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The visual deficit theory of developmental dyslexia.

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Abstract

Dyslexia is an impairment in reading that can result from an abnormal developmental process in the case of developmental dyslexia or cerebral insult in the case of acquired dyslexia. It has long been known that the clinical manifestations of developmental dyslexia are varied. In addition to their reading difficulties, individuals with developmental dyslexia exhibit impairments in their ability to process the phonological features of written or spoken language. Recently, it has been demonstrated with a variety of experimental approaches that these individuals are also impaired on a number of visual tasks involving visuomotor, visuospatial, and visual motion processing. The results of these studies, as well as the anatomical and physiological anomalies seen in the brains of individuals with dyslexia, suggest that the pathophysiology of developmental dyslexia is more complex than originally thought, extending beyond the classically defined language areas of the brain. Functional neuroimaging is a useful tool to more precisely delineate the pathophysiology of this reading disorder.

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