

Challenges of Educational Inclusion in English Language Teaching: Pedagogical Reflections from Teaching Experience with a Visually Impaired Student

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INTRODUCTION & AIM

The transition toward inclusive education in upper secondary education represents one of the most complex ethical and pedagogical commitments for contemporary educational systems. Far from being a merely administrative process, inclusion requires breaking down **barriers to learning and participation (BLP)** that are usually deeply rooted in traditional teaching methodologies.

This problem occurs constantly in foreign language teaching (English). Historically, the communicative approaches and instructional tools of recent decades have developed a heavy reliance on visual stimuli: illustrated textbooks, dynamic slides, interactive digital platforms, subtitled videos, and dynamics based on the observation of body language and conventional literacy.

When an educational approach assumes visual normativity as the sole channel to access knowledge, it implicitly excludes students with linguistic or sensory functional diversity.

In this scenario, the presence of a student with visual impairment in a regular high school classroom not only tests the institutional infrastructure but also directly challenges teaching practice. Teachers face the immediate challenge of deconstructing their own lesson planning and assessing whether their mediation strategies are truly accessible.

The lack of specific typhological materials, the widespread lack of knowledge regarding assistive technologies in the regular language classroom, and the deeply ingrained culture of visual materials in English language teaching operate as exclusion factors that limit equitable learning for visually impaired students.

Objective

To reflect analytically on the pedagogical challenges and adaptive processes that emerge in actual teaching practice when supporting and guiding the learning process of a visually impaired student in a regular upper secondary English class.

METHOD

The study is grounded in a qualitative approach based on critical pedagogical reflection and the systematic analysis of teaching practice.

The data were collected and structured from three main sources:

- **Observation records:** Detailed class diaries that captured spontaneous interactions, learning barriers, and pedagogical friction points.
- **Interaction experiences:** A meticulous analysis of relational dynamics in the classroom and the socio-emotional inclusion of the student with her peers.
- **Curricular adaptation processes:** Systematic documentation of the adjustments made to instructional materials time allocation, and assessment formats during academic support.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

It was identified that the success of inclusion lies in the teacher's ability to structure cooperative learning environments that mitigate isolation. Systematic teacher reflection emerged as the fundamental catalyst tool, allowing the instructor to identify their own methodological biases, evaluate the effectiveness of adjustments in real time, and radically transform their ordinary praxis to ensure the equitable participation of all students.

The findings demonstrate that teaching in inclusive environments is not static but rather demands a continuous cycle of pedagogical adaptation and instructional creativity.

Key Strategy: The transition from a purely visual teaching paradigm to one of a multisensory and auditory nature, diversifying the channels of access to knowledge.

The analysis evidenced the urgent need to reconfigure traditional assessment dynamics (standardized written exams) into flexible instruments (oral evaluations, audio portfolios, and readings using assistive software) that allow for the equitable measurement of language competence development.

CONCLUSION

True inclusion is not just about delivering materials; that is, it is not enough to adapt an activity at the last minute or translate a text superficially. Real inclusion demands a profound change in the way of teaching and in the attitude of the entire school.

In this regard, to respond respectfully to student diversity, it is necessary to redesign curricula and classes from their original planning stage, thinking about all students and not just the majority.

Furthermore, English language teaching must stop relying so heavily on images, screens, and visual resources. It is urgent to move toward universal learning methods that utilize hearing, touch, and other channels so that no one is left behind.

FUTURE WORK / REFERENCES

- Develop applied research lines concerning the implementation of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) specifically in foreign language teaching at the high school level.
- Evaluate the pedagogical effectiveness of screen-reading software and optical readers applied to English grammar and phonetics learning.
- Investigate the impact of institutional training programs in inclusive competencies for language teachers.
- Conduct follow-up studies on the academic performance and school dropout rates of students with sensory disabilities in bilingual programs.

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