



## **EARLY RECOGNITION OF DYSLEXIA**

### **ABSTRACT**

The procedures of the identification of the children prone to dyslexia are described in the article. The identification scale for dyslexia is used for the children aged 6, who do not show any signs of disability. The aim of the procedure is to discover individuals at risk in order to help them and give them professional assessment. The identification scale is designed as a helpful guide for parents and teachers who spend most of the time with the children and know them well.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Early recognition of children who could be potentially dyslectic is not an easy task. Dyslectic disability can easily be mistaken for immaturity, slower or later development especially with the children aged 6.

Each child develops at his/her own pace, but the school system demands almost simultaneous maturing of all the children of the same generation. In Slovenia all children born in the same year start school at the age of six. Nevertheless there are big differences among them who were born in January and those born in December. These eleven months can cause differences in basic abilities, motor skills and life experiences. Despite such big differences children are expected to start writing and dealing with numbers simultaneously. Normally these differences gradually taper off. If they persist there is a big possibility for children to be at risk of having dyslectic disability.

In order not to miss or exclude any dyslectic child an identification scale is used to recognize such problems. Teachers should not only be able to recognise the signs of dyslectic disabilities, but also use their common sense, intuition and empathy.



## PROCEDURE OF RECOGNITION

### The first grade –children aged 5-7

In Slovenia the first graders are taught block letters and numbers. They perform graphomotor exercises to develop prewriting skills, they recognise sounds in words (pre-reading skills), they learn to read, etc.

I use the identification scale whenever I notice the following problems with the child who:

- talks later than most children,
- has difficulties pronouncing words, i.e., busgetti for spaghetti, mawn lower for lawn mower,
- is slow at adding new vocabulary words,
- has difficulty with rhyming,
- often has difficulty separating sounds in words and blending sounds to make words,
- has a very short time memory, can't remember sequences,
- is unable to recall the right word, forgets things.
- has difficulty learning the alphabet, numbers, days of the week, colours, shapes, how to spell and write his or her name,
- has difficulty telling and/or retelling a story in the correct sequence,
- whose fine motor skills develop more slowly than in other children.

## THE IDENTIFICATION SCALE FOR DYSLEXIA

Author- Martha Bogdanowicz (translated in Slovenian language by Pulec Lah. S., 2002)

The identification scale is used to identify children around age 6 at risk for dyslexia. It can be used by parents or teachers. This tool is intended only to increase parents and educators' awareness about learning disabilities during the school years. **It is not a substitute for a comprehensive evaluation by trained professionals.**

It consists of **21 statements** and **a scale from 1- 4.**

- 1 – never/not true,
- 2 - sometimes /partly true,
- 3 – often/ mostly true,
- 4 – always/ completely true.

ZGODNJE ODKRIVANJE DISLEKSije

Dejana Omerza



## Statements

- |  |          |          |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. The child has difficulty recalling letters that are not often used, e.g. F, G, Ž.   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 2. The child experiences difficulty using scissors.  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 3. The child has speech problems (pronunciation of sounds and words).  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 4. The child's gross motor skills are poorly developed. S/he appears awkward and clumsy in running, jumping, cycling, etc.                                 | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 5. The child uses mirror writing, reverses letter order in words, or writes the numbers from the right to the left.  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 6. The child inserts inverted words into conversation, changes prefixes and shows phonemic awareness problems, e.g. busgetti for spaghetti.                | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 7. The child confuses sounds and words that sound similar; therefore s/he can't hear the difference between the words. e.g. g-k, z- s, gos-kos, Zora-Sora. | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 8. The child has difficulty in speaking, misuses words in conversation and uses poor grammar.  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 9. The child dislikes playing with Lego blocks, puzzles or can't copy given patterns, but s/he can draw his/her own ones.                                  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 10. The child has difficulty with motor-oriented games.  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 11. The child confuses and can't recall similar-looking letters that have different orientation, e.g. b-p-d-g.   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 12. The child dislikes drawing.  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |

ZGODNJE ODKRIVANJE DISLEKSIJE

Dejana Omerza



- |  |          |          |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 13. The child can't remember the sequence of words or numbers, e.g. parts of the day, days of the week, meals in a day, seasons, the sequence of 4 numbers, etc. | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 14. The child has difficulty sustaining attention in work tasks.   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 15. The child is bad at performing exercises to develop motor skills in the kindergarten /at school.   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 16. The child confuses and can't recall similar-looking letters, e.g. m-n, l-t, a-o.   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 17. The child has difficulty separating sounds in words, e.g. cake = c-a-k-e.  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 18. The child has difficulty copying simple patterns and geometrical shapes.   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 19. The child has difficulty blending sounds to make words, e.g. c-a-k-e = cake.   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 20. The child has troubles with buttons, hooks and learning to tie shoes.  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |
| 21. The child has difficulty recalling singing or reciting of short poems.   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> |

The results can be evaluated by trained professionals or the following scale for scores can be used.

**From 21 to 34 points:** There is no risk for dyslexia.

**From 35 to 40 points:** There is a small risk for dyslexia. Consult the experts. The important areas should be properly stimulated during daily routines and games.

**From 41 to 53 points:** There is a moderate risk for dyslexia. Consult the specialist in dyslexia who will advise you how to train child's skills systematically.

**From 54 to 84 points:** There is a high risk for dyslexia. A thorough assessment is needed.



The details about the analysis of the results can be found in Marta Bogdanowicz's publication: »Ryzyko dysleksji. Problem i diagnozowanie«, Wydawnictwo Harmonia, Gdańsk 2002.)

### **The second and the third grade; children aged 6-7 / 8-9**

In this period the children revise reading and writing of the block letters, they write lower case and handwriting letters, they calculate, etc.

Dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia become more evident.

If the child has reading difficulties, confuses or changes the letters in words, misses the words when writing and reading, I inform the school speech and language therapist who thoroughly examines the child.

All children in the third grade (aged 8-9) at our school are tested for dyslexia by the peripatetic speech and language therapist.

#### **LITERATURE:**

1. Kruh Ipavec, J. (2014). Disleksija ni samo obračanje črk b in d, predavanje o disleksiji na OŠ Lucija, Powerpoint Presentation, Lucija

#### **ONLINE RESOURCES:**

1. Pulec Lah, S. (2002) [http://www.sous-slo.net/usd/program2/program2\\_mag-suzana-pulec-lah-detekcija.pdf](http://www.sous-slo.net/usd/program2/program2_mag-suzana-pulec-lah-detekcija.pdf) Bogdanowicz, M. (2002). Ryzyko dysleksji. Problem i diagnozowanie. Wydawnictwo Harmonia. Gdańsk. (31/11/2014)
2. Texas education agency. (2014) Dyslexia Handbook 2014. Austin.: [http://www.ut-ucs.org/apps/download/L8JM02WqSlthTDpxJpDac5JKWA43YTYOo2RPsOr9JJAQgLsVM.pdf/Texas%20Dyslexia%20Handbook\\_%20Revised%202014.pdf](http://www.ut-ucs.org/apps/download/L8JM02WqSlthTDpxJpDac5JKWA43YTYOo2RPsOr9JJAQgLsVM.pdf/Texas%20Dyslexia%20Handbook_%20Revised%202014.pdf). (31/11/2014)