learners in the foreign language classroom and overview of teaching techniques

**III. Specific teaching and assessment techniques module**

6. Phonological and orthographic awareness in English as a foreign language
7. Techniques for teaching vocabulary and grammar
8. Techniques for teaching listening and speaking
9. Techniques for teaching reading and writing
10. The assessment of dyslexic language learners

The first six units of the course are logically built on each other, and hence their order is fixed. The last four units, however, can be taught or studied in any order once the first six units were covered.

Each of the units 6-10 can be divided into two sessions to accommodate 15 week long semesters. Units 6-10 include additional materials so that extra units can be formed in a way outlined below. Unit 15 can be a closing session where a final overview is provided and remaining issues are discussed. All the units have optional tasks which allow the adaptation

of the course to form a longer programme. The last unit can also be used for assessment by means of presentations, peer-teaching or portfolio evaluation.

Unit 6. Phonological awareness in English as a foreign language

Unit 7. Orthographic awareness in English as a foreign language

Unit 8. Techniques for teaching vocabulary

Unit 9. Techniques for teaching grammar

Unit 10. Techniques for teaching listening

Unit 11. Techniques for teaching reading

Unit 12. Techniques for teaching writing

Unit 13. Techniques for teaching speaking

Unit 14. The assessment of dyslexic language learners

Unit 15. Review session

We hope that the users of these booklets will find the materials our project team designed useful and enjoyable.

#### References:

Kormos J., & Kontra, H. E. (2008). (Eds.), *Language learners with special needs: An international perspective*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Kormos, J., & Smith, A. M. (2011). *Teaching languages to learners with specific learning difficulties*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Nijakowska, J. (2010). *Dyslexia in the foreign language classroom*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Schneider, E., & Crombie, M. (2003). *Dyslexia and foreign language learning*. London: David Fulton.

Schneider, E., & Evers, T (2009). Linguistic intervention techniques for at-risk English language learners. *Foreign Language Annals*, 42, 55-76.

Wallace, M. J. (1991). *Training foreign language teachers: A reflective approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## UNIT 1 The nature of dyslexia

### Introduction

The aim of this unit is to familiarize trainees with the nature of dyslexia and to raise awareness of different preconceptions and false beliefs about dyslexia. In this unit trainees are also expected to develop an understanding of how the language used to describe dyslexia expresses different conceptualizations of specific learning differences.

### Tasks the trainees will do:

- complete a survey on beliefs about dyslexia
- read an information sheet about dyslexia and learn about the strengths and weaknesses of dyslexic students
- evaluate and reflect on different conceptualizations and definitions of dyslexia
- design an information sheet about dyslexia for a group of colleagues

## Task 1 Awareness raising task

**Duration of the task:** 20-30 minutes

**Preparation:** photocopies of the Dyslexia Perceptions Survey

**Classroom management:** Individual work in the first half of the task and group-work task for 3-4 participants maximum in the second half of the task, but the second half of the task is also suitable for pairwork. It is advised that trainees working in different context co-operate in this task.

### Task description

**STEP 1** Trainees work individually and complete the Dyslexia Perceptions Survey. The survey contains items that include commonly known knowledge about dyslexia and some misconceptions. The aim of the survey is to make trainees aware of their own preconceptions and activate existing knowledge about dyslexia.

**STEP 2** Trainees compare their answers in groups and discuss in what ways they are similar or different. Ask them to select a spokesperson who is going to summarize the main points of the discussion to the whole group. Do not yet give feedback on the ideas and issues, as they will read about these issues in Task 2.

### Notes

The Dyslexia Perception Survey aims to shed light on some of the common misconceptions about dyslexia:

- It is true that boys are more frequently identified having dyslexia, but recent research suggests that girls often remain unidentified because they develop successful coping strategies.
- Dyslexia is not a visual perception problem (see the video and the reading for Task 2)
- Children do not grow out of dyslexia (see the video and the reading for Task 2)
- Dyslexic individuals might develop successful reading strategies, and therefore dyslexia might not always surface as a reading difficulty.
- Dyslexia can be inherited (see the video and the reading for Task 2).
- As dyslexia is of genetic origin, it is unrelated to social status. It is true though that dyslexia can have negative impact on employability, which might then have socio-economic consequences for the individual and his/her family.

### Alternatives:

At the end of the discussion section, trainees can watch this video

( <http://www.dystalk.com/talks/31-what-is-dyslexia>), which addresses most of the questions included in the survey.

**Task 2** Reading and discussing dyslexia

**Duration of the task:** 30-40 minutes

**Preparation:** photocopies of Dyslexia factsheet of the International Dyslexia Association (available from <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/DyslexiaBasicsREVMay2012.pdf>)

**Classroom management:** Individual work in the first half of the task and group-work task for 3-4 participants maximum in the second half of the task, but the second half of the task is also suitable for pairwork. It is advised that trainees working in different context co-operate in this task.

**Task description****STEP 1**

Trainees work individually and read the Dyslexia factsheet of the International Dyslexia Association (available from <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/DyslexiaBasicsREVMay2012.pdf>). They compare their answers to the Dyslexia Perceptions Survey with the information provided in this text. Trainees are asked to reflect on what they learned from this brief text and think about what else they would like to know about dyslexia.

**STEP 2**

In groups trainees discuss how the information they gained from this text might be useful for their teaching and educational context. Their task is also to compile a list of questions about the nature of dyslexia. Once trainees are finished, ask them to report back briefly about their discussion and give them an opportunity to ask their questions.

The issues trainees might discuss include preconceptions about dyslexia, attitudes to learning differences in their context, issues related to early identification and educational adjustments.

**Alternatives:**

If you find the text too long, you can give trainees excerpts from the text. Alternatively you can also watch this very useful talk on the nature of dyslexia instead of giving trainees a reading.

<http://www.dystalk.com/talks/31-what-is-dyslexia>. You can set Frith, U (1999). Paradoxes in the definition of dyslexia. *Dyslexia*, 5, 192-214 as home reading. This is a scientific, but highly accessible article on the nature of dyslexia. Another an informative article written by a group of experts can also be recommended to the trainees (<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/14907/>)

### Task 3 Comparing definitions of dyslexia

**Duration of the task:** 20-30 minutes

**Preparation:** photocopies of the definitions of dyslexia

**Classroom management:** Individual work in the first half of the task and group-work task for 3-4 participants maximum in the second half of the task, but the second half of the task is also suitable for pairwork. It is advised that trainees working in different context co-operate in this task.

#### Task description

**STEP 1** Trainees work individually and note down their personal definition of dyslexia. They also consider how their educational, social and cultural context might influence their personal definition.

**STEP 2** Hand out the definitions of dyslexia and ask trainees to read these definitions of dyslexia and compare them with their own definitions.

**STEP 3** Trainees work in groups and discuss their personal definition of dyslexia and how it differs from various international definitions and critically evaluate the definitions of dyslexia. Ask the groups to select a spokesperson who would report back to the whole class. In the whole class discussion, highlight the main themes trainees mention.

#### Notes:

You might include the following points in your feedback to the trainees:

- the definitions of dyslexia depend on the purpose for which the definition is used
  - educational definitions of dyslexia use different terminology and seem to conceptualize dyslexia differently from medical definitions (see e.g. the definition of the International Classification of Disorders)
  - the way we use language and we label various concepts influences how we think about them and expresses our attitudes about these constructs (e.g. the terms used for dyslexia in different languages)
  - explain the evolution of the views of dyslexia from a medical condition to a learning difference and what this means in terms of educational adjustments and the concepts of integration and inclusion
- most definitions have four layers: biological (brain and neurological functioning, cognitive (mental processing and learning mechanisms), behavioural (reading and spelling problems) and environmental (socio-economic and instructional factors)

#### Alternatives

You can include definitions of dyslexia from your own country and from other countries the trainees are from and discuss these together with the international definitions.

**Task 4** Writing an information sheet

**Duration of the task:** 30-40 minutes

**Preparation:** no extra material required

**Classroom management:** Group-work task for 3-4 participants maximum, but also suitable for pairwork. It is advised that trainees working in similar context co-operate in this task.

**Task description**

In this task trainees work in small groups and write a brief information sheet about the characteristics and difficulties of dyslexic students in general academic domains for a group of teachers in their school. The audience for the information sheet is a group of colleagues in the trainee's school. The length of the information sheet should be approximately 200-300 words.

**Model answer for the information sheet****INFORMATION SHEET FOR TEACHERS**

Dyslexia is a type of specific learning difficulty, which primarily manifests itself in difficulties with reading and spelling. These difficulties are often unexpected as the students might do well in other subjects and they might have received effective classroom instruction on literacy skills. Today most researchers claim that the main reason for dyslexic difficulties is reduced phonological awareness, that is, the ability to differentiate different sounds and to learn to associate sounds with letters. Problems caused by dyslexia, however, are not only limited to reading and spelling. Dyslexic individuals often have problems sustaining their attention for a long time, automatizing new knowledge and with gross and fine motor skills. They might, however, be exceptionally creative in solving different kinds of problems and have good visual skills and abilities.

Even if dyslexic students have managed to overcome their literacy problems, their overall learning difference is not likely to disappear and is going to affect them all through their lives. Dyslexia is dimensional and not an all or nothing state. Dyslexic difficulties might be of different degrees of severity and dyslexia might be associated with a variety of other learning differences, which means that dyslexic individuals might display very different strength and weaknesses.

**Alternatives**

This task can be set for homework. Trainees can also design a poster rather than an information sheet. The audience of the information sheet can be parents. Different groups of trainees might prepare an information sheet for different audiences.

**Teaching tips**

Ask trainees to pay attention to clear and comprehensible language and their use of terminology. The information sheet should contain a description of the strengths of dyslexic students and should not only focus on weaknesses.

## List of resources

Extra resources recommended in addition to the ones listed in the trainee's booklet.

### For Task 2

 Shaywitz, S. (2003) *Overcoming dyslexia: A new and complete science-based program for reading problems at any level*. New York: Alfred Knopf.

 Vellutino, F. R., Fletcher, J. M., Snowling, M. J., and Scanlon, D. M. (2004). Specific reading disability (dyslexia): What have we learned in the past four decades? *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 45, 2–40.

### For Task 3

 Chanock, K. (2007). How do we not communicate about dyslexia? – The discourses that distance scientists, disabilities staff, ALL advisers, students, and lecturers from one another'. *Journal of Academic Language and Learning*, 1, 33-43.

 Corbett, J. (1996). *Badmouthing: the language of special needs*. London: Falmer Press.

**UNIT 2****Specific Learning Difficulties Associated with Dyslexia****Introduction**

The aim of this unit is to extend the trainees' knowledge of specific learning differences (SpLDs) to include some of the most commonly co-occurring SpLDs: dyspraxia, dyscalculia, ADHD and Asperger's Syndrome. In this unit trainees are also expected to develop an understanding of how these SpLDs can affect language learning, and to move towards considering how their practice could be adapted to accommodate learners who have SpLDs.

**Tasks the trainees will do:**

- take part in an experiential activity to explore how it might feel to have a SpLD
- read about the nature of the co-occurring SpLDs and the impact they have on language learning
- produce a visual representation of the overlaps and differences between these SpLDs
- consider how best to accommodate these SpLDs in the language learning classroom
- reflect on previous experiences of working with learners who may have had SpLDs

**Task 1** Experiential learning task

The aim of this activity is for the trainees to experience how it feels to have to perform a task when they are disadvantaged physically by using their weaker writing hand, and challenged cognitively by having to make changes to the text as they copy. It is interesting to notice the different strategies that people employ when under pressure.

**Duration of the task:** 20 minutes

**Preparation:** A5 paper (1 piece per learner - in a range of different colours if possible); Text for the trainees to copy – either to project on the board or otherwise show to the class (Unit 2 Appendix 1). The text is reproduced below.

**Classroom management:** Learners work individually at first, then compare their experiences in small groups of 3 or 4. Each group should appoint a speaker to feed back to the rest of the class.

**Task description**

**STEP 1** As you start passing round the A5 paper, give the trainees these instructions:

“Take some paper as it comes round.  
If it is blue, turn it round so it is landscape.  
Otherwise turn it so it is portrait.  
Pick up your pen or pencil in the hand that you don’t normally write with.  
If you are writing with a black pen stand up.  
If you are using a pencil, push your sleeves up.  
Now I’m going to show you a short text, and I will give you 3 minutes to copy it down.  
BUT whenever you want to write an ‘e’ please write a cross instead, like a plus sign.  
Instead of ‘a’ please write a question mark and instead of ‘i’ please write an equal sign.  
Now work carefully and copy down the text making the changes exactly as I have described.”

Alternatively, start showing the movie (Unit 2 Appendix 2) or PowerPoint (Unit 2 Appendix 3) associated with this task.

### Teaching tips:

There may be some questions at this point, as trainees are overwhelmed with the number of instructions (this is part of the experience). Answer the questions and clarify the instructions, and allow time for everybody to settle. Then remind them that *they are writing with their weaker hand* and show the text to be copied (Unit 2 Appendix 1) which is reproduced below. Encourage the learners to start copying, reminding them to make the changes to the letters as mentioned before.

PLEASE COPY THIS:

Some people are light or colour sensitive. Bright sunlight or florescent lights may bother them. Black print on shiny white paper may be uncomfortable and whiteboards may be too shiny. Pattern glare may also be a problem. It may be helpful to have:

- coloured paper for writing,
- coloured overlays for reading,
- tinted lenses in glasses for both reading and writing.

The colours and brightness on computer screens can be adjusted to suit individuals.

Acknowledge anyone who finishes within 3 minutes, to make the rest of the class aware that someone has accomplished the task. After 3 minutes stop them all and put them into groups of 3 or 4 to compare their work.

### STEP 2

Trainees compare their texts in small groups and discuss how they felt as they were doing the task. They should compare and list the strategies that they used to accomplish the task. Common strategies include:

- Copying from a neighbour;
- Writing it out normally then going back and making the changes needed;
- Working really slowly and carefully, but not completing the task;
- Giving up because it just seems too hard.

Ask them to select one group member to feed back their strategies to the rest of the class, then elicit one strategy from each group until they have all been explored.

If the trainees are keen to see the target text, you could show them the model answer which is reproduced here:

Some people are light or colour sensitive. Bright sunlight or fluorescent lights may bother them. Black print on shiny white paper may be uncomfortable and whiteboards may be too shiny. Pattern glare may also be a problem. It may be helpful to have:

- coloured paper for writing,
- coloured overlays for reading,
- tinted lenses in glasses for both reading and writing.

The colours and brightness on computer screens can be adjusted to suit individuals.

**Alternatives:**

If you know of any participants who do have a SpLD, and they are willing to share their educational experiences with the group, you may judge whether you could draw on this resource to further illustrate the point.

## Task 2 Finding out about SpLDs

**Duration of the task:** 20 minutes

**Preparation:** arrange access to (or print copies of) the page ‘What are Specific Learning Difficulties?’ on the British Dyslexia Association website (available from:

 <http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/about-dyslexia/schools-colleges-and-universities/what-are-specific-learning-difficulties.html>)

**Classroom management:** Individual work in the first half of the task and pair-work in the second half of the task. It is advised that trainees working in different contexts co-operate in this task.

**Task description****STEP 1**

Trainees work individually and read the page on the British Dyslexia Association website called ‘What are Specific Learning Difficulties?’ (Available from:

 <http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/about-dyslexia/schools-colleges-and-universities/what-are-specific-learning-difficulties.html>)

Trainees are paired up in order to discuss what they have just read about the most commonly co-occurring SpLDs. They should consider the following questions:

- What are the main distinguishing features of the SpLDs?
- Where are the overlaps between the SpLDs?
- How easy does it seem to differentiate between the SpLDs mentioned here?

These questions could be projected or written up on the board for their reference.

**Alternatives:**

Students could be directed to some very useful and insightful videos on the internet, including Professor Amanda Kirby explaining co-occurring SpLDs:  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXhO3-S1L-o>

Dyspraxia:

‘What is Dyspraxia?’  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s83zYv-Dbwc>

Amanda Kirby on the main characteristics of dyspraxia.

ADHD:

‘What is ADHD?’  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPctgWW3ki4>

This is a very informative factual short video.

‘How ADHD feels’  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UeozSycgbNo&feature=fvwrel> – ‘JubaJer’ shares his personal experiences of living with ADHD and OCD – this video offers a real insight into the world of the learner with SpLD.

Asperger’s Syndrome:

‘Does Your Child Have Asperger’s Syndrome?’  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMlqlogZ2Yw>

A short informative video covering the main characteristics of Asperger’s Syndrome (from the American Asperger’s Society).

Dyscalculia:

‘What is dyscalculia?’  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxloGUF2Tk>

Jane Emerson discusses the characteristics that indicate dyscalculia.

For homework the trainees can also read  Kormos & Smith (2012) Chapter 3: ‘Associated Learning Differences’ (pp. 41-57).

### Task 3 Making a visual representation of the commonly co-occurring SpLDs

**Duration of the task:** 30 minutes

**Preparation:** A supply of A3 paper and coloured pens.

**Classroom management:** Trainees work with their partner from Task 2 to begin with, and then join up with another pair to refine their ideas.

#### Task description

**STEP 1** Trainees work with a partner and produce a chart or diagram that represents their understanding of the key characteristics of the different SpLDS, as well as the shared characteristics. They may need some encouragement to start with, and thinking in terms of a Venn diagram may be a familiar concept to many trainees (overlapping circles showing which categories items belong to). However, they may decide to use another kind of chart, such as a table or mind-map, or even a 3D model if they have the resources to hand (e.g. cardboard / play dough) .

**STEP 2** Pairs are joined into 4s to share their initial thoughts about the diagram. They should explain the thinking behind their diagrams, and consider how they are similar and/or different from each others.

### Notes

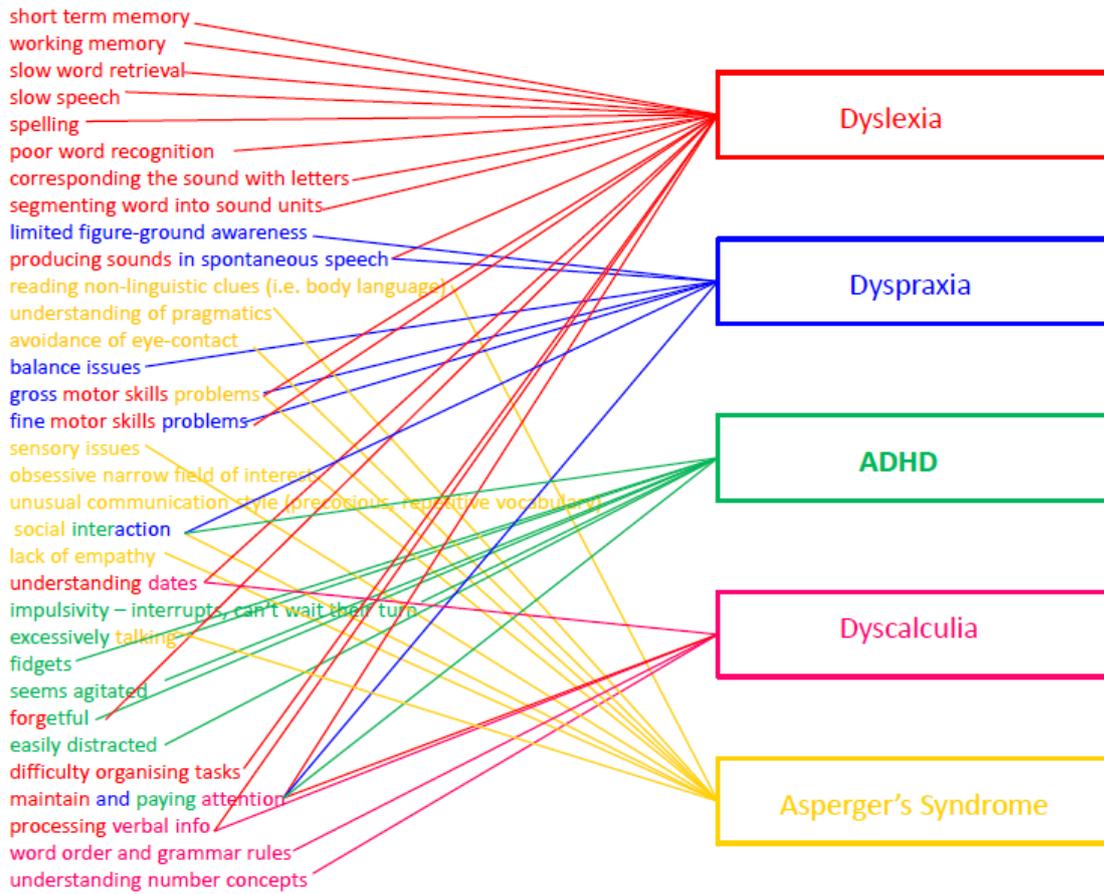
If any pair is really struggling to represent the information in a visual format, you might let them have a look at the following model answers:

Here is one possible solution (taken from:  ELT well (2012) *Specific Learning Differences*. Available at:

 <http://www.eltwell.co.uk/specific-learning-differences-splds.html>).

Specific Learning Difference	Particular characteristics	Shared characteristics
<b>Dyslexia</b>	Difficulties with information processing, particularly phonological information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ good and bad days</li> <li>▪ difficulty processing sensory input (visual, auditory or physical)</li> <li>▪ weak short term and/or working memory</li> <li>▪ lack of time awareness and management</li> <li>▪ hypersensitivity to environmental factors</li> <li>▪ difficulties with sequencing</li> <li>▪ difficulty in maintaining focus and especially in changing focus (from board to book / TV to magazine)</li> <li>▪ difficulty with regulating pitch/volume/pace when speaking</li> <li>▪ lack of rhythm and /or balance</li> <li>▪ difficulties with listening, especially in groups</li> <li>▪ difficulties with turn-taking</li> <li>▪ avoiding new or unpredictable situations</li> <li>▪ difficulty with metaphoric language</li> <li>▪ difficulty sleeping</li> <li>▪ low self-esteem</li> </ul>
<b>Dyspraxia</b>	Problems with visuo-spatial awareness, sequencing of movements.	
<b>AD(H)D</b>	Impulsivity, lack of sustained concentration on one thing.	
<b>Asperger's Syndrome</b>	Difficulties with social interaction.	
<b>Dyscalculia</b>	Difficulties with numerical concepts: Relative size /magnitude and time scales.	

Here is another suggestion, made by Hannah Bienge, who was a participant on the course in December 2012:



These should provide some inspiration, but they should still come up with their own.

**Task 4 Accommodating language learners with SpLDs**

**Duration of the task:** 30 minutes

**Preparation:** copies of the grid (Unit 2 Appenix 4– reproduced below):

SpLD	Challenges for language development			Possible solutions
	reading & writing	listening & speaking	vocabulary & grammar	
Dyslexia				
Dyspraxia				
AD(H)D				
Asperger's Syndrome				

**Classroom management:** The class needs to be divided into 3 groups to start with, each one to focus on one aspect of language development (reading & writing / listening & speaking / vocabulary & grammar). After about 10 minutes, regroup the trainees into 3s (one from each group) to share their initial ideas and complete the grid.

### Task description

In this task the trainees work in small groups and look at challenges in different areas of language learning. They should discuss how the various SpLDS might impact on a learner's progress in developing speaking and listening / reading and writing / vocabulary and grammar proficiency. They should also try to come up with classroom accommodations and strategies that would mitigate the challenges.

### Teaching tips

Ask trainees to think about the characteristics of the SpLDS they have been discussing and how they may impact on the learners in their classes. It may be helpful for them to think about an actual activity they have run in their class recently, and to think about one SpLD at a time, whilst remembering that there is a great deal of overlap.

There is a model answer reproduced below, for trainees to consider at home, in the light of their class discussions. Task 4 Model answer (Unit 2 Appendix 5):

SpLD	Challenges for language development			Possible solutions
	reading & writing	listening & speaking	vocabulary & grammar	
Dyslexia	Matching graphemes to phonemes accurately in decoding and encoding. Organizing ideas logically.	Finding the right word, pronouncing long words accurately. Following the thread of long utterances.	Remembering new words and structures; making productive connections between new and known vocabulary.	Developing a personal dictionary for commonly needed words. Working explicitly on phoneme-grapheme matching in English. Developing memory techniques. Recycling structures and vocabulary - explicit discussion of the use of structures already met.
Dyspraxia	Producing legible script, especially if it is a second script. Remembering the sequence of events in narratives.	Articulating sounds clearly, organizing ideas coherently before speaking.	Sequencing words correctly in the sentence. Expressing time or spatial relationships in narratives.	Additional practice of letter formation, and particularly of letter joining, if appropriate. Use of triangular pencils / pen grips to facilitate a good hand position. Additional practice in articulating problem sounds, and particularly in joining sounds together smoothly. Visual aids to help with planning narratives to ensure place and time are clear.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>AD(H)D</b></p>	<p>Concentrating on longer texts. Remembering all the ideas that emerge when starting to write.</p>	<p>Taking turns, listening carefully to other people. Speaking slowly and clearly.</p>	<p>Maintaining accuracy as well as speed in language use – developing a self-monitor to check what has been said or written.</p>	<p>Breaking texts into small chunks. Making it clear whose turn it is to speak in discussions, perhaps by use of a physical ‘speaker’s token’ (any object can be used: only the holder may speak and then pass it on).</p> <p>Developing metacognitive strategies for checking work and articulating rules that have been learnt and are part of the learner’s procedural knowledge.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Asperger’s Syndrome</b></p>	<p>Understanding overly descriptive or metaphorical language.</p>	<p>Difficulty picking up on paralinguistic cues, such as intonation, facial expressions and body language.</p>	<p>Finding it hard to accept irregularities, and exceptions to rules that have no real explanations.</p>	<p>Explicit instruction in noticing and using paralinguistic cues such as volume, intonation and pace – exploring how they can change meaning.</p> <p>Exploring language from a historical perspective, to account for apparently irrational usage.</p> <p>Providing explanations of poetic or metaphorical use of common terms.</p>

**Task 5 Reflection on Learning**

**Duration of the task:** 10 minutes

**Preparation:** no material required

**Classroom management:** Trainees work individually.

**Task description**

Trainees have a few minutes to think about any students they may have already taught (or who they were at school with) who exhibited any of the characteristics that have been highlighted here. They should be encouraged to consider the following questions:

- What was your initial reaction to these students?
- How did their peers respond to them?
- What effect might these responses have had on the learners?
- Is there anything you could have done differently, knowing what you now know?

They may wish to make a note of their responses, or they may come up with some questions that they would like to know the answers to.

**Alternatives:**

This could be set as homework, with trainees asked to bring a question or an experience to share to the next session.

**List of resources**

Extra resources recommended in addition to the ones listed in the trainee's booklet

 Grant, D. (2005). *That's the way I think: Dyslexia, dyspraxia and ADHD explained*.

London: Routledge. Chapter 1: 'Dyslexia, dyspraxia and ADHD: the common ground,' pp. 7-28.

This book is written from an education practitioner's viewpoint and provides a broad overview of many issues associated with SpLDs that are rarely discussed in detail elsewhere. The first chapter highlights the overlaps between the three SpLDs in the title and discusses in detail how they can affect learning.

 Kirby, A. and Kaplan B. J. (2003). *Specific learning difficulties*. Oxford: Health Press.

This booklet provides very brief practical overviews of each of the SpLDs. This text is written for medical practitioners primarily, but contains accessible information and suggestions for further sources of information.



## UNIT 3 Identification of dyslexia

### Introduction

The aim of this unit is to familiarize the trainees with ways of identifying dyslexia and its common signs observed among dyslexic learners.

### Tasks the trainees will do:

- brainstorm about possible signs of dyslexia
- read about early identification and the signs of dyslexia
- prepare a list to illustrate the steps undertaken in the diagnostic procedure in their country
- design an observation sheet about signs of dyslexia for their colleagues
- write a teacher diary entry

**Task 1** Awareness raising task

**Duration of the task:** 20-30 minutes

**Preparation:** photocopies of teacher diary entries for each group of 3 or 4 for Step 1. (see Unit 3 Appendix 1).

**Classroom management:** Group work in the first part of the task (3 or 4 participants per group). Individual work and group-work in the second part of the task.

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Trainees work in groups of three or four. They relate back to what they learnt about the nature of dyslexia in Unit 1 and to their experience. Ask the trainees to brainstorm possible signs of dyslexia that can be identified in a dyslexic learner. The aim of this part is to raise the trainees awareness about identifying dyslexia and the difficulties their students have.

**STEP 2** Trainees work individually. They read extracts from teacher diaries and compare the signs described in the extracts with the ideas they collected in the brainstorming session in Step 1.

**STEP 3** Ask the trainees to discuss the results in their groups. They select a spokesperson to report the outcome of their discussion. Do not give feedback about their ideas at this point as the trainees will read about signs of dyslexia in Task 2.

**Alternatives:**

At the end of Step 2, trainees can watch this video diary in which people of different age discuss their problems and difficulties in learning.

 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCfoJOhPV64&feature=related>

Ask the trainees to take notes of the following:

- a. Which manifestations of dyslexia did these students talk about?
- b. What were they good at?

**Task 2** Diagnosis of dyslexia in national context

**Duration of the task:** 30-40 minutes

**Preparation:** Before this task, students need to search for information on how dyslexic learners are formally identified and diagnosed in their country. They need to find legal documents or ministerial regulations that describe diagnostic procedures.

**Classroom management:** Trainees work individually, at home, in the first part of the task. In the second part of the task, in class, trainees work in groups of 3 or 4.

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Trainees work at home and search the Internet to look for information on how dyslexic learners are formally identified in their country. The following questions should be considered:

- What is the age of students when a formal diagnosis takes place?
- Where does the diagnosis take place? At which institutions?
- What specialists are involved in the diagnostic procedure?
- What are the specific steps undertaken in the diagnostic procedure?
- What kind of a document is prepared afterwards?
- What adjustments are offered at school to dyslexic students once dyslexia is formally identified? (see Unit 5 for details about adjustments).

**STEP 2** In class, students work in groups of three or four. They share the information they found and discuss how dyslexia is formally diagnosed in their country. Trainees can use questions in Step 1 to help them. They should refer to legal documents such as ministerial regulations or other formal procedures.

**STEP 3** Trainees work individually. They write a list that illustrates the steps undertaken in the diagnostic procedure in their country. They use the information from Step 1.

**Model answer:**

## Step 1

Dyslexia diagnostic procedure in Poland (see information about diagnostic procedures in selected European countries in Unit 3 Appendix 3)

1. There is screening in kindergarten and children at – risk of dyslexia are identified at this time.
2. The earliest time dyslexia can be diagnosed is no earlier than at the end of the third grade of Primary School and no later than by the end of Primary School.
3. Diagnosis takes place at the pedagogical – psychological dispensary.
4. Formal assessment is done by a group of specialists including a psychologist, school counselor, speech therapist, often a neurologist, teachers and parents also contribute with additional background information.
5. In the diagnostic procedure some background information is collected about the learner’s educational history and personal situation, including developmental milestones. A battery of tests is used to determine the level of intellectual development, perceptual processes – motor skills, auditory and visual memory and other cognitive functions, additionally the analysis of child’s writing as well as graphic level of writing.
6. A written report/opinion issued by the pedagogical –psychological dispensary on the basis of which teachers adjust and accommodate the requirements to fit the specific needs and learning abilities of a particular student.
7. Several ministerial regulations were introduced in Poland in 2011 which clarify the conditions and ways of assessing, classifying and promoting students as well as conducting external examinations. Teachers are obliged to individualize their work with SEN students and to accommodate educational requirements toward individual developmental and educational needs and psycho-physical abilities of all SEN students who were granted psychological-pedagogical help. Supportive measures may take the form of therapeutic classes, compensatory, remedial classes.

**Task 3** Reading and discussing identification and signs of dyslexia

**Duration of the task:** 30-40 minutes

**Preparation:** photocopies of texts:

a. Is my child dyslexic by the International Dyslexia Association

Available from:  <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/IsMyChildDyslexic.pdf>.

b. How to identify dyslexia from British Dyslexia Association. Available from:

 <http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/files/DFS%20pack%20English.pdf> : a chapter: How to Identify Dyslexia.

**Classroom management:** Trainees work individually for the first part of the task reading one of the three texts provided. In the second part of the task trainees work in groups of 3 where each member read a different text in the first part of the task so they can share ideas (jigsaw reading).

**Task description****STEP 1**

Trainees work individually reading one of the texts about the signs of dyslexia. Ask the trainees to find out what the characteristic signs observable in groups of students of different age groups are.

You may ask the trainees to think about the following:

- How important is early identification of dyslexia?
- How do the signs differ among learners of different age groups?
- How might the information be useful for your teaching context?

**STEP 2**

Trainees work in groups of 3. Each member of the group read a different text and now their task is to discuss and compare signs of dyslexia observed in different age groups of dyslexic learners and to identify patterns of signs that may prevail and those that change. To summarize, ask the trainees to present briefly the results of their discussion and to reflect on how the information might be useful for their teaching context.

**Optional step:**

As an alternative you can ask the trainees to watch a talk by prof. Amanda Kirby who discusses what parents should look out for if their child has difficulties learning to read and write:

 <http://www.dystalk.com/talks/107-signs-of-dyslexia-and-who-to-see>

or to watch short video recordings where a teacher and a dyslexic learner share their experience:

 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOdZC5iBudM&feature=related>

 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&feature=endscreen&v=IEpBujdee8M>

**Homework**

You can set the following texts as home reading:

a. by Reid, G. 'Dyslexia identification and assessment – issues and perspectives'.

Available from:  <http://www.fss.is/media/namid/radstefna/Gavin1.pdf>

b. by Augur, J. 'Better future. A guide to the early recognition of dyslexia'.

Available from:  <http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/files/Early%20Help%20Better%20Future.pdf>

c. a text where examples of how dyslexics might see the text and also dyslexia indicators are presented.

Available from:  <http://www.etni.org.il/etnnews/inter2d.htm>

## Task 4

## Applying the knowledge about the signs of dyslexia – preparing an observation sheet

**Duration of the task:** 30 minutes

**Preparation:** notes from Task 3.

**Classroom management:** Trainees work in pairs or groups of three. It is advised that trainees working in similar context co-operate in this task.

**Task description****STEP 1**

Ask the trainees to prepare an observation sheet of signs of dyslexia for a chosen group of learners (younger learners, teenagers, adult learners). Their task is to refer to areas such as: reading, spelling, writing and other: memory problems etc. The observation sheet is meant for EFL teachers, their colleagues, who might use it to try and identify signs of dyslexia in their learners.

**Model answer** (see Unit 3 Appendix 4)

**STEP 2**

Ask the trainees to visit a class in a school they know and use their observation sheet to observe learners and note down the signs of dyslexia. The notes they take could be used to complete Task 5.

**Optional step**

This task can be set for homework. Trainees can also write an information sheet for parents where they describe the signs of dyslexia identified in a dyslexic learner. Different groups of trainees might prepare an information sheet for different audiences.

**Task 5** Final reflection task

**Duration of the task:** 30-40 minutes

**Preparation:** no special materials required; observation sheet prepared by trainees in Task 4.

**Classroom management:** Trainees work individually but it is also suitable for pairwork. For pairwork, it is advised that trainees working in similar context co-operate in this task.

**Task description**

In this task trainees work individually or with a partner and write a teacher diary entry of a hypothetical/real dyslexic learner. In the diary entry they describe his/her difficulties experienced in school. Ask trainees to refer to their own experience or to the observation sheet prepared in Task 4. The audience for this task can be their colleagues or parents (for a model answer see diary entries in Task 1).

## List of resources

Teacher diary entries.

Available from:  <http://www.dyslexia-teacher.com/t71.html>

The video diary of dyslexic students sharing their problems. Available from:

 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCfoJOhPV64&feature=related>

Common characteristics of dyslexia.

Available from:  <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/IsMyChildDyslexic.pdf>

How to identify dyslexia. Available from: British Dyslexia Association

 <http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/files/DFS%20pack%20English.pdf>

Identification of dyslexia. Available from:

 <http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/files/Early%20Help%20Better%20Future.pdf>

 <http://www.fss.is/media/namid/radstefna/Gavin1.pdf>

 <http://www.etni.org.il/etnine/inter2d.htm>

A talk by Amanda Kirby about what parents should look out for if their child has difficulties learning to read and write.

Available from:  <http://www.dystalk.com/talks/107-signs-of-dyslexia-and-who-to-see>

Short videos about the signs of dyslexia described by a teacher and by a dyslexic individual.

Available from:  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOdZC5iBudM&feature=related>

 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&feature=endscreen&v=IEpBujdee8M>

### Recommended extra resources:

 Kormos, J., & Smith, A. M. (2012). *Teaching languages to learners with specific learning difficulties*.

Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. Chapter 5.

(The fifth chapter of this teachers' handbook discusses the issues relating to identification and assessment of dyslexia. It also provides information on disclosing the information to students, family, class teachers and external bodies.)

 Nijakowska, J. (2010). *Dyslexia in the foreign language classroom*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. Chapter 4.

(This chapter of the monograph discusses identification of dyslexia with particular indicators described and discussed.)



**UNIT 4****The effects of dyslexia on foreign language learning****Introduction**

The aim of this unit is to familiarize the trainees with the effects of dyslexia on foreign language learning. The trainees will also find out how important native language skills are in the process of learning a foreign language and they will become familiar with the types of difficulties that dyslexic students encounter in learning a foreign language.

**Tasks the trainees will do:**

- read and discuss if it is possible for dyslexic learners to learn foreign languages
- read about Linguistic Coding Difference Hypothesis
- complete a matching activity to find out about the areas of difficulties dyslexic learners might experience in learning a foreign language read about early identification and the signs of dyslexia
- prepare a set of questions for an interview with a dyslexic learner
- interview a dyslexic learner
- write a report to describe the dyslexic learner's experience and suggest ways to overcome the difficulties

## Task 1 Modern foreign languages and dyslexia

**Duration of the task:** 20-30 minutes

**Preparation:** Photocopies of M. Crombie's article.

Available from:  <http://www.languageswithoutlimits.co.uk/resources/Dxa1.pdf>

**Classroom management:** Pair work in the first part of the task. Individual work in the second part of the task.

### Task description

**STEP 1** Trainees work in pairs. They refer back to what they learnt about the nature of dyslexia in Unit 1 and about the signs of dyslexia in Unit 3. Ask the trainees to try to answer the following questions:

- Should students with specific learning differences learn foreign languages? Explain why/why not.
- Will their foreign language learning difficulties resemble the problems they encounter in their native language or will they be different?

Ask the trainees to write their ideas down in a form of a short note.

The aim of this part is to raise the trainees' awareness about the possibility of dyslexic learners learning modern foreign languages.

**STEP 2** Trainees work individually. They read the following text and check their answers:  
Margaret Crombie's article:  <http://www.languageswithoutlimits.co.uk/resources/Dxa1.pdf>

**STEP 3** Trainees work individually. Ask the trainees read through their note from Step 1 and check their ideas against the information they found in the text. Ask the trainees to add any additional information to complete the notes.

### Alternatives:

For additional information the trainees may read:

“Can all children benefit from foreign language learning?” extract from:  McColl, H. (2000). *Modern languages for all*. London: David Fulton Publishers. pp 5-10

Available from:  <http://www.languageswithoutlimits.co.uk/resources/Extract1.pdf>

**Task 2** Input task. Reading about the Linguistic Coding Differences Hypothesis – LCDH

**Duration of the task:** 30-40 minutes

**Preparation:** photocopy of an article or access to the website with an article by  Robin L. Schwarz (1997)

*Learning Disabilities and Foreign Language Learning*

Available from:  <http://www.ldonline.org/article/6065> fragment: What causes the difficulties?

PowerPoint presentation about Linguistic Coding Differences Hypothesis ( see Unit 4 Appendix 1).

**Classroom management:** Pair work in the first part of the task. Individual work in the second part of the task.

**Task description****STEP 1**

Trainees work individually and read the fragment of the following article:

 Robin L. Schwarz (1997) *Learning Disabilities and Foreign Language Learning*

Available from:  <http://www.ldonline.org/article/6065> fragment : What causes the difficulties?

**STEP 2**

Trainees work in groups of 3 or 4. Ask them to discuss answers to the following questions:

- What are the causes of foreign language learning difficulties in dyslexic learners?
- What does the Linguistic Coding Differences Hypothesis explain?
- Is there a phenomenon of Foreign Language Learning Difficulty? What does the phenomenon describe?

**STEP 3**

Trainees stay in groups. It is advised that they cooperate with trainees who work in a similar teaching context. Ask the trainees to watch the PowerPoint presentation (see Unit 4 Appendix 1) and check their answers to questions in Step 2. Ask the trainees to discuss and share ideas whether their dyslexic learners have difficulties in their native language learning and if these are exhibited in their foreign language study.

### Task 3 Learning about the areas of difficulties in foreign language learning

**Duration of the task:** 30-40 minutes

**Preparation:** photocopy of the diagram Unit 4 Appendix 2  
the matching activity cards (cut out) Unit 4 Appendix 3

**Classroom management:** Pair work.

#### Task description

**STEP 1** Ask the trainees to discuss and brainstorm about the possible areas of difficulties that dyslexic learners may encounter while learning foreign languages. Ask the trainees to put their ideas in a diagram.

**STEP 2** Ask the trainees to present their ideas to another pair of trainees and to compare and discuss similarities and differences between their diagrams.

**STEP 3** Ask the trainees to continue working with a partner. Together, they read fragments from the article by  L. Ganschow and E. Schneider: 'Assisting students with foreign language learning difficulties in school'  <http://www.ldonline.org/article/22725/> fragments:

- *Who may have difficulty successfully fulfilling a foreign language requirement in school?*
- *What do research findings indicate about foreign language study and at-risk students?*

and find out about more specific types of difficulties that dyslexic learners experience in modern foreign language study. Ask the trainees to add ideas from the text to their diagrams.

#### Alternatives:

For homework trainees can:

Complete the matching activity in which they match the area of difficulty with the detailed description of the problems. Cut up the matching activity cards and ask the trainees to complete the task by pasting the pairs of cards onto a piece of paper (Unit 4 Appendix 3). For the correct answer see Unit 4 Appendix 4.

**Task 4** Practical application task – writing interview questions

**Duration of the task:** 20 minutes

**Preparation:** photocopies of suggested interview questions (Unit 4 Appendix 5)

**Classroom management:** Group work in the first part of the task – it is advised that trainees working in similar context co-operate in this task; individual work in the second part of the task.

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Trainees work in groups of 3 or 4. They read through and analyze the suggested questions for an interview with a dyslexic learner about his/her experience in learning a foreign language and the difficulties he/she encounters. Ask the trainees to refer back to the areas of difficulty they read about in Task 3 Step 3. Ask the trainees to add more questions or change the suggested ones.

**STEP 2** Trainees work individually. They visit a school they know and interview a dyslexic learner in order to find out about his/her experience with modern language study. They may record or video record the interview or note down the learner's answers.

**Optional:**

For additional information trainees may read:

 Csizér, K., Kormos, J., & Sarkadi, Á. (2010) The dynamics of language learning attitudes and motivation : lessons from an interview study of dyslexic language learners. *Modern Language Journal*, 94, 470-487.

## Task 5 Final reflection task

**Duration of the task:** 30 minutes

**Preparation:** answers to the interview

**Classroom management:** Trainees work in pairs or groups. It is advised that trainees working in similar context co-operate in this task. Trainees work individually when writing their reports.

### Task description

**STEP 1** Trainees share and discuss the interview answers and then work individually and write a short report (200 -250 words) in which they describe experiences of their interviewees in learning a foreign language.

**STEP 2** Ask the trainees to work in groups again and present their reports in small groups. Ask the trainees to suggest possible ways to overcome the difficulties indicated by their interviewees.

### List of resources

Margaret Crombie's article about foreign languages and dyslexia.

Available from :  <http://www.languageswithoutlimits.co.uk/resources/Dxa1.pdf>

“Can all children benefit from foreign language learning?” extract from:  McColl, H. (2000). *Modern languages for all*. London: David Fulton Publishers. pp 5-10.

Available from:  <http://www.languageswithoutlimits.co.uk/resources/Extract1.pdf>

The fragment of the article by  Robin L. Schwarz (1997) *Learning Disabilities and Foreign Language Learning*.

Available from:  <http://www.ldonline.org/article/6065> : *What causes the difficulties?*

Fragments of the article by  L. Ganschow and E. Schneider: ‘Assisting Students with Foreign Language Learning Difficulties in School’. Available from:  <http://www.ldonline.org/article/22725> :

*Who may have difficulty successfully fulfilling a foreign language requirement in school?*

*What do research findings indicate about foreign language study and at-risk students?*

**Recommended extra resources:**

📖 Csizér, K., Kormos, J., & Sarkadi, Á. (2010) The dynamics of language learning attitudes and motivation : lessons from an interview study of dyslexic language learners. *Modern Language Journal*, 94, 470-487. (This article provides an account of the dynamics of language learning motivation in Hungarian students with dyslexia. It discusses the results of qualitative interviews conducted with dyslexic students who studied foreign languages in a variety of educational settings).

📖 Helland, T. and Kaasa, R. (2005) Dyslexia in English as a second language. *Dyslexia* 11, 41-60. (The article discusses the study focused on English as L2 in a group of Norwegian dyslexic 12 year olds, compared to an age and gender matched control group. The results show the differences among the studied groups in their L2 performance.)

📖 Kormos, J., & Smith, A. M. (2012). *Teaching languages to learners with specific learning difficulties*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. Chapter 4. (This chapter of the handbook discusses the processes involved in language learning as well as the language learning processes of students with SpLD.)

📖 Nijakowska, J. (2010). *Dyslexia in the foreign language classroom*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. Chapter 3. (This chapter of the monograph discusses the influence of native language skills onto the process of learning the foreign language as well as research outcomes in that field.)

📖 Schneider, E., & Crombie, M. (2003): *Dyslexia and foreign language learning*. London: David Fulton Publishers. (The book discusses difficulties that dyslexic learners experience while learning foreign languages and also presents teaching and assessment strategies for students with specific language processing difficulties.)

📖 Sparks, R.L. and Ganschow, L. (1991) Foreign language learning differences: Affective or native language aptitude differences? *Modern Language Journal* 75, 3-16. (This article discusses affective factors that influence the process of foreign language learning among learners with specific language learning differences.)



**UNIT 5****Accommodations of dyslexic learners in the foreign language classroom and overview of teaching techniques****Introduction**

In this unit we will define the concept of inclusive education and discuss the kinds of accommodations that can be offered to dyslexic language learners. We will also explore the principles of Multisensory Structured Language (MSL) learning.

**Tasks the trainees will do:**

- discuss the concepts of inclusive education and educational accommodations
- find out how learners with dyslexia can be successfully accommodated in the foreign language classroom
- explore the principles of Multisensory Structured Language (MSL) learning
- watch the Power Point presentation on morphological awareness training following the principles of MSL learning
- create a list of possible adjustments to classroom management, teaching techniques and materials

## Task 1 Inclusive education and educational accommodations

**Duration of the task:** 15-20 minutes

**Preparation:** Handouts with pictures for each group of 3 or 4 for Step 1. Alternatively, OHP or Power Point can be used to display the picture to all trainees.

A4 or A3 paper and markers for each group of 3 or 4 for Step 2.

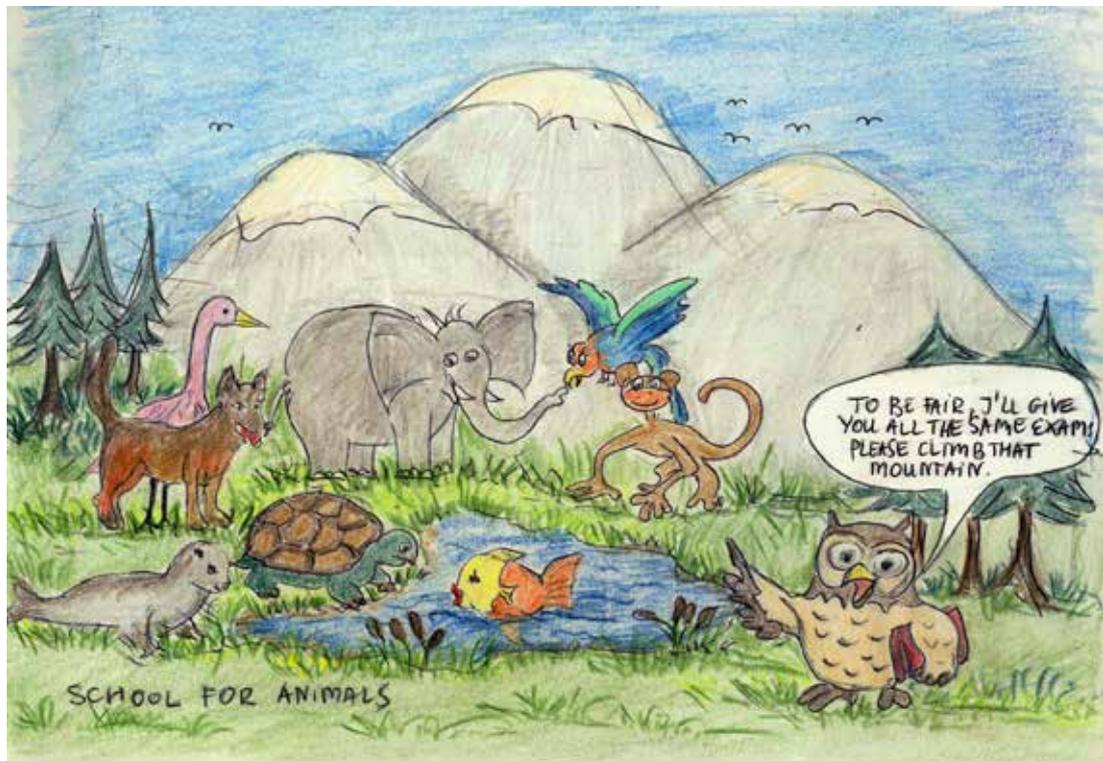
**Classroom management:** Trainees work in groups of 3 or 4 in Step 1 and Step 2, then discuss their answers as a whole group.

### Task description

#### STEP 1

Trainees work in groups of 3 or 4. They look at the picture (1) and the quotation (2). They answer the following questions: Can you see any analogy to your educational context? Have you ever felt the way any of the animals and the teacher in the picture may feel?

(1)



(2)

*'Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish on its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid'* (Kelly, 2004: 82).

**STEP 2**

Trainees continue working in groups. They answer the following questions: 1) How would you define *inclusive education*? 2) How does *inclusion* differ from *integration*? 3) How do you understand the term *accommodation* with reference to your educational context? Trainees write their definitions of *inclusion*, *integration* and *accommodation* on three separate pieces of paper and stick them to the board under the appropriate heading – ‘inclusion’, ‘integration’ and ‘accommodation’. They read, compare and discuss their answers with other trainees.

**STEP 3****Optional step**

Trainees find out about the formal educational regulations and discuss the adjustments offered to dyslexic learners in the country they teach.

**Notes:**

Step 2 – the following texts can be set for reading to help trainees understand the difference between *integration* and *inclusion*:

 [http://www.cdss.ca/images/pdf/general\\_information/integration\\_vs\\_inclusion.pdf](http://www.cdss.ca/images/pdf/general_information/integration_vs_inclusion.pdf)

 <http://openlearn.open.ac.uk/mod/oucontent/view.php?id=397669&section=3.3>

Step 3 can be set for homework. Trainees can be referred to section 2.1.4. *Legal documents providing for dyslexia and dyslexic students* of the *Needs Analysis Report* conducted by the *DysTEFL* project partners in their countries.

Available from  [http://www.dystefl.eu/uploads/media/DysTEFL-Needs\\_analysis\\_report\\_01.pdf](http://www.dystefl.eu/uploads/media/DysTEFL-Needs_analysis_report_01.pdf)

**Model answers:**

## Step 2.

*Integration* – implies a ‘deficit’ model, where the assumption is that difficulties have their source within the child, not within the structures of schools themselves. Integration suggests the need for a student to adapt to the school, rather than for the mainstream school to transform its own practices (e.g. in pupil grouping, assessment, curriculum) and adapt in order to include a greater diversity of pupils and accommodate a diversity of needs. It is assumed that there is something wrong with the child and that extra adaptations or services should be offered to help the child fit into a classroom – to integrate him/her.

*Inclusive education* – There is an emerging consensus among the educational stakeholders that learners with special educational needs, including those with dyslexia, can benefit from the type of schooling available to the majority of learners and enjoy the same educational experiences and opportunities. For this to happen special arrangements and adaptations need to be implemented into the educational system so that the needs of dyslexic learners are appropriately catered for. This is referred to as inclusive education. Inclusion rejects separating students with special educational needs, it is concerned with every learner’s right to take advantage of the benefits offered by the educational system and school’s duty to organize the educational process so that all learners can be accommodated. Inclusive approach assumes that individual differences between humans are normal and that it is the educational system that needs to be adapted to the learners’ needs, not the learners fitted into the system. Inclusion involves a system-wide approach which means that provision for addressing the needs of learners with dyslexia should be made at all levels of the educational system. This involves for example rearrangements in school management and those introduced by the individual teachers (e.g. individual education plans). As much as this is true that most dyslexic learners can be successfully included in the educational system, provided certain alterations are incorporated into it, inclusive education cannot remove all barriers for all learners. This is due to the fact that dyslexia has varying degrees of severity, best illustrated as a continuum of difficulties, ranging from mild to moderate to severe. Some dyslexic learners who experience most severe difficulties would still require more individualized, small group or one-to-one special instruction to overcome their learning problems.

*Accommodations* – can be defined as the enabling solutions and arrangements offered to dyslexic learners in order to respond to their special educational needs and to enable them to show their potential, to develop and to demonstrate attainment. Accommodations should not change the expectations for performance or provide unfair advantage but make it possible for learners with dyslexia to prove their knowledge and to complete the same assignments as other learners despite the difficulties they encounter. Accommodations may cover for example the areas of students’ performance at school (e.g. mode of presentation and response, timing, setting, assignments, homework), curriculum (organization of subject matter, task types), materials, instruction, feedback, classroom management (e.g. grouping, routines, pace), assessment and special conditions during exams (see Unit 10). Types of accommodations available for learners with dyslexia differ across countries, schools and teachers. They may be regulated by national policy, school policy or can entirely depend on individual teachers.

**Task 2 Accommodations in the classroom**

**Duration of the task:** 20-30 minutes

**Preparation:** Sets of cards with descriptions of different ways learners with dyslexia can be accommodated in the foreign language classroom for every pair of trainees for Step 1 (Unit 5 Appendix 1). International Dyslexia Association's fact sheet on at-risk students and the study of foreign language at school (Available from: <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/AtRiskStudentsForeignLanguage2012.pdf>) for every trainee for optional Step 2.

**Classroom management:** Trainees work in pairs in Step 1; in groups of 3 or 4 in Step 2; individually in Step 3; as a whole group in Step 4 (or individually if the activity is set for homework).

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Trainees work in pairs. They are given a set of cards with descriptions of different ways they can reasonably accommodate learners with dyslexia in the foreign language classroom (Unit 5 Appendix 1). Trainees choose at least ten suggestions on how to accommodate learners with dyslexia which they think they could easily implement in their teaching context. Trainees decide whether there are any suggestions which they find implausible or unfeasible in their teaching context. They take notes of their thoughts and justify their choices. This activity is based on the International Dyslexia Association's fact sheet on accommodating students with dyslexia (Available from: [www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/AccommodatingStudentsWithDyslexiaInAllClassroomSettings10-02.pdf](http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/AccommodatingStudentsWithDyslexiaInAllClassroomSettings10-02.pdf)).

**STEP 2** **Optional step**  
Trainees work in groups of 3 or 4. They list some possible barriers to implementing changes in classroom management and teaching techniques to accommodate foreign language learners with dyslexia and then they suggest ways to overcome them.

**STEP 3** **Optional step**  
Trainees work individually, they read the International Dyslexia Association's fact sheet on at-risk students and the study of foreign language at school (Available from: <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/AtRiskStudentsForeignLanguage2012.pdf>) and write down the additional adaptations that a foreign language teacher can make to create a better learning environment for language learners with dyslexia.

#### STEP 4 Optional step

Trainees watch two short videos on accommodating learners with SpLDs. They note down the described difficulties the learners experience and the corresponding adjustments which can be introduced to benefit them. They compare the notes with their partners.

- A teacher sharing a true story of earned wisdom

 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F9NEyFVIDmQ>

- A cartoon giving suggestions for accommodations for learning differences

 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMo5suNUoKw&feature=related>

#### Notes:

Step 3 and Step 4 can be set for homework as individual work.

In Step 3 trainees can be asked to summarize their ideas in a form of a mindmap.

#### Model answers:

Step 3.

*What might the foreign language teacher do to assist students with mild to moderate foreign language learning difficulties?*

A systematic multisensory structured language (MSL) approach that benefits students who struggle to learn to read and spell in their native language also benefits students who have difficulties learning a foreign language. The following recommendations are based on the key principles of the multisensory approach:

- Provide opportunities for students to practice and review a concept frequently (repetitive principle).
- Teach language concepts in a logical progression and help students to categorize concepts; also organize these language concepts from simple to complex (structured, sequential principles).
- Build on what students already know, and make the connection between the known and the new information explicit (cumulative principle).
- Systematically and explicitly teach the phonemes or speech sounds of the foreign language.
- Directly teach students the sounds of the letters in the foreign language and the letter(s) the sounds represent (alphabetic/phonetic principle).
- Show students how to think about a language concept to be learned and ask them to explain the concept in their own words; examples include rules for applying word endings, appropriate word order, and subject/verb agreement (metacognitive principle)
- Model for students the way to break apart words while reading, especially words with more than one syllable (analysis principle).
- Model for students the way to put parts of words back together for spelling (synthetic principle).

*What additional adaptations might the teacher make that will help the student with severe language learning difficulties?*

Additional ways to enhance foreign language learning success include the following:

- When teaching new sounds or phonemes and symbols, teach only one or two at a time. Emphasize how to use mouth movements to produce clear pronunciations. After pronouncing the sound, have students simultaneously trace, say, and repeat the sound pattern. Repeated, explicit modelling is key, as is clarifying for students the difference between the native and the foreign language pronunciation of the same letter pattern.
- Conduct a task analysis of the concept to be learned. Break the concept into small working steps that are often considerably more detailed than a typical textbook presentation of the steps. Model for students how to think through the concept step by step. It sometimes helps to present a memorization/recall device, such as a song, mnemonic device, or color-coding (which works well with rules for word endings).
- Use several learning channels simultaneously (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) to teach a language concept.
- Use simple visual aids, such as picture clues, whenever possible.
- Provide structured overviews (study guides, summary sheets, and graphic representations) of the material covered.
- Provide guided pair work activities to practice and reinforce a concept, pairing a strong student with a weaker student.
- Use colour coding for gender, verb/noun agreement, and other matching principles in the foreign language to highlight a concept.
- Use devices to remember a concept, such as songs with specified grammatical sentence structures, special rhythms, and words in the native language that sound like the word in the foreign language.
- Explicitly model study and test-taking strategies.
- Avoid gap-filling exercises, such as vocabulary or grammar worksheets, unless choices of answers are provided.
- Take time to explain how to read grammatical charts in foreign language textbooks.
- Provide sufficient time during tests to accommodate students with slow language processing skills.

Adapted from the International Dyslexia Association's fact sheet on at-risk students and the study of foreign language at school

(Available from:

 <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/AtRiskStudentsForeignLanguage2012.pdf>).

**Task 3** Multisensory Structured Language (MSL) learning

**Duration of the task:** 40-50 minutes

**Preparation:** Copies of two International Dyslexia Association's fact sheets on Multisensory Structured Language (MSL) teaching

(one available from:  <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/OGBasedandMSLApproaches.pdf> and the other from:  <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/MSLTeaching.pdf>) and two charts (Unit 5 Appendix 2) for each pair of trainees for Step 1.

**Classroom management:** Pair work in Step 1; whole class work in Step 2; individual work and group work in Step 3.

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Trainees work in pairs. Each of them reads one of the two International Dyslexia Association's fact sheets on Multisensory Structured Language (MSL) teaching (one available from:  <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/OGBasedandMSLApproaches.pdf> and the other from:  <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/MSLTeaching.pdf>). One of the trainees identifies the principles of MSL, the other classifies the aspects of language which should be taught following these principles. Trainees summarize and write down the ideas they gained from the reading in the relevant parts of the chart (Unit 5 Appendix 2). Then they tell their partners what they have learned from the texts they have read. Finally, trainees fill in the remaining part of the chart.

**STEP 2** Trainees watch the Power Point presentation on morphological awareness training following the principles of MSL learning (Unit 5 Appendix 3). They complete micro tasks included in the presentation and reflect on how they could use similar activities in their context.

**STEP 3** **Optional step**  
Trainees work individually, they select a 45 minute lesson plan they designed to teach one of their classes. They try to adjust the teaching techniques and materials so that they follow the principles of Multisensory Structured Language (MSL) learning approach.  
Trainees work in groups of 3 with other trainees who share their teaching context. They present their original lesson plans with all the adjustments marked, read the adjusted lesson plans prepared by other trainees, and, finally, compare and comment on their own and their colleagues' suggestions.

**Notes:**

Step 2. The first part of the Power Point presentation constitutes a theoretical introduction, the second part includes micro tasks/questions accompanied by answers. Make sure you give trainees enough time for completing each micro task on their own before you provide the answers.

**Model answers:**

Step 1.

*Which aspects of language should be taught with the use of MSL instruction?*

- **Phonology and Phonological Awareness:** Phonology is the study of sounds and how they work within their environment. A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a given language that can be recognized as being distinct from other sounds in the language. Phonological awareness is the understanding of the internal linguistic structure of words. An important aspect of phonological awareness is phonemic awareness or the ability to segment words into their component sounds.
- **Sound-Symbol Association:** This is the knowledge of the various sounds in the English language and their correspondence to the letters and combinations of letters which represent those sounds. Sound-symbol association must be taught (and mastered) in two directions: visual to auditory and auditory to visual. Additionally, students must master the blending of sounds and letters into words as well as the segmenting of whole words into the individual sounds.
- **Syllable Instruction:** A syllable is a unit of oral or written language with one vowel sound. Instruction must include teaching of the six basic syllable types in the English language: closed, vowel-consonant-e, open, consonant-le, r-controlled, and diphthong. Syllable division rules must be directly taught in relation to word structure.
- **Morphology:** Morphology is the study of how morphemes are combined from words. A morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning in the language. The curriculum must include the study of base words, roots, prefixes, and suffixes.
- **Syntax:** Syntax is the set of principles that dictate the sequence and function of words in a sentence in order to convey meaning. This includes grammar, sentence variation, and the mechanics of language.
- **Semantics:** Semantics is that aspect of language concerned with meaning. The curriculum (from the beginning) must include instruction in the comprehension of written language. (semantics), sentences (syntax), longer passages (discourse), and the social uses of language (pragmatics).

*What are the principles of MSL instruction?*

- **Simultaneous, Multisensory (VAKT):** Teaching is done using all learning pathways in the brain (visual/auditory, kinesthetic-tactile) simultaneously in order to enhance memory and learning.
- **Systematic and Cumulative:** Multisensory language instruction requires that the organization of material follows the logical order of the language. The sequence must begin with the easiest and most basic elements and progress methodically to more difficult material. Each step must also be based on those already learned. Concepts taught must be systematically reviewed to strengthen memory.
- **Direct Instruction:** The inferential learning of any concept cannot be taken for granted. Multisensory language instruction requires the direct teaching of all concepts with continuous student-teacher interaction.
- **Diagnostic Teaching:** The teacher must be adept at prescriptive or individualized teaching. The teaching plan is based on careful and continuous assessment of the individual's needs. The content presented must be mastered to the degree of automaticity.
- **Synthetic and Analytic Instruction:** Multisensory, structured language programs include both synthetic and analytic instruction. Synthetic instruction presents the parts of the language and then teaches how the parts work together to form a whole. Analytic instruction presents the whole and teaches how this can be broken down into its component parts.
- **Comprehensive and Inclusive:** All levels of language are addressed, often in parallel, including sounds (phonemes), symbols (graphemes), meaningful word parts (morphemes), word and phrase meanings (semantics), sentences (syntax), longer passages (discourse), and the social uses of language (pragmatics).

Adapted from:

International Dyslexia Association's fact sheet on Orton-Gillingham-based and/or Multisensory Structured Language (MSL) approaches

(Available from:  <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/OGBasedandMSLApproaches.pdf>)

and International Dyslexia Association's fact sheet on Multisensory Structured Language (MSL) Teaching.

(Available from:  <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/MSLTeaching.pdf>).

**Step 2**

Answers to micro tasks/questions constitute a part of the Power Point presentation.

**Alternatives:**

International Dyslexia Association's Matrix of Multisensory Structured Language Programs that have a strong track records of clinical and classroom success can be set for reading. Trainees can be asked to identify the criteria against which reading programs are assessed

(Available from:  <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/MSL2007finalR1.pdf>).

**Task 4** Accommodating learners with dyslexia – case studies

**Duration of the task:** 30-40 minutes

**Preparation:** Handouts with a dyslexic child's account of trying to copy an assignment from the teacher's board for each trainee for Step 1 (Unit 5 Appendix 4). Alternatively, OHP or Power Point can be used to display the text to all trainees.

Handouts with a chart for each trainee for Step 2 (Unit 5 Appendix 5).

**Classroom management:** In Step 1 and in Step 2 trainees work on their own first and then in groups of 3 or 4.

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Trainees work individually, they read a dyslexic child's account of trying to copy an assignment from the teacher's board (Unit 5 Appendix 4) and list the adjustments they could make to help this student. Then they work in groups of 3 or 4 in order to compare and discuss their answers.

**STEP 2** Each trainee is given a chart to fill (Unit 5 Appendix 5). They think about one dyslexic learner they have taught or observed and note down their observations in the chart. In the left hand column of the chart they make a list of the difficulties the learner experiences during foreign language learning. They take into account all aspects and areas which require adjustments (see Task 2 and Task 3) so that the learner can be accommodated, then they fill in the right hand column with the corresponding adjustments they could introduce with regard to classroom management and the teaching techniques that would make a difference to this learner. Then trainees work in groups of 3 or 4 with other trainees who share the same teaching context (e.g. primary school), they discuss their case studies and provide feedback on suggestions for accommodations.

**Model answers:**

## Step 1.

'If an assignment must be written on the board, and it is not possible to make an individual copy for any dyslexic children in the class, try to leave the information for as long as is necessary for the child to copy it down.

Write each assignment in a different colour, or highlight important points in text to draw attention to them. Write homework assignments on the board in the morning, in the same spot each day, if possible leave it there all day. Check with the student to see that they have copied it down and understand it before they leave.

Try to take a minute or two to go through what they need to take home, or remind them of projects due etc.

Often dyslexic children have a problem with organization, this coupled with a memory issue can be very hard on them regarding independent assignments. Assign all the children a 'phone buddy' so that they can always call each other for information. If all the class do this, the dyslexic student will not feel singled out.

Whenever possible try to avoid making a fuss over any modifications or accommodations that are made for the student. Being humiliated by her classmates needs to be avoided. It is important to be aware of the child's emotions. After possibly years of negative experiences with learning, the child will almost always have issues with self-esteem.'

Adapted from:  <http://www.dyslexia-parent.com/mag42.html>

**Alternatives:**

After completing Step 1, the text on accommodations for students with LD which can be set for reading.

Available from:  [http://www.ldonline.org/article/Accommodations\\_for\\_Students\\_with\\_LD](http://www.ldonline.org/article/Accommodations_for_Students_with_LD)

## List of resources

*Inclusion/integration: Is there a difference?* by Bryan Harman.

Available from:  [http://www.cdss.ca/images/pdf/general\\_information/integration\\_vs\\_inclusion.pdf](http://www.cdss.ca/images/pdf/general_information/integration_vs_inclusion.pdf)

*From integration to inclusion.*

Available from:  <http://openlearn.open.ac.uk/mod/oucontent/view.php?id=397669&section=3.3>

*Needs Analysis Report* conducted by the DysTEFL project partners in their countries.

Available from:  [http://www.dystefl.eu/uploads/media/DysTEFL-Needs\\_analysis\\_report\\_01.pdf](http://www.dystefl.eu/uploads/media/DysTEFL-Needs_analysis_report_01.pdf)

International Dyslexia Association's fact sheet on accommodating students with dyslexia in all classroom settings.

Available from:

 [www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/AccommodatingStudentsWithDyslexiaInAllClassroomSettings10-02.pdf](http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/AccommodatingStudentsWithDyslexiaInAllClassroomSettings10-02.pdf)

International Dyslexia Association's fact sheet on at-risk students and the study of foreign language at school.

Available from:  <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/AtRiskStudentsForeignLanguage2012.pdf>

A teacher sharing a true story of earned wisdom.

Available from:  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F9NEyfVIDmQ>

A cartoon giving suggestions for accommodations for learning differences.

Available from:  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMo5suNUoKw&feature=related>

International Dyslexia Association's fact sheet on Orton-Gillingham-based and/or Multisensory Structured Language (MSL) approaches.

Available from:  <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/OGBasedandMSLApproaches.pdf>

International Dyslexia Association's fact sheet on Multisensory Structured Language (MSL) Teaching.

Available from:  <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/MSLTeaching.pdf>

International Dyslexia Association's Matrix of Multisensory Structured Language Programs that have a strong track records of clinical and classroom success.

Available from:  <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/MSL2007finalR1.pdf>

Case study adapted from:  <http://www.dyslexia-parent.com/mag42.html>

Accommodations for students with LD.

Available from:  [http://www.ldonline.org/article/Accommodations\\_for\\_Students\\_with\\_LD](http://www.ldonline.org/article/Accommodations_for_Students_with_LD)

 Kelly, M. (2004). *The rhythm of life: Living every day with passion and purpose*. New York: Beacon Publishing.

**Recommended extra resources:**

 Bogdanowicz, M., & Sayles, H. A. (2004). *Rights of dyslexic children in Europe*. Gdansk: Harmonia. (The book presents the comparisons of accommodations and rights of learners with dyslexia across European countries on the basis of The European Dyslexia Questionnaire).

 Ganschow, L., & Sparks, R. (2001). Learning difficulties and foreign language learning: A review of research and instruction. *Language Teaching*, 34, 79–98. (The article reviews the research findings on the nature of foreign language learning difficulties of students with learning difficulties).

 Kormos, J., & Smith, A. M. (2012). *Teaching languages to learners with specific learning difficulties*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. Chapters 6 and Chapter 7. (Chapter 6 discusses the ways of accommodating learners with SpLD in the foreign language classroom setting. Chapter 7 describes the Multisensory Structured Learning approach as well as its application in teaching grammar and vocabulary and the four skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening).

 Nijakowska, J. (2010). *Dyslexia in the foreign language classroom*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. Chapter 5. (This chapter discusses the principles of the Multisensory Structured Language Learning approach and its application in foreign language learning; it presents different types of educational accommodations towards learners with dyslexia).

 Schneider, E., & Crombie, M. (2003). *Dyslexia and foreign language learning*. London: David Fulton Publishers. (This book discusses the nature of dyslexic difficulties as they affect foreign language learning; it offers a comprehensible guidance on how to accommodate learners with dyslexia in the foreign language classroom).

 Schneider, E., Ganschow, L., Sparks, R., & Miller, K. (2007). Identifying and teaching learners with special needs. In R. McCarthy (Ed.), *Best practices tool kit ;Avanza! Avençemos!* (pp. A35–A42). Boston: McDougal Littell-Houghton Mifflin Division. (This chapter discusses the identification and teaching techniques which prove successful in teaching learners with special educational needs).

**UNIT 6****Phonological and orthographic awareness  
in English as a foreign language****Introduction**

In this unit trainees will gain understanding of the importance of phonological awareness and knowledge of sound-letter relationships (orthographic awareness) for successful reading and spelling. They will also learn how to develop phonological and phonemic awareness and how to teach sound-letter relationships to dyslexic learners of English as a foreign language.

**Tasks the trainees will do:**

- watch a video and listen to a short presentation on the differences between phonological awareness, phonemic awareness and phonics
- read a text about phonological awareness training
- complete a set of activities designed to practise spelling the /tʃ/ sound with the letters 'ch' and 'tch'
- design a set of three activities for teaching sound-letter relationships following the principles of the multisensory approach
- sum up and reflect on what they have learned

## Task 1 Awareness raising task – lecture

**Duration of the task:** 20 minutes

**Preparation:** For Step 1 photocopy and cut out cards with concepts and their definitions (Unit 6 Appendix 1) for each group of 3 or 4 students. For Step 2 photocopy the bingo boards (versions A, B and C); photocopy and cut out little white cards for each student (Unit 6 Appendix 2).

**Classroom management:** In this task trainees work in groups of 3 or 4 in Step 1 and Step 3, and individually in Step 2. In Step 1 trainees rearrange cards to match concepts to their definitions (Unit 6 Appendix 1). In Step 2 trainees watch a video with a mini-lecture and play bingo (Unit 6 Appendix 2). Before watching distribute bingo boards divided into nine sections corresponding to the main points of the lecture to all students. There are three versions of the bingo board. Trainees sitting next to each other should have different versions. They listen to the lecture and cover the sections of the bingo board corresponding to a given point of the lecture with little white cards. The first person to cover six squares in two rows says ‘Bingo!’ and wins the game. Trainees continue covering the squares until the end of the presentation at which point all the squares should be covered.

### Task description

**STEP 1** Trainees work in groups of 3 or 4. They discuss how they understand the following concepts: *phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, phonics*. They match the concepts to their definitions.

**STEP 2** Trainees work individually; they watch a video (available from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McJldIFpC8>) and listen to a short presentation on the differences between *phonological awareness, phonemic awareness* and *phonics*. While listening to the presentation, trainees are supposed to cover the sections of the bingo board corresponding to a given point of the lecture with white cards. The first person to cover six squares in two rows says ‘Bingo!’ and wins the game. Trainees continue covering relevant squares until the end of the presentation.

**STEP 3** Trainees check their answers from Step 1 against the video. Trainees reflect on what they have learned from the presentation and suggest what else they would like to know about the concepts they discussed.

### STEP 4

#### Optional step

Trainees note down the answers to the questions printed on the bingo board.

**Notes:**

Step 4 can be set for homework.

Questions which trainees are supposed to answer:

- a) What is tricky about learning to read in English?
- b) What is a deep orthography?
- c) What is phonological awareness?
- d) What is phonemic awareness?
- e) What is a phoneme?
- f) Which activities are helpful in developing phonological awareness?
- g) Which activities are helpful in developing phonemic awareness?
- h) What is alphabetic principle?
- i) What is phonics?

Answers to questions c), d), h), i) are provided in Model answers to Step 1, while answers to questions a), b), e), f), g) are given below.

*a) What is tricky about learning to read in English? Why is English difficult for dyslexic learners?*

- a single sound has the capacity to be graphically represented by more than one letter (e.g. **flight**)
- a single sound may be represented by different letters or letter combinations in different words (e.g. **flight**, **cry**, **life**)
- a given letter or a combination of letters may represent more than one sound (e.g. **bread**, **mean**)
- there are numerous exceptions and irregular words

*b) What is a deep orthography?*

Alphabetic orthographic systems can be classified according to the consistency of the letter-to-sound relations, defined as orthographic depth. Deep orthographies demonstrate considerably unpredictable and unequivocal sound-letter relationships and complexities such as, for instance, multiletter graphemes or frequent irregularities. Shallow orthographies have simple letter-sound relations. In some languages, a given letter or letter cluster is always pronounced the same way, whereas in other languages it can have several distinct pronunciations; a phoneme can be represented with multiple spelling choices or is nearly always spelled the same way.

*e) What is a phoneme?*

It is the smallest functional unit of a given language, the smallest unit of sound indicating a difference in meaning.

*f) Which activities are helpful in developing phonological awareness?*

- rhyming
- alliteration
- syllabication
- phoneme manipulation

*g) Which activities are helpful in developing phonemic awareness?*

- identifying/isolating phonemes
- blending phonemes
- segmenting phonemes
- manipulating phonemes (adding, deleting, substituting)

**Model answers:**

## Step 1. Definitions of concepts

*Phonological awareness* – is the broader awareness of sound and is auditory. Phonological awareness is the ability to perform explicit judgments with regard to the structure of spoken words and it refers to all kinds of operations on speech sounds, engaging memory, analysis and synthesis of phonological elements. It is basically defined as an ability to identify, distinguish between, detect and manipulate the sound structure of words with regard to different sizes of phonological units, including whole words, syllables, onsets, rimes and phonemes. It is knowledge that spoken words are made of tiny segments – sounds; it is an ability to break apart and put together these sounds. This facility, in turn, forms a prerequisite for later successful mapping of the sounds on the appropriate symbols – letters.

*Phonemic awareness* – is a type of phonological awareness. While the latter deals with various sizes of phonological elements (words, syllables, onset, rimes, phonemes), the former is reduced in scope and related to identification and manipulation of individual phonemes. It is the awareness of individual phonemes in a word and the ability to segment, blend, isolate, and manipulate those smallest units of sound. It is auditory.

*Alphabetic principle* – is the idea that written words symbolise spoken words in the following way: single sounds are represented by single letters or groups of letters.

*Phonics* – is a method of reading instruction, aimed at familiarising children with relationships between sounds and corresponding printed letters or clusters of letters (the relationship between phonemes and graphemes). It is learning the rules and patterns of the letter-sound relationship.

**Teaching tips:**

Bingo adds an element of competitiveness and fun to a task thus enhancing students' motivation.

**Task 2** Reading and discussing stages and activities in phonological training

**Duration of the task:** 30 minutes

**Preparation:** For Step 1 photocopy and cut out slips of paper with the names of the main stages and types of activities in phonological awareness training. Prepare four sets (each set contains activities suitable for a given stage in phonological awareness training) for each pair of trainees (Unit 6 Appendix 3).

**Classroom management:** In Step 1 divide the class into pairs and distribute sets of slips of paper with the names of the main stages and types of activities in phonological awareness training. In Step 2 pairs of trainees join to form groups of 4. In Step 3 trainees continue to work in the same groups.

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Trainees work in pairs. They sort slips of paper with the names of types of activities used during the four stages of phonological awareness training so that they form the right sequence. Trainees move from recognition to production, from simple to complex tasks.

**STEP 2** Trainees compare their answers with another pair of trainees and check them against the information in the text on tips for teaching phonological awareness (Available from:  [http://www.reading-tutors.com/tips/TH\\_Tips\\_PhonAware.pdf](http://www.reading-tutors.com/tips/TH_Tips_PhonAware.pdf)).

**STEP 3** **Optional step**  
In groups students discuss how they could adapt and implement the activities they have read about in Step 2 in their teaching context.

**Notes:**

Step 1.

The inner hierarchical structure of a syllable is as follows – (C)\*V(C)\*. C stands for a consonant, V stands for a vowel, \* shows a possible repetitiveness, and, finally, () indicates a facultative element. A vowel constitutes a peak of a syllable, which can be preceded by a single consonant, consonant blend (e.g. ‘fr’, ‘gl’) or digraph (e.g. ‘sh’, ‘ch’), called an *onset*. A vowel can also be followed by a consonant or a consonant blend, named coda. A combination of a vowel and a final consonant, consonant blend or digraph forms a *rime*, which constitutes a common part of rhyming words (e.g. ‘cat’, ‘hat’, ‘rat’ or ‘brand’, ‘grand’, ‘stand’). Thus, *onsets* and *rimes* form bigger intra-syllabic chunks of a *syllable* (or a one-syllable word). Each can be further divided into individual *phonemes*. *Phoneme* – is the smallest functional unit of a given language, the smallest unit of sound indicating a difference in meaning.

In the course of development of phonological awareness, young children progress from larger to smaller sound units. The ability to identify and manipulate particular phonological units in words naturally refers to bigger chunks, which are more salient and more directly perceivable, and then to individual phonemes – the awareness of syllables, onsets and rimes develops before the awareness of phonemes. Children first find out that sentences are composed of separate words; these words, in turn, can be divided into syllables, onsets and rimes (intra-syllabic elements) and, finally, they are made up of sequences of sounds. Children also learn that all these elements can be separated, blended together and otherwise manipulated. Tasks aimed at production pose more constraint than recognition exercises. Blending activities tend to be less challenging than analysis tasks. Visual (e.g. tokens, boxes, markers, pictures, gestures) or auditory (e.g. clapping, tapping) cues used to represent a given phonological chunk (word, syllable, onset, rime or phoneme) can considerably back up children’s efforts towards completing a given task, because they make oral activities more concrete.

**Model answer:**

Step 1.

There are 4 stages (A, B, C, D) and 17 types of activities. Names of the stages are printed in capital letters.

- A. RHYME
  - 1. Recognizing rhyme
  - 2. Differentiating rhyme
  - 3. Producing rhyme
- B. ISOLATING AND CATEGORIZING SOUNDS
  - 4. Recognizing sounds
  - 5. Differentiating sounds
  - 6. Producing sounds
- C. BLENDING AND SEGMENTING SYLLABLES AND SOUNDS
  - 7. Blending syllables
  - 8. Blending onset and rime
  - 9. Blending phonemes
  - 10. Segmenting words in a sentence
  - 11. Segmenting syllables
  - 12. Segmenting onset and rime
  - 13. Segmenting phonemes
- D. MANIPULATING PHONEMES (SOUNDS)
  - 14. Manipulating initial sounds
  - 15. Manipulating final sounds
  - 16. Manipulating medial sounds
  - 17. Adding, deleting, substituting sounds

**Alternatives:**

You can set  Nijakowska, J. (2006). Why and how to teach phonological awareness? *The Teacher* 11 (43): 22-30 for homework.

**Task 3** Sound-letter relationship (orthographic awareness) training

**Duration of the task:** 40 minutes

**Preparation:** For Step 2 photocopy a set of materials designed to practise the spelling of the /tʃ/ sound with the letters 'ch' and 'tch' for each student (Unit 6 Appendix 5– instructions to the activities; Unit 6 Appendix 6 – worksheets).

**Classroom management:** In Step 1 trainees work as a whole class, they watch a PowerPoint presentation (Unit 6 Appendix 4) and infer the spelling rules. First they analyse the slide with the first list of words. Ask whether they can see any common parts in them. When they look at the next slide, they will see these parts highlighted. Trainees try to think of the spelling rule before they see it in the next slide. Repeat the procedure with three lists of words in which the /tʃ/ sound is spelled with the letters 'ch' and 'tch'.

In Step 2 distribute sets of materials (Unit 6 Appendix 6) designed to practise the spelling of the /tʃ/ sound with the letters 'ch' and 'tch' to all trainees and conduct the exercises with the class following the instructions (Unit 6 Appendix 5). In Step 3 divide trainees into groups of 3 or 4 so that they can discuss how they could adapt and implement these activities and teaching aids to better suit their teaching context.

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Trainees watch a PowerPoint presentation and try to infer the rules regarding the spelling of the /tʃ/ sound with the letters 'ch' and 'tch'. First they analyse the slide with the first list of words. Ask whether they can see any common parts in them. When they look at the next slide, you will see these parts highlighted. Trainees try to think of the spelling rule before they see it in the next slide. They repeat the procedure with three lists of words in which the /tʃ/ sound is spelled with the letters 'ch' and 'tch'.

**STEP 2** Trainees analyse and critically evaluate a set of activities designed to practise the spelling of the /tʃ/ sound with the letters 'ch' and 'tch' with reference to their teaching context.

**STEP 3** **Optional step**  
In groups students discuss how they could adapt and implement the activities and teaching aids from Step 2 to better suit their teaching context.

**Note:**

Trainees can also conduct some of the activities in Step 2.

**Alternatives:**

You can set  Nijakowska, J. (2010). *Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Classroom*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. Chapter 6. for homework.

You can set IDA Fact Sheet on spelling available at

 <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/SpellingRev.2011.pdf> for additional reading.

**Task 4** Designing teaching materials and aids

**Duration of the task:** Step 1 (homework) – 90 minutes ; Step 2 class work – 30 minutes

**Classroom management:** In Step 1 trainees work individually. In Step 2 divide trainees into small (2-4 people) groups so that all members of a given group share the teaching context (e.g. all work/intend to work with primary school children). They discuss the activities they prepared in groups first and then present the outcomes to the class. Run a class discussion.

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Following the principles of multisensory approach, trainees design a set of activities (with movable teaching aids if applicable) for developing the awareness of sound-letter relationships (see Task 3 Step 2 for sample activities). They choose the spelling issue which is most relevant for their teaching context, e.g. short and long vowels; spelling a particular sound with different spelling choices – like the /k/ sound with the letters ‘c’, ‘k’, ‘-ck’, ‘-ic’ etc. or the /ei/ sound with the letters ‘a-e’, ‘-ay’, ‘ai’; silent letters; endings ‘-tion’, ‘-sion’. In the cases where more than one spelling choice is possible, a spelling rule should be provided first.

**STEP 2** Trainees share and discuss their work with other trainees. They read and comment on the materials designed by other trainees.

**STEP 3** **Optional step**  
Trainees ask students with dyslexia to complete the activities they designed and get feedback from them.

**Notes:**

Step 1 can be set for homework; trainees bring the sets of activities they designed at home to share with other trainees in the class.

## List of resources

 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McJldIFpC8> - this video focuses on the definitions and distinctions between phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, and phonics

 [http://www.reading-tutors.com/tips/TH\\_Tips\\_PhonAware.pdf](http://www.reading-tutors.com/tips/TH_Tips_PhonAware.pdf) - tips for teaching phonological awareness

### Recommended extra resources:

For Task 2, 3, 4

 Chard, D. J. and Dickson, S. V. (1999). Phonological awareness: Instructional and assessment guidelines. Available from  <http://www.ldonline.org/article/6254/> or at <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/6254/>.

 Nijakowska, J. (2010). *Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Classroom*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. Chapter 2 (Phonological Coding Deficit Hypothesis) and Chapter 6.

 Nijakowska, J. (2006). Dyslexics – poor spellers. *The Teacher*, 5(39): 24-30.

 Nijakowska, J. (2006). Why and how to teach phonological awareness? *The Teacher*, 11(43): 22-30.

 Kessler, B. and Treiman, R. (2003) Is English spelling chaotic? Misconceptions concerning its regularity. *Reading Psychology* 24, 267–289.

 Phillips, B.M., Clancy-Menchetti, J. and Lonigan, C.J. (2008) Successful phonological awareness instruction with preschool children. Lessons from the classroom. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education* 28 (1), 3–17.

All the above publications offer short introductions and/or descriptions of sample activities and movable teaching aids used in phonological awareness and/or sound-letter relationships training.

For Task 3

IDA Fact Sheet on spelling available from

 <http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/SpellingRev.2011.pdf>

For Task 4

 Payne, J. (1995). *English guides 8: Spelling*. London: HarperCollins Publishers.

 Shemesh, R. and Waller, S. (2000). *Teaching English Spelling*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

A useful list of spelling rules with examples:  [http://www.dyslexia.org/spelling\\_rules.shtml](http://www.dyslexia.org/spelling_rules.shtml)

Trainees may find these publications helpful while preparing sample exercises as they offer a comprehensible guidance through English spelling patterns and rules.



**UNIT 7****Techniques for teaching vocabulary and grammar****Introduction**

In this unit the trainees will gain an understanding of the difficulties dyslexic students face while learning vocabulary and grammar. They will also become familiar with useful techniques and methods recommended for teaching grammar and vocabulary to dyslexic students. It may be useful to point out to participants that some of the difficulties and mistakes outlined in this unit may occur with any language learner, but are especially persistent in case of dyslexic students. The same is true for the methods and techniques; they may be useful to all learners, but are especially beneficial for dyslexic students.

**Aims of the unit:**

- raising awareness of the difficulties dyslexic students may encounter in learning vocabulary and grammar
- making participants familiar with techniques recommended for teaching vocabulary and grammar to dyslexic students
- initiate discussion about how to provide help to dyslexic students to overcome specific difficulties related to grammar and vocabulary

**Tasks the trainees will do:**

- read interview excerpts about the difficulties dyslexic language learners face in learning grammar and vocabulary
- prepare a list about the difficulties dyslexic students may encounter in acquiring vocabulary and grammar
- prepare a mind map of techniques recommended for teaching vocabulary to dyslexic students
- prepare a mind map of techniques recommended for teaching grammar to dyslexic students
- try out these techniques to overcome specific problems dyslexic students may face in learning vocabulary and grammar
- think about what challenges a regular unit of a course book presents for dyslexic language learners in terms of vocabulary and grammar and think about what efforts they will have to make to help dyslexic students face these challenges
- write some teaching tips and advice for other teachers about how to present and practice the vocabulary and the grammar of a given course book unit in a dyslexia-friendly way

**Task 1** Vocabulary learning and grammar - interviews with dyslexic students

**Duration of the task:** 30 minutes

**Preparation:** Photocopy the interview excerpts. Make one copy for each pair (Unit 7 Appendix 1). You can also find the quotes as sound files there.

**Classroom management:**

- Step 1: Pair work
- Step 2: Group work (optional)
- Step 3: Group discussion

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Working in pairs, trainees read the interview excerpts and make a list of the difficulties dyslexic language learners might face in these areas. Encourage them to add other items to the list based on previous readings in the course and teaching experience.

**STEP 2** **Optional step**  
The trainees discuss the lists they prepared and try to come up with the causes of the difficulties in groups of four.

**STEP 3** Discuss the lists and the causes with the trainees. The following points can also be involved in the discussion:

- the causes of the difficulties – see Notes
- trainees' own experiences about the difficulties their dyslexic students face in learning vocabulary and grammar. For example, practising teachers may give specific examples of confusion of similar words, memorization of misread word forms, problems with word order etc.

## Notes

### Step 1.

- Learning grammar
  - o I hate exercises involving rules. When you have only one good answer and the main point is that you have to write down that good answer. (Barbara, 17)
  - o I am good at understanding the concepts and rules, so in theory I am very good, but when I have to apply them, I am really insecure about it. (Ingrid, 16)
  - o I'm good at good at grammar, I understand it in a second. (Joe, 14)
  - o Everything related to grammar is difficult for me: tenses, rules, where to put which word. I have problems with understanding and memorizing grammar. ( Gabe, 17)
- Learning vocabulary
  - o I made some mistakes when I entered the new words in my vocabulary notebook and I memorized the misspelled form. So I could not get good marks when we were tested . It was like a vicious circle. (Gordon, 13)
  - o I often confuse similar words and what I say does not make any sense. Sometimes I confuse words visually, so I read something different, and the whole text means something else. (Barbara, 17)
  - o I have never been successful in studying words, and I could never memorize them in an effective way (Joe, 14).
  - o As the pronunciation is very different from spelling, you have to memorize both of them and it is very difficult.(Carla, 17.)

### List of difficulties:

- Vocabulary
  - o memorisation of misspelled word forms
  - o problems related to the deep orthography of the English language
  - o confusing similar words
  - o lack of efficient strategies for memorizing words
- Grammar
  - o problems with understanding concepts of grammar (It should be noted that some of the interviewees were of the opinion that they are very good at understanding concepts of grammar, so there can be significant differences between dyslexic students in this respect.)
  - o difficulties related to word order
  - o problems with memorizing rules of grammar
  - o problems with the type and format of grammar exercises

**Step 2.****Reasons for difficulties:**

- Vocabulary learning
  - o reduced phonological awareness
  - o poorer capacity of the phonological short term memory
  - o problems with implicit learning
  
- Grammar:
  - o problems with understanding concepts of grammar
  - o problems with serial processing
  - o problems with implicit learning

(For a detailed discussion see  Kormos, J., & Smith, A. M. (2012). *Teaching languages to learners with specific learning difficulties*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.)

It should be noted that inappropriate teaching methods aggravate the problems dyslexic students experience in learning vocabulary and grammar.

**Task 2 Recommended methods for teaching vocabulary and grammar to dyslexic students**

**Duration of the task:** 45-60 minutes

**Preparation:** You will need pages 132-135 from  Kormos, J., & Smith, A. M. (2012). *Teaching languages to learners with specific learning difficulties*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. This can be substituted with a PowerPoint presentation in which Anne Margaret Smith summarizes the most important aspects of teaching vocabulary and grammar to dyslexic students.

See Unit 7 Appendix 2 or:  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gfVTckcQeA&feature=youtu.be>

Provide the trainees with tools necessary for making mind maps. While A4 sheets are also sufficient, you can provide A3 or even larger sheets for trainees to work with. You will also need markers and pens in several colours, as well as some blu-tack.

- Classroom management:**
- Step 1: Pair work (optional)
  - Step 2: Group work
  - Step 3: Group work
  - Step 4: Group discussion
  - Step 5: Mingling activity (optional)
  - Step 6: Group discussion (optional)

**Task description****STEP 1 Optional step**

Trainees discuss with their partners what kind of recommendations they expect to read about regarding teaching vocabulary and grammar to dyslexic students.

They make a list of their expectations.

**STEP 2** Trainees work in groups of four and decide which topic they would like to focus on: grammar or vocabulary. Make sure the two topics are distributed evenly in the group. Trainees read “Teaching vocabulary and Teaching grammar” form  Kormos, J., & Smith, A. M. (2012). *Teaching languages to learners with specific learning difficulties*. p.132-135.

OR

They listen to and take notes based on a PowerPoint presentation in which Anne Margaret Smith summarizes the most important aspects of teaching vocabulary and grammar to dyslexic students (see Unit 7 Appendix 2).

The disadvantage of listening to the presentation is that the trainees will not have the whole source material at their fingertips when they are working on their mind maps. This can be difficult, especially for those who are not practiced in making mind maps. This problem can be partially solved if the trainer displays the presentation slides while the trainees work (Unit 7 Appendix 2).

As preparing mind maps has a very important role in facilitating language learning for dyslexics, it is essential that trainees are familiar with this technique. Therefore, the rules of mind mapping should be revised. One way of revising these rules is to watch one of the following videos:

-  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76Roy4E4ZbE>
-  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLWVoXN7K1g&feature=related>

You should monitor the mind mapping process and provide help if it is needed.

**STEP 3** Trainees work in groups of four (or pairs if the group is smaller) and prepare a mind map either about teaching vocabulary or teaching grammar. Provide the trainees with the necessary tools and materials for making the mind map (see Preparation).

**STEP 4** Trainees work in groups of eight combining one group who prepared a mind map about grammar and one that made a mind map about vocabulary in the previous step. They present their mind maps to each other.

**STEP 5** **Optional step**

Display the trainees’ mind maps on the board or around the room. Give the trainees time to walk around and look at other groups’ mind maps.

**STEP 6** **Optional step**

Trainees reflect on the techniques recommended and on the method of mind mapping.

## Notes

- See Unit 7 Appendix 3 for a model mind map about teaching grammar.
- See Unit 7 Appendix 4 for a model mind map about teaching vocabulary.

To save time on this activity, it is also possible to give the provided model mind maps to the trainees. They discuss and make guesses about teaching techniques based on the mind maps in pairs, and then read the book excerpt or watch the PowerPoint. Finally, they discuss the methods as a group. While this version takes considerably less time, it is not as effective and hands-on as trainees having to prepare their own mind maps.

Mind maps can be prepared in the traditional way (using pencil and paper) or trainees can use a presentation maker, a simple drawing program (usually provided with every operating system), or a mind mapping software, for example:

 <http://www.text2mindmap.com/>

 <https://bubbl.us/>

 <http://www.thinkbuzan.com/hu/>

 <http://www.mindmeister.com/>

 [http://eduapps.org/?page\\_id=7](http://eduapps.org/?page_id=7)

Remind trainees that it may take some time to learn how to use mind mapping software with ease. Therefore, solving the task may take more time than anticipated.

## Task 3 Vocabulary and grammar - specific solutions

**Duration of the task:** 35 minutes

**Preparation:** You will need slips of papers with problematic lexical items and grammar structures on them, see Appendix 7.5.

**Classroom management:** group work

### Task description

Trainees work in groups. Each group gets a slip of paper describing a structure of grammar or lexical item that might potentially cause problems to dyslexic students.

Trainees try to think about why students might face difficulties with the given structure/lexical item and try to come up with a number of different multisensory ways to practice them and design at least 5 activities. They share their ideas with other trainees.

**STEP 1** The following cards are given to the students:

- A: Your dyslexic student says sentences like:  
‘How is your best friend?’ instead of ‘Who is your best friend?’  
‘Where do you get up?’ instead of ‘When do you get up?’  
Sometimes she simply cannot remember which Wh-word she should use at the beginning of a sentence.
- B: Your dyslexic student says sentences like:  
‘They dog is big.’ instead of ‘Their dog is big.’  
‘You house is nice.’ instead of ‘Your house is nice.’
- C: Your dyslexic student confuses Present Simple and Present Continuous, and has problems forming grammatically correct sentences in both tenses. He says sentences like:  
‘I wearing blue jeans.’ instead of ‘I wear blue jeans.’  
‘He like apples.’ instead of ‘He likes apples.’
- D: Your dyslexic student confuses Present Simple and Present Continuous, and has problems forming grammatically correct questions in both tenses. He says sentences like:  
‘Are you study?’ instead of ‘Do you study?’  
‘Where you live?’ instead of ‘Where do you live?’

**STEP 2** Trainees present their ideas to the group.

## Model answers - A

Wh-questions can be problematic for dyslexic learners because of their similarity. It is advisable not to teach more than one or two Wh-words together, and if a student confuses them often it is important to practise them separately.

Some ideas for practice:

- Mind maps. We can prepare mind maps with the Wh-words in the centre and some answers in the different branches. It is a good idea to personalize the answers (use words which are relevant for the students). In Unit 7 Appendix 6 you can find a mind map which focuses on ‘what’, more specifically ‘what’s your’, with the help of this mind map the student can form seven relevant questions. If we have mind maps prepared for the different Wh-questions, we can use them for a simple revision activity: the centre of mind map is covered (the Wh-words) and the student has to guess which Wh-question is in the centre on the basis of the branches of the mind map.
- Digital voice recorder. You may use a digital voice recorder and record the Wh-words followed by the equivalent in the students’ first language.
- Speech to text software. You may use some speech to text software and convert sample sentences with Wh-questions into an audio file. For example, you can use a user-friendly, free service called Robobrain, available at [www.robobrain.org](http://www.robobrain.org). It converts digital texts to either braille or audio files, and it also emails you the file.
- Songs. You may look for a song containing specific Wh-questions or use a karaoke program for practice.
- Mnemonic devices. Mnemonic devices can be useful. For example, for the question word ‘who’, we may draw eyes and a mouth for the letter o, which reminds the student that the question word ‘who’ refers to human beings: WH 

A Hungarian example: a ghost says “hu” in Hungarian, and the word ‘ghost’ also answers the question ‘who’. A mind map based on this idea can be seen in the Unit 7 Appendix 7.

- Crazy stories. You may write “crazy” stories with relevant question words. A method recommended by Schneider and Crombie (2003).
- Memory game with word cards. You may prepare word cards (with question words in English and in the mother tongue) and play memory games with them.
- Word cards in a digital format. You may prepare word/flashcards using Quizlet: <http://www.quizlet.com>

## Model answers - B

The student in question has problems distinguishing personal pronouns (I, you, he, she, it, we, you, they) and possessive pronouns (my, your, his, her, its, our, your, their). These two types of pronouns should be taught and practised separately before they are contrasted.

Some ideas for practice:

- **Explicit teaching.** It is essential that the students understand the distinction between the two types of pronouns. It is advisable to discuss the distinction in the students' mother tongue if it is possible. However, it should be noted that our main aim is not to teach the grammatical terminology such as 'possessive pronouns' or 'personal pronouns' to the students but to make sure they understand what the difference is in meaning between 'I' and 'my'. It should be emphasized that explaining this distinction is only advisable if you teach students over the age of 9.
- **Teaching and practicing in context.** You can use short activities where students have to identify or use the pronouns in context. For example, by naming the objects on their desks (I am\_\_\_\_\_. This is my pencil. This is my book....etc.). Then move on to do the same with their peers' or teacher's desk.
- **Digital voice recorder.** You may use a digital voice recorder and record sample sentences.
- **Speech to text software.** You may use some speech to text software and convert sample sentences into an audio file.
- **Songs.** You may look for songs containing relevant pronouns or use a karaoke program for practice.
- **Memory game with word cards.** You may prepare word cards (with pronouns in English and in the mother tongue) and play memory games with them. In this case it is important to practice with the card set for personal and possessive pronouns separately before contrasting them. A sample for word cards is given in Unit 7 Appendix 8. It should be noted that the two types of word cards are in different colours to facilitate distinction. Also, there are clues for distinguishing the singular and plural forms of pronouns.
- **Word cards in a digital format.** You may prepare word cards using Quizlet:  <http://www.quizlet.com>

**Model answers - C and D**

Your dyslexic student confuses present simple and present continuous. It is important to introduce and practice the two tenses separately using multisensory techniques, since similar structures are easy to confuse for dyslexic students. After adequate practice they can be contrasted.

Some ideas for practice:

- Colour-coding.

1. Declarative sentences (Group C)

Different colours should be used for pronouns, auxiliaries and verbs.

I am wearing blue jeans.

I study Italian.

He studies Italian.

Different colours should be used for pronouns, auxiliaries and verbs. It is advisable to follow the system of the colour-coding used in L1 – if there is any.

It is also useful to have a visual “formula” as a reminder about the tense.

**Visual formula for Present Continuous:**

--\_ING

**Visual formulas for Present Simple:**

--

He\_s

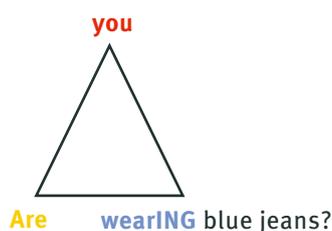
These formulas can be put on the board, or as a poster on the wall and referred to when the tense is practised in an exercise. Also, it may help if we point out that for sentences in Present Continuous there are three items in the ‘formula’, while in a Present Simple sentence there are two. It is also useful that in these visual formulas, problematic parts are emphasized like the -ING in present continuous or the -S in Present Simple.

2. Word order in questions (Group D)

Are you wearing blue jeans?

Do you study Italian?

A good idea for helping students remember the word order of questions in Present Continuous and Present Simple is to draw a triangle. Tell the student that in order to form a correct question you should have a word at every angle of the triangle. The pronoun refers to the person (or object) the sentence is about, so it is at the highest angle of the triangle. You have the auxiliary verb and the main verb at the other angles.



In the Present Simple, it is also useful to call attention to the fact that sentences like ‘You are at home.’ behave differently than ‘You like apples.’ when forming questions (and negatives).

- Tense cards.

You may prepare some tense cards about each tense; for example, you can put the visual formulas on the cards and also some basic rules about when to use the tense.

For example, for Present Simple you can have cards like this:

hobby daily routine	<del>ING</del>	_ _	He _s	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> – do not ? – Do _ _
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For Present Continuous:

now	picture description	-ING	_ _ _ ING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> – not ? – _ _ _
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These cards can help remember and revise rules for these tenses. They may also help in contrasting them. The students are given the cards and they have to decide which cards refer to Present Simple and which to Present Continuous. It should be practised with a few cards at first, and it is also possible to have the cards in two different colours for the two tenses you want to contrast as a first step.

- Explicit teaching. It is a good idea to teach the forms and the rules of the tenses explicitly using handouts and charts (first separately, then to contrast them). It is also beneficial if these tenses are explained in relation to the students' L1 and contrasted with the structures in the mother tongue.
- Mnemonic devices. Instead of correcting students when they leave out the 'do' or the '-s' use mnemonic devices or flashcards with 'do' and '-s' on them to remind them, thereby encouraging self-correction.
- Word cards - Sentence cards. Word order and verb forms can be practiced with sentence cards. The teacher or the students prepare cards with the necessary elements on them, for example (for the present simple): I, you, My dog, dance, at the disco, -s, do, not. Students manipulate the cards to create statements, negatives and questions.
- Mind maps. You may prepare mind maps about the tenses. See a scanned example in Hungarian in Unit 7 Appendix 9.
- Digital voice recorder. You may use a digital voice recorder and record sample sentences.
- Speech to text software. You may use some speech to text software and convert sample sentences into an audio file.
- Songs. You may look for songs containing many instances of Present Simple and Present Continuous or use a karaoke program for practice.

**Task 4 Teaching vocabulary and grammar - a unit of a course book****Duration of the task:**

- 25 minutes in class
- 120 minutes as homework
- 30 minutes for presenting the teaching tips (optional).

**Preparation:** Remind trainees to bring a course book they are familiar with for the session.

**Classroom management:**

- Step 1 : Group work- students work in groups of four. Students working in similar educational context might be grouped together.
- Step 2: Group work (homework)
- Step 3: Group presentation (optional)

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Trainees choose a unit (or some pages of a unit) from a course book and think about how to introduce new grammar and vocabulary in a dyslexia-friendly way. They identify lexical items and grammar structures which may be problematic for dyslexic students and they list ideas facilitating the acquisition of these items.

**STEP 2** On the basis of their ideas trainees write some teaching tips and advice for other teachers. Finishing this task is homework.

**STEP 3** **Optional step**  
Each group presents their teaching tips to the others.

## Model answers

Based on New English File Elementary Unit 1a 1b and c pages 4-9.

### The following lexical items require special attention:

#### Names of the days (p.5)

The names of the days are very similar. You may not want to teach all of them at the same time. For example, you may teach Sunday and Saturday in one lesson (the days of the weekend), Monday (the first day of the week) and Friday (the last day the students go to school) in another lesson. It is also advisable to look for mnemonic devices. For example, Sunday is a sunny day, people are happy, because of the weekend.

It is also a good idea to involve the students' timetable while practicing. They can even make mindmaps or posters about the activities they do on a particular day.

As with other problematic lexical items, it is always useful to play memory games, use digital voice recorders, speech to text software and songs.

#### Names of nationalities and countries (p.6):

The names of nationalities and countries are rather easy to confuse. It may be advisable to teach only 3 to 5 country - nationality pairs in one lesson (English, England, the country of the student, the name of the students' nationality, plus some more). Also, it is a good idea to teach the name of the chosen countries and nationalities in two separate lessons, and contrast them in a third. If for some reason the students should study all the country - nationality pairs, it is worth preparing a mind map about the names of nationalities ending in with the same letters.

E.g.: an: American, Austrian, German; ish: Spanish, Irish, English

It is also possible to come up with acronyms or other mnemonic devices to memorize the different endings.

The following map may also be useful:  <http://www.linglish.net/wp-content/uploads/2008/10/nationality.png>

**Numbers (p.5, p.7):**

It is definitely not recommended to teach all the numbers from 1 to 1000 at the same time. Moreover, special attention should be dedicated to the distinction between numbers ending in ‘-teen’ and ‘-ty’. For example, thirteen and thirty. A possible mnemonic device is that in ‘-teen’ you have ten, so thirteen refers to 13 and not 30. Another mnemonic device is that you have ‘long i’ in ‘-teen’, while you have a short one in ‘-ty’. It would be “logical” that the ‘long i’ refers to the bigger number, while the ‘short i’ to the smaller. However, it is not the case, the ‘long i’ refers to the smaller number (13) and the ‘short i’ to the bigger (30). It is also possible to point out that in thirteen the stress is on ‘-teen’, while there is no stress on ‘-ty’. A possible mnemonic device is that the life of teenager is stressed.

One way to practice the distinction is to ask the students to imagine an 18-year-old girl and an 80-year-old woman. You say some sentences and they should decide whether they are about the girl or the woman. When they hear the sentence they should say eighteen or eighty (e.g., She studies in high school. She has 4 grandchildren.)

**Wh-words in questions:** The acquisition of Wh-words was discussed in Task 3.

**The alphabet (p.8):**

The alphabet song can be useful. It is also worth considering that you may not want to teach all the letters on the first occasion. It may be enough to teach the students how to spell their name.

**The following grammatical structures require special attention:****The verb ‘be’ in questions and negations (p. 7):**

Sentences should be colour-coded when presented. Sample sentences could be converted to an audio file with the help of a speech to text software (e.g.: RoboBraille).

**Personal and possessive pronouns (p.8-9):** Personal and possessive pronouns were discussed in Task 3.

## List of resources

 Kormos, J., & Smith, A. M. (2012). *Teaching languages to learners with specific learning difficulties*.

Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. Chapter 7.

Chapter 7 discusses useful principles and techniques in teaching vocabulary and grammar to dyslexic learners.

 Oxenden, C., Latham-Koenig, C., & Seligson, P. (2005). *New English File Elementary Student's Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76Roy4E4ZbE> - a video about making mind maps

 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLWVoXN7K1g&feature=related> - a video about making mind maps

 <http://www.text2mindmap.com/> - a mind mapping tool

 <https://bubbl.us/> - a mind mapping tool

 <http://www.thinkbuzan.com/hu/> - a mind mapping tool

 [http://eduapps.org/?page\\_id=7](http://eduapps.org/?page_id=7) – a set of tools to support literacy

 [www.robobrace.org](http://www.robobrace.org) – a free service which converts digital texts to either braille or audio files, and it also emails you the file.

 <http://www.quizlet.com> – a free flashcard maker program and learning tool.

 <http://www.linglish.net/wp-content/uploads/2008/10/nationality.png>

 <http://www.linglish.net/wp-content/uploads/2008/10/nationality.png> – a map of the world's countries

### Recommended extra resources:

 Nijakowska, J. (2010). *Dyslexia in the foreign language classroom*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Chapter 5, and 6. (Chapter 5 discusses the principles of the Multisensory Structured Learning approach and its application in foreign language learning; while in Chapter 6 you can find sample activities for raising phonological, orthographic, morphological and grammatical awareness).

 Sarkadi, Á. (2008). Vocabulary learning in dyslexia – The case of a Hungarian learner. J.Kormos & E. H. Kontra (Eds.), *Language learners with special needs. An international perspective* (pp. 110-129). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. (The study focuses on the vocabulary learning difficulties of a Hungarian dyslexic student and on the strategies she applies to overcome these difficulties).

 Schneider, E., & Crombie, M. (2003). *Dyslexia and foreign language learning*. London: David Fulton Publishers. Chapter 3. (This book discusses the nature of dyslexic difficulties as they affect foreign language learning; it offers a comprehensible guidance on how to accommodate learners with dyslexia in the foreign language classroom. Chapter 3 discusses learning strategies and mnemonic devices).

**UNIT 8****Techniques for teaching listening and speaking****Introduction**

The aim of this unit is to raise the trainees' awareness of the problems dyslexic learners can encounter when they practice listening and speaking skills. They will learn how to accommodate dyslexic learners' needs while developing listening and speaking skills in the foreign language classroom. They will choose and adapt listening materials and they will design activities for listening and speaking with dyslexic students in mind.

**Tasks the trainees will do:**

- they prepare a KWL (Know-Want to know-Learnt) poster concerning teaching and practising listening and speaking skills in classes with dyslexic learners
- they will watch an interview with a teacher who will talk about her classes with dyslexic learners
- they will analyse some techniques of developing listening and speaking skills with dyslexic learners and reflect on them
- they will plan activities for developing listening and speaking skills in classes with dyslexic learners
- they will reflect on their learning using their own KWL poster

**Task 1** KWL poster

**Duration of the task:** 15 - 20 minutes

**Preparation:**

Poster paper or whiteboard divided into three sections ( I know....., I want to know....., I've learnt.....), two-colour sticky notes (yellow and green)

**Classroom management:**

Pairwork for the first part of the task, if possible at least one trainee in each pair should have experience in working with dyslexic learners.

Individuals write their contributions on sticky notes and stick them to the poster/board under the appropriate heading. Draw their attention to the third section of the poster/board that will be the focus of the final task. That way they will be offered the “big picture” of the session, which is helpful for many learners (including many dyslexic learners).

Whole class discussion about the poster.

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Trainees should remember what they have learnt about possible problems a dyslexic learner may encounter while developing listening and speaking. You should refer to previous units and remind them of some signs that have been mentioned before. Then they should share their ideas with a partner.

**STEP 2** Trainees write what they already know about teaching listening and speaking on the yellow sticky notes and what they would like to learn about it on the green sticky notes and stick them on the poster/board.

**STEP 3** Trainees read the sticky notes and suggest which ideas on the yellow ones can be used to answer the questions on the green ones. Trainer facilitates the discussion. The outcome of this part should be the focus on the questions/areas (green sticky notes) that have not been answered.  
You should not answer the questions yet; the trainees will hopefully learn the answers throughout the session and if not, you will have a chance to tackle some of the problematic areas in the final reflection.

**Task 2** Lead-in into a listening task

**Duration of the task:** 10 minutes

**Preparation:** Class set of pictures and words (Unit 8 Appendix 1)

**Classroom management:** Pre-listening – whole class

**Task description**

In this task we will use the technique of a “loop input” as defined by Woodward (Woodward, T. (1992) *Ways of Training*. Harlow: Longman, pp. 48, 49). The trainees are expected to follow the content of the listening but at the same time they focus on the way the task is organized. They will also be asked to comment on this in Task 3 Step 2.

**STEP 1** Pre-listening – show 6 pictures and elicit what trainees can see (Unit 8 Appendix 1). Prepare word cards and ask the trainees to match the expressions to the pictures. Let the trainees speculate which of those pictures can be associated with helpful and supportive listening and speaking practice. Sort the pictures according to the trainees’ suggestions on the board.

Tell them that the activity will prepare them for listening to an interview with an English teacher who has had experience teaching dyslexic learners in her classes.

**Key for the matching:** 1A, 2C, 3E, 4G, 5B, 6F, 7D

**Note:** The trainees can use their own sets of pictures.

**Task 3** An interview with an English teacher

**Duration of the task:** 20 minutes

**Preparation:**

Recording in Unit 8 Appendix 8, copies of Unit 8 Appendices 1 to 3 and Appendix 7 with the tapescript of the interview.

Class set of pictures and words (Unit 8 Appendix 1)

Unit 8 Appendix 2

Exercise 1 – each member of the group will get one copy

Exercise 2 – each member of the group will get one copy

Exercise 3 – one set of examples of activities for a group

**Classroom management:**

While-listening – ask the trainees to pair check prior to a whole class check; where appropriate they work in groups

Post-listening – trainees work in pairs

Re-cap – whole class

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Ask the trainees to listen to the recording for the first time and check whether their suggestions were similar or different from what was said in the interview.  
Let them check in pairs before they check all together.

**STEP 2** Divide the trainees into three groups. Group 1 will focus on class management, group 2 on ways of checking comprehension and group 3 on developing speaking. Each group will get a different exercise to do. Let them read the instructions first; check whether they know what to do. Ask them to listen to the recording for the second time and do the exercises in groups.

**STEP 3** Ask the trainees to make new groups of three; each member had a different exercise. They discuss what they have learnt and how useful their exercise was.

**STEP 4** Re-cap the stages of the whole of Task 3, elicit why they might be beneficial for dyslexic learners. Try to hand over the initiative to the trainees. Hand out the checklist of principles for teaching listening and speaking (Unit 8 Appendix 3) which they can compare with what they have mentioned in the discussion. They can add more principles to the list.

**Notes/model answers: (where relevant)**

**Step 1 – model answers:**

Helpful - clear instructions, differentiation, TPR, relaxed atmosphere, pair work

Less helpful – long concentration, dictations

You can also elicit whether these categories are true both for listening and speaking or just for one of them.

**Step 2 Key:**

**Group 1 - Class management**

Listen and decide whether the following statements are true **(T)** or false **(F)**

Dyslexic students should not be bothered with the aims of the listening tasks. **(F)**

The instructions for the listening should be brief and quick. **(F)**

The teacher should always check whether the students understand what to do. **(T)**

Students should check their comprehension in pairs first. **(T)**

The teacher should try to set up a safe learning environment both for the speaking and listening practice. **(T)**

Learners should have enough time to prepare for the speaking and listening and teachers should provide a lot of support. **(T)**

**Group 2 – Ways of checking comprehension – possible answers**

*Listen and continue with the following list of ways of comprehension check.*

- Physical response, gestures, movements
- Organizing pictures
- Draw sketches
- Check orally
- Use students' mother tongue in monolingual classes
- Break tasks into small portions
- Check in pairs/groups first
- Use gapped texts instead of dictations
- Give enough time
- Differentiate tasks

**Group 3 – Developing speaking**

*Listen and organise the speaking activities according to the order they appear in the text.*

Drilling and memorizing

Drama activities

Information gap activities

Role-plays

Arts and crafts activities

**Step 4 Key:**

Order of the stages:

Pre-listening:

**What:** speculating about the topic, using visuals

**Why:** to initiate interest, to involve learners, to prepare key lexis, to activate prior knowledge

While-listening:

Listening 1

**What:** checking predictions, visual support – listening for general understanding

**Why:** beginning from an easy task, understanding familiar key words

(Alternative: one more listening with ordering pictures/pieces of information, more details needed)

**Why:** grading the task, easy response - only numbers or moving pictures)

Listening 2

**What:** three different tasks (2 text-based, 1 material based), listening for details

**Why:** differentiating the tasks (different groups can work on different tasks)

Post listening:

**What:** speaking – discussion

**Why:** using the familiar language for production

**Teaching tips:**

If you feel you might be pressed for time, copy the listening stages listed above onto a slide and ask trainees to comment on them with dyslexic students in mind.

**Task 4 Planning a listening and speaking activity**

**Duration of the task:** 50 minutes

**Preparation:**

Tapescripts and recordings (optional) for different groups of learners (pre-primary, primary, lower-secondary, upper-secondary), Unit 8 Appendix 4 (one tapescript + recording for each group), and copies of Unit 8 Appendix 5 for all trainees (Listening and speaking activity template).

**Classroom management:**

4 groups according to their target learners

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Ask trainees to get into four groups according to the age of learners they teach. Give them listening tapescripts to choose from (Unit 8 Appendix 4). Ask what criteria they need to bear in mind while choosing the tapescripts. Check their choices with the groups, they should mention reasons (situations, topics, level of difficulty, genre of the text....). Tell them that they will design their own teaching plan with the text. They should follow the checklist of principles and they should integrate listening and speaking activities. They note down their plans into the Listening and speaking activity template. Set the time frame, monitor and help if necessary.

**STEP 2** Short presentations. Remind trainees 5 minutes before the time limit and say that they are going to present their plans. For each stage they should mention how they would accommodate dyslexic learners in the lesson.

**Notes/model answers: (where relevant)**

See the model answers in Unit 8 Appendix 6 - Examples of listening and speaking activities.

**Alternatives:**

You can use your own texts, and/or you can have fewer groups according to the levels they teach.

## Task 5 KWL final reflection

**Duration of the task:** 20 minutes

**Preparation:** Orange sticky notes, KWL poster

**Classroom management:** Whole class

### Task description

**STEP 1** Ask the trainees to approach the poster and look at the questions they had at the beginning of the session. Discuss whether any of them have been answered and how. Suggest further reading for those that are still problematic. Tell the trainees to write three things they have learnt from the session on the orange sticky notes and stick them onto the poster/board.

**STEP 2** Trainees will read the orange sticky notes and share their knowledge.

### List of resources

 Kormos, J., & Smith, A. M. (2011). *Teaching languages to learners with specific learning difficulties*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. Chapters 4 and 7.

Chapter 4 focuses on the cognitive and emotional aspects of language learning and includes information about the difficulties of learners with dyslexia with producing and understanding oral texts. Chapter 7 discusses useful principles and techniques in teaching listening and speaking to dyslexic learners.

 Nijakowska, J. (2010). *Dyslexia in the foreign language classroom*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. Chapter 5. Chapter 5 introduces information concerning the principles of the Multisensory Structured Learning Approach and useful accommodation techniques.

 Schneider, E., & Crombie, M., I. (2003) *Dyslexia and Foreign Language Learning*. London: David Fulton Publishers. Chapters 2 and 4.

Chapter 5 discusses barriers to foreign language learning in dyslexic learners. Chapter 4 introduces useful ideas that help teachers to offer learners with dyslexia opportunities of success in foreign language learning.

 <http://www.ldonline.org/article/5885/>

LDonline is a useful webpage where teachers can find scholarly articles on learning disabilities and ADHD as well as tips and checklists for teachers. This link provides a checklist of suggestions for an effective classroom management.

**UNIT 9****Techniques for teaching reading and writing****Introduction**

The aim of this unit is to familiarize trainees with ways to teach reading and writing to learners with specific learning differences (SpLD). The trainees will learn how to choose and adjust texts for reading and how to accommodate learners with SpLD in reading and writing activities.

**Aims of the unit:**

- to raise trainees' awareness of difficulties that learners with SpLD can encounter while reading and writing in English
- to learn how to choose and adapt texts for reading
- to investigate the steps that a reading and writing lesson should include
- to suggest accommodations for learners with SpLD in reading and writing activities

**Tasks the trainees will do:**

- categorise the difficulties that learners with SpLD can encounter while reading and writing in English
- evaluate and adapt a reading text
- organize the stages of a reading lesson and suggest possible accommodations for learners with SpLD
- plan a writing lesson with adjustments for learners with SpLD
- reflect on what they have learnt

## Task 1 Categorization of difficulties experienced in reading and writing

**Duration of the task:** 15 minutes

**Preparation:** Paper for preparing Venn diagrams

### Classroom management:

- Step 1. pair work
- Step 2. pair work
- Step 3. whole group

### Task description

**STEP 1** Trainees work in pairs and categorise the possible difficulties learners with SpLD(s) can encounter when reading and writing in English. The categories are Reading, Writing or Both.

**STEP 2** Trainees compare their answers and prepare a big Venn diagram on the board or on a poster. See Unit 9 Appendix 1 for a model Venn Diagram.

### Notes

Step 1. KEY (Suggested answers. Please note the aim was to discuss the issues, not to come to the “only” correct conclusion.)

#### BOTH:

- slower speed
- limited L2 vocabulary
- insufficient knowledge of syntax
- insufficient knowledge of morphology
- lack of metacognitive strategies (eg. lack of reading strategies, self correction strategies in writing)
- difficulties with establishing letter-sound correspondences
- mixing up similar words

#### READING:

- not having enough attention for decoding meaning
- problems with reading ‘visually challenging’ materials
- problems with reading their own handwriting

#### WRITING:

- difficulties with ordering ideas

**Task 2** Reading text evaluation and adaptation

**Duration of the task:** 25 minutes

**Preparation:**

Ideally you will need computers with Internet access; if you do not have them, you have to print the text of the tale (one copy per trainee). You should make yourself familiar with Unit 9 Appendix 2 (Power Point Presentation about the quality of a reading text) and prepare viewing on a data projector.

**Classroom management:**

- Step 1 – individual, silent reading, pairs
- Step 2 – pair work, whole group discussion

**Task description****STEP 1**

Introduce the situation by asking whether the trainees are involved in any international projects with their learners.

The description of the situation:

Imagine that your class of 13-year-old, lower-intermediate learners, including four learners with SpLD, has a partnership with a class from a school in Brno (Czech Republic). You work on a project together and you are planning a visit to Brno. In one of the lessons you want to use a tale about Brno for initiating interest in the partners' city and developing reading skills with your learners. Look at the following webpage and read the tale.

 <http://www2.brno.cz/index.php?lan=en&navo1=2222&navo2=5&navo3=86&navo4=143>

**STEP 2** Show the PPP slide by slide, give the trainees time to critically evaluate the text which they have just read. They should bear in mind the principles and they should suggest some changes.

*Some suggestions:*

*Contents of the text – may be appropriate for the target group, they usually enjoy stories and tales, betting is popular among children, the fact that they are getting ready for a visit can motivate them as well.*

*Length – the story is not very long but it needs division into sections or paragraphs (minimum three paragraphs – bet, action, after the success)*

*Language quality – check content words which carry the meaning and prepare a glossary of those that are necessary, get rid of some words that are not that important, decide which words or expressions you would pre-teach and how*

*Grammar – simplify some complex structures*

*Layout – divide the text into paragraphs, change the font, illustrate with more pictures, convert it into an audio file.*

### Task 3 Stages of a reading lesson

**Duration of the task:** 20 minutes

**Preparation:**

Cut up the stages of the lesson so that the trainees can move with them (one set per pair). Make yourself familiar with the principles of teaching reading to learners with SpLD (Unit 9 Appendix 3).

**Classroom management:**

- Step 1 – pairs
- Step 2 – groups of 4

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Ask trainees how they teach reading in their English classes. Try to elicit pre-, while- and post-reading stages. Tell them to imagine that they are using the tale for teaching reading. Give them the cut-up stages of the lesson and ask them to arrange them so that they follow the principles of teaching reading generally and at the same time they should respect the needs of dyslexic learners. They will work in pairs.

- A: Students read the text quickly to find out whether their predictions were correct.  
Dyslexic learners: Provide an adjusted version of the text, the glossary of words, highlight the words that are on the board in the text.
- B: Learners read the text again and highlight all important verbs that describe the story line in the text.
- C: Students talk about unusual bets they know about.
- D: Bring visual representations of key expressions (wheel, bet, wheelwright, to roll, city gate, town hall, thaler, mayor, devil) and say them in English. (Check the meaning of the words through translation. Match the pictures with the written forms of the words on the board and practise reading them.
- E: Students use the verbs and pictures to retell the story in their own words.
- F: Ask students to speculate about the content of the tale they will read based on the expressions. Write their suggestions on the board.
- G: Students work in groups; they get 4 cartoon pictures illustrating the events from the story (neighbours chatting in a pub, wheelwright working hard, wheelwright rolling the wheel through the city gate and sad wheelwright sitting and doing nothing). They read the story again and sort the pictures in chronological order.  
Dyslexic learners: provide scissors to cut the story into pieces so that they can match the pieces of text with the pictures.
- H: Tell the learners that they are going to read a tale from the city where they have their partner school. Explain the word 'tale' by giving examples from their context and ask them to share their favourite tales.

**STEP 2** Trainees will compare their order with another pair. They will try to justify their order. The trainer will monitor the work and help by asking guiding questions. After the trainees organize their stages, the trainer will present the PPP (Unit 9 Appendix 3). Trainees will reorganize the stages if necessary and they will say how each stage helps learners with SpLD to develop their reading skills.

Recommended order of stages: H, D, F, A, G, B, E, C

Possible answers:

H – to activate the learners’ knowledge of the genre characteristics, to stimulate expectations, to motivate to read

D – to help with lower-order decoding (pre-teaching vocabulary), to address visual and auditory learners, to practise letter-sound-meaning correspondence

F – to involve learners, to practise making predictions

A – to practise gist reading for global understanding

G – to divide the text into sections, to use illustrations to promote understanding

B – to identify key verbs in the text that carry the meaning and help understand the storyline, to focus on the use of the simple past tense

E – to use the language of the tale for further language production, to scaffold the oral production with visual and verbal hints

C – to personalize the plot of the story

#### Task 4 Planning a writing lesson

**Duration of the task:** 30 minutes

**Preparation:** Preparation: you can prepare examples of A,B and C in Step 2 exercise.

**Classroom management:**

- Step 1 – individuals, whole class
- Step 2 – individuals or pairs

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Draw the trainees’ attention to the stages of the writing lesson and possible accommodation techniques they could use with dyslexic learners. Ask them to match the stages and the techniques. They may use one technique more than once. They can come up with their own accommodation techniques as well.

Below are the stages of the writing lesson :

1. presenting the task
2. collecting ideas for the task
3. the process of writing
4. self-correction
5. feedback

Accommodation techniques:

- A. text to speech software
- B. voice recognition software
- C. spell checker
- D. mindmaps for brainstorming
- E. pre-teaching of new words
- F. do not use a red pencil to circle the mistakes

Let trainees compare the matches in pairs and then check in the whole group.

Possible matches:

- 1 A, E
- 2 D,E, B
- 3 B
- 4 C, A
- 5 F

Trainees may become interested in new technologies. You can suggest some useful examples.

## STEP 2

Ask the trainees to plan a writing lesson that would be a follow-up after the reading lesson in Task 3. They should follow the stages in Step 1.

Before they begin their planning, they should look at the following link:

 <http://speialed.about.com/od/readingliteracy/a/improving-writing-dyslexia.htm>

and choose three more accommodation techniques mentioned in the article. They should use them in their lesson plan. They can compare their lesson plans.

### Example lesson plan:

#### Writing lesson plan

Aim: to write a tale that is connected with the place where students live

Preparation: pictures of places that are connected with the local tales, cameras, guidebooks, webpages. Field trip (before the lesson – the students will do sightseeing in their town. They visit sights that are connected with famous tales. They use a guidebook about their town or information from the website).

Stages of the lesson (The stages correspond with those in Task 4, Step 1)

### **Stage 1 Presenting the task**

Teacher introduces the task: Write a tale from your town that might be interesting for your partners in Brno.

### **Stage 2 Collecting ideas for the task**

Teacher shows the pictures of the sights to remind the students. Each individual will choose the one that they find most interesting for their partner peers.

Teacher shows some tales in a guidebook, leaflets or on a website. Students comment on the layout and structure.

Teacher elicits the parts of the tale – beginning, plot and end. Teacher draws a diagram with the proportions of the parts on the board (piechart or barchart).

### **Stage 3 The process of writing**

Students write events of their tale into each part of the diagram. Teacher monitors the work and helps with the language. Students write their tales using their planning diagrams.

### **Stage 4 Self-correction**

When they finish, they swap their tales and read them. They give each other feedback on the clarity of the events in the tale.

Teacher asks the students to check all the verbs in the tales (are they in the past simple tense?).

Teacher asks the students to use a spell check for the spelling.

### **Stage 3 The process of writing**

Students decide how they want to present their tales – in a printed copy with pictures as in guidebooks, as an audio with Power point presentation or as a part of website. They take their own pictures of the sights.

Students prepare their pieces of writing and present them in the session.

### **Stage 5 Feedback**

Teacher gives feedback on the content and the form of the tale.

Possible answers:

**Stage 1** – make the task relevant, clear and interesting for the learners, use some pre-teaching activities, record the task for dyslexic learners or use a text to speech software

**Stage 2** – let students plan their writing orally (or use a mind map) and record their ideas, use multi-sensory approach (bring real objects, take students to different places...), plan cooperatively

**Stage 3** –If it is necessary, let the students type their piece of writing or use a voice recognition software, ignore grammar, spelling in the first drafts, allow students to use pictures, music, self-publishing so that they can be proud of the product, use cooperative writing

**Stage 4** – read out loud the student's writing, provide language support

**Stage 5** – give sensitive feedback, don't correct in red, do not circle mistakes but cross them, give ongoing feedback

**Alternatives:** Step 2 can be set as homework.

**Task 5** Final task – reflection on the Venn diagram

**Duration of the task:** 10 minutes

**Preparation:** Poster or board Venn diagram, sticky notes

**Classroom management:** Whole group

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Look at the Venn diagram and say how many problems mentioned in it we have covered by our LP with accommodations. Write down the accommodations on sticky notes and stick them on the poster/board.

**STEP 2** What's your opinion of the accommodations? Are they easy to use in a mainstream classroom? If not, do you have any practical ideas to overcome the difficulties with application of the accommodation?

Initiate discussion, suggest readings.

## List of resources

 Kormos, J., & Smith, A. M. (2012). *Teaching languages to learners with specific learning difficulties*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. Chapter 7, parts – Teaching reading and Teaching writing, pp. 135-137, pp. 141 -143

The passages from Chapter 7 include a concise and clear summary of the principles that FL teachers should bear in mind while planning their lessons with dyslexic learners.

 Schneider, E., & Crombie, M. (2003). *Dyslexia and foreign language learning*. London: David Fulton Publishers.

Chapters 3 and 6 point out useful tips for teaching reading and writing.

 <http://www.robobrace.org/AboutRoboBraille>

It is a non-commercial webpage that helps teachers convert texts in different formats so that they can be used with learners with SpLD.

 <http://specialed.about.com/od/readingliteracy/a/improving-writing-dyslexia.htm>

It is a webpage providing ideas for special education teachers.

### Resources used:

 <http://www2.brno.cz/index.php?lan=en&nav01=2222&nav02=5&nav03=86&nav04=143>

A city of Brno webpage.

### Other resources to be used for inspiration:

 <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/fractured-fairy-tales-30062.html>

An inspiring webpage that provides educators, parents, and afterschool professionals with access to the highest quality practices in reading and language arts instruction by offering the very best in free materials.

 <http://younglearners.eslreading.org/stories/writeastory/>

A free webpage that compiles useful tips and materials for reading and writing with young language learners.

 [http://www.englishraven.com/Writing\\_workshopA\\_228953.pdf](http://www.englishraven.com/Writing_workshopA_228953.pdf)

A web-based collection of resources, materials and teaching ideas for EFL/ESL. The resources are practical and innovative. The activity will lead the learners through the process of writing.

**UNIT 10****The assessment of dyslexic language learners****Introduction**

This unit discusses what kinds of assessment methods and tasks can help dyslexic language learners to display their foreign language knowledge and what types of accommodations are useful to provide a fair assessment of the abilities of dyslexic language learners. This unit considers the basic criteria for the reliability and validity of language tests and how they interrelate with concepts of fairness in language testing.

**Aims of the unit:**

- To gain an understanding of basic concepts of test fairness
- To raise awareness of the types of accommodations that might be useful for dyslexic test takers
- To apply knowledge of the nature of dyslexic difficulties and concepts of language testing to designing and evaluating assessment tasks

**Tasks the trainees will do:**

- review a foreign language exam/test paper and discuss what kinds of difficulties dyslexic language learners might experience when taking the exam/test paper.
- listen to a lecture on basic concepts of test fairness and accommodating dyslexic learners in high-stakes foreign language tests.
- design an assessment task for dyslexic language learners and present it to the class
- review and discuss the suitability of the accommodations provided by a national/international exam board (optional task)

**Task 1** Categorization of difficulties experienced in reading and writing

**Duration of the task:** 30 - 40 minutes

**Preparation:**

Find a suitable exam or test paper that is relevant in the trainees' context. It can be an end of unit achievement test from a teacher's handbook, a task set for a national exam or an international exam or an end of term or year test prepared by a teacher. You can also ask the trainees to bring their own tests. Cambridge ESOL provides a wide variety of exams for an array of age groups and proficiency levels, and sample papers are available here:  <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/prepare-and-practise/find-free-resources/>.

**Classroom management:** Groupwork

**Task description**

- STEP 1** Trainees work in groups and make a list of the strengths and weaknesses of dyslexic language learners in the following areas:
- Time management and attention span
  - Different foreign language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening, spelling)

**STEP 2** Students read the exam/test paper.

**STEP 3** Trainees work in the same group as they did in Step 1. Based on the list they prepared in Step 1, they fill in the following table about the potential difficulties students might experience when taking the selected exam/test. If they think some aspects of the exam/test do not cause any difficulties for dyslexic students, they can write NA (not applicable) in the relevant box.

Table 10.1. Potential difficulties of dyslexic students in taking exams/tests

	Difficulties dyslexic learners might experience
Time need to complete the task	
Formatting and layout of the exam/test	
Clarity and length of instructions of what to do in the task	
Types of tasks students have to do	
Length and type of reponse needed in the tasks	

**Notes/model answers :**

The model answers refer to the KET for Schools test.

(downloadable  <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-qualifications/key/how-to-prepare/>).

This test is designed for teenage school children at pre-intermediate level.

Table 10.1. Potential difficulties of dyslexic students in taking exams/tests

	Difficulties dyslexic learners might experience
Time need to complete the task	Dyslexic students might not find the time sufficient to complete all the tasks.
Formatting and layout of the exam/test	The different and quite dense writing in the notices in Q1-5 might be difficult to read for dyslexic students. The layout with text on both sides in Qs 11-15 might potentially be confusing. It is good that there are pictures accompanying the reading texts and the text is not too densely printed in Qs 21-35. Dyslexic students might find it difficult to move back and forth from the text to the choice of words in Qs 28-35.
Clarity and length of instructions of what to do in the task	Dyslexic students might find multiple choice questions difficult (Qs 6-15). Dyslexic student might also face problems deciding on information that is correct/wrong or not stated in a text (Qs 21-27). Choosing the right words to fit in a text might be difficult (Qs 28-35). Filling in missing words in a reading text might be challenging as both reading and writing are involved in this task. In Qs 51-55 students might make mistakes in copying numbers.
Types of tasks students have to do	Instructions for Q1-5 might be difficult to understand.
Length and type of response needed in the tasks	It is good students only have to select the right answer in Qs 1-35 and they do not have to produce extended writing, but they might make mistakes when they transfer their answers to the answer sheet. Dyslexic students might know the words in Qs 36-50, but they might not be able to spell them correctly. Same problem might occur in Qs 51-55. Dyslexic students might find it difficult to produce a short written text under time constraints. Issues with the legibility of handwriting might arise.

**Alternatives:** You can set Steps 1-3 as homework if you distribute the test before the lesson, or if you ask students to work on their own tests.

You can also give groups different tests to work on and include an additional final stage where every group presents their test and their views on the test.

**Task 2** Lecture on the assessment of dyslexic language learners

**Duration of the task:** 30 - 35 minutes

**Preparation:**

not needed

**Classroom management:**

Individual work

**Task description**

**STEP 1** Trainees work individually. Based on the table they completed in Task 1, they make a list of potential accommodations that might assist dyslexic language learners to display the best of their knowledge in a foreign language test/exam in general.

**STEP 2** Then they listen to the lecture on the basic principles of validity, reliability and test fairness and on accommodating dyslexic language learners in foreign language exams and class room testing contexts. The Powerpoint presentation outline can be found in Unit 10 Appendix 1 and the presentation with the text of the lecture in Unit 10 Appendix 2.

**STEP 3** Trainees check the list they compiled in Step 1 and add additional accommodations based on the lecture (see p. 9 of the lecture handout in Unit 10 Appendix 2).

Alternatives: Steps 1 and 3 can be done as pair - or groupwork.

### Task 3 Designing a dyslexia-friendly assessment task

**Duration of the task:** 40 - 45 minutes

**Preparation:**

not needed

**Classroom management:**

Group-work

**Task description**

**STEP 1**

Trainees work in groups and design one short language assessment task (a vocabulary quiz, a grammar test, a reading, speaking test etc.) that is suitable for dyslexic language learners at a selected level of proficiency and of a particular age. In designing the task, please consider the following:

Questions to consider in selecting and designing assessment tasks for students with dyslexia (based on Kormos & Smith, 2012, p.160)

- Does the task measure the targeted skill or knowledge?
- Is the task enjoyable and motivating?
- Is the task relevant for the students?
- Can the task be marked reliably?
- What kind of difficulties might students with dyslexia experience when doing the task?
- Is the time needed to complete the task sufficient for students with dyslexia?
- Are the instructions clear?
- Is the level of difficulty appropriate?

**STEP 2**

Trainees present the task to another group and listen to the presentation of the other group.

**STEP 3**

Then they evaluate the task the other group designed based on the list of questions in Step 1. They give a brief feedback report to the group whose task they evaluated.

**STEP 4**

Based on the report the groups receive, trainees prepare a final version of the task.

**STEP 5**

**Optional task:** Trainees try out the task and report on how it worked in the classroom.

**Notes/model answers :** The model test can be found in Unit 10 Appendix 3.

**Alternatives:** (this is optional) The trainer might want to restrict the type of task groups design so that each group devises the same type of task. Another possibility is to assign different types of tasks to the different group so that trainees see a number of possible task-types. Trainees might be encouraged to design alternative forms of assessment such as portfolios.

Step 2 can be set up as a presentation session for the whole class if there is sufficient time.

Step 3 can involve written feedback to the group presentation.

Parts of the task, such as Step 4, can be set as homework.

*Potential issues that might arise:* Designing reliable and valid test tasks is difficult and time-consuming; therefore students might be encouraged to choose a simple task-type and design just a few test items.

## Task 4 Optional - Accommodations in national and international exams

**Duration of the task:** 20 minutes

### **Preparation:**

Students need to search for information on accommodations before the class or they need to have computer/mobile technology access to the Internet to find the information in class. Alternatively photocopies of access arrangements by international exam boards might need to be provided to the trainees.

### **Classroom management:**

Individual work or groupwork

### **Task description**

#### **STEP 1**

Trainees select a national or an international foreign language exam that is relevant in their teaching context. They find out if there is any description of the accommodations offered by the exam board. As an example they might use the following document on accommodations issued by a major international exam board

 <http://www.cambridgeesol.org/exams/special-circumstances/learning-dyslexia.html>).

**STEP 2**

Trainees write a critical review of the accommodations provided by the exam board. They can consider the following questions:

- Are the accommodations helpful for dyslexic learners?
- Do the students need any training in using these accommodations?
- Are there any practical constraints associated with using these accommodations?
- Are there any additional accommodations that could be offered that do not affect the validity of the exam?

**Model answer :**

The model answer refers to the accommodations provided by Cambridge ESOL exams

(see  <http://www.cambridgeesol.org/exams/special-circumstances/learning-dyslexia.html>)

**Model answer:**

- Are the accommodations helpful for dyslexic learners?

Overall the accommodations are helpful, but some issues might arise:

- specific learning differences are treated as medical conditions
  - in some countries obtaining certification that was issued within two years might be expensive
- Do the students need any training in using these accommodations?  
Students might not type well enough to be able to take advantage of using word processors. Students might need practice working with a copier or transcriber.
  - Are there any practical constraints associated with using these accommodations?  
As the document states, not every center is able to provide all the necessary accommodations, and students might need to travel far to take the test under appropriate circumstances.
  - Are there any additional accommodations that could be offered that do not affect the validity of the exam?  
For students who have difficulties with concentration and attention control a prompter might be useful who could regularly remind them to stay focused on task.

**Alternatives:** As already mentioned above, this task can be set up in a number of different ways. Students can do the entire task as homework and bring their written review to class. Then they can discuss their reviews in groups.

Alternatively the trainer can provide copies of access arrangements by different international exam boards and students can discuss these in groups. Trainees can also use computers/mobile learning technology to find the relevant information on the Internet in class.

## List of resources

Special Connections. (2005a) *Choosing and using accommodations: IEP team considerations*. Lawrence, KS: Special Connections, University of Kansas.

 <http://nichcy.org/wp-content/uploads/docs/eeaccommodations.pdf>

A very useful website on how to select accommodations for learners with a variety of special needs.

 Thompson, S., Blount, A. and Thurlow, M. (2002) *A summary of research on the effects of test accommodations: 1999 through 2001* (Tech. Rep. 34). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes.  <http://education.umn.edu/NCEO/OnlinePubs/Technical34.htm>

This is a useful summary of research on accommodations in general educational assessment.

# Notes

# Notes

Layout: LABOR 2 and Volkshochschule im Landkreis Cham e.V.

