

# The Use of Effective Strategies to Improve Saudi EFL Dyslexic Learners' Writing Skills

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**Abstract**—The use of techniques and strategies is instrumental in teaching different language skills to physically and mentally healthy learners; however, the importance of devising special techniques and strategies to teach dyslexic learners cannot be denied in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Dyslexic learners have difficulties particularly in the recognition of words and putting them into writing. Based on the review of previous works and contexts, the present study aims at implementing the two strategies, i.e., multisensory and chunking, to improve Saudi EFL dyslexic learners' writing skills. The work utilized a qualitative method to collect the data from the participants, i.e., four EFL teachers. Structured interviews were conducted with four EFL teachers from the 'Alkhamisah Ashrah' primary school to collect the data and apply the strategies, i.e., multisensory and chunking, to dyslexic learners and see their impacts on dyslexic learners' writing skill. The study was conducted to develop awareness among parents and society at large about the learning difficulties and needs of dyslexic learners. In addition to this, the study aims to draw the attention of the Ministry of Education, educational institutions, researchers, and pedagogues to measure the academic needs of Saudi EFL dyslexic learners by devising different strategies. Furthermore, the study provides recommendations for the establishment of special schools, infrastructural facilities, well trained teachers, a rubric of strategies, special curriculum, and syllabus to meet the academic needs and enhance comprehension and writing abilities of Saudi EFL dyslexic learners.

**Index Terms**—EFL, learning English, Saudi Arabia, strategies, dyslexic learners, writing skill

## I. INTRODUCTION

In everyday life, we come across many learners with disabilities who cannot utilize the opportunities of life like their healthy counterparts. Needless to say, every child is a unique human being; however, some suffer from certain physical or mental disabilities that take them away from living a normal life. Dyslexic learners fall into the category of such learners. In the past, they were perceived as lazy learners who lagged behind in the classroom despite having outstanding abilities in various other fields (Team, 2018). This attitude took those learners away from their academic careers and led to the deterioration of their interest and self-esteem. Later on, the poor performance of such learners caught the attention of educational institutions, pedagogues, and researchers who probed into the matter and highlighted their problems and needs.

Dyslexia is a type of specific learning difficulty identifiable as a developmental difficulty of language learning and cognition. It is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory, and processing speed. It is significant that a considerable number of famous people, such as Leonardo da Vinci, Albert Einstein, Agatha Christie, Walt Disney, Pablo Picasso, Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, and John Lennon, had broken their speech. Dyslexics included politicians such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Winston Churchill, and John Kennedy. However, the condition did not prevent these people from becoming famous and influential personalities.

Learners with dyslexic disabilities are not always easy to diagnose. Sometimes it seems difficult to parent a child who is lazy. However, with the right approach, a child with dyslexia can be turned into a pure genius. After all, these learners have highly developed creative abilities and intuition. Therefore, an in-depth study is needed to help in providing practical strategies for developing skills for reading and writing to ensure an active and successful life for learners with dyslexia. This study will investigate the use of effective strategies to improve dyslexic learners' writing skills.

Objectives:

**The objectives of the study are to:**

- a. Identify effective functions of multisensory and chunking strategies to help promote Saudi EFL dyslexic learners' learning proficiency;
- b. Enhance Saudi EFL dyslexic learners' writing ability;
- c. Promote awareness among teachers of the effectiveness of multisensory and chunking strategies for dyslexic learners.

Research questions

It is noted that in any area of inquiry, research questions play a vital role in identifying the problem and determining the focus of the researcher on its possible solution. The research questions provide the backbone of any study and help

to distinguish innovative work by new researchers from previous attempts carried out in the same area. More precisely, research questions determine the delimitations of any study and lead the researcher to bridge the gap by introducing novel dimensions. The research questions envisaged for the present study were:

1. What are the different writing skill difficulties faced by Saudi EFL dyslexic learners and what strategies do we need to use to improve their writing skills?
2. What are the impacts of multisensory and chunking strategies on the writing skills, and particularly on the vocabulary learning, of Saudi EFL dyslexic learners?

#### **Statement of the problem**

Research on dyslexic learners has long been neglected in the domain of teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia as all efforts have been exerted towards developing the English proficiency of normal learners. The present study focuses on the implementation of two strategies, namely multisensory and chunking, to help develop Saudi EFL (English as Foreign Language) dyslexic learners' writing skills. It has been noticed that numerous researchers have discovered that foreign/second language teachers who employed numerous strategies to teach different skills to dyslexic learners were not only able to improve their skills but also achieved outstanding academic results.

In this section, a quick glance at the related studies conducted to improve the writing skills of dyslexic learners has provided a sketch of the relevant works of different researchers on dyslexic learners as, before undertaking an in-depth study of the topic in hand, it is important to know what has already been explored and what still needs to be.

1. Studies in the field of improving the language skills of dyslexic learners have been carried out for approximately six decades.
2. So far, in Saudi Arabia insufficient studies have been conducted in this field whilst in other countries this topic is attributed greater importance and explored at a higher level. Among the relevant studies, the work of Cimermanova (2015), entitled '*Teaching English as a foreign language to dyslexic learners*', is very significant. The study focuses on the use of different multisensory strategies to improve dyslexic learners' writing skills through clay, wiki sticks, and writing on colored sand.
3. Similarly, Hammond and Hercules (2016) used the chunking strategy in their paper, entitled '*Understanding dyslexia: An introduction for dyslexic learners in higher education*', to improve the vocabulary of dyslexic learners. Their study aimed to use the chunking strategy that subdivides the letters of vocabulary items in different colors, enabling dyslexic learners to easily identify different colors and memorize spellings of different words.

The focus of previous inquiries in the background to these studies was on the improvement of dyslexic learners' vocabulary and writing skills and how the learners can efficiently write about any given idea. However, to date in Saudi Arabia no research has been conducted in this area so this study is focusing on the implementation and impacts of these strategies on EFL Saudi dyslexic learners' writing skills. The need of the hour is a thorough implementation of these strategies to enhance EFL Saudi dyslexic learners' motivation and improve their writing skills.

#### **Rationale of the study**

The research in hand is an attempt to encourage new researchers to apply different strategies to improve Saudi EFL dyslexic learners' writing skills. The present study focuses on the implementation of multisensory and chunking strategies on Saudi EFL dyslexic learners. The multisensory strategy utilizes different tools to stimulate the senses and make the learners perform robustly whilst the chunking strategy subdivides the vocabulary items into different colors and parts and enhances dyslexic learners' ability to identify those particular expressions. So far, no special primary and secondary schools have been working in the Kingdom to educate Saudi EFL dyslexic learners and meet their academic needs. For this reason, the study proposes a set of recommendations for the Ministry of Education, policy makers, academic institutions, and pedagogues to bring reforms in this domain.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section aims at suggesting strategies to improve Saudi dyslexic learners' writing skills. This part of the research contextualizes my work within a wide range of appropriate contexts to analyze discursive dimensions of the previous works, indicating the 'focus' and 'limitations' of their reading(s) as well as those of my own study. This helps me to bridge the gap and direct my work to speak for itself. In order to see the effectiveness of multisensory and chunking strategies on dyslexic learners, a brief history of their background is indispensable. The next section will be given over to a brief introduction of different researchers who applied different strategies to dyslexic learners to enhance their learning process.

Dyslexia refers to a reading disability that often affects a learner's writing skills negatively. Beringer et al. (2008) that spelling is typically impaired, which in turn interferes with the development of written composition. In some cases, the learner may end up writing incomprehensibly. Consequently, the problem may threaten their self-confidence as well as their motivation to attain better academic outcomes. Therefore, it becomes essential for educators to adopt effective instructional strategies to ensure that dyslexic learners can attain desirable learning outcomes in learning activities that involve writing.

Alnahdi (2014) also points out that educators can enhance the writing skills of dyslexic learners through the use of a multisensory strategy. The approach entails teaching learners how to use different senses to enhance their learning processes. In addition to the use of the visual and auditory senses, educators can also focus on engaging the learners in

physical activities that are likely to help them in remembering spelling and writing skills learnt during different learning sessions, for example, games that involve singing songs, clapping, or making movements. In studies conducted among dyslexic learners, researchers used multisensory techniques among half of the participants during spelling lessons while the other half acted as a control group.

Eventually, the learners who underwent spelling lessons involving the multisensory techniques exhibited a higher level of progress than those who engaged in normal lessons. As such, it is clear that the multisensory approach is an effective way of enhancing writing and spelling skills in conjunction with other methods among dyslexic learners.

Teachers can enhance the writing skills of dyslexic learners through the use of the chunking strategy. This method entails breaking down complex texts into smaller pieces (chunks) and then allowing the learners to rewrite them in their own words (McNeill & Kirk, 2014). Consequently, the learners gain the ability to identify the key words during the given sessions and paraphrase text. As a result, they manage to organize and synthesize information. Eventually, dyslexic learners manage to efficiently spell and write texts involving complex language.

According to Gallardo et al. (2013), learning institutions are mandated to adopt varied online and direct teaching resources. Explicit teaching has been mentioned to necessitate constructive language patterns as the instructor provokes active learning. Correspondingly, active learning should be exploited as a teaching strategy through the use of matching and games as well as group discussions. The authors indicate that teachers need to employ repeated learning practices as a means of facilitating the improvement of learners' memory and writing capabilities. The method is suitable for all learners who engage in spelling and writing activities, especially those who have low learning capabilities. It is also essential for educators to consider kinesthetic modes of learning, such as the use of games that are suitable for dyslexic learners, and integrate them into their instructional programs.

Cimermanova (2015) adds that a multisensory strategy that incorporates audiovisual illustrations is particularly important as it assists the learners to locate the target information.

Hammond and Hercules (2016) reveal the techniques that dyslexics employ to limit their challenges in the course of learning. Some of the learners reported to institute cramming and chunking to synthesize details during lectures. The learners utilize cramming to deal with academic matters such as tests. With chunking, the learners fragment the underlying problems into smaller sections in order to comprehend and solve them. Mind mapping is another technique that the learners engaged in, given that it is a multisensory strategy (a teaching technique that embraces audiovisual elements).

Essentially, it consolidates different tactics by combining and overlapping ideas. The learners use equipment as learning tools, for example tape recorders and computers, to write and store information (Hammond & Hercules, 2016). The computers allow dyslexic learners to arrange, compute, and write information clearly and readably.

On the same note, Griva and Anastasiou (2009) outline the use of morphological strategies to teach English to dyslexic scholars. The authors conducted an experimental study among 25 participants utilizing the Morphological Processing Spelling Approach (MPSA) to determine the system's effectiveness. In effect, the researchers noticed that the approach was *apparently* beneficial in improving the spelling proficiency of the respondents across specific morphemes (linguistic units that are evaluated in their ordinary usage). The authors observed that MPSA was *apparently* productive in conjunction with explicit teaching to eradicate spelling mistakes (Griva & Anastasiou, 2009). Likewise, morphological awareness helped the learners to improve their spelling skills.

Based on cognitive theories, meta-cognitive learning facilitates the flow of information across the working memory, such as learners' reading abilities improving over time. The positive impact, in this case, arises because the learners gain opportunities to understand their thinking and base their learning on the same. Camahalan (2007) undertook a study to determine the impacts of meta-cognitive learning on learners with dyslexia. The author selected samples of two groups of learners who had been diagnosed with dyslexia. Both groups of learners were then subjected to meta-cognitive learning programs. The findings indicated that the sessions had significant benefits regarding improvement to the learners' reading and writing skills. The program entailed helping the learners to understand their learning processes. In such cases, the educators formulate strategies that enable the learners to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning achievements within specified durations. Reportedly, the programs also enable learners to learn new concepts and tasks. Other than just gaining knowledge of the academic concept under study, they also manage to gain self-awareness, based on evaluations and achievements. For instance, the outcomes of the evaluation may present the various strengths and weaknesses associated with a given learner. Consequently, the educator finds it easy to help the learner in maintaining the strengths and neutralizing the shortcomings.

Berninger et al. (2008) offer a set of specialized instructional methods that the educators may employ to improve the writing skills of dyslexic learners. The authors conducted their study through the random selection of dyslexic learners who were repeatedly subjected to guided planning, writing, and text reviewing. Eventually, they discovered that the learners reported improved spelling and writing skills. The researchers then realized that the availability of regular guidance from the instructor is an important way of improving the writing skills of dyslexic learners. Moreover, they noted that the learners normally ask frequent questions of their instructors and in this way, it becomes challenging to proceed with their schoolwork if they fail to receive the necessary clarifications. As such, the learners are likely to develop improved writing and knowledge construction abilities as they learn under close guidance from their teachers. However, other researchers indicate that instructors should avoid criticizing the learners' errors as they continue to

guide them in learning sessions. They go on to explain that too much criticism may lower the learners' levels of confidence and morale.

They are required to understand that the learners are usually trying hard to undertake the learning processes completely even if their work shows some errors. Instead, the teachers should focus on determining whether the learners can manage to put their ideas down instead of examining spelling errors at all times.

A study conducted by Ryder et al. (2007) indicated that learners who are engaged in phenomenal awareness and decoding learning sessions managed to outperform those who did not receive such instruction. A follow-up on the same group after two years indicated that they had developed understanding in word recognition. Thus, the development of simple coding skills and effective collaboration among the three parties aids in enhancing the writing skills of dyslexic learners.

Teachers may also need to exploit the advanced technologies available in their institutions to help dyslexic learners in improving their writing skills. Other than just focusing on direct interaction with learners, they may need to use assistive tools to allow for self-evaluation among learners. Alnahdi (2014) describes how educators can employ assistive technologies to assist learners with special needs. For instance, he points to software that contains approximately 39 educational tools capable of enhancing the behavior, learning, and writing abilities of learners. Teachers may examine the computer-based applications and identify the tools that may be useful for dyslexic learners. For instance, tools that support the use of imagery may support the learners in learning how to explain their thoughts through writing accurately. Additionally, the use of visual media may help the learners to make significant connections to the words under study and describe them correctly. Instructors should also adopt other tools to assist the learners, for instance those that monitor grammar and spelling. After ensuring that the learners have gained effective learning capabilities, the teacher may guide them in using the tools to make sure that they can express their thoughts by writing the relevant words correctly.

In some cases, a single instructional strategy may not be sufficient in offsetting improvements among dyslexic learners. For instance, a study conducted by Berninger et al. (2008) among higher-level learners with dyslexia revealed that they performed well when the instructors used diverse instructional techniques to introduce a single concept. The educators assumed that diverse approaches enhance learners' chances of developing their learning capabilities and linking their thoughts with accurate words. Additionally, the availability of adequate support from instructors proved essential in improving the learners' coping skills since the disabilities of dyslexic learners sometimes affect their confidence. The support also helps learners to adapt their learning pace and receive customized assistance. In this case, the use of multi-layered and flexible teaching techniques as well as unending support becomes a suitable mode of enabling learners to attain improved writing skills. Therefore, teachers may have to consider enhancing their teaching strategies when teaching dyslexic learners by exploring more instructional approaches in addition to those that are used to teach various concepts to other learners.

The development of thorough knowledge concerning language structure and effective implementation of instructional activities is yet another aspect that proves vital in shaping the writing skills of dyslexic learners. The teachers also need to focus on the consistent use of certain phrases and words so that learners can find it easy to recall their meaning. As such, they are discouraged from interchanging synonyms when dealing with learners as the latter may encounter difficulties trying to link the words to their respective spellings as well as their meaning. The emphasis on assessment feedback while teaching also facilitates the continuous improvement of learners. Instead of just pointing out their mistakes, it is also essential to offer them learning strategies that are linked to their common errors (Camahalan, 2006). However, the teacher has to be careful not to keep on criticizing the learners' work since they may easily lose confidence in their capabilities.

The regular evaluation of instructional techniques for teaching dyslexic learners would also help in improving learning outcomes, especially when it comes to writing and spelling various words. A study conducted among elementary school teachers in New Zealand indicates that the continuous review of teachers' skills and the strategies used to implement spelling skills had a direct link with achievements among all learners (McNeill & Kirk, 2014). In this case, dyslexic learners were also included in the investigation. As such, the teachers may not manage to improve the spelling and writing skills of their learners if they do not seek to improve their instructional approaches. For instance, they may need to engage in frequent training and development sessions to ensure that they can explore any advanced teaching strategies with the help of more experienced professionals. Moreover, they may engage in team-based research with other teachers to enhance their knowledge of language as well as new instructional approaches.

In Borga's (2007) study, the researcher sought to understand the study situation among dyslexic learners in Akershus University College and employed a multiple-case design for six respondents. Due to the challenges that they endure during learning, the respondents reported employing several techniques to increase their comprehension of concepts. The respondents stated that they prefer reading alternative textbook materials, such as summaries and other learners' essays, to locate the main ideas. The participants also highlighted that lecture materials, especially handouts, were apparently beneficial in understanding the presented information. Participating in discussions also augmented their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter (Borga, 2007). Over time, public speaking helps dyslexics to build their confidence, as opposed to digital presentations. Moreover, during assessments, most learners prefer an integration of verbal and written examinations rather than sitting tests alone.

Following this, Leksinska (2015) suggests distinct techniques that facilitators can integrate into their plan to teach EFL to dyslexic learners. A multisensory strategy incorporates almost all sensory mechanisms to present the associations between graphemes and phonemes. Essentially, it allows the scholars to progress from decoding basic instructions to complex concepts. The technique also employs repetition, whereby the learners undertake continuous revisions and study exercises to grasp the respective information. Secondly, explicit learning encourages the learners to be attentive and to recall the information imparted. Thirdly, the instructors can adopt the dyslexic learning technique, which involves utilizing the learners' study and interpretation routines (Leksinska, 2015). Under this system, the instructor employs individualization to comprehend the actual needs of each learner.

The International Dyslexia Association (2017) recommends three types of accommodation to educate dyslexic learners. With regards to the material, the association highlights that educators ought to underline key points for the learners to discern ideas easily.

Dyslexia affects writing capabilities and skills negatively among learners. The impairment is a disability which interferes with the ability to write. For instance, sometimes the affected learners write words which cannot be understood by normal people. Thus, it is imperative to determine strategies to improve the learning skills of dyslexic learners at school. Essentially, this approach consists of teaching learners the application of various senses to improve their processes of learning in class. There are several multisensory learning techniques that are integrated for the purpose of learning. They consist of auditory, visual, kinesthetic, and tactile approaches to learning elements. The visual technique of multisensory learning for dyslexic learners involves the teacher reading text which contains visual art (Stein, 2017). This includes posters, videos, and painting as well as demonstrating elements of studies for the understanding of the affected learners. For instance, brainstorming sessions about the government may lead to visual maps used to link ideas of monarchy and democracy.

Besides, the auditory techniques involved are reading through the application of audio books as well as text speeches. The initiative requires individuals to develop practice of the understanding of every aspect of text at a very high speed. Examples of such applications are rhymes, lyrics, music, and singing. Furthermore, the tactile technique is a multisensory strategy of improving the learning capability of learners affected by dyslexia. This approach involves touching items while studying or learning, such as using coins, finger paints, and textures as well as letter tiles (Snowling, 2013). This technique is necessary for studies of subjects like mathematics which involve the use of numbers as the primary core aspect. Lastly, the kinesthetic technique (operations that involve participative acts) focuses on learning by doing. Additionally, it may have little similarity with individuals applying tactile learning system. However, the distinction is based on both the use of motion and touch at the same time in learning. Moreover, it can also be used in learning sports and other physical activities. The common teaching method used with dyslexics is air writing, whereby learners say a letter out loud and simultaneously write it in the air.

Another strategy which can be used to improve the learning skills of learners affected by dyslexia is the chunking method (the process of fragmenting a problem into smaller bits). This is an essential comprehensive reading technique which involves breaking down texts into different bundles. Thereafter, the learners are given the opportunity to manage the information by forming meaningful texts on their own. More importantly, when a teacher uses the chunking technique, it is imperative to ensure that learners are provided with a statement of purpose to use in filling in the word in the passage. Such aspects include what they are looking for while reading the context. Therefore, this strategy begins with reading the content word by word without determining the meaning of such words (Kelly & Phillips, 2016). Moreover, chunking helps learners to identify key ideas and develop phrases to synthesize and recognize information. A procedure must be used in this strategy.

The first step is to prepare a paragraph that can be chunked into different phrases and sentences. The second step is review the reading strategies; this is effective to understand specific strategies to decode meaningful texts - for example, circle unfamiliar words, look for their meaning and read aloud many times. The third step is to chunk the text by breaking it down into smaller parts (Kelly & Phillips, 2016). The fourth stage is where learners may begin paraphrasing the meaning of the words. The essence is to let learners rewrite the texts by themselves. Lastly, the teacher should assess and share the paraphrased texts to evaluate the learners' abilities in reading. The application of a morphological strategy is another vital aspect in improving learning skills of learners affected by dyslexia.

Morphological awareness consists of understanding, recognizing, and using parts of words to determine significance in the learning process. These strategies use examples of prefixes, grammatical inflections such as plurality of words, and also root words. Specifically, this strategy is one of the overlooked aspects in building a background for fluent reading, comprehension and spelling (Hulsten, 2017).

Teachers are advised to begin applying this strategy as early as either first or second grade to enhance focus in future studies. Additionally, when learners are equipped with strong morphological skills, they have distinct advantages. Notably, such learners may have stable ways of reading and understanding novels and their multisyllabic words to predict the meaning from the text. The use of technological tools may be important in improving the learning skills of dyslexics. These tools vary among the different aspects of learning and consist of pocket spellcheckers. These types of dyslexia tools describe how words can be spelled and, moreover, are phonetical. Their essence is to help facilitate learning by strengthening learners' confidence, both in spelling and writing words correctly. Line readers are also an essential category of technological tools that highlight and magnify some portions of texts for learners (Hartas, 2013).

The application of varied online resources by institutions is another strategy that can improve the learning skills of learners affected by dyslexia. This strategy involves the use of constructive language patterns to initiate active learning. Similarly, it also consists of an educative online game.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Procedure of a study maps out the line of action for a researcher. The research theory, research methods, and overall research design of the study, including population, data gathering tools, sampling, and research procedure, has all been determined in the light of the objectives of the study as well as the main research question, and subsidiary and sub-research questions envisaged for the study.

The study in hand is descriptive and proceeds through: (a) the application of multisensory and chunking strategies on 29 dyslexic learners of Khamisah Ashar school, Taif, Saudi Arabia; (b) structured interviews with four EFL teachers with maximum open-ended questions. (i) The interviews were carried out to analyze the validity, reliability, and impacts of multisensory and chunking strategies; (ii) some of the assumptions made by the interviewees were subjective; and (iii) moreover, the employment of the qualitative method as well as the deductive approach added legitimacy and validity to the present study; (c) description of sampling which is truly representative of the population; (d) data gathering devices, whose administration and collection procedures are also explained appropriately in different sections and sub-sections of this section; and (e) citations, for which the researcher employed the APA style and has provided references at the end of the thesis.

The current study will determine the most effective strategies to improve Saudi EFL dyslexic learners' writing skills. It was indispensable to carry out the study in hand because the results and findings will help the researcher to come up with suggestions for policy makers, researchers, pedagogues, and learners with special needs. The present study provides recommendations that will help dyslexic learners in the development of their writing skills.

#### Research Design

In this section, the researcher has provided the research design, participants, sampling techniques, research instruments, and method of data analysis. The present study will use a descriptive survey designed to incorporate a qualitative research tool, i.e. interviews. A descriptive survey design is appropriate because the work investigated the views of four EFL teachers about dyslexic learners, regarding the use of the best strategy to improve their writing skills in a primary school in Saudi Arabia. The researcher obtained data by investigating individuals on issues about the dyslexic learners' achievement in learning English. The identity of the interviewees was kept secret in order to avoid any future complications and each one has been assigned different codes: Teacher A, Teacher B, and so on.

#### Participants

In the present study, the researcher interviewed four EFL teachers of Khamisah Ashrah School, Taif, Saudi Arabia. The two strategies were applied to 29 dyslexic learners of different ages (8-12) at the same school.

#### Research Instruments

The present study used a qualitative research tool to gather the data from the participants. According to Huang, Liao, Huang, and Chen (2014), an interview is appropriate because it enables the researcher to collect information and opinions from participants for a study. The researcher in the current study administered the interview to female teachers about dyslexic learners' attitudes and achievements in the classroom. The data were collected through interviews with open-ended questions that maintain the validity and reliability of the work in hand.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher presents the results obtained in the field. The scholar used scheduled interviews to gather data from the teachers. The interview schedule was suitable in this study because the scholar collected data regarding the strategies of vocabulary learning that the instructors find most comfortable to use when teaching vocabulary to dyslexic learners of EFL.

According to Kerns et al. (2017), a scheduled interview is suitable in a study where the scholar gathers views and related data from the respondents of the research. In addition, the scheduled interview was appropriate in collecting data about the methods that educators can use to enhance the vocabulary of primary school learners with dyslexia. According to Menatti et al. (2015), a scheduled interview is appropriate when the researcher gathers data concerning the strategies used by the respondents in doing their work.

#### Analysis of Interview Questions

The approach or sequence of analysis of interview questions developed from (i) investigating the impacts of the use of multisensory and chunking strategies on Saudi EFL dyslexic learners; (ii) teachers' subjective or objective opinions about the implementations of multisensory and chunking strategies on Saudi EFL dyslexic learners; and (iii) difficulties in implementation. Moreover, samples of interview questions and teachers' responses are given in Appendices A and B.

The first question of the interview checks for the presence of dyslexic learners in Khamisah Ashrah School: "*do you have EFL dyslexic learners in your classroom with learning disabilities?*" From the results, all four teachers indicated that there are cases among the learners of EFL with learning difficulties such as dyslexia. This implies that dyslexia is a common problem among learners learning EFL between the ages of eight and 12 years. It has also been discovered that

dyslexic learners do not have fully developed perceptual-motor abilities; hence, they are not able to connect what they do and see.

The second question refers to the number of dyslexic learners: *"How many dyslexic learners do you have in your class?"* The first teacher stated that she has eight learners with the problem of dyslexia while the second teacher indicated that she has nine dyslexic learners. In addition, the third teacher pointed out that she has five learners who are struggling with dyslexia and the fourth teacher stated that she has seven dyslexic learners. The teachers' confirmation is an indication that learners of EFL between the ages of eight and 12 have dyslexia. According to Snowling (2013), dyslexia is common among young learners because of their undeveloped motor skills and limited interaction with the environment.

The statistics presented by the four teachers support this argument. It is during this period that parents and teachers should diagnose the disorder because dyslexic learners tend to deviate from the standard growth and progress exhibited by other learners.

The third question investigates the difficulties of dyslexic learners in the classroom: *"explain what difficulties dyslexic learners face in the EFL classroom."* The research established that the learners know the letters and numbers. All the interviewees found that the learners' problem is that they write letters and numbers in the opposite direction and sometimes do not distinguish between some letters such as 'd' and 'b'.

This suggests that the learners might experience difficulty making distinctions between them. The learners might also have visual processing issues and have difficulty in recalling how to form the letters. Stein (2017) in his research on dyslexia found that dyslexic learners portray visual defects, which brings confusion to the sensory organs that help in differentiation. It is for this reason that teachers observed the difficulty of these learners in trying to differentiate between two letters. The coordination between visual sensors and the brain causes confusion, which affects the ability of the learners to note and relate the differences in numbers and letters.

The fourth question probes into the nature of strategies which the teacher uses to reinforce dyslexic learners' writing skills: *"What strategies would you use the most with the dyslexic learners?"* Teachers A, B, and D pointed out that they use the multisensory strategy most of the time. The use of this strategy implies that the teachers are committed to assisting the learners to study in at least two senses.

According to Hulten (2017), teachers use multisensory methods with learners with dyslexia to help them acquire knowledge using at least two senses. However, Teacher C said, "To me I use the Chunking strategy the most" and indicated that she thinks that the use of this strategy is more effective when used to engage the learners' sense of hearing and sight, by asking them to listen or read the text and get information respectively.

The focus of fifth question was to investigate: *"how did you implement the principle of multisensory strategy in your teaching?"* From the results, the teachers indicated that they applied the multisensory approach through writing letters and numbers in colored sand. In addition, the teachers pointed out that they shaped the letters and numbers using wiki sticks and clay. According to Hartas (2013), practical approaches to learning should be used to help learners coordinate their sensory systems. These approaches arouse nonverbal communication skills, which help learners to express themselves in the ways that work best for them. The research supports the approaches used by teachers in helping learners to learn and develop their sensory skills. It indicates that writing in colored sand and shaping with clay and wiki sticks arouses the senses and consequently reinforces learning because learners use their senses to write or form letters and numbers correctly. Besides, the learners can now learn new ideas and use nonverbal skills to tackle problems. Dyslexic learners learn better through practical approaches that exploit their nonverbal abilities. Such approaches motivate learners, which in turn improves their differentiation abilities.

To the sixth question: *"how did you implement the principle of chunking strategy in your teaching?"* the teachers indicated that they applied the chunking strategy through subdividing one word into parts with two colors so that the learners could spell and write the word correctly. The use of the chunking strategy implies that the learners understand the subdivided words easily because the ensuing pieces are simple to retain in their memory. According to Lah, Saat, and Hassan (2014), chunking helps learners to use their short-term memory effectively by grouping data. Chunking subdivides words into small comprehensible units (Lah, Saat, and Hassan, 2014). Subdividing the words into parts also help learners to remember and memorize information.

The seventh question investigates the idea: *"how did the dyslexic learners respond to these strategies?"* All the teachers indicated that it was great fun for the learners because of their young ages. In addition, the learners improved. The excitement implies that the strategies help the learners to connect the learning in class to the ideas that they are familiar with and know about. Kelly and Phillips (2016) noted that "Dyslexic learners have extraordinary abilities which should be identified and used to enhance their learning abilities". These abilities include recognition of colors and uncompleted words and numbers. If learners are exposed to an environment where they can interact with things that enhance their multisensory skills, they can easily overcome their learning challenges. The findings provided by these researchers suggest that learners can recall what they learn more easily by remembering colorful subdivided words than they would when teachers do not split the words. Such approaches help learners to relate concepts and build knowledge, which helps them overcome their challenges.

The eighth question was: *"what improvement did you see in your learners after applying those two strategies?"* The teachers brought to the fore that the learners now understand the correct way of writing letters and numbers. The

learners' improvement is an indication that both strategies helped them to recognize that images are not the same, and assisted them to improve on their visual processing challenges and know how to form the letters and numbers. When it becomes easier for learners to understand the correct way of writing the letters and numbers, it contributes to the improvement of their learning.

The ninth question focuses on: *"which strategy do you feel best improved dyslexic learners' writing skills?"* All the teachers indicated that they prefer the multisensory method because it helps the learners to experience using at least two senses. The use of the multisensory technique is an indication that teachers are confident and the method allows the learners to use the areas where they are active to assist them to acquire knowledge, which depends on the learning needs of each learner. The multisensory method also helps the learners to grasp concepts quickly and without problems as well as remember and use the ideas freely when studying in future (Kelly & Phillips, 2016). This approach has been used and tested and is commonly used in institutions that provide help to dyslexic learners. The approach additionally helps learners to identify their talents, which can be nurtured to help them earn a living in the future. These authors further add that a good number of successful people in the world had dyslexia at some point (Kelly & Phillips, 2016). Supporting learners with dyslexia with the help of the multisensory approach has several benefits and may continue to have its impacts in future as well.

In the tenth question the researcher asked the teachers: *"do you feel that the resources you are currently using are adequate to help dyslexic learners in their writing skill?"* All the teachers indicated that they were satisfied with the improvement of their learners when they used both chunking and multisensory strategies. The resources were adequate because they helped the learners to understand the correct way of writing the letters and numbers. The issue of dyslexia varies from one learner to another and what works for one might not work for the other (Kelly & Phillips, 2016). The differences that exist between learners are a clear indication that different approaches should be used to help learners overcome their difficulties. The adequacy of the approaches is an indication that teachers were satisfied that the strategies developed the mental ability of the learners by arousing their visual and touch senses. These two approaches incorporate a multidimensional approach that allows learners to develop skills in different areas (Kelly & Phillips, 2016). In addition to this, they improve the confidence of learners within and outside the classroom. This stimulation was caused by the teachers writing the letters and numbers on the colored sand and shaping the letters and numbers by using wiki sticks and clay. The combination of the approaches should not be limited to what the teachers proposed. Other techniques should be identified to provide a universal approach to help dyslexic learners.

The focus of the researcher in the eleventh question was: *"Do you feel that these strategies were easy to use with the dyslexic learners?"* All the interviewees indicated that it was easy to use both the chunking and multisensory tactics with the dyslexic learners because the strategies were suitable for the learners' ages. The learners were fascinated by writing the letters and numbers in the colored sand. In addition, the learners were excited to shape the letters and numbers using the wiki sticks and clay. All the teachers said their learners liked the experience very much and it was fun because of their young ages. Hartas (2013) noted that "Learners would eventually find it exciting to learn and try new things once they identify what works well for them".

The excitement of the learners is an indication that the use of both strategies would help them understand their learning easily. It also suggests that the learners' perceptual-motor abilities will develop easily and become capable of relating what they do with what they see. These learning approaches used by the teachers to build the learners' confidence finally pay off as the learners started performing like other learners. Dyslexia requires an early diagnosis to enable parents to find the right intervention for their children (Hartas, 2013). Teachers should be encouraged to help dyslexic learners to overcome their disorder and interact with other learners with ease.

In the twelfth question, the researcher inquired: *"What can be done when the dyslexic learners feel inferior or less confident?"* Three teachers concurred that they should neither make learners feel they are inferior to their peers nor criticize them when unable to perform quickly, and that teachers should continue encouraging the learners to practice more. On the other hand, Teacher D said, "As a teacher I should enhance my learners' trust in themselves and make them feel that they are equal to their peers". According to the teacher, the learners have different abilities, and each of them has her strong and weak sides. In addition, she said, "The teacher should tell the learners that they have different skills to make the learners believe in themselves". The teachers' encouragement is an indication that every learner can realize their objective.

It is also a sign that all learners will regularly work hard to become prosperous and exploit their chances to shine in class.

## V. CONCLUSION

The main aim of the research in hand was to establish the most effective strategies for improving Saudi EFL dyslexic learners' writing skills. The study's primary objectives were to improve the writing proficiency of Saudi EFL dyslexic learners through multisensory and chunking strategies. The other objectives were to enhance teachers' awareness of the effectiveness of chunking and multisensory strategies for such learners. The sample of the study consisted of four female EFL teachers and 29 Saudi EFL dyslexic learners between the ages of eight and 12. The study used structured interviews to establish how learners responded to different strategies used in the classroom.



After the interpretation and analysis of data, specific recommendations were given to improve the writing skills of dyslexic learners. Given that the learners are differently talented, and they have varying levels of learning strengths and weaknesses, the teachers can contribute more in assisting the learners by helping them discover the learning concepts that work best for them.

The outcome of the study established that no approach or procedure is the most suitable, but that each is equally significant. The teachers must apply each of them and maintain learner-friendly classrooms to achieve the best learning outcomes since dyslexia is a learning impediment characterized by difficulties in word recognition, and poor writing and reading abilities.

The results suggest that some cases of foreign language learning face similar challenges. The indications imply that dyslexia is common among learners, especially those between eight and 12, who are learning a foreign language such as English, as pointed out by Camahalan (2006). The reason for the challenges at a young age is the learners' underdeveloped perceptual-motor abilities that make them not connect what they do and observe. This means that applying the strategies established in the study would make a significant difference in improving Saudi EFL dyslexic learners' learning skills.

#### Recommendations

From the analysis of the data and findings given above, it became crystal clear that multisensory and chunking strategies have robustly changed the performance of dyslexic learners. These results invite the attention of researchers, academicians, and pedagogues to devise certain strategies that ensure learners' higher level of interest and curiosity. To optimize the learning environment, the teacher should take certain measures, for instance:

1. The research suggests adopting both online and direct teaching techniques in order to develop learners' skills in various environments. In particular, technology is very likely to provide both learners and teachers with assistance in a variety of tasks, including those related to learning and performance at the same time. In addition, it is possible to find specifically developed games for learners with dyslexia that are both entertaining and helpful in the improvement of their abilities. In fact, such games can be included in both their in-class and at-home activities.

2. It is equally important that teachers who work with dyslexic learners take different approaches in classrooms than those who work with non-dyslexic learners. In particular, there is a useful technique known as 'color coding' that appears to be quite beneficial to dyslexic learners when applied by teachers. The technique implies that the material presented on the blackboard is highlighted with chalks of different colors so that it is simpler for learners to perceive the visually-provided information. In addition, it is important to emphasize that the text is to be well-spaced and written in neat handwriting. With the implementation of this technique, dyslexic learners are likely to find it easier to distinguish and, hence, memorize class materials.

3. Similarly, it is important that teachers of dyslexic learners should not pressure and hurry them in the completion and comprehension of different tasks. In particular, the classes should be conducted at a moderate pace so that the learners feel comfortable in how they can perceive the information as well as not feeling stressed due to having to memorize the presented information. In addition, it is vital that teachers do not limit dyslexic learners in the time dedicated to their homework assignments but set deadlines that can help to keep the learners disciplined while also being achievable.

4. By the same token, in order to ensure that dyslexic learners should not be pressurized, it is useful that teachers repeat the materials several times so that they can ensure that the learners are capable of understanding and memorizing the information. Similarly, in reading exercises, it is beneficial to ask the learners to repeat text pieces several times. Although such an approach may appear to take more time than for other learners, dyslexic learners are likely to benefit from it.

5. The content of the syllabus needs to be interesting for the learners so that they can be engaged in the process of learning. In other words, if some dyslexic learners have a strong interest in particular topics, it is useful to assign readings that cover those areas. At the same time, the texts must not be complex or contain difficult language.

6. Another beneficial approach to be taken into consideration when teaching dyslexic learners is to diversify the exercises that they have to do. Similarly to computer games, that are considered to be contributive to the improvement of the learners' skills, in-class activities are also to be engaging and interesting. Among these, it is useful for the teacher to ask learners to write down their ideas and thoughts and present them afterward so that the learners can practice their skills while not doing anything that requires additional effort.

7. Besides the workload, the teacher needs to consider the learning capacity of dyslexic learners. In particular, as the educational process requires these learners to work harder on their academic performance and skill development than other learners, the fact that they are much likely to be quite tired at the end of the class is significant. Therefore, the teachers of dyslexic learners must make sure that the learners get enough rest in between the classes and activities so that they can remain productive and capable of comprehending the provided material.

8. The reason for this is that it is possible that dyslexic learners get discouraged and hence become demotivated in a shared educational setting. Such an outcome can be caused by the false expectations that teachers may have of dyslexic learners in comparison to the others, as well as their personal understanding that they are not capable of showing the expected progress. With this in mind, it is also important to emphasize that the educators should make sure

that the family of a dyslexic learner is aware of the importance of showing tolerance and understanding of the way their child approaches things. Their help is crucially important to support and assist their child's educational process.

9. In addition to this, it might be difficult to teach learners both with and without dyslexia in the same classroom. Therefore, they should be separated into a special class, where the teachers will be able to concentrate their attention on them and their needs. In some cases, depending on the spread of this disorder in a particular area, special schools may be the best choice.

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