Chapter 10
Addressing the Needs in Reading of the Dyslexic Learner in the Inclusive Classroom

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ABSTRACT
Many children in the nation are not proficient readers. Many of them are affected by learning disabilities and disorders. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was designed to help meet the needs of these children. However, children diagnosed with dyslexia were excluded from special education services because they did not qualify. Though advances in technology have identified dyslexia as stemming from a neurological difficulty to process language skills necessary for learning to read, dyslexic children continue to fall outside the qualification guidelines for special educational service. For this reason, many classroom teachers find themselves with children in their classes who are unable to read and who will not receive extra help. The aim of this chapter is to share teaching ideas, methodologies, and strategies which will help the classroom teacher address some of the needs of the dyslexic learner within the regular classroom setting.

INTRODUCTION
The goal of all teachers is to teach all of their students. The goal of all students (at least at the beginning of their educational career) is to learn, especially to learn to read. All children come to school hoping to become readers. They see those around them reading and they come to school wanting to become a member of this “club.” Though learning to read is a universal goal, the reality is that not all students easily succeed in this task. A report by the National Institute for Literacy reported that in 2007, 57% of students failed the California Standards Test in English; of the six million students in the California school system, 25% of them are unable to perform basic reading skills; and 45 million adults are functionally illiterate and read below a fifth grade level (National Institute for Literacy, n.d.). There are many factors which influence these statistics and schools are attempting to address these issues through identification of students who demonstrate an inability to read. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) were meant to provide a level playing field.

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for persons with disabilities (IDEA, n.d.; Shaywitz & Boyle, 2009). However, the interpretation of this law by agencies such as the United States Supreme Court and the National Board of Medical Examiners severely limited who was covered by both the IDEA and the ADA and resulted in the disqualification of dyslexic children. A possible cause for this could be the fact that there is no visible indication of a disability with dyslexia, such as there is for students in a wheelchair or who display delays due to cerebral injuries. This has resulted in the exclusion of dyslexia as a condition needing special services since dyslexia does not fall into the identified qualifying conditions (Shaywitz & Boyle, 2009).

BACKGROUND

Dyslexia was first described in scientific literature by physicians who noted cases of individuals with normal or high intelligence who, nevertheless, were unable to read and physicians used the term “word blindness” to describe this phenomenon (Siegel, 2006). Various theories were set forth in the following years suggesting that “word blindness” was a visual perception problem; this is evident in the wide-spread belief that dyslexics write their words and letters backwards because they see them this way. Several studies have discredited this belief (Shaywitz et al., 1998; Siegel, 2006; Tanaka et al., 2011). Through the use of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and brain scanning, it has been discovered that the language processing center of the brain is mainly on the left side of the brain, however, children with dyslexia appear to begin processing language from the right side of the brain. This means that processing sounds and relating these sounds to their visual representations (phonological processing and sound-symbol correspondence) takes longer and requires more effort for the dyslexic child than for the child without this disability (Tanaka et al., 2011). Due to the plasticity of the brain, dyslexics can retrain their brain to utilize more of the left lobe for processing all aspects of language, including reading, through practice and rehearsal (Shaywitz et al., 1998; Wolf & Gottwald, 2012).

Characteristics of Dyslexia

The term dyslexia, in its broadest sense, is used to describe a person who is capable of reading, yet finds it difficult to do so. Children who are characterized as dyslexic tend to find reading laborious, require more time to process both written and spoken language, display difficulties with spelling and writing, and may have difficulty expressing themselves verbally and in written form.

Through fMRI and brain scans, it has been demonstrated that dyslexia is a neurological condition which results in deficits in the acquisition of phonological awareness which places limitations on the child’s ability to process and manipulate the graphene-phoneme connections vital to being able to read. Through the utilization of fMRIs, brain scans, and multiple studies confirming the neurological nature of dyslexia (Shaywitz et al., 1998; Wolf & Gottwald, 2012), and the work of various organizations and experts in the field, the needs of dyslexic children have been highlighted and are drawing more attention. However, accommodations by special education departments for these children are still not readily forthcoming. Some teacher education departments who are responsible for training future special education teachers do not yet consider dyslexia a learning disability and provide their future teachers no professional development in this area (Moore, 2016).

Because dyslexia is a neurological condition affecting phonological processing, it affects multiple learning areas including the ability to hear, remember, and manipulate individual sounds in spoken words,
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