Special Educational Needs in Europe
The Teaching and Learning of Languages
Insights and Innovation
European Commission 2005

COGNITION & LEARNING DIFFICULTIES (pp 69-71)

The second contribution to this section comes from Margaret Crombie of *Dyslexia Scotland* and *Highland Council Education, Culture and Sport Service, Scotland, UK*. The focus here is on inclusion and the type of response to foreign language learning which is optimal for learners with cognition and learning difficulties.

Inclusion of all pupils into mainstream schools presents teachers and pupils alike with numerous challenges. Teaching additional languages is no longer restricted to those of undoubted ability who will cope irrespective of the teaching style of the educator. For young people, learning in school is not done independently of the peer group and the peer group may present a rich diversity of talents and troubles. The world in which we now live and work demands that learning is done in co-operation with others, all of whom differ in terms of abilities and disabilities. Learning however, when it comes to modern foreign languages, should be done in a social and communicative setting with an interdependence on those around. Whatever the context or language social communication is the reason for mastering an additional language. It is a purpose of language learning to communicate with others in the language which is most appropriate to the setting. Young people whatever their disability or ability have a right to learn a language of their choice at whatever level they can.

Dyslexia in schools has always presented language teachers and their dyslexic pupils with a major challenge. Young people who have difficulty in learning to read and write in their own mother tongue cannot fail to have problems when it comes to learning an additional language, it is believed. The reasons for this are now well understood. Young people who lack awareness of the sound system of their own language which they have spoken since early childhood, are unlikely to quickly grasp an alien tongue (Ganschow, Sparks and Schneider, 1995). Those with short-term memory problems will have difficulty in remembering vocabulary, and even when vocabulary seems to have been memorised, word-finding difficulties will present a challenge to accessing the memorised vocabulary. Dyslexia generally means that information is processed more slowly than for others consequently speech presented in another language at normal speed will be too fast to follow, translate and absorb meaning. These are but a few of the

problems dyslexic pupils may present with in the classroom (Crombie & McColl, 2001).

As dyslexic pupils generally manage to master speaking and understanding of their own language, it was often believed (and still is in some quarters) that if teachers omit the reading and writing elements of additional language learning then dyslexic young people will learn to speak and understand a new language (Javorsky, Sparks & Ganschow, 1992). However, as is plain from what has been said earlier there are good reasons why this is not necessarily so. Firstly, learning a language as an additional language cannot be equated to mother-tongue learning as a classroom cannot be a complete immersion programme as a baby would experience it from its earliest days. When learning a second and subsequent language new vocabulary has an already established vocabulary to map onto. Initial learning of an additional language therefore involves a mapping exercise to previously mastered vocabulary learnt in infancy, and later enhanced by specific experiences. Put more simply, instead of absorption through experience, translation to known vocabulary takes place.

Strategies to help additional language learning are about motivating students – all students. Dyslexic students however can be encouraged to learn not just by specific techniques but also by realising the purpose of their learning. The young man therefore who sees himself as a top TV chef with a superior knowledge of cordon bleu, and the young woman who wishes to communicate with her newly discovered Spanish boyfriend will be encouraged to develop their abilities in French and Spanish.

However, motivation is only one aspect of learning which needs to be taken into account when preparing to teach dyslexic young people. Dyslexia techniques which apply to first language learning are appropriate for second and subsequent languages (Crombie, 1997). The speed at which a new language is presented needs consideration. The dyslexic pupil will not be likely to absorb new vocabulary at the speed of normal speech as this does not allow for the translation process. Until the new vocabulary (in words, phrases and sentences) is overlearned and fully established, speed of presentation has to be slowed down. This means that the pupil will have the maximum chance of hearing and comprehending. If language teaching is purely oral, dyslexic pupils will have no visual hook to hang their learning on. Learning through words and pictures presented visually will help the pupils' memory processing and also begin to help an understanding of a different phonological system (Ganschow & Sparks, 1995; Ganschow et al, 1998).

While it is inappropriate to formally assess the reading and writing skills of dyslexic pupils in the early stages of learning another language, it is appropriate to supply the written word to aid speaking and listening (Schneider & Crombie, 2003). Visual memory then works along with kinaesthetic memory through the reading and writing processes to maximise the young person's opportunities for learning.

The principle of multisensory teaching and learning which is vital to first language learning for dyslexic students is vital too in learning an additional language. Provision for overlearning through the use of taped material, CD-ROMs, videos with subtitles, picture cards with cue words on one side in the additional language as well as English will promote a multisensory approach. The addition of drama, singing and games especially if some writing, typing or other additional kinaesthetic element can be brought in to add to the multisensory experience will all help the effectiveness of the programme.

Helping dyslexic pupils to understand how they learn best and to use meta-cognitive processes to aid their understanding of learning styles and techniques is important if there is to be success. Whether a pupil learns best working on their own or with a group or partner can be important information for pupils and their teachers. Organisation within the class should be flexible and respond to the learning needs of all pupils. Knowing whether a pupil learns best in the morning or in the evening can affect the optimal time to do homework. While it may not be possible to meet the learning styles of all the pupils all of the time, it should nonetheless be possible to vary styles at different point so that all of the pupils are suited for some of the time, and when they can suit themselves they can opt for their most effective style or medium.

Technology as a medium for learning is often effective, or can at least increase the effectiveness of other methods. If the student has a computer at home, then the effectiveness of having access to learning out of school hours is an added benefit. Through the use of CD-ROMs and other forms of practice, the dyslexic pupil can reinforce previous learning in a non-threatening way with as many repetitions as they wish to gain understanding. For work within the classroom, the dyslexic student can be paired with a willing helper who can help provide a social learning experience. They can also provide help in understanding web-based tasks.

Digital language instruction allows students to work with their teacher using specifically designed audio panels. Lessons can be appropriate for one student or a whole class. The teacher is in control of activities and can plan different activities

for each session. Lessons can be planned so that the needs of all young people are catered for. The student can hear the teacher's voice through the computer. Activities are pre-programmed to allow for differences within a class so that each pupil is working at their own level. A variety of learning experiences can be presented giving listening comprehension, reading practice, imitation, phone conversations, discussion and a facility to record responses. What benefits all can be of particular benefit to those with specific needs.

While a combination of methods is better than one particular technique, the potential of technology for the future is as yet immeasurable. The facility of computer-based learning which has the potential to translate the human voice speaking its native tongue into the language of the recipient so that it is readily understood may relax our worries for dyslexic pupils in future generations communicating with those in other countries. Nothing however will replace the satisfaction which can be gained from communicating directly with another human being in their own language. For dyslexic pupils, this is unlikely to be easy, but will be all the more worthwhile. Learning another language will inevitably challenge both the teacher and the dyslexic learner, but success is a possibility that must be tested.

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