

IDENTIFICATION OF DYSLEXIA SUB-TYPES AMONG ITALIAN READERS

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The diagnostic procedure to define a dyslexic subject usually employs exclusion criteria. Boder (1973) proposes for this pathology a different approach, defined as "direct" or "intrinsic" because it takes into consideration primarily the performance of reading and spelling of a subject. A normal reader reads a known word through the visual channel by a gestalt process. The instantaneous recognition of a word, without a phonetic analysis of the word, by spelling its single components, syllables or letters, indicates that the word belongs to the subject's sight vocabulary. An unknown word is read by the same subject through processes of analysis and synthesis by the auditory channel. In a normal reader, the integration of visual and auditory processes is efficient, in dyslexics subjects this integration is lacking or interrupted. It means that dyslexic subjects read and write differently from a normal reader both qualitatively and quantitatively. On the basis of these assumptions Boder has postulated the existence of 3 sub-types of dyslexia: dysphonetic with difficulty on the auditory channel; dyseidetic with difficulty on the visual channel and mixed with impairments of both channels. The identification of these patterns is based on a behavioural test of reading and spelling, developed by Boder and Jarrico.

The direct test of reading and spelling is an adapted and modified, italian version of this test. The test is completely computerized, self-paced, controls the exposition time of a word and measures the reading performance time necessary to establish normative data. The existence of these 3 subtypes of dyslexia among italian school-readers will be demonstrated.