

Empowering Students Through Inclusive Language Teaching Practices

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Abstract

The innovative strategy for inclusive learning aims to ensure that each student, regardless of their abilities, background, or learning needs, has fair opportunities to access a high-quality education. This educational philosophy aims to provide an atmosphere where each student can succeed intellectually, socially, and emotionally while acknowledging the diversity of learners. Since teaching English is crucial to academic success and efficient communication in many educational systems throughout the world, the need for inclusive education is particularly apparent. Proficiency in the English language is essential for students' growth and prospects, in addition to their academic success. The study reviews current literature, identifies effective inclusive strategies, and discusses their implementation in language classrooms.

Keywords: *Inclusive Practices, Language Teaching, Universal Design Learning, Student-centric approach, Inclusive Development, Instructional Strategies*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is the social institution that provides knowledge, facts, job skills, and morality to the members of society. One of the most significant functions of education is to enhance human lives and promote societal cohesion. Inclusive education is one of the concepts in the education field. All students, regardless of ability, learn together in a single setting under the umbrella of inclusive education. Through an ongoing, never-ending process, inclusion aims to increase everyone's involvement in education. (Department of Education & Science, 2007; Salend, 2010). The aim is to draw attention away from the injustices that result from exclusion and prejudice against diversity, including the abilities of students and their families, gender, religion, and social and ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, we assert that the movement for inclusive education is a response to political segregation and social

inequality as well as a movement against all forms of exclusion. (Petrou, Angelides, & Leigh, 2009).

This ensures that every student receives equal treatment and opportunities. It is a way to respect each student's uniqueness and diversity while simultaneously acknowledging their individuality. Inclusive education advocates for a comprehensive strategy that modifies curriculum, school cultures, and teaching methods to fit the needs of all learners, going beyond the simple physical integration of students with disabilities into mainstream classrooms. As classrooms become increasingly diverse, both culturally and linguistically, educators must adopt strategies that address the varied needs of all learners. This method helps students with a variety of learning styles and abilities in addition to those with different linguistic backgrounds. Recognizing and appreciating diversity as a strength forms the cornerstone of inclusive language education. It entails putting into practice adaptive and flexible pedagogical techniques to guarantee that every student has fair access to educational opportunities. Differentiated instruction, culturally sensitive teaching, and the utilization of multimodal resources are just a few of the many tactics that are included in these practices. Teachers can adjust their lesson plans and instructional resources to meet the needs of students with varying learning styles and skill levels thanks to differentiated instruction. They can give students a variety of ways to interact with and comprehend the language they are learning by changing the curriculum, methods, and product of instruction.

2. INCLUSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES

A vast array of instructional strategies that meet the needs of students with various backgrounds, learning preferences, and skill levels are included in inclusive teaching practices. These instructional strategies are crucial for creating a learning environment in which students of all backgrounds and ability levels feel valued and inspired. These methods aid in the development of an inclusive classroom where all students are valued and given every opportunity to succeed. These strategies include customising instruction to fit the requirements of each student, acknowledging and incorporating the cultural contexts in which they are learning, and utilising the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to accommodate a variety of learning styles along with equitable assessment

methodologies. According to Shuman, 2007; Kumar & Wideman, 2014, By giving students flexibility and the chance to personalize their education, ‘universal’ approaches to curriculum design inevitably involve them as partners. The importance of promoting inclusivity in schools and the education system has been underscored by various national and international policy regulations. It necessitates systemic changes in the classroom process, from curriculum planning to student achievement, as well as fundamental adjustments in classroom discussions. As research has indicated, students with learning disabilities have lower levels of self-esteem than their non-disabled peers. Giving every student the chance to socialize and participate in class will hopefully help them all feel like they belong and engage in constructive peer interactions. It necessitates that educators change their methods of instruction to reflect the shared nature of learning in an inclusive classroom. (Florian, 2015). The use of inclusive practices in the classrooms, with a strong consensus regarding the benefits of these practices on academic and socioemotional outcomes. The most economical approach to educating the millions of disabled children who seldom receive any kind of education in developing nations is through inclusion. (UNESCO 2020).

3. WHY USE INCLUSIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES?

The emphasis on student responsibility and activity, where students are naturally motivated to learn, has been characterised as a strategy that shifts the focus away from the teacher or the textbooks. (Cannon & Newble, 2000). The inclusive education theory states that every child should have equal access to education. The significance of inclusive teaching is becoming more and more apparent as educational institutions work to address structural injustices and educate students for a varied and connected world. Historically, education systems often excluded students who were different. Through time, inclusive education was pushed by laws such as the UNESCO Salamanca Declaration and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in the United States. According to UNESCO’s Guidelines for Inclusion (2005), inclusion is a process that encompasses several elements, some of which are evident below.

By promoting involvement in learning, cultures, and communities and decreasing exclusion from and within education, inclusion is understood as a process that addresses

and responds to the diversity of needs of all learners. With a shared vision that encompasses all children of the appropriate age range and the belief that the regular system must educate all children, it entails adjustments and modifications to content, approaches, structures, and strategies. As educators address the challenges presented by diverse classrooms, the use of inclusive strategies becomes imperative in preparing children for a global society. Teachers can help students become active participants in their own learning by using a variety of strategies and technological tools to make the curriculum more engaging and relevant for them. Using these strategies demonstrates a commitment to both teaching excellence and the holistic development of every student. This strategy enhances academic results by making sure that instructional strategies and resources are understandable and interesting to all students. It also advances equality by addressing and removing structural barriers that disproportionately affect marginalised communities. Inclusive education can boost students' self-esteem, positive attitudes, and independence. Additionally, it prepares pupils for a globalised and heterogeneous society. Through the integration of varied viewpoints and the promotion of empathy and cooperation, educators help students acquire critical thinking and social skills that are important in an international community.

4. INCLUSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES AND THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS

Language classrooms are often diverse settings with learners and teachers from many different backgrounds. In contemporary education, inclusivity in the language classroom is essential to cater to the varied needs of students. Students who are English Language Learners (ELLs) face challenges in comprehending and producing language. Inclusive teaching practices in language classrooms are beneficial not only for students with diverse backgrounds and abilities but also for the overall learning environment. Teachers can foster a more inclusive and enriching language learning environment for all students by valuing and promoting each student's distinct strengths and experiences.

The maxims and methods of inclusive education can be applied to the language classroom to create an inclusive learning environment for all students, including those with language disabilities or difficulties. The use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) can be applied by offering texts in various formats (e.g., audio, digital) and providing options for students

to demonstrate their understanding through different modalities (e.g., oral presentations, written essays). The use of scaffolding method and social interaction in classroom supports collaborative learning and peer tutoring among students. The integration of cultural references from students into all facets of learning can be strengthened using the culturally responsive teaching strategy. Diversity should be reflected in and respected in language classroom design. This includes displaying multicultural materials and celebrating cultural events and traditions. Walker and Covington (1998) suggests that institutions ought to employ top-notch instructional methods and any required assistance programs and additional resources to ensure educational success. Support is provided to learners within the regular classroom setting, instead of students being taken out to access these services.

Teachers are required to meet high standards in more inclusive curricula. They must become knowledgeable about curriculum adaptation in their classrooms and actively participate in local curriculum development. The curriculum should include a variety of voices and opinions in the programme. The classroom environment can be enhanced by using case studies, books, and examples that represent students' diverse cultural origins. Students' engagement can be improved by using interactive teaching methods and techniques. It is possible to achieve success using methods like project-based learning, storytelling, and cooperative learning. They also need to be adept at organizing the involvement of every student, overseeing a wide variety of challenging classroom activities and supporting their students' learning without providing them with pre-written answers. In addition, they must know how to operate across conventional subject boundaries and in culturally aware ways (UNESCO, 2003). Research has revealed that students develop a greater appreciation and understanding of different cultures, which prepares them to function effectively in a diverse society. By using assistive technologies to help them overcome specific problems, students demonstrated notable increases in their academic performance, especially in reading and writing. The supportive and adaptive environment help reduce anxiety and frustration among students, contributing to their overall well-being and social development.

The inclusion of a special needs student in a regular classroom depends on a variety of factors, including the availability of resources and the way teachers allocate them to

different students in addition to appropriate policies, laws, and regulations. The availability of resources for funding, materials, and equipment is one of the biggest challenges in implementing inclusive education in this case. Developing nations have implemented several affordable measures to address the issue of limited resources and advance inclusive education. By utilising trainer-of-trainer models for professional development and establishing links between universities and pre-service training institutions for clinical experiences, it is possible to address the issue of scarce resources and advance inclusive education.

5. IMPLEMENTATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To effectively implement inclusive practices, ongoing professional development for teachers is essential. Teachers must get professional development and training to build cultural competency and special education skills before they can begin using inclusive practices in the classroom. Training should focus on inclusive strategies, cultural competence, and the use of assistive technologies. To support students with disabilities, the classroom environment must be modified to be inclusive and welcoming, incorporating assistive technologies. Adequate funding and support for teachers are among the policy proposals, as is the promotion of inclusive education at all levels of the educational system. To further help different learners, student-centered learning should be prioritised together with the integration of student voice and choice and the use of technology. To guarantee that inclusive practices are efficient and sensitive to the requirements of students, ongoing evaluation and reflective practice are required. This fosters an environment of fairness and support for all students. Future research should explore the long-term outcomes of inclusive practices and the effectiveness of specific strategies in diverse ELT contexts.

6. CONCLUSION

Inclusive teaching methods are essential for establishing equitable learning settings that meet the various requirements of every student. If teachers can respond to a larger range of demands, inclusion in the context of English language instruction will be effective. More differentiation of tasks and resources could be used to achieve this. Teachers can never accomplish their responsibilities without the necessary training. When teaching in English,

teachers in this situation must be skilled in meeting the demands of their students. This suggests that they must adapt their teaching strategies to accommodate students with various learning preferences, including kinesthetic, auditory, and visual learners. By incorporating data into decision-making, fostering collaboration, and fostering an inclusive culture, educational establishments may create an environment where all students can succeed. Furthermore, inclusive language teaching involves fostering a supportive and collaborative classroom environment. This includes promoting positive interactions among students, encouraging peer learning, and creating a safe space where mistakes are seen as opportunities for growth. Continuous evaluation and reflection are key to ensuring that inclusive practices remain effective and responsive to the needs of all learners. The dedication to fairness and quality in education is ultimately what inclusive language instruction is all about. It is all about preparing students for a world in which understanding one another's differences and communicating with one another will be crucial in the future. By implementing inclusive practices, teachers can leave a lasting impression on their students' lives and give them the knowledge and self-assurance they need to succeed in and contribute to a world that is becoming more and more interconnected.

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