Teaching Foreign Languages to Learners with Special Educational Needs

Silvia Pokrivčáková et al.

e-textbook for foreign language teachers

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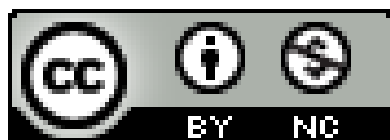
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Introduction

The e-textbook *Teaching Foreign Languages to Learners with Special Educational Needs* is the last of the series of three modern university textbooks/methodological manuals for teacher-training courses provided by the Department of Language Pedagogy and Intercultural Studies at the Faculty of Education, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra which came to existence as results of the project KEGA 036UKF-4/2013 "Creating textbooks and multimedia courses for a new study programme as a means of internationalization of foreign language teacher training" funded by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic. The textbook is accompanied by the interactive Moodle course.

Teaching foreign languages to learners with special educational needs (SENs) has become one of the top challenges of contemporary foreign language education and its methodology. It is the main reason why future and in-practice teachers should be well informed about various SENs and the principles how to teach and support SEN learners in foreign language classes.

The authors – university teachers and teacher trainers - wrote their chapters with an intention to modernise and up-date both the content and methodology of the contemporary teacher-training courses.

Authors

1 Teaching foreign languages to learners with special educational needs in Slovakia

Silvia Pokrivčáková

Objectives

Foreign language education of learners with special educational needs is one of the fields of language pedagogy which constantly demand more attention from teachers, researchers, teacher trainers, education-system decision-makers and managers. Despite the growing number of research outputs, their systematic summary is still necessary. The objective of this chapter is to offer a systematic overview of the current status and organization of foreign language education provided to learners with special educational needs in Slovakia. Detailed attention is paid to 3 defined areas: the legal framework and organization of foreign language education of learners with special educational needs in Slovakia; b) the extent of support provided to foreign language teachers; and c) the reflection of Slovak language education of learners with special educational needs in research.

Think and discuss!

Before learning the facts from the chapter, try to summarise your own knowledge, opinions, believes, attitudes, and even prejudices on learners with special educational needs.

1. Work in groups of four.
2. Cut all the worksheets A, B and C (appendices 1-3) into individual pieces.
3. Based on your previous knowledge or believes and opinions **create a poster or a commented video presentation** on teaching foreign languages in an inclusive classroom with learners with various special needs. You should use most of pieces of worksheets A, B, and C (some of the expressions are incorrect and based on prejudices solely). You may also use any other additional materials and photos from other sources. Your poster/videopresentation should consist of the following 5 sections:
   a) dyslectic learners
   b) dysgraphic learners
   c) learners with ADD/ADHD
   d) talented learners
4. Display/present your product and discuss it with other groups.

Introduction

One of the most obvious aspects of humanistic education is how it treats those who are somehow different, standing out from the mainstream that defines general learning objectives and curriculum. A rather sizable subgroup of these "different" learners are learners with special educational needs, which in this chapter are seen in the context of foreign language education.

Schwarz (1997, p. 1), one of the pioneers in research on foreign language education of learners with special needs, once aptly expressed the reason why more interest should be paid to the area of foreign language education to learners with SEN: "For the student unencumbered by a learning disability, foreign language study is indeed an enriching and rewarding experience. For the learning disabled student, however, it can be an unbelievably stressful and humiliating

experience, the opposite of what is intended". Ortiz (1998, p. 3) added that "these difficulties may become more serious over time if instruction is not modified to address the students' specific needs. Unless these students receive appropriate interventions, they will continue to struggle, and the gap between their achievement and that of their peers will widen over time".

Moreover, the possibility of the occurrence of a new type of disorder named "the foreign language learning disability" has been considered by both learning-disorders and foreign-language pedagogy sources (starting with Arries, 1999 and Sparks, Ganschow, & Javorsky, 1998).

The aim of the study is to introduce the situation in foreign language education of learners with special educational needs in Slovakia.

Defining the used terms

For the purposes of this paper we use the terminology as listed and defined in the Slovak School Act 245/2008, §2:

- **mainstream learners** are learners able to follow the curriculum without requiring any special treatment;
- **a learner with special educational needs** is a learner who has been <u>diagnosed</u> by the appointed institution (e.g. the Centre of Pedagogical and Psychological Consultancy and Prevention) as the one with SEN;
- **a special educational need** (SEN) is the learner's condition which requires modifications of content, forms, methods and approaches to the educational process which arises from the learner's health status, learning disabilities, or socially disadvantaged environment in which the learner lives.

Consequently, a learner with SEN is listed under one of more of the following categories:

a) **a disabled learner** (which might be an ill learner, or a learner with a mental, hearing, sight, or physical impairment; disturbed communication skill, autism or other pervasive developmental disorders, learning and attention disorders);

b) **a learner from a socially disadvantaged environment** (i.e. an environment which does not support learner's optimal development and progress, which may lead to a risk of learner's social exclusion);

c) **a gifted learner** (with above-average intellect, music or sport skills).

Mainstream learners	SEN learners
learners without any special educational requirements or the need of special educational treatment	health disabilities (both mental and physical)
	learning disabilities and disorders
	behaviour and attention disorders
	social exclusion
	gifted learners

Similarly to the previously published research study (Pokrivčáková, 2013), this chapter will seek the answers for the following questions:

1. How is foreign language education 'of learners with special educational needs' catered for in Slovak school legislation (the School Act, national curriculum, a reform conceptions)?
2. In which organizational forms, for which levels of education and in which types of school is foreign language education 'to learners with special educational needs' provided in Slovakia?
3. What professional and methodological support is provided to teachers of foreign languages?
4. How much is foreign language education of learners with SEN in Slovakia reflected in (and saturated by) the latest research findings?

To see the selected issues in their dynamical development, whenever possible, the current data (gained in 2014) will be compared with the data from 2009.

Foreign language education of learners with special educational needs reflected in Slovak school legislation and state pedagogical documents

Along with other European countries, foreign language education has become one of the priorities defined in Slovak school legislation. Changes in foreign language education have been in line with the long-lasting and systematic reform of Slovak school system (since 1989). The general aim of foreign language education in Slovakia has been highlighted in the basic document called *The Conception of Foreign Language Education at Primary and Secondary Schools* (Koncepcia..., 2007) as follows: "The general aim is to ensure reaching communicative levels B1 or B2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in the first foreign language and communicative levels A2/B1 according to CEFR for languages in the second foreign language by all learners in the Slovak Republic at the end of the secondary school" (Koncepcia.., 2007). The main aim of the conception was **to provide quality foreign language education for all primary and secondary learners, including those with special educational needs.** The other aims included the following: to unify foreign language syllabi at all types of schools; to maximize intensity and lower extensity (variants) of foreign language teaching programmes; to guarantee continuity of foreign language education in the first foreign language while passing from primary schools to secondary schools; and to ensure that secondary schools graduates will be able to communicate appropriately in two foreign languages to perform well in European labour markets.

The Conception… (2007) has established the minimal target model of foreign language education which was introduced into schools in September 2008. The model defines the compulsory start of foreign language education for all learners at least in the third year of the primary school. Learners are allowed to choose from 6 foreign languages: English, German, French, Russian, Spanish and Italian, according to the possibilities of the school. One of the later directives stated that all learners need to learn English as a first foreign language.

The model has been slightly altered (with a lower number of lessons in foreign languages per week) for schools where pupils learn in one of the minority languages used in Slovakia (Hungarian or Russinian).

The basic framework for the contemporary Slovak educational system is given by the School Act 245/2008. Along with other means of humanistic pedagogy, the act creates conditions for securing equal chances for learners with special educational needs in all areas of education, including foreign language education. The Slovak Republic pledged to do so in many international directives and doctrines, e.g. Declaration of the Rights of the Child, Declaration of Human Rights, Human Rights Agreement, Antidiscrimination Act 365/2004, etc. Despite many efforts and agreements, the contemporary situation of mainstream schools in Slovakia is not far from the one described in the publication entitled *Organisation of Provision to Support Inclusive Education* (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2013, p. 7-8): „Mainstream schools often find it difficult to provide high quality support for learners with disabilities. In some contexts, the systems of provision to support these learners and their families lack flexibility, failing to take local contexts and cultures into account. Learners' needs may not be identified and assessed until late in the learner's school career and parents may not have enough information about the services available, while bureaucracy and lack of funding may create further barriers. Further difficulties arise as the number of learners identified as having disabilities and being referred for statutory assessment increases – sometimes as a way for schools to obtain more support both in terms of human and economic resources."

Not so long ago (up to the end of the 1980s, or even later), these learners were most often placed in special schools segregated from mainstream schools. In 1993, *The Conception of special education development* (*Koncepcia*..., 1993) was published which established two system approaches to SEN learners´ education: a) further development of special schools and b) integrated education of SEN learners in regular classes within mainstream schools. The further step was secured by the document called *The Conception of educating learners with health impairment* (*Koncepcia*..., 2000). Based on the aforementioned documents, the contemporary Slovak school system distinguishes 3 main educational approaches to SEN learners' education

(School Act 245/2008): segregation, integration, and inclusion. In addition, several other forms of educational placement were made possible as well, e.g. special classes in mainstream schools, individual education in homecare, residential education, etc.

A. Segregation

Until 1989, segregation (grouping learners according to their health status, level of their skills, proficiency, competence, etc.) of learners with special educational needs was the dominant approach applied by Slovak education. These days, only learners with grave difficulties or handicaps are disengaged from mainstream education and attend special schools (both primary and secondary). The numbers of Slovak special schools and learners who attend them in 2009 and 2014 were gained from the statistical data provided in the official *Statistical Yearbook* (UIPŠ, 2015) and are indicated in Tab. 1. It is obvious that despite the general efforts to integrate/include as many learners with SEN to mainstream education, the number of special schools and their learners have been growing.

Special primary schools			Learners	
	2009	**2014**	**2009**	**2014**
public	185	178	15,740	21,619
private	9	10	201	332
church	5	6	263	349
total	**199**	**194**	**16,204**	**22,300**
Special secondary schools			Learners	
	2009	**2014**	**2009**	**2014**
public	112	127	5,824	5,986
private	2	6	21	199
church	5	5	47	71
total	**119**	**138**	**5,892**	**6,256**

Tab. 1: Comparison of numbers of special schools and their learners in Slovakia in 2009 and 2014

Foreign language education is not a compulsory part of their curriculum; however, learners can opt for learning two foreign languages. Tab 2 indicates numbers of learners who learned foreign languages at special schools. Again, the exact numbers were gained from the statistics provided in the official *Statistical Yearbook* (UIPŠ, 2015).

Special primary schools Learners learning a foreign languages in 2014							
	total	**English**	**German**	**Spanish**	**Russian**	**French**	**Italian**
public	4547*	4496	1504	9	426	37	29
private	639*	639	129	0	121	21	0
church	37*	37	15	0	0	0	0
total	**5223***	**5172**	**1648**	**9**	**547**	**58**	**29**

Tab. 2: Numbers of special primary school learners who learned foreign languages in 2014. Note: since learners usually learned the combination of two languages (English + other foreign language), the total numbers in the column do not equal the sums of numbers in individual lines.

	total	English	German	Spanish	Russian	French	Italian
Special secondary schools **Learners learning a foreign languages in 2014**							
public	1216*	1104	550	92	39	5	0
private	13*	13	13	0	0	0	0
church	10*	10	9	0	0	0	0
total	**1248***	**1127**	**572**	**92**	**39**	**5**	**0**

Tab. 3: Numbers of special secondary school learners who learned foreign languages in 2014. Note: since learners usually learned the combination of two languages (English + other foreign language), the total numbers in the column do not equal the sums of numbers in individual lines.

B. Integration

Integration as a form of education is based on involving learners with SEN in mainstream schools and classes for mainstream learners. They become regular students, however, they follow their individual educational plans (designed by both the CPPCs and the school), which means that SEN learners spend part of their school day with other learners within a regular school class completing the regular school tasks as others, and in the other part of the school day they learn individually (either in special classes with special teachers, or completing tasks in the mainstream classroom with their assistants). Integrated learners follow the same curriculum and target standards as the mainstream learners. The school management is responsible for equipping the classes and other school environment so it meets the special needs of these learners: modification of school buildings´ design, classroom equipment, compensating teaching strategies (c.f. Davis et al., 2004) and aids, etc. Typically, individual educational plans are designed by adapting educational objectives, reducing or extending content, applying different timing, etc. Learning two foreign languages is a standard requirement for this group of learners. The main expectation for their foreign language education is to compensate the existing defects to such an extent as to make it possible for them to manage at least basic syllabus, so that they could lead a productive and successful life in the future.

Table 3 shows the number of such "internally" integrated learners at all types of Slovak schools. It does not include either the number of talented or the number of learners from socially disadvantageous environment.

Type of school	Number of integrated learners	
	2009	2014
nursery schools	446	557
primary schools	20,246	21,168
grammar schools	518	909
Conservatories	44	53
secondary vocational schools	4,770	5,725
Total	**26,024**	**28,412**

Tab. 4: Number of integrated learners at Slovak schools

The official statistics by UIPŠ include education of learners who come from socially disadvantageous environment (for more see chapter 8) to the integrated form of education. The table 4 shows the number of such learners at nursery, primary and secondary schools in Slovakia in 2014 (numbers for 2009 were not available).

Type of school	Number of learners coming from socially disadvantaged environment in 2014
nursery schools	4324
primary schools	20,785
grammar schools	388
conservatories	0
secondary vocational schools	1932
total	**27429**

Tab. 5: Number of learners coming from socially disadvantaged environment in 2014

C. Inclusion

In accordance with the School Act 245/2008 all learners with special needs, whose learning performances and outcomes are not seriously affected and who do not require special attention of special educators/assistants, should be included into regular classes. It means that learners with SEN are involved in regular school activities during the whole school day. During the entire time, they are taught by mainstream teachers alongside mainstream learners, which brings important social consequences for the future life of all the subjects involved, since the experience usually has an enriching effect on both learners with SEN and mainstream learners. This type of organization relies heavily on the expertise of the teacher who must be skilled to differentiate the learning objectives and manage mixed-ability group activities, based on solidarity and as team work (for more see Ainscow, 2006; Bernard, 2000; Stubbs, 2002 and others).

Professional support for teachers

Slovak foreign language teachers are provided with several types of professional support while dealing with learners with SEN: institutional (ECC, MPC, universities), specialized teacher-training courses, conferences, specialized publications and other sources.

Centres of Pedagogical and Psychological Consultancy and Prevention (Centrá pedagogicko-psychologického poradenstva a prevencie) provide complex psychological, special-pedagogical and diagnostic consultancy to both schools/teachers and parents. CPPC´s services are free of charge for both. Regarding learners with SEN, they are responsible for diagnosing the learners and working out their individual educational plans. Moreover, they furnish schools/teachers with methodological instructions, special teaching materials and compensation aids if necessary.

Teachers, school managers and parents can also consult the **special needs counselling/resource centres** (centrá špeciálno-pedagogického poradenstva) which focus on searching for and diagnosing learners with various disabilities or disorders. Moreover, they assess the prognosis of learner´ progress and recommend the optimal form of intervention/education.

In addition, teachers may ask for help **school special pedagogues, school special psychologists, or educational consultants.**

Training teachers for teaching SEN learners

Methodological and Pedagogical Centres (MPC) are, in accord with Law 596/2003, the organizations under direct management of the Ministry of Education. They focus on in-service teacher's training and life-long education. So far, no courses have been organized to train foreign language teachers how to perform foreign language teaching to learners with SEN.

In Slovakia, there are 8 **universities** which have the accredited right to organize pre-service and in-service teacher training for foreign language teachers. Only a few of them (i.e. Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, University of Matej Bel in Banská Bystrica, Prešov University and the Catholic University in Ružomberok) provide their students with

courses or workshops on teaching foreign languages to learners with SEN. They also cooperate in organising **methodological workshops and research conferences** for teachers to inform them about the latest trends in the field.

Despite the fact that the fields of general special pedagogy and psychology have been well developed and saturated in Slovakia, only a few **publications** on the topic, which respond to the particular Slovak context, have been published so far. They range from theoretical expositions (Andreánsky & Andreánska, 2004; Homolová, 2010, Homolová & Ivančíková, 2013; Hvozdíková, 2010, 2011) to methodological and instructional (Jursová Zacharová, 2012; Pokrivčáková, 2009, 2012; Vačková & Zaťková, 2003). To evaluate this aspect of the support provided to teachers, it may be easily concluded that a limited number of publications on the topic is the obvious consequence of the lack of complex and regionally determined research.

The reflections of Slovak language education to learners with special educational needs in research

Institutional research on teaching foreign languages to learners with special educational needs in Slovakia is extremely rare, or even non-existent. It might be caused both by the extended requirements on the theoretical preparation of the researchers (they unquestioningly need to integrate knowledge and methodologies of several disciplines: language pedagogy, special pedagogy, special psychology, cognitive sciences, and others) and the problems related to finding subjects (and their parents) open to long-term cooperation.

Quite untraditionally, the most important sources of new knowledge in the field are research products by university students and in-practice teachers with the characteristics of academic research reports, such as doctoral theses, rigorosa theses, and diploma theses. Despite some limitations (e.g. reduced extent of samples), their methodological appropriateness was secured by the fact that their authors were supervised by expert teacher trainers and double-checked by university teachers.

Very recently, Hvozdíková (2013) published her doctoral thesis with the research results coming from an extended case study within which she longitudinally observed and tested a Slovak learner with ADHD (subject) who learned English as a foreign language. Her observations resulted in creating an intervention programme for the subject. While testing the effectiveness of the programme (based on using drama techniques), Hvozdíková monitored mainstream learners in the subject´s English class, as well. She found the positive impact of the programme on both the observed subject with ADHD and the mainstream rest of the English class.

In the following part of the paper, we present the results of the qualitative content analysis of 16 rigorosa and diploma theses (their list is given in Attachment 2) on the defined topic. 8 codes were identified and they are emphasized in bold and numbered in brackets.

A vast majority of the analysed theses focused on **types of learning disorders** (1) in classes and how they affect the learner's progress in learning foreign languages. Namely, dyslexia, dysgraphia, and ADHD occurred as the most necessary to be dealt with, since they directly affect the learner´s performance in the foreign language class. One diploma thesis studied the particularities of teaching English to blind learners and one diploma thesis considered the particularities of foreign language education of gifted learners. No thesis focused on teaching foreign languages to learners from socially disadvantaged environments.

All the analysed theses included surveys of various kinds (e.g. interviews and questionnaires) to identify **attitudes of foreign language teachers** (2) to foreign language education of learners with SEN. The teachers´ general attitude may be concluded as: "In theory everything is great, but in practice, it is very problematic". Teachers mostly expressed their frustration **c**aused mainly by the lack of proper training in the field, the lack of sufficient information, the lack of adapted teaching materials and the omniscient time stress.

What occurred in nearly all theses is the conclusion that foreign language teachers were extremely disappointed by the contemporary situation in classrooms, where more than two students typically require special educational care. However, foreign language teachers have never been **trained to deal with SEN learners** (3). They feel "caught in a trap", unprepared and

unsure of themselves. Teachers also mentioned frequently their fear that by adapting teaching techniques and tempo to learners with SEN, they would negatively influence and limit progress of mainstream learners. None of the teachers questioned in 16 theses expressed satisfaction or feelings of being successful.

Teachers also complained about less-than-ideal **cooperation with centres of pedagogical and psychological consultancy and prevention** and sometimes very problematic relationships with parents who are not willing to accept "otherness" and any special needs of their children. By comparing their statements to the programmes of CPPCPs, it is obvious that teachers expect very precise, tailor-made directions with concrete teaching techniques, while CPPCPs provide them only with general and framework instructions.

Observations described in the theses refer to the fact that in practice, integration and inclusion of learners with SEN usually ends behind the classroom´s door. The authors observed the wide spectrum of **incorrect or even harmful teachers´ acts** (5):

a) excessively tolerant approach where SEN learner do not need to do anything because " they have disorders",
b) formally tolerant approach where teachers do not apply any special care to SEN learners at the end of the school year while assessing if they improve SEN learners marks;
c) deprecating or doubting approach when teachers are not willing to accept SEN learners and to adapt their pedagogical performance so that these needs are fulfilled,
d) incorrect or even harmful re-education, e.g. when teachers ask dysgraphic learners to copy long writing exercise, etc.;
e) inappropriately comparing SEN learners' outcomes to those of mainstream learners;
f) "internal" segregation of SEN learners when they are constantly singled out and appointed different learning tasks.

It is important to emphasize the fact that teachers make these mistakes unintentionally. All of them expressed their wish and **determination to help SEN learners**. More probably, their actions resulted from the generally criticised **lack of information** and proper training. In this context it is very important that teachers also expressed that they are **willing to get new information** and undergo specialized teacher training.

Several general teaching tips how to help SEN learners in foreign language classrooms

A.   Dyslexia is one of the language-based learning disabilities (together with dysgraphia). It is a condition in the learner´s brain which causes problems with receiving and processing verbal signs (letters, words, sentences) and, as a result, the learner cannot comprehend the message easily or correctly. In a more complex explanation, "dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge" (International Dyslexia Association, n.d.).
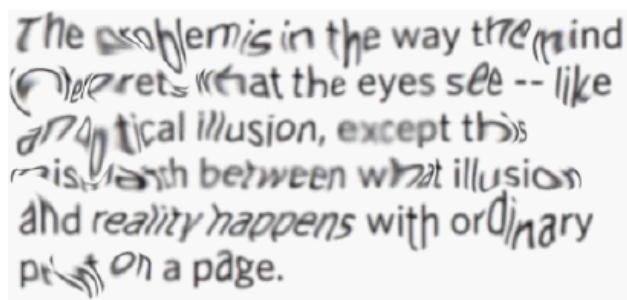
Picture 1: The example of dyslectic perception of a text (taken from Kaplan, 2014).

The recommended educational means

1. **Multisensoric approach integrates receiving information through seeing,** hearing, and moving or touching. In some cases, even smells and tastes can be incorporated into learning. This opens multiple pathways for the information to reach the learner´s brain and increases chances of a learner to comprehend the verbal message.

   2. Audiobooks
   Learners with learning disabilities can be successful when the proper tools and supports are used. One of such tools that can be used effectively both in and outside the classroom are audiobooks that allow learners read and hear the text at the same time (for more see Dafčíková, 2015; Gulliver, 2015). Teachers (and parents) can look for and find many appropriate (and free!) sources accommodated for dyslectic learners, e.g. Free Classic Audio Books, LearnOutLoud Free Audio, LibriVox, Librophile, Lit2Go, Loyal Books, Podiobooks, Project Gutenberg, Storynory

3. Mnemonics
Since dyslectic learners rely heavily on memorisation, mnemonic devices can be excellent help for their memory (for more see Pokrivčáková, 2013b, p. 67-69). A typical example includes the mnemonics for remembering standard word order of an English sentence: SVOMPT (S = subject, V = verb, O = object, M = manner, P = place, T = time).

Moreover, mnemonics can help SEN learners spell tricky irregular words. When dyslectic learners try to learn to spell a tricky word, ask them to make up a sentence (the sillier the better) with each word beginning with the letters of a target word.

> *little:* Little Indians try to lick elephants.
>
> *pretty:* Pretty red eggs turn totally yellow.
>
> *could:* Can Oliver Ugly lie down?

Task: Design mnemonic devices for the following „spelling daemons":

> necessary: ...
>
> world: ...
>
> always: ...

B.   Dysgraphia is a learning disability that affects coding a verbal message into writing. The warning signs of dysgraphia include: tight, awkward pencil grip and body position; illegible handwriting; inconsistent spacing; poor spatial planning on paper; poor spelling; tiring quickly while writing; unfinished or omitted words in sentences; difficulty organizing thoughts on paper; difficulty with syntax structure and grammar and others (acc. to the National Center for Learning Disabilities, 2015).
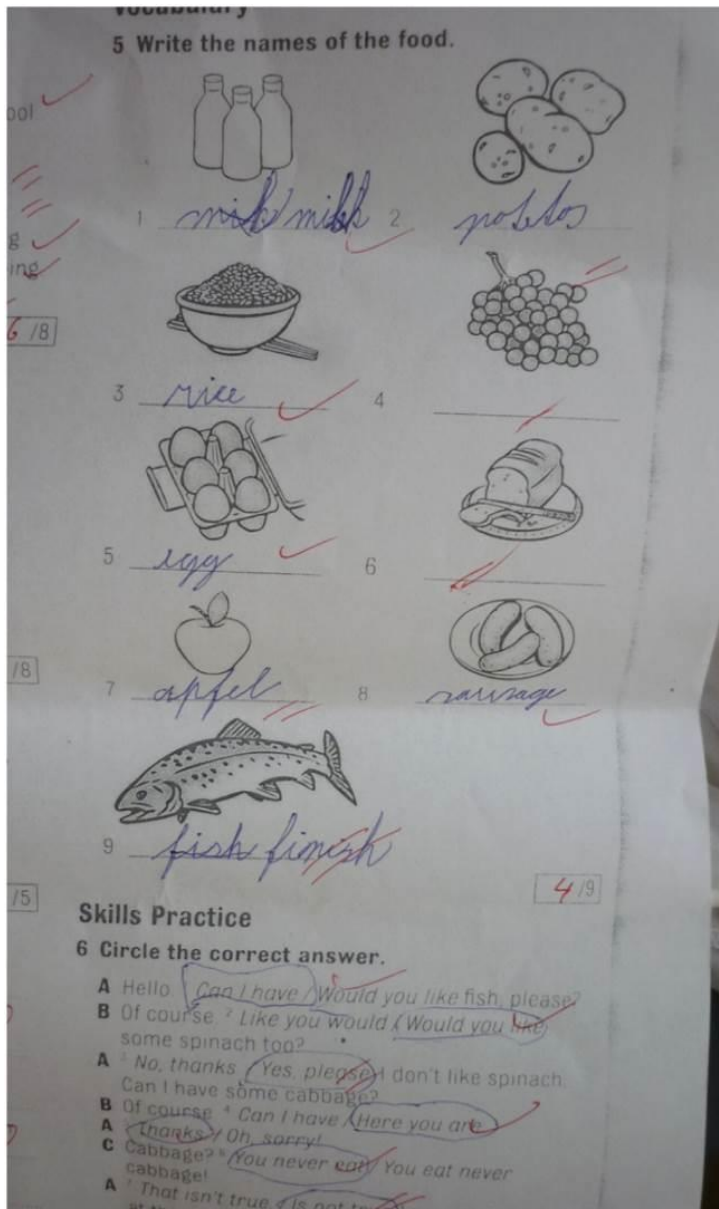
The Learning Disabilities Association of America (2015) advises the following:

• Allow the use of digital devices and word processor (including a spell checker).

• Avoid chastising student for sloppy, careless work.

• Use oral exams.

• Allow the use of a recorder for lectures.

• Allow the use of a note taker.

• Provide notes or outlines to reduce the amount of writing required.

• Reduce copying aspects of work.

• Provide alternatives to written assignments (video-taped reports, audio-taped reports)

Picture 2: The example of the Slovak dysgraphic learner´s written output in English.

Further recommended educational means

1.   **Pre-organization strategies**, such as the use of graphic organizers. Dysgraphic learners have problems with spatial planning of their written task on paper. Paper with a colour-coded pre-writing structure of paragraphs and other parts of the text will help the learner to organise and complete the written assignment. For example, if learners are asked to write a short explanatory essay consisting of five paragraphs, you can in advance prepare the sheet of paper with the following pre-writing structure (meaning of colour-coding: upper yellow = title, green=introduction, blue = body, pink = conclusion, lower yellow = author´s name) :

Task: Prepare a similar colour-coded pre-organisation sheet for writing an e-mail.

2.   **The outline instead of a full text**. Writing a full, cohesive text consisting of several dozens of sentences with appropriate grammar and syntactic structures may be the task too demanding for a dysgraphic learner. Therefore, a teacher may replace such a writing assignment by creating an outline of the text. The outline should be brief and very clear, made of key words and expressions (for more on outlining see Pokrivčáková, 2013b, p. 70). To get used to this technique, the teacher can prepare the partial outline first and then ask learners to complete the missing parts of the outline (see the example below).

ELECTRIC CARS

Introduction
(What is an electric car? Which aspect I am going to write about?)

    A. Pros
        1.   …
        2.   …
        3.   …

    B. Cons
        1.   …
        2.   …
        3.   …

Conclusion
(Should people buy them or not?)

---

3.   **Alternative types of note taking**. Taking notes is a very important part of both a learning process and professional life. Therefore, all learners, including those with dysgraphia, should be skilled enough to take notes on their own (although dysgraphic learners can be allowed to use various less orthodox aids such as their own abbreviations, pictures, symbols, etc.). Dysgraphic learners require more time and support to learn how to take notes. At the beginning, the teacher can either:

a) provide them with a copy of completed notes (made by you or a note taking buddy) so that they can only fill in missing parts; or

b) provide them with a partially completed outline so that they can fill in the details under major headings.

4.   **Mind mapping** was originally a tool for organizing mental concepts and ideas. Unlike outlining where only words are used, mind maps fuse together key words and pictures (Buzan & Buzan, 1996). Mind maps enable dysgraphic learners to structure, organize, and better express their own thoughts without long and tiring writing. As a teaching technique, mind mapping is highly valued by cognitive pedagogy since it stimulates memory by creating strong associations. To avoid handwriting completely, several mind mapping software applications can be used, e.g. iMindMap (for more see Pokrivčáková, 2013b, p. 64; Liptáková, 2015; Szombathová, 2015).
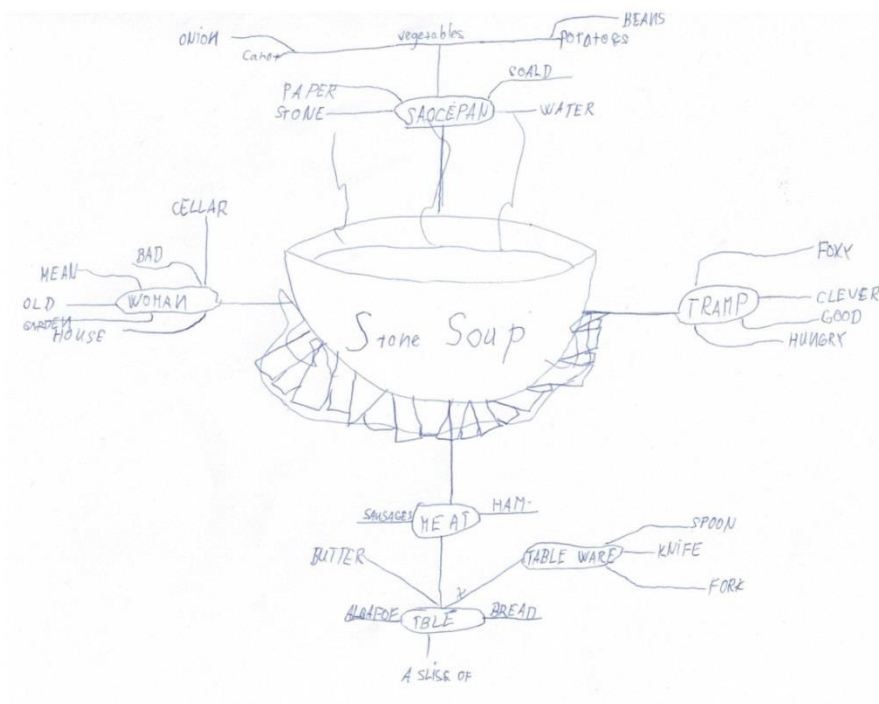
Picture 3: The example of a mind map created by a Slovak dysgraphic learner who learns English as a foreign language (source: Liptáková, 2015).

C.   Teaching ADD/ADHD learners (i.e. learners with attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) can be extremely challenging (c.f. Fiľová, 2015). These learners behaviour is marked by frequent inattention, distractibility, and daydreaming. They have an extremely short concentration span and the trouble following instructions. They can often miss details or forget things. In addition to the frequent problems with their parents and teachers, they have also complicated relationships with classmates and peers, which usually causes their frustration, depressed moods and poor self-esteem.

Recommended accommodations
- Use preferential seating.
- Ensure a stable climate in the class, set an effective system of classroom rituals and signals (gestures).
- Keep a balanced level of sound in the class (no yelling, shouting, whispering, etc.).
- Use a point system (e.g. colourful sticks, tokens, stars, or other methods) to reinforce appropriate patterns of behaviour of ALL learners.
- Use alternative test format and be sure that testing runs in distraction-free environment (no pop-quizzes!). Give frequent short quizzes rather than long tests.

Moreover, the teacher should consistently use generally applicable teaching techniques and strategies which are recommended for all SEN learners: step-by–step approach (dividing complex tasks into smaller steps), over-learning, and cascade activities (c.f. Pokrivčáková, 2012).

D.   Blind learners and learners with visual impairment

Visually impaired children are capable of learning foreign languages without any serious problems. They usually need only special teaching aids and assistant teachers to help them not specifically with foreign language learning, but with regular everyday activities.

Recommended accommodations:
- seating preferences,
- using enlarging instruments (see pictures 8-9),
- using special teaching aids and compensation instruments (see Pictures 5-7),
- transcribing/translating texts into the Braille (e.g. by using a free application Robobraille which converts digital texts to either braille or audio files, and then it also emails you the file),
- using sound generating (text–to-speech) computer programmes to read (hear) various texts,
- reading audiobooks,
- using speech-to-text software (instead of traditional writing assignments)
- using digital voice recorder to record learner´s oral presentations as a replacement for traditional writing assignments,
- using Braille dictionaries (it needs some training, in Picture 4 you can compare the original "pocket" Slovak-English and English-Slovak dictionary and its translation into Braille which consists of 11 volumes).

Picture 4

Picture 5
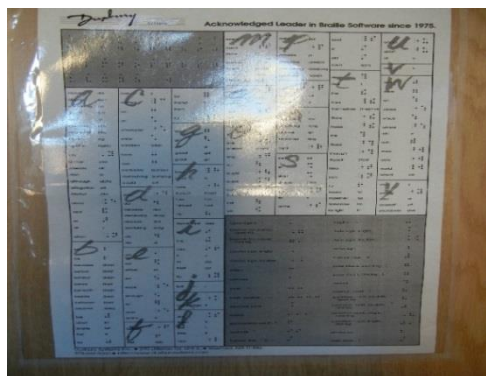
Picture 6
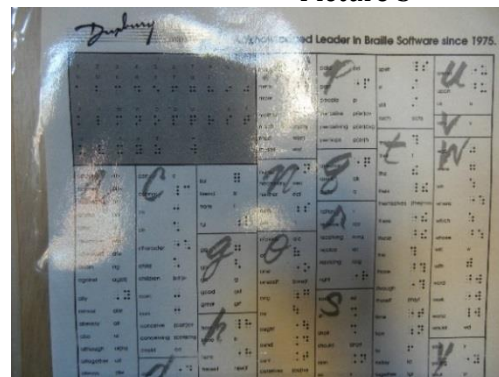
Picture 7

Picture 8
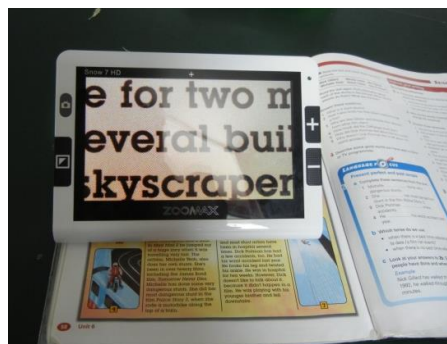
Picture 9

Picture 10

Picture 11

Pictures 4 - 11: Various teaching aids used for teaching English at Special school for blind and visually impaired learners in Levoča (source: Paľagová, 2015).

E. Deaf learners and learners with hearing impairment

These learners can be successful in learning foreign languages, the only limited area being the fluent listening and speaking competences. Depending of the level of impairment, developing these two skills may be omitted completely (for more see Šmídová, 2015).

Recommended accommodations:
- Use preferential seating.
- Ask for help of teacher assistants & interpreters.
- Use hearing aids.
- When speaking, always face the student.
- Ask for help of good note takers in the classroom.

Conclusions

The objective of this paper was to introduce the current status and organizational structure of foreign language education provided to learners with SEN in Slovakia. Three areas were especially emphasized: the legal framework and organization of foreign language education of learners with SEN in Slovakia; b) ways of support provided to foreign language teachers; and c) the courses on foreign language education of learners with SEN (focused mostly on classroom management in mixed-ability classes and internal differentiation).

The results showed that while the legislation and state documents related to education are in accord with international standards, and thus create standard conditions for the development of foreign language education of the target group, the existing situation at schools is not very optimistic. The results also pointed to the areas in which a set of important measures need to be

adopted. Information on teaching SEN learners should be integrated in all pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes. The appropriate evaluation instruments for the objective evaluation of learners with SEN should be designed and validated as soon as possible. What is needed even more is theoretical sources, teaching materials, and practical handbooks, as well as other measures that would lead to the fulfilment of the general aim: to improve foreign language education of learners with SEN while keeping the appropriate demandingness and attractiveness of foreign language education of mainstream learners in the same classroom.

Based on the overview of research results, some teaching tips and recommendations for teaching practice were offered.

Acknowledgements

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Appendices
Appendix 1: The list of unpublished academic research papers (diploma and rigorosa theses) by pre-service or in-service teachers which were qualitatively analysed in the study.
Appendix 2: Introductory activity - definitions
Appendix 3: Introductory activity – famous people with SEN (or their works)
Appendix 4: Appendix 3: Introductory activity - symptoms

Appendix 1: The list of unpublished academic research papers (diploma and rigorosa thesis) by pre-service or in-service teachers which were qualitatively analysed in the study.

ADAMJAKOVÁ, E. (2015). *Mind Maps in Teaching English as a Foreign Language*. Diploma thesis. Ružomberok: Katolícka univerzita.

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Appendix 2: Introductory activity - symptoms

difficulties with accurate word recognition, decoding and spelling	problems with understanding non-literal language, such as idioms, jokes, or proverbs	as adults they are successful in design, art, architecture, engineering and surgery
omitting words, words ordered incorrectly	an effect of learner´s laziness	a learning disorder
a big impact on a person's self-image and self-esteem	problems with handwriting or with gripping a pencil	very early readers
lack of self-discipline	a sign of poor intelligence	difficulties with spelling
problems with reading comprehension	their brains process and interpret information differently	illegible to organize their time and space
poor handwriting	poor reading fluency	a neurological disorder
learning the alphabet, numbers, and days of the week or similar common word sequences	reading and spelling, such as reversing letters (d, b) or moving letters around (left, felt)	difficulties with learning the alphabet, numbers, and days of the week or similar common word sequences
excellent memory and fast learning	a learning difficulty	strongly curious
genetic reasons	relying heavily on memorization	a learning disability
slow down vocabulary growth	the result of impaired vision	a language processing disorder
needs extra time to complete assignments	unfinished words or letters, omitted words	a result of poor teaching instruction
prefers older companions	inconsistent position of letters on the page with respect to lines and margins	struggle to form written sentences with correct grammar and punctuation
inconsistent spaces between words and letters	long attention span (when interested)	their brains process and interpret information incorrectly
incorrect verb and pronoun usage and word ending errors	difficulty converting the sounds of language into written form	the condition related to ethnic backgrounds

Appendix 3: Introductory activity – famous people with SEN (or their works)
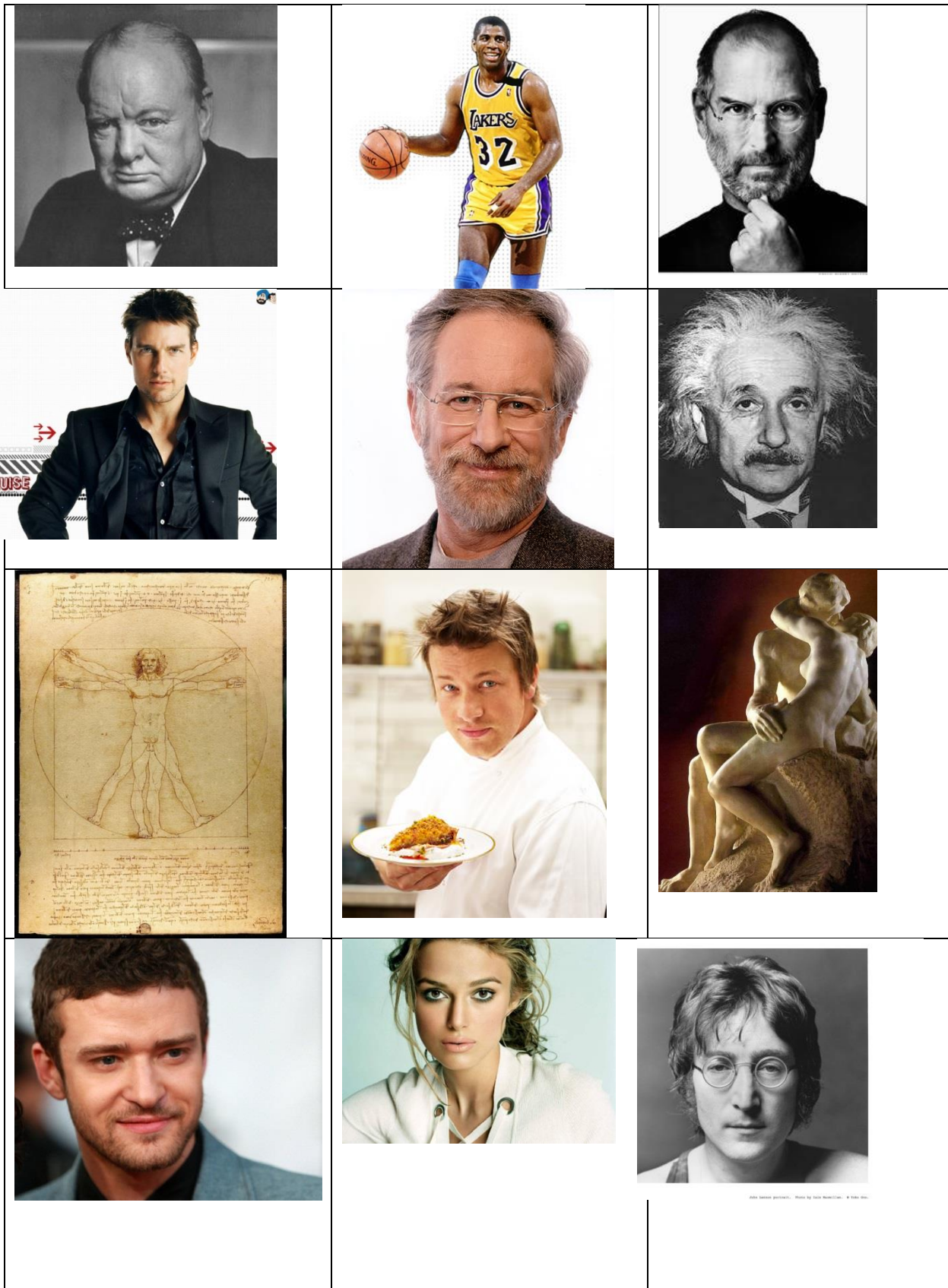
Appendix 4: Introductory activity - symptoms

Th classic dyslexic

Som 10 years ago I had a privat pupil cald Tony. He was 12 years old, and aftr one lesn he said, "I do wish we cud spel words as we say them - but u'd be out of a job then, wudnt u?" I replyd, "Tony, I wudnt mind if it wer esir for u to read and rite." Now Tony had hy intelijnce, and aftr som 18 months of tuition he cud read quite satisfactrly, in th sense of being avraj for his aje tho stil undracheving. If reading had been th only problm, he wud no longr hav needd to keep coming to me. But as his *speling dificltis* persistd, I had to go on teaching him. His fathr was also dyslexic - th problm dos very oftn run in famlis. Tony was a classic dyslexic. He was in fact a pupil in th scool wher I was a remedial teachr, and wher I taut him in a group of about 6 children. His fathr askd me to giv him extra help at home. He was a boy of hom th teachrs said in a tone of surprise, "Oh, is he remedial? To talk to him u wudnt think ther was anything rong with him." That is wy dyslexia is cald 'th hidn handicap': wen u look at these children and wen u talk to them, u normly notice nothing stranje.

2 Teaching English to learners with specific learning needs

Elena Kováčiková

Objectives

Learning disorders are not a problem of learners´ intelligence or motivation. The way of their processing information is different. This chater deals with learning disorders, namely dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, ADHD, etc. as well as the way they can be dealt with in English inclusive classes. A number of identified learners with specific learning needs which are not related to the IQ level at schools are still growing. In order to follow educational goals, modern teachers face the reality by educating learners with various perspectives. After teachers have received reports describing capabilities and impairments of the learners, they need to find the way of how to manage classrooms full of learners with different needs and rise, motivate and maintain learners' enthusiasm towards English learning. This chapter offers helpful ideas on how to apply various techniques on a macro level of classroom management and also a micro level regarding building on language systems and skills.

Introduction

English teachers at elementary schools in Slovakia face the demanding job of covering needs of all types of learners including those with diagnosed learning difficulties. In order to succeed in mediating and transferring their knowledge towards the learners they should master different teaching approaches, methods and strategies. The old-fashioned way of a teacher centered approach and use of a grammar translation method is not only out of date, however, it definitely damages the motivation and eagerness of learners with learning differences. In this paper a learner centered approach with different methods and strategies is suggested which might become approachable and attractive for every learner at the lower secondary level of schooling. The first part of this paper deals with definitions used for special needs learners in Great Britain, USA and Slovakia. Then, paper covers brief description of general problems of students with learning differences. Comparing with other subjects, language classes are advantaged in a way that any action or performance within any topic which is attractive for learners is possible, provided that English language is used. Learners can sing, dance, play games, or exercise which results in multisensory approach which is highly advisable particularly for learners with learning differences. That is considered to be a great asset for the learners with specific differences in order to raise and maintain motivation to learn English. Multi-sensory approach, brain gym, mnemonic devices are some techniques that are enormously helpful and effective for learners with difficulties. Thus, by following a holistic approach all learners might be engaged and profit in their English classes.

Learning disability, disorder or difficulty?

Terminology used in this paper compares the use in British, American and Slovak environment. The concept of "learners with special educational needs" extends beyond those who may be included in handicapped categories to cover those who are failing in school for a wide variety of other reasons that are known to be likely to impede a child´s optimal progress (OECD, 2005, p.12). Under an umbrella term "specific needs" this paper covers every learning difficulty which is not a matter of significant general learner´s intelligence impairment. In some papers and studies these are defined as learning disorders. However, a label of a *learning disorder* is often changed into a *learning difficulty* as a more acceptable and comprehensible term. Therefore, learning disorder and learning difficulty will be used in this chapter and textbook interchangeably. Yet, according to British and American educational pages

(www.improvinghealthandlives.org.uk, www.bild.org.uk, www.bris.ac.uk/cipold) it is obvious that there is a difference in meaning in American and British terminology. In the USA the term ´learning disability´ is used to cover several specific learning disorders particularly in relation to reading, writing and math, such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia. In American references, terms like ´intellectual disabilities ´and ´mental retardation´ are commonly used as labels to describe what people in UK would understand as learning disabilities. In comparison, the UK uses several definitions of learning disabilities. These usually include the presence of:

- *A significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information or to learn new skills;*
- *A reduced ability to cope independently;*
- *An impairment that started in childhood with an effect on development.*
  In general a person finds difficult to understand, learn and remember new things, and means that the person may have problems with a range of things such as managing everyday tasks and communication (QCF, n.d., p. 4).

British literature recognizes several levels of learning disabilities. The continuum of learning ability ranges from *mild learning disability*, continuing with *moderate* and *severe*, finishing with *profound* learning disability. Learners suffering from severe learning disability use only basic words and gestures in order to communicate their needs. People with a profound learning disorder are considered to be the most disabled individuals in the community. Their intellectual quotient is estimated lower than 20, therefore they need special educational centers in order to be taught.

Learners with a moderate learning disability are likely to have some language skills. They are able to communicate about their needs and wishes. They may need some support with caring for themselves but they succeed in carrying out daily tasks. A mild learning disability is often not diagnosed. Learners may need some support to understand abstract or complex ideas. They are quite independent in caring for themselves and carrying out given tasks (QCF, n.d.)

Following the Slovak legislation, inclusive classrooms in Slovakia cover learners with health impairment, learners with learning disorders, attention disorders, gifted children, and children from socially deprived families. Inclusive schooling is realized in classrooms with other learners and if necessary such a learner is educated within the individual educational program elaborated by school in cooperation with appropriate professional educational institution (SSI, 2012, translated by the author). Unfortunately, as Pokrivčáková (2013, p. 120) reveals that "*institutional research on teaching foreign languages to learners with special educational needs in Slovakia is extremely rare, or even non-existent.*" Therefore, as the author later on claims, there is *a limited number of publications on the topic as the obvious consequence of the lack of complex and determined research* (ibid.). She later on recommends discussing the latest progress in the field among wider professional public in order to prepare either teachers or teachers to be for the real life situation in our schools.

For the purposes of this paper, the discussed target groups of learners are ranged into mild and moderate learning disabilities in British environment and according to American definition, the learning disorders like dyslexia, dysorthographia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, Asperger syndrome, ADHD learners are covered. However, Slovak terms for learning disabilities and disorders are widely used in the papers and books.

Differences in English learning

Kormos and Smith (2012) claim that around 10 per cent of students exhibit a specific learning difference. That means that they have difficulties with acquisition of literacy-related skills(dyslexia), numeracy (dyscalculia), the coordination of movement (dyspraxia), sustained attention(ADHD) and social interaction(Asperger´s syndrome). Thus, it is very likely to have at least 2 different learners in the classroom with 20 pupils.

The term *learning difference* does not seem to convey the negative meaning such as learning difficulty or disorder, and therefore it will be used in this paper in order to cover all the above mentioned learning syndromes. Our aim is not to describe particular differences as these are

usually defined in a very detail in the medical report of a learner and they vary from person to person. The paper focuses on general problems of a teacher teaching English in common Slovak schools and tries to offer help in a form of practical guidance and advice.

Many children have difficulties with reading, writing, or other learning-related tasks at some point but it does not necessarily mean that they have learning disabilities. The signs of learning differences vary from person to person but usually they these persist over time. According to National Institutes of Health (2014) most common learning disorders like dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia include the following:

- difficulty with reading and/or writing;
- problems with math skills;
- difficulty remembering;
- problems paying attention;
- trouble following directions;
- poor coordination;
- difficulty with concepts related to time;
- problems staying organized ;
- impetuous behavior;
- difficulty staying on task, easily distracted;
- difficulty finding the right way to say something;
- inconsistent school performance;
- immature way of speaking;
- difficulty listening well;
- problems understanding words well.

These are the most general symptoms which are once in a while seen in every learner´s performance. Therefore, it is not enough to determine that a person has a learning disorder. A professional assessment is necessary in order to diagnose it. Children being taught in a second language act in ways that are similar to someone with a learning disorder. For this reason, assessment must take into consideration the fact that a student is bilingual or a second language learner.

NHI (2014) states descriptions of particular learning difficulties and due to the focus of this paper concentrates fully on a language classes therefore this part summarizes the symptoms related to the language learning and affecting its performance.

- Failure to fully understand what others are saying (Dyslexia);
- Difficulty organizing written and spoken language (Dyslexia);
- Difficulty learning new vocabulary, either through reading or hearing (Dyslexia);
- Slowness in learning songs and rhymes (Dyslexia);
- Slow reading and giving up on longer reading tasks (Dyslexia);
- Understanding questions and following directions (Dyslexia);
- Poor spelling (Dyslexia);
- A strong dislike of writing and/or drawing (Dysgraphia);
- Problems with grammar (Dysgraphia);
- A quick loss of interest while writing (Dysgraphia);
- Trouble writing down thoughts in a logical sequence (Dysgraphia);
- Difficulty with math-related word problems (Dyscalculia);
- Trouble with understanding the time sequence of events (Dyscalculia);
- Leaving words unfinished or omitting them when writing sentences (Dysgraphia);
- Trouble with tasks that require hand-eye coordination, such as coloring within the lines, assembling puzzles, and cutting precisely (Dyspraxia);
- Sensitivity to loud and/or repetitive noises (Dyspraxia).

Even though ADHD and autism are not considered learning disabilities, they sometimes co-occur or are confused with learning disabilities (Helpguide, 2015).

ADHD learners often have problems sitting still, staying focused, following instructions, staying organized, and completing homework. These forms of performance may certainly affect language classes and therefore language teachers should be aware of techniques and methods of how to make the learners focused on their work.

There is a very little empirical research on how students with particular learning difficulties learn another language, however, some of them (Fletcher et al´s,2004; Jeffries and Everatt´s,2004) manifest that learners exhibit lower language aptitude scores and experience difficulties in language learning. Children with ADHD, dyslexia and dyscalculia have difficulties in sustaining attention (Fletcher et al., 2007). Regarding the language skills, it is obvious that basic cognitive mechanisms involved in learning a mother tongue and a foreign language are similar, then it might be predictable that similar problems in particular skills development might occur. As for example, dyslexic students have generally problems with reading in mother tongue, consequently, they might face problem with reading even in English. However, due to a wide complexity of learning difficulties, it is very likely that motivation and enthusiasm of students with learning differences might be much lower. Pokrivčáková (2009, p.29) claims that the above mentioned differences may not be completely removed, therefore, the aim of foreign language learning at schools is to compensate the differences up to a point that learners would be able to manage at least the very basic content of the curriculum and further have successful and productive life in a plurilingual and multicultural society.

Kormos & Smith (2012, pp.86) summarize difficulties of dyslexic learners regarding the foreign language acquisition as follows:

- Problems with sustained attention which might hinder the noticing of new linguistic information in the input;
- Difficulties in phonological processing, therefore, developing reading and writing skills are problematic;
- Memorization of words is difficult, they need repeated encounters with words and conscious effort to encode them in memory;
- They mix up similar sounding and similar meaning words;
- Grammatical concepts are difficult to understand (e.g. word order, applying grammar rules in practice or in communications);
- Reading speed tend to be slower and students face word recognition problems;
- All the above mentioned problems contribute to text comprehension problems;
- When writing, students find demanding to produce written text due to their spelling problems and lack of vocabulary;
- They have problems to organize their ideas, ordering them and applying word order rules in written texts;
- Speaking is the least affected skill, however, it is very individual;
  Listening skill seems not to be affected much, depending on the length of listened texts or speech and the level of severity in learning difficulties.

Taking into consideration all the above mentioned difficulties, lack of motivation and enthusiasm to learn a foreign language are predictable. These symptoms are common for every student with learning difficulty and they usually vary in connection with good and bad days, and emotional state of the learner.

Classroom management in inclusive classrooms

Best practice for English teachers seems to be using methods, techniques and strategies applicable for all the learners taking into consideration their learning styles, preferences and difficulties as well. Motivation always leads and therefore teacher´s attitude towards learners is extremely important. Encouragement, praise, support, patience and understanding are basic

presumptions for positive attitude and relationships between teachers and learners. Even if these basic conditions are fulfilled there are some general rules which might be followed in order to make learning and teaching process approachable for English teachers and learners. Classroom management covers classroom organization with seating arrangements, displays, and technologies in the classroom, including teaching styles, behavior, rules, relationships between teachers and learners, atmosphere and discipline (Scrivener, 2011). According to Pokrivčáková (2012, p.56) classrooms should be equipped with stimulating visuals (posters, schemas, etc.) and work displays; circular desks and flexible furniture, areas for small group work, space for kinesthetic activities, interactive equipment such as a white board, connection to the Internet/school network through a wireless network. Unfortunately, not many schools in Slovakia have above mentioned equipment available, even though a number of language labs have grown recently. From the organizational point of view, the situation is that furniture and seats are usually pre-arranged and cannot be easily changed for different lessons. However, in the opposite case, the best seating arrangement for language classes is a U-shape in which an eye-contact is maintained and space for physical activities is guaranteed. In a typical Slovak classroom, two pupils share one desk, there is a white or a black board, displays on the walls, rarely with an overhead projector, a computer and the Internet connection. However, even if English teachers can do very little within fixed furnished classrooms, they might still influence seating arrangements of learners according to their needs.

Students with learning differences may be seated alone (i.e. individually, especially in case they are easily distracted or have problems with attention) or paired with their classmates who positively react and respond to them. Another possibility is to group all the learners with difficulties together in front of the classroom so that the individual approach of a teacher is easier. Kormos and Smith (2014) claim that personal space is very important for some learners with specific learning differences and sharing a table might be problematic. Especially, learners with ADHD or Asperger´s syndrome may appreciate, apart from their own desk; having a designated ´retreat´ they can go to if the classroom environment becomes too overwhelming for them. They suggest a quiet corner or a separate space. All in all, this space should be agreed at the start of the course and all learners should be made aware of its purpose.

English teachers should also be aware of a fact that different levels of light, temperature and volume might be irritating for some learners and those with specific learning differences are considered to be hyper-sensitive to slight changes. Natural light is undoubtedly the best and fluorescent, flickering lights, or dying light bulbs may cause a big problem. Learners with dyslexia might experience blurring, shimmering or disappearing texts, impossible to be read due to visual distortion. This can easily happen even if the text is in black print on white paper which is quite usual. Teachers might ask learners to use colored overlays or tinted paper in order to reduce the glare. Practicing reading with the help of overlays once at a time might be also a funny and amusing moment in the class. Temperature and noise are also issues for learners who are prone to distraction. They might find it hard to focus if the temperature is not comfortable enough or noise becomes unbearable for them. Teachers should do their best to provide the classroom environment reasonably suitable for all the learners.

Equipment and materials

Recently, technological advances such as electronic devices or equipment supporting language teaching have grown enormously, yet paper-based technologies also still have a role to play (Kormos and Smith, 2012). As learners with specific learning differences have troubles with short-term and working memories they keep forgetting their assignments or bringing asked materials to the classroom. Therefore, organizers such as diaries, small notebooks, or mobile phone reminders are possible back-up systems. Another way might be the technique of appointing ´*Buddies*´ in the class in order to remember doing homework. Learners choose a friend from the classroom who takes responsibility over reminding and checking homework in order to fulfil assignment and bring it to the classroom the following day. Teaching explicitly

planning skills and tracking homework, as well as instructing students on how to break down large projects into smaller tasks help students completing long-term assignments.

Textbooks used in English classes are not always possible to be changed; however, additional material may be modified the way in which they are presented to the learners. Current trends in language teaching materials go towards a busy page, full of pictures and action. This might be very confusing for the learners with differences. Text windows made by cutting a hole in a paper or in ´L´ shaped pieces of paper that can be slid apart to change the size (Kormos and Smith, 2014). Text windows are recommended and widely used mainly by dyslexic students. Within the holistic approach in inclusive English classrooms, all the learners may use tinted foils or cut-out text windows when they practice reading texts silently or out loud and thus the learners with learning differences might not feel specially treated and on the opposite, the others may empathetically experience how it feels to be different. All in all, it might become an entertaining activity in order to enrich and vary teaching routines.

The most important thing is to ensure that provided texts are large enough and in a font that can be easily read, with wider spacing. Recommended font is 12 point Arial, with clear text structuring, sometimes even numbering the lines.

Students face classroom walls which are rarely white and empty. Teachers are promoted to have colored posters, pictures, projects and other materials displayed all over the room. However, attention disorders frequently occurring in learners with differences might be disturbed by too many pictures and displays. Scrivener (2011) recommends having walls around the board white and empty; however, suggests displaying additional materials (pictures, posters, etc.) in order to support multi-sensory perception. A reasonable use of visuals should be purposeful, refreshed after some time, or exchanged for something new. Nevertheless, project displays are important to support learners' need for self-expression and fulfill purposefulness of classroom activities, as well as give reasonable feedback for a teacher and learners. Particularly, students with learning differences need to support their self-esteem in learning languages and be praised for even minimal success twice as much as other students. However, project displays should be preceded by personal presentation of the project and peer evaluation in order to enforce critical thinking of students and accomplish their feeling of being important in the teaching and learning process.

Hands-on approaches, strategies and techniques in English inclusive classrooms

Multi-sensory approach involves the use of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic ways simultaneously to enhance memory and learning of written language. According to IDA (n.d.) links are constantly made between the visual, auditory and tactile language in learning to read and spell. 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). Thus, all language systems are covered. DysTEFL (2011, pp. 48-52) summarizes practical key principles of the multisensory approach as follows:

- Provide opportunities for learners to practice and review a concept frequently within the repetitive principle;
- Language should be taught in a logical progression and help students categorize concepts;
- Language concepts should be organized from simple to complex within structured, sequential principles;
- Teachers should build on what learners already know and make connections between the known and the new information (so-called cumulative principle;
- Systematically and explicitly the phonemes or speech sounds of the foreign language should be taught;
- Sounds of the letters in English and the letters the sounds represent within alphabetic/phonetic principle should be taught directly;

- Learners get a model from a teacher for the way to break apart words while reading, particularly longer words with more than one syllable within analysis principle;
- Learners are shown the way to put parts of words back together for spelling within synthetic principle;
- Several language skills can be presented simultaneously when a new language system is presented;
- Visual aids, such as pictures, posters should be used whenever possible;
- Structured overview should be provided to learners such as study guides, summary sheets, and graphic representation of covered content;
- Color coding for gender, verb/noun agreement, and other matching principles;
- Teachers should take time in order to explain how to read grammatical charts;
- Gap-filling exercises for vocabulary or grammar should be avoided, unless choices of answers are provided;
- Provide sufficient time during tests to accommodate learners with slow processing skills.

Solutions for teaching vocabulary and grammar

Students with learning differences face several problems when learning vocabulary and grammar. Due to reduced phonological awareness, poorer capacity of the phonological short term memory, problems with understanding grammar concepts inappropriate teaching methods may have a devastating effect on their English performance (Kormos and Smith, 2012). Mind maps and mnemonic devices are applicable for all students with the benefits for those who suffer from above mentioned problems. Mind maps help organize thoughts and ideas as well as new vocabulary taught within the given context. Following the rules of multisensory approach, by using colors within mind maps (e.g. for nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc.) may enforce structuring, organizing and memorizing the language systems. Mind maps are easy to create taking into consideration individual principles of understanding and logic sequencing of an individual learner. The important fact is that a teacher presents the possible key techniques of how to create and use mind maps, how to trace them in order to find necessary information. Mind maps can be prepared in a traditional way by using a pencil and paper or by using a presentation maker, which might be a simple drawing program or a mind mapping software.

Mnemonic devices, on the other hand, do not need much of preparation and they are considered to be powerful tools for learning a foreign language. It is a word or sequence of words or images used as an aid to memory. The philosophy behind mnemonics is that meaningful information is easier to remember than arbitrary data. English words are not arbitrary, because they follow rules that rare unique, however, they can be arbitrary to someone who is unfamiliar with the language system. A word lining is one common mnemonic which involves connecting words in your own language to words in English (Innovative Language com, 2009). As for illustration, widely confusing word ´who´ might be remembered when ´o´ is drawn as a human face and that is how learners remember that it is used when asking about people. These tools are ready to be created by learners themselves; it may a very entertaining activity either at school or at home. Sharing and presenting their ideas might also contribute to enhance their self-confidence and esteem.

Grammar concepts may be reinforced by color coding (i.e. different colors for endings, tenses, etc.), structured displayed charts, posters, tense cards which can be referred to whenever necessary. Question word order is possible to be presented in a triangle where the highest angle represents a personal pronoun; the other two angles represent auxiliary and main verb form.

Speech-to-text software, digital voice recorders, songs, crazy stories or memory games might be helpful and valuable especially for students with learning differences.

Language skills

It is difficult to modify the curriculum of a provided English textbook; however, it is up on a teacher how to organize topics, sequence of language skill development and they choose

teaching methods, techniques and activities. The common English classroom should be mainly instructed in English but especially learners with learning difficulties are very sensitive to teacher´s instructions. Instructions should be given clearly, simply, with an explicit example if possible and step by step. Repetition of what should be done by a selected students gives an appropriate feedback to a teacher whether the given instructions have been comprehended.

Reading and listening

When selecting reading texts for learners, first of all, the length of the text should be increased gradually, starting with short paragraphs. Longer texts are good to be divided into smaller sections. Students can work with them in different phase of the lesson. Kormos and Smith (2011) suggest that not many unfamiliar words should be included. The use of text windows and appropriate font and size of letters have been already discussed. Extremely important are pre-reading activities especially for students with learning differences. In this phase, they can review necessary and known vocabulary, learn something about the topic and thus approach the text. Students with learning difficulties should not be asked to read out loud and be expected to understand what they read at the same time. However, it does not mean that they do not read loud at all. They should be asked to read smaller parts of the text with the following discussion about understanding. Text comprehension should be checked by using questions that require short answers with the help of tables or diagrams. Afterwards, reading texts might be used for speaking activities to provide meaningful ways of using the learnt language.

Students with learning differences tend to have difficulties to listen and read at the same time. Therefore, it is suggested to listen for the gist for the first time and then add also development of other skills. Once learners seem to have a good general understanding of the text, they can be presented with listening tasks such as filling in missing information in a table or giving brief answers to questions. Post listening activities alo foster the development of speaking and writing skills. Linguistic constructions necessary for understanding of the listened text are taught explicitly in the pre-listening phase. Multi-sensory listening tasks accompanied with TPR actions make listening more enjoyable and help them acquire new words and expressions. (Kormos and Smith, 2011, Chapter 7; DysTEFL, 2012).

Speaking and writing

Most of the instructional programs for students with learning differences focus on communication activities with adjustments that take into consideration the difficulties of the students. In order to build up the confidence of students in their speaking competences communication activities are introduced from the first stages of communication, i.e. from one and two word utterances such as responding to simple personal questions even at communication level. Again, multi-sensory speaking tasks, accompanied by movement are advisable as learners thus memorize communicative phrases better. Within pre-speaking tasks it is necessary to review or instruct the learners what language structures they should use and provide them with an explicit example. IT technologies, such as presentation programs or recording by mobile phones or I-pads might be enjoyable and appreciated from the side of almost every learner.

Even though learners with differences are usually exempted from the writing requirements set by the curricula, they are also expected to display sufficient levels of writing competence.

Within writing skill development all the above mentioned strategies might be applied, however, the key issue is to make writing tasks motivating, practical, close to the interests of the learners and help the learners with organization and planning the writing process. It is important to increase their awareness by drawing colored mind maps, brainstorming and activities with linguistic aspects of the text important to overcome writing difficulties. Changing traditional pen and paper techniques with the use of modern communication technologies, such as emailing, chatting and text messaging might be also recommended. Students with learning

differences might find problematic to find their spelling mistakes and teachers should be very sensitive when correcting their written tasks in order not to discourage the learners to write.

Conclusion

Inclusive classrooms can be defined as the enabling solutions and arrangements offered to students with learning differences in order to respond to their special educational needs and enable them to show their potention, to develop and to demostrate attainment. Inclusion involves a wide approach which means that provision for addressing the needs of learners with differences should be made at all levels of the educational system. This involves for example rearrangements in school management (Nijakowska, 2011, p.49). Most learners with differences can be successfully included in the schooling system under the condition that certain alterations are incorporated into it. However, icnlusive education cannot remove all barriers for all learners due to various degrees of severity of learning impairments, ranging from mild to severe.Inclusive classroom means good teaching for all students with benefits to all with informal support and the expertise of mainstream teachers (Harman, n.d.). Types of accommodation differ across countries and cover the areas of learners´performance at school (timing, setting, assignemnts, homework), curriculum (organization of subject matter, task types), materials, instruction, feedback, classroom management at both macro and micro levels. These may be regulated by national policies or school policies, however, the biggest burden of managing and teaching students with different perspectives lies on teachers´shoulders. due to various levels of severity and different manifestation of learning differences not many studies have been carried out in the field of teaching English to learners with differences. Therefore any helpful approaches strategies, techniques and ideas within the classroom management at a micro and macro level are appreciated. The art of inclusive classroom is to use strategies which are applicable for almost every learner. Multi-sensory structured approach, using mind maps, mnemonics and Brain gym exercises accompanied by following general rules for inclusive classroom regarding seating arrangment, displays and materials might be profitable not only for students with learning differences. At the same time, they can bring joy, fun, raise motivation and enhance enthusiasm to learn English.

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3 Teaching English as a foreign language to dyslexic learners

Ivana Cimermanová

Think and discuss
- Do you think that (EFL) teachers understand learning disabilities and know how to accommodate their teaching?
- Do you know anyone who is dyslexic? Can you describe compensation strategies s/he uses?
- Do you know what the legislation is/ what are the possibilities/options for educating dyslexic learners in Slovakia?

Foreign language learning is an integral and compulsory part of educational system in Slovakia and students with dyslexia who are integrated in the regular classes tend to face difficulties in foreign language learning (FLL). There are a lot of myths about dyslexia, as e.g. that people see things backwards or that dyslexia is rare (some studies and statistics reported that 1 in 5 people have dyslexia); some people believe it is a vision or auditory problem; similarly, the myth that dyslexics cannot read is not true.

Almost in all study groups there are students with learning differences on different levels and there are also students that are not diagnosed. The problem of dyslexia is in fact associated with native language learning. There are various studies confirming that performance on standard measures of native language skill is related to the level of foreign language proficiency.

Even though there is a group of scholars claiming that dyslexic learners should not study foreign language, there are also opinions that "many at-risk students can benefit from the study of a foreign language in the appropriate learning environment" (IDA, 2010). Crombie (1999) assesses the inclusion of dyslexic pupils into language learning very positively; she points out that "True inclusion in the modern languages classroom is about much more than having a presence and being exposed to another language. It is about feeling accepted and involved in a worthwhile learning experience whatever the level that can be achieved". Many scholars and dyslexia specialists support this idea and draw our attention to the importance of social development and state that "while it is acknowledged that some dyslexic children are only likely to achieve limited competence in a foreign language, it is important to acknowledge that the opportunity to participate in communicative activities brings additional benefits such as enhanced social development"(The British Dyslexia Association, 2015).

Teachers are expected to accommodate their teaching, their requirements and examination conditions to the individual needs however they are not systematically trained, to identify specific learning needs, to work with dyslexic students, to accommodate their teaching, which techniques, strategies to use. Even though there is a plethora of literature about dyslexia there is still not enough literature on methodology of teaching foreign languages to students with dyslexia.

Dyslexia – definition, symptoms

It is often claimed that dyslexia should be perceived as a different learning ability rather than as a disability. There are authors who see dyslexia as an advantage and gift (see e.g. Davis & Braun, 1997). It is important to define first what dyslexia is. Dyslexia can be defined as a language learning disability. Generally, it refers to the problems with reading, but students usually experience difficulties with spelling, pronouncing the words and writing.

The term dyslexia "referred strictly to an impairment in the processing of written language. It was later recognised (Pumfrey & Reason, 2003) that the two terms seemed to be used

interchangeably to cover the particular pattern of difficulties experienced" (Mortimore, 2008, p. 50). Specific learning disabilities, however, cover dyslexia as one type of specific difficulties along with e.g. dyspraxia or attention deficit disorder.

It is important to realise that dyslexia is a specific learning disability that has neurological origin and cannot be cured. It is not a question of intelligence, intellectual abilities or age. The International Dyslexia Association defines dyslexia considering biological, behavioural, cognitive and environmental levels (Kormos & Smith, 2012, p. 24):

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin.	**Biological level**
It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities.	**Behavioural level**
These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities	**Cognitive level**
and the provision of effective classroom instruction.	**Environmental level**

Dyslexia is a **chronic, lifelong condition** and "studies show definite **brain differences** between dyslexics and nondyslexics" (Wood, 2006, p. 18). As dyslexia may severely affect the self-perception the early identification is important (watch e.g. HBO Documentary Film Journey into Dyslexia, 2011). It is very hereditarian. And it is many times unexpected as children are very bright but they have problems with acquiring a written language. It frequently happens that children are very frustrated, they are struggling very hard, before being diagnosed as they themselves as well as other people do not understand what the problem is. The pupils are usually described as low and/or lazy; sometimes they are labelled as disorganized, stupid, dummies.

A lot of people are embarrassed with the dyslexia "label"; it happens that parents do not want to accept that their child is dyslexic. Hudson (2013) explains the positive aspects of dyslexia identification and possible labelling learners with *dyslexia.* He claims that people have to "understand the talents that go along with dyslexia and those who have it in the way their brains operate. It's a package of strengths, and some areas of challenge. More to the school system, however, is labelling is sometimes relieving to a child. And that's true whether it's a mental health issue or learning issue. Or a health issue that's beyond a mental health issue. People need to get a handhold on something in order to know – it's not about them, that whatever they are contending with it might be a challenge, is not a character flaw".

Early identification[1] is also important because "the brain is much more plastic in younger children and potentially more malleable for the rerouting of neural circuits" (Shaywitz, 2008, p. 611-612). The symptoms or behaviors associated with dyslexia can be observed and help the parent or teacher to suspect dyslexia.

Concerning **symptoms** associated directly with language we can mention that dyslexic children are late-talking, they start to speak late, they cannot tell the rhyming words, reverse letters and numbers (especially p and b, w and m, 3 and 5), they alter or leave out word parts, they have problem to break words into their component, to discriminate sounds within a word – *phonological processing* (d-o-g). There are also other than language (non-linguistic) symptoms as e.g. confusion with before and after, left vs. right confusion, difficulty remembering and following directions, difficulty with motor skills and organisation, attention. Many dyslexic children show problems with handwriting, *processing speed*, *working memory*.

"At the upper levels of the language hierarchy are components involved with, for example, semantics (vocabulary or word meaning), syntax (grammatical structure), and discourse (connected sentences). At the lowest level of the hierarchy is the phonologic module, which is dedicated to processing the distinctive sound elements of language. Dyslexia involves a

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[1] „In 1994 Reid observed that about 15% of the children who were identified as having specifi c learning diffi culties were not identifi ed until they reached secondary education" (Mortimere, 2008, p. 57).

weakness within the language system, specifically at the level of the phonologic module" (Shaywitz, 2008, p. 772-775). Davis and Braun (1997) suggest that "dyslexics have little or no internal monologue, so they do not hear what they are reading unless they are reading aloud. Instead, they are composing a mental picture by adding the meaning—or image of the meaning—of each new word as it is encountered". This is also why many dyslexic pupils say words (while reading) quietly to themselves. This is called *subvocalization*.

There are several ways how to identify/suspect dyslexia, as e.g. observation (parent, teacher), self-report questionnaire, screening, diagnostic interviews.

Pollock, Waller and Politt (2004, in Mortimere, 2008, p. 59) provide a helpful guide to this kind of diagnostic approach. In general, if the answer to three or more of the following questions is 'yes', further investigation is definitely warranted.

Does a seemingly able and frequently articulate student:
1. have difficulties with expressing themselves on paper – poor and sometimes bizarre spelling, slow or poorly formed handwriting, untidy presentation?
2. seem resistant to or need extra time for written work?
3. have unexpected difficulties with reading or maths?
4. frequently seem worried, switched off or lagging behind?
5. have difficulties with organisation within time and space?
6. have difficulties with situations that involve memory (bringing the right equipment on the right day, remembering spoken instructions, remembering phone numbers, learning multiplication tables)?
7. use inappropriate behaviour to avoid classroom situations in which dyslexic-type learning difficulties might be revealed in public?

Ranaldi (2003, p. 14-16) summarises some of the areas that highlight the variation of difficulties associated with dyslexia:

Possible difficulties
- reading hesitantly;
- misreading, making understanding difficult;
- difficulty with sequences, e.g. getting dates in order;
- poor organisation or time management;
- difficulty organising thoughts clearly;
- erratic spelling;
- processing at speed;
- misunderstanding complicated questions, though knowing the answer;
- finding the holding of a list of instructions in the memory difficult, though able to perform all the tasks;
- remembering people, places and names of objects;
- tiring more quickly than a non-dyslexic person – far greater concentration is required;
- deciphering a passage correctly yet not getting the sense of it;
- great difficulty with figures (e.g. learning tables), reading music or anything which entails interpreting symbols;
- learning foreign languages;
- inconsistent in performance;
- may omit a word or words, or write one twice;
- very likely to suffer from constant nagging uncertainty;
- great difficulty in taking good notes because cannot listen and write at the same time;
- when looking away from a book they are reading or a blackboard from which they are copying, they may have great difficulty in finding their place again;
- works slowly because of difficulties, so is always under pressure of time.

The types of problems experienced in reading might be:
- hesitant and laboured reading, especially out loud;
- confusing letters such as b-d, m-n, p-d, u-n and those that sound similarly – in Slovak language s-y, k-g, š-ž;
- in Slovak language – ignoring the soft or hard syllables – de-te-ne-le-di-ti-ni-li;
- omitting or adding extra words;
- reading at a reasonable rate, but with low level of comprehension;
- failure to recognise familiar words;
- missing a line or reading the same line twice;
- losing the place or using a finger or marker to keep the place;
- double reading (silent reading first and then aloud)
- difficulty in pinpointing the main idea in a passage;
- finding difficulty in using dictionaries, directories and encyclopaedias.

The types of problems experienced in writing might be:
- poor standard of written work compared to oral ability;
- poor handwriting with badly formed letters;
- good handwriting, but production of work is extremely slow;
- badly set out work with spellings crossed out several times;
- words spelled differently in one piece of work;
- difficulty with punctuation and grammar;
- confusion of upper- and lower-case letters;
- writing a great deal but 'loses the thread';
- writing very little but to the point;
- difficulty in taking notes in lessons;
- difficulty in organising work and personal timetable.

The mindmap below summarises some of the symptoms of dyslexia that might be observed.
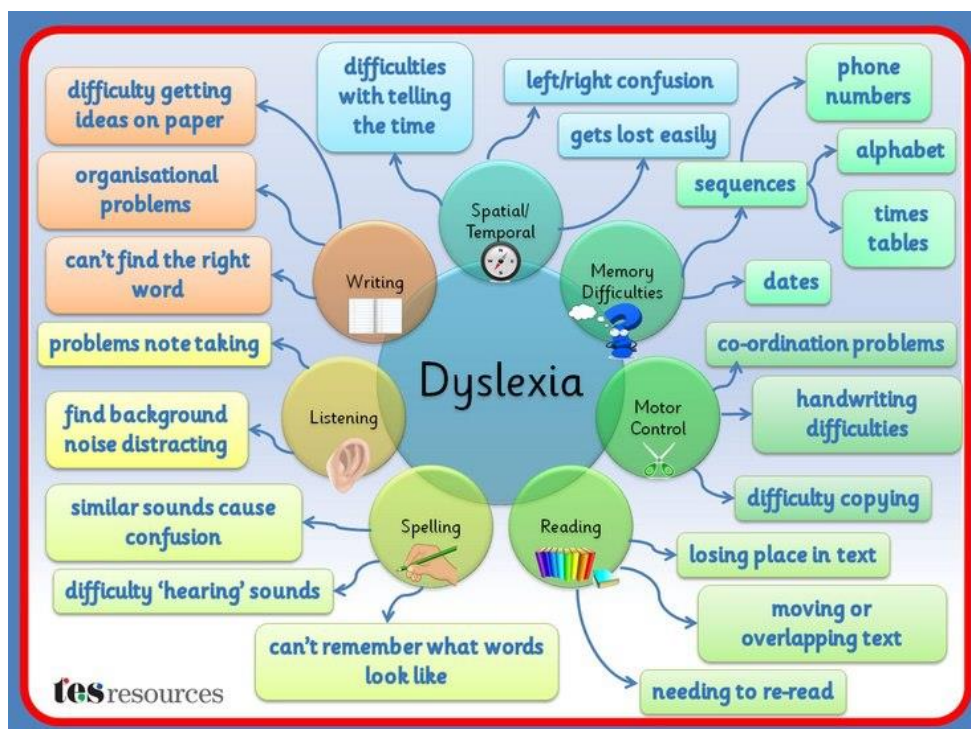

Figure 1: Dyslexia Difficulties Mind Map (Source: Teaching resources homepage; 2013)

Bakker (1990, in Pumfrey & Reason, 2005) has hypothesized the existence of **two types of dyslexia** "P" (perceptual) type and "L" (linguistic) type. **"P" type learners** "tend to read relatively slowly and in a fragmented fashion, albeit rather accurately because they remain

sensitive to the perceptual features of text". **"L"-type learners** "read in a hurried fashion and produce many substantive errors (omission, additions, etc.)". Some scholars define also "M" (mixed) type who read slowly while making lots of mistakes.

Principles of accommodations in foreign language teaching

Even though reading is related to speaking, it is not as natural as speaking. "Our biology is programmed to learn to speak and understand what is spoken to us. Reading, on the other hand, must be carefully taught. Children have to spend many hours and years being taught to read. **Reading is primarily a process of decoding written symbols which stand for spoken language. Once decoded, the child must construct these symbols into meaningful ideas**" (Nuttall & Nuttall, 2013, p. 9-10).

Foreign language learning can be extremely difficult for dyslexic learners. Reading and writing difficulties along with the associated problems as **short working memory** and **problems with automaticity** in language have a strong influence on their language learning. Classroom accommodations are essential for dyslexic students. Barton (2013) stresses that classroom accommodations are something the regular teacher does. She highlights that teacher has to avoid humiliating this child by e.g. accidental revealing their weakness to their friends. She suggests teachers shouldn't ask dyslexic learners „to read out loud in class; make them participate in spelling bee; have them come up to the board and write the answers to the homework where they'll see his spelling issues, and his handwriting issues and so on. The most important thing for a teacher is to keep his struggles private. His academic struggles are nobody else's business but this, the parents, and the teachers". Barton (ibid) adds that the other types of accommodations that teachers should also provide (so the child can access the same curriculum as everyone else) is e.g. "allow him to listen to his textbook on audio" (as he can't read and write at the grade level yet). Instead of written test the child should be allowed to do oral testing; essays should be graded on content and the spelling should be ignored. Barton (ibid) points out that such accommodations cost no money and do not "require changing the curriculum. They just require an awareness by the teacher that these are necessary".

There are many tips or pieces of advice how to assist or help students to enhance their learning; the most frequently mentioned are:
- Suggest and allow them to use pens with erasable ink or pencils – this means they can delete/erase the incorrect or not well written text without crossing it and delivering messy writing,
- allow enough time to process question or task before answering,
- do not ask dyslexic learners to read aloud in from of the whole class,
- make sure the instructions/assignments are clear and appropriate, meets a particular student's needs, and students understand what they are expected to do,
- if it is possible, have peer buddy – a classmate who can help the dyslexic learner (who e.g. can sit next to him/her),
- avoid gap-filling activities,
- model exam/test-taking strategies,
- use different learning channels simultaneously,
- use e.g. colours or symbols along with the names of things, this would help them to work more quickly and get organised more effectively as reading letters might be substituted by "reading" colours or symbols,
- concerning different activities, you may also use colours to support learning,
- make sure your writing on board is well-spaced,
- you may use different chalks for different lines in case there is a lot of information.

Nijakovska et al. (2013, see the project DysTEFL: Dyslexia for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language at http://dystefl.eu/) propose a set of ways of accommodating learners with dyslexia in the foreign language classrooms and these can be categorised into 7 groups:

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1 Lesson organisation

During the lessons teachers should *use explicit teaching procedures* (such as a lot of demonstrations, guided practice, corrective feedback). To make sure learners understand the instructions it is important to *repeat directions* and in different ways as well as check understanding. If directions are difficult and complicated it is suggested to *use step-by-step instruction*, *to break them down into subsets*, one can demonstrate each part. In case of written instructions we should also *clarify or simplify written directions* with the samples.

It is important to keep the balance in the lesson - balance between oral presentations with visual information and participatory activities, a balance between large group, small group, and individual activities. The small assignments bring steps to success and increase motivation. It is thus suggested to *present a small amount of work* what prevents learners becoming discouraged by the amount of work. Similarly, teachers can reduce the amount of work – e.g. to complete only half of the activity, or they can work only with the specific section, etc.

2 Simplification of material

Teachers often create their own materials to support education. The teachers are often creative and they often try to make them graphically attractive using different fonts decorations, pictures. With dyslexic learners we should, however not to crowd the page, *block out extraneous stimuli* (sometimes if you cannot make it simple you can suggest learners to use a blank sheet of paper to covers distracting stimuli), use large print, "dyslexia-friendly" font (e.g. Comic Sans, Century Gothic, Open Dyslexic)[2] and *highlight essential information.* The advantage of teacher-made materials that these can fully reflect students' needs. The teacher can *design hierarchical worksheets* where tasks are arranged from easiest to hardest.

Figure 2: Sample how to make reading minimise distractors in the textbooks - just 2 pieces of paper can be used to help learners focus on what should be read

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[2] There are "four fonts designed for people with dyslexia: *Sylexiad*, *Dyslexie*, *Read Regular*, and *OpenDyslexic*. The four fonts have in common that the letters are more differentiated compared to regular fonts. For example, the shape of the letter 'b' is not a mirror image of 'd'". The Open Dyslexic (both roman and italic styles), is the only open sourced. This font has been already integrated in various tools. (Rello, Baeza-Yates, 2013).

3 Organisation

Dyslexic students need more time for certain type of activities and thus good organisation might save their time. They are therefore suggested to use different colour coding, sign/symbol coding, ETC. Thus teachers may *provide students with a graphic organizer*, e.g. charts, blank webs, maps what helps learners to listen for key information and understand relationships. Similarly, we should *encourage learners to use graphic organizers*. Many learners, not only dyslexic ones use different diaries and calendars to get organised. We should *encourage use of assignment books or calendars* where pupils can record due dates, homework, test dates, etc..

4 Additional support

Dyslexic learners have often problems with writing and thus teachers may *reduce copying by including information or activities on handouts or worksheets*, they can also *provide a glossary in content areas* and/or *outline/copy of the lecture.* Dyslexic learners need *additional practice activities* and teachers can recommend some software programmes, self-correcting materials and provide them with additional worksheets.

5 Interaction

Peer-mediated learning is usually beneficial for both sides. One student verbalises the problem what helps them to understand and memorise the issue the other listens and the multisensory approach in this case can be applied. They can also compare and check the notes, collaboratively work ion different tasks etc. Similarly we can *encourage note sharing.*

6 Multisensory approach

Multisensory learning involves using two or more sense is often. It is an effective approach not only to teaching children with dyslexia, but teaching generally (see also the text below). *Verbal information* can be *simultaneously combined visual information*, you may use e.g. handout or overhead. Prior to a presentation, the e.g. *new vocabulary or key points can be written on the board or overhead.*

7 Individual approach

Placing students close to the teacher can help e.g.to limit distracting factors (sounds, objects, etc.) as we can in some way "close" the space among the teacher, students and board. *Using flexible work times* might be useful with dyslexic learners as they sometimes need more time to complete assignments (if students are seated close to the teacher, he can constantly monitor their progress). To reduce the time they need to complete the assignments they should be *allowed to use of instructional aids*. Sometimes it is worth considering the *use assignment substitutions or adjustments*. We also can help learners to apply different learning strategies and *mnemonic devices.*

Schneider and Crombie (2003, p.17) stress the importance of **metacognition** and suggest to "make language learning a 'discovery learning' process in which students turn into 'language detectives'. They should be encouraged to find out:
- about the structures and uniqueness of the new language,
- why certain expressions are used the way they are,
- how they can self-correct and monitor their own reading and writing.

This makes all students independent learners. Dyslexic students cannot succeed without this component; the explicit use of mnemonics is helpful". They stress that "By teaching metalinguistic strategies, the FL educator allows dyslexic students to process the FL language in multi-sensory ways **using their strengths to compensate for auditory and or visual weaknesses**".

Specific teaching methods and strategies

Teachers in primary level spend a lot of time with their pupils. This gives them opportunity to know their pupils, to understand their strength and weaknesses and help them to find the most appropriate strategies for effective learning. However, pupils since lower secondary level sometime move from class to class and from teacher to teacher and they see most of teachers 2 or three times a week for no more than 45 minutes.

Reid distinguishes three main components in the information **processing cycle**, namely, input, cognition and output and he suggests the following strategies that might be applied in different stages (2005, p. 32-33):

Input

At the input stage it is important to:
- present information in small units;
- monitor at frequent intervals to ensure that the student is comprehending;
- utilise overlearning, and vary this, using a range of materials and strategies; and
- present key points at the initial stage of learning new material.

Cognition

At the cognition stage it can be important to:
- encourage organisational strategies to help with learning;
- organise new material to be learned into meaningful chunks or categories;
- relate the new information to previous knowledge to ensure that concepts are clearly understood;
- place the information into a meaningful framework;
- utilise specific memory strategies, such as mind mapping and mnemonics; and
- monitor and assess the new learning frequently.

Output

At the output stage:
- use headings and subheadings in written work to help provide a structure;
- encourage the use of summaries in order to identify the key points; and
- assess learning at each point.

Homolová (2012, p. 51) uses the term strategopedia and referring to Rogers (2003) stresses the importance of knowing the most efficient learning strategies for student. It is important to help student to find his/her own way of learning and help him to become autonomous. It is equally important to teach dyslexic learners to use the compensation strategies.

Multisensory approach

Concerning language teaching methods applied in a group of dyslexic students results of many researches and studies indicate that TPR, audio-oral method and especially multisensory structured learning (MSL) approach.

Multisensory approach has been proved to be efficient and useful for all students but it is of great importance for dyslexic learners. In case of involving more senses we may compensate their visual deficits. More senses are involved at the same time.

MSL approach presents and teaches L2 "through the activation of auditory, visual, tactile and kinaesthetic pathways" (Kormos & Smith, 2012, p. 127). As it has been mentioned, many dyslexic students have problems with phonological processing skills and thus applying images, sounds or touch is a way of compensation. For example, bringing real objects into the classroom enables learners to apply additional sensory chancels rather than encoding the words, texts verbally. At the same time it helps them to apply different direct learning strategies as applying images, sounds or associations. Kormos and Smith (ibid) claim that "additionally, the modeling of affective strategies, such as rewarding oneself when completing a task, might assist language learners with an SpLD to overcome any anxiety and stress they might experience".

Tánczos, Mónis and Wiwczaroski (2010) suggest that in "language teaching, however, touching and movement are rarely applied for fixing the input. The question arises then how these two sensory modalities could be exploited more often in the language classroom". They (ibid) suggest using:

- project work - as it provides the variety and multitude of stimuli; making projects is one of the most effective methods of acquiring and expanding topic-related vocabulary,
- role-play in language teaching; role plays involve students' emotions, what leads to better, deeper and longer lasting fixing of information,
- mimics, gestures and movements in a playful way,
- cards for the acquisition of words and grammatical items as these provide learners with a large amount of tactile-kinaesthetic input; other object can be used for the same purpose, such as wood boxes of different sizes, toys, buttons, letters made of wood or plastic, etc.

It has been already mentioned that it is important that teachers

- materials, topics, structures should be linked to student's prior knowledge,
- structure and order materials logically where the relationship is clear,
- progress from the simple towards the more complex materials ,
- progress from the receptive to the productive activities,
- present and explain learning strategies.

Kormos and Smith (2012, p. 129) enumerate the basic principles of the MSL approach and namely: multi-sensory, carefully structured, cumulative, frequent revision, explicit explanation of linguistic structures, ample practice, drills and learning strategy training. They highlight that "The main differences between teaching languages to learners with an SpLD and students with no learning difficulties lies in **the importance of explicit teaching of linguistic structures, slower pace of progress and frequent revision**".

Mind mapping

One of the strengths of dyslexics is that they see the overall picture. This is why teachers are suggested to provide an overall plan of the lessons.

Mind mapping is a simple and effective tool that can be used to help learners to understand the relationships and also e.g. structure of learning and goals. Michalko (in: Buzan, 2012)[3] describes mind map as "**the whole-brain alternative to linear thinking**. [It] reaches out in all directions and catches thoughts from any angle". Mind maps help to visualise, connect, structure, classify thoughts and relations among them. Mind maps can make use of not only written text (generally less text to process), but also images, colours, shapes, different symbols that help proceed, understand and remember information. There are less or more professional tools available that are freeware or those based on commercial basis. Buzan (2011) formulates **7 steps to making a mind map:**

1. "Start in the **CENTRE** of a blank page turned sideways. Why? *Because starting in the centre gives your Brain freedom to spread out in all directions and to express itself more freely and naturally.*
2. Use an **IMAGE** or PICTURE for your central idea. Why? *Because an image is worth a thousand words and helps you use your Imagination. A central image is more interesting, keeps you focussed, helps you concentrate, and gives your Brain more of a buzz!*
3. Use **COLOURS** throughout. Why? *Because colours are as exciting to your Brain as are images. Colour adds extra vibrancy and life to your Mind Map, adds tremendous energy to your Creative Thinking, and is fun!*
4. **CONNECT** your MAIN BRANCHES to the central image and connect your second- and third-level branches to the first and second levels, etc. Why? *Because your Brain works*

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[3] Buzans's book *The Ultimate book of mind maps. Unlock your creativity, boost your memory, change your life* is available online and can be downloaded free of charge.

by association. It likes to link two (or three, or four) things together. If you connect the branches, you will understand and remember a lot more easily.

5. Make your **branches CURVED** rather than straight-lined. Why? *Because having nothing but straight lines is* boring *to your Brain.*

6. Use **ONE KEY WORD PER LINE**. Why? *Because single key words give your Mind Map more power and flexibility.*

7. Use **IMAGES** throughout. Why? *Because each image, like the central image, is also worth a thousand words.* So if you have only 10 images in your Mind Map, it's already the equal of 10,000 words of notes!
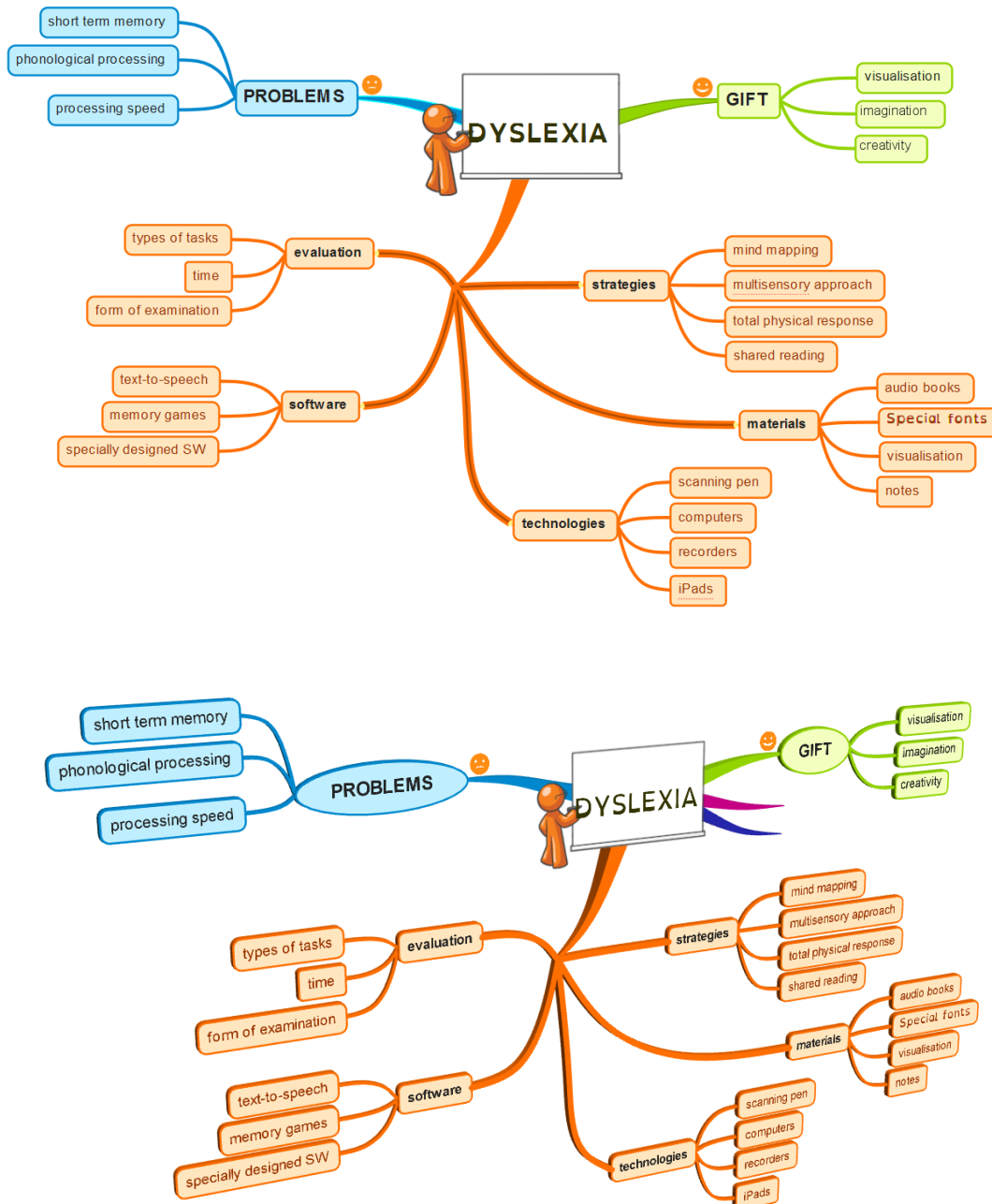

Figure 3: Mind maps created in iMindMap software

Total physical response

Homolová (2012, p. 45-46) stresses the positive aspect of total physical response that is based on the principle of mother tongue acquisition, where listening is the first skill developed. In TPR EFL environment learners do not need to produce language until they are not ready for verbal production. The process can be simplified into three steps **hear – understand – react**. New vocabulary is based on the visual stimuli, mimics, gestures, movement. The first goal of a teacher is thus to help learners develop listening fluency. TPR creates positive atmosphere and reduces stress. It can motivate learners what is very important not only for dyslexic learners. TPR is criticised for its limits (rarely applied beyond the beginning level) but on the other hand it stimulates learners to learning languages.

Shared/paired/parent reading, KWL

Shared reading is interactive reading when learner shares reading with teacher and/or parents. This enables them to go through the books they may not be able to read on their own. Usually it starts with the discussion about the book – its cover, title, predicting the content; discussion about the author(s) and illustrator(s). During reading it is important to keep learners motivated, check understanding and lead them to predicting. It is also useful to do post-reading activities after reading. This helps learner to understand and leads him to think about the content and language used. It also helps them to develop reading strategies as e.g. where to look and what to focus on, how to interconnect background knowledge and the content, encourages predicting.

In **paired reading** usually learners are paired and they read the text aloud simultaneously or one reads the text (e.g. page) and the other starts where the first stops. The aim of the paired reading is to develop reading fluency. Students are also trained different strategies to build reading fluency. Teacher has to be very careful and sensitive in creating the pairs.

Parent (sometimes also called shared) reading is quite common in e.g. in Ireland compared to Slovakia, where it is not systematically developed. Reading begins at home and it is natural and safe environment for children. Parents may read the books they loved in their childhood and they can share reading and their reading experience with their kinds. In some schools parents write feedbacks on how their children progress in home reading and what they have read together. This is important information for teacher and possible in-class discussions. There are a lot of occasions for authentic reading – names of the shops, funny greeting cards in a shop, scrapbooks with captions, etc.)

The main aim of the KWL reading method is to guide a reader to understanding The KWL stands for what we **Know**, what we **Want** to know, what we **Learned.** In the first stage readers should think about the topic, to brainstorm what they already **know** about the topic. In the second stage readers should formulate the questions what they **want** to learn about the topic (the questions should be ordered by importance. This is usually done based on the book cover, table of contents, pictures etc. In the last stage readers should evaluate what they have **learned**, whether they can answer their question.

Teaching vocabulary and teaching grammar

Most scholars agree that there should not be more than 6-8 new words in a lesson. Concerning dyslexic students, these should not be asked to acquire new words implicitly and they need a lot of repetition. They have a short-term working memory and they may seem to understand new words but they need to repeat them frequently to build automaticity. As they also have problem with **working memory** they have problems e.g. to repeat the text following the logical line and when they learn lists of words they usually remember the first and last words. Homolová (2012) brings the statistics and states that after one hour students forget 50% of what they have learnt, after 9 hours they forget 60% and after a month 80%. In the groups of dyslexic learner the above mentioned numbers are even higher. Kormos and Smith (2012, p.132) recommend that "session needs to be **revised repeatedly** on at least three to four consecutive occasions".

Dyslexic children find it demanding to acquire new words implicitly and they prefer explicit explanation. Still, context is helpful and can also facilitate the memorization of words. Multi-sensory methods are helpful and can involve different learner types. Usually the oral presentation of the word is also support in other ways, Using flashcards, gestures, objects, mind maps stimulate the visual channels. The kinaesthetic/tactile learning of vocabulary can be supported by mime, tracing the words in the air, building the words from the e.g. wooden letters (or paper). This is a typical activity in re-education and compensation applied in mother tongue. Teaching foreign languages is based mostly on using strategies analogically.

"Visualizing the word can be a successful strategy for some dyslexic pupils. This process involves the following:

- Look at the word
- Cover the word with a piece of paper
- Try to see the word - visualize it - on the paper
- Copy the word as you see it
- Check to see if you have spelt the word correctly
- Have a ten-minute break and then repeat the exercise
- A few hours later repeat this again
- Then repeat this at various times over the next few days
- Add a new word to the list each week and repeat the above sequence" (Reid & Green, 2011, p. 41).

Learners can use picture dictionaries to better remember and visualise words and phrases. The possibility to transfer letters into the drawings is suggested by experienced teachers and scholars.

Crosswords are liked by children and based on the task different levels of difficulty can be obtained:

- there are no clues – learner must find it in a crossword,
- the clues are descriptions (synonyms of the words) – learner must read it, understand/find the synonym and find it in a crossword,
- the clues are Slovak words – learner must read it, translate it and find it,
- the clues are pictures words – learner must recognise it, translate it and find it,
- the clues are English words – learner must read it, translate it and find it *(see the sample below)*,
- to simplify the process of finding a word the direction might be indicated *(see the sample below).*

A	S	P	E	A	C	H	Y
P	L	U	M	C	L	U	R
P	E	A	R	V	E	R	R
L	W	B	A	P	M	E	E
E	O	D	A	B	O	U	H
Q	C	R	O	N	N	H	C
W	G	E	A	R	A	R	B
F	D	A	S	N	E	N	M
P	O	I	U	T	G	B	A
K	I	W	I	R	V	E	R

APPLE ↓
PEAR →
PLUM →
GRAPE ↗
ORANGE ↘
LEMON ↓
BANANA ↘
CHERRY ↑
KIWI →
~~PEACH~~ →

The problems with reading and writing, memory problems as well as phonological awareness problems have an influence on language teaching.

Sarkadi (2008, p. 111) refers to Selikowitz and states "The English alphabet has 26 letters representing 44 phonemes; however, according to Selikowitz (1993), there are 577 grapheme-to-phoneme correspondences in English, which need to be recognised during the reading process.

Gerber (1993, in Schneider & Crombie, 2003, p. 6-7) draws our attention to "a dyslexic student's ability to identify, understand and use socio-pragmatic language concepts such as **idiomatic expressions, humour, jokes, homonyms, homographs, homophones or metaphors** in proper discourse in the foreign language. This includes the development of comprehending implicit information 'in between the lines' or spoken or written information".

Teaching **grammar** is important as it helps with comprehension skills. Similarly to teaching vocabulary, it is most effective when it is taught explicitly. If it is possible the abstract linguistic terms can be avoided. One of the ways how to help learners to grasp the grammar structures and functions can be colour coding. Kormos and Smith (2012, p.134) bring the example: "we can decide to use red for the subject of the sentence, blue for the predicate and green for the object (e.g. The boy bought a book). If this kind of colour-coding is consistently followed, students will soon learn that words in red express the agents of actions, blue stands for the action itself, and green represents the object of the action".

Using colours and schemas might be effective way how to visualise grammar that is abstract otherwise. Look at the following sample:

SUBJECT WHO	TO BE (am, is, are)	VERB + ING	what where
Daddy	is	reading	newspaper.

Question

VERB -TO BE (am, is, are)	SUBJECT	VERB + ING	what where
Is	daddy	reading	newspaper?

Negative sentence

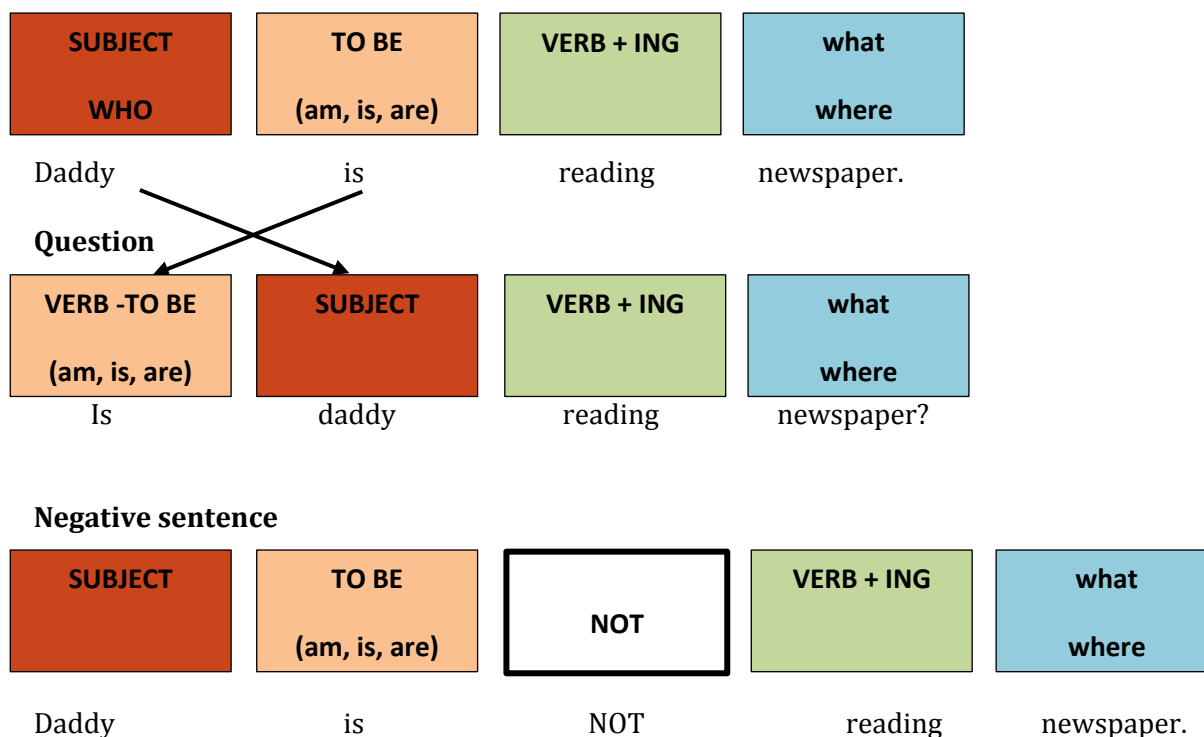| SUBJECT	TO BE (am, is, are)	NOT	VERB + ING	what where
Daddy	is	NOT	reading	newspaper.

Figure 4: Structure for teaching present continuous tense

The guided and controlled practice is very important for dyslexic learners. This can lead to automaticity that is later used in free practice and helps to develop fluent production without overanalysing language.

Automaticity can be reached using different drill activities; the teacher needs to be patient with students as this process might be slow. A lot of supplementary materials and activities can be also found online.

Extensive reading and dyslexic learner

To become efficient reader we need to read a lot. Shared reading, paired reading, parent reading have been already mentioned. EFL readers many times use graded readers to develop motivation and habit of reading. Graded readers are levelled usually within series (based on the number of words used, headwords counts). There are graded readers for different age groups (these can be adaptations of literary works and there are also books written specifically for the EFL students).

Books for children are usually supported by a lot of visuals to enhance understanding. One may find also graded comics that can be used in language classroom.
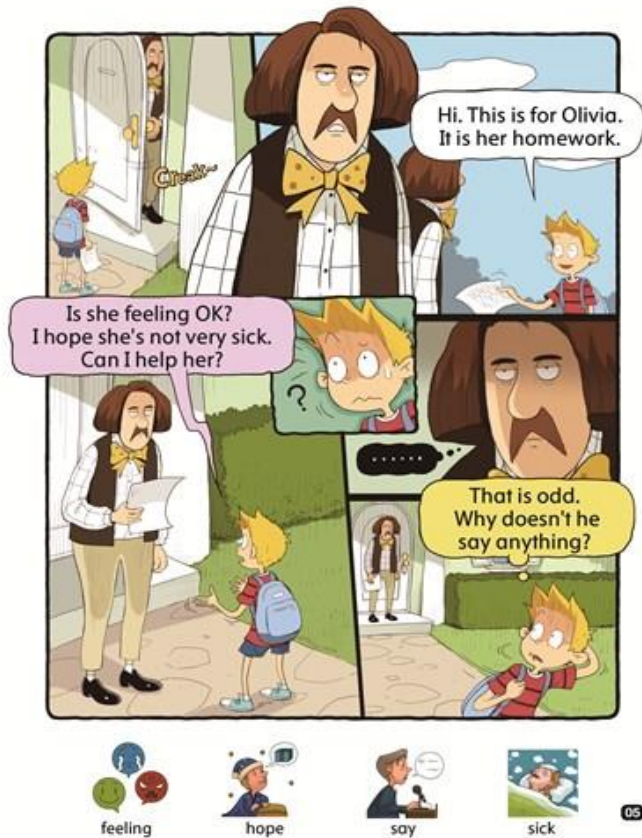
Figure 5: Sample of the graded reader comic
Source: http://www.englishbooks.jp/catalog/product_info.php/magic-adventures-graded-comic-readers-level-set-books-p-28597)

There are also special editions of dyslexia-friendly books for children that might be used in language teaching. Here, teacher must be careful as those are not adapted for foreign language teaching. See the sample below.

Figure 6: Sample of the book for dyslexic readers
Source: http://www.lovereading4kids.co.uk/genre/dys/Dyslexia-friendly.html

It must be mentioned that there are scholars, on the other hand, who claim that reading comics is not appropriate genre for dyslexics as text in the bubbles might be problematic (see e.g. Homolová, 2012).

If you want to apply extensive reading, you may use special edition of books prepared for students with dyslexia (e.g. the special editions - quick reads, see http://www.quickreads.org.uk/resources – it is necessary to mention that these editions are for native speakers. The books are supplemented with the *Learning with Quick Reads* methodological support downloadable from their website. As far as we know there are no special graded readers for EFL dyslexic learners. Still, the teachers might selectively use the above mentioned readers.

Similarly, the use of graphic novels allows pupils to be creative readers. Even though there is a little or no text, actually the kids read the pictures and read/create the story and at the same time they develop the habit of reading and later, when they learn some compensation techniques they are motivated to overcome linguistic barriers as they have experience the joy of reading. The samples below are from Shaun Tan's social novel *The Arrival* and Raymond Briggs story for children *Snowman*.
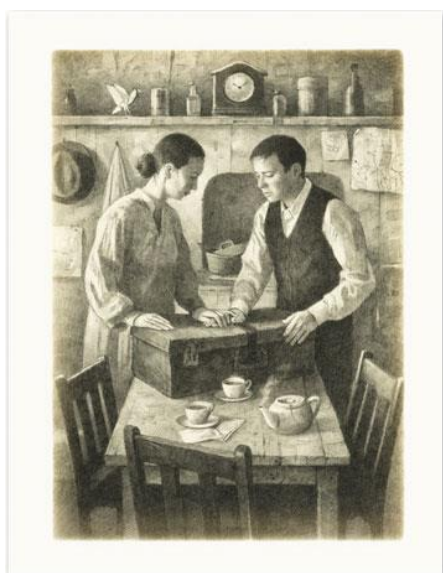

Figure 7: Sample pages from the graphic books. (Graphic novel: *Shaun Tan: The Arrival* – the social graphic novel about migration; Raymond Briggs: The Snowman – the book about snowman and a boy friendship; The Briggs' book evokes the blueish feelings (he uses colours but the blue one prevails) whereas Tan works with grey and sepia shadows that evokes the feelings of old photographs that create a story.)

Comics similarly do not provide much language, and they tell a story. This is a format that can provide access to narratives for dyslexics. You may for example read Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn graded reader with a group and use comics. You may delete the bubbles and students can add the text. If you want you may use software to create the comics (based on whar students read), as e.g. makebeliefscomix.com or toondoo.com.

You may also use audio books depending on your aim – but definitely this is a way how to help learners with dyslexia. There are a lot of graded readers that are accompanied with the audio CD. Similarly, there are a lot of material online.

Technologies to enhance dyslexic students learners

Special teaching aids are available at the market and the function of few of them is presented in the next part. Concerning using technologies and dyslexic pupils we can deal with both, assistive hardware and software and learning, educational software).Using different tools might be useful in the educational process, both, teaching and learning to enhance the process of language learning. It is also one of the ways how to accommodate the teaching.

The tools to enhance the learning are being constantly developed. We can mention **reading pens** that have scanning capabilities with different possibilities as e.g. to enlarge the font to make it easier to read, to read the text aloud what is the useful tool for dyslexic learners.

Text-to-speech software is very useful and might be used by both, teachers and students. Concerning not only English language teaching we may use paid software that reverses the text to sound. The special software is mentiond later.

One of the very simple but very challenging tool is e.g. website voki.com that can be used by both, mainstream pupils and also the students with specific learning difficulties. *Voki* is a free website application where teachers/students can create characters (different fields: classics, folk, animals, politics…) and they can either record their voice (i.e. they do not need to write/type). They can hear their own utterances what means this enables them to spot their mistakes. They can rerecord themselves as many times as they want and to refine their utterance. Another alternative is they type the text and select the voice that reads the text instead of them (text-to-speech). Students can listen to it and if there is a mistake in a written text, they can hear it and correct it. This is, however, the tool that is not intended for the dyslexic students, but it might be useful and motivating tool for them as well as for other students.

Figure 8: Print screen - website voki.com

Speech-to text is the software that may save your dyslexic students' time and stress. Student "dictates" the text and the software transfers it to the written text. Some of them include even games to improve vocabulary and thesaurus.

In Slovakia we can mention using **Program DysCom SK** (sold in Slovakia by November 2012, still available in Czech Republic – Czech version). The software trains not only reading, but also, different types of orientation, grammar, the activities to support motivation are also included.

Nowadays many schools are equipped with the iPads and a lot of students have their own tablets. There are various applications that can be used to support (language) learning. E.g. the books that have read along children's books with visual support can be mentioned. There are plethora materials available for dyslexic users on/for iPad. Different books even though written for native learners and readers may be used by foreign language learners as well. There is usually a little text and a lot of visual support. *The Spy Sam Reading Series* are available free of charge, *Dr. Seuss library* offers 50 books for children (http://dyslexiahelp.umich.edu/tools/apps/dr-seuss-bookshelf-free), OUP has a tool *Gamebooks: Read and Learn*.

The Spy Sam is series of 3(http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/spy-sam-reading-book-1-big/id644904139) books that start with a few words on a page, gradually developing an interesting story for children. The reader can touch the screen-objects on the screen that are interactive.
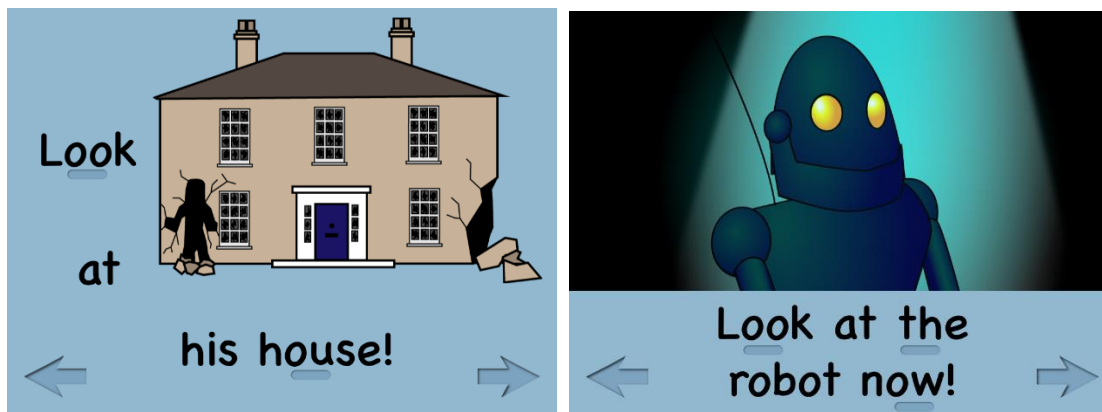

Figure 9: Screens from the book *The Spy Sam Reading Series (iPad)*

Dr. Seuss Bookshelf is free application (https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/dr.-seuss-bookshelf/id543665995?mt=8) and offers 50 famous books (among the famous probably belong The Cat in the Hat). Children can read them on their own, or have the book apps read them aloud to them with their text-to-speech features. The books are for natives but visual support significantly helps the reader to understand the text. The audio books are a real help to dyslexic learners and they can connect sound and written form of the words.

Figure 10: Screens from the book *Dr. Seuss's ABC*

The *Make sentences* is an interactive tool (https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/make-sentences/id587265511?mt=8) recommended for English speaking pre-school children (5+) and young learners. The tool, however, maybe used with EFL learners as well. Their task is to order the scattered words according to what they can hear. The children construct simple or complex sentences by picking and placing words in the correct order from the given words.
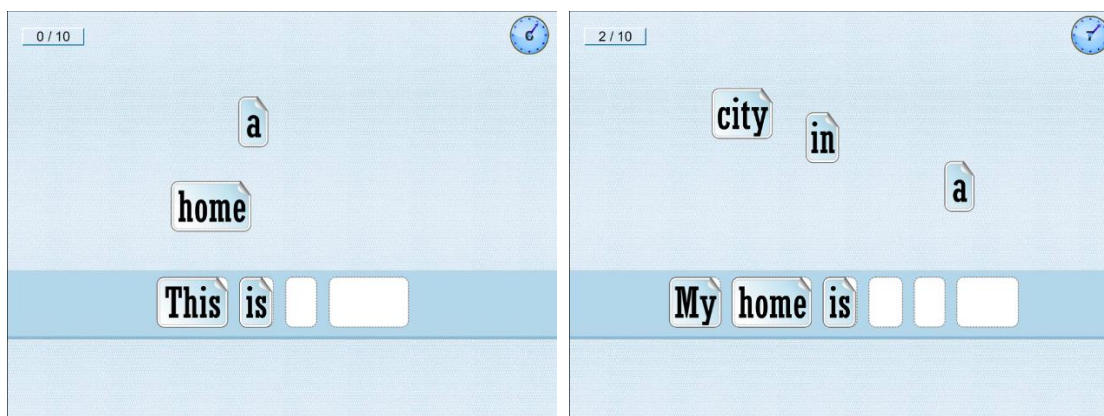
Figure 11: Screens from the interactive tool *Make sentences*

Another interactive tool that can be used with dyslexic children is free application *Play & Learn LANGUAGES* (http://dyslexiahelp.umich.edu/tools/apps/play-learn-languages-free) where children can use fun flash cards to learn new words and new languages (different languages are available - English, Spanish, French, German, Italian, Russian, Hungarian, Polish, Czech, and others). During installation the user selects target language but also a mother tongue. Vocabulary is topic-based and kids can see the picture and hear its target language name and its translation to mother tongue. Application includes Learn, Word quiz, Memory games sets. Setting level is an important possibility as some words belong to high language proficiency level.

The tool *Gamebooks: Read and Learn* is aimed for EFL learners and offers graded books to learners. It offers also the game activities to practise vocabulary and phrases, the tasks to check comprehension. The text to speech support and visual support help also dyslexic learners to overcome the problems and enjoy reading. This tool is also available as PC version (http://gamebooks.secretbuilders.com/home/).

There are various types of software specially **designed for dyslexic learners**. We can mention e.g. Kurzweil 3000. It is a robust system that combines the set of useful tools. The system can read inserted texts, similarly is the texts being written. It has in-built thesaurus, and what more (what might be an advantage for EFL learners) it has also an in-built translator. The software can be used for different types of brainstorming – one can use mind-map tool. In a package, there is also KESI Calculator Application. The software reads what user types and thus it is a useful tool for dysgraphics, as well as users with dyscalculia or dysgraphia.
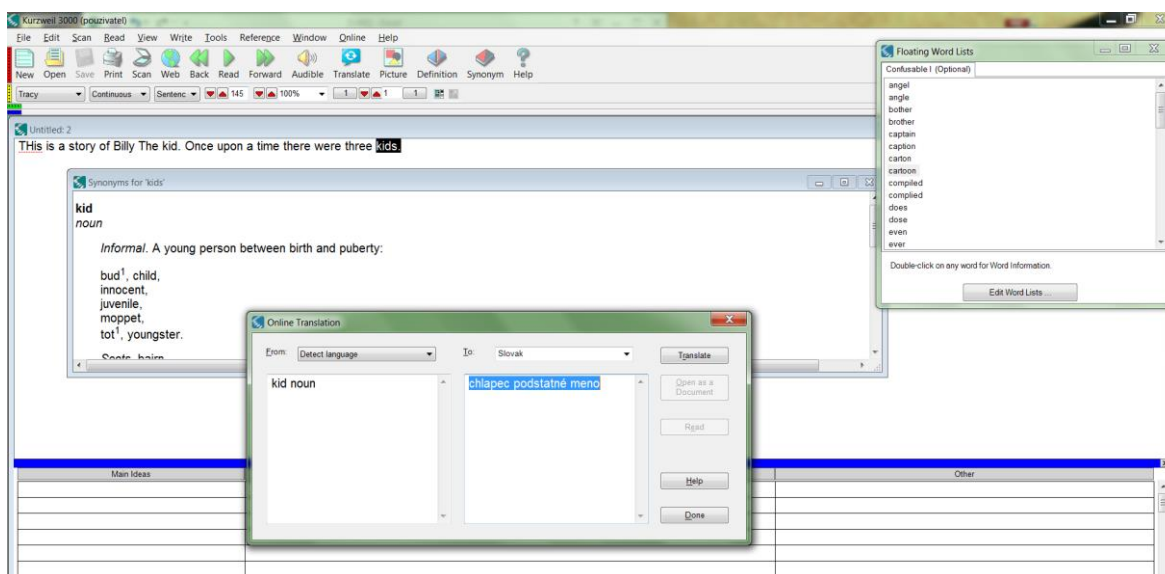
Figure 12: Kurzweil 3000 print screen – displaying the synonyms and translator tool

Another possibility how to enhance understanding is the possibility to show the picture of the selected word. User thus can read their own work but also the whole books that are in English, French or Spanish.
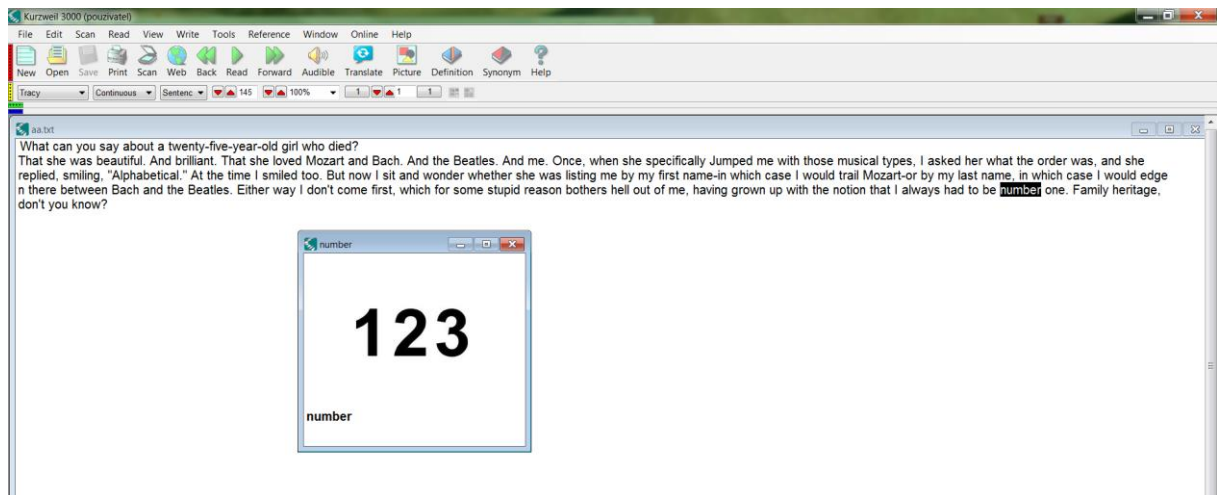

Figure 13: Kurzweil 3000 print screen – displaying the picture tool

It is important to mention that **Windows software itself** offers the tools for multisensory approach. It can help learner to reduce visual and auditory distractors. We can mention, e.g. Windows 8, where one can access the *Ease of Access Center* (windows logo key + U) where learner can change settings.
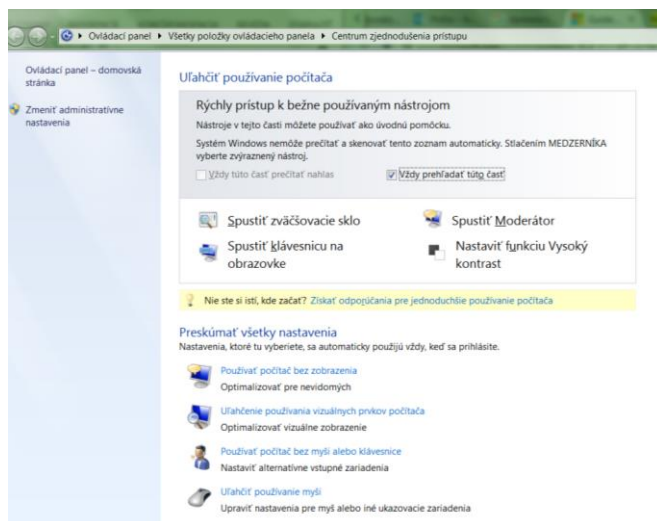

Figure 14: *Ease of Access Center* print screen

The user can e.g. start magnifier, launch on-screen keyboard, start narrator or set up the contrast. In the *Narrator* setting the user can choose one of several voices and specify other preferences. To reduce visual distractions, one may remove background image, turn off all unnecessary animations. Similarly, users can use speech recognition programme what allows users to command PC with user's voice, as well as dictate into most of applications.The too that not used by many users tool in MS Office is Speak. „You can add the Speak command to your Quick Access Toolbar by doing the following:

1. Next to the Quick Access Toolbar, click Customize Quick Access Toolbar.
2. Click More Commands.
3. In the Choose commands from list, select All Commands.

4. Scroll down to the Speak command, select it, and then click Add.
5. Click OK.
6. When you want to use the text-to-speech command, click the icon on the Quick Access Toolbar." (Microsoft, 2015)[4]
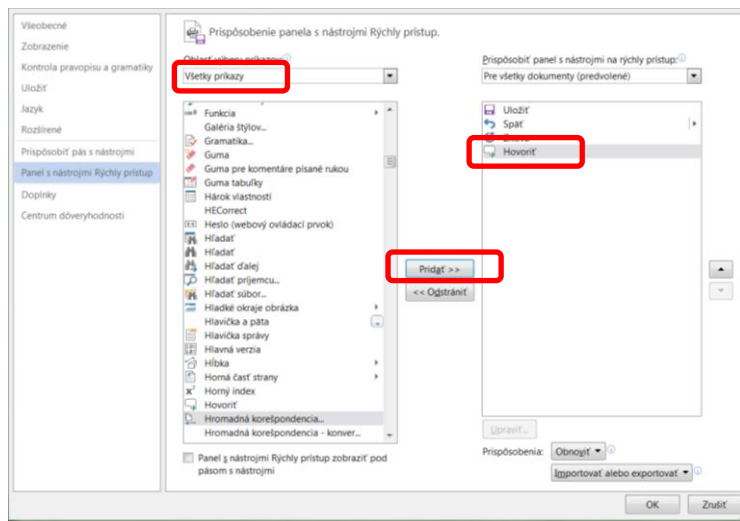

Figure 15: Running text-to-speech tool print screen (Ms Office / Word)

The possibilities of changing size, colour of the text, selection of the font have been also described above.

Testing and evaluating

The Slovak legislations enables not to classify the learners with dyslexia but they need to be evaluated and the feedback they get is extremely important. It has been already mentioned that the tasks and assignments can be modified for the students with dyslexia. Concerning the test the **accommodations or modification** can be useful not to demotivate them, similarly as the careful explanation of the tasks and instructions.

We should carefully **select the tasks** and **modify the activities**. The timing must be considered, in case of need it should be extended. In some cases, the consideration of using technical devices and supplementary materials (e.g. dictionaries, additional papers for experimentations with spelling, brainstorming etc.) can be considered.

We have already mentioned the importance of applying the cognitive (memory strategies, association, etc.) metacognitive (self-assessment) and affective (e.g. peer mediated learning) learning strategies. It is equally important to **teach different strategies** effective with different test tasks. Some examples are: multiple choice or matching tasks – start with the elimination of definitely incorrect choices; in short paragraph responses pupils can use highlighters to mark the key words; gap-filling activities- the part of speech can be considered (position in a sentence) tense, plural/singular, etc.). Presley (2002, in Schneider & Crombie, 2003, p. 69) suggests with regard to dyslexic students' language processing difficulties „to **avoid cloze procedure tasks** whenever possible. Even in their native language, these students rely heavily on context clues". They also point out that "**matching activities** may be **difficult** and unfair, because their poor visual perceptual short-term memory is over-challenged by the specific eye-movement task required to match the combined word or sentence parts".

Concerning oral production it is suggested to give them **enough time (ahead)** and not to force them to immediate response.

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[4] There are other possibilities with e.g. internet explorer or Microsoft OneNote. You may read more on Microsoft website (http://www.microsoft.com/enable/guides/learning.aspx)

Gavin and Reid (2011, p.77) suggest that "one of the main ways of ensuring success for dyslexic pupils is to provide a range of means whereby they can demonstrate their competence. This may not necessarily be through writing, and it is important that other means of displaying competence should be provided. For example:

- Investigation in groups
- Making posters
- Brainstorming
- Sentence completion
- Quiz and competitions
- Videoing
- Worksheet activities
- Drama and role-play
- Fieldwork and enquiring
- Oral presentations
- Self-assessment
- Learning in pairs
- Cartoons and comic strips
- Completing tables
- Tape-recording
- Debating
- Computer work
- Drawing pictures
- Making crosswords
- Journal writing
- Songs and poems

These activities are usually very good for dyslexic young people as they involve active participation and do not necessarily require vast amounts of reading. Some key instructions may be all that are necessary to get them started" (Reid & Green, 2011).

Next steps

The integration of learners with specific educational needs was an important and significant step in our legislation. The question of preparation for effective process of integration was not fully answered. The qualified special teachers for teaching different subjects are rare. What is very positive is that English language teaching has already started to consider the support of English language teachers.

Theoretical books as e.g.

- HOMOLOVÁ, Eva, 2012. *Výučba angličtiny žiakov so špecifickými vývinovými poruchami učenia a špeciálnymi výchovno-vzdelávacími potrebami*: *Výučba angličtiny žiakov s dys-poruchami*. Hradec Králové : Gaudeamus, Univerzita Hradce Králové, 112s., ISBN 9788074352263
- KORMOS, J., & SMITH, A. M., 2012. *Teaching languages to learners with specific learning difficulties*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. ISBN 978-1-84769-620-5.
- NIJAKOWSKA, Joanna, 2010. *Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Teaching Classroom*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. ISBN: 9781847692795

It was positively accepted that EFL textbook writers consider dyslexic students and they either suggest some ideas how to work with dyslexic students in the classroom (teacher guides), add aids for dyslexic learners, etc.

Textbooks which support teaching dyslexic learners, e.g.
- English Zone (Teachers book has a special part Dyslexia: a Guide for Teachers, OUP)
- Solutions, (Teachers book has a special part on teaching dyslectic learner, Macmillan)

However, there is still need of systematic pre-graduation education as well as special trainings for in-service training. The training must be very practical, not giving general information about the needs of the dyslexic learners but rather how to teach different subjects.

Questions for discussion
- Does reading equate with intelligence? Why (not)?
- What are the signals the teachers can spot identify dyslexia?
- Name at least 3 ways to support dyslexic learners.
- Create your own Voki
- Read the text *Dyslexics Need to Read The End of A Story First to Understand & Remember* and express your own opinion on the possibilities of applying the technique in teaching English as a foreign language.

Websites you might be interested in:
- DYSTEFL – Dyslexia for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language - http://dystefl.eu/
- Dyslexia and Foreign Language Teaching - free online course - https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/dyslexia
- British Dyslexia Association - http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/educator/modern-foreign-languages
- LDonline – The educator's guide to learning disabilities and ADHD - http://www.ldonline.org/article/6065/
- TEXT mindmap – a tool to draw mind map - https://www.text2mindmap.com/
- Memory game - www.math-and-reading-help-for-kids.org/kids_games/memory_lights.html
- Eidetic games and puzzles - http://www.ababasoft.com/games/learning_disability.html
- Memory gym - www.memorise.org/memoryGym.htm
- Books for dyslexics http://www.quickreads.org.uk/resources
- Love reading 4 kids - Dyslexia Friendly Books - http://www.lovereading4kids.co.uk/genre/dys/Dyslexia-friendly.html
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4 Teaching English as a foreign language to learners with dysgraphia

Zuzana Šimková

Objectives

The first objective of this chapter is to define the term dysgraphia, the problems that dysgraphia may cause and to analyse the factors indicating dysgraphia. The chapter also suggests the methods and strategies which may be used to support and to overcome the problems which students with dysgraphia encounter. Finally, the chapter provides the model exercises to show the various types of activities, exercises and games appropriate for students with dysgraphia.

Perception of dysgraphia and dysgraphic students

Dysgraphia is a specific type of learning disability that affects writing the words and letters, which requires a complex set of motor and information processing skills. Dysgraphia makes the act of writing difficult and it can lead to problems with spelling, poor handwriting and putting thoughts on paper (Lokerson, 1992). Dysgraphic students have illegible writing, they confuse the letters that are similar, they need more time to write something, they get easily pain into their hand and many other problems which we analyse further in the chapter. Since dysgraphia is a processing disorder, difficulties can change throughout a lifetime.

Nowadays there is an increasing number of children with writing problems, but just having bad handwriting doesn't have to mean that children have specific learning disorder so called dysgraphia. However since writing is a developmental process, children learn the motor skills needed to write, while learning the thinking skills needed to communicate on paper. These difficulties can also overlap. Children who have been diagnosed with this writing malfunction, have difficulty in recognizing certain speech sounds and letters therefore practicing writing is very important. It is part of learning based on a complex psychical activity, resulting in the formation of a psycho-functional system directly linked to the sound speech and thought (Pardel, 1966).

It is extremely necessary to develop both gross and fine motor skills but also other cognitive functions as auditory and visual perception, spatial orientation, phonemic awareness, overall motor coordination, visual and kinetic memory and attention. With the intention to develop all the skills, children should play many motion games, colour the pictures, play with toys, cubes and other games supporting the development of motor and cognitive skills from the birth. These students are probably much better able to communicate ideas through speech rather than through writing. They remember much better listening and speaking something then writing so they should learn through listening to the songs, watching serials and films, preparing some picture based presentations, doing the matching exercises, playing games and other similar activities developing these two skills. Students with dysgraphia often suffer emotional stress, they feel anxiety and are nervous, when doing some task at the lesson. They are likely to feel frustration over their inability to do what their classmates can do and may be unfairly criticized for being sloppy, inattentive, careless, or lazy in their work. These students are also likely to fall behind with school work, which may lead not only to poor grades but also to anxiety, depression and in the worst case, it may lead to disgust to learn. Considering all these factors, we summarized the warning signs of dysgraphia and we analysed the way how to cope with this disability.

Warning signs

Levine (1993) says that writing is a highly complex process that involves various senses, muscles, and parts of the brain. He identified seven types of neurodevelopmental problems that can cause writing difficulties. According to Levine students cope with problems as attention, spatial ordering, sequential ordering, memory, problems with using language and improving language abilities, bringing original thought, creativity, or critical thinking skills to the writing task and graphomotor troubles coordinating the small muscles of the fingers to manipulate writing instruments. These neurodevelopmental problems defined by Levine (1993) represent the core signs of dysgraphia, but there may occur several other problems which may also be the signs of dysgraphia:

1. Handwriting takes a long time, copying or writing is slow or laboured
2. Illegible handwriting
3. Handwriting needs a big effort
4. Pain in hand or arm after a short time
5. Inconsistencies: mixtures of print and cursive, upper and lower case, or irregular sizes, shapes, or slant of letters
6. Inconsistent spaces between words and letters and position on page with respect to lines and margins
7. Unfinished words or letters, omitted words from sentences
8. Orienting letters incorrectly
9. Cramped or unusual pencil grip, especially holding the writing instrument very close to the paper, or holding thumb over two fingers and writing from the wrist
10. Difficulty with syntax and grammar
11. Difficulty with spelling and remembering grammar rules and their rationale
12. Feeling fatigue after a short time writing
13. Poorly formed and inconsistently formed letters
14. Poor spatial planning on paper, with uneven spaces between letters or words, difficulty keeping writing on the line, or difficulty maintaining left and right margins
15. Difficulty organizing thoughts on paper
16. Inability or difficulty performing tasks that require thinking and writing at the same time, such as taking notes.

Strategies that can help with dysgraphia problems

There are many ways to help students with dysgraphia in the classroom. Teacher is a crucial element during the educational process whose role is irreplaceable and with parents´ cooperation, students can move forward very fast and with ease. Every teacher should create the environment where dysgraphic students feel comfortable, relaxed, motivated and willing to learn something new and willing to improve their writing skills. In the case of dysgraphic students, there should be cooperation between parents, teachers and specialists. Parents should try to do their best and support their children at home, teachers should teach them in various ways to improve their writing skills and specialists or already trained teachers should give some advice to the teachers who do not have any experience with such students. If all teachers are trained and well-prepared with creativity and plenty of ideas, it will be easy for them to design the structure of the lesson. To have students with dysgraphia in the classroom mean to teach mix-ability group. It requires advanced preparation of the teacher for lessons and it is a challenge not only for these students, but also for teachers, because teachers have to create special types of exercises and activities to support such students. Using special activities and exercises is time-consuming therefore students with dysgraphia should have some extra teaching time to deal with the given exercises without stress and anxiety from the insufficient learning time. The best solution would be to have extra teacher in the classroom who would work with those students, but in many schools there is not enough financial support for extra teacher in the classroom therefore we need trained teachers who are able to design the lesson to

practise all skills, especially the problem making skills where the students face difficulties and problems.

Educational games are one of the possible ways how to motivate and improve students´ writing skills. There are plenty of activities and games suitable for dysgraphia students, but the problem that could occur is teachers´ disability to prepare and use such games and activities. As we have already mentioned, teachers should have been provided with several seminars or lectures dealing with the preparation of materials for students with dysgraphia.

There are different ways how teachers can help children with learning and to succeed in school. Here are some suggestions to discuss with the school, schools psychologist or specialist as possible options for students. We summed up several hints of accommodations, modifications, and techniques to assist the student with dysgraphia. We analysed these problems and summarized them into the following areas and we suggested how to overcome them. Presentation modifications, response modifications and other following modifications allow and recommend students to:

Presentation of a new grammar	1. Learn content from songs, movies, audio books, videos and digital media 2. Listen to audio recordings instead of reading text 3. Have another student share class notes with 4. Work with fewer materials and exercises 5. Have a written list of instructions how to fulfil the task 6. Record a lesson, instead of taking notes 7. Have an outline of a lesson and worksheets to copy less from the board 8. Use information gap activities, problem solving activities to develop critical thinking and open-ended stories to develop imagination and creativity 9. Use visual presentations and IT technology 10. Play special games to develop the range of attention 11. Practise writing by copying a short phrases or articles 12. Be patient and positive when practicing handwriting. 13. Use sensory tools-flashcards, playing cards, pictures, charts, posters, tool which they can catch and touch
Response	1. Give responses in a oral/recorded or written form 2. Use a dictionary 3. Learn from webpages where he can find exercises in both forms-written and spoken/recorded 4. Dictate answers to a scribe 5. Capture responses on an audio recorder 6. Use a word processor to type notes or give responses in class 7. Complete writing activities in small steps 8. Have a "proofreader" to look for errors
Timing	1. Take extra time for writing tasks. 2. Have extra time to process oral information 3. Take frequent breaks after completing a task 4. Repeat the words several times and copy more times the same words
Setting	1. Work or take a test in a different setting, such as a quiet room with few distractions 2. Sit where he learns best (near the teacher) 3. Cooperate with partner while doing the task 4. Take a test in small group setting 5. Use a lot of colours, highlighters and colourful felt-tip pen to mark the text and important facts.

Scheduling	1. Take a test in several timed sessions or over several days
	2. Take sections of a test in a different order
	3. Take a test at a specific time of day
Assignment modifications	1. Complete fewer or different homework problems than peers
	2. Answer fewer or different test questions
	3. Write shorter papers
	4. Create alternate projects or assignments
	5. Have classmate who helps with the tasks and projects
	6. Reduce copying tasks
Curriculum modifications	1. Make the learning material easier using various types of exercises
	2. Get graded or assessed using a different standard than the one for classmates
	3. Get graded on content, not spelling
	4. Give answers orally
	5. Reduce writing essays
Graphomotor techniques	1. Use activities and hand exercises when he/she becomes fatigued.

(Adopted from: Richards, 1999)

The Power of POWER

Students with dysgraphia have difficulties with a writing assignment. A helpful strategy for all such students would be to teach and encourage the use of pre-organization strategies created by Richards (1999). These can include outlining, highlighting the main ideas, organising the ideas on the separate papers, writing main ideas on cards and rearranging them in the desired order, rewrite the sentences several times, using colourful papers and pens. A strategy developed to assist students who have problems organizing their writing and writing ideas into correct form is derived from the mnemonic POWER:

P - Plan your paper;
O - Organize your thoughts and ideas;
W - Write your draft;
E - Edit your work;
R - Revise your work before producing a final draft (Richards 1999).

Based on these research findings and factors indicating students with dysgraphia problems, we created the set of sample exercises for students where they deal with various types of exercises to support and improve writing skills and to encourage and motivate them. They practise their motor skills by drawing, matching, connecting and rewriting the words, phrases, pictures and sentences. In this chapter there are assessments, exercises, games and special activities which every teacher can adopt and use to help students with writing. These activities can be completed whether online or in printed version.

Advantages of specially tailored exercises for dysgraphic students
1. Well-structured exercises and activities
2. Clear instructions
3. Visualization of words and their meaning
4. Tasks in both forms-written and spoken
5. Use of pictures for better remembering
6. Variability of the exercises and activities
7. More ways to practice one thing better
8. Eye-catching exercises
9. Exercises in the form of games
10. Complex exercises to improve not only the writing skills, but also other skills.

Model exercises for students at the age of 10 (5th grade)

1. *Students label the house. They can use the words below to help them.*
2. *Students listen to the recording and draw the house described in the recording.*
3. *Students describe their own house using the vocabulary that they practised in previous two exercises.*

These exercises are suitable for dysgraphic students because they can see all the new vocabulary written on the paper and they have to practise this vocabulary in various ways. At first they only choose the correct words from the table then they circle the words, they write them down and then they use them in the speaking activity. In this way they learn new vocabulary and they also practise the writing of the given words.

4. *Students circle the equipment which they can see in Amanda´s bedroom.*
5. *They write down the things which they have in their own bedrooms.*
6. *Students fill the missing words into the short article about John´s bedroom.*

Within 3 exercises they use the same vocabulary in various types of exercises. The words constantly repeat so they write them several times and this way, they practise their writing skills.

7. Students match the *pictures with the definitions. They write down the correct answers into to table below the exercise.*
8. *Students circle the housework which they do at home and then they write this housework into the exercise.*

Students with dysgraphia remember better if they have visual input, therefore the picture-definition matching exercise is suitable for them and makes their learning easier.

9. *Students match the halves of the sentences. They match the activities which we usually do in the bedroom. After matching they write the number of the sentence next to the correct picture which describes that activity.*
10. *Students fill the missing adverbs of frequency into the sentences. After completing the exercise, teacher can ask the questions about the housework they do at home and how often they do it. They can lead pair or group discussion*
11. *Students fill in the crossword and then they find the hidden word which defines the part of the house. Below the crossword there is a table with the words which students have to fill in the crossword.*

They see all the words to be used in the crossword, so they have to write them down, to practise the writing of these words. After all exercises, the teacher can lead discussion with students because it is said that dysgraphic students learn better by listening and speaking.

Model exercises for students at the age 13 (8th grade)

1. *Pre listening activity: Teacher pre-teaches the vocabulary needed to complete the song. Students separate the words which are in the "word snake". They find 13 words defining various jobs.*
2. *Students listen to the song for the first time and they get familiar with the song´s lyrics. During the second listening students fill the gaps with the words from the previous exercise.*
3. *Teacher prints out the playing cards, cut them and shuffle them on the desk. Students match the name of the job with its description and with the place where the job is done. They practise the usage of the vocabulary connected with professions and they also practise the question words: Who, What, Where.*
4. *Students read the job interview. After reading, print out the dialogue shuffle it and ask students to put it into the correct order. Students prepare their own dialogue.*
5. *Students mime or describe a job while others make their guesses. Use the six jobs given below. When you use all six jobs given, each person writes down three more jobs on small piece of paper and places them in the middle of the table. Continue to play with your own choices of jobs.*
6. *Students circle the personal traits which a lawyer needs to have. Then they choose another job and discuss about personal traits required for that job.*
7. *Students put the unscrambled letters into the correct order to make 6 adjectives.*
8. *Play Bingo. Students write 9 random jobs into the squares and then play the bingo with teacher. The teacher announces several randomly selected jobs. If the player has the announced job written on the Bingo card, he crosses it out. The first player having crossed out all the jobs is the winner.*

MODEL EXERCISES FOR DYSGRAPHIC STUDENTS AT THE AGE OF 10
(5th grade)

1. Label the parts of the house. Choose the correct words from the table and put them into the correct bubble.

attic	staircase	garage	bathroom	bedroom	living room

2. Listen to the recording and draw the house described in the recording.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CfgGX-hBpjc

4. Circle the things that you can see in Amanda´s bedroom?

bed	pillow	window	oven	teddy bear	blanket
book	rug	sofa	shelf	cup	wardrobe
frame	mouse	armchair	schoolbag	night table	shoes
mirror	flower	yellow wall	blue curtains		

5. What things do you have in your bedroom? Write down at least 10 things. You can help yourself with the previous exercise.

1.   6.

2.   7.

3.   8.

4.   9.

5.   10.

6. Look at the picture and fill in the gaps using the words in the box.
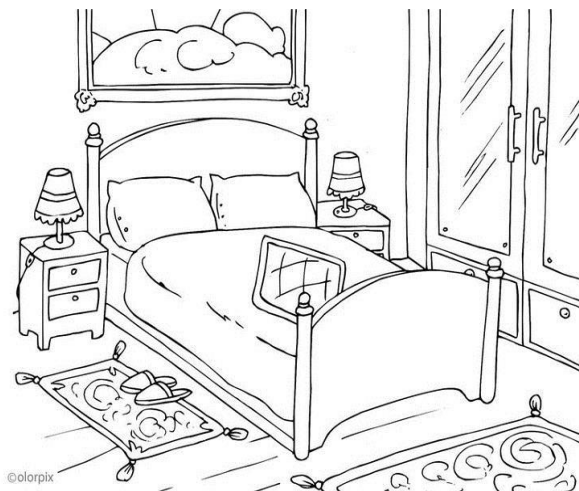
wardrobe	night tables	bed
pillows	carpet	

This is John´s bedroom. It's small and tidy. There is a bed next to the big
(1) _____. There are slippers in front of the (2) _____. On the bed there are two (2) _____.
On the both sides of the bed there are (3) _____with two lamps. There is a (5) _____on the floor.

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7. How does Peter help at home? Match the pictures with their definitions.

1.

A. Wash the car

B. Do the gardening   12.

C. Hoover the floor

D. Do the ironing

2.   E. Make the bed

F. Cut the grass   11.

G. Paint

3.   H. Do the shopping   10.

I. Sweep the floor

J. Do the washing up

4.   K. Clean the Windows

5.   L. Wash the clothes   9.

6.   7.   8.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L

8. How do you help at home. Circle at least 4 pictures from the exercise 1 and name the activity.
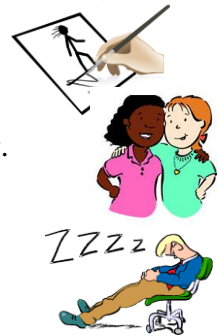
1.   3.

2.   4.

9. What activities do we usually do in the bedroom? Match the halves of the sentences and write the number of the sentence next to the correct picture.

1. I usually listen   a picture on my desk.
2. I sometimes draw   my relatives.
3. I sleep   homework every evening.
4. I meet   in my bed every night.
5. I chat with   my friends in my room.
6. I do my   to music.

10. How often do your relatives do the following housework? Read the sentences and add the adverb of frequency.

never	sometimes	usually	normally	always
often	rarely			

1. I_____cut the grass.
2. My mother_____cooks the lunch.
3. My father_____repairs the car.
4. My aunt_____sweeps the floor.
5. Uncle_____do the gardening.
6. My grandmother _____does the washing up
7. My best friend_____ do the shopping

11. Complete the crossword and find the hidden word.
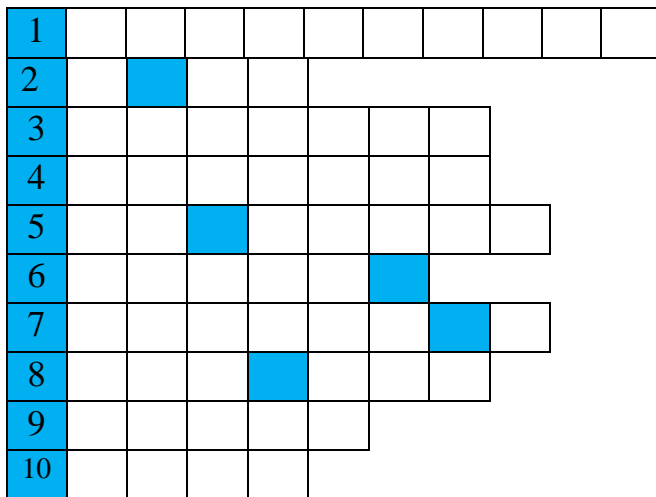
1. The place where you watch TV
2. The large entrance room
3. The place where you sleep
4. The place where you can sit and have a beautiful view from
5. The place where you have a bath and shower
6. The floor covering
7. A big comfortable chair
8. The place we have a cooker, blender and things to cook with
9. A piece of furniture specifically used for serving food
10. A seat for two or three people

carpet	kitchen	living room	sofa	hall	bedroom	table	balcony	bathroom	armchair

The hidden word is:

MODEL EXERCISES FOR DYSGRAPHIC STUDENTS AT THE AGE OF 13
(8th grade)

1. Word snake. Find 13 jobs and write them below.

politicianwaitressfarmerchampionastronautjournalistballerinamothersoldiersurgeonjudgeteach
ergeologist

1.	6.	11.
2.	7.	12.
3.	8.	13.
4.	9.	
5.	10.	

2. Listen to the song by Shania Twain: She is not just a pretty face and fill in the gaps the missing words. Use the words from the previous exercise.

She hosts a TV show. She rides the rodeo .
She plays the bass in a band. She´s
an (1)_____ a valet at the
parking lot, a (2)

_____ working
the land
She is a _____

she gets the gold. She's a

_____ the star
of the show.
[Chorus:]
She's not just a pretty face. She's got
everything it takes. She has a fashion line,
a_____for "Time".
Coaches a football team. She's a
_____a romance novelist.
She is a _____of three.
She is a _____she is
a wife. She is a _____

she'll save your life

[Chorus:]
She's not just a pretty face
She's got everything it takes
She's mother of the human race
She's not just a pretty face

Oh, oh, yeah
Oh na, na, na, na.....
She is your _____she is

your _____
she is your _____She is
every woman in the world

Oh, la, la, la
She flies an airplane, she drives a subway
train
At night she pumps gasoline. She's on the
council she's on the board
She's a _____she praises
the Lord

[Repeat Second Chorus]

3 Playing cards.
Print out these cards and cut them. Shuffle the cards and try to find the pairs- WHO the job does, WHAT he does and WHERE he does it.

Receptionist	Meets and greets visitors.
Chef	Cooks food in a restaurant.
Flight attendant	Looks after passengers.
Accountant	Analyses and checks the accuracy of financial information.

Lawyer	Researches, explains and applies legal matters to specific problems.
Waiter	Takes orders at a restaurant and serves.
Actor	Reads and performs film or theatre roles.
Shop Assistant	Works in a shop by using the cash register or helping people to decide what to buy.
Builder	Constructs buildings from plans.

He/She works in reception.	**He/She works in a law court and in a lawyers office.**
He/She Works in a plane.	**He/She works in a restaurant.**
He/She works in a post office.	**He/She works in a theatre.**
He/She works in a hospital or doctor's surgery.	**He/She works in a shop or supermarket.**
He/She works in a veterinary surgery or vets.	**He/ She works outside.**
He/She works in an office.	**He/She works in a kitchen.**

George has a job interview for a part-time job.	
Interviewer:	You've applied for the position of waiter, haven´t you?
George:	Yes, I have. Well, I was looking for a part-time job. And I think that I'd be really good at this kind of work.
Interviewer:	Do you know exactly what you will you do as a waiter?
George:	Well, I will help customers, keep a desks clean and serve the food.
Interviewer:	That is exactly what you will do. This type of work requires politeness and hard work. What kind of student were you during your studies?
George:	I think I'm a reasonable and responsible man. I passed all my exams and I enjoy studying subjects that interest me.
Interviewer:	Have you any previous work experience?
George:	Yes. I worked part-time at a take-away in the summer holidays.
Interviewer:	Now, do you have any questions you'd like to ask me about the position?
George:	Yes. Could you tell me what hours I'd have to work?
Interviewer:	We open at 8.30, but you would be expected to arrive at 8 and we close at 10 pm. You would be able to leave then.
George:	Thank you. When will I know if I have been successful?
Interviewer:	We'll be making our decision next Monday, we'll give you a call.

4. Read George´s job interview. After reading print out this dialogue, cut it into the pieces then shuffle it and put the sentences into the correct order. Prepare own dialogue and act it out.

5. Miming and describing activity. Mime or describe a job while your partners make their guesses. Use the six jobs given below. When you use all six jobs given, each person writes down three more jobs on small piece of paper and places them in the middle of the table. Continue to play with your own choices of jobs.

Dentist	Dancer
Butcher	Shop assistant
Beautician	Lorry driver

6. Circle the personal traits which a lawyer needs to have. Then choose another job and use the personal traits required for that job.

hard-working	lazy	reliable	friendly
polite	impolite	sociable	funny
responsible	irresponsible	fair	trustworthy

7. Put the unscrambled letters into the correct order to make 6 adjectives.

1. efrlnidy   4. ohnset

2. kind   5. nema

3. erungeso   6. rmsat

8. Bingo. Write 9 jobs into the squares and then play the bingo with your teacher.

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Pictures taken from:

Parts of the house:
https://www.google.sk/search?q=houseworks&rlz=1C1FDUM_enSK518SK518&es_sm=93&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0CAcQ_AUoAWoVChMI0tSm0rK9yAIVASksCh2TXgh-&biw=1517&bih=710&dpr=0.9#tbm=isch&q=parts+of+the+house&imgrc=FzzbYtIQNbMq_M%3A

Bedroom:
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Chat:
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5 Teaching English as a foreign language to learners with ADD and ADHD

Mária Babocká

Objectives of the chapter
- to define the basic terms connected to EFL teaching of ADD and ADHD learners;
- to explain the differences between ADD and ADHD learners;
- to provide a basic framework for classroom management which can help teachers working with ADD and ADHD learners;
- to provide some practical examples and activities suitable for learners with these disorders.

Terminology and literature review

Primary and secondary EFL teachers are often called upon to work with mixed-ability groups. Nowadays, more and more often, inclusive education means that differences between learners are very large, as learners with special education needs are integrated into EFL classes. From a teacher's viewpoint, it can then become difficult to manage the classroom to ensure the progress of different kinds of learners. The crucial questions are as follows:
- How to teach and manage both kinds of learners (with and without special education needs) in order to achieve education objectives?
- How to manage both kinds of learners so that all the students can experience their own learning progress?

In this chapter, we will focus on two education disorders: ADD and ADHD.
ADHD is the acronym for Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. As the name suggests, the condition entails inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity. ADD means Attention-Deficit Disorder. At first glance children with this syndrome are not hyperactive, but only have problems with concentration. However, as Anderson (2015) states, this was never the intended application of the term; in fact, it was used to describe the same disorder until 1987: "Before that, say in 1980, a child would be diagnosed with ADD, either with or without hyperactivity. But starting in the early 1990s, that child would be diagnosed with ADHD." In this chapter, we will mainly use the term "ADHD learners."

We differentiate three general types of ADHD learners:
- **Inattentive:** These children have problems with concentration. In the EFL classroom, they have difficulties in sustaining attention when working on some education tasks, listening to the teacher's instructions, or completing tests. They are easily distracted and very sensitive to all visual and aural stimuli, which often causes problems with self-regulation.
- **Hyperactive/Impulsive:** The symptoms of hyperactivity can be defined as "commonly occurring, minor motor activities that are performed at abnormally high intensity and high frequency levels" (Hughes, Cooper, 2007, p. 4). In other words, these children are extremely restless and can be a handful for teachers – they tend to constantly walk around, jump, climb, talk, tap their fingers, or stamp their feet. Meanwhile, impulsive children are impatient; in the classroom, when they know a correct answer they just blurt it out, ignoring the teacher's instructions. They also have problems in waiting their turn in games, activities, discussions and conversations. This can cause a lot of problems, particularly in EFL lessons, where the practice and production of new language are realized through communicative group work, pair work, cooperation, and problem-solving activities. In these cases, improper management of collective activities can negatively affect both the ADHD learner and his/her classmates.
- **Combined:** These children show all three symptoms – inattention, impulsivity and hyperactivity – in their classroom behaviour (Hughes, Cooper, 2007).

In education, it is very important to recognize the symptoms of ADHD. This can be a challenge, especially for novice teachers who are still building experience and developing their teacher-personalities. First experiences with ADHD learners can be gained one of two ways:

1) ADHD learners are introduced to the novice teacher by the school psychologist; the teacher is acquainted with their psychological and study profiles, and is also instructed about how to work with these learners. This is the ideal case, because the novice teachers know what to expect in the classroom; they are not shocked and frustrated by an unknown situation.

2) Alternatively, there is an ADHD learner in the classroom who has not been recognized as having special education needs. It is up to the teacher to inform the school psychologist, school director and parents about his/her concerns in this case. The American Psychiatric Association (2013) has developed a manual providing some help to teachers in recognizing ADHD symptoms. If at least six of these symptoms are present for at least six months, the child should be subjected to expert examination. On the basis of the examination results, a special education program should be developed. The list of symptoms is presented in the following table:

Inattention	Hyperactivity and Impulsivity
• Often does not give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, work, or other activities. • Often has trouble keeping attention on tasks or play activities. • Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly. • Often does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace (loses focus, gets sidetracked). • Often has trouble organizing activities. • Often avoids, dislikes, or does not want to do things that take a lot of mental effort for a long period of time (such as schoolwork or homework). • Often loses things needed for tasks and activities (e.g. toys, school assignments, pencils, books, or tools). • Is often easily distracted. • Is often forgetful in daily activities.	• Often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat when sitting still is expected. • Often gets up from seat when remaining in seat is expected. • Often excessively runs about or climbs when and where it is not appropriate (adolescents or adults may feel very restless). • Often has trouble playing or doing leisure activities quietly. • Is often "on the go" or often acts as if "driven by a motor". • Often talks excessively. • Often blurts out answers before questions have been finished. • Often has trouble waiting one's turn. • Often interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., butts into conversations or games).

Table 1: ADHD Symptoms (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

The strength of symptoms is influenced by age. The younger the children, the stronger the symptoms. The good news is that many children grow out of ADHD. However, the latest studies show that "50% to 70% of children continue to have some symptoms of ADHD in adolescence, and as many as 50% have persistent ADHD in adulthood" (Nass, Leventhal, 2011, p. 8). It is important to realize that symptoms are just manifestations of the dysfunction of cognitive and neurobiological systems inhibiting *working memory*, *internalized speech* (responsible for self-control), *motivation*, and *behavioural planning*. This means that ADHD sufferers face difficulties not only in education, as the disorder correlates with many social, emotional and other behavioural aspects. For example, ADHD sufferers have problems with relationships, and are often aggressive, selfish, and disorganized, which causes frequent employment difficulties (Hughes, Cooper, 2007).

Understanding the characteristic traits of these learners can help us understand their special world, their mind and behaviour. It can help teachers to realize that these learners are not enemies or "problems" trying to ruin their teaching efforts, but learners who need their patience, a positive attitude and an individual approach. However, this is often very difficult, and even experienced in-service teachers trying to do their best are walking in the dark sometimes. Slovenská komora učiteľov (2014) has provided some statements of Slovak teachers on the matter of teaching ADHD learners; these can be found in Slovak under the following link: http://www.komoraucitelov.org/clanok-210-podnet-na-riesenie-problemov-pri-praci-so-ziakmi-s-poruchami-ucenia-poruchami-spravania-sa-a-najma-ziakmi-s-hyperkinetickym-syndromom-poruchou-adhd.html

Some are given below, translated into English:

We experience everyday problems. Teachers perceive it as a vicious circle of unsolvable problems. … Schools usually cannot provide any necessary conditions for ADHD learners and the parents do not cooperate…

A child with ADHD acts unconsciously and impulsively. When the teacher explains why their behaviour is inappropriate, they do not understand. … A child with ADHD often usurps the whole attention of the teacher at the expense of the other learners.

We insist on allocation of school psychologists and special pedagogues to all schools!

(Author's translations, paraphrased.)

As such statements reveal, the cooperation of teachers, parents, school psychologists and special pedagogues in the process of ADHD learners' education is crucial. In the classroom, however, the teachers are "alone" and they must try to manage the education process as well as they are able. Carter (2011) offers a key principle of how to manage ADHD children in the classroom. This is not meant only for teachers, but also for the parents of ADHD children. In the following sub-section we try to adapt this principle for the context of the EFL classroom:

Key principle: Establish systems and routines and follow them.

This key principle is accompanied by five sub-principles referred to as the **FIRST methodology**, used to develop concrete and practical steps. It is derived from the first letters of each of these sub-principles:

F- **F**un
I- **I**ndividualism
R- **R**ules
S- **S**implicity
T- **T**ime management

Fun

The education process for ADHD learners should comprise 1) good management and organization, and 2) elements of fun and novelty. This means that some education activities are realized through games or competitions, though the teacher insists on predefined rules. As these learners have problems with concentration, motivation and impulsivity, an external reward serves as a stimulus for their work. Immediate feedback should be given on their behaviour or the outcome of their work. Rief (2008) provides some examples of how to reward ADHD learners, which can be viewed here: http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/3002.html

Parker (2006) states two ways to motivate learners to work on an assigned task and behave appropriately:

1) **Use of simple compliments** like *Great job!*, *Fantastic!*, *Couldn't be better!*, *Great answer!*. These simple compliments foster the ADHD learner's motivation and simultaneously serve as a gateway to second-language acquisition and a positive attitude to second-language learning in the EFL classroom.

2) **School rewards**, which can have different forms. These mainly depend on the learner, and what he or she likes. Some ideas for simple school rewards are as follows:

Being teacher's helper.	Being first in line.
Erasing chalkboard or whiteboard.	Sitting near a friend.
	Playing a game.
Stickers.	Getting an award certificate.
Writing on chalkboard.	Collecting papers.
Positive note to parents.	

Another option to modify education tasks to take the form of interesting games is the use of a "cover story." This works mainly with younger learners. For example, fill-in exercises can ask the child to play the role of a pirate who has to fill a chest with gold. Each correctly filled-in word or phrase (or whole exercise) is rewarded with a golden sticker, a star or a coin, which the child collects and sticks into a paper chest.

Carter (2011) claims that any activity can become a game when a time limit is introduced. The child should not compete with his/her classmates, but with the clock: for example, they can be asked to work out an exercise in a set time. This motivates the ADHD learner to focus on the task and ignore other external stimuli.

Individualism

This sub-principle draws on the fact that all children are individual human beings with individual interests and opinions. ADHD children are no exception. Carter (ibid.) writes that the diagnosis of ADHD children is often perceived as more important than the individuality and personality beneath the surface of the disorder. This may result in underestimating and lowering their self-confidence. As Hvozdíková claims (2011, p. 463), "self-esteem is so low among these students that it may gradually grow into serious difficulties in later teen years – into a secondary disorder of self-esteem." Therefore, it is always good to focus on the strengths of ADHD students and approach them individually.

In the EFL classroom, interactive activities and activities with a lot of movement are best for ADHD learners. These are not only more fun, but make a virtue of ADHD learners' energy and need to move. They are often very successful in these activities, demonstrate greater focus, and may "also find acknowledgement among their peers, gain confidence and inspire everyone with their energy and enthusiasm" (Turketi, 2010, p. 4). Such activities might include:
- TPR – Total Physical Response
- Task-based learning
- Drama activities.

Rules

Rules can be defined as general standards for learners' behaviour in all classroom situations (Wayne State University, n.d.). They are beneficial both for the teacher, as a tool for effective classroom management, and the ADHD or ADD children, as they provide a safe environment for them to express their personalities. A teacher of ADHD learners must realize that these children require regular reminding of the rules. This is one reason why classroom rules:
- Should be clear, with no ambiguity to allow different interpretations. For example, "Class time is for class activities" rather than "No toys or games in class."

- Should be in the form of a positive statement. For example, "Listen when someone else is talking" rather than "No talking out of turn."
- Should be few. Fewer rules are easier to remember and have a stronger effect (Wayne State University, n.d.).
- Should be posted in a visible place, for example on a notice board, or as a poster next to the chalkboard or whiteboard.

Implementation of innovative and funny elements in rules can even intensify their effect. For example, rules about talking in the classroom can take the form of traffic lights on a poster, like in Picture 1 (Murdoch Children Research Institute, 2013):

RED light means NO talking

ORANGE indicates LOW LEVEL talking allowed

GREEN indicates OPEN talking
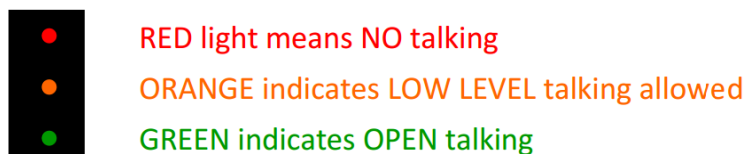
Picture 1: Traffic Lights - Tips for ADHD Classroom Management (Murdoch Children Research Institute, 2013)

When the EFL teacher wants ADHD learners not to shift to their mother tongue but use the target language in the classroom, he or she can prepare some private reminders (Picture 2) with two flags: a) a flag representing an English-speaking country with some basic phrases and vocabulary of common classroom language; b) a flag of the home country, e.g., Slovakia. When the British flag is on the desk, the learner has to use English; when there is the Slovak flag, the learner can shift to their mother tongue.
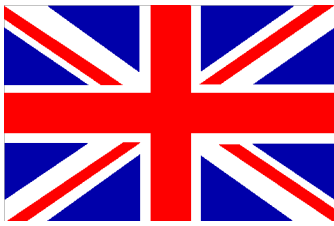

English only! ☑ Can I go to the toilet? ☑ Can I open the window? ☑ Could you please help me? ☑ Thank you!	**You can speak Slovak.**

Picture 2: Example of an "English Speaking" Reminder

Writing homework is a problematic issue for ADHD and ADD children. They often forget to record homework assignments properly or to complete the work at home. In order to prevent this, the teacher can:

- Post a calendar with motivational pictures or slogans in the classroom. The child will see what he or she is supposed to do for the next lesson (Carter, 2011).
- Suggest the learner uses a special notebook where he or she can record homework and other classroom duties. Check the notebook after each lesson and ask parents to check it as well.
- Make sure that the learner has understood the assignment, first in English, then, if necessary, in the learner's mother tongue.

Simplicity

The fourth step of the FIRST methodology is closely connected to the previous steps. It is relevant not only for rules in the EFL classroom, but also for teacher language and task instructions. All instructions should be as simple and concrete as possible. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2008), "the simpler the expectations communicated to an ADHD student, the more likely it is that he or she will comprehend and complete them in a timely and productive manner." If a task comprises several sub-tasks, instructions should be provided one by one. This procedure helps the ADHD learners to maintain the focus on a concrete issue. One technique is called the "Adapt worksheet," which teaches the learner to fold over all the questions and tasks in a worksheet except the one relevant at the time (U.S. Department of Education, 2008).

Time management

One difference between ADHD children and their classmates is their difficulty in changing between activities. If these children are happy with an activity in which they have been involved, it can take some time to focus their attention on something else. For example, after a dynamic role-play, reading or listening activities can struggle to engage their attention. Therefore, it is necessary to plan activities beforehand and to inform children about the course of the lesson. The teacher can give a brief outline of classroom activities at the beginning of each lesson. An example is portrayed in Picture 3.

The schedule should be clear and brief; it should not reveal too much about particular activities so as not to destroy the moment of surprise.
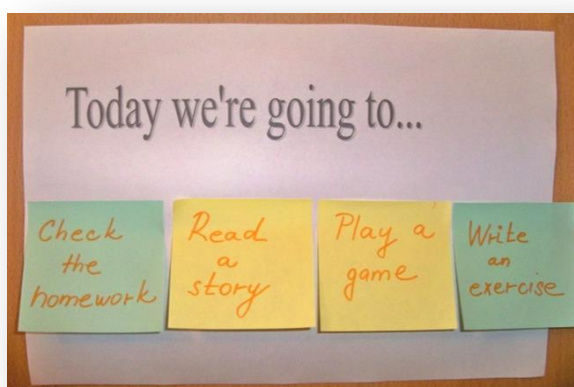
Picture 3: Outline of Classroom Activities

Carter (2011) suggests using representative objects to help in changing between activities. For younger learners, toys like dolls or teddy bears are appropriate; for older ones, visual or aural symbols can be used.

An indispensable aid in classroom time management is the clock. According to Rief (2005), looking at the clock helps ADHD learners realize how quickly time passes and how long it takes to complete tasks or exercises.

Practical examples and tips for teachers

Not all the skills that need to be taught in the EFL classroom can engage through movement and activity. Reading, decoding and comprehension of texts are receptive skills requiring immersion in the context and concentration, which may cause difficulties for ADHD learners. Seeing reading as a boring activity can lead to restlessness, distractibility and disturbance of the ADHD child's classmates. In this section we provide some examples of teaching reading to primary learners with ADHD.

In order to overcome reading problems with very young and young primary learners, Parker (2006) advises using individualized tutoring and a phonic-based approach to reading. This approach is based on matching graphical forms of letters with their sounds, first in some simple words, and later in more complex words and sentences (Scott, Ytreberg, 1990). The ADHD learner needs to spell out a word or a sentence properly and comprehend it. The meanings of the words can be introduced by using visual imagery. Teachers can create index cards, where words are explained through picture mnemonics, as portrayed in Picture 4 (Parker, 2006).
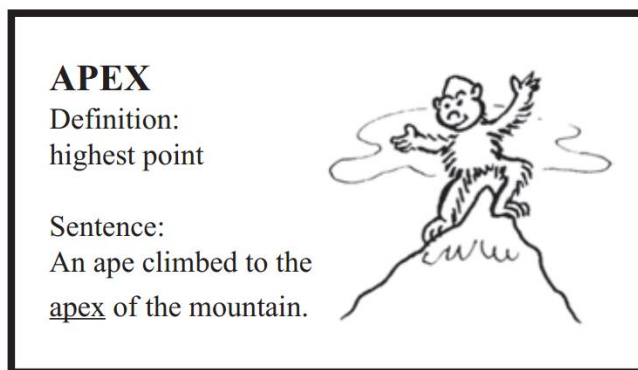
Picture 4: Example of an Index Card (Parker, 2006, p. 13)

The index card can be prepared with the cooperation of the ADHD child's parents and friends, or the child him or herself.

The teacher can also select online games and activities fostering reading skills. This approach not only provides a secure and relaxing environment, which ADHD children like, but is also fun, allowing learning through games and immediate feedback. The example activity below is based on one of many options provided by the portal knowledgeadventure.com. (http://www.knowledgeadventure.com/games/letter-activity/).

Name: Postcard to my friend
Proficiency level: Beginners, pre-intermediate
Objectives:
- The learners can recognize the main parts of a post card,
- They can read a simple English post card,
- They can reply to a post card in English.

Practiced skills: Reading and writing
Age level: Young primary learners
Approximate time: 35-40 minutes
Preparation: Classroom with an interactive whiteboard and access to the Internet, (http://www.knowledgeadventure.com/games/letter-activity/), post card worksheet (Picture 5), small envelopes, visual and audio signals, "golden stamps" as reward for the ADHD learners.
Classroom organization and motivation: The ADHD learners should sit the closest to the teacher and the interactive white board. They need to complete three classroom tasks correctly to obtain three golden stamps.
Procedure:
1. Pre-reading: The teacher starts by asking whether the learners have ever written a post card. On the basis of the answers, he/she explains the main elements a post card should contain (address, text, greeting, signature, stamp...).
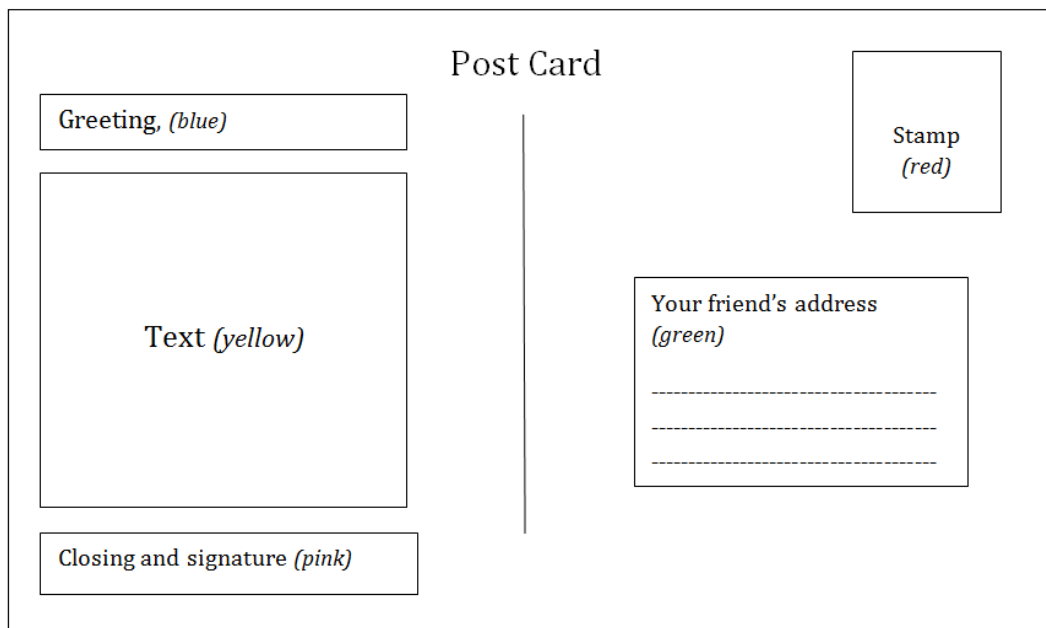
   For ADHD: While explaining, the ADHD learner is given a model postcard with an instruction: *When the teacher mentions any of the parts of the post card, colour them in using an appropriate colour.* This simple task helps the ADHD learner to focus on what the teacher is saying, and engages him/her in the activity.

Picture 5: Post Card Worksheet

The teacher must not forget to check the task outcome and reward the child with a golden stamp. An audio or visual sign is given to signal the next activity.

2. Reading: In the next activity, the class works with the interactive whiteboard and the task from the portal knowledgeadventure.com (Picture 6). The learners are asked to read the jumbled parts of the letter and order them according to the colour of the text.
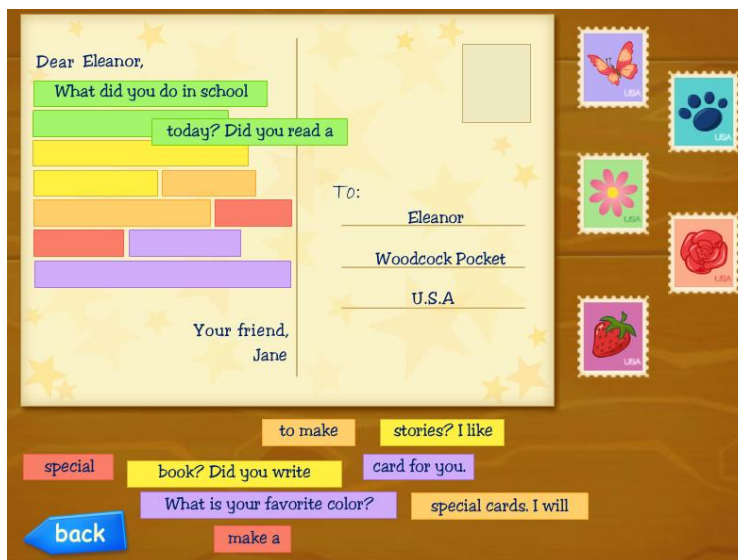
Picture 6: Activity form knowledgeadventure.com

For ADHD: Since this activity is for the whole class, not only the ADHD learners, the teacher must manage the situation very strictly. To avoid their blurting out the answers, the ADHD child is instructed to raise his/her hand when he/she knows the correct answer; speaking is allowed only when he/she sees the "speaking symbol," e.g., a mouth on a stick (Picture 7).

Picture 7: Speaking Symbol (etsy.com)

This is the only way the child can get another golden stamp.

When the letter is complete, all the learners read it again silently and send it to the virtual character (e.g., Eleanor).

3. Post-reading: The virtual character (Eleanor) immediately sends back her response to the letter. The learners have to read it. Now, their task is to write their own postcard – a response to Eleanor's letter.

For ADHD: In this activity, the ADHD learners will work with their non-ADHD peers. The non-ADHD peers are instructed to:
- Remind their ADHD peers to use the English language,
- Help them to focus on the task,
- Be a vocabulary and grammar resource, together with some useful phrases given to the learners beforehand.

When the letter is ready, the teacher gives the ADHD learner the last golden stamp. He/she can put the letter into the envelope, stamp it with the golden stamps and give it to the teacher. The teacher can then answer the letter with some feedback and comments and deliver it the next day.

Summary

Inclusion of ADHD learners in regular classrooms has become a common part of education in many Slovak schools. Inclusive education brings many challenges which teachers and learners must face. In this chapter, our attention was focused on teaching English to ADHD learners, which is difficult but not impossible. First, it was important to characterize ADHD to know how its symptoms can be manifested in the EFL classroom. If these symptoms are not identified early enough, the ADHD learner's development can be hindered and the teacher's effort defeated. Knowing that there is an ADHD learner in the EFL classroom, the teacher can adjust the classroom environment, materials, activities and the education program to the needs of the learner. The ideal case is to use an individual education program elaborated with the cooperation of the teacher, school psychologist, special pedagogue and parents.

In the next part, the F.I.R.S.T methodology created by Carter (2011) is introduced and its basic principles are implemented to EFL education. Following these steps, systems and routines can be brought to the teaching-learning process so that both the teacher and the learner know where to direct their energies.

The last part brings a concrete example and tips for teaching reading to primary ADHD learners. It takes the form of a lesson plan with pre-reading, reading and post-reading stages. At first, each stage is focused on the procedure for the entire classroom group, then, it is devoted to the ADHD learners.

Concluding this chapter with Shannon A. Alder's quotation will possibly motivate teachers working with ADHD learners to see their learners and the education process in a new light: "Never give up on someone with a mental illness. When 'I' is replaced by 'We', illness becomes wellness." In other words, children with ADHD can be successful EFL learners; all they need is teachers' patience, understanding and organized work.

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6 Foreign language learning anxiety

Zdena Kráľová & Daniela Sorádová

Objectives

There is a great deal of research focusing on foreign language anxiety. It is generally conceived as a significant factor in foreign language learning, yet there are many inconsistent conclusions. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to summarize the most relevant research findings on foreign language anxiety in a brief overview. The attention is paid to the definition and classification of anxiety and its causes and consequences specific for foreign language learning.

Introduction

Feelings and attitudes play an important role in perceiving everyday life. It is said that we get constant reports to our mind about the world through our feelings. We scan the environment and then infer the moods, feelings and create attitudes. As regards students, they often feel stressed or even anxious about a certain subject.

As learning languages has its significance nowadays, there is a great deal of research focusing on foreign language anxiety (FLA). The fact that some learners are more successful at acquiring a foreign language (FL) than others even though the circumstances of a foreign language learning are almost identical has led to investigations of individual characteristics as predictors of successful FL learning, most of them agreeing with the following categories (Olivares-Cuhat, 2010):

a) cognitive factors (language aptitude, learning strategies);
b) affective factors (attitudes, motivation, anxiety);
c) metacognitive factors;
d) demographic factors.

The differences between studies over several decades in design and methodology have led researchers to draw rather conflicting conclusions about the influence of certain factors on FL learning. Their results have not been consistently replicated thus they require further examination before any firm conclusions could be drawn. Due to a number of methodological and conceptual divergences and the complexity of individual differences in FL learning, the limited amount of research findings in this area could be generalized (Ehrman et al., 2003).

However, researchers had to accept the fact that personality traits such as self-esteem, inhibition, anxiety, risk-taking and extraversion, may well shape the ultimate success in mastering a second language (Dörney, 2005). As there is a growing acceptance within the FL community of learners´ feelings and reflections within the learning process, one of the most highly examined variables in the field of FL learning is foreign language anxiety (Horwitz, 2001) and FL researchers widely conceive FLA as an obvious factor in FL acquisition.

Defining anxiety

Spielberg (1983) defines anxiety as "the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the nervous system." Scovel (1991, p. 18) further states, that "anxiety is a psychological construct, commonly described by psychologists as a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object".

It is important to differentiate between the different types of anxiety. When anxiety is limited just to a specific situation, such as speaking in a foreign language, we use the term specific anxiety. On the other hand, the term generalized anxiety is used by those who are generally

anxious (Horwitz et al., 1986). The more precise psychological classification (Horwitz, 2001) differentiates between the following categories of anxiety:
1. trait anxiety,
2. state anxiety,
3. situation-specific anxiety.

Trait anxiety is a relatively stable personality trait (Scovel, 1978) while state anxiety is a temporary response to a particular stimulus (Spielberger, 1983). Situation-specific anxiety is aroused by a specific type of situation or event (MacIntyre – Gardner, 1991). Linguistic research has shown that learning a foreign language can be classified as a specific situation (Horwitz, 2001; Woodrow, 2006). Two models of anxiety emerged from Tobias' research (1986):
1. an interference model of anxiety,
2. an interference retrieval model.

An interference retrieval model relates to anxiety as inhibiting the recall of previously learned material at the output stage, whereas a skills deficit model relates to problems at the input and processing stages of learning, as a result of poor study habits, or a lack of knowledge. Recent research in language learning has provided some support for this theory (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey and Daley, 2000).

Foreign language anxiety

Anxiety when associated with learning a foreign language is termed as "second/foreign language anxiety" related to the negative emotional reactions of the students towards language acquisition (Horwitz, 2001). Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) viewed the FLA as a complex and multidimensional phenomenon of self perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviours related to FL classroom learning.

The FLA is being intensively studied since 1980s when Stephen Krashen (1981) hypothesized that the affective factors (anxiety, motivation and self-confidence) correlate with the success in FL learning. Intensive research in the area of FLA made anxiety one of the most highly examined variables in psychology and education (Horwitz, 2001). Most FLA research has focused on FLA that takes place in the classroom settings in a non-English speaking country (Horwitz et al., 1986; Phillips, 1992; Aida, 1994). Early research studies produced inconsistent results in determining the relationship between FLA and achievement in FL – some studies found negative relationships between anxiety and achievement; others found positive relationships, while others found no relationship at all. There are two approaches to the description of FLA:
1. The broader construct of anxiety as a basic human emotion that may be brought on by numerous combinations of situational factors (McIntyre & Gardner, 1989; McIntyre, 1995).
2. A combination of other anxieties that create a separate form of anxiety intrinsic to language learning (Horwitz et al., 1986).

FLA was measured by a number of researchers using several instruments. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) made a valuable contribution not only to the theory but also to the measurement in FLA. The thirty-three item Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) has been used in a large number of research projects (Horwitz, 2001) and it has been found to be reliable and valid (Aida, 1994; Cheng, Horwitz and Schallert, 1999). Some other measures of FLA have been used as well, e.g., Pappamihiel (2002) used English Language Anxiety Scale for learners of English as a second language and reported homogeneous results in anxiety level.

Causes and consequences

FLA has the same clinical picture as any other type of anxiety (Horwitz, 1986): sweating, palpitations, trembling, apprehension, worry, fear, threat, difficult concentration, forgetfulness, freezing, going blank and avoidance behaviour (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986). In the research conducted by Hashemi and Abbasi (2013) the participants described their own signs of

anxiety such as blushing, perspiration, staggered voice, either too fast or too slow speed of speech, rubbing the palms, poor performance, less interpretativeness, less eye contact because of the reading from the paper or screen while giving presentations, etc.

FLA may be a result as well as a cause of insufficient command of the target language (Sparks & Ganschow, 1991). Eysenck (1979) explained the negative effects of anxiety in FL learning saying that anxious people divide their attention between task-related cognition and self-related cognition, making cognitive performance less efficient.

Learners commonly report various kinds of evaluative situations in which their knowledge and performance of FL will be monitored by people around them as the most stressful situation contributing to FLA. They fear to make mistakes and as a result get corrected by the teacher in front of their classmates. Horwitz (1986) established three related FL performance anxieties:

1. communication apprehension,
2. test anxiety,
3. fear of negative evaluation.

Communication apprehension is defined as the anxiety to communicate with people, to talk in front of others, and to talk in groups. Despite the fact that communication apprehension leads to communication fear, it also causes fear of not being able to understand the others´ speech. Test anxiety, arises out of the fear of failing to perform. It can be explained through the high demands that learners put on themselves to be perfect masters of the FL. Fear of negative evaluation is explained as the learners' expectation to be evaluated negatively by others in any kind of situations (Wörde, 2003).

Since FLA is a psychological construct, it most likely stems from the learner´s own "self" (Scovel 1991, p. 16): self perceptions, perceptions about others, perceptions about FL learning and performance, etc. Therefore, competitiveness and self-esteem may also be a potential source of learners´ anxiety. Bailey (1983) claimed that the competitive nature can lead to anxiety because students tend to compare themselves or idealize self-images. Moreover, low-esteem causes worry and fear of the negative responses or evaluation from the classmates (Krashen, 1985). Likewise, cultural and social environment, mainly the environment where learning takes place may influence the students´ level of anxiety. Other causes of anxiety may be students´ own concerns about their ethnicity, foreignness, social status, relations within the class or gender (Hashemi & Abbasi, 2013). What is more, as the major source of stress was declared the classrooms that follows traditional learning styles, its strictness and formality. Generally, we call the factors stemming from the individual´s inner-self, intrinsic motivators and the factors stemming from the outer environment, the extrinsic motivators (Scovel, 1991).

Moreover, English plays an important role in a global market as it is a communication language of business, education, science and technology. This fact may on the one hand serve as a motivator for students, but on the other hand, it may be perceived by students as pressure and consequently negatively contribute to FLA (Tran et al., 2012).

Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) explain that FLA mostly shows up in its strongest form in testing situations. Students claim that they know and understand the certain grammar, but they tend to "forget" them when it comes to test or oral exercise when many grammatical points must be recalled at the same time. Doing persistent errors in spelling or syntax due to nervousness is also very common. The same authors also explain that overstudying is a related phenomenon. Although students devote a lot of time to studying, they still do poorly in tests or oral exams. They become even more frustrated when they realize they do the same mistakes repeatedly. On the contrary some students tend to give up, avoid studying or miss the class to alleviate their anxiety.

As every human is individual and distinct in their character, the above mentioned causes and consequences influence each student in a different way and severity.

Research results

Most research studies confirmed the debilitating effect of FLA on FL learning. What is more, it has been documented that the relationship between FLA and FL achievement can be affected by a number of other factors.

Research has also examined how FLA and FL achievement are related to a number of variables, such as age, length of FL study, gender, living or staying in a FL country, academic achievement, other FLs learned, self-perceived FL proficiency, perceived self-worth, and perfectionism (Kunt & Tüm, 2010). Perhaps one of the most interesting findings of this research is that advanced learners and learners who have lived or stayed in a FL country are more susceptible of FLA (Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999; Kitano, 2001; Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002). Kitano (2001) found a relationship between gender and the anxiety – male learners, who perceived themselves as less competent in FL, suffered from FLA more than female learners.

Most research has proven that there is a negative correlation between FLA and FL achievement in a large number of contexts and situations (Horwitz, 1986; Horwitz, 1996; Kunt, 1997; Yan, 1998; Sellers, 2000; Kitano, 2001; Yan & Wang, 2001). Anxiety also has negative influence on the three stages of cognitive processing: input, processing and output (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Furthermore, a number of studies have examined FLA in relation to specific language skills, such as reading, listening, writing, and speaking (Saito & Samimy, 1996; Cheng, 1998; Cheng, Horwitz & Schallert, 1999; Saito, Horwitz & Garza, 1999; Sellers, 2000; Argaman & Abu-Rabia, 2002; Cheng, 2002; Elkhafaifi, 2005). Dixson (1991) found out that while listening, anxious students had difficulty to comprehend the content of the target language. Sellers (2000) investigated the relationship between anxiety and reading and concluded that anxious students do not understand the tasks correctly and tend to recall less passage content while reading than their less anxious mates. As regards speaking, more anxious students produce longer texts and smaller continuous speech and make longer mid-clause pauses (Djigunovic, 2006). All of these studies provide evidence for the existence of skill-specific FLA.

More recently, Baran-Łucarz (2013) has investigated the effect of anxiety on the learning of phonetics – Phonetics Learning Anxiety – which represents an interesting step in the understanding of the impact of affective factors on pronunciation. She points out that no instrument has been designed yet to examine specifically the pronunciation anxiety (Baran-Łucarz, 2013, p. 60-61).

Horwitz et al. (1986) have developed "Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale" (FLCAS) to measure the amount of anxiety by students. The scale has 33 items scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" and it consists of three components: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. The possible range is from 33 to 165. The higher score, the more anxious the individuals are.

The questions of FLCAS are presented in the table below (Horwitz et al., 1986).

1.	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.
2.	I don´t worry about making mistakes in language class.
3.	I tremble when I know that I´m going to be called on in language class.
4.	It frightens me when I don´t understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.
5.	It wouldn´t bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.
6.	During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.
7.	I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.
8.	I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.
9.	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.
10.	I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.
11.	I don´t understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.
12.	In language class I can get nervous I forget things I know.

13.	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.
14.	I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with the native speakers.
15.	I get upset when I don´t understand what the teacher is correcting.
16.	Even if I am prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.
17.	I often feel like not going to my language class.
18.	I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.
19.	I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.
20.	I can feel my heart pounding when I´m going to be called on in language class.
21.	The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.
22.	I don´t feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.
23.	I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.
24.	I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.
25.	Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.
26.	I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.
27.	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.
28.	When I´m on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.
29.	I get nervous when I don´t understand every word the language teacher says.
30.	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.
31.	I am afraid that other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.
32.	I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.
33.	I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven´t prepared in advance.

5-point Likert Scale	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

The table serves as an example for teachers to get inspired and may later alert it according to their needs.

The universal scale by Horwitz et al. (1986), which was used by students learning Spanish as a second language, has been later adjusted by other researchers according to the language or a cultural background where the research has been conducted. As FLA has been studied mostly in classrooms learning English as a second language, "English Learning Anxiety Scale" (ELAS) has been created. Firstly, the majority of research has been conducted in Western countries. Later on, more and more research results have been coming from Asian countries using modified scale version called "Second Language Speaking Anxiety Scale". Moreover, in Saudi Arabia, the "Arabic Foreign Language Anxiety Questionnaire" (AFLAQ) has been developed.

In Woodrow´s research (2006) it is stated that English language learners from countries such as China, Korea and Japan were more anxious than other ethnic groups. Further, Al-Saraj (2011) explains why Saudi Arabian culture creates a social and cultural setting for examining FLA. The education system in Saudi Arabia is free for all levels, where male and female students are separated, typically attending segregated schools. The combination of factors such as the importance of learning English, the educational system and conservative culture create an environment for FLA. Moreover, the study where only females were participating showed, that giving live, in-class presentations causes strong anxiety for them.

Moreover, Horwitz (1996) using the Teacher Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (TFLAS), was the first researcher to propose that non-native teachers and student teachers may experience feelings of FLA as well. However, the research on FL teachers and student teachers´ feelings of anxiety remains very limited to this day. Nevertheless, this kind of FLA can have a number of undesirable effects on FL education (Horwitz, 1996). As the number of non-native FL teachers increases by the year, it is clear that more research is desperately needed in this area.

Anxiety and learning differences

All the above mentioned causes, consequences and research results have been carried out in the main-stream classes. Although no learning differences were defined by the participants, the results by mainstream learners have shown the negative influence of FLA for FL learning.

As mainstream learners in many cases experience quite serious feelings of anxiety that influence their further understanding and production in FL, it can be assumed, that students with learning differences can feel much more anxious.

Supposing a student has problems with reading, they see the text blurred, they mistake letters, they are not able to concentrate, they need longer time to understand the subject or finish the exercise and the parents, teachers and the environment generally bring pressure on the learners to do the task as expected by mainstream learners, the feelings of anxiety and discomfort naturally emerge. For example, dyslexic students often feel stressed and "dumb" and less capable what leads to discouragement about continuing in school (The International Dyslexia Association, 2012).

The role of teacher

Beyond all doubt a teacher plays one of the most important roles in increasing or alleviating anxiety by students. Price (1991) explains, that students need to feel teacher´s support encouragement and patience with their errors without being excessively critical. In the research by Al-Saraj (2011), the majority of participants pointed out teacher´s characteristics as the major cause of their anxiety. Teacher´s no-sense explaining of the subject, over-correcting the students and visible favouritism strongly contributed to increasing anxiety by the students as well. Moreover, teacher´s authoritative nature, embarrassing and humiliating attitude towards students create stressful environment in the class (Tanveer, 2007). Therefore, it is important that teachers pay attention to signals of anxiety radiating from the students and accommodate the later steps.

Hashemi and Abbasi (2013) have collected some helpful recommendations for teachers to alleviate anxiety by students:

1. Scan for the signs of anxiety by students and apply quick strategies to help them overcome the destructive feelings.
2. Create student-friendly and learning-supportive environment in the class.
3. Create friendship and cooperation among students.
4. Put more emphasis on formative assessment and constructive feedback rather than summative assessment.
5. A communicative approach should be adopted so that students get more chances to practise their speaking skills.
6. Encourage students not to be afraid of doing mistakes.
7. Do not correct student´s each mistake. Horwitz et al. (1986) recommended teachers to select the error correction techniques and base them upon instructional philosophy to reduce defensive reactions in students.
8. Make students feel successful and satisfied when using FL.
9. Choose activities and task that do not cause instant frustration.
10. Initiate discussion about how the students feel, for instance, when giving presentations, and help them overcome their worries.
11. Search for more training courses on general psychology including language anxiety and learning differences.

It may also be helpful for students to find their own strategies to overcome anxiety in stressful situations. Many students like to have some rituals before big exams or they keep talismans close. Hauck and Hurd (2005) have collected a few strategies to deal with FLA:
1. Be positive and use positive self-talk such as "It will be OK, I will do it, etc".
2. Take risks and guess the meaning or try to speak although you make mistakes.

3. Give yourself a reward after accomplishing the task.
4. If you are anxious when speaking in front of people, imagine that those are you friends and it is an informal chat. (Many students tend to imagine cabbage heads or different objects instead of the people in the audience.)
5. Write down your feelings or let your teacher know about how you feel.

Moreover, relaxation techniques are becoming more and more discussed nowadays. Deep breathing, meditation or getting moving are some of the examples. Robinson et al. (2015) suggest progressive muscle relaxation, visualization meditation, yoga or tai chi as further techniques how to overcome stress and alleviate anxiety from the longitudinal point of view.

The above mentioned recommendations and strategies may be very helpful in the classroom but it is important to bear in mind that all the students are different in their feelings and manifestation and each student requires different approach from the teacher.

Conclusion

It is human and natural to feel stress or anxiety in certain situations. However, it is important to be able to cope with the negative feelings so that they do not affect one´s learning and performance.

According to the above mentioned researches, anxiety, which is present among the students of FL, negatively influences students´ acquisition of FL and further performance. Although anxiety is an abstract term, it can be observed by students in a form of blushing, rubbing the palms, perspiration, staggered voice, either too slow or too fast speech, poor performance, forgetfulness etc. Students are very individual and therefore, the signs may differ in their manifestation or severity. That is, some learners may completely forget what they have learnt and be unable to perform in any way (oral or written) or some learners need only small hint, help or motivation to be able to perform with imperceptible signs of anxiety.

There are many factors such as classroom environment and its atmosphere, learners´ self-esteem, the evaluation coming from the classmates, etc. that are the source of anxiety. Students themselves declared the strictness and formality of the classroom as the major factor of FLA. Moreover, the teacher´s attitudes or favouritism cause FLA as well. Therefore, the role of the teacher is even more important, because the teacher is the person in the classroom who can regulate the atmosphere, search for the signs of anxiety and help students to overcome it.

Although the results of the researches were similar in demonstrating the presence of anxiety in the classrooms and its negative effect on FL, more studies need to be done in this area to investigate the interplay of various contributing variables as the exact nature of this relationship is still blurry and may be influenced by various concomitant factors.

Acknowledgement

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7 Drama as a multisensory approach to include SEN learners in an EFL classroom

Šárka Dohnalová

Objectives

The objective of this chapter is to introduce drama and structuring drama work as a multisensory approach that integrates more than only linguistic intelligence (Gardner, 1999), which is not the strenth of SEN learners, namely dyslexic learners. Structured drama is a special type of method or holistic planning of teaching the EFL subject content in a meaningful context. As this is a complex method the aim of this chapter is to briefly introduce the theoretical background of drama in EFL as well as to introduce one structured drama lesson to demonstrate some of the possibilities of structuring EFL content in a way that is suitable for SEN children incorporating psychomotoric, affective, and cognitive aims; various learning strategies as well as various intelligences.

SEN learners need to acquire English as a foreign language in situated, experiential and holistic learning, which might, however, be a challenge for the language teachers, therefore, a complete drama structure based on a simplified reader is an integral part of the chapter to demonstrate structuring drama work and give the target audience, i.e. teachers of English as a foreign language, a model lesson with practical teaching tips, which can be used for their own creative work in EFL

> **Think and do:**
> Before learning the facts from the chapter try to summarise your own knowledge of drama in EFL on a poster.
> Work as the whole group. Put the word **"DRAMA"** in the middle of the poster. Then write any associations that come in your heads.

1. Terminology and literature review

Drama came into being in 1924 at the university in Evanston (Illinois) almost at the same time as the project method (Machková, 2012), a project usually uses only the content of a subject, however, drama works with the interpersonal relationships and human interaction. The main drama activity is in the world of „as if", i.e. the world of fiction and imagination, using various techniques and conventions originally created for actors´ training. As there are many techniques and conventions, each student can find some that suit him or her and their way of learning as everyone is different and everyone is good at something else (Armstrong, 2011). Drama as well as project teaching requests friendly atmosphere in the classroom; structured drama is a kind of project incorporating drama techniques, where the necessary condition of a successful implementation of the method is the social climate of the classroom and the feeling of safety and no threat to the learner (Kratochvílová, 2009), which is crucial for making SEN children successful.

Drama in ELT is a quite recent phenomenon as Almond (2005) suggests on page 9 where he states that in the 1980s drama specialists still felt that drama needed to be demystified and was almost impossible to define due to intangibility and immeasurability while today most teachers know what drama is and recognise its value in ELT. The methods and conventions of drama in education are based upon the holistic, experiential, and cooperative learning and are based primarily on the humanistic and constructivist conception of education. It is a complex teaching

method that is highly pedocentric and where the pupil/student is in the centre of the learning/teaching process. The pupil is viewed as an individual with his/her own needs, interests, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. The centre of interest is taking care of the teaching/learning process, its quality in the relation of every individual child, his/her possibilities. It is a process where the child is an active co-creator of the learning situation/process (see Marušák, Králová, & Rodriguezová, 2008).

The aim of the lesson for an EFL teacher is generally to work with the language developing all four language skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing); Alan Maley and Alan Duff state that the main reason why to use drama in an EFL classroom is the fact that it integrates skills in a natural way and that listening is a key feature of it, furthermore, what is important for SEN learners, is the focus on bringing together body and mind in integrating verbal and non-verbal communication, integrating both the cognitive and affective domains, thus restoring the importance of feeling as well as thinking (Goleman, 1995), by contextualising the language, we bring the classroom interaction to life through focus on meaning with the emphasis on whole-person learning and multi-sensory inputs, which helps learners and offers them unequalled opportunities for catering their differences (Maley & Duff, 2007). Bearing in mind that SEN learners often face failure in the EFL classroom, the main benefit in using drama techniques in the EFL classroom seem to be the focus on building the lerners´ confidence, improving their spontaineity and fluency in real life situations and not focusing so much on accuracy and mistakes either in oral production or in writing. Thus providing them with the possibilities to succeed and not to succumb to helplesness due to their frequent failures.

Fleming in his book Starting Drama Teaching speaks of two main aims when teaching drama "**to develop personal qualities**" and "**to develop appreciation of the cultural heritage**", which at first sight might suggest very different orientations – the first implying **the emphasis on active participation** in making drama, the second suggesting a **study of texts of different sorts** (Fleming, 2011), which is what we seek for when working with SEN learners trying to involve them as fully as possible, trying to develop their awareness of their strength and weaknesses and to develop their metacognitive and compensatory skills when working with a topic or text in the context of the EFL classroom. Fleming, besides the two main aims mentioned above, lists more aims which can be considered as very helpful for SEN children and their well-being in an EFL classroom:

- to provide future artists and audiences;
- to help pupils think;
- to develop personal qualities;
- to develop imagination and creativity;
- to provide insight into human situations;
- to improve teaching other subjects;
- to educate the emotions;
- to develop confidence;
- to provide entertainment and relaxation;
- to develop appreciation of the cultural heritage;
- to develop understanding of how drama works as a genre (Fleming, 2011)

Neelands and Good (2008) provided teachers with a very useful handbook of available forms in theatre and drama, which they divided into 4 parts:

a) **Context-Building Action** (circle of life, circular drama, collective character, collective drawing, defining space, diaries, letters, journal, messages, games, guided tour, making maps/diagrams, objects of character, role-on-the-wall, simulations, soundtracking, still image, the ripple, unfinished materials);

b) **Narrative Action** (a day in the life, critical events, hot-seating, interviews/interrogations, mantle of the expert, meetings, noises off, overheard conversations, reportage, tag role, teacher-in-role, telephone/radio conversations, time line);

c) **Poetic action** (action narration, alter-ego, analogy, behind the scene, caption-making, ceremony, come on down!, cross-cutting, documentary, flashback, folk-forms, forum-theatre, gestus, masks, metamorphosis, mimed activity, montage, play within a play, prepared roles, re-enactment, revue, ritual, role-reversal, shape-shifting, small-group play-making, soundscape, TV Times);

d) **Reflective Action** (choral speak, gestalt, giving witness, group sculpture, If I was you..., marking the moment, moment of truth, narration, space between, spectrum of difference, taking sides, this way/that way, thought-tracking, voices in the head, walls have ears).

Defining the terms
- **drama in EFL** is a complex method using drama techniques and conventions; it is a whole-person approach to language teaching and it requires us to look at communication holistically.
- **drama techniques** are activities, many of which are based on techniques used by actors in their training. Through them, students are given opportunities to use their own personality in creating the material on which part of the language class is based.
- **language learning strategies** are the processes and actions consciously deployed by language learners to help them to learn a language more effectively.
- **constructivist approach** believes that learning occurs when the learners are actively involved in the learning process and create their knowledge in the process.
- **holistic learning** is a type of learning that focuses on the whole picture and not only the splinters or puzzle pieces within a topic, thus, it is easier for majority of SEN children who tend to need to see the whole picture first.
- **situated learning** is experiential learning in a meaningful situation
- **multisensory approach** – using as many senses as possible to improve the learning process of SEN learners
- **social aspects of SEN** describe the feelings and challenges that the child with special educational needs faces

2. Australia – multisensory structured drama approach (Teaching language and content using drama techniques and conventions)

I decided to demonstrate structured drama approach on using a simplified reader (Australia and New Zealand by Christine Lindop, Oxford Bookworms, level 3). The project of this structured drama is based on situated learning, which uses experiential learning in a meaningful context where the rule is that our learning is led by the harmony between our experiences and the experiences of the others in the classroom (Krátká, 2011). The experience becomes educationally significant when the learners identify themselves with the characters, and on the basis of their reflection in the role of the character as well as their own reflection the learners gain new social and emotional experiences (Silberman, 2007).

Author of the lesson: Šárka Dohnalová

Time needed: 2 to 8 sessions depending how deep we want to get into the topic and what the students want to research.

Age group: 6th grade and older

Educational area: Humans and their world; Humans and communication; Cross-curricular links;

Outputs according to the Educational Framework of Reference:
- The pupil recognizes the main information, past and contemporary, of Australia as the continent, its inhabitants, riches and poverties;
- The pupil uses texts, encyclopaedias, the Internet as their sources of information for understanding the topic;
- Using the selected texts the pupil compares and evaluates the way of life of the Australian past inhabitants (both: first the Aborigines, then the convicts coming from England) and the contemporary inhabitants and their way of life.

EFL aims:
- Eliciting what the pupils know about the topic – vocabulary specific to the topic;
- asking questions in present simple about the topic – practicing questions and eliciting what the pupils are interested in regarded the target topic;
- practicing all the four language skills;
- practicing present simple tense for present situations and past simple for past situations;
- cross-curricular links: learning geographical vocabulary and learning about the map of Australia.

Drama aims:
- Individual and group work in a given situation;
- practice the skill of cooperation in groups of different sizes (pairs, small groups, the whole class as a group);
- practice the presentational skills in small groups;
- use the found out information in creative work (TPR map, role of the Aboriginal tribes, roles of the British convicts);

Sources of information:
- Simplified reader: Lindop, C. (2008). *Australia and New Zealand, Oxford Bookworms, level 3,* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Encyclopaedias, dictionaries, the Internet.

The methods and conventions: Soundtrack, Circular drama, Defining space, Teacher-in-role, Meetings in roles, Narration, Note-taking dictation, Text reconstruction, Lying game, Memory game, Find your pair

The structure of the Lesson:
1. Tune in
First we need to tune students into the topic and learn what the pupils already know (the K-W-L approach – the table can be downloaded from the teaching resources on www.oup.com/elt/gradedreaders

The teacher asks the students to close their eyes, listen carefully and shout any association that the sounds bring upon their mind. Then the teacher plays the Spirit of Uluru on youtube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdZQytU_nS0), waits for the students to shout the associations and writes them on the board in one colour (eliciting what the group knows about the topic)

2. *"Want to learn"* – the mirror circle (elicitation)
Then the teacher asks the pupils what they want to learn about the topic and writes on the board *"I want to learn about…"*

The pupils have some time to think and prepare one sentence each about what they want to learn.

Then they form a circle and the teacher tells them that they are his/her mirror and he/she is thinking about what he/she wants to learn. The teacher goes around the circle and the pupils say what they what to learn, e.g. *"I want to learn about the Aborigines/outback/life in Australia/map of Australia/Sydney/…"*

Then the teacher asks the pupils to go to the board and write, in different colour, what they want to learn about (they can form interest group that will look information up together).

3. TPR map of Australia
The teacher asks the pupils to create the map of Australia in the classroom using their bodies. The teacher says, *"the north is at the whiteboard, the south is opposite, the west is.."* pointing to

the sides of the classroom. *"Please, if you said you were Sydney, go to the place of the classroom where you think Sydney is, I am Uluru and I am in the middle of the classroom"* and the teacher goes to the middle of the classroom positioning himself/herself as Uluru saying, *"I am Uluru, and I am in the middle of the classroom",* then waits for the pupils to go somewhere and to declare what place they are.

4. Checking the map

Then the teacher projects the map of Australia on the whiteboard so that the pupils can check if they were right and maybe change the position if they were wrong (https://elt.oup.com/feature/global/maps/?cc=cz&selLanguage=cs)
Or the students can work with the map in their reader (appendix 1):

5. After checking the map we will find out something about **the beginnings of the continent and the original inhabitants,** i.e. presenting the students with the picture of the Aborigines from the reader and asking the students what they know about the original inhabitants of Australia. After eliciting what the students know, the teacher will use the text in the reader for a **note-taking dictation** (the students have to write only notes and later they will be working in groups of 3 or 4 to reconstruct the text together). After having reconstructed the text they will check it on the whiteboard, the dyslexic learners will get a copy of the text not to have to look up at the board and down at their writing as that is difficult for them, they can get extra time to check and rewrite the text at home (find the text in Appendix 2).

The lying game

The teacher chooses the activities done by the Aborigines in the ***Dreamtime** (e.g. 1) travelled to different parts of their land; 2) they ate plants and and fruits; 3) they built houses made from branches and leaves; 4) They painted their bodies and sang, danced)*, the teacher and the students decide how to mime each of the sentences and then the teacher divides the classroom into **A**s and **B**s. **A**s have to mime the activity, **B**s come to **A**s asking *"What are you doing?"* and **A**s have to lie (i.e. they have to say one of the 3 activities they are not doing at the moment) and **B**s start to do the activity **A**s said; then **A**s go to another **B** asking *"What are you doing?"* (the teacher lets them swap the roles several times to practive the sentences).

6. Teacher-in-role

The teacher divides the class into groups of 4 to represent different tribes of Aborigines, then the teacher comes in the role of the main chief of all the tribes in Australia saying:

My fellow Aborigines, this is how we were living here in the Dreamtime, travelling to different parts of the land, eating plants and fruits, building houses from branches and leaves, painting our bodies, singing and dancing, HOWEVER, this year: 1788, there are 11 ships approaching our land with many British immigrants who will change our lives forever. Each tribe, please, discuss, the possibilities what we can do with the bloody British, the n we will have a meeting at our sacred place, Uluru and we will together decide what we will do.

Before the meeting the teacher projects the picture of Uluru on the whiteboard/wall (appendix 4):

Then the meeting starts and the tribes (groups of students suggest what to do with the immigrants, e.g. welcome them, send them back home, etc.)

After the meeting and the discussion has finished the teacher tells the students what happened and how the British changed the life in Australia, demonstrating the situation of Aborigines on how many lived in Tasmania (letting them guess the numbers):

In 1804 (4000-6000 Aborigines)
In 1831 (190 Aborigines)
In 1876 (0 Aborigines)

7.   Possible extension – similar activities about the British convicts who had to do a lot of work when changing Australia (using the same games and techniques)

8. **Memorising in groups and circular TPR activity:**

Learning more about Australia today (geography) – using the map (http://fdslive.oup.com/www.oup.com/elt/general_content/global/map_posters_worksheets/AustraliaandNewZealandMapPoster.pdf**)** – dividing the class into 7 groups. Each group has to memorise one text from the map of Australia, i.e. 1) the Great Barrier Reef, 2) the outback, 3) Uluru, 4) Perth, 5) Sydney, 6) Adelaide, 7) Canberra. They have 3 minutes and then they have to present their text in the circle (Each student has a sentence or two). Then the teacher gives them numbers. Number 1 start in the circle, says his/her sentence, then number 2 goes in the circle, until the end of the text. This activity is very good for ending a lesson and opening the next one, as the students can look at the text again before starting the circle in the next lesson and thus re-read and revise the whole text.

9.   **Finding your pair**

The teacher distributes cut out sentences with the facts about Australia. Each student has only half of the sentence and they have to find the other half, i.e. their partner (see appendix 2); **follow up**: writing. The teacher distributes a new table (see appendix 3) with only halves of the sentences. Dyslexic learners can only paste the second halves of the sentences in the lesson and can copy the second halves at home to be provided more time for their writing practice.

10.   Possible extension:
a) Life in the outback (a day in the life of people living in the outback)
b) School in Australia (school of the air – practicing teaching using IT (skype, mp3s, emails, etc.)
c) Flying doctors (using transmitters for listening and making notes about the problem/patient)
d) The riches of Australia (planning the crops, prices, sales, economic growth)
e) The current situation of the Aborigines
f) More readymade teaching resources can be found on: www.oup.com/elt/gradedreaders

Conclusions

The objective of the chapter was to introduce drama as a multisensory, project method using acting techniques and conventions to create "as if" worlds and situations, which make foreign language learning more meaningful. After a brief introduction of drama and project method, drama in EFL, what drama can offer to SEN learners, and a list of techniques and conventions suggested by two of the big names in drama in EFL, Jonothan Neelands and Tony Good, I presented a structured drama project using some of the techniques from their list, planned in such a way that all 4 language skills were developed within the project and also that the project fulfilled the conditions of multisensory (learning through more senses), and holistic and situated learning (learning in a complex situation via own experience to understand the topic) with the focus on fluency and friendly atmosphere in the classroom to give all learners at their time (when the activity was easy for them-it suited their intelligence/strength) the feeling of success.

I have chosen the topical theme of immigrants, however, from a bit different point of view as, in this case, the unwanted immigrants are the British in 1788, which the students appreciated and laughed at.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: The map of Australia from the simplified reader (p 2)

Appendix 2: The picture of the Aborigines

Appendix 3: The text of the note-taking dictation

Appendix 4: The picture of Uluru
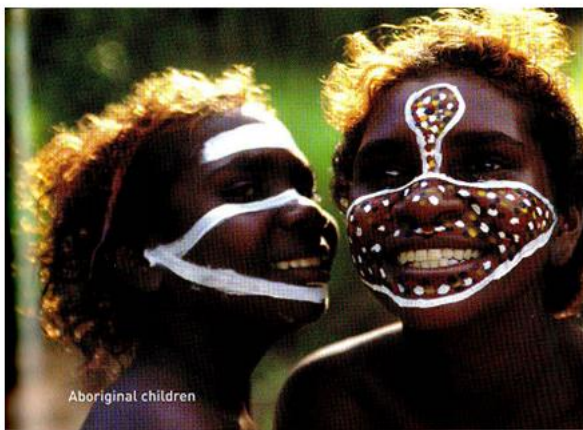
Appendix 5: halved sentences (to cut out)

Appendix 6: halves of the sentences for writing exercise

Appendix 1: map of Australia from the simplified reader (p 2)

Appendix 2:

The Aborigines

The text of the note-taking dictation

The ABORIGINES

- ## T reading; Ss listening:
- The 300,000 Aborigines who lived in Australia until 1788 belonged to more than 300 different groups and each group had its own land and language. They travelled to different parts of their land during the year to find food and water; they ate plants and and fruits and caught animals and fish. They did not own many things, and their only buildings were houses made from branches and leaves. This way of life did not damage or destroy the land where they lived.
- **At special times Aborigines came together in big groups**. They painted their bodies and sang, danced, and made music. They believed that a long ago the world was made by animals, plants, and humans together. This time was called **"Dreamtime"**, and there were many songs. Stories, and pictures about it.

Appendix 3:

Appendix 2: halved sentences (to cut out)

Australia is big:	7,686,848 kilometres.
Only 5 countries in the world are larger than Australia:	Russia, Canada, the United States, China and Brazil.
Western part of Australia:	is four times as big as Texas, or eleven times as big as Great Britain.
Australia is low and flat:	only 5% of the land is above 600 metres.
The highest mountain is	Mount Kosciuszko, at 2,228 metres.
Australia is hot and dry	two thirds of the country is desert.
From May to October the north is often sunny and dry for weeks	and it is a popular place for winter holidays in the sun.
December is	in the summer.
June is	in winter.
Tasmania is cooler and wetter than the rest	of Australia, with high mountains, thick forests, and some of the world´s trees.

Appendix 3: halves of the sentences for writing exercise

Australia is big:	
Only 5 countries in the world are larger than Australia:	
Western part of Australia:	
Australia is low and flat:	
The highest mountain is	
Australia is hot and dry	
From May to October the north is often sunny and dry for weeks	
December is	
June is	
Tasmania is cooler and wetter than the rest	

8 Foreign languages in education of Roma children from socially disadvantaged settings

Eva Farkašová

Objectives
- to clarify the backround, conditions and specifics of Roma children from socially disadavantaged settings in a scope of their education
- to present some adjustments, modifications and customizations which should be provided in content, methodologies and techniques used in education generally, and FL teaching particularly.

Foreign languages and Roma population in Slovakia

The first foreign language, namely English, has been introduced into state curricula from 3rd grade of basic schools, i.e. from the age of 8. This procedure is compulsory for all pupils regardless their individual internal and external conditions. Certain difficulties can be expected in case of pupils having special educational needs due to learning problems, physical and sensual disorders and of those coming from low stimulating, socially disadvantaged settings. In Slovakia, the latter concerns mainly children from marginalized Roma communities (MRC).

Educational Law (Zákon č. 245/2008 o výchove a vzdelávaní (školský zákon)) states characteristics according to which these children have to be viewed or assessed, in §2, item p): "dieťaťom zo sociálne znevýhodneného prostredia alebo žiakom zo sociálne znevýhodneného prostredia [je] dieťa alebo žiak žijúci v prostredí, ktoré vzhľadom na sociálne, rodinné, ekonomické a kultúrne podmienky nedostatočne podnecuje rozvoj mentálnych, vôľových, emocionálnych vlastností dieťaťa alebo žiaka, nepodporuje jeho socializáciu a neposkytuje mu dostatok primeraných podnetov pre rozvoj jeho osobnosti."

Beside the cited characteristics another distinctive feature consists in the fact that their mother tongue is (mostly) a local Roma dialect having quite small lexicon (word-stock) not containing various expressions, concepts and abstract terms which are very important in educational contents of particular subjects from the very beginning of school attendance (see e.g. 1st grade text-books: Math, Science, Slovak language etc.). Children from MRC do not know a lot of terms, do not understand the meaning of many words (or at most can understand educational/state language at a communication level). They have not experienced a lot of situations, handling with things and materials; a lot of skills are missing (e.g. using a pencil and drawing). The vocabulary is limited and verbal instructions can be/are thus misunderstood.

There is also another specific trait: many children from MRC are not supported by their parents in the effort to perform well in school. Their attitudes to the education are then very limited and unsuccessful indications are enough to slow down their interests and study aspirations.

Primarily they are to learn some components of the educational/state language, to master some activities, become familiar with basic and a bit advanced matters, to use consciously their second language. Researches confirm that the listening and reading with understanding form the problem in education during the whole compulsory school attendance of these pupils (Špotáková et al., current research).

So, all the above mentioned issues lead to the conclusion that it would be more optimal for these pupils to shift 1st FL education into later years. Nevertheless we have to accept the set regulations and to prepare the content of FL teaching in accordance with abilities and possibilities of the pupils from MRC.

The principal requirement is to appoint **procedures**, to select **topics, vocabulary, teaching and learning materials, techniques and practices** which will be convenient to a concrete group of pupils. All the mentioned items are interconnected and/but are discussed gradually.

The content – new topics, vocabulary, related activities etc., must be presented in small amounts and a lot of repetition is needed for satisfying learning results. The cognitive functions (will be mentioned below) have to be developed in frames of individual possibilities by using adequate support from psychological and educational resources and according to creative and inventing effort of the **teacher – his/her professional and personal capabilities and erudition are inevitable.**

To set an appropriate **procedure in teaching** means to modify timing, ordering and arrangement of presented units. The emphasis is put on communication – listening - nonverbal and verbal reacting, thereafter autonomous speaking. Other language competencies (i.e. reading and writing) can be involved but much later than in regular classes. Also the results must be evaluated more tolerantly than usually, in other pupils.

Techniques and practices have to be developed and applied according to pupils´ specifics in cognitive functions: intentional attention (and perception) – short-term, easily dissipated and detached; memory – prevailingly short-term, linked to concrete experiences, fostered by repetition; language – short vocabulary generally and in educational/ state language particularly; thinking – based on real and single experiences and practices.

For better understanding pre-conditions of children of the age, let´s explain the psychological presumptions which must be respected.

According to J. Piaget´s classification 8-10 year olds inhere in stage of concrete operations, i.e. their understanding and assessing the world is connected to really experienced and seen matters and events – this concerns children nurturing in standard surroundings. The background of the children from MRC is but different and thus we have to regard also characteristics of the previous period – preoperational stage (till 7 years of age), i.e. limited experience, assessing the world through his/her own perception and from only one´s point of view (Piaget, Inhelder, 2014). And all this links to low passive and even lower active vocabulary (in their mother tongue and/or in educational/state language).

The techniques, methods and practices have to follow possibilities of the individuals – slow advancing with a great extend for repeating and handling presented notions, practical implications and utilization in real surroundings. Games, especially games with motion represent effective activities that can keep interest of pupils and motivate them to active approach in learning process.

Another fact should be viewed in preparing suitable practices and materials: there exist several types of thinking (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and other types and their combinations). It means that individual pupils learn easier by using different types of presenting new matters – pictures, video and audio recordings, motional games etc. More detailed characteristic of thinking types by H. Gardner (Gardner, 1983) and what activities are effective in which cases, is introduced in the chapter "Foreign languages in education of gifted children".

Topics: Text-books for pupils mostly offer topics which are close to them in connection with their ages, their interests and a scope of their everyday experience. Pupils from MRC, living in distant and detached settlements, having rare contacts with children and standard surrounding of the village or town (they live in), cannot understand and use properly contents, presented matters, contexts and global interconnections.

Topics in text-books must be reviewed carefully and selected those ones that correspond with a diapason of the pupils´ knowledge and their everyday-life context. The topics should be arranged in order to provide developing process, storyline, to join particular subject-themes, i.e. inter-subject relations for understanding dependences among matters and events and for better remembering words, phrases and contextual sentences.

All this must be prepared in connection with **word-stock** selection which has to insure the comprehension and adequate using of words, phrases and related grammatical phenomena. Vocabulary must be filled with expressions that can be applied in various situations to foster

understanding with the aim to automatize using because the pupils need not know grammatical rules in initial stages of FLL – in the communicative level. The expressions must be selected with respect to concrete situation in a given group/class – the pupils should know the words from a practice and can name them in their mother tongue and/or in a language of education (Slovak, Hungarian).

Teaching and learning materials (i.e. educational materials) selection is also bounded with the above presented items. These mean not only text-books and work-sheets but also all accessory items which can be and are (usually) used in course of the lessons. They help to make teacher´s work effective and at the same time they enrich educational process and facilitate pupils´ comprehension.

These materials can be found as components of regular published equipment. To prepare fitted materials is a challenge for creative teachers because it means to find sources in internet, to adapt and combine them, or create new sheets, texts, exercises, games etc.

Real objects, toys, things of daily handling and other materials form a very important part of educational aids. They are useful especially for young pupils and for various types of thinking (e.g. visual and kinaesthetic types, see below). Frequent repetition in different contexts helps to fix information.

The use of concrete materials, continuous and developing repetition of presented matters and gradual involvement of advanced information (globally said) must be present during the whole FL education to prevent failure, frustration from individual troubles and insufficiencies.

In later phase, after mastering the basic knowledge, pupils can proceed to higher stage in FL learning. Reading and writing, as further language skills, can be involved and developed in similar though adapted, activities and materials – (reading) texts, pictures, objects, music, games can stimulate formulation of sentences.

Special procedures of FL teaching of pupils from MRC are needed in primary level but also in later grades. Requirement to reach expected level according to CEFRL (internet source, see below) which were set to A1-A2 for basic school, must be judged carefully as these criteria were defined for adult learners and just little adopted for younger ones in Slovak translation.

For all age groups of pupils from MRC in basic schools can be **recommended methods** as follows:

1. **CLIL** (Content and Language Integrated Learning) – for introducing English/FL in various contexts of non-linguistic subjects, more frequent contact with FL, possibility to arrange more interesting situations for pupils;
2. **Personalized learning** – for preparing opportunities of individual engagement in a way that is close to his/her experiences, a chance to present own opinions and attitudes;
3. **TPR** (Total Physical Response) – enables more dynamic lessons where children can express freely keeping their attention and concentration to selected/intended content without emphasizing the learning situation.

Topics and activities (optional) in primary FLL for pupils from MRC:

The beginning of FL lessons or introducing new vocabulary and activities must be preceded by talking about an on-coming topic and situation in the language of education, eventually in Roma language with a help of teacher´s assistant. The aim is to prepare and motivate pupils for the subsequent and wished procedures.

The initial vocabulary is connected to school and class activities and forms a part of class instructions, e.g. sit, stand, book, paper, pencil, pen; new expressions are always presented followed by manifestation of real objects and acts. This is probably not enough for understanding and using Slovak words is inevitable.

Family – members and some main/usual activities (e.g. sleep, eat, sit, watch TV); later: occasional activities – holidays, birthday (event. names of holidays, present, sweets);

Home and the closest surrounding – selection of terms depends on local conditions (e.g. village/ town, forest, river, hill/-s, street, house, flower, tree);

Games and free-time activities – selection according to local possibilities, habits and manners; eventually sports, music etc.; e.g. ball, doll, cubes.

School, classroom and concerned activities – friend, teacher, pupil; read, write, draw; names of (some) subjects; school things and the like.

Animals – well-known, according to the local situation, domestic: e.g. dog, cat, hen, duck, goat; wild: e.g. rabbit, fox, bear, perhaps some birds.

More general topics should be involved just later: e.g. occupations, means of transport, health etc.

Beside nouns and verbs there are adjectives (colours, attributes – big/small, new/old …), pronouns, numbers and thus the vocabulary is/has to be indeed much extensive. There is strong request not to broaden vocabulary at the expense of quality mastering.

There can be named many activities and games which could engage young learners and make them active. They can be found and chosen from various resources – printed methodical materials, text- and work-sheets available at internet, and adopted for concrete group and teaching purposes.

Pupils from MRC represent a special group which has to be supported by carefully selected educational means with the aim to enable them as successful performance in FLL as possible.

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9 Teaching English to gifted children

Eva Reid

Objectives

This chapter provides a brief description of characteristics and peculiarities of gifted children and gifted education. There are two forms of educating gifted children: integrated in regular classes and segregated in special classes. There are certain tips concerning working with gifted children, what to do and what to avoid. Teaching English as a foreign language to gifted children also has its specifics and these are discussed, together with general tips, in this chapter.

Defining giftedness and identification characteristics

Silverman (2012) views giftedness as a psychological reality, which can be observed in young children and documented on measures of general intelligence.

Characteristics such as abstract thought, insightfulness, compassion, sensitivity, perfectionism, intensity, creative imagination, sophisticated sense of humour accompany gifted individuals throughout their lives. Giftedness needs early identification, intervention and accommodation to assure healthy development.

There is a common belief that gifted children make it on their own, that they do well by themselves without any special intervention. However, it is a myth, which should be avoided, as Silverman (ibid.) pointed out that most gifted children hide or underachieve. Jurašková (2003) added that gifted children do not develop their talents without the support of schools, families and society, because they stand out from average population in cognitive and emotional areas. According to Dočkal (1995, 2005) development of talent depends on the environment. The more stimulating the environment is, the higher is the chance of development of a talent. Renzulli (2011), one of the greatest scholars on gifted education, emphasised the necessity of special education for gifted children, as they exhibit specific needs. This idea is also supported by Milgram (1991) who claimed that gifted children cannot maximize their abilities in regular school programmes unless teaching is adjusted to their specific needs. According NAGC (2014), separate studies done in the last decades prove the need for gifted education and more importantly the benefits of special education of the gifted children. Very eloquent is an analogy is with developing sports talents. Even the greatest sportsmen would not have been so great if their specific talents had not been developed by specially trained coaches. In comparison, how do we expect gifted children to train themselves to be outstanding in science, languages, etc. if we do not develop their talents? As a result, we need special education for gifted children with special approach in order to develop their abilities to maximum.

Many gifted education programs around the world set as a minimum criterion an IQ score of 130 for admitting children to their special programs. Gifted individuals are further divided based on the IQ scored they achieve (Wasserman, 2003). Laznibatova (2007, 2012) adds that every gifted individual is unique and the population of the gifted does not form a homogenous group. Gifted individuals are a diverse group with various foundations and conditions for development. This diversity influences the process of development, which emerges in various levels and areas of giftedness. Even though the gifted children are a heterogeneous group, there are certain identification characteristics, which can apply to diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. It is not a simple task to identify gifted children, as many are hidden, or do not exhibit their talents. These are some of the common identification characteristics of gifted children (Laznibatová, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2008; Dočkal, 2005; Silverman, 2012):

- excellent memory,
- good reasoning,

- extensive vocabulary,
- early reader,
- fast learning,
- long attention span (when interested),
- facility with numbers,
- mature judgement for the age,
- prefers older companions,
- compassion, concerned with justice,
- sensitivity (feels hurt easily),
- perfectionism, intensity,
- creative imagination,
- strongly curious,
- skilled with jigsaw puzzles,
- questions authorities
- humour, etc.

Silverman (2012) emphasised that although these characteristics can be helpful in showing the possibility of giftedness, that each gifted child is an individual with unique set of traits that might not confirm any suggested attributes. Therefore gifted children should be identified and assessed by professionally qualified people.

Gifted education in Slovakia and a place of English language teaching in gifted education
Slovakia has quite a unique system of educating children with general intellectual giftedness. There are two ways of educating gifted children:
- segregated education in special classes
- integrated education in regular classes.

Segregated education has been in existence for more than 20 years. These days, there are 28 schools in Slovakia that offer segregated education for gifted children (Laznibatová, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2008; Dočkal, 2005). **The School Act 245/2008 § 2 letter j) and q) specifies gifted children (pupils) as children with specific educational needs.** Children with special educational needs have to be identified by centres of pedagogical-psychological advisory services. The national curriculum § 103 (1) letter a) number 1 specifies the key stages, core subjects, expected standards of pupils' performance for pupils with general intellectual giftedness. The key competences, which pupils have to acquire, are the same as for the regular pupils. The reason is the compatibility of all schools, which is necessary in the case when pupils change schools (VÚDPaP, 2009). Apart from the minimum requirements set in the national curriculum, there are certain modifications concerning the contents (enriching, additional and widening contents, additional books, elaboration of projects, etc.).
Concerning foreign language teaching in gifted education in Slovakia, there are two foreign languages recommended with English being the first foreign language which is taught from the first grade of primary school. English language is recommended as the first foreign language because it is a global language and a language of science and ICT (VÚDPaP, 2009). In the curriculum there are not any specific recommendations on how to teach foreign languages to gifted children. It is all left to the schools and individual teachers on how to deal with peculiarities of gifted pupils. Even though there are additional books for gifted pupils for some subjects, there is none for foreign languages. Therefore it appears that foreign language education for gifted pupils is not given sufficient attention. In order to make teaching English to gifted pupils more efficient, there should be a manual or English language learning books created specifically for gifted pupils (Reid, 2014).

Principles for nurturing gifted pupils

Certain principles should be always kept in mind in dealing with, nurturing and educating gifted children. Nurturing environment and positive attitude towards giftedness should be present as gifted children´s behaviour can be demanding, wearing and even disruptive. Gifted children require time, attention and patience and therefore careful time management and priority setting is a need for successful education (Bevan-Brown & Taylor, 2008). The following tips can be applied to teaching gifted children in general, including English language education.

Developing creativity, divergent thinking and high level thinking skills

Already Renzulli (2011) emphasised the importance of creativity in giftedness. Skills like fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration, curiosity, complexity, risk taking and imagination are needed for development of creativity. Creative skills can be developed by asking open-ended questions, challenging questions, various games, activities and everyday events that children go through.

In English classes creativity is mainly manifested through productive skills: speaking and writing. Gifted children should be encouraged to talk freely about various topics, such as their experiences, troubles, ideas, dreams, etc. Pair work, group work, role plays, simulations, finishing unfinished stories, etc. would be suitable techniques for practicing speaking activities. For practicing writing, children could write self-invented stories, poems, plans, inventions, etc. Elaboration of projects is an excellent technique for developing creativity and high level thinking. Certainly age and level of proficiency must be considered.

Facilitating learning study skills

Study skills such as taking notes, knowing how to use library efficiently, listening carefully, organizing time efficiently, constructing effective questions, debating well, observing carefully, evaluating own and others´ work critically, etc. are often assumed to be natural to gifted children. This is not necessarily true. Gifted children need to be taught the missing skills in order to develop their talents by establishing regular homework routine, encouraging them to make a working plan for various activities, encouraging them to suggest solutions for problems, discussing, praising and giving feedback to children´s work, etc. (Dalton & Smith, 1986).

In English classes, it is recommended to have extra activities prepared as gifted pupils are often very fast and manage more than regular pupils in the same time. Teachers should always be prepared for such cases, so games, quizzes or role plays should fill the spare time. Gifted children require rather challenging activities than a great number of easy exercises. Teachers can push the boundaries with challenging exercises using more difficult grammar, vocabulary or topics and let gifted pupils to work them out.

Attending personal qualities, attitudes, values and feelings

Many gifted children are more sensitive than their peers, having interest in social, moral, and philosophical topics. Emotional giftedness can be developed by discussing controversial news items, resolving peer conflicts, examining moral issues on TV programmes, expressing opinions on games, books and movies, etc. In ordinary classes where gifted children are integrated, they can be "leaders/organizers" of a group work in making projects, etc. Also activities dealing with moral dilemmas can be practiced in role plays, socio-dramas, mock trials, simulations, etc. with the aim to develop decision-making skills, spiritual sensitivity, ability to manage own thoughts, feelings and behaviour (Bevan-Brown & Taylor, 2008).

The mentioned issues on moral dilemmas, controversial issues, etc. can be addressed in English classes with more mature students having good command of English. Gifted children enjoy discussing controversial news and sensitive topics such as homelessness, immigration, etc. For discussing such issues, pupils need to have good command of English (at least B1).

Forms of educating gifted children
The most common forms for educating gifted pupils are:
- acceleration,
- enrichment,
- early entrance to primary school,
- skipping classes,
- absolving chosen subjects with higher grades,
- choice of more difficult optional subjects,
- creation of individual plans for subjects where the child is exceptional (Hribkova, 2009).

Among these, acceleration and enrichment are the most frequent. Acceleration is more spread in gifted education in many countries around the world. Enrichment is the preferred approach in Slovakia (Reid & Boettger, 2015). However, both varieties are often combined, as acceleration can be enriching and enrichment can lead to acceleration.

The problem with acceleration is that even though the gifted children can cope cognitively with older children, but they are at different levels of emotional maturity. Enrichment aims to deepen the contents of existing subjects. Enrichment can be carried out in both regular and segregated classes. In regular classes, gifted children can manage in the same time greater amount of work (deepening the topic) than other children. The key competences specified in the national curriculum are the same for regular and gifted pupils. The same standards should guarantee the compatibility of all schools (VÚDPaP, 2009). That is why enrichment is the more common and preferred way of educating gifted children in Slovakia.

Teaching techniques in gifted education
Teaching techniques for gifted children should lead to discovering, active searching, active acquiring and active formation of information, knowledge and skills. All techniques should connect learning to real life situations, experiences and humour should not be missing. Teaching gifted children should integrate multi disciplines into the area of study with the aim to get complex information, connect ideas, historical background, etc. CLIL (Content language integrated learning) would be a very suitable method for teaching gifted pupils as it promotes mixing mother language and foreign language in a lesson instead of teaching subjects´ contents only in one language (Pokrivčáková, 2013). Techniques such as drilling, application of many simple tasks, memorizing, application of rules and knowledge without knowing the background, application of non-creative and non-problematic tasks should be minimized or avoided (Jurašková, 2003; Laznibatová, 2012; Bevan-Brown, Taylor, 2008). Here are some suggestions for working with gifted pupils:

1. Discovery techniques – teachers do not explain to pupils everything, but allow pupils to work out by themselves rules and solutions to the problem. Pupils are encouraged to create their own constructs and answers. For solving the problematic tasks, pupils need to apply previous knowledge, predict and elicit new rules, apply intuition and risk taking. Teachers should create such situation that would lead pupils to work out and acquire new rules, knowledge and skills.

In English lessons, the discovery techniques could be used for example for teaching grammar (e.g. comparatives and superlatives "tall/taller/tallest". Fourth graders know the word "tall", but do not know the comparative and superlative forms. A teacher picks three pupils of a different height and asks the rest of pupils "Who is the tallest?" (A pupil is the tallest.) Even though the pupils do not know the form "tallest", they can work out the meaning. The comparative form "taller" is also applied in comparison with the other two pupils (Is A pupil taller than B pupil? Is C pupil taller than B pupil? Are A and B pupils taller than C pupil?). With this technique pupils discover the grammatical rule and figure out the pattern for themselves. The teacher´s role is to guide pupils to their own discovery, not to give them information on the grammatical rule. Such

tasks satisfy the pupils´ needs to discover and work out rules by themselves. With regular pupils, teacher arranges the pupils according to their height and explains "tall/taller/tallest" showing the differences in their height.

2. Multi-stimulation techniques – mechanical drilling is reduced to minimum. These techniques integrate cognitive, affective, intuitive and physical components. Tasks for pupils are prepared by teachers with the aim to stimulate their intellectual potential and satisfy their needs for variety. This can be done by giving pupils ambiguous assignments, exceptions, assignments which require more rules or steps, puzzles, riddles, tongue twisters and brainteasers.

In English lessons, for example, teaching grammar – comparatives and superlatives. Pupils apply the rule they worked out themselves on any adjectives they know (short, big, small, pretty, happy, sad, etc.) and show it on examples of items or mime the feelings. Irregular words "good/better/best" should be given as examples for pupils to work out the meaning and applications. TPR, group work, observing, touching/handling objects, elaboration of projects are suitable techniques requiring multi stimulation and multi sensors. The aim is to stimulate gifted pupils to search, discover, acquire and apply. The regular pupils apply the learnt rules to given examples and forms.

3. Self-learning techniques – are convenient and effective ways of learning and they should maximize the pupils´ potential. Work sheets (including problem solving tasks, creative tasks) can be suitable for self-learning as pupils work their own speed and apply their own processes and solutions. Projects encourage pupils to work by themselves from start to the end. They search, analyse, evaluate, synthesize information and then present the outcome of their work in the class. Self-learning is very well supported by multimedia, as there are many internet activities, quizzes, tests, games, etc. (English grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, reading, listening comprehension activities for different age groups and proficiency levels) where pupils can learn and practice new knowledge and skills. These self-learning techniques are especially suitable in mixed classes with pupils of different abilities.

4. Dialogue, discussion and argumentation techniques – allow pupils to express their opinions, accept opinions of others, solve problems, practice functions as agreeing, disagreeing, negotiating, summarizing, putting forward and argument, etc. Such techniques are especially suitable for mature students.

For example, a topic of housing can be discussed in an English class. The teacher creates an atmosphere by asking questions about living in the UK and Slovakia, types and standard of houses, furnishing, etc. Practicing is carried out by giving arguments, predicting or acting out the task – pupils discuss the known facts about housing in the UK. New information is given to pupils - pictures of differences: bathroom taps, carpets everywhere, thick curtains, small parts of windows that open, gardens, hedges, etc. Pupils are divided in groups and discuss advantages and disadvantages of British houses in comparison with Slovak houses (one group is the supporter of English houses and the other group is the supporter of Slovak houses). The groups should give arguments for and against and come to the solution which types of housing they prefer. The use of internet for more information is allowed. This kind of activity encourages pupils to discover, learn in greater depth about the topic, develops intercultural competences, but it also develops affective components such as accepting different opinions, self-reflection, tolerance and virtue.

Twice exceptional children

There are certain myths and beliefs about gifted children, which are not necessarily true, such as that gifted children should manage twice or three times as much as regular children, that they are gifted in every area of learning, that they are ambitious, self-confident, socially and emotionally stable, that they do not have learning difficulties and disorders, etc. (Laznibatová,

2012). However, it is not rare for gifted children to have learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural disturbance, or disorders such as Asperger syndrome or ADHD.

These children are called twice exceptional and they are gifted and have disabilities at the same time (Silverman, 2012; Trail, 2010). Gifted children with learning difficulties may be often viewed as underachievers, or in a better case as average, because they use compensating strategies to hide their difficulties. In such cases, their abilities nor disabilities are recognized.

Strategies for teaching children with learning difficulties, gifted children and gifted children with learning difficulties need challenges that can be built on the children´s interests and strengths and they require more support to overcome difficulties. The following strategies should be used (Bevan-Brown & Taylor, 2008):

- explicit teaching - thinking aloud, visualising, self-questioning,
- compensatory strategies – computer spellchecks, dictation recorders, reader/writer assistance, other aids,
- encouraging to develop coping strategies – working with a mentor, using relaxation techniques, finding out how others cope, developing excapes such as music, painting
- teaching multisensory approaches - looking for patterns in reading and spelling, making pictures of words and phrases, working with CDs, visualising, tracing, etc.
- encouraging reasonable expectations – doing less, giving more time, doing only what is important, prioritising things, etc.

Model activities

Two tips for an English class lesson developing fluency, creativity, originality and flexibility are given. Both activities are recommended for pupils to work in small groups. When taught in a regular class, there should be similar representation of pupils in each group with a gifted child in each group. In segregated classes, gifted children could work both, individually or in a group. Both activities are taken from online magazines for children (authentic print materials), which can bring reality and real language to the classroom.

Finishing a story

The first example is a fiction story from a *Creative Kids* magazine. The activity is suitable for a lower secondary grade gifted pupils (age 13-15), whose English is on A2 level. The title and a beginning of a story is given. Pupils work in groups and create a story based on given starting sentences. Pupils should be given sufficient time to write the story. The next lesson they should read their stories in front of the class. At the end the teacher presents them the full story that was written in the magazine. They discuss all the stories and vote for the best one. Further suggestions can be dramatizing and performing the best story.

The Monster in the Closet

Meet Jimmy. Jimmy just turned off his lights and tried to go to sleep. He fell asleep after about 20 minutes. When he woke up, it was about 1:30 in the morning. Something happened that night. Something Jimmy would never forget. Something . . . well, you'll see what I mean . . .
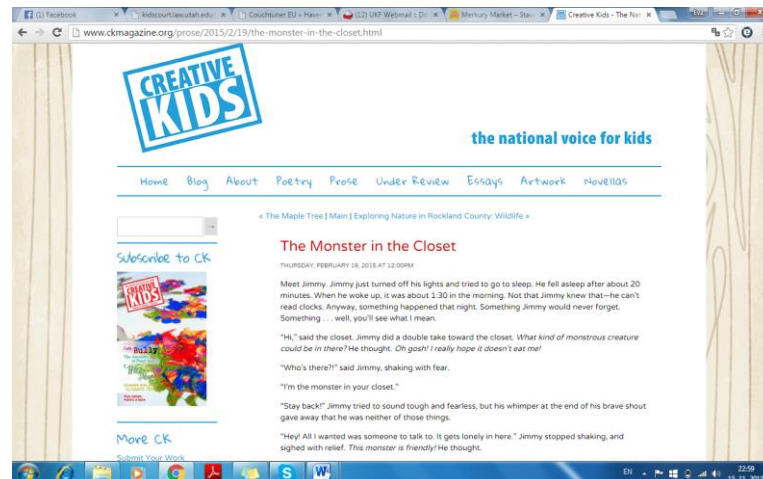
(Source: http://www.ckmagazine.org/prose/2015/2/19/the-monster-in-the-closet.html)

Figure 1: The Monster in the Closet (Bailey, 2015)

Predicting a story

The second example is a factual article from the *Time for Kids* magazine. This magazine is children´s version of the Time magazine and it is full of serious and factual articles. The activity is suitable for secondary grade gifted pupils, whose English is on B1-B2 level. The title, starting sentence of the article and points for reference are given. Pupils work in groups and predict what could refer to the given points. Pupils should be given sufficient time to discuss and write their predictions. Groups present their predictions in front of the class and discuss them. The teacher presents pupils the full article from the magazine. They discuss the real information and their predictions.

The article is about children and technologies. Information in the article is based on research done on tweens (8-12 years old children) and teens (13-18 year old teenagers).

The Truth About Kids and Tech
A new study reveals some surprises about kids and technology...
(http://www.timeforkids.com/news/truth-about-kids-and-tech/304976)

The points of reference are: 1. How many hours a day children spend looking at screens. 2. Is reading affected by computers? 3. Connection between boys/ girls and playing video games/social media. 4. Is watching TV and listening to music affected by technology? 5. Playing PC games and going out?
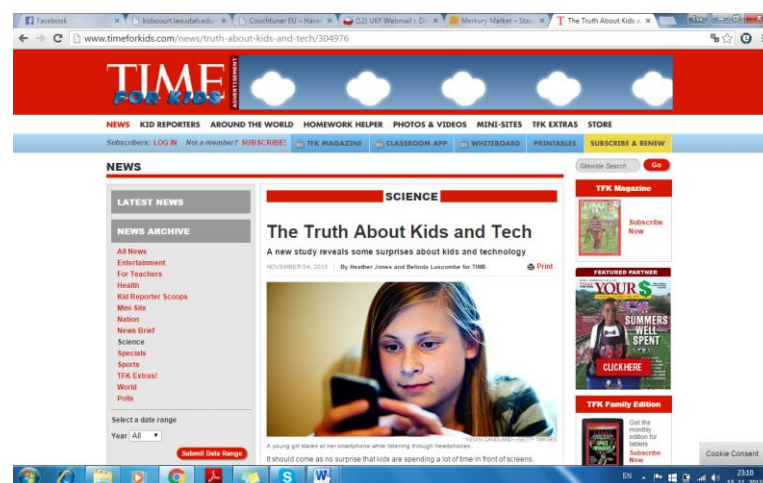

Figure 2: The Truth About Kids and Tech (Jones, 2015)

Mock Trial

The activity *Mock Trial* addresses pupils personal qualities, attitudes, values and feelings. The activity is suitable for secondary school students, whose command of English is B1-B2. Gifted students are sensitive and enjoy expressing opinions on moral and controversial issues. Mock trials give a chance for the whole class to get involved.

This activity takes more than one class. Students are taught needed vocabulary: court, judge, jury, trial, attorney, prosecution, defense, evidence, argument, cross examination, verdict, sentence, etc. They are divided into three groups (numbers in each group can vary depending on number of students): jury, prosecution group A defense group B and the judge. The groups are given information with their roles beforehand with the aim to prepare arguments for the court. The Mock trial lesson should be arranged as a court room - judge being in the middle, next to him a witness box, A and B groups being on opposing sides of a room facing the judge and the jury should be on the side. Both groups give their arguments defending their cases. Judge controls the discussions. Discussions should not take more than 30 minutes. After all the evidence is presented, the judge and jury leave the room (10 minutes before the end of the class) to decide on the verdict. Once the jury has decided which attorney group is innocent, the judge reads the verdict.

The best topics for Mock trials are known and contemporary criminal cases, which students are aware of from news, blogs, newspapers or magazines. The disadvantage of this activity is difficult preparation, which cannot be reused much, as the topics should always be contemporary. However, students always enjoy Mock trials especially if they are given props to help them to get into characters. Concerning English language learning, students develop fluency and public speaking skills in a foreign language.
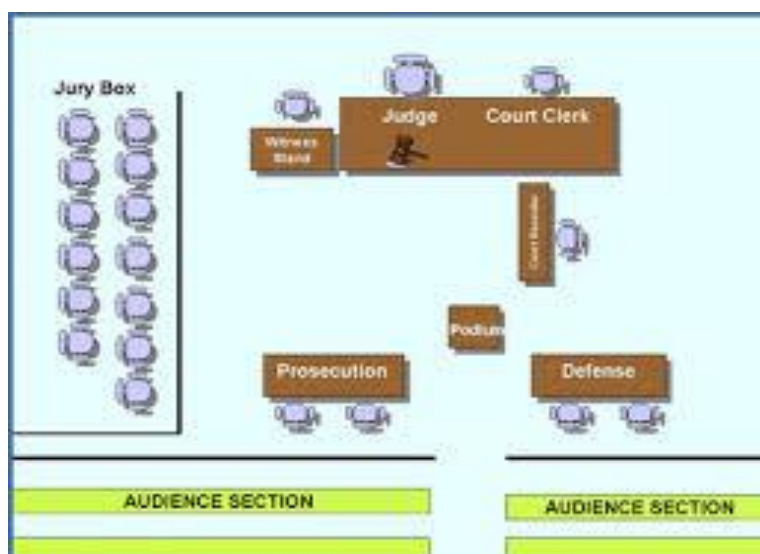

Figure 3: Courtroom (S.J. Quinney College of Law, n.d)

To conclude, the above were mentioned principles, strategies, techniques and teaching tips can be followed and applied to teaching gifted children. However, gifted children are individuals who require individual approach and it is more the matter of approach rather than methods, techniques and activities when it comes to working with gifted pupils. Activities should arouse interest and challenge intellectual abilities of gifted children. Working with gifted children requires proficient teachers in language pedagogy with a high degree of tolerance, patience, flexibility to adjust to the fast and demanding pupils.

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Teaching Foreign Languages to Learners with Special Educational Needs

e-textbook for foreign language teachers

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