

“A Study on Language Teaching for the Learning Disability Students” - With Special Reference to Kalyan School, Trivandrum

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Abstract- Learning disabilities are problems that affect the brains' ability to receive, process, analyze, or store information. These problems can make it difficult for a student to learn as quickly as someone who isn't affected by learning disabilities. There are many kinds of learning disabilities. Most students affected by learning disabilities have more than one kind. Certain kinds of learning disabilities can interfere with a person's ability to concentrate or focus and can cause someone's mind to wander too much. Other learning disabilities can make it difficult for a student to read, write, spell, or solve math problems. This paper focuses on difficulties, hunches and lists faced by LD students in “English language learning and tries to solve the problems faced by LD students in schools with special reference to Kalyan School, Trivandrum.

Index Terms- Learning disabilities, LD Students, Kalyan School

I. INTRODUCTION

Language teaching practice often assumes that most of the difficulties that learners face in the study of English is a consequence of the degree to which their native language differs from English (a contractive analysis approach). Some students may have very different cultural perceptions in the classroom as far as learning a second language is concerned. Also cultural differences in communication styles and preferences are significant.

Learning disabilities are problems that affect the brains' ability to receive process, analyze, or store information. These problems can make it difficult for a student to learn as quickly as someone who isn't affected by learning disabilities. There are many kinds of learning disabilities. Most students affected by learning disabilities have more than one kind. Certain kinds of learning disabilities can interfere with a person's ability to concentrate or focus and can cause someone's mind to wander too much. Other learning disabilities can make it difficult for a student to read, write, spell, or solve math problems. This paper focuses on difficulties, hunches and lists faced by LD students in “English language learning and tries to solve the problems faced by LD students in schools with special reference to Kalyan School, Trivandrum.

This paper examines spontaneous writing of a college student with a history of language learning problems. Writing samples, collected from tests and papers in college courses, were analyzed for syntactic complexity, spelling, grammatical errors, semantic

errors, and organization. Meta-cognitive factors were analyzed by examining student's responses to questions about his perceptions about writing.

II. KALYAN SCHOOL

Kalyan School situated in pleasant surroundings at the heart of the city is a premium institution catering to the educational needs of the children of primary category. Equipped with colourful classrooms, qualified and dedicated teachers, able helpers and wonderful methods of teaching through playful way and Montessori, we aim to develop your child holistically. We have an annex at Pravachambalam.

The special features of Kalyan School are playful way and Montessori method of teaching, field trips to generate awareness, special competitions to kindle the artistic and cultural talents, exhibitions to promote creativity in the child, special attention to slow learners etc. The teacher to child ratio is at a very attractive high of 1:10.

III. KALYAN PLUS THE SPECIAL SCHOOL

A NEW addition to the Kalyan group of schools, it believes in the motto that every child in the world has the right to be enlightened with the light of knowledge. With an efficient and experienced team of Special Educators, Occupational Therapist, Speech Therapist, Child Psychologist and above all Neurologist.

IV. OUR SPECIALITIES

- ✓ Children with special needs (with autism, Down's Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy) are given special training to be self-reliant.
- ✓ Children trained according to their aptitude.
- ✓ 1:1 teacher student ratio for the special school children.
- ✓ Monthly medical check-ups & the records are maintained.

‘KALYAN’ signifying progress and goodness is the name of the group imparting excellent service in the field of education, medicine, day caring and teacher's training. Kalyan group is a part of the PRS group, the pioneers in the field of construction, medicine, hospitality and education.

V. OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH

Our primary goal is to conduct a rigorous examination of existing research to identify and understand those practices and instructional principles that produced a positive impact on student learning. Our second goal is to help educators better understand why some practices are more likely to be effective than others..

VI. WHAT IS A LEARNING DISABILITY?

Some individuals, despite having an average or above average level of intelligence, have real difficulty acquiring basic academic skills. These skills include those needed for successful reading, writing, listening, speaking and/or math. These difficulties might be the result of a learning disability.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a federal law, defines a learning disability as a condition when a child's achievement is substantially below what one might expect for that child. Learning disabilities do not include problems that are primarily the result of intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbance, or visual, hearing, emotional or intellectual disabilities. The official definition is here.

Many children with LD have struggle with reading. The difficulties often begin with individual sounds, or phonemes. Students may have problems with rhyming, and pulling words apart into their individual sounds (segmenting) and putting individual sounds together to form words (blending). This makes it difficult to decode words accurately, which can lead to trouble with fluency and comprehension. As students move through the grades, more and more of the information they need to learn is presented in written (through textbooks) or oral (through lecture) form. This exacerbates the difficulties they have succeeding in school.

VII. WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF LEARNING DISABILITIES?

LD is a broad term. There are many different kinds of learning disabilities. Most often they fall into three broad categories:

- Reading disabilities (often referred to as dyslexia)
- Written language disabilities (often referred to as dysgraphia)
- Math disabilities (often called dyscalculia)

Other related categories include disabilities that affect memory, social skills, and executive functions such as deciding to begin a task.

Here is information on the more common forms of LD.

Dyslexia (difficulty reading)

Dyslexia is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. Reading disabilities affect 2 to 8 percent of elementary school children.

A person with dyslexia can have problems in any of the tasks involved in reading. However, scientists found that a significant number of people with dyslexia share an inability to distinguish or separate the sounds in spoken words. Some children have problems sounding out words, while others have trouble with rhyming games, such as rhyming "cat" with "bat." Yet, scientists

have found these skills fundamental to learning to read. Fortunately, remedial reading specialists have developed techniques that can help many children with dyslexia acquire these skills. However, there is more to reading than recognizing words. If the brain is unable to form images or relate new ideas to those stored in memory, the reader cannot understand or remember the new concepts. Other types of reading disabilities can appear in the upper grades when the focus of reading shifts from word identification to comprehension.

Here is a fact sheet and a newspaper story that give you more information about dyslexia:

- Dyslexia Basics
- Dyslexia

Dysgraphia (difficulty writing)

Writing too, involves several brain areas and functions. The brain networks for vocabulary, grammar, hand movement, and memory must all be in good working order. A developmental writing disorder may result from problems in any of these areas. For example, a child with a writing disability, particularly an expressive language disorder, might be unable to compose complete and grammatically correct sentences.

How are learning disabilities identified?

Usually, the teacher or parent notices that the child is struggling to learn or is behind in class. An evaluation can be requested by the teacher or the parent. A comprehensive set of tests are given to see why the child has difficulty. Here are some articles on the evaluation process:

- Evaluation: What does it mean for your child?
- What do you do if you suspect that your child has a learning disability?

Traditionally, evaluators used the results from the assessments to determine if there was a discrepancy between the child's ability and achievement. In practice, this often meant waiting for the child to fail before a child was eligible for special education services. Today a greater effort is being made to respond to a child's special learning needs before he or she falls too far behind. This effort is called Response to Intervention.

VIII. WHAT IS EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH LD?

Students with learning disabilities benefit from instruction that is explicit and well sequenced. Effective teachers help students with LD learn how to use strategies for managing their assignments. For example, a teacher might teach students to use a graphic organizer that outlines the important information from a text. A different type of organizer might be used to help students remember to bring home the right supplies for a homework assignment.

Teachers often need to provide accommodations to help children learn in class. These are changes in how tasks are presented or responses are received that allow the child to do the same work as their fellow students.

IX. HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU HAVE A LEARNING DISABILITY?

Just because you have trouble studying for a test doesn't mean you have a learning disability. There are as many learning styles as there are individuals. For example, some people learn by doing and practicing, others learn by listening (such as in class), and others prefer to read material. Some people are just naturally slower readers or learners than others, but they still perform well for their age and abilities. Sometimes, what seems to be a learning disability is simply a delay in development; the person will eventually catch up with - and perhaps even surpass - his or her peers.

But many people with learning disabilities struggle for a long time before someone realizes that there's a reason they're having so much trouble learning. For most people in their teen years, the first telltale sign of most learning disabilities occurs when they notice that there's a disconnect between how much they studied for a test and how well they performed. Or it may just be a feeling a person has that something isn't right. If you're worried, don't hesitate to share your thoughts with a parent or a teacher.

The first step in diagnosing a learning disability is ruling out vision or hearing problems. A person may then work with a psychologist or learning specialist who will use specific tests to help diagnose the disability. Often, these can help pinpoint that person's learning strengths and weaknesses in addition to revealing a particular learning disability.

X. COPING WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY

Although a diagnosis of a learning disability can feel upsetting, it's actually the first step in resolving the condition. Once an expert has pinpointed a person's particular problem, he or she can then follow strategies or take medicines to help cope with the disability. And taking steps to manage the disability can often help restore a student's self-esteem and confidence.

Some students who have been diagnosed with a learning disability work with a special teacher or tutor for a few hours a week to learn special study skills, note-taking strategies, or organizational techniques that can help them compensate for their learning disability. If you've been diagnosed with a learning disability, you may need support just for the subjects that give you the most trouble. Your school may have a special classroom with a teacher who is trained to help students overcome learning problems.

Some schools develop what is called an Individualized Education Program (or IEP), which helps define a person's learning strengths and weaknesses and make a plan for the learning activities that will help the student do his or her best in school. A student's IEP might include some regular time with a tutor or in a specialized classroom for a certain subject, or the use of some special equipment to help with learning, such as books on tape or laptop computers for students who have dyslexia.

There are several medicines on the market today to help improve a student's attention span and ability to focus and to help control impulses and other hyperactive behavior.

There's no cure for a learning disability. And you don't outgrow it. But it's never too late to get help. Most people with

learning disabilities learn to adapt to their learning differences, and they learn strategies that help them accomplish their goals and dreams

XI. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although learning disabled students have always been part of the educational scene, it has not been until the 1990s that a significant number of LD students have attempted college. There are a number of reasons for this. Until approximately 15 years ago, it was quite possible for students-LD or otherwise-to finish high school and get a job that would provide support for a family. Today, that has changed. Even "trade" jobs now require at least a two-year college diploma. Most skilled labour jobs require significant computer ability, with training provided by local colleges.

Another reason for the increase in LD school students is the growing awareness among students, educational institutions, and guidance counselors which mandates that institutions of higher education which receive education funds, including student loans, are not allowed to discriminate on the basis of disability. This paper proposes to find new innovative methods in helping the LD students the most effective ways.

XII. METHODOLOGY : PRIMARY – QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

Interview Questions for Students

Demographic Information

Age _____, Gender _____, GPA _____

Number of years in school _____

Number of years retained in school _____

Questions

Understanding of Learning Disability

What is your specific learning disability?

How do you see yourself as student?

Tell me about when you first become aware of a learning disability?

Tell me what elementary/high school/college was like.

Tell me who you think you are-in terms of strengths and weaknesses.

Have you ever been in special education classes during your academic career?

Family

Are you aware of others in your family who are LD?

How important has your family been to your school success?

Describe how your family relates to your LD.

A. How have they been not helpful?

B. How have they been helpful?

Classes

How do you choose classes?

Describe a class where you felt comfortable.

a. Requirements b. Teacher c. Other students

What's your strategy for "managing" classes?

Tell me about "wrong" classes.

Have you ever studied a foreign language?

Support

What kind of support, remedial education, tutoring have you used prior to college?
What kind of "outside" support has been most useful to you?
What accommodations have you used through high school?
What kind of support have you tried and found to be not useful?
What kind of support have you used and found helpful here?
What do you do when you have difficulty with a class?
Are you aware of your "rights" as an LD student? What are they?

Dealing with Stress

How stressful is school for you?
What causes the most school-related stress?
How do you cope with the stress of school?
What do you do for fun?

Relationships

Are your friends/significant others aware of your learning disability?
Do you have friends with learning disabilities?
What are helpful peers like?
What is your life like socially?

Self-Perception

How do you think other people "see" you?
In what situations do you feel confident?
In what situations do you feel less competent?

Achieving

To what extent are good grades important to you?
What is your reaction when you receive a good grade?
How do you feel when you're given a poor grade?
What do you predict for your future?

Interview Questions for Parents

1. What is _____'s specific learning disability?
2. When did you first become aware of your child's LD?
3. What was elementary/high school/college like for your child?
4. What are your child's strengths? weaknesses?
5. Has s/he ever been in special education classes?
6. Are there other members of your family who have learning disabilities?
7. How important is a college education in your family?
8. How does your family relate to your child's LD?

Interview Questions for Teachers

1. _____ has identified you as being a particularly "helpful" teacher.
Can you identify how you were helpful?
2. When were you first aware of _____'s learning disability?
3. What do you know about the rights of LD students?

4. What types of learning disabilities have you encountered in your classroom?
5. How many LD students have you encountered?
6. What strategies have you used in dealing with them?
7. What specific training have you had in dealing with LD students?
8. How much personal reading have you done, if any?
9. Are you aware of any resources on campus for dealing with LD students?
10. Have you have referred students to these sources?

XIII. CONCLUSION

Although learning disabilities, in contrast to other disabilities, tend to be "invisible," the effects are not-to the student, to teachers, to parents, to employers, and to friends. The purpose of this study is not to solve the definitional problems surrounding learning disabilities which still exist, though perhaps to a lesser degree than they used to. Rather, our main concern is to inquire into the experiences of a few students within the learning disabled category who have worked-successfully-to complete a school education.

From this study we will look for emerging themes that may be useful to other LD students, their families, and educators so that they may be more aware of the needs and challenges of at least one group of LD students in college settings and how those challenges can be ameliorated. By emphasizing the elements of success, educators in particular can more intentionally provide the real support necessary to the growing number of LD students desiring school education.

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