PART III
Cross-linguistic Aspects of Literacy Development and Dyslexia
In this paper, I present a theoretical overview at the cognitive level of the role of phonological awareness in reading development and developmental dyslexia across languages. My assumption is that the primary deficit in developmental dyslexia in all languages lies in representing speech sounds: a deficit in "phonological representation." I will argue that this deficit manifests in somewhat different ways, depending on orthography. I will also argue that the phonological deficit in dyslexia is initially at the syllable and onset-rime levels of phonological awareness, with the development of "phonemic" awareness being a consequence rather than a precursor of reading. Finally, I will suggest that some of the processes underpinning language acquisition are disrupted in dyslexia, in particular, the detection of rhythm in speech.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS AND LEARNING TO READ ACROSS LANGUAGES

One of the most robust findings to emerge from research in cognitive developmental psychology across languages is that there is a causal connection between a child’s phonological awareness and his or her reading and spelling development (Goswami & Bryant, 1990). This has been documented in numerous studies,