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English as a Foreign Language students' diagnosis of dyslexia in a context of community service

Diagnóstico de dislexia en estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera en un contexto de servicio comunitario

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ABSTRACT

Dyslexia is a learning disability that affects people of all ages, including children, teenagers, and adults, and it impacts their reading and writing abilities. It can influence both syllabic and phonetic awareness. Common traits include difficulties with fluency, reading, and spelling. The goal was to identify students with dyslexia in a community service setting. A qualitative methodology with a descriptive approach was used. The instrument employed was the PECFO test, which has two parts: syllable awareness and phonetic awareness. This tool was used to diagnose students attending a center, aged between 4 and 7 years. The results showed that 7 students exhibited characteristics of dyslexia. They scored within the 10th percentile according to the table, indicating they have dyslexia. These students represented 21.88% of the sample, with 15.63% being female and 6.25% male. The conclusion is that these students have deficiencies in syllabic and phonetic awareness, which hinder their reading and writing skills, leading to slower learning.

Keywords: dyslexia, phonetic awareness, syllabic awareness, reading, writing

RESUMEN

La dislexia es una discapacidad de aprendizaje que afecta a niños, adolescentes y adultos en la lectura y la escritura. Puede afectar tanto la conciencia silábica como la fonética. Esta discapacidad se caracteriza por problemas con la fluidez, la lectura y la ortografía. El objetivo de esta investigación fue diagnosticar a estudiantes con dislexia en servicio comunitario. Se utilizó una metodología cualitativa con un enfoque descriptivo. El instrumento utilizado fue la prueba PECFO, que consta de dos partes: conciencia silábica y conciencia fonética. Este instrumento se utilizó para diagnosticar a los estudiantes que asisten a un centro. Los estudiantes tenían entre 4 y 7 años de edad. Los resultados mostraron 7 estudiantes con características de dislexia. Los estudiantes obtuvieron una puntuación en el percentil 10 según la tabla. Estos estudiantes representaron el 21,88% de la muestra. El 15,63% fueron mujeres y el 6,25% fueron hombres. Se concluye que los estudiantes presentan deficiencias en la conciencia silábica y fonética, lo que dificulta sus habilidades de lectura y escritura y resulta en un aprendizaje lento.

Palabras claves: dislexia, conciencia fonética, conciencia silábica, lectura, escritura

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INTRODUCTION

Learning English enables individuals to discover new cultures, access new job opportunities, and communicate with people worldwide (Putra et al., 2020). However, learning a new language has been affected by neurological problems such as dyslexia. According to Guevara-Enríquez (2017), students with learning difficulties have the right to learn a foreign language within their possibilities with the support of teachers. According to D'Mello & Gabrieli (2018), the school-age population affected worldwide with a dyslexic learning disability is between 5% and 17%. Then, identifying dyslexic children helps prevent problems, whether academic or emotional. Then, teachers need to apply appropriate strategies for teaching a foreign language and adapt them to classes. Dyslexia is a learning disorder that affects the ability to read and write. Students often struggle with identifying words and recognizing letter sounds to read. According to Carrillo et al. (2011), reading disorder was more common in 2nd grade (15.2%) compared to 4th (9.3%) and 6th (10.9%). The reading challenges detected are more common in basic decoding and spelling problems. Therefore, it is advisable to apply a test to take preventive measures.

Dyslexia is a neurodevelopmental disorder associated with lower-order processing issues or phoneme-grapheme correspondence problems (Allam et al., 2015). One skill connected to reading difficulties is phonological processing, which involves breaking down speech into units like morphemes, syllables, or phonemes (Cuetos et al., 2017). This indicates that dyslexia is a learning challenge marked by difficulties in word recognition and spelling due to a phonological deficit. Dyslexia includes various components, but phonological awareness is among the most affected in children. According to Manosalvas and Mishell (2021), phonological awareness develops between the ages of 4 and 8 years. This means neurocognitive issues can be identified early in children. With poor phonological awareness, dyslexic students struggle with tasks such as counting syllables, deleting, or replacing phonemes, leading to serious reading problems (Kuersten et al., 2020).

According to Monsrud and Andresen (2021), reading difficulties can have negative consequences in students such as poor academic performance and comprehension problems that end in a lack of motivation to learn and study the language. So, it is important to implement preventive programs or pedagogical activities to reduce problems of lack recognition of sounds and syllabic segmentation associated with dyslexia, especially in young children (Cuetos et al., 2017).

According to Ehri (2005), syllabic segmentation can help identify the syllables of a word so, children can join the syllables and recognize the word when reading. However, not identifying syllables could affect the child's reading speed and understanding. According to Anthony and Lonigan (2004), children who do not have the skill of syllabic segmentation affect the decoding of words. In syllable identification, Rasinski (2003) mentions that this helps children decode unknown words. Bishop and Snowling (2004) mention that having a deficit in syllable identification affects the combination of sounds. This indicates that recognizing the syllables of a word when reading is necessary to manage.

Ziegler and Goswami (2005) suggest that learning to separate words into different fragments helps children to pronounce the words. Troia (2010) suggests that being able to manipulate the final syllable makes children successful in reading and writing. Torgesen (2000) points out that without good syllable recognition, children cannot divide words into syllables. These authors emphasize the importance of recognizing syllables and their order within a word. Moser et al. (2009) mention that recognizing syllable placement is a fundamental process for producing and understanding language effectively. Therefore, it is essential for developing fundamental language skills such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening.

Molis et al. (2015) mention that the recognition of the initial syllable of a word contributes to enhancing phonological awareness to understanding oral language. Goswami (2015) suggests that being able to recognize the initial phoneme depends on the ability to identify and manipulate the sound fragments of a word. Kilpatrick (2015) mentions that the inability to omit initial phonemes is very common in children with dyslexia because it indicates the inability to divide words into phonemes and delete them. Goswami (2018) mentions that the phonemic synthesis contributes to children dividing words into sounds and understanding. Children with dyslexia often have difficulty processing sounds effectively. It affects their ability to recognize words. According to Kilpatrick (2015), phonemic synthesis is an indicator of successful reading as it demonstrates the ability to distinguish sounds and combine them to form a word.

This research is relevant because it allows teachers to recognize characteristics of dyslexia in children from 4 to 7 years old in the community context. It also provides the opportunity to understand the individual needs and facilitates the implementation of pedagogical strategies to reduce problems related to dyslexia, especially in the development of fundamental skills for learning such as reading and writing in learning the English language. It also helps teachers to promote an inclusive educational approach that fosters equal opportunities, ensuring that all students can reach their full academic and personal potential. So, the objective of this research is to identify EFL students with dyslexia in a context of community service, and the research questions are: What are the strengths and weaknesses of dyslexic students in phonological awareness and syllabic awareness? What is the percentage of children with dyslexia between the ages of 4 and 7?

Dyslexic students with learning disabilities often have trouble memorizing words, doing dialogues, or making grammatical errors in their writing. Tlustošová (2006) mentions that when a child has a learning disability, they tend to have problems learning the alphabet as well as words that rhyme or connecting letters with their sounds. It leads them to make many mistakes in writing and reading since they have very messy spelling. People who have learning difficulties were discovered through various questionnaires or tests conducted; these problems include dyslexia that is a serious problem in people's learning development.

Therefore, it is important to develop appropriate learning strategies for students with dyslexia. It is characterized by difficulties in recognizing words accurately and fluently, poor spelling and

decoding skills. People with dyslexia may also have difficulty with reading comprehension and may experience challenges in related areas such as writing, spelling, and sometimes even math. According to Tlustošová (2006) Some characteristics about dyslexia, problems identifying sounds within a word; confusing letters such as b and d, read or write or “won” for “now”, a person sometimes reads or writes incorrectly, has a slow, non-fluent, word-by-word reading, constantly losing place and skipping some letters.

Dyslexia has different degrees of severity and can affect each person in different ways. There are several types, such as Phonological Dyslexia (or Dysphonetic Dyslexia), a condition in which people are unable to break down words into their basic sound units, known as phonemes. Shaywitz (2003) states that phonological dyslexia are the most common because students have trouble breaking down words and identifying phonemes. It affects the ability to process and decode the sounds that make up words, which is why it is very important to read and understand.

Surface Dyslexia (or Dyseidetic Dyslexia) occurs when a person has trouble identifying complete words at a glance. Although words can be broken down into sounds, also called phonemes, and read phonetically, the person cannot read irregular words that do not follow a standard phonetic rule. Marshall and Newcombe (1973) People with surface dyslexia have difficulty recognizing complete words just by looking at them; they can read by spelling the letters; however, they have difficulty reading irregular words, that is, those that do not follow typical phonetic patterns. In addition, there is visual dyslexia, where people have difficulty interpreting and making sense of what they see with their eyes.

This type of dyslexia affects the brain's ability to understand visual information, it is characterized by having a difficulty following the order of words on a page, skipping lines or words, making reading confusing and frustrating as well as having a confusion of letters that seem similar such as "b" and "d" or "p" and "q", people with this type of dyslexia tend to write and read incorrectly due to phone confusion. Stein (2014), visual dyslexia, also known as visual processing disorder, affects the way the brain interprets visual information, this problem leads to people having incorrect reading and writing.

Then, Curricular adaptation is necessary to help dyslexic children improve their learning abilities in reading and writing. It can help identify and process sounds in words, provide reading support, writing assistance, extra time, and personalized instruction to ensure that they receive an equitable education. Flores (2022) Curricular adaptations were made as a solution to educational needs focused on dyslexia. Showing the importance of the curriculum according to the level of each student. The modifications made to the curriculum must be in response to the needs of each student so that it is a support for teachers when teaching their classes, taking into account the weaknesses of each student. By adapting the curriculum, schools manage to create a safe environment for all children with dyslexia so that they can feel motivated and be very involved in the classroom, in addition to reaching students with knowledge in a creative way, where children feel motivated to learn a second language.

Karimupfumbi & Dwarika (2022) mention audiovisual, multisensory, phonological-phonemic, interactive and game-based strategies that could be applied to students who present characteristics of dyslexia. With a multisensory strategy, the authors refer to the combination of two senses, visual and tactile. An example of this is that when teaching vocabulary, the teacher gives the students capital letters made of foam, cardboard, wood, or a similar material that they can modify and with these letters they form words. As students form the words, they are shown an image of the word they are forming.

The audiovisual strategy refers to applying activities to children such as word decomposition, memory games, or word construction and at the same time having students read the words they were learning. Another audiovisual strategy that is described is learning the sounds of syllables through rhymes and rhythm. In this way, students can see the syllables, hear them, and memorize them more easily since it helps students relate the letters or syllables with their corresponding sounds. And finally, the phonological-phonemic strategy focuses more on teaching the alphabet using resources such as phonetic charts or flashcards and audibly reproducing the sounds of each letter to develop the child's reading and writing skills and address common challenges, such as differentiating between letters such as "b" and "d."

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Approach

This research used a qualitative method to identify English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners with dyslexia, as the results obtained in the PEFCE test are displayed descriptively, analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of each participant. Creswell & Creswell (2017) highlight that qualitative research is characterized by collecting descriptive data, inductive analysis of texts and images, and objective and subjective interpretation of the results. The research contributed to describing the characteristics for identifying students with dyslexia. It is based on a descriptive method (Siegmond & Siedlecki, 2021). The purpose of this design is to describe individuals, events, or data being studied in nature.

Participants

The participants in this study were 32 students from the Popular English Schools program. There were 14 females and 18 males enrolled in general basic education from fourth to fifth grade. The participants' ages ranged from 4 to 7 years and 11 months. This course is located in the Guaytacama parish, El Calvario neighborhood. Informed consent was obtained from the participants' representative.

Data collection

The researchers explained the terms of the research to each participant's representative and they agreed to give their written consent. Each participant individually completed the assessment conducted by the researchers. Each participant provided their responses orally, and the researchers recorded them using a response matrix. The time to complete each instrument is 40 minutes per participant, which means that responses can be obtained from 4 to 5 children per day during the allotted time in the

"English Folk Schools" course. Data from all children could be collected within 5 weeks, as the instrument could only be administered on Saturdays when the children attended the aforementioned course.

The instrument used was the Phonological Awareness Evaluation Test (PECFO) by its acronym in Spanish. Varela & Barbieri (2013) developed an instrument designed to diagnose metalinguistic ability in children between 4 and 7 years with 11 months. This test is divided into two types of awareness: phonological awareness and syllabic awareness, that are in turn divided into categories. The PECFO instrument contains clear instructions in each category to be able to apply the test correctly, in addition, the test has examples and images to guide the participant.

PECFO Description

This instrument is divided into two sections: the first section, that is **Syllabic Awareness**, has six categories. *Syllabic segmentation* is the first category. This category assesses the child's ability to divide words into syllables. For this category, the Pre-service teacher tells the child to look at the drawing and explains: "It is an orange. The word orange can be divided into three parts: na-ran-ja." The Pre-service teacher explains to the child that he or she must put the number of lines according to the number of syllables. After the example, the Pre-service teacher says "now you do it," and continues explaining in the same way.

The second category of Syllabic Awareness is *Initial syllable identification*. This category assesses whether the child is able to recognize the first syllable of the word. For this category, the Pre-service teacher tells the child to look at the row of pictures and explains: "Here are: lápiz, lana, luna, nariz" while pointing to each picture. The Pre-service teacher has to say "The word lápiz begins with the syllable la, show me another picture that begins with the syllable la." After the example, the Pre-service teacher says "Let's continue with the next row of pictures", and continues explaining in the same way.

The third category of Syllabic Awareness is *Final syllable identification*. This category assesses the child's ability to recognize the last syllable. For this category, the Pre-service teacher tells the child to look at the row of pictures and explains: "Here are: gato, zapato, gota, sapo" while pointing to each picture. The Pre-service teacher has to say "The word gato ends with the syllable to, show me another picture that ends with the syllable to." After the example, the Pre-service teacher says "Let's continue with the next row of pictures," and continues explaining in the same way.

The fourth category is Syllabic Awareness is *Omission of initial syllable*. This category assesses the child's ability to recognize and eliminate the first syllable of words. For this category, the Pre-service teacher asks the child to look at the row of pictures and explains: "Here are: cortina, tina. If we remove the first syllable of the word cortina, that is, cor, we are left with the word tina." After the example, the Pre-service teacher says "Now look at the next row of pictures" and continues explaining in the same way.

The fifth category of Syllabic Awareness is *Final syllable omission*. This category assesses the child's ability to recognize and delete the last syllable of a word. For this category, the teacher asks the child to look at the row of pictures and explains: "Here they are: camarón, cama. If we remove the last syllable of the word camarón, that is, rón, we are left with the word cama." After the example, the teacher says, "Now look at the next row of pictures" and continues explaining in the same way.

The final category of Syllabic Awareness is *Syllabic inversion*. This test evaluates the child's ability to identify the syllables that make up the word. For this category, the Pre-service teacher asks the child to look at the row of pictures saying "Here are: silla, sopa, llave" pointing to each picture and explains: "Listen carefully because I am going to say one of the words that are drawn here backwards and you have to guess what word it is and point out its picture" and continues saying "For example, I say llasi, show me which of the words drawn here are said backwards." After the example, the Pre-service teacher must continue repeating the same instructions.

The second section of this instrument is Phonemic Awareness, it contains four categories. Each category contains five items. *Identification of the initial phoneme* is the first category. This category assesses the child's ability to recognize the initial phoneme of the word. For this category, the Pre-service teacher asks the child to look at the row of pictures and explains: "Here they are: pato, casa, boca, pelo" while pointing to each picture. The Pre-service teacher has to say "The word pato starts with the sound p". (The sound must be made, not the name of the letter) "Show me another picture that starts with the sound P" "Now look at this row", and continue explaining in the same way.

The second category is *Final phoneme identification*. This category assesses whether the child is able to recognize the last phoneme of words. For this category, the Pre-service teacher asks the child to look at the row of pictures and explains: "Here they are: sol, mar, sal, pan" while pointing to each picture. The teacher has to say "The word sol ends with the sound L" (He tells the child the sound of the letter, not the name). "Show him what other picture ends its name with the sound L". After the example, the Pre-service teacher says "Now you, look at this row" and continues explaining in the same way.

The third category is *Omission of the initial phoneme*. It is assessed whether the child can identify the initial phoneme of the word and eliminate it. For this category, the Pre-service teacher asks the child to look at the row of pictures and explains: "Here are: barco, arco, almohada, oso. If we take away the "b" sound from the word barco, it becomes the word arco." After the example, the Pre-service teacher says: "Now look at the next row of pictures" and continues explaining in the same way.

The final category is *Phonemic synthesis*. This category assesses the child's ability to identify the sounds of the letters that make up the word. For this category, the Pre-service teacher asks the child to look at the row of pictures and explains: "Here they are: loro, toro, lobo. The word lobo has four sounds l-o-b-o. I am going to tell you only the sounds of the word and you have to show the picture of the word that I told you." After the example, the Pre-service teacher says: "Now look at the next row of pictures" and continues explaining in the same way.

Adaptation of the test to Latin America

Manosalvas & Mishell (2021) argue that there is still no instrument in Ecuador to diagnose metaphonological ability, which is why they decided to adapt the PECFO test, which is of Chilean origin, to be able to be applied in an Ecuadorian context.

For this reason, the instrument of this research is the adaptation developed by Manosalvas & Mishell (2021). However, the images of the instrument were modified and validated by Mercedes Abata, Mg, and Paulina Arias, PhD.

The process began with each participant individually completing the assessment conducted by the researchers. The students received individual guidance. Each participant provided their responses orally, and the researchers recorded them using a response matrix. Each instrument took 40 minutes to complete, meaning responses could be obtained from four to five children per day during the allotted time of the English Popular Schools course.

The PECFO instrument contains a table for calculating results and defining whether participants have dyslexia.

- Normal, between the 25th and 75th percentiles or higher.
- At risk, between the 25th and 10th percentiles.
- Deficit, below the 10th percentile.

Table 1

Percentiles to identify Dyslexic students

Percentiles	Percentil 10	Percentil 25	Percentil 50	Percentil 75	Percentil 90
4 a 4 años 11 meses	12 ptos.	16 ptos.	22 ptos.	26 ptos.	32 ptos.
5 a 5 años 11 meses	20 ptos.	25 ptos.	29 ptos.	33 ptos.	39 ptos.
6 a 6 años 11 meses	27 ptos.	34 ptos.	39 ptos.	41 ptos.	47 ptos.
7 a 7 años 11 meses	35 ptos.	41 ptos.	44 ptos.	47 ptos.	49 ptos.

Note : Varela. V. et. al. (S.A) PECFO Prueba de Evaluación de Conciencia Fonológica. EDICIONES UC.
<https://es.scribd.com/document/333009340/Manual-Aplicacion-Pecfo-pdf>

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Tabla 2

Participants with dyslexic characteristics

Code	Age	Syllabic awareness						Phonemic awareness				Total		
		Syllabic segmentation	Syllable identification	Final syllable identification	Omission of initial syllable	Omission of final syllable	Syllabic inversion	Initial phoneme identification	Final phoneme identification	Omission of initial phoneme	Phonemic synthesis	Total	Percentiles	%
S-1	7	5	0	0	2	1	1	3	2	0	2	16	10	15,625
S-2	6	4	2	1	1	5	1	3	2	1	3	23	10	
S-3	7	5	4	3	3	4	3	2	2	3	5	34	10	
S-4	5	1	1	1	2	0	2	1	1	2	2	13	10	
S-5	6	0	1	5	1	3	3	1	3	1	4	22	10	
S-6	7	5	3	0	0	2	1	2	3	2	5	23	10	6,25
S-7	7	3	4	0	0	1	1	1	1	3	1	15	10	
Total														21,88

The results in Table 1 show that 7 students exhibit characteristics of dyslexia. The students scored in the 10th percentile according to the table used to evaluate the results, which indicates that if a participant scores in the 10th percentile or lower, they have dyslexia. These students represent 21.88% of the student body. Of this group of students, 15.63% are female and 6.25% are male. Of the students with dyslexia, 4 participants are 7 years old, 3 are 6 years old, and one participant is 5 years old.

The results answer the question: What are the strengths and weaknesses of dyslexic students in phonological awareness and syllabic awareness?

Students presented strengths and weaknesses in each part of the PEFCO test. The students obtained these strengths because at the beginning of each question they were given an example of how to carry out the activity and give their answer. Their strengths lie in the fact that four participants (S-1, S-2, S-3, S-6) obtained an adequate score in syllable segmentation. Syllable segmentation refers to the ability to separate syllables to begin reading and writing in any language.

Ehri (2005) states that syllable segmentation plays an important role in the development of reading, contributing to good phonological awareness. In the identification of the first syllable, two

students (S-3 and S-7) obtained a 4. This indicates a good mastery of syllable identification. This score is normal and important for a child to read and write correctly. According to Rasinski (2003), syllable identification helps children decode words well. In the final syllable identification category, one participant (S-5) scored correctly. Vazeux et al. (2020) Syllables play an important role in the reading process, as readers activate phonological syllables. Recognizing initial, medial, and final syllables is important for successful reading and writing. In the final syllable omission category, two participants (S-2 and S-3) scored adequately. This represents a strength in reading. Troia (2010) states that phonological manipulations, such as final syllable omission, are important for success in reading and writing.

The students also showed deficiencies in each part of the test, such as syllable segmentation, first syllable identification, last syllable identification, initial syllable omission, final syllable omission, syllable reversal, initial phoneme identification, final phoneme identification, initial phoneme omission, and phoneme synthesis. The students had deficiencies in this part because they were not pre-tested for dyslexia. In syllable segmentation, three participants (S-4, S-5, and S-7) scored between 0 and 3. Syllable segmentation is the ability to separate syllables. Anthony and Lonigan (2004) reported that a deficiency in syllable segmentation made word decoding difficult and impaired spelling and reading development. In initial syllable identification, four participants (S-1, S-2, S-4, S-5, and S-6) scored low. This impairs their reading skills. Bishop and Snowling (2004) stated that poor syllable identification skills are often due to phonological processing.

This makes it difficult to blend and segment sounds. The lack of proper sound blending leads to reading difficulties. In the final syllable identification, six participants (S-1, S-2, S-3, S-4, S-6, S-7) scored very low. This can make word segmentation difficult. Torgesen (2000) observed that children are unable to decode unfamiliar words because they do not recognize the first syllable. This leads to slower development of reading and writing.

In the omission of the initial syllable, all participants obtained a very low score, which hinders their success in reading and writing. Lane and Pullen (2011) Children with problems deleting initial syllables tend to have difficulties manipulating and segmenting the sounds in words, which makes their reading and writing difficult. In the omission of the final syllable. 5 participants (S-1, S-4, S-5, S.6, S7) obtained a low score.

The difficulty in identifying the last syllable affects the child's pronunciation, reading and writing. Preston & Edwards (2010) Having a lower phonological awareness is associated with having a smaller receptive vocabulary and with errors in reading and writing. In syllable inversion, all participants showed a low level, with a score ranging from 1 to 3. This demonstrates a poor ability to identify words with inverted syllables and problems ordering the syllables in a word. According to Moser et al. (2009), the ability to order the syllables in a word is a fundamental process in language production and comprehension.

Similarly, in initial phoneme identification, all the participants showed a score between 1 and 3. It shows the poor ability to identify the initial sound of a word. Molis et al. (2015) mention that it is very important to have the ability to identify the initial phoneme of words since if this skill is affected, problems develop in understanding oral language. Final phoneme identification is another category in which all participants showed poor proficiency, scoring between 1 and 3. Goswami (2015) suggests that the inability to identify the final phoneme is a very common characteristic in people with dyslexia, as it presents difficulties in recognizing and manipulating sound structures.

Another category that the children tested found difficult was initial phoneme omission. In this case, participants scored between 0 and 3. Kilpatrick (2015) suggests that initial phoneme omission is often difficult for children with dyslexia, as it requires a great skill in segmenting and deleting phonemes.

Finally, in the phonemic synthesis category, four students (S-1, S-2, S-4, S-7) scored poorly, scoring between 1 and 3. This demonstrates difficulty processing the sounds in a word. According to Goswami (2018), the ability to identify the sounds in a word depends on the speed and efficiency of a child's auditory processing. Children with dyslexia often have deficiencies in sound processing, which limits their ability to correctly follow the sequence of sounds and identify the word.

Finally, in the phonemic synthesis category, three students (S-3, S-5, S-6) scored adequately, between 4 and 5 points, indicating an optimal ability to identify the sounds in a word. Kilpatrick (2015) suggests that phonemic synthesis is a fundamental skill in early reading. It allows children to combine individual sounds to form whole words. This ability facilitates the decoding of unfamiliar words and is a strong indicator of good reading skills.

To answer the second question, what is the percentage of children between the ages of 4 and 7 with dyslexia, the total number of students in the population was taken into account, along with the students with the lowest scores, to obtain a percentage of 21.88%, which represents the students who obtained a percentile of 10, which shows that they have characteristics of dyslexia.

CONCLUSIONS

Dyslexia is a learning disability that can affect people of different ages and their abilities to read and write. The results showed that 7 young learners from a sample of 32 have characteristics of dyslexia. They obtained scores on the 10th percentile. It indicates that children presented more symptoms of dyslexia in phonemic awareness than syllabic awareness. The findings showed some strengths in syllable segmentation, first syllable identification, final syllable identification, and final syllable omission. On the other hand, there were weaknesses in phoneme identification, final phoneme identification, initial phoneme omission, and phoneme synthesis. It means that teachers need to recognize the characteristics of dyslexic students to focus on enhancing syllabic awareness and phonemic awareness using pedagogical strategies and activities to avoid difficulty in reading and writing, and to be slow learners. Therefore, it is suggested that teachers focus on these learning

disabilities to create activities that lead to optimal learning and improve reading and writing skills. For future research, it is recommended that teachers implement the PECFO test in schools to determine the number of students with dyslexia and implement activities that allow them to strengthen their reading and writing skills.

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