

## **Reading Disabilities (Dyslexia) and Difficulties as a Learning Problem: A Psycholinguistic Study**

Professor Janaki S. Wijesekara  
Department of Linguistics, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka  
*janakiswijesekara@gmail.com*

'Reading' is a creative ability and it is a complex cognitive process relating to brain-cells with the functions of visual system or tactile. Knowledge on symbols in a language and semantic interpretation of those symbols are important in reading process. The first stage of reading is understanding sequences of symbols and the second stage is the semantic interpretation of them. Those two categories on reading are noticed by different symptoms, but they look normal and intelligent. Though some literature on reading problems in English language are available, no successful research has come out on reading texts in Sinhala language. Being a symbolic system, Sinhala symbols are different from English symbols as it has a phonetic symbolic system. Therefore, the research problem focuses on identification of linguistic problems on reading difficulties and dyslexia and finding the methods that can be applied to solve those problems. Therefore, (a) identifying those two categories of children and finding out what reading problems that they face and (b) introducing alternative methods for reading for the children who are severely disabled in reading are the objectives of this research. The hypothesis of this research, if the memory of phonemic symbols can be improved, it will be easy to avoid these conditions or if it is difficult, an alternative method could be identified to improve their education. twenty school children from each category from grade 6 to 10 will be selected by a test and some specific teaching methods will be applied to improve their reading ability. At the same time the questionnaires will be given to the teachers and the parents to gather knowledge and the background details of those children. This research is limited only to the children who read Sinhala. This research will be important for the students to upgrade their education and for the therapists and educationists to employ these results for their purposes.

**Key words:** cognitive process, dyslexia, difficulties, disabilities, visual and tactile