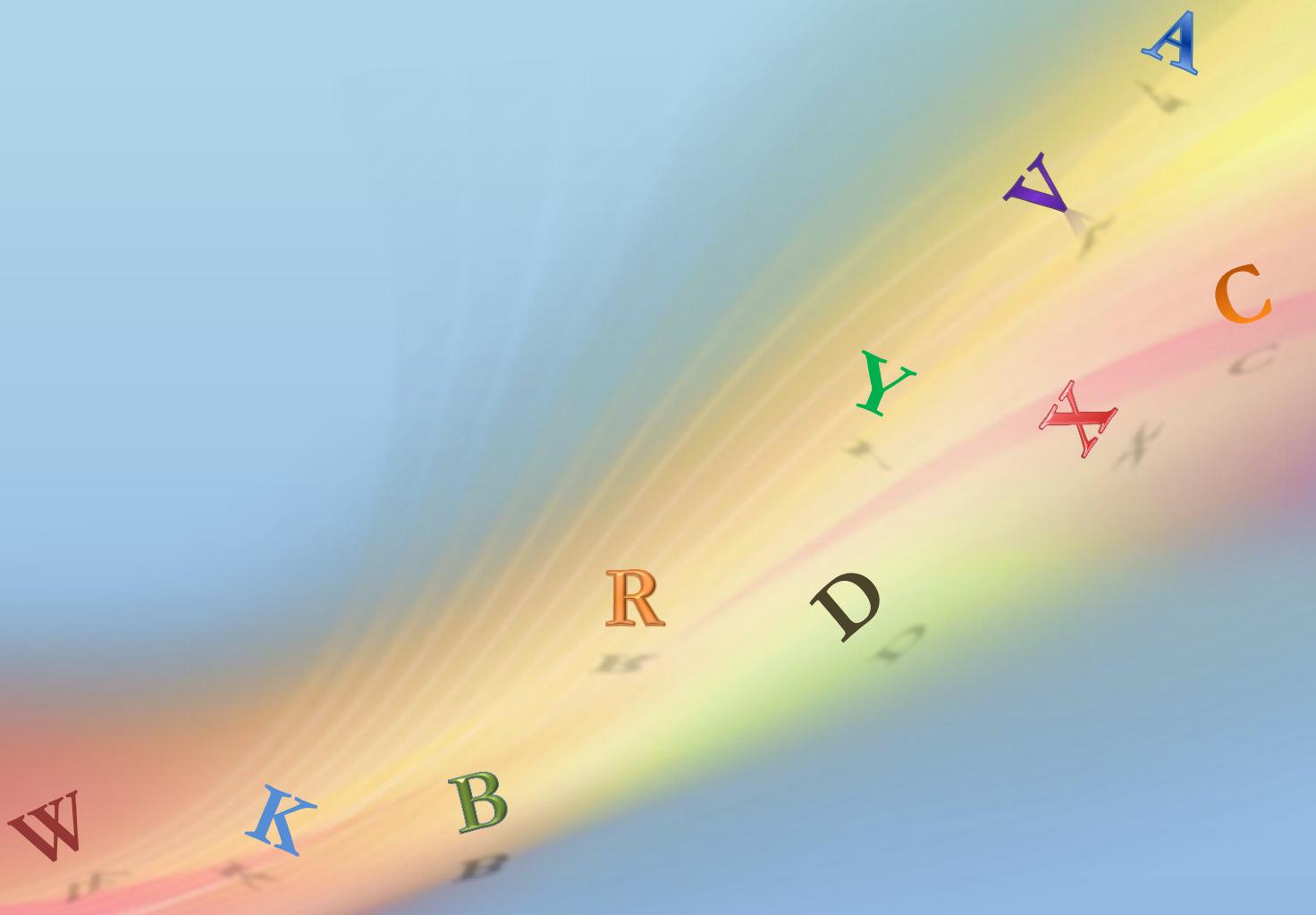# Dyslexia and English language teaching in Sri Lanka

A teacher training guide

Bimali Indrarathne

Dyslexia and English language teaching in Sri Lanka

A teacher training guide

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Bimali Indrarathne

Guidelines for using this book

This is a guidebook which gives you instructions on how to run a one-day teacher training workshop for English language teachers on enhancing the inclusion of dyslexic learners in English language teaching.

The activities cover:
- Main features of dyslexia
- How to identify dyslexic learners in class
- Inclusive classroom techniques
- Multi-sensory Structured Language Teaching approach (MSLT)
- Raising phonological/morphological awareness through MSLT approach
- A sample MSLT grammar lesson
- A sample MSLT vocabulary lesson
- Tips for teaching listening, speaking, reading and writing
- Things to consider when testing dyslexic learners

This book contains:
- All materials that you need for a one-day workshop
- Instructions on how to use the materials
- A PowerPoint presentation – this is optional, alternative ways of using the materials without the PowerPoint presentation are also given.

The suggested duration for all tasks is given in the description. This may slightly vary depending on the number of trainees you have in the workshop. Altogether, the tasks take 5 hours and 30 minutes.

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2017

Inclusion of learners with specific learning differences in teaching English as a foreign language: A teacher training project for Sri Lanka, 2017

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Main features of dyslexia

Task 1: Dyslexia Perceptions Survey

Aim of the task:
- To raise awareness of the trainees of common beliefs on dyslexia.

Duration:
- 10 minutes

Materials:
- Survey questionnaire (Page 24)

Hand out the Survey Questionnaire and allow the participants to complete it on their own. Give about 5/6 minutes.

Ask trainees to compare their answers with each other to see if they agree with the answers.

Then discuss the answers.

Dyslexia perception survey – answers

1. Yes
2. No - It is true that boys are more <u>frequently</u> identified as having dyslexia, but recent research suggests that girls often remain unidentified because they develop successful coping strategies, and they do not show noticeable signs of learning difficulties.
3. Yes
4. No - As dyslexia is of genetic origin, it is unrelated to social status. It is true though that dyslexia can have a negative impact on employability, which might then have socio-economic consequences for the individual and their family.
5. No - People develop coping up strategies, so they can be as typical as non-dyslexic people, but dyslexia is not a disease to cure, it's a learning difference.
6. Yes – There are many talented artists, sports personalities, writers, etc. who are dyslexic
7. Yes – this is a global number
8. Yes

9. No – dyslexia can be identified anytime. Particularly when someone starts learning a second language – so even at a later stage in life
10. No

Task 2: Problems dyslexic learners face

Aim of the task:
- To raise awareness of the trainees of common problems that dyslexic learners face.

Duration:
- 20 minutes

Materials:
- Cut-ups (pages 25-27) – one set per group
- Answers (page 3)

Put the trainees into 4/5 groups.

Give each group a set of cut-ups.

Ask them to categorize the cut-ups into the following categories.

- Difficulties in reading
- Difficulties in writing
- Difficulties in speaking
- Difficulties in listening
- Memory problems
- Other

When they finish, assign each group a category and ask the groups to report to the class what problems that they have categorized under that category. Answers are given on the next page for your reference. If you think it is useful for trainees to have a copy, please feel free to photocopy it.

There can be several overlaps: e.g. difficulties in applying grammar rules – this can go under speaking and writing.

After this task, let the trainees ask any questions about dyslexia or let them talk about their experience of observing these problems among the learners that they teach.

Problems dyslexic learners face - answers

Reading
- slow reading
- can't identify word boundaries
- mixing up letters/words
- can't map spelling with pronunciation

Listening
- can't identify subtle differences between sounds
- can't differentiate between long/short vowel sounds
- difficulties in comprehending what others mean
- difficulties in remembering/following long instructions

Writing
- mixing up letters/words
- incorrect letter patterns
- spelling errors
- poor handwriting
- difficulties in application of grammar rules
- can't map spelling with pronunciation
- difficulties in organising ideas

Speaking
- difficulties in pronouncing sounds with slight differences
- takes time to respond
- can't express themselves clearly
- difficulties in application of grammar rules
- can't map spelling with pronunciation

Social skills
- less confident
- low self-esteem
- difficult to make friends
- don't like to work with some peers
- difficulties in understanding what others mean

Other
- messy
- easily gets distracted, bored
- poor organizational skills
- short attention span
- forgets things quickly (e.g. homework)

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Task 3: Experiential learning task

Aims of the task:
- To let trainees experience how challenging it is to complete a task when they are physically at a disadvantage

Duration:
- 20 minutes

Materials:
- 1 A5 sheet per trainee (in different colours)
- Text on PowerPoint (The PowerPoint presentation comes with this book). Alternatively, you can copy the text on to a flipchart.

Pass A5 papers around in different colours. While passing the papers, give the following instructions.

 "Take some paper as it comes round. If it is blue, turn it round so it is landscape. Otherwise, turn it so it is portrait. Pick up your pen or pencil in the hand that you don't normally write with. If you are writing with a black pen stand up. Now I'm going to show you a short text, and I will give you 3 minutes to copy it down. BUT whenever you want to write an 'e' please write a cross instead, like a plus sign. Instead of 'a' please write a question mark and instead of 'i' please write an equal sign. Now work carefully and copy down the text making the changes exactly as I have described."

[**Taken from:** DysTEFL2 trainer's booklet (http://dystefl2.uni.lodz.pl), page 23]

Then, put the following text up (PowerPoint slide), displaying it for 3 minutes, and ask the trainees to copy it. Remind them that they need to use their weaker hand. (If you have copied the text on a flipchart, display it on the board for 3 minutes).

PLEASE COPY THIS: Some people are light or colour sensitive. Bright sunlight or florescent lights may bother them. Black print on shiny white paper may be uncomfortable and whiteboards may be too shiny. Pattern glare may also be a problem. It may be helpful to have: ● coloured paper for writing, ● coloured overlays for reading, ● tinted lenses in glasses for both reading and writing. The colours and brightness on computer screens can be adjusted to suit individuals.

[**Taken from:** DysTEFL2 trainer's booklet (http://dystefl2.uni.lodz.pl), page 23]

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Leave the text only for 3 minutes. After 3 minutes, acknowledge anyone who has completed the task. Then put the trainees into small groups and ask them to compare their writing. In groups, they need to make a list of strategies that they used to complete the task. E.g. Copying from a neighbor.

Ask each group to report the difficulties they faced and any strategies that they have used to do the task.

Finally, make them aware that this task is challenging for anyone and the aim of it to show them how learners with specific learning differences are cognitively and physically challenged in classroom tasks.

Expected answer: (also on the PowerPoint) – it is not essential to show this, so if you do not have multimedia facilities, you can skip it.

Som+ p+opl+ ?r+ l=ght or colour s+ns=t=v+. Br=ghtsunl=ght or flor+sc+nt l=ghtsm?yboth+rth+m. Bl?ckpr=nt on sh=nywh=t+ p?p+rm?y b+ uncomfort?bl+ ?ndwh=t+bo?rdsm?y b+ too sh=ny. P?tt+rngl?r+ m?y ?lso b+ ? probl+m. =t m?y b+ h+lpful to h?v+: • colour+dp?p+r for wr=t=ng, • colour+dov+rl?ys for r+?d=ng, • t=nt+dl+ns+s =n gl?ss+s for both r+?d=ng ?ndwr=t=ng. Th+ colours ?ndbr=ghtn+ss on comput+rscr++ns c?n b+ ?djust+d to su=t =nd=v=du?ls.

[**Taken from:** DysTEFL2 trainer's booklet (dystefl2.uni.lodz.pl), page 25]

Note. By the time trainees have completed these three tasks, they should have a basic understanding of what dyslexia is and what problems dyslexic learners face when learning a second/additional language. If time permits and if you have resources, you can show the video by Professor Judit Kormos which gives an overview of dyslexia and how it influences language learning.

The link to the video is: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-nrMvocyk8

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Identifying dyslexia

Task: Different techniques for identification

Aim of the task:
- To make trainees aware of different techniques that they can use to identify dyslexic learners in classroom settings

Duration:
- 40 minutes

Materials:
- Please refer to the **Identifying Dyslexic Learners** booklet that comes with this booklet.

Put the trainees into 6 groups. Give each group a set of materials and the instructions (Please photocopy them from the **Identifying Dyslexic Learners** booklet).

1. Group 1: Observation grid (page 9), Student's questionnaire (page 11), Parent's questionnaire (page 10), English teacher's questionnaire (page 12), Subject teacher's questionnaire (page 13), instruction on holistic observation (page 2) – these page numbers are of **Identifying Dyslexic Learners** booklet.
2. Group 2: Visual memory Task 1 (page 14), Visual memory 1 cards (pages 20-29), Visual memory Task 2 (page 15), Visual memory 2 cards (pages 30-39), Visual memory instructions (pages 3-4) - **Identifying Dyslexic Learners** booklet
3. Group 3: Auditory memory instructions (page 5) (Name cards are not provided, please make a set of cards) - **Identifying Dyslexic Learners** booklet
4. Group 4: Literacy practices – copying (page 16), Literacy practices – scanning (page 17), Literacy practices instructions (page 6) - **Identifying Dyslexic Learners** booklet
5. Group 5: Big picture cards (page 18), picture naming sheet (page 19), Speed of processing instructions (page 7) - **Identifying Dyslexic Learners** booklet
6. Group 6: Picture naming sheet (page 19), audio file, Phonological awareness instructions (page 8) - **Identifying Dyslexic Learners** booklet

Ask each group to go through their materials and discuss how to perform the test. Give about 10 to 15 minutes. Monitor and check if all groups have understood the instructions.

Then ask each group to explain:
- What their test assesses
- The procedure
- How to interpret the results
- What the results indicate

Do a recap to answer any questions that trainees might have.

Inclusive classroom techniques

Task 1: Classroom practices to promote inclusive education

Aim of the task:
- To make trainees aware of different types of classroom practices that promote inclusive education

Duration:
- 30 minutes

Materials:
- Cartoon (on the PowerPoint) – also on page 33
- Cut-ups for the matching task – each group gets a separate set of cut-ups (pages 28-32), The answers are on pages 10 and 11.

Put the trainees into groups of 3 or 4 and show them the cartoon. Ask them to discuss the following questions in groups (these questions are also on the PowerPoint).

1. Is our education system similar to this?
2. Do we have any practices to accommodate individual learners?
3. Have you come across learners who show the learning difficulties that we discussed?
4. Have you used any techniques to help such students?
5. Do you see any problems that might occur when helping students with learning difficulties?

When they finish, elicit answers. Make sure to assure them that it is perfectly normal to have concerns and that inclusion is a longer process, not something they can implement fully immediately after completing the workshop.

Put the trainees into five groups. Give the sets of cut-ups to the groups (Each group gets a different set).

Ask them to match the classroom technique with the descriptions.

Elicit the techniques that they read through from all groups – altogether 30 techniques (6 each per group).

Encourage them to come up with other possible techniques.

If time permits and if you have the resources, you can show the video by Dr Anne Margaret Smith which gives an overview of inclusive classroom techniques.

The link to the video is: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icZlWT3bwgo

The list of techniques is adapted from: DysTEFL handout *Ways of accommodating learners with dyslexia in the foreign language classroom*

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Classroom practices to promote inclusive education – answers

Clarify or simplify written instructions	Sometimes instructions given in the textbook or a handout can be very long. The teacher can help the learners by underlining or highlighting the significant parts of the instructions or orally going through the instructions step by step.
Present a small amount of work	The teacher can select only a few tasks to complete in one lesson and tell the students they have to do only those tasks. Ask students to mark the tasks they have to complete, so they don't get anxious about completing the entire book.
Block out extraneous stimuli	Learners can be distracted by too many things on a textbook page, e.g. a lot of pictures, several small activities, instructions, etc. Ask students to use a blank piece of paper to cover the sections that they don't need to focus on – so they can pay attention only to the task that they are working on.
Highlight essential information	The teacher can mark important information by underlining/italicizing/boldfacing them, e.g. in a test paper if there are 10 questions and students have to answer 5 questions only, highlight the part which says **'5 questions only.'**
Provide additional practice activities	Students with learning problems need additional practice. Teachers should provide extra practice activities.
Provide a glossary in content areas	Students often benefit if you give them a glossary of content-related words particularly in reading tasks.
Develop reading guides	The teacher can give one or two questions, a chart to complete, etc. for each paragraph or section if students have to read long texts. This helps them to focus on main points of the text.
Use explicit teaching procedures	Students with learning difficulties benefit if the teacher explains things explicitly, e.g. giving the meaning of an unknown word directly without asking the learner to guess it. Explaining how the word can be used (as a noun/verb, etc.).
Provide students with a graphic organizer	In listening tasks, it is better to give an outline, chart, etc. to fill in while listening. This avoids note taking which is difficult for those who have learning difficulties.
Simultaneously combine verbal and visual information	Include pictures, illustrations, realia when explaining things to learners.
Repeat instructions	Students with learning difficulties easily forget instructions. Ask them to repeat the instructions in their own words. The student can also repeat the instructions to a peer.
Maintain daily routines	It is helpful for students with learning problems to follow the same daily routine, so they know what is expected. E.g. checking homework at the beginning of the class everyday as a routine.
Provide a copy of the notes	This is more relevant to subject teachers. It is difficult for students with learning difficulties to take down notes. Giving them a copy of the notes helps them. Also this reduces the amount of copying that students have to do from notes that the teacher makes on the board.
Use step-by-step instructions	If a task is complicated and has several steps, give step by step instructions. Don't give all instructions at the beginning of the task.
Write key points or words on the chalkboard	This is more relevant to subject teachers. It is better to write down the key points and key words on the chalk board before the lesson.
Use mnemonic instruction	Mnemonic devices can be used to help students remember key information or steps in a learning strategy, e.g. NEWS to remember North, East, West, South

Emphasize daily review	Remind students what you have covered in the previous lesson. This helps them to link the previous lesson to the current one.
Design hierarchical worksheets	Prepare worksheets with the least difficult activities to very difficult activities. Students with learning difficulties can attempt to complete as much as possible. The strong students in class can attempt the most difficult ones.
Change response mode	Students with learning difficulties might find it difficult to write a lot. Give them alternative ways of completing the task, e.g. a task where students have to write answers can be changed into a multiple-choice task. Those who have severe writing issues can be asked to give answers orally in tests.
Provide an outline of the lesson	At the beginning of every lesson, tell students what you are going to cover in the lesson and in what order. This helps students with learning difficulties to organize their work.
Encourage use of graphic organizers	When students are studying for examinations, it is useful if they prepare charts based on notes or highlight/underline essential information in the notes.
Place students close to the teacher	Students with attention problems can be seated close to the teacher and chalkboard and away from distracting sounds, materials, or objects.
Encourage use of assignment books or calendars	Students with learning difficulties may forget what they need to complete in future or due dates. Encourage students to maintain a record book or a calendar where they can record assignment due dates, homework, school related activities, test dates, etc.
Use cues to denote important items	Students with learning difficulties may not be able to complete all tasks in a test within the given time. Using asterisks to show the items that carry more marks will help them to focus on important items in the paper.
Non-white backgrounds	Usually students with learning difficulties find it difficult to look at black letters on white backgrounds, e.g. PowerPoint slides, handouts in white with black letters. On PowerPoint slides, use a mild colour such as light blue or light green as the background. Print handouts on coloured papers – beige or light blue.
Display work samples	Display/make available samples of completed essays at a good standard. This will help students with learning difficulties to understand expectations.
Use peer-mediated learning	The teacher can pair peers of different ability levels to review their notes, study for a test, read aloud to each other, write stories, or conduct laboratory experiments. Also, a partner can read maths problems for students with reading problems to solve.
Encourage note sharing	A strong student can use carbon paper to take notes and then share them with students with learning problems.
Use flexible work times	Students with learning difficulties should be given additional time to complete tasks, e.g. if the other students get one day to complete a task, a student with learning difficulties may need two days.
Provide instructional aids	It is better to provide lined sheets in examinations, not blank paper. If the expectation is to write 50 words, try to give a sheet with separate lines for 50 words.

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Multisensory Structured Language Teaching (MSLT)

Task: Introduction to the Multisensory Structured Language Teaching Approach

Aim of the task:
- To provide a brief introduction to what MSLT is

Duration:
- 15 minutes

Materials:
- Cut-ups – one set per group – Please print this in colour (page 34)

Do not mention the name (MSLT) before the task is completed. The aim is to first introduce the name of the teaching approach. Start by saying that there is a particular teaching approach that helps dyslexic learners.

Put the trainees into groups of 3 or 4.

Give each group a set of cards and ask them to arrange the cards and form the name of the teaching approach. (You can do this as a game).

When several groups have got the name correct, i.e. *Multisensory Structured Language Teaching,* have a brief discussion. Ask questions such as:
- What helped you to arrange the words in order?
- Did you talk to each other?
- Did you guess words?
- Did you try to pronounce the words loud?

The answers may help you to emphasize that all senses helped them to come up with the answer. E.g.
- Colour coding helped them to categorise syllables into words - Colour gives visual clues.
- Pronouncing words, talking to others – Auditory cues
- Arranging cut-ups in different orders – Kinesthetic cues
- Touching cut-ups – Tactile cues

Emphasize that the principle behind the MSLT approach is invoking all senses at the same time. So learners with difficulties learning through one of the senses may use cues in other senses to complete the task.

Also everybody learns better if they integrate information in multiple modalities. In other words, this technique is good for all learners.

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Raising phonological/morphological awareness through MSLT

Task: Techniques to raise phonological/morphological awareness through MSLT

Aim of the task:

- To make the trainees familiar with how MSLT can be used in class to raise phonological/morphological awareness

Duration:

- 30 minutes

Materials:

- MSLT approach sample activities – please print these in colour (pages 35-40)
- Raising phonological/morphological awareness handout (page 41)

Put the trainees into groups of 3 or 4.

Give a set of activities and the activity types handout to each group. Ask them to go through the activities and match them to the activity types. (Answers are on page 15).

(**Note.** A brief description or the relevant answers are given below for each activity.)

Then ask them to discuss how the activities fit into MSLT approach.

Do a whole class feedback. Elicit which activity type matches with which activity. Elicit how an MSLT approach is used in these tasks.

Brief description of activities

- Activity 1: Base word is 'friend'.
- Activity 2: Answer – difficult, more, often, prefect, hopped.
- Activity 3: Ask trainees to make longer words by using the black base word and attaching affixes. This activity makes learners aware of affixes. Pay attention to the colour code. Immediate suffixes are in red, the following suffixes are in blue, and the prefix is in green.
- Activity 4: This shows that there are words with same final sounds, but with different first sounds. Pay attention to the colour coding. Similar sounds are in one colour.
- Activity 5: This activity shows that the same middle sound appears in all these words.

(Please make the middle part of this as shown in the photo below – The middle part is movable)

- Activity 6: This activity shows that the same sound 'ch' can come in different places of the word: word initial or word final. It also shows that the same sound can be spelled in different ways – ch, tch
(Please make the movable 'ch' and 'tch' parts as shown in the photos below).
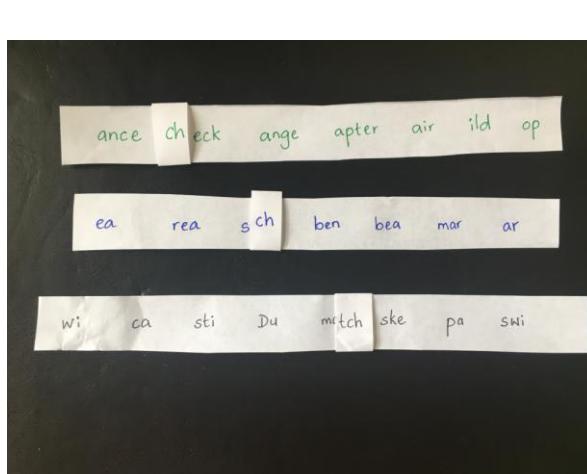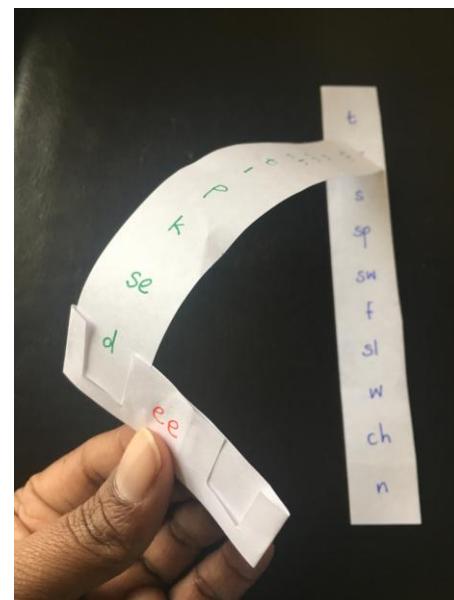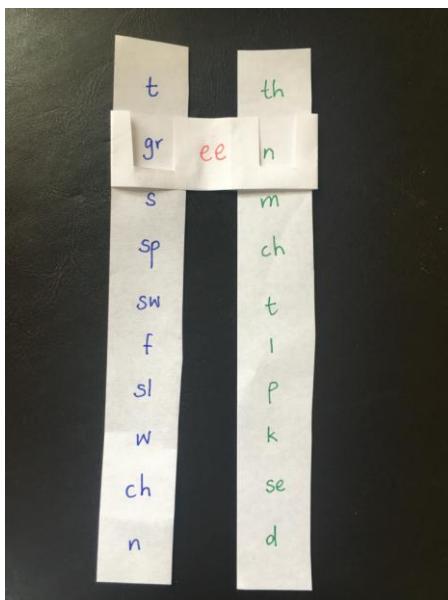
Matching activity types with activities – answers

Differentiating between sounds	Activities: 4, 5
Identifying spelling	Activities: 1, 2
Position of sounds	Activities: 5, 6
Isolating sounds	Activities: 4, 5
Segmenting sounds	Activities: 4, 5
Blending sounds	Activities: 6
Adding parts to words	Activities: 1, 2, 3
Removing sounds	Activities: 4
Substituting sounds	Activities: 4

These activities were developed based on the video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofDMOmuG4GQ

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Teaching grammar through the MSLT approach

Task: A sample grammar lesson

Aim of the task:
- To model a sample grammar lesson designed based on MSLT approach

Duration:
- 30 minutes

Materials:
- Teaching grammar, large word cards (for the trainer) – please prepare a set of cards similar to the small word cards – one word per A4 sheet. Follow the same colour code as in small cards.
- Teaching grammar, small word cards – please print these in colour (for trainees) (pages 42-43)
- Teaching grammar questions (page 44)

Put the trainees into pairs or groups of 3.

Model the lesson based on the following lesson plan.

Lesson plan: Teaching word order/revising present simple singular, plural and questions

- Give a set of small cards to each group/pair in an envelope and ask them to lay them on the table.
- Check if there are any unfamiliar words.
- First, give them a model sentence – paste the large word cards on the board: E.g. She is at the library every Saturday.
- Ask students to make the sentence on the desk using their cards.
- Ask a few groups/students to read out the sentence.
- Then change the word 'she' into 'they' on the board and ask students if the sentence is correct.
- Without giving the answer, ask them to make the correct sentence on the table.
- Elicit what changes should be made to the sentence (replace 'is' with 'are'), and do it on the board too. Ask students to pay attention to the **colour** of the words.
- Now, ask students to make a sentence starting with 'I'.
- Elicit the sentence. Emphasize the difference in colour code.
- Ask them to make the first sentence again – she is .... Change the sentence on the board to she is ....

- Show the 'not' card and ask where it should go in the sentence.
- Without you doing it on the board, ask students to insert their 'not' card in the appropriate place in their sentence.
- Elicit the sentence and insert the big word card 'not' in the sentence on the board.
- Now put the question mark at the end of the sentence on the board and ask students to make the correct question on the table.
- Elicit the answer. Remind them that 'not' is unnecessary in the question.
- You can give more practice by asking students to make questions using 'I' and 'they'.
- Show the big word card 'where' and ask them where it goes in the sentence. Place the big word card 'where' in the sentence on the board and ask if the question is correct.
- Without giving the answer, ask students to make the correct question on the desk.
- Elicit the question and ask why they have removed 'at the library'

Note. Make sure to make the changes on the board using the big word cards whenever you elicit an answer.

Now tell the trainees that the lesson is over and hand out the questions. Alternatively, you can put the questions on the board. Ask them to discuss answers in groups and then elicit their responses. (See answers below).

Teaching grammar questions – answers

1. The aim is to practise present simple singular/plural and questions with word order (this is like a revision lesson). (Trainees will come up with answers such as 'teaching simple present.' Emphasize that in a real class situation, we do not teach all these structures in one lesson, so this is more a revision task).
2. Yes, it uses colour coding to give visual clues, moving words around gives kinesthetic cues, pronunciation/reading out sentences give auditory cues etc.
3. Particularly, colour coding helps them to remember the structures – aids memory.
4. Any – E.g. prepositions – other words of sentences in one colour and prepositions in different colours
5. No
6. Yes – emphasize that they can make children prepare their own set of word cards before the lesson if the teacher does not have time to prepare several sets of word cards. Children can build up their word cards by preparing a few every week, so they can bring the cards to class for different activities.

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Teaching vocabulary through MSLT approach

Task: A sample vocabulary lesson

Aim of the task:
- To model a sample vocabulary lesson designed based on MSLT approach

Duration:
- 20 minutes

Materials:
- Teaching vocabulary text (page 45)
- Teaching vocabulary word cards, small (page 46)
- Teaching vocabulary word cards, large (pages 47-49)
- Teaching vocabulary questions (page 50)

Put trainees into pairs.

Model the lesson based on the following lesson plan.

Lesson plan: Practising vocabulary within context

- Give each group a set of big word cards. Ask them to spread the words on the table.
- Elicit the pronunciation. Provide some practice if necessary.
- Give each pair a copy of the text (with blanks).
- Now read the complete text ones. Ask students to read with you, either aloud or silently.
- While you read it for the second time, ask students to show large word cards when you come to a blank.
- Check if they have shown the correct card.
- Then ask them to practise in pairs: one reads the text, the other shows the cards.
- Then give a set of small cards to each pair. Ask them to put the small words in gaps.
- Monitor to check if the answers are correct.

Now tell the trainees that the lesson is over and hand out the questions. Alternatively you can put the questions on the board. Ask them to discuss answers in groups and then elicit their responses. (Answers are on page 19).

Teaching vocabulary questions – answers

1. The aim is to practise vocabulary in context. Remind trainees that this lesson did not include the pre-teaching phase. In a real classroom situation, they need to pre-teach these words first.
2. Yes - using words in different sizes gives visual support, reading out words gives auditory support and moving around words gives kinesthetic support
3. Spelling problems – as they can see the words in big letters, pronunciation problems – by giving a lot of practice
4. Big cards are for students to see the spelling clearly and practise words. Small cards are for them to see how these words fit in with the other words in the text, to identify word boundaries.
5. No
6. Yes - emphasize that they can make children prepare their own set of word cards before the lesson if the teacher does not have time to prepare several sets of word cards.

Teaching the four skills

Task 1: Tips for teaching the four skills

Aim of the task:
- To raise trainees awareness of how to teach listening, speaking, reading and writing to dyslexic learners

Duration:
- 20 minutes

Materials:
- Cut-ups (pages 51-53)
- Tips for teaching the four skills handout (pages 54-55)

Put the trainees into four groups. Each group works on one skill. Ask the groups to discuss if they use any techniques to assist learners who they think have learning difficulties and make a list. They can also add tips based on what they have learned so far.

Assign four places in the room for the four skills. You can use four flip-charts – write one skill on one chart and paste them in four different places on the wall. Alternatively, if the whiteboard is large, you can draw four columns, one for each skill.

Give about 3-4 cut-ups to each trainee. There are 51 cut-ups, so try to give each trainee a similar number.

Ask them to paste the cut-ups under the relevant skill (on the flip-charts or on the board).

Ask all trainees to work in their previous groups, move around and read the tips that come under each skill. Then they have to compare their list with these tips.

Do a whole class feedback, e.g. ask trainees if there is any tip that they did not understand or are not familiar with.

You do not need to go through all four lists. Instead give the handout, Tips for teaching the four skills and discuss any doubts/problems/concerns they have in implementing these changes.

Task 2: Application of tips when teaching the four skills

Aim of the task:
- To make trainees analyse how to use the tips discussed in the previous task when teaching skills.

Duration:
- 1 hour

Materials:
- Textbooks from different grades
- Pens, pencils, papers, colour pens, etc.

Put the trainees into four groups. If you have a lot of trainees in the workshop, put them into groups of 4 or 5.

Assign a skill to each group.

Give one textbook to each group.

Ask each group to select a lesson (based on the skill that their group gets) from the textbook, read through the tips related to that skill (from the handout in the previous task) and suggest any changes that they would make when teaching that lesson to make it suitable for dyslexic learners.

Give about 20 minutes to prepare – encourage them to make simple visual aids, worksheets, etc.

Give each group about 5-7 minutes to present their lesson. They do not need to do model lessons. Instead ask them to explain the following:

- What skill does the lesson teach?
- Proficiency level/grade
- What is the task in the book?
- What changes are they going to make and how?
- Why are they proposing those changes (how those are going to help dyslexic learners)?

After each presentation, let the others ask questions, give brief feedback.

Assessing learners with dyslexia

Task: Understanding difficulties dyslexic learners face in exams

Aim of the task:
- To raise the awareness of trainees of common difficulties faced by dyslexic learners in exams

Duration:
- 20 minutes

Materials:
- A sample GCE (O/L) English paper or any other test paper (e.g. term test) A copy of the GCE (O/L) English Paper I, 2016 is provided with this book.

Put the trainees into groups of 3.

Give a copy of the test paper to each group.

Ask the groups to analyse the paper focusing on the difficulties that dyslexic learners may face in completing this test paper. Give these prompts.
- time needed
- formatting and layout
- instructions
- types of tasks
- length and type of response needed in the tasks

Do a whole class elicitation/discussion to wrap up ideas from different groups.

Note. Emphasize that dyslexic learners need more time in exams. Also stress the importance of not having reading questions where learners have to copy down sentences as in Test 7, item 4 in the G.C.E. (O/L) English paper I, 2016.

Resources and Recap

Task 1: Other resources

Aim of the task:
- To raise trainees' awareness of the other resources available (E.g. professional development programmes, worksheets, etc.)

Duration:
- 5 minutes

Materials:
- PowerPoint slides
- More resources - Handout (page 56)

Show the further professional development opportunities and resources available on the PowerPoint slides. You can give a copy of the handout where all links to online courses are given.

Task 2: Feedback

Please use any feedback method that your centre uses to get feedback on the training.

Dyslexia Perceptions Survey

1. Dyslexia is a language based learning difference/difficulty.
   ♦Yes ♦No ♦I do not know
2. Dyslexia is more frequent among boys than girls.
   ♦Yes ♦No ♦I do not know
3. Dyslexia can be inherited.
   ♦Yes ♦No ♦I do not know
4. Dyslexia is more frequent among those who are socially disadvantaged.
   ♦Yes ♦No ♦I do not know
5. Dyslexia can be cured.
   ♦Yes ♦No ♦I do not know
6. A dyslexic child can be very talented.
   ♦Yes ♦No ♦I do not know
7. 10% of the population is dyslexic.
   ♦Yes ♦No ♦I do not know
8. Dyslexia affects people all through their lives.
   ♦Yes ♦No ♦I do not know
9. Dyslexia is identified only in early life.
   ♦Yes ♦No ♦I do not know
10. Giving students with dyslexia accommodations such as extra time on tests, shorter spelling lists, special seating, etc. is unfair to other students.
    ♦Yes ♦No ♦I do not know

Taken from:
DysTEFL2 trainee's booklet (dystefl2.uni.lodz.pl), page 135
Week 1, Dyslexia and foreign language teaching MOOC,
https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/dyslexia/2/steps/55850
Soriano-Ferrer & Echegaray-Bengoa (2014)

Problems dyslexic learners face – cut-ups

slow reading

can't identify word boundaries

mixing up letters/words

can't map spelling with pronunciation

can't identify subtle differences between sounds

can't differentiate between long/short vowel sounds

difficulties in comprehending what others mean

difficulties in remembering/following long instructions

mixing up letters/words

incorrect letter patterns

spelling errors

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poor handwriting

difficulties in application of grammar rules

can't map spelling with pronunciation

difficulties in organizing ideas

difficult to pronounce sounds with slight

differences

takes time to respond

can't express themselves clearly

difficulties in application of grammar rules

can't map spelling with pronunciation

less confident

low self-esteem

difficult to make friends

don't like to work with some peers

difficulties in understanding what others mean

messy

easily gets distracted, bored

poor organizational skills

small attention span

forgets things quickly (e.g. homework)

Classroom practices to promote inclusive education, cut-ups: Group 1

Clarify or simplify written instructions	Sometimes instructions given in the textbook or a handout can be very long. The teacher can help the learners by underlining or highlighting the significant parts of the instructions or orally going through the instructions step by step.
Present a small amount of work	The teacher can select only a few tasks to complete in one lesson and tell the students they have to do only those tasks. Ask students to mark the tasks they have to complete, so they don't get anxious about completing the entire book.
Block out extraneous stimuli	Learners can be distracted by too many things on a textbook page, e.g. a lot of pictures, several small activities, instructions, etc. Ask students to use a blank piece of paper to cover the sections that they don't need to focus on – so they can pay attention only to the task that they are working on.
Highlight essential information	The teacher can mark important information by underlining/italicizing/boldfacing them, e.g. in a test paper if there are 10 questions and students have to answer 5 questions only, highlight the part which says **'5 questions only.'**
Provide additional practice activities	Students with learning problems need additional practice. Teachers should provide extra practice activities.
Provide a glossary in content areas	Students often benefit if you give them a glossary of content-related words particularly in reading tasks.

Classroom practices to promote inclusive education, cut-ups: Group 2

Develop reading guides	The teacher can give one or two questions, a chart to complete, etc. for each paragraph or section if students have to read long texts. This helps them to focus on main points of the text.
Use explicit teaching procedures	Students with learning difficulties benefit if the teacher explains things explicitly, e.g. giving the meaning of an unknown word directly without asking the learner to guess it. Explaining how the word can be used (as a noun/verb, etc.).
Provide students with a graphic organizer	In listening tasks, it is better to give an outline, chart, etc. to fill in while listening. This avoids note taking which is difficult for those who have learning difficulties.
Simultaneously combine verbal and visual information	Include pictures, illustrations, realia when explaining things to learners.
Repeat instructions	Students with learning difficulties easily forget instructions. Ask them to repeat the instructions in their own words. The student can also repeat the instructions to a peer.
Maintain daily routines	It is helpful for students with learning problems to follow the same daily routine, so they know what is expected. E.g. checking homework at the beginning of the class everyday as a routine.

Classroom practices to promote inclusive education, cut-ups: Group 3

Provide a copy of the notes	This is more relevant to subject teachers. It is difficult for students with learning difficulties to take down notes. Giving them a copy of the notes helps them. Also this reduces the amount of copying that students have to do from notes that the teacher makes on the board.
Use step-by-step instructions	If a task is complicated and has several steps, give step by step instructions. Don't give all instructions at the beginning of the task.
Write key points or words on the chalkboard	This is more relevant to subject teachers. It is better to write down the key points and key words on the chalk board before the lesson.
Use mnemonic instruction	Mnemonic devices can be used to help students remember key information or steps in a learning strategy, e.g. NEWS to remember North, East, West, South
Emphasize daily review	Remind students what you have covered in the previous lesson. This helps them to link the previous lesson to the current one.
Design hierarchical worksheets	Prepare worksheets with the least difficult activities to very difficult activities. Students with learning difficulties can attempt to complete as much as possible. The strong students in class can attempt the most difficult ones.

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Classroom practices to promote inclusive education, cut-ups: Group 4

Change response mode	Students with learning difficulties might find it difficult to write a lot. Give them alternative ways of completing the task, e.g. a task where students have to write answers can be changed into a multiple-choice task. Those who have severe writing issues can be asked to give answers orally in tests.
Provide an outline of the lesson	At the beginning of every lesson, tell students what you are going to cover in the lesson and in what order. This helps students with learning difficulties to organize their work.
Encourage use of graphic organizers	When students are studying for examinations, it is useful if they prepare charts based on notes or highlight/underline essential information in the notes.
Place students close to the teacher	Students with attention problems can be seated close to the teacher and chalkboard and away from distracting sounds, materials, or objects.
Encourage use of assignment books or calendars	Students with learning difficulties may forget what they need to complete in future or due dates. Encourage students to maintain a record book or a calendar where they can record assignment due dates, homework, school related activities, test dates, etc.
Use cues to denote important items	Students with learning difficulties may not be able to complete all tasks in a test within the given time. Using asterisks to show the items that carry more marks will help them to focus on important items in the paper.

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Classroom practices to promote inclusive education, cut-ups: Group 5

Non-white backgrounds	Usually students with learning difficulties find it difficult to look at black letters on white backgrounds, e.g. PowerPoint slides, handouts in white with black letters. On PowerPoint slides, use a mild colour such as light blue or light green as the background. Print handouts on coloured papers – beige or light blue.
Display work samples	Display/make available samples of completed essays at a good standard. This will help students with learning difficulties to understand expectations.
Use peer-mediated learning	The teacher can pair peers of different ability levels to review their notes, study for a test, read aloud to each other, write stories, or conduct laboratory experiments. Also, a partner can read maths problems for students with reading problems to solve.
Encourage note sharing	A strong student can use carbon paper to take notes and then share them with students with learning problems.
Use flexible work times	Students with learning difficulties should be given additional time to complete tasks, e.g. if the other students get one day to complete a task, a student with learning difficulties may need two days.
Provide instructional aids	It is better to provide lined sheets in examinations, not blank paper. If the expectation is to write 50 words, try to give a sheet with separate lines for 50 words.

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Multisensory Structured Language Teaching – cut-ups

mul	ti	sen	so
ry	struc	tured	lan
guage	tea	ching	
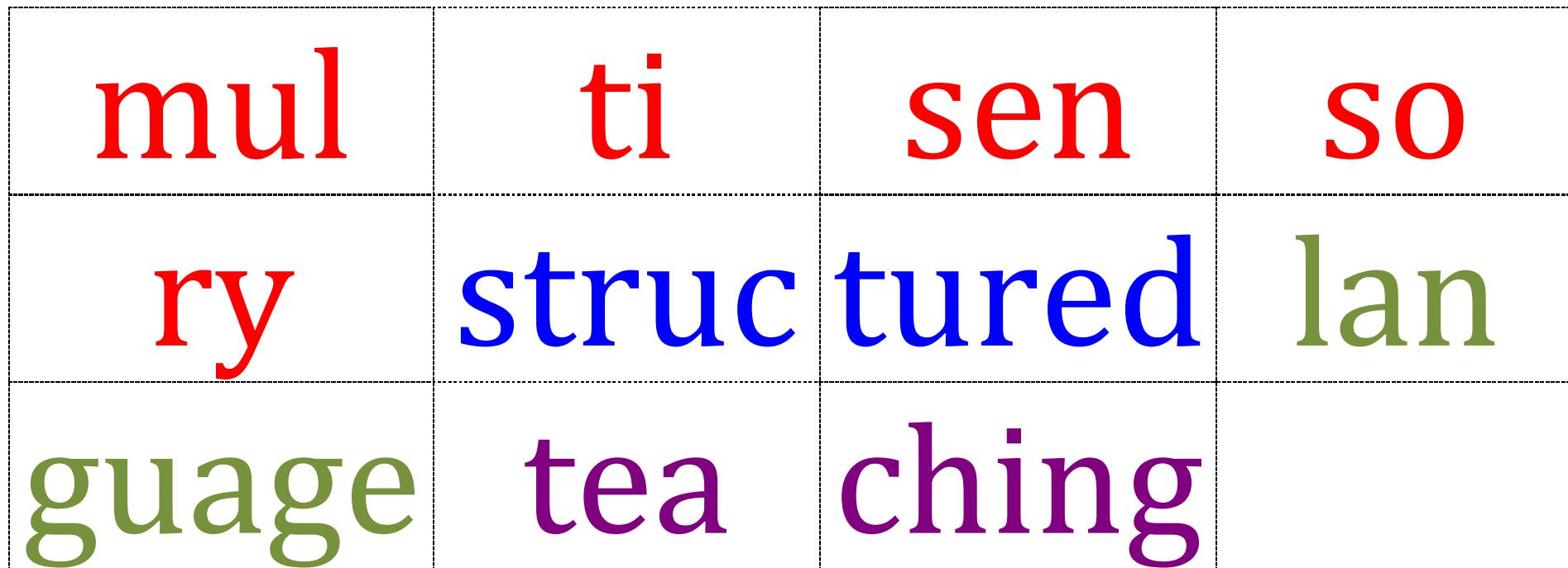
Activity 1

Underline the words that belong to the same word family.

friend   friend   unfriendly

friendliness   friendship   frightened

friendly   freely   unfair

                      unfriendliness

Activity 2

Underline the odd word.

1. different   difficult   differently   differ

2. move   moved   more   movable

3. open   opening   often   opened

4. prefect   perfect   perfection   perfective

5. hopped   hope   hoping   hoped

Activity 3

educat	e	educat	ion	
educat	ed	educat	ed	un
educat	ing	educat	or	s
educat	or	educat	ion	al

Activity 4

	b	at
	c	at
	r	at

Activity 5

t	th
gr	n
s	m
sp	ch
sw	t
f	l
sl	p
w	k
ch	se
n	d

ee

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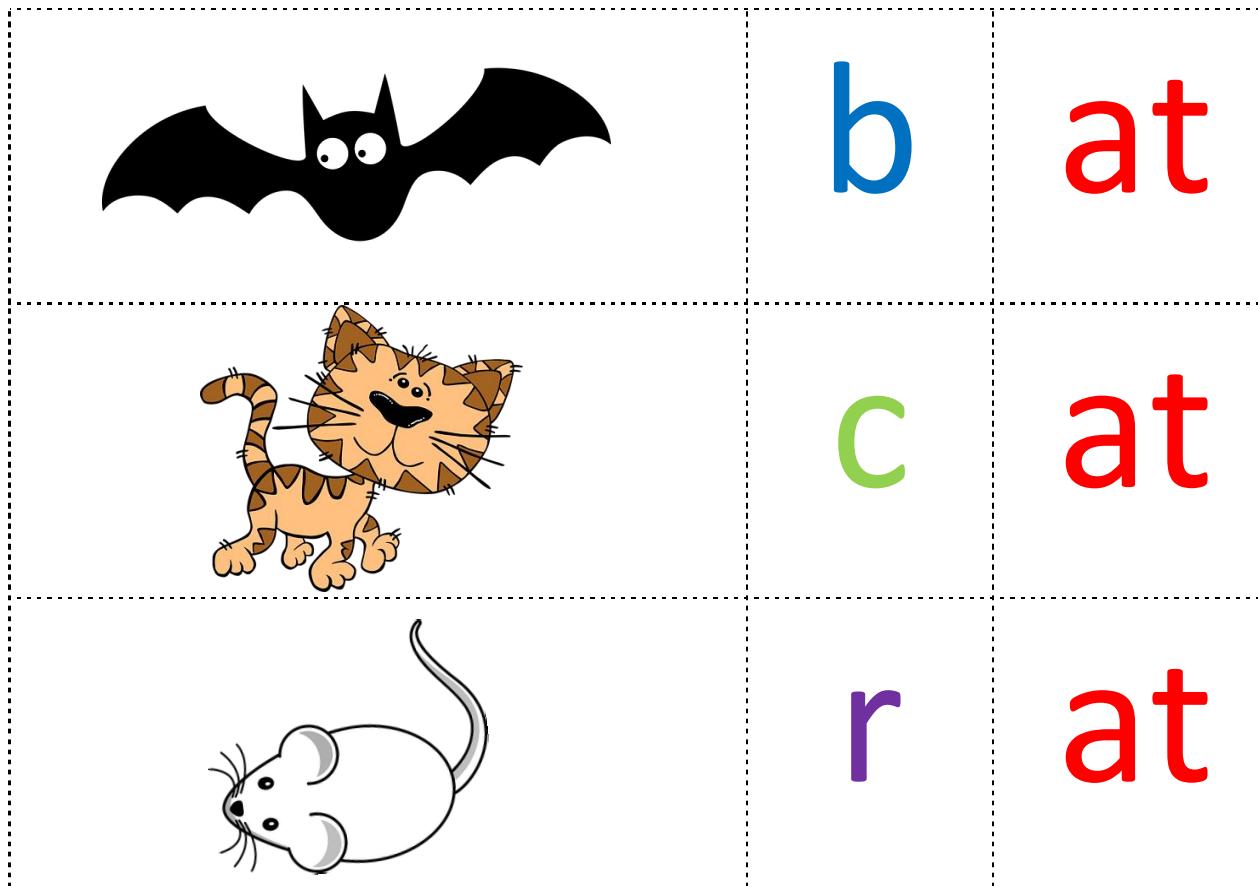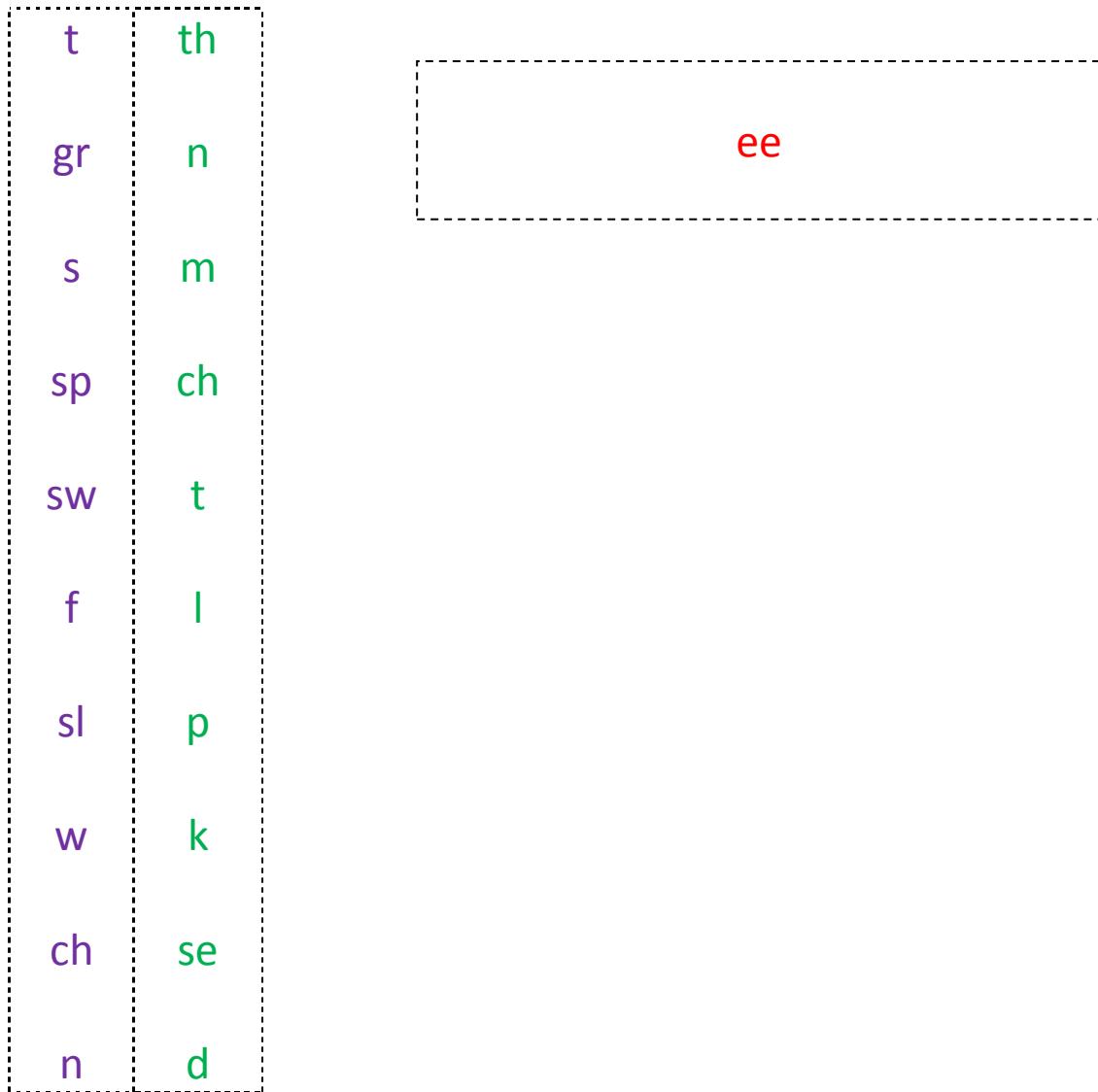
Activity 6

ance	eck	ange	apter	air	ild	op	ina
wi	ca	sti	Du	ma	ske	pa	swi
ea	rea	spee	ben	bea	mar	ar	chur

ch	tch	ch
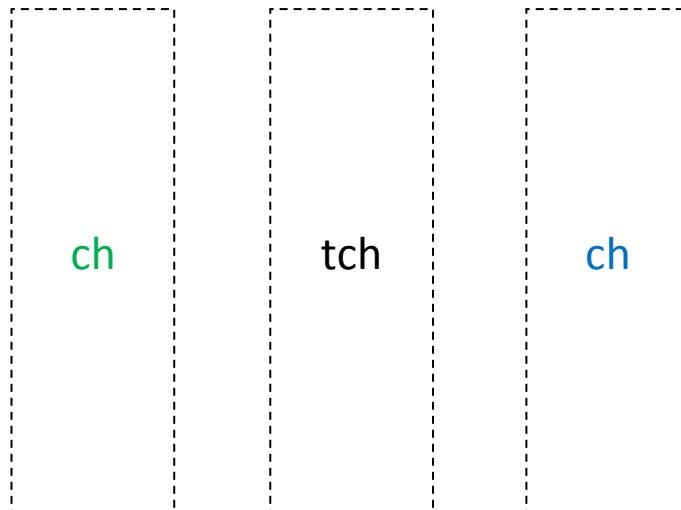
Raising phonological/morphological awareness handout

Differentiating between sounds

Identifying spelling

Position of sounds

Isolating sounds

Segmenting sounds

Blending sounds

Adding parts to the words

Removing sounds

Substituting sounds

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Teaching grammar – small cards

are	they
is	she
I	am
?	when
not	where

every Saturday

at the library

Teaching grammar – questions

1. What's the aim of the lesson?
2. Does it follow MSLT approach? If so how?
3. What potential problems that dyslexic learners face can be accommodated through this?
4. Which other grammar components can be taught like this?
5. Is this task age-dependant?
6. Can you use it in your context?
7. How can you use this task and what adaptations would you make?

Teaching vocabulary – text

Sigiriya

Sigiriya is a famous historical monument in Sri Lanka. It is a .... rock which used to be a palace complex in the ancient times. Thousands of tourists visit the place every year to see the ruins. Archeological .... shows that it was a tourist destination even thousand years ago.

Sigiriya is .... between Dambulla and Habarane towns which is about 180 km from Colombo.

We can still see the ruins of a palace, gardens, ponds, canals, ... and fountains. There are many frescoes on the rock. The poems on the mirror wall are believed to be written by the .... to Sigiriya.

Buildings and the surrounding landscaping of Sigiriya show unique and .... architectural skills and technologies.

Teaching vocabulary – small word cards

visitors	located
massive	alleys
creative	evidence

Teaching vocabulary – large word cards

visitors

located

massive

alleys

creative

evidence

Teaching vocabulary – questions

1. What's the aim of the lesson?

2. Does it follow MSLT approach? If so how?

3. What potential problems that dyslexic learners face can be accommodated through this?

4. What's the purpose of having word cards in two sizes?

5. Is this age-dependent?

6. Can you use it in your context?

7. How can you use this task and what adaptations would you make?

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Teaching the four skills – cut-ups

Providing an oral teaching phase before moving on to reading above sentence level

Intensive development of L2 word reading skills before teaching text-level reading

Frequent practice of word recognition and reading

Increasing the length of the text gradually starting with short paragraphs

Breaking down reading texts into smaller sections and doing a follow-up task after each section

Selecting interesting and motivating reading texts that suits the proficiency level

Creating a need for reading

Fewer unfamiliar words in the text

Fewer unfamiliar grammatical structures in the text

Appropriate layout of the texts

Pre-reading tasks that facilitate learners' understanding of the text

Providing a gloss of unfamiliar words

Do not pre-teach more than 6 words

Learners with SpLDs should NOT be asked to read aloud in class

Providing additional help with illustrations, pictures, etc.

Follow-up speaking tasks rather than writing tasks

Explicit teaching of reading strategies

Not including several new words with similar sounds
Accompanying visual information with oral information
Gradual increase in the speed of speech and length of text
Relevant, interesting and appropriate texts that suit the level of the learners
Pre-listening tasks to assist listening comprehension
Pre-teaching vocabulary with the emphasis on pronunciation
When learners listen to the text first time, don't do a while-listening task. Let them just listen.
Listening and reading/writing is difficult, so while-reading task types should be a simple one (E.g. ticking answers, True/False, etc.)
Make note-taking while listening optional
Explicit teaching of listening strategies
Inclusion of speaking activities regularly
Gradual development of responding: one/two word responses to complex pieces of language
Building up confidence by allowing them to give short responses
Regular activities to improve pronunciation and intonation skills
Explicit explanation of how to carry out communication tasks
Providing a model of the communication tasks
Review vocabulary and syntactic structures before communication tasks
Allow time to formulate the content of responses
Allow students to rehearse tasks in pairs/small groups

Give individual feedback on speaking
Allow learners to use aids (E.g. note cards/vocabulary cards) while speaking
Gradual introduction of writing: from very short sentences/filling in gaps to longer texts
Scaffolding in the writing process
Provide writing tasks that give a feeling of accomplishment and success
Providing sufficient planning activities and time to plan writing
Brainstorming/providing writing models/templates
Giving visual support by using colour coding or shapes (E.g. to differentiate between topic sentence and supporting sentences)
Setting specific linguistic focus in the writing task
Pre-teaching vocabulary and syntactic structures necessary for writing
Realistic targets/expectations from learners with SpLDs
Shorter writing tasks
Allowing brief intervals in the writing process
Praise for all achievements in writing
Focus on only one error type when giving feedback

Tips for teaching the four skills – handout

Reading

- Providing an oral teaching phase before moving on to reading above sentence level
- Intensive development of L2 word reading skills before teaching text-level reading
- Frequent practice of word recognition and reading
- Increasing the length of the text gradually starting with short paragraphs
- Breaking down reading texts into smaller sections and doing a follow-up task after each section
- Selecting interesting and motivating reading texts that suits the proficiency level
- Creating a need for reading
- Fewer unfamiliar words in the text
- Fewer unfamiliar grammatical structures in the text
- Appropriate layout of the texts
- Pre-reading tasks that facilitate learners' understanding of the text
- Providing a gloss of unfamiliar words
- Do not pre-teach more than 6 words
- Learners with SpLDs should NOT be asked to read aloud in class
- Providing additional help with illustrations, pictures etc.
- Follow-up speaking tasks rather than writing tasks
- Explicit teaching of reading strategies

Listening

- Not including several new words with similar sounds
- Accompanying visual information with oral information
- Gradual increase in the speed of speech and length of text
- Relevant, interesting and appropriate texts that suit the level of the learners
- Pre-listening tasks to assist listening comprehension
- Pre-teaching vocabulary with the emphasis on pronunciation
- When learners listen to the text first time, don't do a while-listening task. Let them just listen.
- Listening and reading/writing is difficult, so while-reading task types should be a simple one (E.g. ticking answers, True/False, etc.)
- Make note-taking while listening optional
- Explicit teaching of listening strategies

Speaking

- Inclusion of speaking activities regularly
- Gradual development of responding: one/two word responses to complex pieces of language
- Building up confidence by allowing them to give short responses
- Regular activities to improve pronunciation and intonation skills
- Explicit explanation of how to carry out communication tasks
- Providing a model of the communication tasks
- Review vocabulary and syntactic structures before communication tasks
- Allow time to formulate the content of responses
- Allow students to rehearse tasks in pairs/small groups
- Give individual feedback on speaking
- Allow learners to use aids (E.g. note cards/vocabulary cards) while speaking

Writing

- Gradual introduction of writing: from very short sentences/filling in gaps to longer texts
- Scaffolding in the writing process
- Provide writing tasks that give a feeling of accomplishment and success
- Providing sufficient planning activities and time to plan writing
- Brainstorming/providing writing models/templates
- Giving visual support by using colour coding or shapes (E.g. to differentiate between topic sentence and supporting sentences)
- Setting specific linguistic focus in the writing task
- Pre-teaching vocabulary and syntactic structures necessary for writing
- Realistic targets/expectations from learners with SpLDs
- Shorter writing tasks
- Allowing brief intervals in the writing process
- Praise for all achievements in writing
- Focus on only one error type when giving feedback

Adapted from

Kormos, J. & Smith, A. M. (2012). Teaching languages to students with specific learning differences. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

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More resources – handout

Dyslexia and foreign language teaching – online free course
https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/dyslexia

Free resources on teaching English to dyslexic learners
http://www.dystefl.eu/

Project website
http://www.dyslexiaprojectsl.com

Materials from the workshop can be downloaded at
http://www.dyslexiaprojectsl.com/materials/