CALT: What is it? How do I become one?

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What is a CALT?
A Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT) is an individual who has the specialized training needed to serve students with dyslexia and other disorders of written language.

How do I become one?
The certification process includes coursework, practicum, and a national examination. Professionals may be eligible for this national credential through training in the DuBard Association Method®.

Session Outline
• Definitions of language disorders and dyslexia
• Reciprocal nature of oral and written language disorders
• Accrediting and certifying agencies
• Steps to become a Certified Academic Language Therapist

What is a Language Disorder?
The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association defines language disorder as impaired comprehension and/or use of spoken, written and/or other symbol systems. The disorder may involve (in any combination)
• form of language—phonology, morphology, syntax
• content of language—semantics
• function of language in communication—pragmatics

Disclaimer
Missy Schraeder is employed as professional development coordinator, DuBard School for Language Disorders; course development and presentations are included in salaried duties. She is also a co-author of DuBard Association Method® therapy materials and receives royalty payments. There are no other non-financial relationships.
Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability. Dyslexia refers to a cluster of symptoms, which result in people having difficulties with specific language skills, particularly reading.

Catt’s Language-Based Definition of Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a developmental language disorder that involves a specific deficit(s) in the processing of phonological information. The disorder is generally present at birth and persists into adulthood. A prominent characteristic of the disorder is a specific reading disability.

Characteristics of individuals with language-based disabilities, including reading disabilities

Preceding, accompanying, and following this reading disability, the disorder manifests itself in various difficulties in phonological coding, including problems in encoding, retrieving, and using phonological codes in memory. In addition, difficulties may be observed in speech production and in the metalinguistic awareness of speech sound segments.

International Dyslexia Association

Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability. Dyslexia refers to a cluster of symptoms, which result in people having difficulties with specific language skills, particularly reading.

Students with dyslexia usually experience difficulties with other language skills such as spelling, writing, and pronouncing words. Dyslexia affects individuals throughout their lives; however, its impact can change at different stages in a person’s life.

http://www.interdys.org/FAQ.htm

✓ Poor attention, especially for language
✓ Poor memory and poor memory for sequences
✓ Poor predictability for language
✓ Performance and achievement below expectations
✓ Difficulty with phonological awareness—including segmenting and blending

✓ Difficulty with sound-symbol association
✓ Poor spelling
✓ Inaccurate or labored oral reading—lack of reading fluency
✓ Difficulty with comprehension—oral and written
✓ Difficulty in word finding and rapid naming

✓ Poor written expression
✓ Messy handwriting prone to size and spacing errors
✓ Directional uncertainty
✓ Poor organizational skills
✓ Family history of similar problems or history of speech, language, or reading problems

Relating oral and written language:

Implications for dyslexia

• Between 40 and 75 percent of preschoolers with early language impairment develop reading difficulties later, often in conjunction with broader academic achievement problems.

The risk for reading problems appears to be lowest among those whose early language weaknesses were relatively mild or were confined to a narrow domain (especially to speech production alone).

Nevertheless, some children with only mild-to-moderate language delays, who appear to overcome their spoken-language difficulties by the end of the preschool period, remain at greater risk than other youngsters for the development of a reading difficulty.

Children who reach typical levels of language skills by age 5 still remain at risk for subsequent reading difficulties at a later time.

Adolescents with a history of preschool language impairment commonly have academic difficulties.

NON-NEGOTIABLE BEGINNING READING SKILLS

- development of phoneme awareness
- development of an understanding of the alphabetic principle
- translation of these skills to decoding words
- proficiency in reading at a fast pace

The National Reading Panel identified five areas of reading instruction:

- **Phonemic awareness**—the ability to notice, think about, and work with the individual sounds in spoken words
- **Phonics**—the understanding that there is a predictable relationship between phonemes (smallest unit of spoken language) and graphemes (smallest unit of written language), the letters that represent those sounds in written language

NICHD research tells us that in order for a beginning reader to learn how to connect or translate printed symbols (letters) into sound, he must understand that

- speech can be segmented or broken into smaller units (phoneme awareness)
- that the segmented units can be represented by printed forms (phonics).

Appropriate Intervention for Dyslexia and Reading Difficulties


Statement of Dr. G. Reid Lyon, Chief, Child Development and Behavior Branch, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Overview of Reading and Literacy Initiatives. [http://www.nichd.nih.gov/search/docs/prentice.pdf](http://www.nichd.nih.gov/search/docs/prentice.pdf)
The National Reading Panel identified five areas of reading instruction:

- **Fluency**—the ability to read a text accurately and quickly
- **Vocabulary**—the words we must know to communicate effectively
- **Text comprehension**—understanding what has been read

Guidelines for proof of reading instruction quality:

- **Accreditation of courses** specifically related to developing teachers of reading/written language
- **Certification of individuals** who have successfully completed such courses

Three reliable resources:

- IMSLEC
- ALTA
- The Alliance

**ADVOCATING** high professional standards in the preparation of MSL specialists

**ESTABLISHING** criteria of program excellence.

**EVALUATING AND ACCREDITING** both independent post-secondary educational programs which offer comprehensive on-site training courses, and programs located within other already accredited institutions.

![IMSLEC](image)

1. **The International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council (IMSLEC)**

   **ACCREDITATION FOR COURSES**

2. **Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA)**

   **CERTIFICATION FOR INDIVIDUALS**

3. **The Alliance for Accreditation and Certification**

   COMPRISED OF IMSLEC and ALTA

### Principles of Instruction

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<td>Morphology: basewords, roots, affixes</td>
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<td>Syntax: grammar, sentence variation, mechanics of language.</td>
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The International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council

Multisensory Structured Language: What is Taught

Phonology and Phonological Awareness:
Phonology is the study of speech sounds and how they work within their environment. A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a given language that can be recognized as being distinct from other sounds in the language. Phonological awareness is the understanding of the internal linguistic structure of words. An important aspect of phonological awareness is phonemic awareness or the ability to segment words into their component sounds.

Sound-symbol Association:
This is the knowledge of the various sounds in the English language and their correspondence to the letters and combinations of letters which represent those sounds. Sound-symbol association must be taught (and mastered) in two directions: visual to auditory and auditory to visual. Additionally, students must master the blending of sounds and letters into words as well as the segmenting of whole words into the individual sounds.

Syllable Instruction:
A syllable is a unit of oral or written language with one vowel sound. Instruction must include the teaching of the six basic types of syllables in the English language: closed, vowel-consonant-e, open, consonant-le, r-controlled, and diphthong or vowel pair. Syllable division rules must be directly taught in relation to the word structure.

Morphology:
Morphology is the study of how morphemes are combined to form words. A morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning in the language. The curriculum must include the study of base words, roots and affixes.

Syntax:
Syntax is the set of principles that dictates the sequence and function of words in a sentence in order to convey meaning. This includes grammar, sentence variation and the mechanics of language.
Semantics:

Semantics is that aspect of the language concerned with meaning. The curriculum (from the beginning) must include instruction in the comprehension of written language.

The International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council

Multisensory Structured Language: How It Is Taught

Simultaneous, Multisensory (VAKT):

Teaching is done using all learning pathways in the brain (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile) simultaneously in order to enhance memory and learning.

Systematic and Cumulative:

Multisensory language instruction requires that the organization of material follows the logical order of the language. The sequence must begin with the easiest and most basic elements and progress methodically to more difficult material. Each step must also be based on those already learned. Concepts taught must be systematically reviewed to strengthen memory.

Direct Instruction:

The inferential learning of any concept cannot be taken for granted. Multisensory language instruction requires the direct teaching of all concepts with continuous student-teacher interaction.

Diagnostic Teaching:

The teacher must be adept at prescriptive or individualized teaching. The teaching plan is based on careful and continuous assessment of the individual's needs. The content presented must be mastered to the degree of automaticity.
Synthetic and Analytic Instruction:

Multisensory, structured language programs include both synthetic and analytic instruction. **Synthetic instruction** presents the parts of the language and then teaches how the parts work together to form a whole. **Analytic instruction** presents the whole and teaches how this can be broken down into its component parts.

- Accredits training courses which include a variety of approaches such as Orton-Gillingham, Spalding, Hardman, Alphabetic Phonics, Slingerland, **DuBard Association Method®,** and others.

- Accredited courses are located at approximately 90 sites in 27 states.

• These training courses offer extensive coursework and supervised teaching experience leading to professional certification. The training programs may be independent post-secondary training programs or may exist within already accredited institutions, such as colleges, universities, or medical entities.

LEVELS OF ACCREDITATION

- TEACHING
- INSTRUCTOR OF TEACHING
- THERAPY
- INSTRUCTOR OF THERAPY

Requirements for Teaching Level (IMSLEC)

- Bachelor’s degree in education, speech-language pathology, or related field.
- 45 hours of instruction in a MSLE course
- 60 hours of supervised practicum (over a minimum of 9 months)
- 5 hours of direct observation with written evaluations
- Lesson plans and work samples
- 30 hours of continuing education every 3 years

Requirements for Therapy Level (IMSLEC)

- Master’s degree in education, speech-language pathology, or related field.
- 90 hours of instruction in a MSLE course
- 3 models of supervised practicum
  - 700 clock hours with 10 hours of observation/evaluations
  - 500 clock hours with 15 hours of observation/evaluation
  - 350 clock hours with 20 hours of observation/evaluation
### Requirements for Therapy Level, continued

- Lessons must include all levels of instruction, from beginning to advanced
- Lesson plans and work samples
- Three different cases
- 30 hours of continuing education every 3 years

### BENEFITS OF IMSLEC

- Accreditation of a MSLE training course assures that the teachers or therapists trained in that program have received adequate course instruction and practicum in the skills required to produce positive, measurable results in literacy for this population.

### ACCREDITATION IS FOR COURSES

- Accreditation of a training course assures intervention for children and adults with dyslexia based on an alternate reading approach which has a scientific basis for its instructional procedures. Individuals with dyslexia or related disorders require a different method of teaching to match their different learning differences.

### CERTIFICATION IS FOR INDIVIDUALS

- An important resource for parents, government agencies, and educational systems for the clarification of what constitutes a quality teacher training program for teachers of students with dyslexia by establishing organizational criteria and evidenced-based instructional program standards for content and methodology for MSLE training courses.
WHAT IS ALTA?
The Academic Language Therapy Association is a certifying organization which certifies individuals who are graduates of an accredited training course.

www.altaread.org

• ALTA is a national professional member organization dedicated to the remediation of written language skills.
• ALTA certifies individuals trained in the remediation of written language skills.

What is a CALT?
A Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT) is an individual who has the specialized training needed to serve students with dyslexia and other disorders of written language.

Certification as a Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT) or a Certified Academic Language Practitioner (CALP) is based on four very important components:
• Coursework
• Demonstration lessons
• Supervised clinical experience
• Successful completion of a national certification exam

What is The Alliance?
Alliance for Accreditation and Certification

www.allianceaccreditation.org
• A united association of organizations concerned with the accreditation of Multisensory Structured Language Education (MSLE) training courses and the certification of graduates of these courses
• Current participating organizations: IMSLEC and ALTA

There are numerous phonetic, multisensory structured language approaches based on sound, research-based principles. Selection of a specific approach should be based on the needs of particular students.
Extensive professional training in a phonetic, multisensory approach is required for effective intervention.

Once an individual has completed training in an accredited program, he/she is eligible to sit for the Alliance Exam. Successful completion of this exam is required for certification as an Certified Academic Language Practitioner (Teaching level, CALP) or Certified Academic Language Therapist (Therapy level, CALT).

Individuals who have completed a 2-year (minimum) internship in teaching MSLE methodology to other professionals are eligible to use the designation of Qualified Instructor.

CALT, QI

The DuBard Association Method® training course of the DuBard School for Language Disorders at The University of Southern Mississippi holds accredited status from the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council (IMSLEC) for its instructional programs at the Teaching, Instructor of Teaching, Therapy, and Instructor of Therapy levels (first of 2 accredited programs in Mississippi) since 1997.

Components of Multisensory Intervention through the DuBard Association Method®
- Visual
- Auditory
- Tactile
- Motor-Kinesthetic
- Phonetic
- Linguistic
- Structured content
- Systematic implementation
- Incremental implementation
- Cumulative

The DuBard Association Method® Distinctive Features
- No program to buy or sell
- Use of Northampton symbols

Northampton symbols are organized into primary and secondary spellings.


1’s and 2’s are used to differentiate between sounds that are written the same but said differently.

• Precise articulation required from the beginning
• Cursive script recommended (may be taught in manuscript)
• Color differentiation

• Teaching of phonemes progresses to syllables, words of gradually increasing length, sentences/questions, stories/questions

• Modification of temporal rate

• Individual student’s book made as he/she progresses through the method (modified for whole-class instruction)

• Instruction in phonetic rules is delayed until upper levels of the DuBard Association Method®

DuBard Association Method® as related to National Reading Panel Guidelines for Reading Instruction

• **Phonemic Awareness** – DuBard AM teaches individual phonemes using VAKT (visual, auditory, motor-kinesthetic, and tactile) modalities. Phonemes are combined into syllables and words. Segmenting and blending is a key aspect.

• **Phonics** – DuBard AM teaches sound-symbol association. DuBard AM uses VAKT to reinforce this association.

• **Fluency** - Goal of AM is 90% accuracy for oral and written recall with automaticity.

• **Vocabulary** – Vocabulary words are taught directly through cross drills at the early levels. Concepts are taught as well. Vocabulary development continues through all levels of the method.

• **Text Comprehension** – Teaches strategies such as direct pairing of question language to sentence language at every sentence and story level. As appropriate, multiple questions are taught for individual sentences.
Master’s Degree in Dyslexia Therapy
The University of Southern Mississippi

- Collaboration between two university colleges: College of Education and Psychology College of Health
- Will begin May, 2013
- Will include practicum
- Graduates will be eligible for MDE Educator Licensure endorsement #203 for dyslexia therapy

DuBard School for Language Disorders
The University of Southern Mississippi

www.usm.edu/dubard
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