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Reimagining Literacy: Supporting Polish Students Learning English with Dyslexia

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Abstract

We were not born equipped to read. Literacy is a learned skill, and for many students, especially those with Dyslexia, acquiring it is a significant challenge. This is particularly true for Polish students learning English as a second language (ESL), as the complexity of English orthography creates unique difficulties for learners with Dyslexia. Research indicates that many students who graduate from Ontario schools and beyond with insufficient literacy skills must improve their literacy skills for full participation in society. These gaps highlight the need for structured, evidence-based approaches to teaching literacy.

As Rosa Luxemburg famously stated, “*The most revolutionary thing one can do is always to proclaim loudly what is happening.*” This paper proclaims the necessity of reimagining literacy education for dyslexic ESL learners. It introduces the *Dyslexia in the ESL Classroom* method, designed specifically for dyslexic Polish students learning English. Grounded in the science of reading and integrating principles of structured literacy, the method incorporates techniques such as orthographic mapping, phonological awareness, and morphological analysis. This approach systematically guides learners through the phases of reading development by addressing word recognition, decoding accuracy, and fluency.

The findings emphasize that the challenges faced by dyslexic Polish students stem from both the differences between Polish and English orthographies and the lack of explicit, systematic instruction in traditional teaching methods. The *Dyslexia in the ESL Classroom* method fills this gap, providing a framework that bridges linguistic differences and supports dyslexic learners in mastering English. This structured approach benefits all students but is particularly transformative for those with Dyslexia, enabling them to overcome barriers and achieve fluency in English.

Keywords: Dyslexia, English as a Second Language, Science of Reading, Orthographic Mapping, Structured Literacy, Polish-English Learners