

# DysLexia\*

\* Our project logo

*Dyslexia* is a neurogenic special learning disorder involving difficulty in reading fluently, recognizing, analysing and spelling letters and words correctly despite the high creativity and strong reasoning abilities of the individual.



How people with Dyslexia perceive the letters...

**We understand you.**

While it is very difficult for you, others can do it so easily. You work much harder, but still you cannot do as well as others, and this situation repeats every single day...

Meanwhile people around you ask  
“How is the school going?”

Don't worry!

We are and will always be with you...

**Team Name: DySlexia**

**Team Members:** Dilara Işık (Founder),  
Senem Işık (Co-Founder), Melisa Ayyıldız (Member)

**Project Title: LEXIA**



## Reading is complex

%100

%8

It requires our brains to correctly recognize letters graphically, connect them to sounds, put those sounds in the right order, and pull the words together into sentences and paragraphs we can read and comprehend. According to Turkish Ministry of Education, each year, 1,630,000 students start 1<sup>st</sup> grade in Turkey. **130,000** of them (**8%**) need special education including children with Dyslexia, ADHD etc. and the global situation is similar.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Empower and promote the social and economic inclusion for all, irrespective of learning difficulties.

Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnership, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships. Enhance the partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stake holder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the SDGs.

Dyslexic people tend to exhibit antisocial and marginalized behaviors in social environments, and they tend to be more anxious, depressed, sensitive and resentful. If Dyslexic individuals are not directed and provided a special education, experiencing failures in academic settings repeatedly leads to the cognitive death of the student. 40% of students with Dyslexia aged 7-18 consider their school years as a devastating experience. In early ages, they lose their self-confidence and self-respect, but most importantly, they lose their motivation to learn. It becomes impossible to teach them anything. For dyslexic people, the rate of committing suicide is 3 times and the rate of dropping out of school and committing crimes are 6 times higher than the average in the world.

*However, with the right support and diagnosis of their talents, Dyslexic individuals can become highly successful.*

**Problem:** According to a global survey by **Made by Dyslexia**, we know that only 3.25% said their schools have an understanding of the emotional impact of dyslexia and most believe this understanding to be non-existent. Most importantly, 98% of parents and teachers think that teachers need more training in how to support dyslexia.

### Our Goals

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



Eliminate special learning disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education for dyslexic children. Build upgrade education facilities that dyslexia sensitive and provide inclusive and effective learning environments.



**Learning and Skills Developed:** We, Dilara and Senem, had been volunteering at **Turkish Dyslexia Foundation (TDF)** for over three years. Due to our close interaction with Dyslexic children and their parents, we were extremely aware of their special education needs and experienced in effectively using different tools and methods for their education. In addition, we completed courses from **MOOC** platforms like **FutureLearn** to have a greater understanding of Dyslexia.<sup>1</sup> To be *socially conscious leaders who are prepared to take responsibility and collaborate their talents* to contribute to Social Development Goals, we participated in education programs.<sup>2 3</sup>

**Our Solution:** *Creating educative and entertaining workshops for Dyslexic children, facilitating local seminars and organizing large-scaled conferences all over Turkey by inviting psychologists, special education teachers, pedagogues, language therapists, and academicians from universities such as **Eskişehir Osman Gazi University** and **Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa University** in collaboration with NGOs such as*

***Turkish Dyslexia Foundation, Municipallities in Istanbul, partner kindergartens such as **3 Elma Anaokulu**, primary schools such as **Kultur2000 College** and special education centers such as **PERA** in order to raise awareness of teachers and parents about Dyslexia and educate them about tools and materials to support special education needs of dyslexic children effectively.***

<sup>1</sup> Supporting children with difficulties in reading and writing by University of London and Dyslexia International

<sup>2</sup> Young Guru Academy Leadership programs for social innovation.

<sup>3</sup> Leadership Through Emotional Intelligence by Case Western University



**Our Impact:** We contacted the special education center of our local **Beylikdüzü Municipality** and invited academicians, experts, chief educators from universities and NGOs as the guest speakers. We organized our district's **first free special education training** and reached out to **150 families**.

With the training we got from our internships and volunteering activities at Turkish Dyslexia Foundation, we facilitated workshops for children and educative seminars for their parents and teachers in **7 schools** in our district. The amount of families we had one-to-one seminars reached to **1100** in Beylikdüzü.

At the same time, we volunteered, advertised and supported seminars given by experts of TDF to raise awareness about Dyslexia all over Turkey. We contacted **officials** of the schools in the respective districts and sent special invitations to teachers and parents through **emails**. We started managing **the Facebook and Instagram accounts** of our guest speakers (@logopedi.ozelegitim) and our partner kindergartens (@3elmabilimanaokulu) to actively share attractive stories and posts. One of our biggest influencers to promote the seminars was the **Instagram accounts of influencer mothers**, who also used the stories of our social media stakeholders. We also distributed the **brochures and flyers** of our conferences through various school events, education seminars, parent meetings etc. The designs of these were inspired by the first and last page of this report.

In conclusion, through seminars and conferences we organized in collaboration with TDF and academicians from universities as guest speakers to raise Dyslexia awareness all over Turkey, we were able to reach **2300 people** in the three months.

Using **Stanford University d.school K12 Lab's Design Thinking Framework**, we prepared special surveys for our participants of our seminars and used **Empathy Map Model** to understand their needs and struggles as teachers and parents. To reach more students with special education needs such as children with ADHD, we collaborated with other NGOs and special education centers and surveyed **3200 parents and teachers** in total.

**Knowledge Gained of Our Community:** Upon this research, we learnt that the academic challenges of dyslexic people begin with learning the alphabet, the most important necessity of their primary school journey. However, they do not have proper resources to support their personal education needs. Conscious parents who are in search for effective tools to

compensate the lack of specialized assistance for their children made up 20%\* of families. Most importantly, we collected data about how to equip and support children with Dyslexia in accordance with our vision.

**Our Vision:** *To equip and support children with Dyslexia with **edutainment** tools using technology to address their specific educational needs and empower them to learn **remotely**.*

**Sustainability:** As *global citizens* passionate to make our project **sustainable**, we decided to create a **mobile application** to give access children with dyslexia a technological tool that will help them to excel in academic journey and in life.

**Learning and Skills Developed:** We took online courses<sup>4</sup> to learn how to program. From the training by **Google Play Academy for Kids-Friendly App Success** we created a framework of factors that can contribute to a high-quality app. We also took courses to implement **User Centred Design** in the building process of our application<sup>5</sup> and, lastly, we started developing our application, **LEXIA**.

**Adaptability to Challenges:** When the global education system was transferred to online platforms due to global *Covid-19 pandemic*, we realized that the *need* for edutainment mobile apps like LEXIA was even more than ever. Therefore, we accelerated the development process to finish the design of our application and have been working on it intensely for the last two months to expand our vision **globally**.

Currently, we are designing graphics for adapting our iconography to Russian and developing more language options for our application.

**Future Goals:** We are planning to launch our application before 2020-21 education year and within 5 years, we are forecasting to reach out to 26,000 families who are in search for specialized assistance, which is **20%\* of 130,000 families** in Turkey. At the same time, we will partner with NGOs in other countries to meet the special education needs of Dyslexic children not only in Turkey but all over the world.

*"I was impressed by the confidence of these high school students to bring change to society. They researched and critically analyzed the core problems with Special Education in Turkey and the world. Thanks to their communication and collaboration skills, they were able to organize and advertise many educative conferences all over Turkey. I especially loved how creative this young minds were in the design process of the mobile application. They are the compassionate conscious role models for today's leaders in the world." – Chief Educator at Turkish Dyslexia Foundation*



<sup>4</sup> CS-Bridge CS106A by Stanford University & Coding and CS Principles by Trinity University

<sup>5</sup> Running Product Design Sprints by University of Virginia

The cities we organized seminars and conferences:



*We aim to democratize dyslexia support,  
so that every dyslexic child is understood and  
given the right support to realize their brilliant potential.*

**We understand you.**

**We have a solution for you!**



LEXIA will be launched in August, 2020.

**JOIN US**

For being DySlexia social media influencer, volunteer, regional ambassador,

or to make gifts, please contact us:



@dys.\_lexia

## MADE BY DYSLEXIA PLEDGE

**We will endeavour to:**  
**Recognise** dyslexia as a different and valuable way of thinking.  
**Understand** the importance of identifying each dyslexic and their pattern of strengths and challenges.  
**Support** which is targeted to enable dyslexics to harness their strengths and flourish.

**We'll achieve this through:**  
**Knowledge** skilling up staff in schools and workplaces to recognise, understand and support dyslexia.  
**Discover** using digital screeners which make it easy and cost effective to check if you're dyslexic.  
**Adjustments** in tests and assignments so dyslexics can demonstrate their full knowledge and skills.

**DySlexia**