

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS IN CHILDREN WITH DYSLEXIA AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

SAILAJA CHENNAT

Research Scholar, Associate Professor, Central Institute of Education, University of Delhi, Delhi, India

ABSTRACT

A specific learning disability is a neurological condition that affects a child's brain and impairs his ability to carry out one or many specific tasks. These tasks include reading comprehension, writing, speaking, listening, and calculating. A child with learning disability is neither slow nor mentally retarded. An affected child can have normal or above average intelligence. This is why a child with a learning disability is often wrongly labelled as being smart but lazy. Dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyspraxia are classifications under specific learning disability based on the nature and needs. Of these, dyslexia is the focus of this study. Dyslexia is a language based disability, related specifically to reading comprehension although reading comprehension affects writing to a great extent and hence it is difficult to clearly truncate one from the other. This research study is an attempt to analyse the classroom strategies used by teachers of class V to VII to support children with dyslexia (CWD) in a school of Delhi, for developing language, skills in English. Situating the study in an interpretive paradigm, a purely qualitative approach was followed to collect and analyse the data from the field. Out of a pool of five non- Govt. Schools in Delhi with identified CWD, one school which was open to such a study was chosen for field work. Data was collected by observing classroom transactions related to English language in grades 4 to 7 in the school. Triangulation of data was carried out through interactions with the Head, teachers, special educator and students although the major sources of data were classroom observations and interactions with the English teachers. Care was taken to select English prose and grammar classes of all the teachers for observation. The data analysis brought an insightful picture of the philosophy and practice of education of CWD of the school vis-à-vis learning of English language skills. It is evident that this study results have implications for teacher education, both pre and in-service and also for the Heads of schools for organising refresher courses for teachers to be empowered with the specialised classroom strategies for addressing the needs of CWD.

KEYWORDS: Language Based Disability, Dyslexia, Language Skills in English, Interventions, Specific and General Classroom Strategies, Accommodation, Modification