

English for students with disabilities

In this report we consider some aspects of teaching English to students who suffer from the disfunction of organs of speech, who cannot see or hear well. We also tell about problems of evaluating the level of their knowledge and skills. Some peculiarities of studying in groups where students have different physiological problems are being discussed.

Any language exists in two forms – oral speech and written speech. Teaching foreign language aims to form and develop skills of oral and written speech -reading, writing, speaking and listening. To master such skills it is important to have normal functioning of organs of speech, a good motor function of hands, see and hear well.

For students with motor disfunction of hands it is difficult to write tests and exercises. For some of them it is easier to type, so a computer can be of great help. If students cannot see well they usually find it not so easy to accept information from the board, from TV-screens and computer monitors and even to read a book.

Students who cannot hear well or who cannot hear at all have difficulties with listening and working in pairs (dialogues), mastering phonetic patterns.

We think it is reasonable to evaluate the knowledge and skills of such students in each type of activity (reading, writing, listening and speaking) separately.

At our university we teach students with different disabilities in one group. For a teacher it is rather a problem, but for students it is very useful. As a rule, in such groups students help each other gladly, their cooperation is much greater than in the groups of normal students. The result is positive both for students who help and for students who are helped. They get rid of their ‘inferiority complex’ or ‘invalid complex’ completely or partially, meet their desire for social contact. It helps them to adapt in the society, to use the knowledge of the subject and the skills of socializing in their future life.