Educational Considerations

Instructional approaches for Academics

- Instructional Approaches for Reading:

There are 5 essential components of effective reading instruction: phonological awareness training, phonics instruction, fluency instruction vocabulary instruction, and comprehension instruction. In addition, the most successful reading instruction is explicit and systematic.

- Instructional Approaches for Writing:

The ability to read and write are closely linked. Researchers have determined that effective writing instruction for students with LD involves teaching students explicit and systematic strategies for planning, revising, and editing compositions. Self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) is a research-based model that has been highly effective.

- Instructional approaches for math:

Students with LD need more structure and teacher direction. Some principles are that the teacher should sequence the instruction to minimize errors, but when errors occur, they should be immediately rectified. The instruction should include cumulative review of concepts and operations, and the studentsô progress should be closely monitored

- Instructional approaches for Science and Social Studies:

When activities-based instruction is carefully structured and sequenced with emphasis on cumulative review and monitoring of student progress, it can be effective for students with LD. When textbooks are used, researchers have found that enhancing the content of science and social studies materials, by using graphic organizers and mnemonics, are very effective for students with LD.

Cognitive training (CT)

This involves three components:

1. Changing thoughts processes
2. Providing strategies for learning
3. Teaching self-initiative

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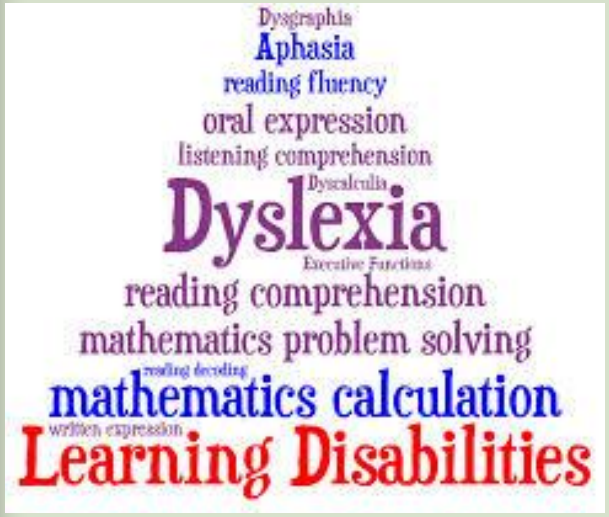
EDSE 6001: Nature and Needs of Exceptionalities

A Guide to Learning Disabilities



What is a Learning Disability?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1997) defines a learning disability (LD) as a specific learning disability or a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations.

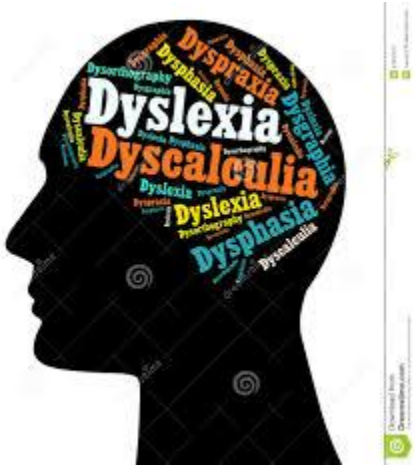
Disorders included ï Conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia.

Disorders not included ï Learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantages.

The National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD) Definition proposed a definition that states that a *LD is a general term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of disorders are intrinsic to the individual, presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction, and may occur across the life span.* .

Causes

With the advent of technology, it was shown that children with LD did not possess damaged brain but, instead, a malfunctioning or dysfunction of the CNS. Using neuroimaging techniques, researchers have accumulated evidence for structural and functional differences between the brains of people with and without learning disabilities. Structural differences refer to such things as the size of various areas of the brain. Functional differences refer to activity in the brain.



- **Medical factors**

Several medical conditions can cause learning disabilities. Many of these can also result in intellectual disabilities depending on the severity of the condition. For example, premature births places children at risk for neurological damage resulting in LD.

- **Social-Emotional Problems**

Although not necessarily universal, children with LD do run a greater risk than do their peers without disabilities of having these types of problems. For example, they are at greater risk for depression, social rejection, suicidal thoughts, and loneliness. For those who experience behavioural problems the effects can be long-lasting and devastating. In adulthood, the scars from years of rejection can be painful and not easily healed.

- **Toxins**

Toxins are agents that can cause malformations of defects in the developing foetus. Foetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) and foetal alcohol spectrum disorders are leading causes of intellectual disabilities. Authorities have also speculated that some people may be exposed to levels of these substances that are not high enough to result in intellectual disabilities, mental retardation but are high enough to cause learning disabilities.