

The system for remediation and accommodation of dyslexia in Estonia

Ilona Sillak, Ene Varik-Maasik, Kadi Lukanenok

Estonian Reading Association
Tallinn University
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1. OFFICIAL DEFINITION OF DYSLEXIA

- No state level definition
- Common use: dyslexia – medical area, specific reading difficulties (SRD) – educational area
- Dyslexia/SRD is included into „specific learning difficulties“ (by Basic School and Gymnasium Law , BSGL, applied since 2010, mod 2013)



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1. OFFICIAL DEFINITION OF DYSLEXIA

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- Dyslexia/SRD is included into „specific learning difficulties“ (by Basic School and Gymnasium Law , BSGL, applied since 2010, mod 2013)
- *What do we speak about if we say dyslexia/SRD?*
- Difficulties in reading and/or learning to read which is not caused by developmental, sensory or intellectual deficit and appears in common educational and socio-economical conditions



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1. OFFICIAL DEFINITION OF DYSLEXIA

- WHO DCM-10

F81 specific learning difficulties

F81.0 specific reading difficulties

F81.1 specific writing difficulties

Co-occurrence – writing difficulties, difficulties in speech and language development

Secondary – difficulties in learning success, social accommodation, self esteem, relationships



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2. FREQUENCY, number of students 2012/13 by National Statistical Office

SCHOOL LEVEL	REGULAR CLASS	REM GROUP / DLX / DGR	SEN CLASS in regular school	REM GROUP / DLX
1. Level 1-3 Gr	38051	6390 / 110 / 302	408	238 / 8 / 9
2. Level 4-6 Gr	34829	3261 / 162 / 504	567	246 / 19 / 45
3. Level 7-9 Gr	33202	985 / 87 / 264	861	129 / 21 / 37
Gymn	23567	41 / 3 / 5		
TOTAL	129649		1836	



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4. LEGISLATION

- New Basic School and Gymnasium Law (BSGL, applied since 2010, mod 2013)
- Dyslexia/SRD is included into „learning difficulties“ by BSGL
- Every LA is obligated to provide special support to every student with special needs, including reading difficulties, by BSGL
- Every school is obligated to provide accommodation of curriculum, learning methods or IEP according to student`s special needs and using specialists (special teacher, psychologist, social pedagogist/worker).
- Councelling centers in every county
- Lot of schools, but not all provide special teacher and speech therapist services.
- Educational institutions, i.e. schools and councelling centers establish support as system, main aims: early identification and implementation of supportive services/learning support.



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- **4. LEGISLATION**
- **BSGL § 46. SEN student**
- (1) Students with giftedness, **learning difficulties**, health condition, disability, emotional and behavioural differences, long-term absence from learning process, diversity between mother tongue and learning language which requires accommodations in curricula, learning process, length, environment (tools, rooms, language, support specialists) or learning outcomes.
- (3) Pedagogical-psychological approach in identifying SEN: observations in different situations, collecting data about previous educational and home environment, medical and speech therapist assessment



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- **4. LEGISLATION**
- **§ 47. Learning organisation for SEN students**
- (1) learning organisation bases on idea of inclusive education which states the every child right to learn in his/her residential school
- (2) SEN students learning organisation is stated by the school curriculum
- (3) School principle determines the coordinating person (SENCO) who organise cooperation between school leaders, teachers, support team and parents in order to assess and support SEN students learning.



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4. LEGISLATION

BSGL § 51. Classes and groups for SEN students

- (1) remedial learning/ learning support groups can be formed to meet students' needs, max 6 students

5. IEP as option to support SEN students learning

- § 48. School recommendations to support SEN student
- § 49. Counseling commission recommendations to support SEN students (*bit later*)



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4. LEGISLATION

Ministry of Education and Research regulation (3.06.2012) about additional conditions for basic school final examinations:

- 1) **extra time** up to 15 min per one hour (60 min)
- 2) **extra room**
- 3) **extra break** up to 10 min per one hour (60 min)
- 4) exam questions and text **oral presentation** for students with visual impairment or specific reading difficulties
- 5) use of **dictionaries, collections of formulas** etc for students with learning difficulties
- 6) **easy language instructions, detailed descriptions, orally presented instructions** for students with learning difficulties
- 7) **differentiated assessment** in mother tongue exam for students with specific writing difficulties



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- **DREAMS AND REALITY**

- Freshly formulated BSGL (2010, mod 2013)
- Accepted inclusive educational approach
- Elaborated and implemented (but not everywhere) system for learning support
- Lack of resources:
 - a) staff: teachers, teacher assistants, special team members
 - b) teacher education, pre-service and in-service preparation
 - c) methodological tools and equipment
 - d) common knowledge, parental involvement



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• 3. ASSESSMENT

- Experience based process coordinated by school special staff (remedial teacher, special teacher, speech therapist)
- Cooperation between special staff and classroom teacher
- Regular assessment mainly twice per academic year (fall and spring)
- Tools: reading tasks, writing tasks, cognitive tasks, learning outcomes
- Few support from parents, cooperation with families needs further development
- School based assessment and support is free for families



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3. ASSESSMENT

- Special teachers and speech therapists are educated to identify, assess and support/treat students with dyslexia
- School based support and treatment mainly focus on writing, reading and cognitive difficulties, less difficulties on math
- Assessment in counselling centers in every county
- Additional options to get assessment in medical area by speech therapists, mainly in private praxis



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5. What is done in IEP development?

- Remedial and supportive teaching are provided mostly by LA;
- SEN- coordinator- works at every schools, monitors each SEN- student's needs and coordinates remedial services (IEP, remedial or additional teaching, changed exams, cooperation between specialists);
- Dyslexic students might have IEP (parents, teachers, SEN- coordinator, remedial teacher, speech therapist, psychologist are involved);
- Dyslexic students can get remedial teaching in their schools or outside (speech therapist, remedial teaching), ICT resources are available.
- IEP and remedial services have been paid by goverment and LA;
- Every school get some money from goverment for children who need extra help, schools use this funding differently;
- Access to supportive teaching is different in different schools (depends on school`s SEN- policy and priorities).



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- **7 PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

- Parents have right to be involved into their child learning processes, schools and counselling centres advices are recommended but not compulsory
- Parents support and counselling depends on schools: readiness to meet SEN students, supportive services, cooperation and networking in school and with parents.
- Central role plays the classroom teachers and support team (special teacher, speech therapist, psychologist).



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- **8 WHAT ARE RETENTION OR EXTRA YEAR RULES?**
- No retention practices any more, very rare cases only by parental intention.
- Extra year is provided only for students in simplified curriculum (moderate and severe mental retardation) by BSGL.



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9 HOW IS SUCCESS OF SYSTEM MEASURED?

BSGL § 48. School recommendations to support SEN student

- 4) Every teacher and support team member evaluates support efficacy, describes student`s development, learning success and provide further suggestions at least once per academic year
- 5) SENCO evaluates efficacy in cooperation with teachers, support team and provides suggestions to school leaders and parents for further approach

Every day life: regular cooperation and counselling between classroom teacher and support specialist.



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NGO Hooling/Care

- NGO Hooling/Care est. 2013 to support families and teachers in their everyday work with children with special needs.
- Provides training courses and experience based groups for parents, teachers and educational staffs. Optional offering case-based support, special educational counselling and support for organisations/institutions.
- NGO Hooling/Care board members: Maili Liinev, Ilona Sillak and Kristi Lüüde.



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Comments? Questions?
Thank you 😊



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