

**DYSLEXIA AND EFL TEACHING AND LEARNING:  
A CASE STUDY IN BALI CHILDREN FOUNDATION, SINGARAJA-  
BALI**

**by  
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This research was conducted in an attempt to give general overview how dyslexia influence students in learning English as Foreign Language, dyslexic students' responses in Innovative Teaching Method provided by teacher and the performance of dyslexic students in the four language skills.

The subjects of this research were students of Bali Student Foundation (Yayasan Samiarsa Seminyak) class VI & VII who were confirmed dyslexic by Youth Shine Academy using Dyslexia Screening Test. By using European Language Portfolio, Classroom observation and teacher's note, the researcher observed dyslexic students in EFL learning and narrated using case study report.

Based on the data analysis, the study identified some findings. First, each dyslexic student displays a different set of features, but there is one common problem all dyslexics face - it is difficulty with the written language, a failure to recognize and interpret what is perceived. Dyslexia is a problem that many students face and have great difficulty coping with in a school environment. However, with the help and support of the teacher, dyslexic students can become successful learners. The role of teachers is to make educational adjustments to facilitate learning and create successful class environment. Some improvements have been obtained by dyslexic students using Innovative Teaching Methods with different time accumulation depend on complexity of their problems. The dyslexic students perform better in Speaking and Listening rather than in Writing and Reading but by time and strategy they can show improvement in Writing and Reading.

**Key words:** EFL teaching & Learning, Dyslexia and EFL

**DISLEKSIA DAN PEMBELAJARAN EFL: STUDI KASUS DI BALI  
CHILDREN FOUNDATION, SINGARAJA-BALI**

**oleh  
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Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk memberikan gambaran umum bagaimana pengaruh disleksia pada siswa dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing, tanggapan siswa disleksia dalam Metode Pengajaran Inovatif yang diberikan oleh guru dan kinerja siswa disleksia dalam empat keterampilan berbahasa.

Subyek penelitian ini adalah siswa dari Bali Children Foundation (Yayasan Samiarsa Seminyak) kelas VI & VII yang dikonfirmasi disleksia oleh Youth Shine Academy menggunakan Uji Disleksia. Dengan menggunakan European Language Portfolio, observasi

Kelas dan catatan guru, peneliti mengamati siswa disleksia di pembelajaran EFL dan melaporkan dengan menggunakan studi kasus.

Setiap penderita menampilkan gejala yang berbeda, tapi masalah umum anak disleksia - adalah kesulitan dengan bahasa tertulis, kegagalan untuk mengenali dan menafsirkan apa yang dirasakan. Disleksia adalah masalah kesulitan belajar yang banyak siswa hadapi dan alami dalam lingkungan sekolah. Namun, dengan bantuan dan dukungan dari guru, siswa disleksia dapat menjadi pelajar yang sukses. Peran guru adalah melakukan penyesuaian untuk memfasilitasi pembelajaran dan menciptakan lingkungan kelas yang sukses. Beberapa perbaikan telah didapat oleh siswa disleksia menggunakan Metode Pengajaran Inovatif dengan akumulasi waktu yang berbeda tergantung pada kompleksitas masalah mereka. Para siswa disleksia tampil lebih baik dalam Berbicara dan Mendengarkan bukan di Menulis dan Membaca tetapi dengan waktu dan strategi mereka dapat menunjukkan perbaikan dalam Menulis dan Membaca.

**Kata kunci:** Pembelajaran EFL, Dyslexia and EFL

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English has been taught since elementary school grade one as a Foreign Language but inadequate support either in strategy and curriculum even policy to help specific learning disability like Dyslexia. Dyslexic students have been labeled as slow learners even bullied as stupid while it may be caused by "*maladaptive learning styles*" (Graham & Harris et al, 2000). The dyslexic students are not considered as handicapped people that need to be provided with special treatment. When, they have difficulties to follow the lesson because their slow progress in learning, they are considered as dumb and may stay at the same class because of their deficit. Researches related to learning difficulties like dyslexia and learning English as foreign language is not much done yet in Indonesia while dyslexic children potentially face problem in EFL learning.

In the classroom process teachers can notice among dyslexics such warning signs as: changed or reversed shapes and sequences of letters and numbers, inconsistent and incoherent spelling, skipping words or lines while reading, poor concentration and high distractibility while reading, word blurring, doubling and size change. Furthermore, these can be: difficulties making some speech sounds and meaningful utterances, confusion between left and right, difficulties in judging distances, following directions, remembering instructions, repeating long words and finally illegible handwriting, etc. (<http://dyslexia.learninginfo.org/symptoms.htm>)

Dyslexia is a problem that many students face but with the help and support of the teacher, dyslexic students can become successful learners in EFL teaching and learning (<http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Krzyzak-Dyslexia.html>). The role of teachers is to make educational adjustments to facilitate learning and create successful class environment. Educators ought to bear in mind that acquiring a great amount of knowledge about a dyslexic learner is the factor that may play an essential role in a child's later success. Whenever a dyslexic child is positively sure that the teacher recognizes and is aware of the nature of the learner's difficulties and helps him/her to overcome them, it may increase the dyslexic's motivation as well as make him/her willing to learn.

The learning difficulties like dyslexia might not be able to be cured and need certain therapy and expertise to deal with it. But there must be a strategy that can make them learning and be motivated to achieve their goal. As that will be explained later about dyslexia, they have normal intelligence but educators have to find their learning styles. The researcher as teacher cannot ignore the existence of low achievement students especially in learning English as the subject. The goal is how to make them learn and acquire English as subject and able to aspire and express communicatively.

In Indonesia, studies on dyslexia and EFL learning have not been much done. The term of dyslexia has been introduced to the researcher by expatriate who has dyslexia case and made her has short term memory and difficulty in writing, reading, sequence, abstract thinking etc. As her deficit, she faces difficulty to learn language except it is acquired naturally. However, she has talent in art and very smart woman. Some references mentioned that there is no correlation between intelligence and dyslexia – in fact very intelligent people are dyslexic (<http://serendip.brynmawr.edu/bb/>).

This raises curiosity to the researcher. The researcher has tried to search journal related to Dyslexia and EFL in Indonesia for empirical studies however it failed to find any. There were some titles related to dyslexia and EFL in Indonesian language in Google but failed to be opened. This research hopefully will precede other researchers related to dyslexia and EFL or other learning difficulties and English teaching learning. This research gives general overview related to dyslexia and EFL teaching learning on how dyslexia influence their learning of English as foreign language. This research also narrates the dyslexic students difficulty in EFL learning in the responses of strategy provided by teacher and how innovative teaching methods help them to improve their

learning. This research narrates how is the performance of dyslexic students in the four language skills.

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

This research used collective case study research due to reporting collective case and more than one person. The subjects were Bali Children Foundation (Yayasan Samiarsa Seminyak), a foundation that establishing free English lesson for students in Dencarik & Banjar Village. They were 6 students from Grade 6 and 7 students from Grade 7. The subjects were confirmed dyslexia by screening test that had been judged by Youth Shine Academy.

The following research procedures have been done in this study:

1. Subject observation and Dyslexia screening test

The subjects have been observed for more than 6 months and suspected as dyslexia by preliminary warning of dyslexia. With screening test that has been judged by Youth Shine Academy, the students were confirmed dyslexia. With Davis category, the subjects then were categorized for their difficulties.

2. Data Collection

Data were collected by observation and record of students' European Language Portfolio. The observation showed how dyslexia influenced their learning in EFL subject using Theme Content Based Instruction, and European Language Portfolio showed in writing evidence of their response and performance in the classroom.

3. Conclusion Drawing

The conclusion gave explanation about this study's question: giving general overview about dyslexia and its influence in EFL learning, students response and performance in the subject.

## **3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings showed that each individual sufferer displays a different set of features, but there is one common problem all dyslexics face - it is difficulty with the written language, a failure to recognize and interpret what is perceived. Symptoms of dyslexia are closely related to the following areas: vision, reading, spelling, hearing, speaking, writing, balance and movement and memory. In observing symptoms of dyslexia, a huge role is attributed to

teachers. In the classroom process teachers can notice among dyslexics such warning signs as: changed or reversed shapes and sequences of letters and numbers, inconsistent and incoherent spelling, skipping words or lines while reading, poor concentration and high distractibility while reading, word blurring, doubling and size change, sounds and meaningful utterances, confusion between left and right, difficulties in judging distances, following directions, remembering instructions, repeating long words and finally illegible handwriting.

Dyslexia is a problem that many students face and have great difficulty coping with in a school environment. However, with the help and support of the teacher, dyslexic students can become successful learners. The role of teachers is to make educational adjustments to facilitate learning and create successful class environment. Innovative Teaching Method such as Theme Content Based Instruction, Multi-Sensory teaching, Mnemonic Device, Total Physical Response can be provided not only for dyslexic learners but also the whole class students. Theme Content Based Instruction is involving one theme in every session to make the learning meaningful. Multi-sensory means making use of all the senses in the learning process. This kind of teaching is based on a combination of aural, visual, tactile and kinesthetic aspects to improve and facilitate learning. Mnemonic Device helps learners to memorize words with rhyme, situation, anonym and some association. Total Physical Response is method that vocabulary connected with action, imperative interaction and classroom management. Language Learning Strategy such as Memory Strategy, Cognitive Strategy, Compensation Strategy, Metacognitive Strategy, Affective Strategy, and Social Strategy can be involved in the classroom management to improve learning.

- 1) a. The dyslexic students showed improvement when Theme Content Based Instruction with Mnemonic Device, Total Physical Responses and Multisensory Teaching was applied. The dyslexic students who hardly memorizing vocabularies, but by the help of the Innovative Teaching method applied, they could make vocabularies in retention. Previously students had difficulty in number and could not differentiate between hundred and thousand and –ty and –teen, by using memory tools in the form association, the dyslexic students could memorize numbers. Some creativity for memory tools could be developed to help dyslexic students such as singing for vocabulary repetition in the form of rhyme, visual aids in the form of picture and spelling table, and kinaesthetic such as touching in the body part and moving in the action verb.

Dyslexic students showed improvement when Classroom management was arranged to be suitable for not only students who did not have learning disability like dyslexia but also students who were categorized as slow learners. The Lesson plan and syllabus that had been arranged into students centered have made students active in the learning process. Teacher only directed the classroom to acquire the basic competence and let the students to be active in learning. Innovative Teaching Methods such as Theme Content Based Instruction, Total Physical Responses and Multisensory teaching and application of Language Learning Strategies such as Cognitive strategy, Memory Strategy, compensation strategy, Metacognitive, Affective Strategy, Social strategy had made the class more motivated and active.

As evaluation, students wrote in European Language Portfolio. Teacher checked if the students still incorrect or need help in following the class lesson. Teacher also made journal to write and memorize some activities related to observed students such as what happens, what to do, how to do. The journal and students' portfolio made easier to track the development of students. Some repetitions were given for students who were weak in certain category. The repetition and reinforcement improved the students learning in English as Foreign Language.

#### **4. CLOSING**

Based on the findings and the discussion on the previous section it can be concluded that:

- 1) Dyslexia has influenced students in this study in learning English as Foreign Language. Because of their deficits, such as short term memory; changed or reversed shapes and sequences of letters and numbers; inconsistent and incoherent

spelling; skipping words or lines while reading; poor concentration and high distractibility while reading; word blurring; doubling and size change, the students learned slower than their peers. It took more time for them to learn spelling, vocabularies, sequence etc related to English as Foreign Language teaching, compare than non-dyslexic students. It was shown also from the result that they were struggling with spelling although they could speak, respond to instruction well by help. They performed better in speaking and listening but poor in reading and writing.

- 2) Some improvements have been obtained by dyslexic students using Innovative Teaching Methods with different time accumulation depend on complexity of their problems. The dyslexic students perform better in Speaking and Listening rather than in Writing and Reading but by time and strategy they can show improvement in Writing and Reading.
- 3) Dyslexic students showed better in Listening, Speaking rather than in Reading and Writing using Innovative Teaching Methods. But by picture in Bilingual story, the dyslexic students could perform better in reading rather than spelling. Spelling table could help dyslexic students, but it takes extra time and more exercises to make writing spelling last longer in their memory due to their deficit.

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