



# The inclusion of students with dyslexia. Proposals for good practices[1]

## **Maria, Drossinou- Korea, Dr Psychology,**

exterior scientific collaborator for students with special educational needs and disabilities in Agricultural University of Athens (AUA), Deputy in the Pedagogic Institute.

Contact Address: Iera Odos 75, 11855 Athens, Greece, Phone:030 210 529 4818 Mobile: 6931730520

**E-mail: [drossinou@hotmail.com](mailto:drossinou@hotmail.com), [career.drossinou@aua.gr](mailto:career.drossinou@aua.gr), [mdros@pi-schools.gr](mailto:mdros@pi-schools.gr)**

**[1] Friday, 17th June 2011, 16.45 – 18.00. Sessions 4 – 6 (each participant may choose 1 of the following 3 Sessions).**

**Session 6** • Drossinou-Korea, M. (Oral Presentation), The inclusion of students with dyslexia. Proposals for good practices. Fedora, Summer University in Ioannina, Greece, June 16-18 (<http://www.fedorasu2011.eu/>)

# Abstract



- Internationally, the number of dyslexic students entering in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is estimated that represent a small but significant minority. The purpose of the longitude study was to investigate the inclusion factors that affect of cases' students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs) in the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA) and provides a brief overview of some good practices for inclusion.
- Data were collected using individual educational supporting sessions with the 60 students who had received an official diagnosis of dyslexia and who we have met the last nine years (2002-2011) through the career office' services.
- The results of the study are indicating the proposals for good inclusion practices and are discussed in the light of inclusive education and equality of opportunity for students (SLDs) in (HEIs) with emphasis the forms of examinations and generic counseling. Especially, the oral has helped 10 cases with enormous (SLDs) to reading, writing the theoretical issues of the lessons, the mixed form of oral, reading, writing, computing examinations has helped 40 cases with mild (SLDs) to reading, writing the theoretical issues and the laboratory 'works of the lessons. Finally, the formal form has helped 10 cases with minor (SLDs) to reading, writing the theoretical and laboratory issues of the lessons.

# Introduction



- Internationally, the number of dyslexic students entering in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is estimated that represent a small but significant minority.
- According the studies for the inclusion factors, we examine a brief overview of some good practices for inclusion.

# In the light of the current knowledge

- The life experiences of individuals with dyslexia can throw light on how support for neurodiversity in the Higher Education Institutions and can be constructed under new directions.
- In the light of the current knowledge, dyslexia as the longitude study has a connection with the inclusion factors from the childhood issue (Bartlett and Moody, 2000; McLoughlin, Leather and Stringer, 2002; Rose, 2009).

# Education supporting programs and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

- **Greek Constitution**, (Article 22 [Work, Social Security]).

- The rapidly evolving demands of the 21st century Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have focused the attention of education supporting programs providing an appropriately skilled workforce to ensure economic prosperity of communities (Kalantzi-Azizi, Rott, Aherne, (1997).
- Also, decrees and laws ensure vocational rehabilitation for people with disabilities and also prepare the grounds for the labour market in order to welcome the people with disabilities. The participation in work constitutes a right and is under the protection of the State.
- Additionally the state applies measures from the perspective of establishing appropriate conditions for the full employment joined with moral, ethical and financial support for the working agricultural and urban population.



## "Special Education and education of people with disability or special educational needs" The Greek Law 3699/2008

- The Greek Government has adopted and implemented the United Nation's Laws in terms of equal opportunities by all means and the legislation of the European Union, which refers to education, medicare, provision, and vocational rehabilitation for the people with disabilities.
- According the Law 3699/2008 "Special Education and education of people with disability or special educational needs" where special needs are defined as follows:
- The Difficulties in learning, due to sensory, intellectual, cognitive, developmental, mental and neuropsychiatric disorders which are localized after a scientific and pedagogical evaluation. These difficulties influence the process of learning and school adjustment.
- Pupils with who have disabilities in motion, vision, hearing, who suffer from chronic diseases, disorders in speech, attention deficit, and all pervasive developmental disorders are considered as having special educational needs.
- As special needs are also considered behaviors due to complex factors, i.e. cognitive, sentimental, mental and social disadvantages deriving from the family and social environment.

# The Purpose



- This paper draws on naturalistic research into the experiences of students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs) or dyslexia and examines the significance of their inclusion factors that affect in the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA).
- Also, it provides a brief overview of some good practices for inclusion through their career supporting.
- The implications of these findings are discussed and are made recommendations.



# Theoretical background to the study

- There is still no single conclusive definition of dyslexia (British Psychological Society, 1999).
- Assessment in the Greek education system commonly employs the working definition, which implicates a persistent difficulty with reading and spelling at word level, despite appropriate education opportunities.



# Theoretical background to the study

- However, the more expansive definition provided by the British Dyslexia Association (2007),
  - including underlying dyslexic differences in information processing,
  - embraces more fully the spectrum of difficulties (Miles, 1993)
- now known to be implicated in dyslexia and that have more significance for many students.

## **Theoretical background to the study**

**1. Disability Discrimination Act, (1995)**

**2. Singleton and the National Working Party on Dyslexia in Higher Education (1999)**

**3. Commission For Disabled Staff In Lifelong Learning, (2008).**

- The incidence of dyslexia in the students is an important reason why it should be taken very seriously.
- In England, it is estimated that between 4% (McLoughlin et al., 1994) and 10% (Fitzgibbon and O'Connor, 2002) of the adult population is affected by dyslexia.

-

## **Theoretical background to the study**

**1. Disability Discrimination Act, (1995)**

**2. Singleton and the National Working Party on Dyslexia in Higher Education (1999)**

**3. Commission For Disabled Staff In Lifelong Learning, (2008).**

- Studies of higher education students led to the conclusion that
- many adults did not have Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs) or dyslexia diagnosed in childhood:
- found that 43% of students with dyslexia were diagnosed only
- after they began their university career.

# The inclusion factors\_ the social model of disability ,



- The inclusion factors, that affect of cases' students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs) can be related to **the social model of disability** (Barnes and Mercer, 2006),
- which suggests a realignment of the definition of disability, arguing that although individual impairments exist,
- these only become disabling because of the nature of society and its institutions .

# The inclusion factors\_ the medical model,



- In contrast, the medical model
- requires the individual to take responsibility for their disability and make the necessary adjustments to their behaviour in order to fit in with the expectations of society.
- Dyslexia in the Agricultural University can be framed in this way.

# The problem



- The increasing demands of employment in terms of organisational skills and literacy,

students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs) or dyslexia as adults with dyslexia

- **are disadvantaged**

when seeking work or functioning in the workplace

# Methodology\_ the career office' se



- This paper reports a qualitative research study carried out with the 60 students who had received an official diagnosis of dyslexia and we have met the last nine years (2002-2011) through the career office' services.
- The intention was to discover how the inclusion of students with dyslexia had impacted on the lives of this group and what sort of experiences in their working lives related to their understanding of dyslexia in the AUA.
- An ethical code informed the investigation.



# Methodology\_ life study stories



- The nature of dyslexia and the motivation to allow these students as adults a voice initially led the researcher to accept the participants' decision to permit their own names to be used.
- The project examined how the data were collected using individual educational supporting sessions, and how their life study stories and current situations had been affected by this.

# Methodology\_ The research design



- The research design
- was influenced by educational and social constructivism
- in which the nature of the reality of the world of the HEIs is not a fixed phenomenon and
- it is actually made up of accepted norms or structures constructed by the people within it (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007).

# The hypothesis of research\_

- 1. This paper concentrates a small part of the findings that relate to transitions from upper secondary education into HEIs and throughout career in AUA, with attention paid to whether dyslexia can produce a cycle of the Specific Learning Difficulties related disadvantage in the lives of students.
- 2. The difficulties that students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs) or dyslexia encounter when their school and University experience fails to equip them and may indeed actively discourage them from seeking appropriate HEIs (Drossinou, 2004, 2005, 2006).

# The hypothesis of research

3. We are discussed good inclusion practices for the cases' students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs) in the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA)

as the using the forms of examinations and generic counselling with:

- the oral way,
- the mixed form of oral, reading, writing, computing examinations and
- the formal form of examinations.



# The data

- Data were collected using individual educational supporting sessions
- **with the 60 students**
- who had received an official diagnosis of dyslexia and
- who we have met the last nine years (2002-2011) through the career office' services



# Table 1. The sample \_ The participants' educational histories

Participants of <u>AUA</u>	Gender		Age of dyslexia diagnosis	Provider of diagnosis			Age of students (MD)
	Female	Male		a. the Diagnostic Evaluation and Support Centres ( <u>KEDDY</u> ), L.3699/2008 or Centres of Diagnosis Evaluation and Support ( <u>KDAY</u> ), L.2817/2000 _ministry of education			
				b. Medical –Pedagogical Diagnosis- ministry of health			
				c. others diagnosis			
				a	b	c	
60 students	15	45	12.-45	40	15	5	25,7
2		2	19.-50		2		43
10	3	7	12	5	2	3	12
5	2	3	14-15	4	1		14,6
35	5	30	16-17	30	5		16,2
8	2	6	8-15	4	2	2	13

# Inclusive findings\_I



- A number of themes emerged from the analysis of this data relating to diagnosis and disclosure of
- dyslexia;
- students rights;
- individual or group support;
- the influence of significant others; and
- the effect of dyslexia on these students in AUA scientific lessons settings.



# Inclusive findings\_2



- The results of the study are indicating the proposals for good inclusion practices and
  - are discussed in the light of inclusive education
  - and equality of opportunity for students SLDs in HEIs
- **with emphasis the forms of examinations and generic counselling.**

## Table 2. Proposals for good practices according the forms of examinations and generic counselling

the forms of examinations and generic counselling	Specific learning difficulties (SLDs)	Number cases of good inclusion practices
-a. the oral	enormous (SLDs) to reading, writing the theoretical issues of the lessons	10 cases
-b. the mixed form of oral, reading, writing, computing examinations	mild (SLDs) to reading, writing the theoretical issues and the laboratory works of the lessons.	40 cases
-c. the formal form	minor (SLDs) to reading, writing the theoretical and laboratory issues of the lessons.	10 cases

# The “good proposals” as the inclusion practices\_I

- 1. the **oral** has helped
- **10 cases**
- with enormous (SLDs)
- to reading, writing the theoretical issues of the lessons,

# I. The oral way examinations

- These findings, the oral formal form of examinations, highlighted the difficulties for ten (10) cases' students with enormous Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs) or dyslexia encounter the low self-esteem caused by years of failure to thrive in the school system (Burden, 2005; Edwards, 1994; Morgan and Klein, 2000).
- Many students with dyslexia are reluctant to risk embarrassment by applying for promotion even when encouraged to do so by the close staff of AUA.
- They could not understand the meaning of enormous SLDs to reading, writing the theoretical issues of the lessons.

# The “good proposals” as the inclusion practices\_2

- 2. the **mixed** form
- of oral, reading, writing, computing examinations
- **has helped 40 cases with mild (SLDs)**
- to reading, writing the theoretical issues and the laboratory works of the lessons.

## 2. The mixed form of oral, reading, writing, computing examinations

- These findings, the mixed form of oral, reading, writing, computing of examinations, highlighted the difficulties for forty (40) cases' students with mild Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs) or dyslexia encounter the evaluation of their potential based on what they could not do rather than what they could do.
- Because of regulations aiming to professionalise the lessons, they accessed support from a special class for literacy and 'Skills for Life' .
- The supporting of sessions which provided by the career office of AUA, were able to achieve as an adult, when their difficulties were acknowledged and they contrasted their lack of attainment and reading and writing at University.

# The “good proposals” as the inclusion practices\_3

- 3. The **formal** form
- has helped 10 cases with minor (SLDs)
- to reading, writing the theoretical and laboratory issues of the lessons.



### 3. The formal form of examinations

- These findings, the formal form of reading, writing the theoretical and laboratory issues of the examinations, highlighted the difficulties for ten (10) cases' students with minor Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs) or dyslexia encounter the when their school experience fails to equip them and may indeed actively discourage them from seeking appropriate help and support.
- In the developed world, during childhood, the acquisition of knowledge and skills occurs in specialist environments (schools) and facilitated by specially trained and designated teachers. These findings exposed such opportunities as a double-edged sword that can be either a barrier or an opportunity for a student with dyslexia. .

# The results



- The results of the study are indicating the proposals for good inclusion practices and are discussed in the light of inclusive education and equality of opportunity for students (SLDs) in (HEIs) with emphasis the forms of examinations and generic counseling.
- Especially,
- we are discussed good inclusion practices for the cases' students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs) in the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA) as the using the forms of examinations and generic counselling with: -the oral way, -the mixed form of oral, reading, writing, computing examinations and - the formal form of examinations.

# **The Agricultural University of Athens (AUA) with “two words” .....**

## **....is the third oldest university in Greece.**



- Current pedagogical practice in inclusive HEIs takes into account individual learning preferences (Reid, 2005).
- The Agricultural University of Athens (AUA) is the third oldest university in Greece. Since 1920, it has been making valuable contributions to Greek and European agricultural and economic development, by conducting basic and applied research in the agricultural sciences, and by producing high quality graduates as well as cutting edge scientific knowledge.
- Between them, the current psycho - pedagogical inclusion practices for the students with SLDs, since 2002.

# Conclusions\_I



- The support for students with dyslexia, particularly at points of transition, should encourage metacognition and recognition of strengths and weaknesses.
- Individuals will then be able to use these in setting goals for suitable training.

# Conclusions\_ II



- One potential source of support for students with dyslexia is the workshops for the memory techniques should address the needs of all with dyslexia, including those with persistent literacy difficulties, in relation to their lives and way of studies.
- The needs of working individuals are likely to be completely different from those experienced in an educational environment.

# Further research\_I



- In Greece, government support attaches funding to the individual. This encourages a medical model of dyslexia, where the adult themselves must take responsibility for their successful adaptation to their examination. Funding bodies should consider ways of finance to businesses and institutions to help them create and encourage inclusive learning cultures.
- Further research is needed to examine students' attitudes and inclusion practices, and the nature of dyslexia-friendly workplaces. Models of good inclusive practice should be established, so that this can be embedded into the normal HEIs systems and procedures.

## Further research\_II



- Research could develop case studies and training packs to help those supporting students with dyslexia in transition to and through HEI's studies, and could be part of the induction packages offered by employers.
- To conclude, we have discussed the learning and support needs of students with dyslexia in further and higher education proposing "good" inclusive practices regarding assessment and special education support.



# The most important message



**The most important message that  
can be taken from this study is  
that adopting a dyslexia-friendly approach  
to pedagogy  
in further and HEIs  
which is not only of benefit to the dyslexic  
students but  
is also 'good for all students'.**

# References



- Abramson, L., Seligman, M. & Teasdale, P. (1978) 'Learned helplessness in humans: a critique and reformulation. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 87 (1), pp. 49–74.
- Bell, S. (2010), Inclusion for adults with dyslexia: examining the transition periods of a group of adults in England: '*Clever is when you come to a brick wall and you have got to get over it without a ladder.*'. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 10: 216–226.
- Blakemore, S-J. & Frith, U. (2005) *The Learning Brain: Lessons for Education*. London: Blackwell Publishing.
- British Dyslexia Association (BDA) (2007) Dyslexia Definition [Online]. Bracknell: BDA. < <http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/researchp.html>> (accessed 18 November 2008).
- British Educational Research Association (BERA) (2004) *Revised Ethical Guidelines*. Nottingham: BERA.
- British Psychological Society (1999) *Dyslexia, Literacy and Psychological Assessment*. Leicester: BPS.
- Burden, R. (2005) *Dyslexia and Self-Concept: Seeking a Dyslexic Identity*. London: Whurr.
- Chris Singleton, C., Horne J. and Simmons, F. (2009). Computerized screening for dyslexia in adults. *Journal of Research in Reading*, Vol. 32, (1), pp 137–152.)
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2007) *Research Methods in Education*. (6th edn). Oxford: Routledge.
- Drossinou, M. (2006) Advisory Intervention in the Agricultural University of Athens. Individualised Supporting Programs of Special Education in Students with Training Difficulties and Dyslexia. *Inspection Advisory and Orientation, ([ELE.SYP])*, 76-77, pp. 31-48. Ed. Greek Letters.
- Kalantzi-Azizi, A., G. Rott, D. Aherne, (1997). *Psychological Counselling in Higher Education - "Umgang mit Lern- und Prüfungsproblemen"* Ed. Austrian Ministry of Sciences.
- Singleton, C. & the National Working Party on Dyslexia in Higher Education (1999) *Dyslexia in Higher Education: Policy, Provision and Practice*. Hull: The University of Hull.
- Stampoltzi, A. (2003) The import of students with dyslexia in the third degree education and professional you direct them: A pilot research. *Inspection of Advisory - Orientation, ([ELE.SYP])*, 64-65, pp.109-119
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2008) *International Literacy Statistics: A Review of Concepts, Methodology and Current Data*. Montreal, Canada: Institute for Statistics.
- Scott, R. (2004) *Dyslexia and Counselling*. London: Whurr.
- Greek Ministry of Education for Lifelong Learning And Religions - Pedagogic Institute (2011) [Online]. < <http://www.pi-schools.gr> of/ Department of Special Education and Education of/Activities of Training Readiness, Book of Teacher of Special Education and Education