

LEARNING DISABILITY: A LAGE LEARNING PROBLEM IN SCHOOL CHILDREN

Lalitha Raja. R

Introduction

'Problems in learning a language is due to learning disability and not because of the intelligence' is the theme of the present study. This is due to learning disability (LD). This LD constitutes many divisions according to the specific problems they face.

Some of them are having

- 1) Attention deficit disorder
- 2) Writing problem (dysgraphia)
- 3) Reading problem (dyslexia)
- 4) Problem in doing mathematical calculations (dyscalculia)

As language aptitude is affected by this learning disability, it is important to study the influence of learning disability on children.

Learning disability (LD)

Children with special learning disabilities exhibit a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological process involved in understanding or in using their ability for speaking and writing. These may be manifested in disorders of listening, thinking, talking, reading, writing, spelling, or arithmetic.

We can also say that

1. The LD child shows a discrepancy between achievement and intelligence.
2. Handicaps such as mental retardation, visual and hearing impairment and emotional behavioural disorders must be ruled out.
3. A LD is psychological processing disorder and presumes a central nervous dysfunction.
70% of LD are right brain dominants.

Types of LD

Dyslexia

Dyslexia is the presence of a significant discrepancy between intellectual ability and reading and/or writing performance.

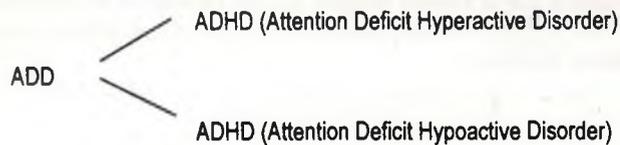
Dyscalculia

Dyscalculia is a specific learning disability in mathematics; in particular, a difficulty in performing arithmetic operations.

Dysgraphia

Dysgraphia is essentially a difficulty in handwriting. There are three main types of dysgraphia and they are as follows:

Attention Deficit Disorder



Some children have more trouble paying attention in class and completing academic assignments than others. It is estimated that from 3 to 10 percent of the population has a condition known as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)

The degree of dyslexia ranges from mild to severe.

It is difficult to find pure dyslexic

Dyslexics differ with their problems.

Aim

This paper explains about the cause for learning disability, why early intervention is important, how to identify it and also some problems found in their reading and writing form are discussed here.

Method

A survey has been done in the six schools of in Chidambaram where the data has been collected. Teachers and some parents cooperated for this and due to that the following results are found.

Out of 459 children 46 were LD children and according to school, gender and class the number of children is listed in the table below.

Table 1 shows the number of LD children among the informants.

School	Std						Total
	III		IV		V		
S3	G	B	G	B	G	B	13
	1	3	1	4	1	3	
	4		5		4		
S6	G	B	G	B	G	B	14
	2	2	1	4	2	3	
	4		5		5		
S1	G	B	G	B	G	B	8
	0	2	0	3	0	3	
	2		3		3		
S2	G	B	G	B	G	B	7
	0	3	1	1	1	1	
	3		2		2		
S4	G	B	G	B	G	B	2
	1	0	0	1	0	0	
	1		1		0		
S5	G	B	G	B	G	B	2
	0	1	0	0	0	1	
	1		0		1		
	15		16		15		46

TABLE 1

Out of these 46,

21 were dyslexic, dysgraphic and dyscalculic,

12 were dyslexic and dysgraphic,

7 were dyslexic and attention deficits and

6 were dysgraphic and attention deficits.

Though these children seem to be active and intelligent they were unable to excel in their studies. They need special care and training to learn a language.

Discussion

As per the observation and analysis of the collected data, the following crucial points are discussed.

Cause for learning disability

Hereditary, Birth trauma, Post - natal problem, Pre - natal problem and If mother is an alcoholic

Importance of early intervention: Why parents and teachers ignore?

Parents as well as teachers don't think that language plays predominant part in academic performance. So, they are ignoring the late development in language. It is important to know that the stages of language development and if the language has not been developed to the expected level (As per suggestion of the psycholinguists), proper steps have to be taken.

Psycholinguists say that plasticity of brain is up to 10 years. After that it hardens. So, early intervention helps for the betterment of these children.

What are IQ and EQ? Why It is needed for children?

IQ - Intelligence Quotient, EQ - Emotional Quotient.

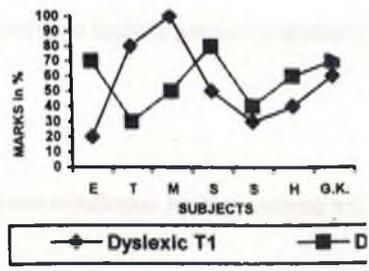
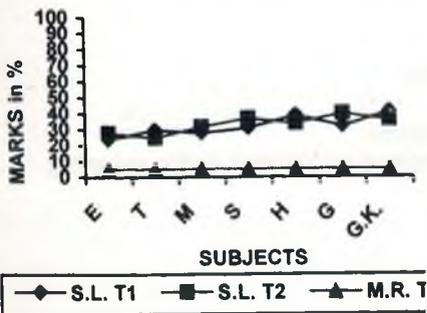
IQ level ranges from -60 to 130+ for normal person. Usually the IQ of the LD ranges from average to gifted. But most of the children have problem in EQ, which leads to behavioral problem in turn affects their learning.

Some famous ADHD with LD

Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell and Winston Churchill were the persons who were supposed to be a dyslexic. So it is understood that most of the LD are intelligent and proper guidance is the only thing they need.

Difference between S.L (Slow Learner), M.R (Mentally Retarded), and LD

Often LD are confused with slow learners and mentally retarded due to their poor academic performance and behavioral problems. This may mislead the educators in giving proper guidance for LD children. The following graphs show a discrepancy between S.L, M.R and LD children.



S.L. - Slow Learner

T1 - Test 1

M.R. - Mentally Retarded

T2 - Test 2

How a child with an ESL (English as second language) problem, differs with LD (when concerned with learning English).

The observation also reveals that LD differs with a child has ESL problem. The following points are observed as a difference. The child with ESL problem will have these whereas it cannot be seen in LD who doesn't have ESL problem.

1. Comprehension problem
2. Rate of vocabulary will be very low.
3. Spelling problem (if irregular)
4. Structural and Grammatical problem - puts the ideas in English as he has in Tamil.
5. Except English / Subjects taught through English medium, he excels in other subjects.
6. Free writing and unknown comprehension are the major problems.

How each human differs in learning? (Especially LD).

They differ by

- > kinds of learning - VAKT (Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic, Tactile)
- > 8 types of intelligence and
- > processing deficits

Shuell says (1990) "learning is much more an evolutionary, sense-making, experimental process of development than of simple acquisition".

Problems of Learning Disabled

Problems of learning disabled children in reading and writing are found in the following areas,

- Spelling
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Comprehension

The addition, deletion, substitution and reversals are the main problems found in their reading and writing.

Reading

Spelling:

	[Incorrect- -form]	[Correct- -form]
Addition:		
Initial: black	-	back
Medial: oven	-	own
Final:	battli	- battle
	boys	- boy
Substitution:		
Initial:	dabl	- trouble
	harer	- However
Medial: trow	-	through
Deletion:		
Initial:	tips	- troops
	ha:ndli-	handedly
Medial: refd	-	refused
	indias	- Indians
Final:	no	- known
	luk	- lucky
Reversal:	ben	- pen

Morphology:

Addition:

Initial: dis - un

Final ing - ed
ed - ing
Negative marker

Reversal:

ed walk- walked
ting put- putting

Deletion:

negation

Substitution:

pronouns, lexical items.

Syntax:

1. Substitution in 'wh' words
2. Reversal of word order.

Writing**Spelling:**

Addition:

Initial: tricket - ticket

Medial: reaypai - repay

quine - queen

Final thife - thief

theafe

Deletion:

Initial: rigule - wriggle

cinties - Scientist

sintest

Medial: usful - useful

knoldge- Knowledge

Final: killdele - killed

Reversal:

buring - during
 foriegn - Foreign

Substitution:

Initial: phasin -faster
 Medial: facine - fasten
 Final: plased -placed

Morphology:**Addition:**

Initial: dis - un
 Final: ing - ed
 ed - ing
 Negative marker

Reversal:

ed walk- walked
 ting put- putting

Deletion:

negation

Substitution:

pronouns, lexical items.

Syntax:

1. Substitution in 'wh' words
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These problems increase in these children is also due to the complexity of the language. Teachers must have this in their mind while teaching a language. Let us see some of them in the following.

Spelling:

English have,

Silent letters

Blends

Digraphs

Complexities in pronouncing vowel that occur in different environment

confusion in 'c' and 'k', and in 'g' and 'j'.

In Tamil the orthographic complexities leads to increase the problem of children.

Morphology:

Problems found in affixes

Syntax:

Word order problem is found

Substitution of lexical items and 'wh' words are found.

Mostly lexical expansion is found.

Comprehension

Interpreting the meaning of content is problem for these children.

Conclusion

The evidence shown in this paper reveals that this is a collaborative work of psychologist, linguist and educationist. Otherwise linguists have to approach the LD children with knowledge of psychology to assess the problems of the children and the educationist has to render their helping hand to the linguist to remediate this problem. The linguists have to come forward to produce the assessment materials and to find the ways to remediate them, as they know to analyze the language scientifically. Since the work with LD in Mother tongue / regional language is very rare in Tamilnadu, it affects the academic learning of children.

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