

INCLUSIVE TEACHING: EASY-TO-IMPLEMENT **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DYSLEXIC STUDENTS** IN LANGUAGE CLASSES

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BELTA DAY 2023

belta

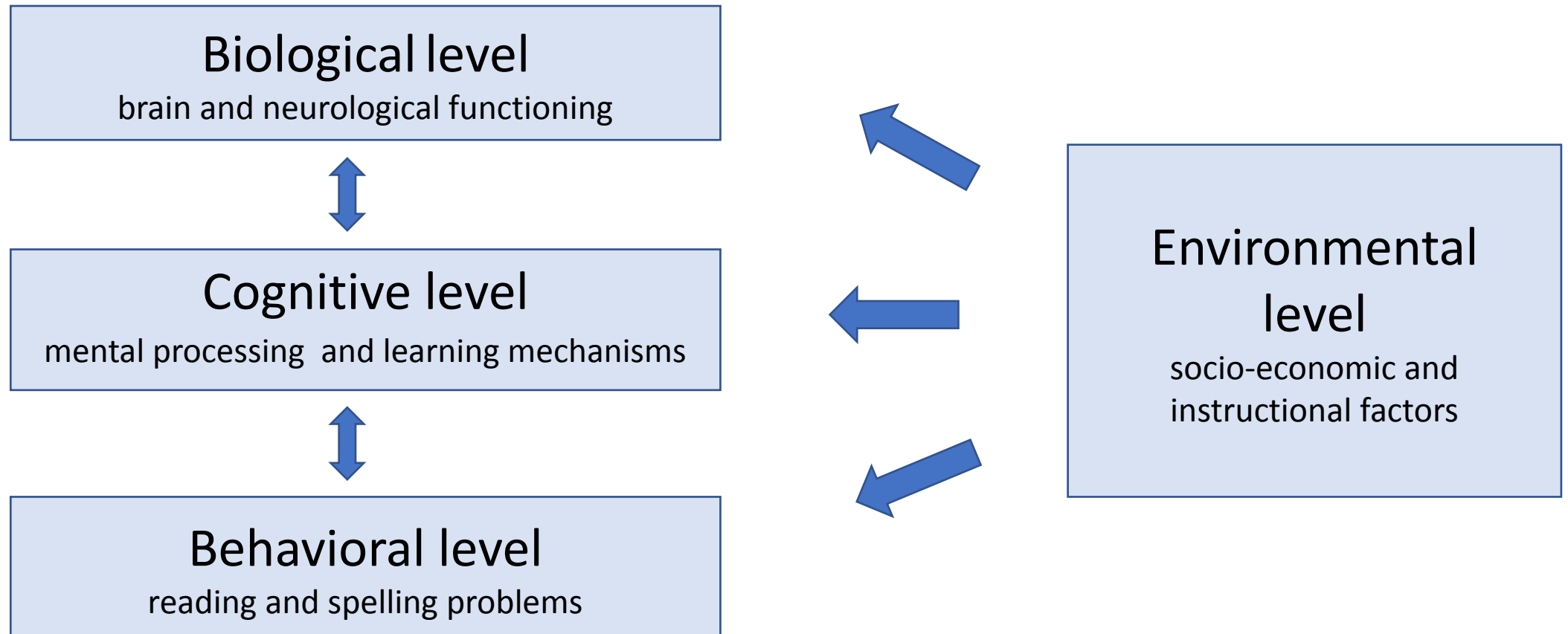


UCLouvain



ILV

What is dyslexia?



based on Frith, 1999

Linguistic problems experienced by dyslexics

- Problems in segmenting words into phonological units
- Problems with phoneme-grapheme correspondences
- Problems in word recognition
- Slow reading speed
- Difficulties in spelling
- Smaller range of vocabulary
- Slow word retrieval
- Slow speech
- Articulation problems

➔ compensatory strategies
➔ fatigue
➔ stress + frustration

Non-linguistic problems experienced by dyslexics

- Difficulties in time management and organizing work
- Problems with arithmetic and memorizing multiplication tables
- Smaller span of working memory
- Difficulties with handwriting
- Gross motor coordination problems
- Problems with sustained attention
- Difficulties in automatizing new skills

→ compensatory strategies
→ fatigue
→ stress + frustration



Need for accommodations

Dyslexia exists on a continuum

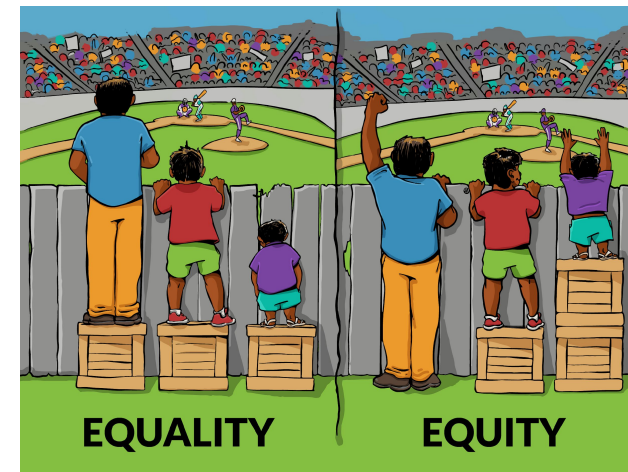


every profile is unique

no link with IQ

Dyslexia as a disability or specific learning difference?

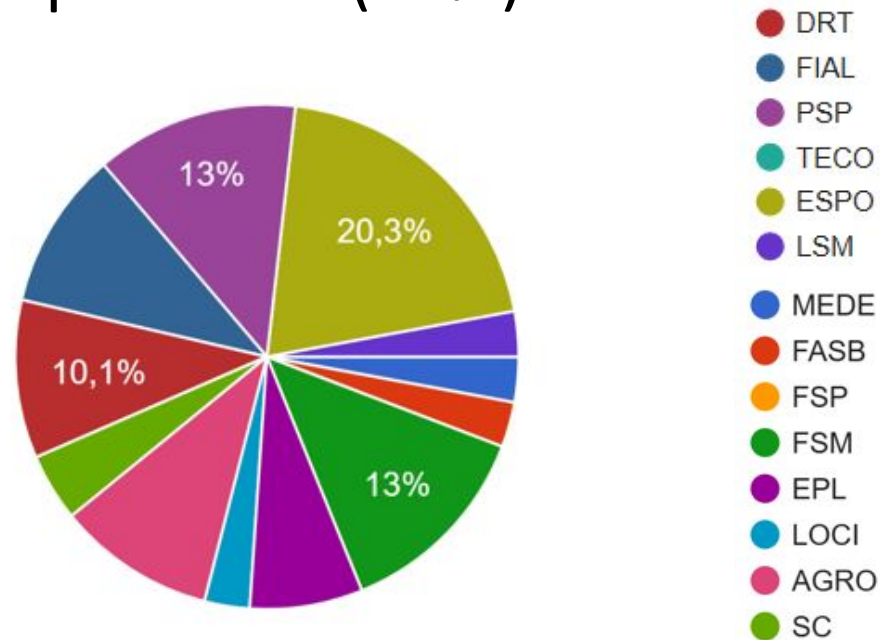
- Recognized by the WHO as a disability
- In Belgium: Legal obligation for accommodations
 - since 2015 in Flemish education
 - since 2018 in French-speaking education



What are our students' profiles? UCLouvain survey

Survey carried out at UCLouvain in March 2023:

- 292 students with specific learning differences
- 69 respondents (24%)



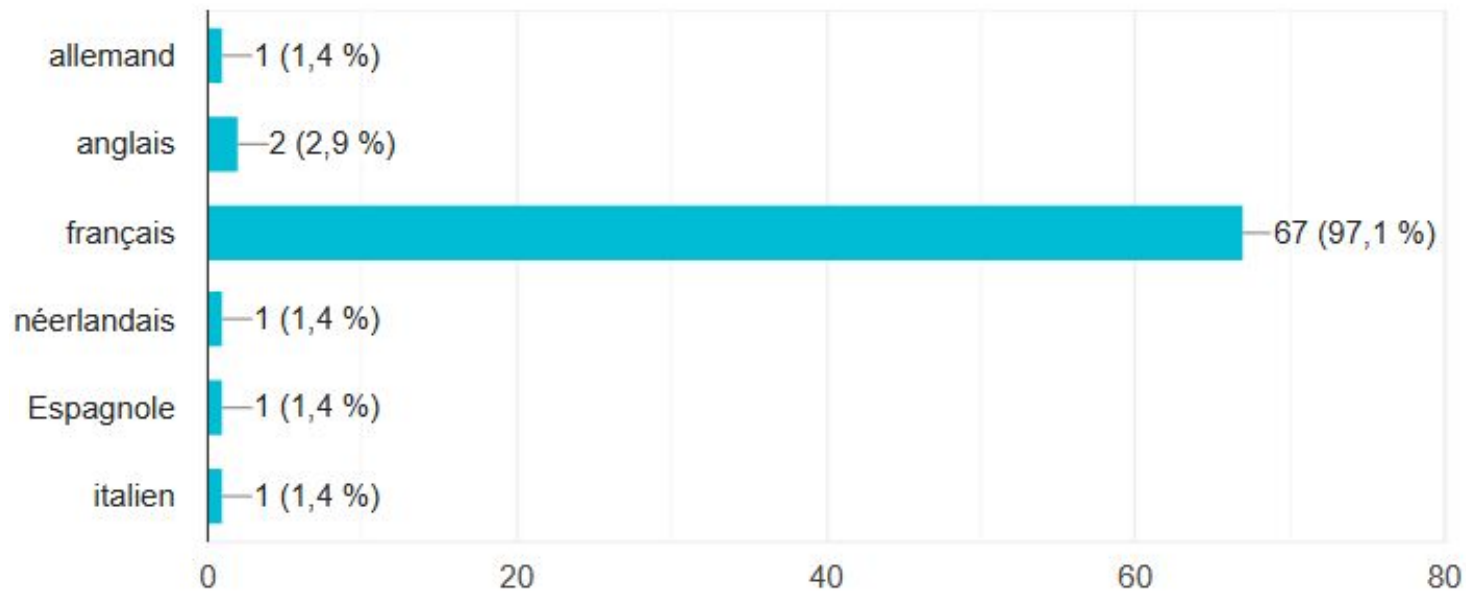
What are our students' profiles? UCLouvain survey

65 % in Bachelor's programs

35 % in Master's programs

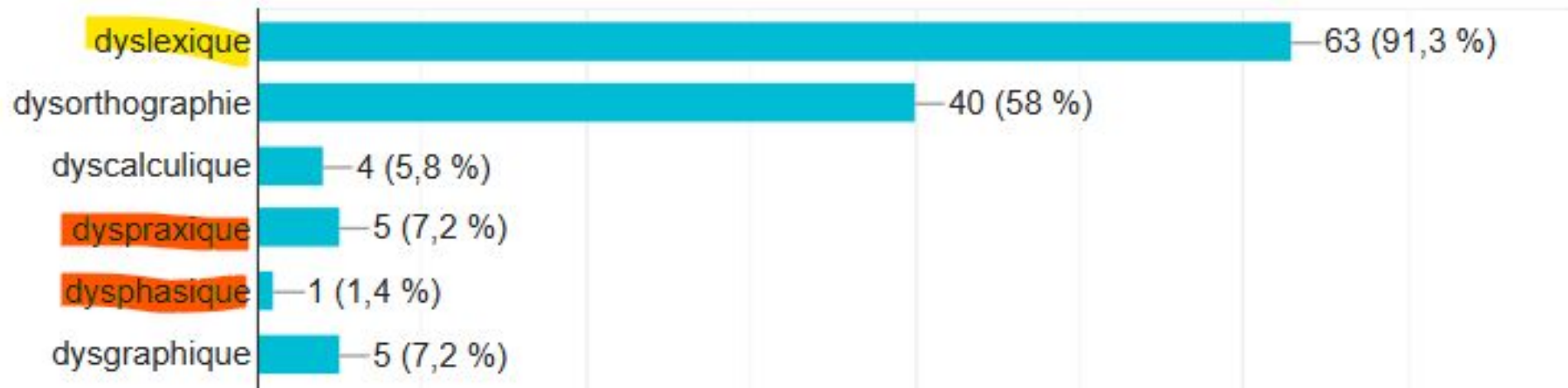
97% native French speakers

8.5 % bilingual students

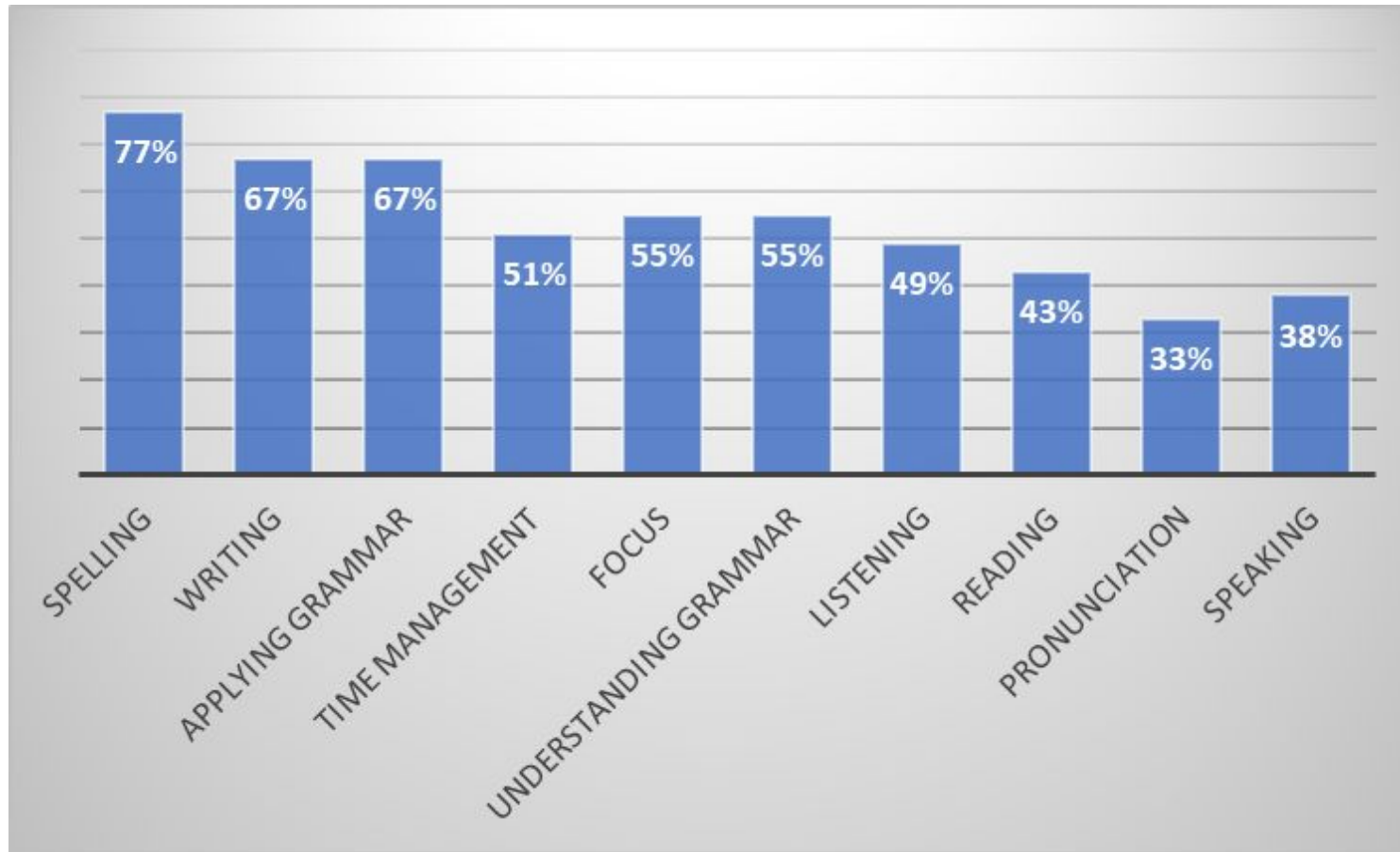


What are our students' profiles? UCLouvain survey

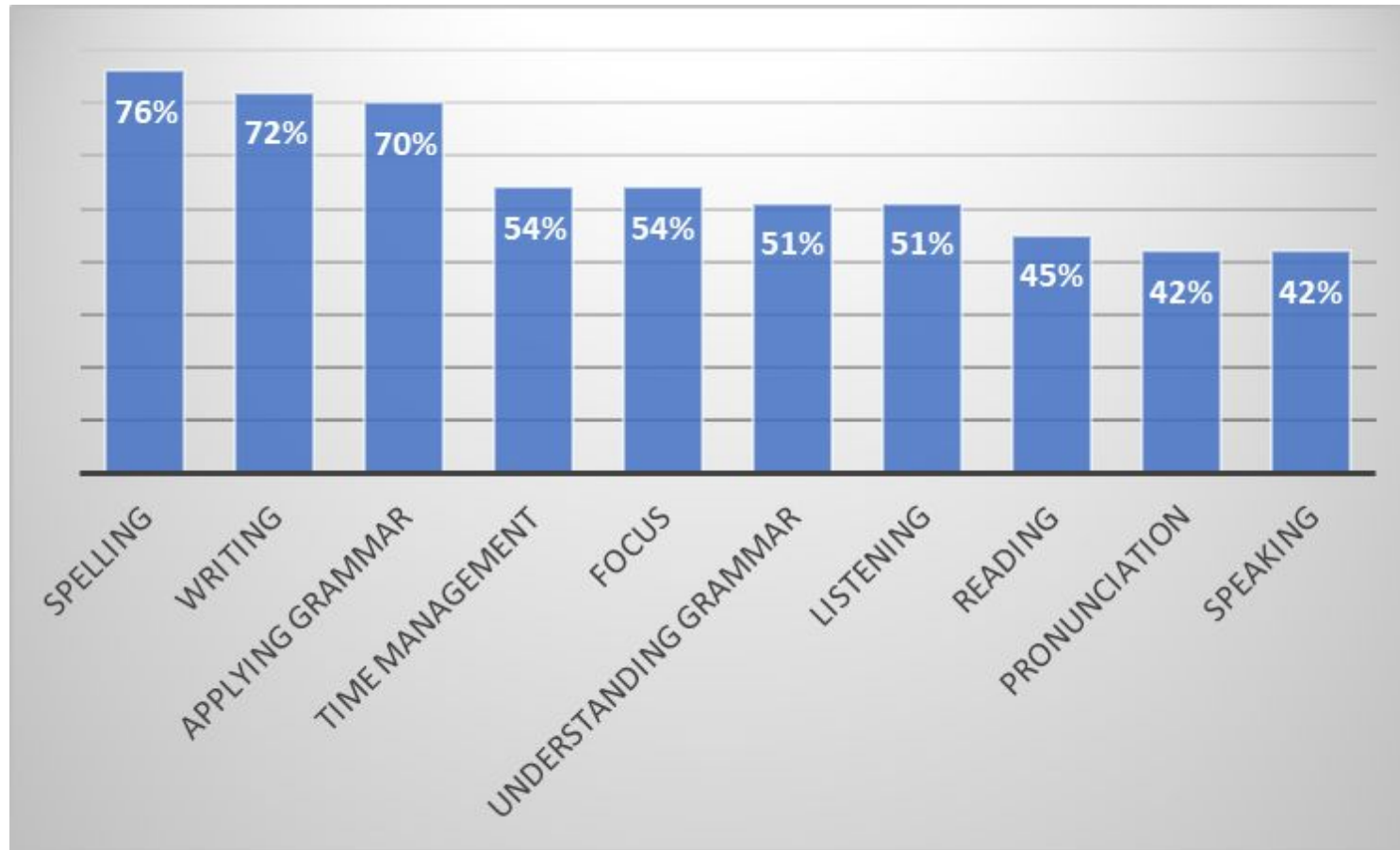
91% dyslexic 79% dyslexic + other learning difference
7% of which ADHD



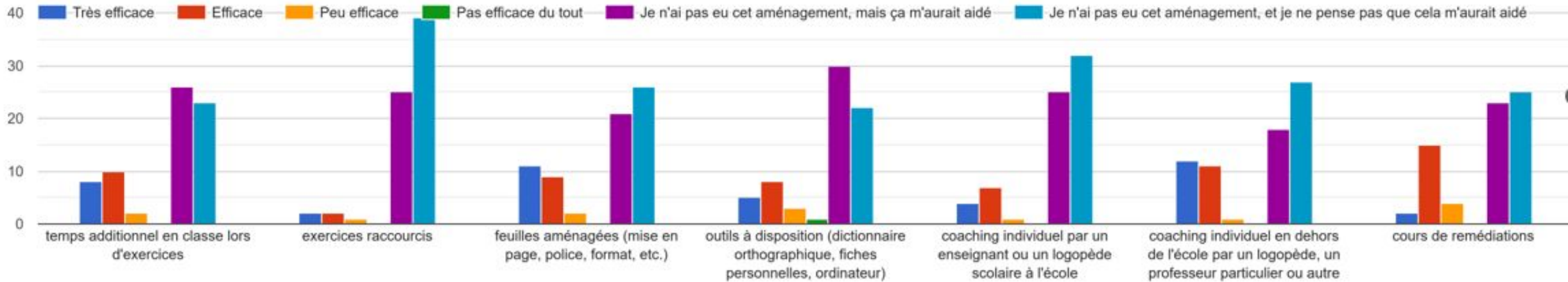
What are our students' difficulties DURING EXAMS? UCLouvain survey



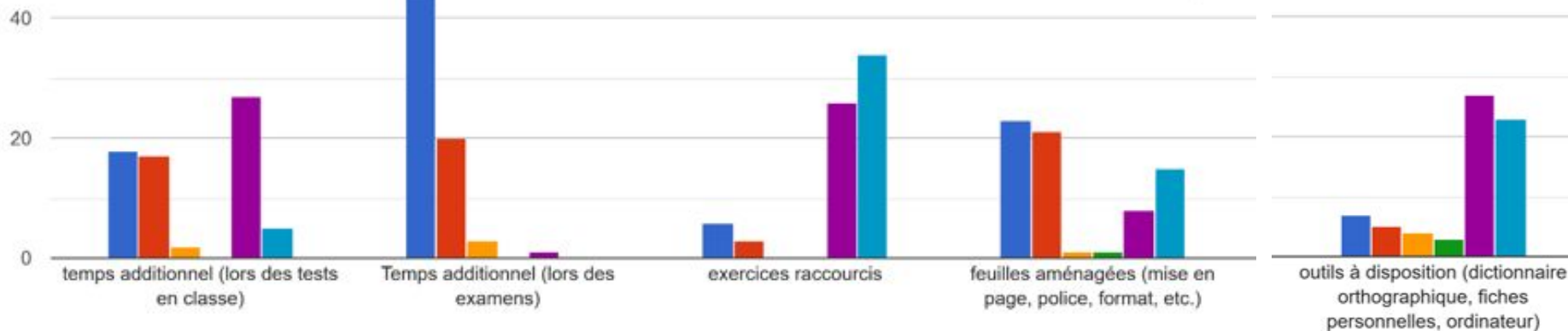
What are our students' difficulties IN CLASS? UCLouvain survey



Which accommodations given IN CLASS? UCLouvain survey

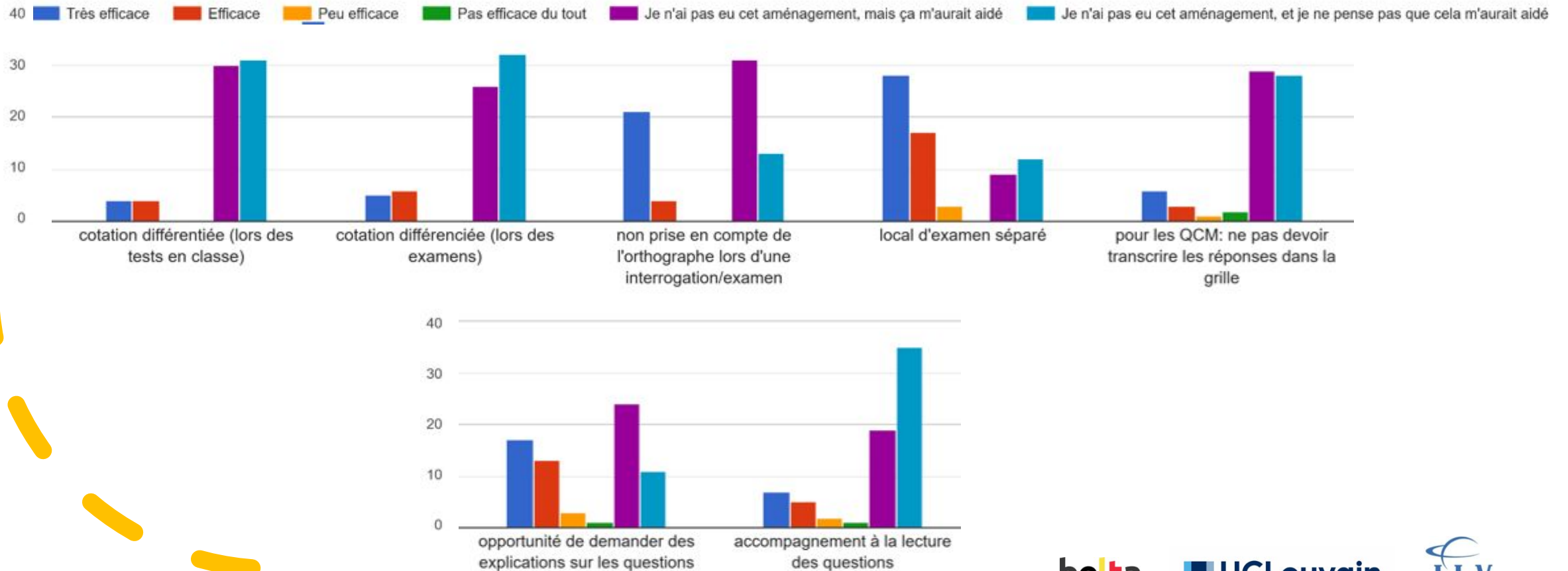


Which accommodations given DURING TESTS/EXAMS?



Which accommodations given DURING TESTS/EXAMS?

UCLouvain survey



Which other accommodations could help IN CLASS?

UCLouvain survey

- Dyslexia-specific / **slower paced** coaching
- Writing on the **blackboard**
- Multisensory teaching, esp. **visual** (timelines, color codes, etc.)
- Never make dyslexic students read out loud
- **Airy page layout** for worksheets / course notes
- More grammar exercises
- Exercise **keys**
- Vocabulary lists

Which accommodations should we grant / prioritize?

- Accommodations that students request if possible

→ **Checklist**

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR
DYSLEXIA OR OTHER SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFERENCES
IN LANGUAGE EVALUATION

Check the accommodations you'd like to get and that are permitted in your support plan:

During your language tests or exams:

- Separate exam room if possible
- If not possible, use of noise-canceling headphones:
 - I'm bringing my own
 - I'd like to borrow one from the school
- Additional time
- Exam or test sheet printed **single-sided** only
- Exam or test sheet printed in **A3** format
- Additional listening opportunity for listening comprehension
- Spelling not graded
- MCQ: I will answer directly in the questionnaire, **not** on the separate answer sheet
- MCQ: I may **specify my answer choice** through a short, written explanation for questions that may give rise to confusion
- Group assessment: pair me with another dyslexic student if possible
- Use of specific tools: _____
- Other: _____

Do you give permission to your teacher to talk to you about these accommodations during class if necessary?

- Yes**
- No**, only online or through e-mail, I'd like to remain discreet

Checklist

Check the **accommodations** you'd like to get and that are permitted in your support plan:

- Separate exam room if possible
- If not possible, use of noise-canceling headphones:
 - I'm bringing my own
 - I'd like to borrow one from the school
- Additional time
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Checklist

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Checklist

Do you give permission to your teacher to talk to you about these accommodations during class if necessary?

- o **Yes**
- o **No**, only online or through e-mail, I'd like to remain discreet



Checklist

- During your language **classes**:
 - Additional time OR shortened exercise for **written exercises** and **reading**
 - Additional listening opportunity OR shortened exercise for **listening comprehension**
 - For pair work be paired with another dyslexic student if possible
 - Individual feedback or coaching if time permits
 - Other: _____

Recommendations: Best practices for teaching dyslexics

- **Identify their needs** as of the beginning of the year / term:
 - Check any lists or make an announcement
 - Ask for students' accommodation requests
 - Avoid communicating their difference
- Give them some **individual support**
- **Diversify** your teaching methods + use **repetition**

Recommendations: Best practices for teaching dyslexics

- **Course notes:**

- Clearly organized with a **table of contents** and page numbers
- Use **sans serif fonts**: Arial, Verdana, Helvetica, Courier (**minimum size 10/11**)
- Use at least **1.15 line spacing**
- Key words in **bold**
- No italics
- Text not justified

Recommendations: Best practices for teaching dyslexics

- **Course notes:**

- **Airy layout**, with ample space for answers in exercises
- Include written **instructions for all exercises**; instructions should be short and clear
- All information necessary to complete an exercise should be on the same page
- Include timelines / tables / mind maps / color codes to **make information visual**
- Include vocabulary lists
- Should be **available in electronic version** as from Day 1 of class

Recommendations: Best practices for teaching dyslexics

- **Exercises:**

- **Short** texts and videos
- **Regular practice:** short grammar and vocabulary exercises and tests throughout the course
- Provide **exercise keys** that students can use at their own pace
- Speaking exercises in pairs or groups before students have to speak in front of the class
- **Careful pairing** / grouping with partners they feel comfortable with, possibly regular partners
- Never make them read out loud in front of the class

Recommendations: Best practices for teaching dyslexics

- **Exercises:**

- Write on the **blackboard** a much as possible
- Or project from a computer instead
- Give **instructions for exercises BEFORE** starting the exercise or distributing worksheets
- **Listening comprehension** practice:
 - Wait until they have **finished reading** questions/gap text before playing the recording
 - Possibly drop every 3rd question for them if their reading cannot keep up with the audio

Recommendations: Best practices for assessing dyslexics

- Check students' **accommodation requests** (inclusion coordinator / lists / your checklist)
- Give 1/3 of total exam **time in addition** at the end, under good conditions in a quiet classroom
- **Separate exam room** if possible
- If not possible, ensure a **quiet exam room**:
 - Allow students to use noise-canceling headphones
 - For listening comprehension: Additional listening opportunity at the end, on demand

Recommendations: Best practices for assessing dyslexics

- Exam sheets:
 - Use **sans serif fonts**: Arial, Verdana, Helvetica, Courier (**min. size 10/11**)
 - Use at least **1.15 line spacing**
 - Use **bold** text to highlight
 - **Airy layout**, with ample space for answers
 - No italics
 - Text not justified
 - Pages **single-sided**
 - All information necessary to complete an exercise should be **on one page**

Recommendations: Best practices for assessing dyslexics

- Clear instructions and questions:
 - Clearly **numbered questions**
 - **Short instructions**
 - Avoid negatively formulated questions and double negations
 - If question formats vary, make this **clear visually** and point this out orally as well

Recommendations: Best practices for assessing dyslexics

- **Listening comprehension** questions:
 - **Short extracts**
 - Leave **sufficient text between questions**
 - e.g. one blank every other sentence (never 2 blanks in the same sentence)
 - e.g. one question per idea rather than several questions about the same short extract
 - Wait until students have **finished reading** questions / gap text before playing the recording
 - Give them an **additional listening opportunity**, ideally on laptop / MP3/4 player with headphones

Recommendations: Best practices for assessing dyslexics

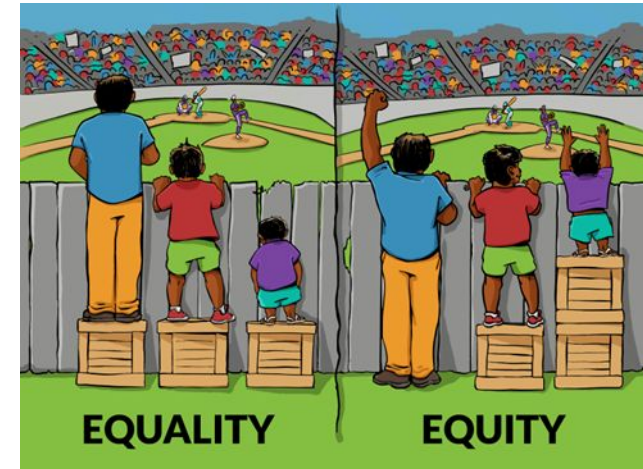
- **Multiple choice** questions:
 - Allow them to **answer in the questionnaire** directly
 - Allow them to **specify their answer choice** through a short, written explanation
 - **Do not mark spelling**, grammar, or syntax in questions in which they're not targeted
 - When spelling is targeted, allow access to tools such as spelling dictionaries or spelling corrector software to which students are accustomed

Recommendations: Best practices for assessing dyslexics

- **Oral exams:**
 - Give dyslexic students **1/3 more preparation time**
 - Give them the choice to take the exam with another dyslexic student if possible
- Ensure accommodations during **in-class tests** as well
 - If additional time cannot be granted, shorten the test (1/3)

The most effective accommodations

- Additional time
- Adapted exam / test / exercise sheets
- Separate or quiet exam / test room
- Adapted grading



Watch out for undiagnosed dyslexics!

- Poor spelling
- Missing words
- Poor text structure
- Poor penmanship, erasures, untidy or crumpled pages
- Difficulty using precise vocabulary
- Slow reader
- Difficulty reading out loud (to be avoided)
- A surprisingly big gap between written and spoken skills

Checklists + recommendations

- BELTA website
- EN + FR

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Exchange with your neighbor:

- Which accommodations have you used so far?
 - Have you found them work-intensive to implement?
 - Which other accommodations / practices would you like to implement in the future?
- 