Chinese dyslexics need memory, sensory training

BY TEDDY NG

Training on memory and senses should be strengthened among children with Chinese dyslexia, linguistic experts from the University of Hong Kong said.

A study conducted by the university, which compared Chinese-speaking dyslexic children to English-speaking dyslexic children, found structural and functional differences in the brains of these children.

The study found that English dyslexics have a smaller gray-matter volume in the left middle frontal gyrus compared to normal children.

The function of the left middle frontal gyrus is coordinating cognitive resources.

The study found that normal children have a stronger activation in the left middle frontal gyrus region than dyslexic children.

The university's department of linguistic assistant professor Siok Wai-ting said the differences in structural abnormalities in the brains between Chinese and Western dyslexics suggest that there may be two different brain disorders.

She suggested that, as written Chinese is mostly memorized by vote, activities should be offered to train Chinese dyslexics' memory, such as asking the children to repeat words after the teachers.

She added that activities, such as drawing pictures, should also be conducted to train their handwritings.

Developmental dyslexia affects seven to nine percent of children in Hong Kong, and about 17 percent throughout the world.

Siok said different types of dyslexia require unique therapies, and the wrong therapy would lead to delayed treatment.

She said therapy should be offered to dyslexic children before they start primary three education.