ENGLISH INSTRUCTION TO EFL STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT AT

FERNANDO VOLIO JIMENEZ HIGH SCHOOL AND AEROPUERTO JERUSALÉN

HIGH SCHOOL IN PÉREZ ZELEDÓN COUNTY

A Case Study

By

Carolina Solano Hidalgo

Elvira Gutiérrez Pineda

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

The Licentiate's Degree in Applied Linguistics in English

Universidad Nacional, Brunca Extension, Pérez Zeledón Campus

February, 2017

Defensa de Proyecto de Graduación de la Licenciatura en Lingüística Aplicada con

Énfasis en Inglés


Presentado por las sustentantes

Elvira Gutiérrez Pineda

Carolina Solano Hidalgo

Febrero del 2017

Tribunal Examinador:


M. A. José Luis Díaz Naranjo                    _____

Decano de la Universidad Nacional- Sede Región Brunca


M. A. Yalile Jiménez Olivares                    _____

Vicedecana en Representación de la Dirección Académica


M.A. Cinthya Olivares Garita                    _____

Tutora del proyecto


M.A. Lenna Barrantes Elizondo                    _____

Lectora


M.A. Jorge Altamirano Alvarado                    _____

 Lector


Sustentantes:

Carolina Solano Hidalgo                    _____


Elvira Gutiérrez Pineda                    _____

Acknowledgements

To begin with, we would like to thank God for allowing us to complete this research

project since without His help, nothing would have been possible. Second, we are very

grateful to our tutor M.A. Cinthya Olivares Garita for her patience, experience, knowledge

and willingness to guide us in the way to fulfill this study. Then, we would like to give a

profound thanks to the educational staff at Fernando Volio High school and Jerusalén High

school; more specifically, to the principals and the teachers who treated us very kindly and

cooperated with every requirement we had regarding the research. Forth, a great thanks to

the students who were subject of this research project and their parents for their willingness

to help us gather the data and complete the project. Fifth, we would like to thank our

reviewers M.A Lena Barrantes Elizondo and M.A. Jorge Altamirano Alvarado for their

willingness to collaborate with us throughout the final stages of this research paper. Sixth,

thanks to the Universidad Nacional of Costa Rica, which granted us the scholarship to

become professionals. Finally, a huge thanks to our families because they were always

tolerant, patient and willing to collaborate with us in order to fulfill this research project.

They have been part of the motivation we had to keep on working until the end.


Carolina Solano Hidalgo
Elvira Gutiérrez Pineda

Dedication

I dedicate this project to my husband Julio César Pérez. Thanks for being right there when I needed you and supporting me in the most challenging moments.  Thanks for your willingness, love and patience; you were a great motivation for me. Also, I dedicate this work to God, who has never left me alone and has been there to support me in the most difficult situations.

*Carolina Solano Hidalgo*

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family Pineda and my boyfriend Fabián López that accompanied and supported me emotionally, challenging me to be better every day. They were always willing to give advice and extra support when required. Thanks for your love and motivation. Also, I dedicate this study to all the professors who not only instructed us to be excellent teachers, but human beings. Most importantly, thanks to God that provided me this opportunity to study at UNA and to become a professional.

*Elvira Gutiérrez Pineda*

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

| Abbreviations | Concept |
|---|---|
| CAE | Comités de Apoyo Educativo |
| CENAREC | Centro Nacional de Recursos para la Inclusión Educativa |
| CNREE | Consejo Nacional de Rehabilitación y Educación Especial |
| EFL | English as a Foreign Language |
| HKI | Helen Keller Institute |
| INA | Instituto Nacional del Aprendizaje |
| INEC | National Institute of Statistics and Census |
| MEP | Ministry of Public Education |
| MS | Marfam Syndrome |
| R1 | Researcher 1 |
| R2 | Researcher 2 |
| ROP | Retinopathy of Prematurity |
| SVI | Student(s) with Visual Impairment |
| T1 | Teacher 1 |
| T2 | Teacher 2 |
| T3 | Teacher 3 |
| TIC | Information Technologies |
| TVI | Teacher of Visual Impairment |
| VI | Visual Impairment |

Abstract

This work presents the cases of two students with visual impairment learning English as a foreign language in two different public high schools located in Pérez Zeledón District in Costa Rica. Through observation, both cases present to the investigators the direct environment and needs that arise when learning English and the possible solutions to the participant's specific needs. The main specific goal of this work was to inquire about the EFL instruction provided to an eighth-level and a tenth-level student from Fernando Volio Jiménez High School and Aeropuerto Jerusalén High School respectively. Based on the results obtained, the researchers designed a booklet for teachers, parents and students with the objective of facilitating the teaching-learning process for English teachers and for the students with visual limitations. There are other study questions that investigators did not focus on in this work, but that emerged out of this process. Future studies could be based on How to include technology to reach inclusion in the English classroom, How to personalize English lessons when having a student with any visual deficiency or How does standard evaluation affect the final results of students with visual limitations. There are other important issues to study that are to consider and develop that surely are going to provide better guidance and progress in the language instruction extent.

Key words: Teaching strategies, teaching techniques, visual impairment, learning styles, students' needs, and inclusion.

Chapter I

Introduction

Teaching strategies play an active role when teaching any type of task, especially, in the learning process of those students with visual impairment (SVI) since a student with visual needs does not learn the same way as the rest of students do. According to Carney, Engbretson, Scammell and Sheppard (2003), visual impairment (VI) refers to "a significant loss of vision, even though the person may wear corrective lenses" (p. 3). As a result, the person who suffers from this physical challenge needs adequate accommodations (materials, physical space, etc) to learn. The researchers' purpose is to analyze the teaching strategies and to propose different effective language teaching procedures if there is the need. In this paper, the participants under study are two students. One of them suffers from Subluxated Crystalline Lens caused by the MS genetically; that is a type of VI in which the connective optical tissue affects vision, and the other student has retinal detachment which is "a separation of the sensory retina from the underlying retinal pigment epithelium (RPE)" (Jones, 2004, p. 3). In this chapter, the background as well as the purpose of the study are presented. Also, the main questions that this research intends to answer and the significance of the study are included along with the limitations and delimitations that appeared through the whole process of the investigation. Finally, several relevant terms are defined as a way to explain their meaning throughout the research paper.

Background of the Study

When teaching a student with visual challenges, instructors need to use specific strategies to benefit the learner. The teaching strategies used to instruct SVI are the focus of this research study. Studies about teaching EFL learners with visual impairment are scarce, but significant. One study found on VI was conducted in Sao Paulo, Brazil; it was about assistive technology to education of students with visual impairment (Alvez, Martins, Rabello, Rodrigues, & Montiero, 2009, p. 148). The researchers used a descriptive survey

as collection tool, and it included 134 teachers.  Furthermore, Gal California Journal of

Science Education, Galetová (2012) carried out an investigation oriented to lesson planning

for EFL learners with low vision in Brno (p. 4). Galetová used questionnaires to gather the

data for her study. Also, researchers in Costa Rica have taken part in investigations related

to teaching EFL students with visual challenges. For instance, Cruz (2011) conducted a

research project at Universidad Técnica Nacional, and the participant under study was a

twenty-four year student who suffered from Toxoplasmosis (p. 45). The study generated

some results. Some of them were:

> When teachers planned their lessons they forgot about students with visual
> impairment, teachers did not include the learner with low vision when checking the
> answers for the practice, the visually challenged student needed to work with
> someone else, some educators did not know that learners with visual problems
> needed more time to develop a task, the student with visual impairment had poor
> participation in the EFL class, and it was crucial to prepare EFL instructors on the
> visually impairment field. (Cruz, 2011, pp. 70-78)

The results previously mentioned were found by means of observations, interviews,

and questionnaires. Moreover, Mckenzie and Lewins (2008) conducted a research study in

the United States with the aim of analyzing the role and training of paraprofessionals who

work with sudents who are visually impaired. They found that 35% of the paraprofessionals

were providing direct instructions in skills in the expanded core curriculum. (p. 459). The

results were collected through the review of students' records found in several specialized

centers. The main research tool used was a survey.

In Costa Rica, public universities guarantee the inclusion of learners with visual

limitations; as Gross (2006) affirmed "the state universities have been accepting a new

student population in their classes, as a reaction of the new educational paradigms" (p. 1).
This new population entails SVI such as the ones this work focuses on. According to Gross
(2006), "the University of Costa Rica has been applying different educational strategies...
their efforts are an important support for the inclusive educational strategies" (p.1). The
integration that this university proposes supports students with visual limitations in their
future as professionals. Also, the Universidad de Costa Rica makes adaptations to the
Academic Aptitude Test for the accessibility of students with visual problems; for example,
they minimize the test features for the learner with visual limitations, change the letter size
and style, provide a magnifying glass and provide the test in Braille, among other
modifications (Gross, 2006, p. 5).These adaptations open a window for the SVI since
he/she may be more likely to succeed. The researchers have not found official documents
of a similar study developed locally by universities in San Isidro, Pérez Zeledón yet;
however, the most relevant works found in the country and related to the topic were
mentioned.

     Teachers and specialized personnel in Costa Rican high schools value the teaching
of English to those students with special needs. The educational policy "Towards the 21st
Century" enforces students' rights with special needs. This policy "establishes an
educational process which provides similar opportunities for everybody: the achievement of
high standards of education as well as opportunities that take into consideration the
participants' needs, problems and expectations" (Ministerio de Educación Pública (MEP),
2009, p.18). Therefore, all high school students in Costa Rica must have the chance to
succeed academically in spite of their difficulties and needs. According to MEP ( 2005),

     Each educational institution; public or private, must have an academic support

       committee that has consultative and counseling functions for the teachers of the

institution about the attention and follow up process of the curricular adaptations of

the students. It also works to facilitate the participation of students with disabilities

and their parents in the learning process. (p. 10)

With the emergence of the instructional policy and the committee previously mentioned,

the Costa Rican public educational curriculum has been adapted since many years ago for the

purpose of supporting students with special requirements. Regarding these adaptations, MEP

(2005) declared that curricular accommodations are educational assistance that

teachers in schools and high schools provide to the students who require them (p. 12).

Hence, modifications to the curriculum are necessary in order to offer proper instruction for

students with a physical impediment since these curricular accommodations are the clues to

offer the same opportunities for all learners.

In Costa Rica, students with special needs are included and involved in the

educational system along with the rest of the students who do not display any difficulty for

learning. For this reason, the Law 7600 "Ley de Igualdad de Oportunidades para Personas

con Discapacidad" and committees in the academic institutions protect differently-abled

students against any type of discrimination.  Nevertheless, there is the need for improving

the teacher's strategies in the classroom so that these students can be appropriately taught

and included in the EFL class.

Finally, the National Center of Resources for Educational Inclusion (Centro

Nacional de Recursos para la Inclusión Educativa, CENAREC) was created in 2002, and it

is an entity with minimal independence of the Ministry of Public Education (MEP). The

goal of the center is to strengthen the development and active participation of students with

disabilities in society (TIC y Personas Con Discapacidad en Costa Rica, 2011, p. 13).  SVI

deserve to be integrated in society like the rest of individuals are; for this reason, centers as

the one previously mentioned promote the inclusion of these learners. According to the

MEP regional advisor of Special Education, there are neither specific statistics nor a

nomenclature of the most common visual problems registered (MEP Regional Coordinator

of Special Education, personal communication, January 22nd, 2015). The following is a

comparative chart to indicate categories of terms concerning VI mentioned in this study

according to MEP, INEC and CNREE.

| MEP | INEC | CNREE |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Visual Impairment | Blindness (total or partial) | Blindness (total or partial) |

Since this study is addressed to EFL teaching, data collection and the analysis of the

results will be based on the categorization stated by MEP. From this categorization,

Subluxated Crystalline Lens and Retinal Detachment are regarded as VI.

Purpose of the Study

EFL instruction implies several considerations such as the student's level, age, and

learning strategies to analyze in order to enable learners to grasp the language effectively.

When the learner has special needs, instruction must be adapted to providing an accessible

learning environment. Once teaching English to SVI, adaptations or changes must be made.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the teaching strategies implemented to teach SVI

and to propose different effective language teaching procedures if there is the need. The

teaching to visually challenged learners is a complex task since these students require

curricular accommodations for their instruction.  It is relevant to comprehend these needs and

requirements if real success in language instruction and learning is the goal. Finding more

appropriate and adapted teaching methods is usually not considered by language

teachers; many aspects are ignored mainly because there is no formal instruction or training

in the matter. As Carney et al., (2003) pointed out,

The development of a student with a visual impairment is affected by the type and

severity of the visual impairment; the onset of the visual impairment; the nature and

degree of intervention; the use of residual vision; personality; the availability of

equipment and resources; the presence of other disabilities; family adjustment and

acceptance; and cultural attitudes to visual impairment. (p. 7)

All the considerations previously mentioned are difficult to predict, but possible to identify

before and during the process of directing VI. Teachers must be provided with strategies as

clues to adapt their lessons when they face a similar teaching setting. Regarding the study

of academic success of students with special education needs, Artiles and Ortiz ( 2000)

argued that "preventing academic failure requires school improvement efforts and early

intervention programs for struggling learners" (p. 33). It is not only the environment that

has to be adapted to these students, but also the teaching procedures and materials in the

language classroom. Consequently, teaching strategies offer learners with visual problems

more realistic opportunities to understand their own limitations and needs when learning a

foreign language to later improve their English language proficiency.

Strategies to instruct students with visual problems offer an opportunity to improve

these learners' instruction of the target language. According to Salandanan (2008), a

strategy "suggests the procedure and direction to be followed" (p. 3), this is why strategies

are vital for teaching effectively. For the researchers, teaching strategies are everything the

teacher does in the classroom: the methods, the skills, the techniques, the materials and the

activities to practice and make learning meaningful. Also, instructors should consider that

not all students with visual problems learn in the same manner since "no two students with

low vision have the same functional vision even if they are diagnosed as having the same

eye condition and similar acuity" (Carney et al., 2003, p. 17). Teaching students with

Subluxated Crystalline Lens and Retinal Detachment, for instance, is a challenge due to the

differences among them not only in their physical condition, but also in their personality and

learning style or preferences.  Therefore, it is essential to find the most suitable

procedures to teach these learners in order to support and guide them in the process of

learning a foreign language in an inclusive manner.

Research Questions of the Study

     Central question.

·   How is the EFL instruction provided to an eighth-level and a tenth-level student from

     Fernando Volio Jiménez High School and Aeropuerto Jerusalén High School of the

     Pérez Zeledón School District respectively?

     Associated  subquestions.

·    What are the needs of a high school student with VI when learning English as a foreign

     language?

·   What are the teaching strategies implemented to instruct SVI? ·

What are the resources available to instruct SVI?

·    What teaching techniques and materials could be suggested to instruct EFL learners

     with VI more effectively?

Significance of the Study

        This work opens a window not only to English teachers but also to teachers of other

languages or subjects in order to look for more strategies that might help students with any

other special need. It will show authorities the importance of considering changes within

the educational system and institutions in order to cope with different issues in formal

education to visually challenged individuals. Moreover, this study is innovative in Pérez

Zeledón county as well as in the Brunca Region, and its data demonstrate a present issue to

accomplish that is the call for adaptations when teaching English to SVI as a foreign language in public academic institutions. Future researchers could compare this research study to other similar cases outside the country to conceive different settings and educational systems where students with special needs are found. In addition, training is essential when dealing with students with VI because teachers may be further prepared to treat the cases of visual impairment more properly. In fact, instructors involved in this study are aware of the fact that they need more training and support from the educational authorities, mainly. According to these teachers, training and support must be provided to be ready to teach students with these specific visual needs in the classroom since it is fair and desirable from both teachers and students. Furthermore, instructors who work in the institutions involved in this research project were asked to provide information about their experience working with students with blindness or VI, the advice they have received from authorities, preparation to deal with the issue of teaching English to students with this disability among other important matters. They were also able to provide their point of view regarding English teaching to SVI (see appendix A).

The diagnosis carried out consisted of a questionnaire to English teachers from both high schools. Inquiries in the questionnaire were intended to portray the situation regarding the teaching of English when having visually challenged students in the classroom. The answers obtained resulted with valuable information about the training they had, support they received from authorities and personal recommendations and opinions about the situation in the classroom with a student with any visual challenge. Based on the responses, it was evident that there is work to be done in order to improve EFL teaching in the classrooms. Instructors confirmed that they are not well trained, not ready to carry out

lessons and design materials for visually challenged students. The most relevant information is summarized as follows.

Based on the information gathered, it is possible to mention that most of the teachers have had students with some VI. What they generally do to help these learners is to prepare all or most of the materials and tests with larger size fonts and provide clear pictures. It was noticed that 25% of the teachers pointed out that they usually provide more oral descriptions for the student to understand other visual aids she offered. In addition, 100% of teachers agreed that they are not prepared to deal with this specific need since they have not had enough training. Actually, 90% of them said that they have not received any English teaching orientation on VI. Even though teachers said they are willing to help, they do not feel supported by the institution or the government. Also, 50% of teachers said that they have received information regarding students with visual needs. The Helen Keller Institute (HKI), an organization in Costa Rica that adjusts educational needs of adolescents and adults with total blindness or VI trained them; this institute is a valuable support for teachers in Costa Rica since it is available when teachers have doubts or need support to teach SVI. Another teacher took a Braille course. It was found that 90% of the instructors also recognized that the infrastructure is not appropriate for students with visual problems and that an aspect to improve is organization within the institution to deal with these cases.

Furthermore, they mentioned that in order to improve the teaching process of students with visual needs, instructors should be trained and given special material, and to have a professional in the area to support them permanently. Also, they mentioned that based on the Law 7600, the institution should make changes in the infrastructure. Some argued that they were trained neither during their university careers nor by authorities nowadays. More importantly, 100% of them held that it is vital to be prepared to deal with

students with visual needs in order to benefit them, and to facilitate their work as language teachers. It is possible to conclude that teachers are aware of the fact that they need more training and support from the educational authorities, and, if possible, to have extra and permanent help.

Limitations

Even though there was a specific and thoughtful plan organized for the accurate development of the research project, the researchers faced some limitations which are vital to consider. The most remarkable are first that extra-curricular activities such as meetings, appointments, drop off among others interfered to do the observations since the authorities as well as the teachers' and the participants' availability depended on the school year events. Second, high schools change language teachers every year to every level; it was necessary to ask for permission to different teachers since the development of the work took more time than expected. Third and more importantly, when dealing with the topic of visual challenges, the researchers had to be sensitive and wise in order to express and mention this topic either to the students or to their parents. Fourth, as this research study is qualitative, results cannot be generalized to a larger population. Finally, there is no a specific list or census about the number of SVI by type; thus, it was difficult to access the information desired for better analysis.

Delimitations

The next ideas describe the essentials that were taken into consideration to delimit this research study.

· Two students with different visual problems were chosen due to the fact that in Pérez Zeledón it is not possible to find a single visual problem within the same community, and it is not possible for the researchers to cover all the cases that existed. It also helps

to expose both cases as analogous because even though they come from different

educational institutions, similar solutions must be acknowledged.

·   Researchers are not considering literature or information about other limitations in

order to be focused on visual issues only. Regarding this, there are other physical and

cognitive disabilities that require dissimilar treatment and methodologies that differ

from the ones suggested for individuals with VI. Additionally, the English subject is not

usually included in the curriculum used to instruct learners with cognitive impairment. ·

Instruments to compile the information were limited to questionnaires, interviews, logs

and observation charts. Interviews are fundamental to gather information about the

participants with VI and questionnaires from teachers and other participants that were

considered. The collection tool used  are .highly useful due to the fact that it is intended

to have personal contact with the entities involved, and every participant's case is

necessary to be analyzed independently.

These delimitations were considered to study participants and gather the substantial

information to lead the work appropriately. It is suitable to identify what other aspects must be

delimitated even if researchers desired to include them in order to keep the correct path and

focus of the investigation

Definitions

In order to clarify the meaning of certain words which are significantly vital for the

understanding of this research study, a list of terms is presented with their corresponding

definitions.

Adapted materials. "Techniques to adapt materials such as addition, expansion,

deletion, subtraction, replacement, reorganization, re-sequencing, conversion to the

teaching material to be used" (Masuhara as cited by Duarte & Escobar, 2008, p. 67).

Accommodations. "These are educational supports that teachers in schools and high schools provide to the students who require them "(MEP, 2005, p. 12).

Braille. It is defined as " a system of printing for blind people, using raised patterns that they read by touching" (Cambridge dictionaries online, 2016 . n. p.).

Inclusion. This term refers to "the idea that everyone should be able to use the same facilities, take part in the same activities, and enjoy the same experiences, including people who have a disability or other disadvantage (Cambridge dictionaries online, 2016, n. p.).

Learning environment. It "is a workplace that requires managing if it is to be safe, supportive and productive "(Keefe & Jenkins, 2013, p. 95).

Marfan syndrome. Sandoval, Saldarriaga and Isaza (2014), defined it as a "systemic disorder caused by mutations in the extracellular matrix protein fibrillin 1 (FBN1) (p. 206).

Modifications. Based on Britisth Columbia (2009), "modifications are instructional and assessment-related decisions made to accommodate a student's educational needs that consist of individualized learning goals and outcomes which are different than learning outcomes of a course or subject (p. 4).

Retinal detachment. It is "a separation of the sensory retina from the underlying retinal pigment epithelium (RPE)" (Jones, 2004, p. 3).

Strategy. According to Salandanan (2008) a strategy "suggests the procedure and direction to be followed" (p. 3).

Subluxated crystalline lens. This condition is defined by Hoffman (2013) as "any displacement or mal position of the crystalline lens irrespective of the cause or association" (p. 1904).

Tactile. It "suggests learning with hands through manipulation of resources" (Dunn, Beaudry & Klavas, 2002, p. 81).

Visual impairment. According to Engbretson, Scammell and Sheppard (2003), visual impairment (VI) refers to "a significant loss of vision, even though the person may wear corrective lenses" (p. 3).

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

This chapter includes relevant information about English teaching in the Costa Rican educational system, students with special needs, and more specifically, teaching strategies used to instruct SVI. Also, this section provides information regarding last population statistics on visual deficiency in the region where the study is to be developed, general causes and effects of Marfan Syndrome (MS) and Retinal Detachment along with their relation to visual loss.

English Teaching in Costa Rica

EFL teaching in this country has been included in the school curriculum in order to fulfill society demands in a globalized world.  English has been used in business with England and the United States since 1815, and was incorporated in the academic curriculum in 1825 (Navarro & Piñeiro, 2010, p. 3). These facts prove the relevance of this foreign language for the country development.  In Costa Rica, teachers of English are directed by MEP which through the establishment of teaching policies directs and supervises English teaching in public academic institutions. In these institutions, students take English lessons from kindergarten until eleventh or twelfth grade, in the case of technical high schools. In the document Costa Rica Multilingüe, the Presidency of the Republic (2009) concluded that in eleven years of academic education, students receive one thousand five hundred hours of English classes (p.5). Learners receive English lessons every week during the whole school year. The government also offers secondary education programs such as Bachillerato por Madurez (distance learning), which is a secondary education program for adolescents and adults; and Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje, INA (National Institute of Learning) offers free English courses to Costa Rican adolescents and adults. Moreover, there are other secondary academic systems such as night, virtual high schools, and "telesecundarias" (schooling through satellite television in isolated

communities).  English has been given high relevance in the public curriculum, and its importance increases every year.

Moreover, it is well-known that English is the most common language to do business, and consequently, indispensable to foster economic growth in a country. For this reason English

> was considered national priority in the economic field, and late, in the educational arena… teaching-learning English is not only a right but also a duty that language teachers and students have to accomplish in order to activate the national economy. (Araya & Córdoba, 2008, p. 2)

MEP identified this issue, and it is still a main concern for the government to decide about. To do so, teachers and students need to follow different procedures requested in the academic English syllabus in order to reach bilingualism. Based on Araya & Córdoba (2008), "English has to be studied according to three fundamental aspects related to the formal, functional and cultural components. Thus, English language teaching-learning is conceived from a linguistic and sociolinguistic perspective that enables students to perform and accomplish certain functions" (pp. 2-3).  The main goal MEP has regarding English teaching and learning is to provide an appropriate setting for learners to be bilingual. Teachers are seen as guides to help them reach bilingualism. Instructors are also demanded to accomplish a pedagogical and an administrative agenda.

Not only must teachers foster the four skills in the classroom considering the formal, functional and cultural aspects but also prepare activities to introduce, develop and conclude the topics to be studied, which is the pedagogical part.  As Araya and Córdoba (2008) pointed out along with these aspects, teachers have to take into account students' different learning styles, prepare and apply the required curricular adaptations of the

syllabus for those students with special needs (p. 4). Still, the administrative work

requested by MEP has to be done in a way to standardize the manner teachers prepare,

organize and develop their lessons. As it is clearly seen, different and crucial points are part of

a language teacher's job. In other words, teachers

> have to present (for approval) daily, weekly or monthly -according to each
>
> institutional policy- lesson plans; prepare meetings with parents to inform about
>
> students' performances and records on all disciples; adapt the syllabus to work with
>
> the transversal topics: education in and for values, education in and for human
>
> rights, democracy and peace, education for conservation (use, management and
>
> environmental protection), education for personal and social health and education for
>
> prevention on natural disasters; prepare students for national reading-
>
> comprehension tests -in the case of ninth and tenth graders- among other
>
> administrative works. (Araya & Córdoba, 2008, p. 4)

The role teachers maintain outside the classroom is as important as the one they assume

inside the class. For instructors to reach objectives, hard work has to be done apart from

extra-curricular activities that also demand their support; that is, teachers need to take time

apart from the time that has been scheduled for them in the educational institutions to

coordinate meetings, plan their lessons, look for materials, etc.  For this reason, being an

instructor seems to be a complicated and overloaded job.  Nevertheless, they keep on

working on what they are asked and developing lessons as it is possible for them.

EFL Teaching in Costa Rica and Its Pedagogical Basis

The instruction of English as a foreign language in the country has experimented different teaching methodologies in order to facilitate the learning process. English teaching in Costa Rica has started since 1825, bringing as a consequence the need to analyze and investigate for the most appropriate and effective instructional methods since then. González (as cited by Córdoba, Coto & Ramírez, 2005) explained that from 1854 there were only native English teachers or Costa Ricans that studied English abroad, instructing in the country (p. 3).  In 1887, public high schools were established and included English in their study plan. There are no data about the teaching methods they implemented, but Córdoba et al (2005), believe that the first method was the Grammar Translation, where translating was the key to learn; in the past, it was the most common method to learn the classic languages and later adapt it to learn the modern languages. English teaching implemented Grammar Translation during many years, and later the German method by Brown (as cited by Córdoba  et al., 2005), which  was focused on learning the second language as the native language in a spontaneous, oral and without grammar instruction and translation ( p. 4). At this point, English was expected to be learned in a more natural manner, having native speakers or experienced teachers instructing it. However, it was necessary and appropriate to form teachers in the country to facilitate instruction.

Córdoba et al. (2005), pointed out the professionalization of English Teaching in the country, acknowledged to the Universidad de Costa Rica (UCR), and its impact on EFL teaching.  In 1956, UCR opened the English Teaching major due to the need of national English teachers. The method applied at UCR during the instruction process was the Audio-lingual which was based on oral repetitions. Due to this fact, in public high schools teachers started to apply the same method to teach English. Later, in 1966, after analysis, a

new English plan was edited and in 1972 the plan was re-examined by MEP with the Plan

de Desarrollo Educativo, in which there are included objectives, activities samples and

evaluation procedures for English teachers to execute in the classroom. To add more, a

bibliography was included recommended by MEP that incorporated books such as Lado

English Series by Lado Rober in academic English and New Horizons in English by

Mellgren Lars, in night high schools, for instance.  These and other books assigned focused

on the way a person learns the first language; however, there was a greater emphasis on

pronunciation" (pp. 4-5). The Audio lingual method was the key method from 1956 up to

1972, in which bibliography took an important role because it provided the activities and

practices required for English instructors to carry out the lessons with the help of the

English plan provided also by MEP. Since the objective was to reach pronunciation, it was

later necessary to improve not only pronunciation, but communication which evidently was

not achieved using either the Grammar Translation or Audio-lingual methods.

After 1972, MEP eliminated the English plan and designed a guide for teachers with

different units to cover and a bibliography, similar to the last one, to base the classes on. So

far, it was more focused on communicative situations greater than in pronunciation. In

1988, standardized tests were included in the evaluation process. These tests evaluated

English language competence at the end of all secondary school levels. Consequently, it

demanded the English plan to change the focus into reading comprehension. Later on in

1990, the English plan was completely changed again. It was more communicative and

differently evaluated. England government provided professional consulting to Costa Rican

government in order to improve English teaching in the country. New books such as Have

Fun by Rosa Bonilla et al, New Interchange by Richards Jack C, among others were

designed and recommended as supportive material for English teachers (Córdoba et al.,

2005, p. 6). It was concluded that communication has to be the main focus, and with the

guidance of the English plan and books, communication was intended to be achieved.

In primary schools, English teaching started in 1994 thanks to the president of that

time José M. Figueres O. It started with 27 schools with the objective of providing more

job opportunities to children mainly from marginal and rural areas. Later, in 1997 English

was declared a basic subject to study in elementary schools. During 2003, Costa Rica was

distinguished as the only country in Central America offering English subject in public

schools. Other than English teachers in the country there are regional advisers that are in

charge of guiding and supervising the English teaching processes in public schools.

Córdoba et al. (2005) concluded in their work that the listening skill has an important role

in different teaching methods to teach the foreign language (pp. 6-11).  EFL teaching in

Costa Rica has had different variations and methodologies. Currently, the objective of

English teaching is still concentrated on natural communication.

English teaching is still improving in the country; the main objective still remains;

offering better job opportunities to students in order to reach a more active economy.

Nowadays, English books are not mandatory to teach, and teachers are to use any material

necessary to expose students to the language. There are different units with different topics

like "Costa Rican Typical Food," "Holidays and Celebrations," "Our Democratic

Tradition" among others with their corresponding objectives provided that teachers must

use to design and organize their language lessons. Regarding EFL teaching to visually

challenged students, specifically, it is expected that support committees in high schools

provide the most appropriate environment for students, and that teachers plan and design

the English lessons and materials necessary with the corresponding adaptations.  There are

other concerns that English teachers are to contemplate when teaching students with any

visual limitation, and the Law 7600 comes to help guarantee the adequate teaching to these students.

The Law 7600 for Equal Opportunities in Costa Rica

   The importance of the Law 7600 increases in the country every year. In order to grow as a nation, Costa Rica has to consider every single aspect necessary for the population to live in an egalitarian country. Regarding the  educational area,  El Estado de la Nación (2012) noted that since the promulgation of the  Law 7600 curricular adaptations as a didactic support  to students with special needs were stated and also the Comités de Apoyo Educativo ( Educational Support Committees) or CAE were created. The committees are present in both private and public academic institutions. They are supposed to be composed of two teachers, the principal, one parent and one student. Their main goal is to supervise the appropriate application of curricular adaptations (p. 13).  The support this law provides backs up the work teachers and institutions are supposed to do in order to teach students with special needs. It is a right and a duty to provide better opportunities to learn for those who are at a physical, emotional or psychological disadvantage. Concerning education to students with visual problems, Costa Rica improved in that area due to the promulgation of the Law 7600. CENAREC (2012), pointed out that in 1977 Manuel Ortuño School of Desamparados (one of the 81 counties in Costa Rica) was founded with an innovative proposal that was "aula de recurso" (resource classroom). It was an academic service to assist students with low vision or blindness in a more inclusive manner.

   In the "Aula de recurso" SVI were placed in groups with "regular" students within the same institution. "Aula de recurso" did not prosper until it was improved with the addition of itinerant teachers; they are "usually qualified school teachers who have had some formal training in the education of children with visual impairment" (CENAREC,

2012, pp. 8-9). Itinerant teachers represent a great support for learners with VI because of the preparation these teachers have related to visual problems and instruction. It was highly valued since the resource classroom represented the first opportunity for students with low vision or blindness in Costa Rica to study in regular classrooms. Consequently, a tendency to create less segregated techniques in classrooms grew in the Costa Rican educational system with the inclusion of itinerant teachers (p. 8). SVI had the chance to study in regular classes because the law demanded the right for everyone to be included in the community. After the creation of Manuel Ortuño School, in 1985, the HKI rehab and formation institute was created with low dependency from MEP. Its responsibility is to support adolescents and adults with VI in Costa Rica (CENAREC, 2012, p. 9). Since then, the institute is in charge of guiding parents, teachers and students studying in public high schools throughout the country.

In addition, the Law 7600 endeavors to guarantee equal opportunities to people with special needs in Costa Rica. Some of the main objectives this law intends to attain are the following

> To include in plans, policies, programs, and services of its institutions, equality of opportunities, principles and accessibility to services that, based on this law, are offered as well as to develop projects and actions differentiated which consider the development of regions and communities of the country. To support society sectors and organizations of handicapped people in order to reach equality of opportunities. To guaranty the right of handicapped people organizations for participating in actions related to the elaboration of plans, policies, programs and services in which they are involved. (7600 Law, 2008, p. 9)

The duties this law establishes are reasonable policies that must be attained by Costa Rican

citizens as a way to create an equitable society for inhabitants with special needs. Due to the

law 7600, the MEP policies also foster the inclusion of students within the public

academic institutions by implementing curricular accommodations in the classrooms

supervised by academic-support committees.

Educational Supports: Curricular Accommodations in the Costa Rican Academic

System

  In every educational institution, students must receive support when they require it.

According to Calderón (2013), these supports are all resources, activities, and strategies

which tend to facilitate the students' learning process with the objective of responding to

the diversity, and minimizing the boundaries for the learning and the participation that these

students may experience (p.1). These academic supports are offered to all the learners who

face any circumstance that does not allow them to learn in the same way as the rest of

students in their class do. There are other resources to adapt lessons to students that require

extra-help.

  Other types of educational supports depend on the students' needs. They can be

personal, material or technological, organizational and curricular. Personal support requires

the participation of other people different from the regular teacher, for example, a special

education teacher, a counselor teacher, the family, friends, among others.  Material or

technological supports involve providing students with different materials or technological

devices that facilitate their access to the school curriculum. For instance, technical support,

devices, adaptations or equipment are some organizational supports. In addition,

organizational support includes the students' grouping, time organization, setting and

organizational atmosphere in the classroom.  This kind of support may be considered an

access adaptation, along with material or technological support. Finally, curricular support refers to the temporal or permanent adaptations, adjustments or modifications to the curriculum elements in order to satisfy the learner's educational needs (Calderón, 2013, p. 2). All the student population has access to the academic supports previously mentioned and explained. However, the use of each support depends on the need that each student has regarding his/her learning process.

The existence and application of academic supports in schools and high schools facilitate the inclusion of students with special physical needs into the MEP academic curriculum considerations. This organization demands that teachers take into account students' specific needs in their planning and teaching. As concluded by Beech (2003), "accommodations are changes to the way your child is expected to learn or how he or she is tested" (p. 1). Then, English teachers must adjust their materials, general planning, or class organization, evaluation considering the students' demands to learn.

Through curricular access, non-significant and significant adaptations, teachers make an effort to include students in the classroom. Curricular accommodations are adjustments of the educational content for students' characteristics and needs in order to deal with their individualized differences. Access adaptations are modifications in order to facilitate the access to the regular or adapted curriculum. On the other hand, non-significant adjustments do not change the official curriculum, but teachers are in charge of adapting teaching practices to help students with special needs in the classroom. Finally, significant adaptations consist of the elimination of contents and objectives that are considered basic in each subject, and consequently, evaluation criteria vary as well (CENAREC, 2005, as cited in Meléndez et al, 2012, p. 14). Instructors determine what the most suitable adaptations for a student is for later inclusion in the teaching practice. Hence,

careful attention must be paid in order to be accurate when designing a significant adaptation. According to Giangreco and Doyle (2000), "decisions about curricular selection become more complex and the curricular content tends to be more individualized when students have more severe disabilities or have combinations of physical, cognitive, sensory, or behavioral disabilities" ( p 58). These are deficiencies that may affect students' academic success negatively, making evident the need for adapting the curriculum in different ways for them to have access to quality education. The subjects of study of this research project are under the category of access accommodation.

Having mentioned curricular adaptations, it is important to discuss the role of instruction since it is the vehicle through which students learn a foreign language, and the most common areas in which modifications should be made when teaching a student with a limitation. Thus, teachers may make changes in certain areas of their teaching in order to help students with special needs. Based on Beech (2003), accommodations can be provided for instructional methods and material, assignments and assessments, learning environment, time demands and scheduling, and special communication systems ( p. 1). In instructional methods and material, the teacher could make changes regarding instruction and materials used for reading, lectures and discussion.

Regarding assignments and assessment, the instructor could make changes in the instruction of writing, following instructions and completing assignments, organization, and taking tests, presentation, response, schedule, setting and assistive technology. Regarding the learning environment, the instructor could change the physical environment and the behavior management. In time demands and scheduling, teachers could provide a flexible schedule for students, allow extra time for assignments and tests, give assignments ahead of time, and provide learners with a clear schedule with highlighted points along the

school period. With regard to special communication systems, the instructor could provide

learners with total communication systems such as sign language, finger spelling, and lip

reading or augmentative communication systems such as a communication board or a

presented symbol system (Beech, 2003, pp. 7-20).  These adaptations are just some

examples of what a teacher can do in the classroom to support differently-abled students

and include them in the class. They must be applied in accordance with the need that the

learner has so that he/she is properly included in the EFL classroom.

MEP has tried to provide solutions to both teachers and students in order to reach

the ideal inclusion of students with any special need including visual limitations. One of the

most relevant initiatives to help pupils with VI in Costa Rica was the creation of the HKI in

1985 as an independent department from MEP. This institute is in charge of adjusting

educational needs of adolescents and adults with total blindness or VI (Centro Nacional de

Recursos para la Educación Inclusiva, 2012, p. 9).  Nowadays, MEP and this institute are

working together to create a more comprehensive academic environment for students with

visual problems.

The Law 7600, Costa Rican Educational System and the Students with Special Needs

Despite the fact that the priority to help students with different needs is recognized,

the setting in the real classroom is not sometimes what is expected. Navarro and Piñeiro

(2010) added that instructors, who they used as reference, considered these curricular

adaptations extra work (p. 14).Teachers of English might have regular students, students

with access, significant or non-significant curricular accommodations in the same group.

Regarding this idea, Navarro and Piñeiro (2010) concluded that teachers are not trained to

deal with students with special needs and curricular adaptations, and it adds a lot of paper

work into their daily tasks (p.14). Hence, the teaching procedures that most teachers

struggle with are accommodation plans and designs. According to the Costa Rican Law 7600, the government must guarantee the access of education in private or public institutions from primary to supplementary education (Act 14, p.11). Learners with special needs, either cognitive or physical, have the same opportunity to study. English instructors should not ignore, in their practices, that students with any disability also have the right to study English when it is possible.

Students with special needs then, based on the law, are included in the educational system, and teachers cannot disregard their responsibility to provide the most appropriate options for these learners. In the same way, institutions must not forget their conscientiousness to cooperate with teachers. The ideal setting in which all students, despite their needs, could share the same classroom and study in the same manner is not completely attained in classrooms throughout the country.

El Estado de la Nación (2012), pointed out that inclusion in classrooms is a challenge. It was found that most of the teachers interviewed in their study do not assume their role regarding the accommodations because they believe it should be given to specialists (in the field) and not to them. Repercussions to this issue affect students with special needs directly. It is reflected in school failure, student desertion, peer and teacher segregation (p. 49). Reality in classrooms varies from school to school. It depends on parents, the teachers and authorities in the institution to assure the correct implementation of the law in classrooms. English teaching to students with different needs becomes a bigger challenge when institutions and authorities do not support instructors in their work. Infrastructure, materials such as video players, projectors, music players and any other type of audio-visual and didactic material are not always available to everyone. Apart from this issue, there are educational institutions that are located in zones where social problems such

as poverty and delinquency are part of the population's daily life. These external factors impede teachers to provide special attention to students with special needs in order to attain the curricular goals.

Teaching English to SVI: The Most Frequent Cases in the Brunca Region

Teaching English to students with visual needs like Crystalline Lens Dislocation and Retinal Detachment is a challenging task. According to Sofia (2016) "overcoming the students' optical limitation requires unique and personalized strategies based on the specific visual disability of each student and their ability to communicate" (p. 215). Likewise, using activities and methodologies that provide students with enough information concerning social communication prepares them to satisfy their needs. Sometimes, students with visual disabilities are just taught how to read and write by using Braille which is a "touch-based way to read" (Kent, 2012, p. 5). Although it is an effective technique, teachers should not only rely on this way of instruction. It is important to provide students with a meaningful experience when learning the oral skill. Regarding this, Sofia (2016) affirmed that " role plays and dramatized dialogues not only help students to develop orientation and mobility skills, but also help them put to use the language of a particular meaning and practice linguistic expressions" ( p. 218). In other words, they need to use the language in real life situations.

Teachers of SVI should "collaborate with teachers and other professionals regarding methods for including students with visual impairments in classroom activities (Spungin & Ferrell, 2007, p. 4). Trying to bring suitable activities that include everyone .Therefore, teachers should give emphasis to active tasks in the EFL classroom in order to include learners with visual needs. Also, using oral instruction is considered effective since students with visual problems have not developed the sense of sight thoroughly; they work more

properly auditorily. The auditory and kinesthetic learning styles are the basis to teach the language since those fit more into the profile of a SVI. The auditory learning style is the one that is based on the listening skill. Also, kinesthetic "implies whole-body involvement, such as taking a trip, dramatizing, interviewing, or pantomiming" (Dunn, Beaudry & Klavas, 2002, p. 81). Teachers who make students move their hands, their bodies, stand up, jump, and run while learning will help them learn by making use of their sense of touch. Moreover, contact with their environment is essential since "the more experience a visually challenged child has with his/her environment, the more data will be stored in the brain and for future reference and recall" (Bishop, 2004, p. 60). They should interact with their environment so that learning is more meaningful for them and it is effective.

Furthermore, the theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) reinforces the idea of everyone being intelligent and having different intelligences, ones usually more developed than others. There are seven intelligences in total and one is called bodily kinesthetic that consists of the "expertise in using one's whole body to express ideas and feelings and facility in using one's hands to produce or transform things." (Armstrong, 2009, p. 7). Thus, this intelligence is closely related to the kinesthetic learning style, and as a consequence, can be fostered in SVI who could obtain significant benefits from it. Besides, the MI teacher

> often plays music at some time during the day,…provides hand on experiences, whether they involve getting students up and moving about, passing an artifact around to bring to life the material studied or having students build something tangible to reveal their understanding, … [he/she] has students interacting with each other in different ways (e.g., in pairs, small groups, large groups). (Armstrong, 2009, p. 57)

Therefore, MI theory reinforces the auditory kinesthetic learning style as well as the idea

that students should interact with each other and have an active involvement in the class.

They may feel as part of the class and may participate more and enjoy at the same time

Likewise, SVI may be benefited in a considerably way by being in a class where this theory

is applied since they may be using their body and their ears which are the areas that they

have more developed in the language class. To comprehend further this study background,

data regarding visual frequency are also provided as well as features related to the

conditions and the diagnosis of the student-participants of this study.

In Costa Rica, Pérez Zeledón is located in the south Brunca Region, and it is the

nineteenth county of San José, which is the capital and one of the seven provinces of Costa

Rica. Based on the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos, INEC (National Institute of

Statistics and Census) Pérez Zeledón population was composed of 44 690 people in the year

2011(2011, p. 36). These data are provided in order to comprehend the frequency of visual

problems in the region population. In Costa Rica to the year 2000, the most frequent

disability registered was blindness, which is understood as blindness or any visual

deficiency, constituted by 29.772 women and 32.784 men (Organización Panamericana,

2004, p.16.). In the year 2006, 6383 cases of  blindness or visual limitation cases in the

Brunca Region were registered, out of which 1952 were listed in Pérez Zeledón (Agencia

de Cooperación Internacional, 2007,  p. 47). The last account found was in the year 2011;

in Costa Rica there were 251 464 people with visual problems even though they wore

corrective lenses (INEC, 2011, p. 79).  What is more, INEC(2011, as cited in CNREE)

indicated that in the central area of the southern region there were 42.704 men and women

with visual deficiency or blindness Visual problems are constant not only in the Brunca

Region, but in Costa Rica among kids, adolescents, adults and the elderly. The causes vary

and are not subdivided in any document provided by the INEC, but there are different

levels of visual disabilities that have been affecting the Costa Rican population, specifically

in Pérez Zeledón. The probability of a higher number of visual limitations in the area is also

possible.

According to MEP, in the year 2005, in the Brunca Region, 1 625 students with

different visual disabilities enrolled. They received attention and support during classes

(2005, as cited in Agencia de Cooperación, p. 43). Schools and high schools have received

students with visual limitations to enhance conditions of special education for them in the

classrooms. Apart from the data shown regarding visual disabilities in the region, it is

meaningful as well to understand the MS and Retinal Detachment that caused partial

blindness to the participants of this study.

Regarding MS, Sandoval, Saldarriaga and Isaza (2014), defined it as a "systemic

disorder caused by mutations in the extracellular matrix protein fibrillin 1 (FBN1). With a

dominant autosomal pattern, MS patients are characterized by ocular, cardiovascular and

skeletal involvement, all within a variable clinical spectrum" (p. 206). This syndrome is

complex since it attacks not only one part of the body system but also several others at the

same time. Related to this idea, MS is a "disorder involving the cardiovascular, skeletal and

ocular systems, the integument, lungs and dura" (Ades, 2011, p. 1).  For this reason,

patients with MS should avoid contact sports, extreme exercise and isometric activities.

However, patients with MS are recommended to practice moderate aerobics and undergo an

echocardiogram once a year at least (Loeys, Dietz & Braverman, 2010, pp. 482-483).

Following these pieces of advice, individuals with the syndrome could have an easier life.

The diagnosis of this syndrome is done through the family history, cardiovascular

manifestations, and/or bonafide FBN1 mutation (Ades, 2011, p. 1). When people are

diagnosed with the syndrome, an expert on each several field should treat them. That is, an

expert on cardiac, ocular, skeletal, pulmonary, Central Nervous System, pregnancy/labour,

and delivery areas is necessary to help the patient with MS (Ades, 2011, p. 4).   Thus, a

comprehensive treatment has a significant importance to support individuals with the

syndrome. All parents, teachers and educational community in general should care about

students who have MS since it is important to understand the cases to sensitize and achieve

inclusion even in the worst case scenario because everyone is at risk of suffering from this

disease. There are different solutions people with MS are given in order to improve their

condition; symptoms vary from person to person, and it is necessary to pay careful attention

to the implications in order to act against the syndrome symptoms effectively.

Due to the MS, individuals could develop other illnesses such as Subluxated

Crystalline Lens which "encompasses any displacement or malposition of the crystalline

lens irrespective of the cause or association" (Hoffman et al., 2013, p.1904). This VI may

be caused by MS or by other conditions such as homocystinuria, Ehlers-Danlos syndrome,

hyperlysinemia, sulfite oxidase deficiency, simple primary ectopialentis, and congenital

aniridia syndrome among others. Furthermore, Subluxated Crystalline Lens may be

provoked in other cases by blunt external trauma or iatrogenic zonular dehiscence induced

during complicated cataract surgery (Hoffman et al., 2013, p.1904). It is a complex type of

VI, and in order to make an assertive clinical evaluation, "family history, relevant trauma,

and onset and types of visual symptoms" (Hoffman et al., 2013, p.1904) need to be

considered since trauma and family inheritance patterns are the most common causes of

this condition. Moreover, symptoms may imply "moderately blurred vision from induced

lenticular astigmatism when the crystalline lens decenters to a severe decrease in vision if

the crystalline lens is subluxated out of the visual axis" (Hoffman et al., 2013, p.1905).

Ectopia lentis, which is another name given to Subluxated Crystalline Lens, may affect the performance of daily life activities since vision is affected considerably. For this reason, adequate treatment is indispensable.

In addition, "A retinal detachment is a separation of the sensory retina from the underlying retinal pigment epithelium (RPE)" (Jones, 2004, p. 3). The individual with Retinal Detachment may lose part or all of the vision in the affected eye that could provoke significant reduction in the visual area and an inability to function at his or her job or other daily activities. Patients frequently require a surgery, which has inherent risks (Jones, 2004, p. 3). This illness affects the individual greatly since he/she cannot perform his/her daily tasks as the rest of people. The diagnosis of Retinal Detachment is done by "binocular indirect ophthalmoscopy with scleral indentation. The retina appears grey, and shows folds and undulations" (Jalali, 2003, p. 25). An early detection is essential to take action and avoid the illness to progress rapidly. According to this, Jalali (2003) said that unfortunately, "most retinal detachments progress to total retinal detachments and complete loss of vision. If the retina is not re-attached promptly then visual recovery is progressively affected" (p. 25). Moreover, there are certain conditions that may lead individuals to suffer from Retinal Detachment; for example, people with myopia, aphakia, and ocular trauma are more prone to suffer from Retinal Detachment and the management of the cases involves restriction of physical activity and eye movement (Jones, 2004, p. 15, 34). If individuals with this illness take into consideration the experts' recommendations, they can deal with their condition more easily. In addition, availability of trained human resources, and adequate equipment are key elements to manage and prevent Retinal Detachment that later could cause blindness (Jalali, 2003, p. 26). Retinal detachment may progress with time and prevent blindness is the priority for patients and experts on the field.

The Role of the Teachers to Support SVI

In an ideal classroom, the teacher should have a TVI (Teacher of Visual Impairment) next to him/her in order to receive support and assistance to instruct the SVI in the most appropriate way. However, it is not the reality in many countries. Classroom teachers have a great challenge since they are in charge of supporting the student with VI and facilitate their learning. However, sometimes instructors have some difficulties to deal with these students and satisfy their needs. According to this, Udvari-Solner and Frentz (1996) affirmed that "traditionally, teachers have planned lessons and activities by considering the abilities of the majority of the class members" (p. 1). This is a mistake since there are no two equal students; all of them are different and have distinct needs and ways to learn. In fact, "it is important to recognize the heterogeneity of learners, and that one theory may be better for some learners than another" (Bishop, 2004, p. 50). So, individual differences must be taken into consideration when instructing.

Apart from the classroom teacher and the TVI, there are other people working on the educational institution who represent valuable support for the SVI. These members work along with the classroom teacher and TVI to offer the suitable opportunities so that SVI develop successfully in the learning context. Regarding this idea, Koening and Holbrook (2000) argued that "teachers of students with visual impairment have many opportunities for working with parents, general education teachers and administrators" (p. xiii). Thus, they must work as a team to support SVI and each member of the team has an essential role to fulfill, being communication an important tool to succeed. Actually, Udvari-Solner and Frentz (1996) affirmed that

A collaborative relationship between parents and educators provides a positive

learning environment for students with disabilities that accommodate different

learning styles. It also enhances the learning of all class members. By sharing a

common commitment to improving educational experiences for all learners, their

collaborative efforts produce positive and productive learning activities for the

entire class. (p. 10)

In this way, parents also play a significant role to help their children reach success in

learning since they can observe them at home and communicate any situation to the teacher

that may require special attention and team work.  Parents are an essential source of

information when it comes to helping the learner with visual limitations. All members of the

student support team fulfill different tasks but all equally vital for the development of the

individual with VI. Sometimes, this team is not complete in some educational

institutions since one or two members are absent or not all of them cooperate. For this

reason, teachers and parents are to demand the help from the rest of academic workers to

ensure a strong and effective support team that communicates and proposes solutions for an

appropriate management of the cases of VI in the classrooms.

The Role of Assessment in EFL Teaching to SVI

Students with visual problems cannot be assessed in the same way as the rest of

students who do not have any visual disability. Assessment should be comprehensive and

the school support team should be involved in it. Teachers may "conduct the assessment

themselves or in coordination with relevant professionals on the educational team"

(Koening & Holbrook, 2000, p. 56). SVI should be assessed in an integrative way. They

should be qualified for the task so that assessment is carried out properly. More

specifically, teachers need to

be involved in determining the appropriate areas of assessment, developing or

adapting appropriate assessment techniques both formal and informal, conducting

formal and informal assessment when appropriate, interpreting data, both formal

and informal to ensure the consideration and the understanding of the educational,

psychological and social implications of the visual impairment, conducting on going

assessments and evaluations of a students' progress and developing a strong

working relationship among the student, parents and school personnel for

productive assessments and instructional planning. (Koening & Holbrook, 2000, p.

63)

Regarding assessment, teachers and specialized personnel have numerous functions and

responsibilities that they should fulfill. Training should be provided to teachers so that they

can conduct an appropriate assessment and visually challenged learners are benefited from

it. Different types of assessment are given to the student with a visual limitation, all with

the objective of providing an integrative and complete assessment for the learner with a

visual condition. VI generates constant changes; thus, it is more appropriate to adapt the

environment and teaching materials when it is necessary in order to decrease the effects that

a visual problem brings about.

In general, visual problems cause other variations in a person. If it is understood by

the school community and teachers work with parents to enhance teaching practices,

positive results might be achieved not only in the English class, but in the academic life of

students with different visual abilities. Based on this idea, the Act 29 from the Law 7600

(as cited in CENAREC, 2012) stated that "Educational centers must supply their students

and parents with the necessary information for them to participate, comprehend and support

the educational process" (p.17). The Law 7600 ensures that every student with special

needs may become part of the community in an equal manner. It is the assistance and

defense for those who need it. Teachers in the classroom have not only the task to prepare

materials, activities, tests, evaluations, assessments, and give special attention to students

with any special need, but also the duty to do so, based on the law. Parents, teachers,

academic authorities, classmates, and the rest of the personnel in an academic institution

affect the school life of SVI either negatively or positively. Academic institutions and MEP

are to provide more suitable options, support and solutions for teachers to facilitate their

labor when having students with different abilities. Special considerations need to be

studied and adapted according to the setting and the students with significant visual

problems, to create an inclusive and comprehensive environment to study and learn.

Chapter III

Methodology

The purpose of chapter three is to present the qualitative research methodology that was used to answer the research questions presented in chapter one. This research opens a window to understand how teachers and the institution cope with the teaching of students with Subluxated Crystalline Lens and Retinal Detachment. Furthermore, participant and site selection are introduced as a means for the reader to understand how the subjects of study and the institutions were selected according to the requirements of the research study as well as the scope this work was intended to develop. Then, the role of the researchers in the study is described in order to define the participation they had in the data collection process and in the research process in general. Next, the data collection section is included to provide the reader with the description of the data collection tools used to gather the pertinent information for the purpose of this study. Finally, data analysis procedures used for this research project are included so that readers comprehend how the researchers handled the information collected and how they analyzed it in order to obtain results.

Research Design

This study follows a qualitative approach since it attempts to "study human actions in natural settings" (Gall, Gall, J & Borg, 2003, p. 25). It tries to comprehend a case without manipulating the context. It intends to describe and interpret information collected in order to point out the most relevant findings obtained from the case. Furthermore, the design of this study is also a case study because it "focuses attention on a single entity…" (Johnson, 1992, p. 75). Thus, this research study considers two cases that fall under the VI category and occur in a natural setting in order to interpret and analyze the findings. The scope this research follows is exploratory because as Creswell (2014) stated "this usually means that not much has been written about the topic or the populations being studied and the researcher seeks to listen to participants and build an understanding based on what is

heard" (p. 29). During the data collection about studies that have been carried out in the country, it was not possible to find out an analogous research carried out in a similar framework to that of this study. This investigation was carried out in a specific area with specific participants to underline the needs behind teaching SVI in public institutions in the region selected; a topic researched within a similar background has not been found. There are other studies conducted in the country, but they do not provide similar information aligned to the objectives proposed for this work.

Site Selection

The educational institutions where the research took place were Fernando Volio Jiménez High School and Aeropuerto Jerusalén High School. The former is an academic high school located in Daniel Flores district in Pérez Zeledón county. The latter is an academic high school located in San Isidro de El General district. The selection of the institutions was due to the fact that authorities agreed on developing the investigation and more importantly, the students-participants were enrolled in these institutions.

Fernando Volio High School is a public institution which is located in Palmares Pérez Zeledón. Approximately, 1038 students attend this institution. Fernando Volio High School provides students with essential services such as transportation and lunch. They have a cafeteria and a photocopy place.   There are four English teachers, and most of them affirmed that although they have had students with visual limitations in their class, they do not feel prepared to deal with these cases because of the lack of training on the issue. On the other hand, Jerusalén High School has a new building. It is located specifically in Alto Los Núñez, 2 kilometers northeast from Pérez Zeledón Airport. Jerusalén High School provides important school services to students. It has a lunch room and offers transportation service. The institution grants scholarships for free transportation to students who live far

away and free lunch or lunch tickets at a very low price; it depends on the socioeconomic

situation of the students. There is a small cafeteria and a photocopy place. Students have

access to a computer room to receive computing classes. There are four English teachers in

this institution, and most of them agreed on the fact that they do not have any training

regarding English teaching to students with visual needs, but that they have received talks

from the HKI.

The institutions were chosen due to the willingness from the principals, teachers and

parents to collaborate with the researchers. All the information necessary came from the

participants involved in this research project.

Participant Selection

Based on the phenomena observed, it is essential to discover specific considerations

for instructing students with Subluxated Crystaline Lens and Retinal Detachment. Thus,

this work is aimed to observe two single cases in a natural setting to describe, interpret and

analyze the data obtained. After this description, the researchers reflect and offer new

insights that are fundamental to the improvement of the EFL teaching to students with

Subluxated Crystaline Lens and Retinal Detachment. The subjects of study were selected

through the judgment sample method, for "the researcher actively selects the most

productive sample to answer the research question" (Marshal, 1996, p. 523). The

participants were chosen because of their specific characteristics which were fundamental

for this study. The participants are first the students called student A and student B; who

have visual impairment. Second, teachers that were directly instructing the SVI in their

classrooms from whom information was taken. Third, parents that know the specific needs

of their children; fourth, the research describes the committees in the high schools that

provide the background data regarding specific support provided to learners.  Fifth, the

English Regional advisor from MEP that is in charge of regulating the correct instruction of

language in Pérez Zeledón; sixth, the coordinator of Special Education who handles

information about curricular adaptations and special education in Pérez Zeledón; however,

it is only for primary school matters. Finally, the specialist from the HKI, who possesses

the information directly related to the situation of SVI in high schools is described to close

this section. All of the contributors that provided information are briefly described to have a

better understanding and a clearer view of the setting where this work was developed.

Student A and B. Both learners are enrolled in public high schools, but in different

levels and areas within Pérez Zeledón.  Student A is a fourteen- year-old female that was

diagnosed with Subluxated Crystalline Lens due to the MS. She lives with her family in Pista

Las Lagunas neighborhood in Daniel Flores district. She has a sister with the same syndrome.

She was in ninth level when this study started. Student A does not like English, but she said

she studies hard to learn the language because she considers it is important for her future.

However, she affirmed that sometimes she lacks interest in the subject because her teacher

sometimes does not look motivated. Student B studies in Jerusalén High

School; she was diagnosed with Retinal Detachment, and she was in eleventh level when

this study began. Student B is sixteen years old, and she lives with her parents near the high

school she attends. She likes English, and decided to improve it because she visited the

United States and could not speak and understand the language.  Researchers worked with

two students in different high schools due to the fact that there were not two similar cases

in a single educational institution at the time to start the research project. Researchers

believe that this issue provides also a wider sample by understanding how to teach English

to students with visual limitations in different settings located in the same area.

English teachers. Teacher 1 (T1) who works at Fernando Volio Jiménez High School holds a Bachelor's degree in English teaching, a Licentiate's and a Master's degree in Educational Administration. She has taught English for six years, and she works at Palmares Night High School too. She teaches twenty lessons, and she lives in El Pocito neighborhood. She has known student A since the beginning of the year. She said that to teach a learner with visual problems is a new experience since she has never done it. For that reason, she said that she feels nervous and not prepared enough to deal with visually challenged students. However, she affirmed that she is making a great effort to instruct student A appropriately so that the student could learn as the rest of learners do. In fact, she argued that she devotes a lot of time to adapting materials for student A.

In this section, two teachers who work at Aeropuerto Jerusalén High School are included, Teacher 2 (T2) and Teacher 3 (T3). T2 is the regular instructor that was in charge of the group where student B was since the beginning of the year. Due to pregnancy, T3 was hired as a substitute teacher while T2 was on a maternity leave. T2 has been working for fourteen years in public institutions for MEP. She has had SVI as well as with other special needs. She met student B at the beginning of the year. She agreed on the fact that working in public educational institutions is tough because students with different special needs enroll, and she has to instruct them with the rest of learners knowing that they need special attention. On the other hand, T3 has nine years of teaching experience, but in private institutions. She does not have experience working with SVI, and has dealt with other cognitive disabilities or conduct issues.  She agreed that based on her experience, to have students with cognitive or physical disabilities in private institutions is not very common and the environment is less stressful.

Students' parents. Student A's parents are a middle-aged couple who lives in Daniel Flores district in Pérez Zeledón. The father works during the day, but sometimes at night too. The mother is a housewife, and she is pregnant. Student B's parents are a young couple that lives close to downtown San Isidro. They work during the week and were not very open to provide their personal information. Student B's mother is very concerned about her daughter's future because she is losing her eyesight, and it may be even more difficult for her to go to the university. They face economic problems that hinder the possibility to afford tools or medical attention to improve her daughter's condition. The mother is aware of the fact that her daughter must become independent to face society's demands, and that she must help her as much as she thinks it is appropriate.

Institutional support committees. Fernando Volio High School Support Committee is composed of four members; all of them are regular teachers of different subjects. When they were interviewed, just one of them was willing to collaborate with the research study. They are in charge of monitoring instructors' work regarding the student with visual deficiencies and doing the paper work related to curricular adaptations among other responsibilities. Jerusalén High School Support Committee is composed of two members. They are teachers of different subjects such as mathematics, French, Spanish, and social studies. When they were interviewed, only one of them was eager to provide information.

English regional  advisor. He is in charge of monitoring the correct instruction of English based on MEP policies. The supervision is done based on the level observed. He is also a teacher of English in a private university.

Specialist from the HKI in Pérez Zeledón. There is one person in charge of

providing support and information to instructors in every high school in Pérez Zeledón. The

main office is located at CNREE office in the region. This person is trained regarding

visual disabilities, and provides talks to teachers and SVI; she is also in charge of the

process to provide technical support to those that require it to learn.

Role of the Researchers

Researchers played an essential role to collect data for the purpose of this study.

Both researchers observed a class in which there was a student with a visual limitation.

They observed ten lessons taught to each student, that is two months approximately. The

observations consisted of witnessing what occurred in the English class without

interrupting it; that is, they performed a non-participant observation. During observations,

they took notes on the most relevant data by using two different observation instruments.

They did not manipulate the context of the study; for this reason, observations were carried

out in a natural environment. Both researchers have the same academic level; they hold a

bachelor's degree in English Teaching and both studied at Universidad Nacional, Brunca

Extension, Pérez Zeledón Campus. Regarding the researchers' previous experience in

teaching, Researcher 1 (R1) taught at CI- UNA (Centro de Idiomas, Universidad Nacional)

for more than two years; she taught the levels beginner, I, II, III, IV, V, and VI. She was a

tutor at Éxito Académico, a project developed at Universidad Nacional and a tutor at

TEAM- UNA, another project that belongs to Universidad Nacional. In addition, she took

part in CONLA UNA (the I International Congress of Applied Linguistics in English) at

UNASRB, and she teaches individual private English lessons, too. During the research,

R1's main objective was to collect as much significant information as possible to analyze it

later and contribute with her insights and experience. Researcher 2 (R2) has worked in a

private institute teaching the basic level to teenagers; she has also taught private English lessons to adolescents. R2's main objective was to analyze the information obtained in order to provide a methodological solution to students that have VI and their teachers in order to create a more inclusive language teaching environment.

Not only did the researchers observe the EFL classes but also they gathered valuable information by interviewing the teachers, the parents, the students, the English regional advisor, and a specialist from the HKI; all of them were essential for the project. Additionally, it is a fact that none of the researchers has taught learners with visual deficiencies. However, they read about the topic and became well- informed so that they could be competent to analyze the data collected and to give valuable comments and insights regarding visual limitations. In this way, the inquiry results and analysis were not affected negatively by the incompetence of the researchers on the topic under study. The researchers triangulated the information gathered from participants to consider each of their perspectives since all the data collected were valuable. To triangulate the information, researchers formed three groups. The first one composed of the students and their parents; second, the support committees and the teachers. Third, the specialist from the HKI and the English Regional Advisor. The goal was to complement the information obtained from the participants' personal views, institutional personnel and governmental authorities or institutions.

Data Collection

In order to gather data, it is necessary to use instruments carefully designed. They have to be suitable for the specific kind of research so that they elicit the information the researcher is looking for. For this reason, the data collection tools that were used in this study are interviews for the students and their parents, a questionnaire for the students and

their teachers. Also, an observation checklist for the researchers and a researchers' log were

designed to collect data to describe the classroom behaviors. In addition, information from

the support committee, the regional advisor, and a specialist from the HKI was collected as

part of the raw data by means of questionnaires. Finally, an interview with the MEP

English Advisor of Special Education was conducted and English didactic material used in

the classroom was also collected. To add more to these data-gathering tools, essential data

were gathered and analyzed to understand the situation of two students with visual

problems as well as the day to day challenge and experiences that these learners face. The

instruments mentioned are described as follows.

Instrument # 1: Interview with parents. This instrument is composed of eight

open questions in Spanish, since this is the language that parents of the students under

study handle. Three of the questions are optional. Questions are related to the students'

needs, English teaching, possible changes for future classes, recommendations for teachers,

and support for the students. The purpose of this research tool was to identify the parents'

perspective regarding the teaching of English that their daughter receives.

Instrument # 2: Interview with the students. This instrument is composed of nine

open questions in Spanish since this is the native language of the students and

misunderstandings are avoided. Two of the questions are optional. Questions are related to

the difficulty of the English class, what participants like and dislike about the class and

activities, possible modifications to the class, etc. The objective of this instrument was to

find out the students' perspective regarding the teaching of English that they receive. The

students had the opportunity to say what they thought about the English class. Also, they

could give their opinion about possible improvements in the teaching of the target language

to students with Subluxated Crystalline Lens and Retinal Detachment according to their

experience as language learners. For this reason, the results that this tool elicited were

significant for the purpose of this study.

Instrument # 3: Questionnaire for the EFL teachers. This instrument is

composed of six questions. Question one, two, three, and five are closed questions, but they

have their respective open questions in order to elicit more detailed answers from the

teachers. Questions are associated to teaching strategies used in class to instruct students

with visual limitations, results obtained by using specific strategies, aspects to consider

when teaching a visually challenged learner, recommendations for other teachers who deal

with these students, among other features.  The objective of this questionnaire was to find

the teachers' perspectives regarding English teaching to students with visual disabilities and

more importantly, the strategies the teachers used to instruct an EFL learner with a visual

problem. This instrument was highly vital to gather data since it revealed EFL teachers'

perspectives and strategies which were essential for the analysis and the purpose of this

study.

Instrument # 4: Observation checklist. To do classroom observations, the

researchers designed an observation checklist with subtopics such as personal delivery,

presentation, the use of visual aids and socio affective factors. Each subtopic has several

yes/no questions for the researchers to check "yes", "no" or "not observed" according to

what they observed. Finally, the checklist has a space for the researchers to write additional

notes. The purpose of this checklist was mostly to determine the teaching strategies used to

instruct the participants under study. Out of this instrument, the absence and presence of

some strategies could be determined, which was of vital importance for the results of the

study.

Instrument # 5: Researchers' log. During each observation, the researchers wrote down details about the classroom, the teachers' strategies, the participants under study and the English class in general in a sheet of paper. The notes taken served the purpose of providing specific information and details that otherwise may be ignored. This instrument was aimed to gather valuable details about the classroom, the teachers' strategies, the students under study, the English class and any other essential feature that the researchers considered necessary; this tool provided an opportunity for the researcher to describe every event or action that took place in the EFL lesson. The data gathered by means of this instrument were highly beneficial for the research objective since this log revealed clear points that contributed to the results obtained from other instruments. It was also useful to point out the real dynamics of the classroom, and it was used to corroborate the information and insights that teachers, parents, participants and the committees said.

Instrument # 6: Questionnaire for the support committees. This questionnaire consists of eight open questions.  Questions refer to the support provided by the committees, training, tools, and recommendations for other committees. The objective of this questionnaire was to identify the support that students with visual limitations receive from the institutional authorities, and the control the support committees have over the cases of students with visual problems. Also, it was used to complete information pointed out by teachers, students and parents regarding the classroom and assistance obtained from the institution.

Instrument # 7: Questionnaire for the English regional advisor. This tool is composed of five questions. Two of them are open and three of them are closed questions, but they have their respective open inquiry in order to elicit more detailed answers from the advisor. Questions are regarding the existence of any program to support EFL teachers to

teach a student with visual problems, inclusive education to visually challenged learners, supervision to EFL teachers, recommendations for EFL teachers and materials available for EFL teachers who instruct students with visual limitations.

Instrument # 8: Questionnaire for the HKI specialist. It is composed of eight questions, five of them are open- ended questions and three of them are closed- ended questions, but they have their respective open question in order to elicit broader answers from the specialist. Questions are associated to the incidence of students with visual problems in Pérez Zeledón, training and help given to EFL teachers on the issue, inclusive education, materials available for EFL teachers as well as recommendations for EFL teachers. The objective of this questionnaire was to identify the support given by the HKI to the teachers and students with a visual problem as well as the situation of the county regarding the issue.

Instrument # 9: Interview with the MEP regional coordinator of special education. It is composed of a set of questions in order to know current statistics regarding SVI in Pérez Zeledón and the frequency of students with any VI that enroll in public institutions.

Instrument #10: Didactic materials. A set of materials used to instruct English to each student was collected. Specifically, these materials are photocopied booklets that were given to the learners to study and practice during classes. These materials were useful, for they provided a sample of the common dynamics of the classroom considering the activities and exercises observed.

The data obtained were carefully analyzed in order to find out a practical and effective solution to instruct visually challenged students and their classmates. The analysis that was developed is explained in the next section.

Data Analysis

This section describes how the data collected were analyzed and interpreted in order to understand the cases. There were instruments that provided the researchers with the necessary information to analyze and interpret the learners' contexts and the teaching strategies implemented to instruct the visually challenged students. The data collection tools that were used in this study are an interview to parents and the participants, a questionnaire for teachers in the institution, a log for the researchers, a questionnaire for the English Regional advisor and for the specialist from the HKI as well as for the committees in each educational institution. Tools also include an observation guide to take notes on the general teaching strategies and the environment as well as a log to take notes on any other aspects that occurred in each lesson during the observation period. First, the researchers divided the instruments by type and participants. The researchers read carefully all the data collected through the instruments. Interviews were transcribed and tabulated to find out about the participants' insights and questionnaires categorized by question to infer and make comparisons. The log was analyzed along with the observation guide and teaching materials so that the information was reinforced to avoid omitting relevant details. Questionnaires were useful to find out unknown details from teaching administration. The researchers considered ten instruments in order to add reliability to the work. To find out the answer to each question proposed, the investigators decided to compare necessary information obtained to answer each research question.

First, in order to identify the wants of a visually challenged student when learning English, the researchers distinguished information from the interview with parents, participants and teachers. Information from the instruments was tabulated to extract the most important aspects from each tool. The interpretation and description was made along

with data from the checklist and the log since they revealed real samples of the issues that occurred during the English class that might not have been noticed by the participants.

Second, the teaching strategies implemented in the classrooms, resources available, and procedures observed are clearly noticed on the checklists, logs filled out and the questionnaires for the committees gathered. The tabulation of the options and points written showed the most common manners to instruct these learners. It was valuable as well to add experiences and opinions of students collected in their interviews, for they provided evidence of experiences with any strategy, resource or procedures available in the institution.

Third and most importantly, the investigators used the observation checklist, log, and data collected from the specialist of the HKI to propose teaching techniques and materials to instruct SVI The observation guide was analyzed by subtopics to identify the teaching strategies used to carry out the English lessons and to later interpret and link the information to have an understanding of the teaching environment where the SVI are instructed. Each aspect in the checklist along with the significant points from the log provided evidence of the weaknesses that the teaching process has regarding teaching strategies to instruct visually challenged learners. The information from the HKI specialist supported effective ideas to adapt English lessons to teach students with visual limitations. After all the data collected were analyzed, the researchers suggested teaching techniques and materials to instruct EFL learners with VI based on the teachers' and students' needs found.

Research Schedule

The following is the schedule that corresponded to the development of the research project. It is divided into two years of work. Each year is subdivided by weeks per month

and the activity to develop during each week marked with an X. Moreover, the data

collected were analyzed and interpreted by the researchers; the process behind is explained

after the research schedule.

**Research Schedule 2014**

Pre-Research Procedures — Weeks

| Months / Week # | Jan 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Feb 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Mar 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Apr 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | May 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Jun 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Jul 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Aug 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Sep 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Oct 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Nov 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elaboration of the research idea | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Review of the literature | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Visit to the institution | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Design of data collection instrument for the diagnosis. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Diagnosis application & analysis. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Elaboration of the final research question. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | | | | | | | | |
| Proposal Design. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | |

| Research Schedule 2015 |
|---|

| Research Procedures (Weeks) | Jan 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Feb 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Mar 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Apr 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | May 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Jun 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Jul 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Aug 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Sep 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Oct 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Nov 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Proposal approval. | | | | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Visit to the institution and to parents for permissions. | | | | | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Introduction design. | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Literature Review elaboration. | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Methodology design. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Data collection instruments design. | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Observations. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | |
| Instruments administration. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | |
| Data collection and description. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | | | | |
| Data analysis. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Action plan design | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Conclusions and recommendations. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X |

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

Analysis of Question #1: Needs of SVI

One of the objectives of this research is to identify the needs of SVI. To identify the needs, researchers considered information from parents, students and teachers mainly. Also, valuable specific aspects obtained from other participants in this study were included to complement parents', students' and teachers' opinions so that a clearer idea of the necessities that the SVI had provided. Thus, the triangulation of the information was essential to obtain a more global perspective. The three main sources used in the analysis to answer question #1 were the interview with parents, the interview with students and the questionnaire for teachers. However, the observation checklist and the researchers' log were used to complement the findings.

Students' viewpoints. This study was developed with two students with a visual deficiency at two different public high schools in Daniel Flores and San Isidro district; Fernando Volio High School and Jerusalén High School. To comprehend the following information, participants will be referred to as student A and student B respectively.

Parents' viewpoints. Students' parents are included as well. They will be called parent A and B respectively.  Parents' opinions are greatly valuable for the purpose of this study since they live daily with the SVI.

To begin with, we considered students' and parents' opinions the most relevant viewpoints since parents are the ones who cope with different events with their visually challenged children. These children, as students, recognized their own wants when studying English inside the classroom or in the comfort of their homes. After analyzing the information obtained through the students' and parents' interviews and observations, it was found that most of the parents' conclusions were similar. They pointed out the necessities their kids have in school from their perspective.

Students' parents were aware of the fact that each student requires special attention when developing the lesson. Parent A recognized that didactic material is one desired aspect to improve in the classroom (see Table 1).

Table 1.

Needs of Visually Challenged Students When Studying English according to Parents

| Parent A's Insights | Parent B's Insights |
| --- | --- |
| - Time and dedication | - Individualized attention |
| - Colorful material | - Material ready on time |
| - Dynamic lessons | - Clear explanations |
| - Pronunciation of words | |
| - Material ready on time | |

Note. Information obtained from Instrument #1: Parents' Interview.

Material is photocopied in black and white; it is improved by bigger font size only. Activities are mainly reading comprehension exercises, and language practices which are performed by using the material given. Reading comprehension exercises and writing exercises were the most predominant in the English class. Moreover, parents A and B expressed that not only should the material be improved, but also the time provided for them to perform tasks. Through the observations and parents' and students' interviews, it was found that when introducing new topics to pupils, the material was not given on time to students A and B sometimes. For example, student A had her material once in a while, but on other occasions, she had to pay attention to the teacher and take notes. Student B had to go to the copy place to print out the material on one occasion. The place was closed, and the student was late to class due to this issue. As a consequence, Student B did not

participate with the rest of the class. In general, classes were carried out with different

written exercises, and group or pair work was not common.

To add more, T2 dedicated around 15 minutes to explaining the material and clarifying

doubts to student B.  She made use of her personal cellphone in order to translate words

from English to Spanish, and this was the common activity this student did in the English

class (see Table 2).

Table 2.

Needs of Visually Challenged Students When Studying English according to Students A
and B

| Student A's Insights | Student B's Insights |
| --- | --- |
| - More interest from the teacher | - The teacher (student- teacher |
| - Use of the class time to assist the | relationship). |
|   student | - The substitute teacher (new teacher´s |
| - More careful attention paid to the | negative expectations). |
|   student | |
| - The use of technological devices other | |
|   than the projector | |
| - Lighting | |
| - Ventilation | |
| - Colorful materials | |
| - Catchy materials | |
| - Group work | |

Note. Information taken from instrument #2: Participants' Interview.

T1 usually took time for student A at the end of the class. It did not please student A since

she could not have her time to rest.   Both participants were in similar settings; nonetheless,

student A is less independent compared to student B. Through the information obtained in

the students' interview, it was found that they acknowledged the fact that they need special

considerations due to their condition.

Students agreed on the fact that they need the instructors to devote more time to

explaining the contents of the lesson. Student A expressed it clearly since it is imperative

for her to have the teachers' attention, more appealing material as well as make correct use of

visual resources and activities. The fact that she does not like English does not impede her

from learning it since she said she makes a great effort; however, the lack of interest the

teacher showed in her learning along with the activities and material used in the class make

her feel demotivated. Group work is one option to provide her with an opportunity to

participate in the class; by doing so, tolerance is to be fostered. It is significant for this

student to feel that she is part of the group, and not segregated. When participation is

necessary, student A could be able to do it. Oral explanations work better in this case in

order to save time and provide more detailed clarifications.

Student B said she likes her teacher, and it is due to the fact that the permanent

instructor (T2) took time to explain to her what was required. According to the teacher, this

relationship existed because of the time they had been together. This fact created a bond

with a degree of confidence.  The fact that T2 was replaced by T3 made student B feel

worried because T3 did not know her as much as T2 did. This reflects an emotional need in

which interpersonal factors influenced the learning process directly. Both cases presented

evidence that materials and class activities are an issue to improve. During the interview,

student B mentioned that in conversational English she did better because it was more

about speaking than reading or writing, and thus, it was of her preference. Furthermore, it is

revealed that both of them needed extra attention from instructors; this is a way to help

students with visual deficiency to perform lesson activities at the same pace as their

classmates do.  It is also imperative to recognize that there is a need of inclusion in the

classroom because emotional factors such as trustworthiness and tolerance influence the

learning process. Parents and students highlighted the most influential conditions that are

absent in these two cases during the teaching process, and that affected the English learning

process directly.

      Based on parents' and students' interviews and the observations done, it was

concluded that the most relevant improvements to be made are related to the materials and

teaching practices or techniques to carry out the lessons as well as the activities for

inclusion in the English class. These improvements should be made with the goal of

providing a more comfortable and relaxing environment in the class. These actions grant the

opportunity to practice and learn the language in the classroom appropriately. To

comprehend this issue, teachers' opinions are useful to examine what else visually

challenged students require in the English classroom.

      Teachers' viewpoints. This study involved three teachers. They will be referred to

as T1, T2 and T3. In the classroom, teachers are the guides for students to learn the

language; they are always in charge of supervising students' work and clarifying their

doubts with extra help when necessary. Teachers have the necessary experience to

recognize students' needs from their own perspectives. Information from the questionnaire

for teachers shows each teacher's point of view towards the needs of EFL students with

visual difficulties when learning. Teachers recognized that they must dedicate more time to

working with the visually challenged learner; once again, they know that technology and

training are necessary to create a more adequate and equal setting for instruction. Basically,

teachers were focused on the teaching tools and preparation they needed to instruct, but

they did not recognize the personal needs students have.

Instructors agreed that they are not well trained to deal with any kind of special

needs. Nevertheless, committee members commented that instructors are given support

from the institution as well as from the HKI that gives talks in order to guide teachers that

instruct students with visual limitations. Each committee member mentioned that it is

recognized that students with any VI need more tools, strategies or/and techniques to learn

English.T1 mentioned that a more inclusive instruction must be supported, but in the class

it is not present (see Table 3).

Table 3.

Needs of Visually Challenged Students When Studying English according to Teachers

| T1's Insights | T2's Insights | T3's Insights |
|---|---|---|
| - Technological resources | - Technology as a tool | - Teacher training |
| - Students' needs recognition | | |
| - Time to help them | | |
| - Guidance | | |

Note. Information taken from instrument # 3: Questionnaires for EFL Teachers

Student A, whom T1 instructs, stated that her favorite part of the English class was "when

it's break time, I feel uncomfortable in class, I just want to get out of the classroom"

(Instrument #2). T1 did not ask student A to answer any questions orally, give an opinion

or to perform any sort of task that demanded her participation and effort. Actually, student

A's name was never mentioned in the class. Also, T1 said that the time to help a student

with visual problems was essential. However, time to help student A was not sufficient

since the teacher had to check all students' work. Usually, a part of the break time was

devoted to helping student A.

T2 admitted that technology is a tool to teach because student B was finally given a tablet to record, and play audio material of every subject and a magnifying glass to read materials easily. These instruments were given by the HKI and the support from Jerusalén High School after a long wait. T3 expressed that she had no experience working with students with visual problems, and that she needs training. T3 concluded that what she commonly did was to explain contents orally. During the observations, a short time was dedicated to student B for explanations about the topic. Time to instruct individually, the use of technological devices and well-trained teachers are the most important requirements instructors considered to help students with any visual need. To sum up, teachers recognized that they need to educate themselves in order to instruct students with any visual deficiency. Further, teachers admitted that it is difficult for them to assist students individually and assist fifteen or more students at the same time. Unfortunately, some of these teachers lack experience in the field of special needs. Lessons are short, and teachers are told to cover contents of study during every month. Consequently, they pay more attention to the majority of students. Parents, students-participants and teachers detailed clear suggestions about their needs to enhance the teaching-learning process for their specific case and to reach equality in the classroom. Inclusion is not fostered, and it is an aspect that is important to be regarded when designing and developing activities to teach English.

Analysis of Question # 2: Teaching Strategies Implemented to Instruct SVI

The main sources used in the analysis to answer question #2 were grouped to carry out the triangulation process since there are more than three instruments. Group 1 is composed of the questionnaire for teachers; group 2 is composed of the observation checklist, the log and the didactic materials; and group 3 is composed of the questionnaire

for the specialist from the HKI, the Interview with the MEP Regional Coordinator of

Special Education and the questionnaire for the English Regional advisor. In addition,

teachers who were in charge of the participants under study were asked about the most

common strategies they use to instruct a visually challenged student. Based on their

answers from the questionnaire, they used different and appropriate strategies to instruct

students with visual limitations. However, they used just one or two strategies (see Table

4).

Table 4.

Teachers' Strategies to Instruct SVI

| T1 strategies | T2 strategies | T3 strategies |
|---|---|---|
| - Lecture information in a visual format <br> - Sighted volunteer student to team up with the student with visual limitations | - Translation by using texts with the size needed. | - Orally explained contents |

Note. Information taken from instrument # 3: Questionnaire for EFL teachers.

On the other hand, observations played an essential role to corroborate and contribute with

the information given by the teachers regarding strategies used in the class since this data

reveals if instructors did what they stated in the questionnaire effectively. For example,

researchers observed that the teachers did not implement pair or group work frequently; as

a consequence, there was not any volunteer to help the student with visual problems as T1

affirmed. In fact, individual work was present during all the lessons observed. Also, researchers could notice that the instructors did not explain most of the contents orally as T3 indicated. Normally, contents were explained with a short introduction to the topic and vocabulary when necessary to the whole group; later, teachers worked with photocopied material in order to continue studying the topic. Sometimes, exercises were reviewed orally or checked on the board.

T1 provided the visually challenged student with the information she was going to present using a bigger font size at the beginning of the class. It helped student A to have the information in advance and keep record of some information that, otherwise, she could miss.  Furthermore, all materials used for class, extra class work and tests had the size needed for the SVI. It contributed to the performance of the students during English classes since the font size was not an obstacle for them. However, sometimes page numbers were omitted, and it made the student feel confused during exercises (instrument number 4 and 5). Finally, according to student A, she liked it when the teacher implemented group work; however, based on the evidence found, this did not take place often.

As group and pair work have high relevance for the students with visual deficiencies to learn, it is important to point out their occurrence during the English classes observed. Based on the data gathered from the observation checklist and the log, it could be found that teachers do not use pair and group work constantly in their classes .T1 was observed ten times, T2 was observed six times and finally T3 (Substitute teacher) was observed four times during the observation period. It was not possible to observe this teacher more lessons since her contract was over by the time and it was considered appropriate to include her since it is part of the participant's natural environment and affects her learning process. Even though group and pair work were part of classroom work, they are not considered

strategies to help the learner with VI. In some cases, Student A and B were not involved in the activities. In other cases, group work was done, such as in short consolidation activities, but not to carry out the main lesson. When pair work was observed, Student B was working individually because she was left behind and the same happened to Student A. Group and pair work were developed, but not as recommended when working with visually challenged students (see Figure 1).
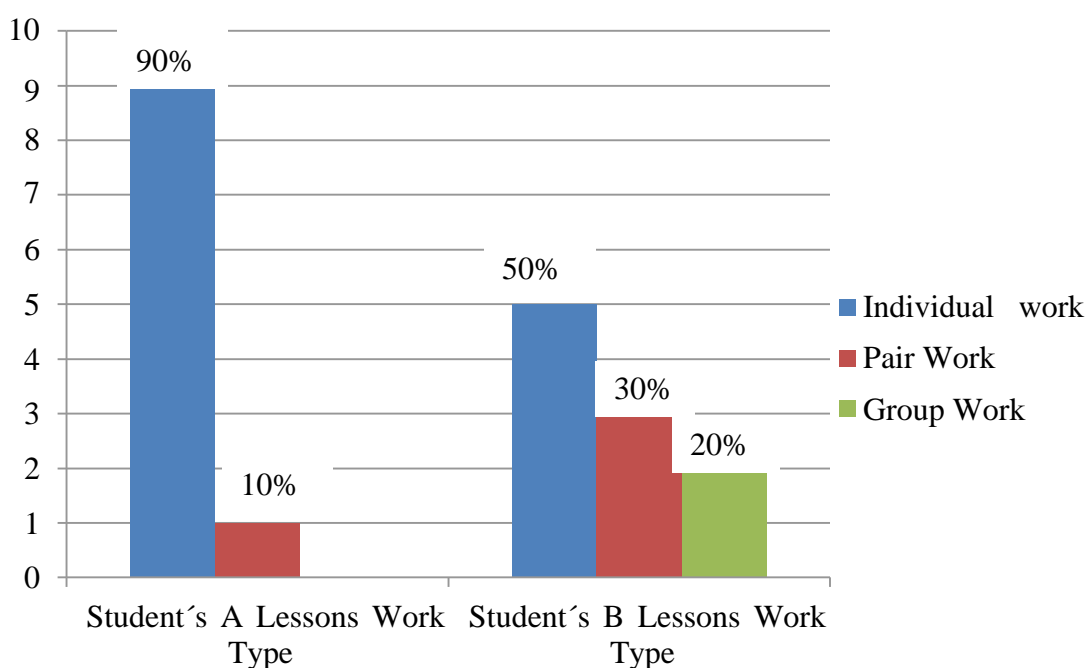


Figure 1. This graph presents the number of times pair, group and individual work were implemented in the classes observed. Information taken from Instrument # 4: Observation Checklist and Instrument # 5: Log.

As stated by student A, she prefers working in groups because their classmates help her and she feels supported. For this reason, pair and group work are necessary since they foster interaction among students, and it may improve the performance of visually challenged students. Student B, for instance, was not usually part of the activities developed during the class due to the fact that she did not receive the material on time, or needed more time to

answer questions during reading-writing exercises. In addition, the researchers noticed, during the observations done on T1, that activities that were meant to be performed as discussions were implemented as individual writing activities. This action hindered the opportunity for the visually challenged learners to interact with their classmates using the target language. To consider the learners' needs and preferences when planning and implementing activities during English classes is essential.

One significant concern when teaching SVI is informing the students in advance before presenting audio and visual material so that they become familiar and feel somehow ready to perform any task.  Out of ten classes observed, T1 did one listening practice, and did not inform the student in advance about the audio that was going to be played. T2 used audio material on three occasions during six lessons observed and there was no pre-activity for student B, so she could not perform the activity. In the case of T3, she used audio-visual material and a song once in four lessons observed. On no occasion was student B informed. In regard to the audio-visual material, it was a video played in the teacher's laptop; the student was given a seat in front of the laptop to listen to the video and watch better.  In addition, the researchers observed that T1 used audio-visual material only once out of ten classes. It reveals that visually challenged students did not receive the necessary input that their condition demands. The most frequent listening input that the SVI were exposed to was teacher talk.

Additionally, kinesthetic activities are a striking part of the development of an English lesson for a group that includes a visually challenged learner since based on the theory, learners with visual limitations are benefited from using his/her body to learn. Through the data gathered from the observation checklist and the researchers' log, it was discovered that kinesthetic activities were barely implemented in the observation period, or

were not specifically kinesthetic. This account entails the role play activities students did during the observation period during the English lessons. The fact that students did not perform enough kinesthetic activities prevents the visually challenged students from learning as the rest of students do. Therefore, these activities should be part of the EFL lesson plan, especially if there is one or more students with visual problems in the classroom. More importantly, student B claimed that she liked it when T3 brought games to the class (see Figure 2).
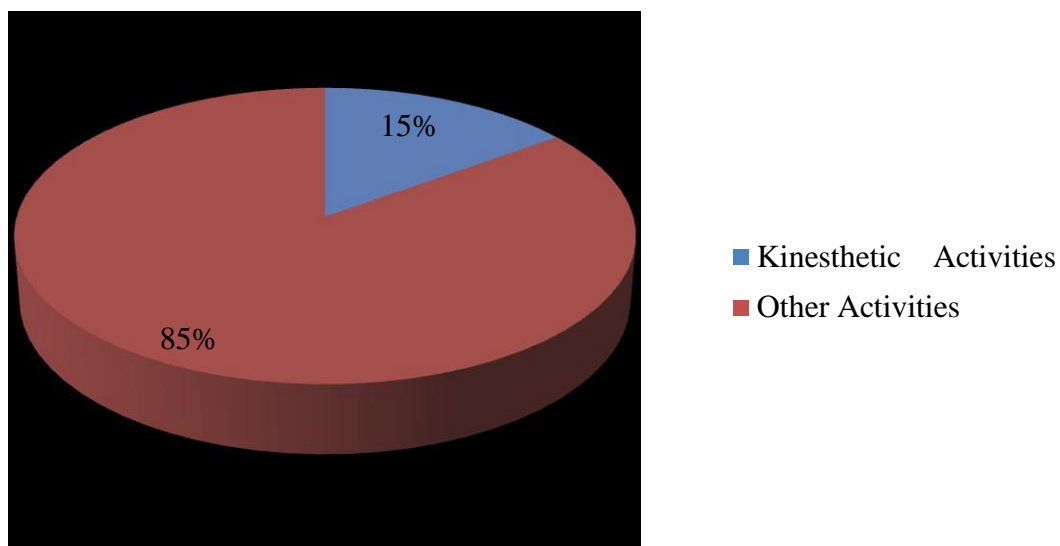


Figure 2. Classroom Observations - EFL Kinesthetic Activities. Results obtained from Instrument # 5: Log. The presence or absence of kinesthetic activities in a total of 20 lessons observed.

However, when the teacher brought a game, the student was not included in it. Games and other tasks which involve movement should be done not only because all students including those with visual deficiencies may feel integrated in the class, but also because they may learn and have fun at the same time.

In order to teach a student with visual limitations, the teacher must plan the activities that he/she will implement in the EFL class carefully so that the visually challenged student is supported and integrated in the class effectively. Therefore, the researchers observed the plan format that the teachers implemented, including activities and materials to corroborate if specific activities for the visually challenged learner were involved. According to the observation checklist, the log and the didactic materials, it was found that there is not a specific plan format to teach a class where there is a student with visual limitation. This may make it more difficult for teachers to treat the students and satisfy their needs since there are not standard guidelines to follow.

During the lessons observed, all the students were working similarly, and sufficient individual attention was not paid to the participants under study when performing activities. Actually, several times student B was not included in the activities developed. Moreover, students were not exposed to a warm-up activity during every class. There were two warm-up activities implemented by T2 and T3 and on both occasions student B was not taken into account. This fact hinders the student involvement in the learning process (see Figure 3).
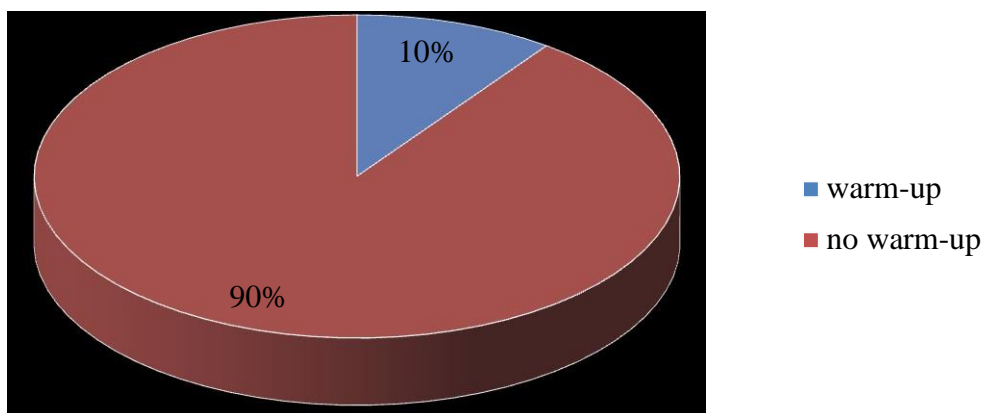


Figure 3. The presence or absence of a warm-up activity in a total of 20 lessons observed.

Also, it is essential to mention that the only three actions observed that could reveal the

proper treatment that the learners with visual deficiencies received were the appropriate

font size of written material, the seating arrangement and the individual attention

sometimes given.

Through the information collected with the observation checklist, the researchers'

log and the didactic materials, it was discovered that most of the lessons were based on

reading and writing exercises. Teachers made efforts to include other types of activities, but

these activities were not focused on integrating or supporting the visually challenged

students in their learning process. In some cases, the student was not involved in the

activities carried out, or the student did not obtain the current photocopied material used

during lessons on time (see Figure 4).
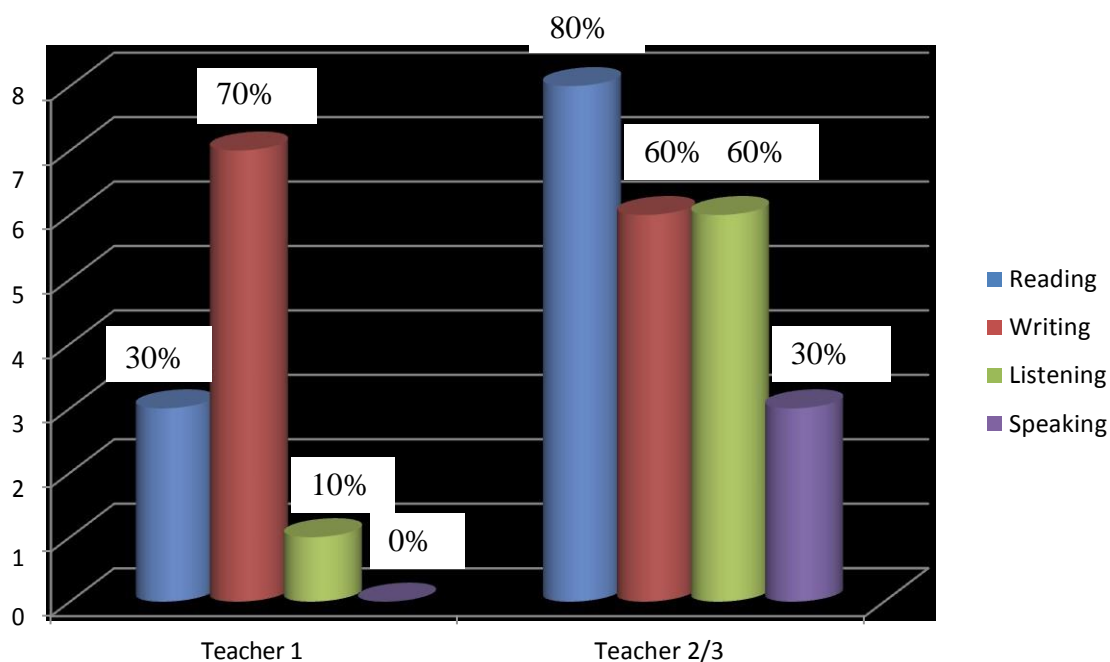


Figure 4. This graph presents the macro activities performed by teachers observed.

Information taken from Instrument # 5: Log and Instrument #10:  Didactic Materials.

There were different situations with the use of teaching activities that demonstrated specific

issues affecting the learning process of visually challenged students. For instance, visually

challenge students did not participate during the general classroom activities because they

were left behind, or they could not participate in answering questions as other students did

for they needed more time to read. Morales from the Helen Keller institute explained that to

achieve inclusion in the classroom it is necessary to embrace the student with visual

impairment into the natural dynamics in the language lesson, as well as in the institutional

extra-curricular activities such as art festivals, sports and the like (Morales, personal

communication, July, 2015).

Consequently, when having SVI, to develop more listening, speaking and

kinesthetic activities during the lessons is recommended in order to facilitate inclusion and

effective learning activities to reinforce the listening and speaking skills as well as SVI

kinesthetic learning style. Moreover, ludic activities are useful to enhance group work and

inclusion among students since they provide a natural stress-free environment. There are

common classroom materials that were part of the lessons observed. It was common to

observe reading and writing exercises handed out in photocopied material with font size

augmentation. In both cases, students were given booklets with the content and activities to

perform during a specific period of time. During the school year, every time the student

finishes completing the texts practices, they are given a new handout with the next topic to

study. The following figures exemplify common exercises done. It is important to mention

that the copies are given in black and white (see Figure 5 and 6).

**3. Read the text and fill in the blanks.**

## BUNGEE-JUMPING

It has become a very popular activity in Costa Rica. It first started in the early 1980's by a group of students from England's Oxford University who were visiting an island in the South Pacific and watched native people jumping from towers. Now, bungee jumping is popular all around the world. People jump from bridges, cranes, and air balloons. Bungee jumping came to Costa Rica in 1991 with the company "Tropical Bungee". The bridge crossing the Colorado River, near Grecia, is used for bungee jumping. To jump, a cord, made of more than 1800 elastics is used. Each cord can hold as much as 500 pounds and it is made for 2000 jumps. Every person who jumps needs to extra safety equipment including harness, belts, and an anchor to the bridge. Each jump is closely supervised, that there have not been any accidents.

The reading is about an extreme sport named _____. It is a famous sport in our country. Bungee jumping began in _____ on a Pacific Island as inspiration from the native people activities. People can jump from _____, bridges and air balloons. The cord used to this sport holds _____ and it is created to resist two thousand _____. This extreme sport requires some implements as _____, _____ and _____.

Figure 5. Sample of photocopied material given to student A. This figure illustrates some of the material provided to student A.

## Read the texts and answer the questions

## Boston Honors Homeless Man Who Returns $42000 Found in Backpack

Glen James a homeless Boston man, reportedly found a backpack Saturday at a shopping mall containing $42000 in cash and traveler's checks, but instead of keeping it, James flagged down a patrol car so it could be returned to its rightful owner. Now the God Samaritan whose noble words include "even if I were desperate for money, I would not have kept even a penny" -is being honored by his town for his honesty, according to Boston Magazine.

1. Who was Glen James?

_____

2. What did Glenn find?

_____

Figure 6. Sample of photocopied material given to student B. This figure illustrates some of the material provided to student B.

Effective didactic materials are the basis for effective instruction, and mainly reading and

writing exercises were developed in the classes observed. More has to be done to enhance

adequate integration of students with visual needs into the EFL classrooms in this research,

considering materials and types of activities performed during lessons. Usually, students

with visual problems are left behind because it is difficult for them to read and answer in

English as fast as their classmates do. Due to this, when expected to participate, they cannot

do it because they are still working on the material. To implement simple actions that

support the visually challenged learners in the English class on a daily basis will effectively

improve the situation in the English class for these students. Teachers should take some

actions such as  providing more specific activities that facilitate the practices and the

learning process of students, planning the lesson considering the needs of the students with

visual problems, providing suitable material that adjusts to their needs as well as

identifying what actions are affecting students with visual limitations negatively and

positively.

Analysis of Question # 3: The Resources Available to Instruct SVI

        Suitable resources, strategies and procedures to deal with SVI in EFL classrooms

are required so that these learners have a satisfactory integration and support while learning

the language. Concerning resources available and procedures in the English class when

treating cases of visually challenged learners in Daniel Flores and San Isidro district, there

are some specific actions that the committees from the appointed institutions take. This

information was obtained from the questionnaire for the committees.

        Committees in charge of supporting the cases of visually challenged students have

certain resources and parameters to follow. Personnel involved in both committees share the

fact that they ask for a diagnosis of the case to work on the other aspects later, and that

coordination with teachers is necessary as well as adequate training. However, Fernando

Volio Jiménez High School support committee pointed out that for them parents and

students are greatly important and that they need attention. Aeropuerto Jerusalén High

School support committee said that they provide the student with the access to a specialist who can help him/her. In addition, both committees agreed on the fact that they have trained the teachers to deal with visually challenged learners; at the same time, they feel prepared to deal with the cases, and that the education they offer to these students is inclusive (see Table 5).

Table 5.

Committees' Information about Resources Available and Procedures in the Educational Institutions when Treating Cases of Visually Challenged Learners

| Fernando Volio Jimenez High School Support Committee | Aeropuerto Jerusalén High School Support committee |
| --- | --- |
| - Attention to parents and students, request of the medical opinion, information to the instructors about the student's situation<br>- Coordination with teachers for the adequate management of the cases<br>- Isolated area for the student to take tests | - An accurate and timely diagnosis for the implementation of the access curricular adaptation, and the use of visual aids<br>- Access to a specialist who guides these students.<br>- The supervision to the teachers to verify that they develop the curricular adaptations adequately |

Note. Information taken from Instrument # 6: Questionnaire for the Committees.

Nevertheless, the students' parents said that the only aid given is the enlargement of material and the supervision by the HKI; they also said that there are several projects, but that these ones have not been done. A project such as providing supportive technologies and materials should be done as soon as possible in order to maximize the learning of

students with visual problems efficiently. Strategies, resources and procedures are striking elements to consider in order to instruct students with visual problems and to analyze their situation. Hence, the researchers tried to collect data regarding all of the elements mentioned before (see Table 6).

Table 6.

Interview with the MEP Regional Coordinator of Special Education, MEP English Regional Advisor and the HKI Specialist

| MEP Regional Coordinator of Special Education's Insights | MEP English Regional Advisor's Insights | The HKI Specialist's insights |
| --- | --- | --- |
| No answer | - There is not any program to train English teachers to deal with SVI.<br>- Each institution has a committee that tries to supervise the different subjects.<br>- Only the HKI specialist helps with English teaching material for instructors. | - Training is given in general to all teachers working for MEP.<br>- Parents and students are also prepared to ask for material and necessary information to acquire any technical support and training on personal growth and techniques to study at home. |

Note. Information taken from: Instrument #7: Questionnaire for MEP Regional Advisor, # 8: Questionnaire for the HKI and # 9: Interview with the MEP Regional Coordinator of Special Education.

Having interviewed the MEP regional coordinator of Special Education, the MEP regional advisor, and a specialist from the HKI, it was found that there are not consistent procedures to follow in order to deal with cases of VI in public high schools. The Regional Advisor of English argued that every institution has its own committee that tries to supervise the teacher's work, but each committee works differently and they have similarities in the mechanisms used.

More importantly, he pointed out that there is not an established program to train teachers on the matter. This idea reveals the necessity of working hard to create a program that could guarantee that all high schools have adequate standards to regulate the teachers' and committee's work, among other personnel related to the students with visual deficiencies. In addition, when the researchers interviewed the MEP Regional Coordinator of Special Education, she said that they were not in charge of high school students, only primary school students. It demonstrates that a follow-up process for primary school students does not exist. It was not possible to find a percentage or an account of students enrolled in public high schools either; the MEP Regional Coordinator of Special Education explained that they are in charge of a different area of public education that is primary school; however, there is no information about primary school SVI that later enrolled in public high schools. Each student has his/her personal record where information about their conditions or special needs is accounted if it is the case. When the student moves from primary school to high school, the personal file is transferred to the new institution.

There is not an account of all the students with a similar condition in MEP Special Education office, what makes less accurate the possibility to find out about the frequency and number of SVI in Daniel Flores and San Isidro district. The HKI is in charge of looking into cases of students with visual barriers and providing training or technical support to students enrolled in public secondary education.  It is complicated to specify concrete

procedures in general to treat cases with SVI in each public institution because the work is done independently. It is essential to synthesize the procedures, resources and strategies found from a general perspective considering the two institutions were the study took place.

The procedures, resources and strategies depend on the authorities, committees in charge, and the contributions of parents and the HKI. Careful attention, solutions and supervision are essential to be given in order to enhance the conditions and language teaching environment to students with visual deficiencies for a more reflective language learning process (see Table 7).

Table 7.

Synthesis of Procedures, Resources and Strategies when Teaching English to Visually Challenged Students

| Procedures | Resources | Strategies |
|---|---|---|
| - Student's file provided to the institution.<br>- Committee, teachers and parents' coordination<br>- HKI support | - The HKI training or technical assistance<br>- Photocopied materials<br>- Audio-visual materials | - Seating arrangement<br>- Font size adaptation<br>- Individual attention |

Note. Information taken from: Instruments # 3: Questionnaires for the EFL teachers, #4: Observation Checklist, #5:Log, #6:Questionnaire for the Support Committees, #7: Questionnaire for the English Regional Advisor, #8:Questionnaire for the Specialist from the HKI and #10: Didactic Evidence.

Suggestions and conclusions were drawn considering the setting of EFL teaching to visually challenged students which provide the most important findings of this study.

Chapter VI

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Through the analysis of the information collected, several conclusions have been drawn about the instruction given to SVI.  The conclusions about these two specific cases of VI are presented as a way to reflect upon them and take actions regarding instruction and VI in the EFL classrooms.

First, the teachers observed use a limited set of teaching strategies to instruct SVI. Even though they argued that they use a variety of specific strategies, what occurs in the EFL lesson is different. Through the observations done, it was concluded that teachers use just one or two strategies to teach the visually challenged student. It is important to remember that students' learning styles and needs should be considered when instructing them. Second, it can be concluded that the student with visual limitation does not participate in class at all. The student with visual problems does not volunteer to solve any exercises, and the teacher does not encourage a different attitude. Moreover, the instructors observed did not ask the visually challenged learner to answer questions aloud and individually.  In fact, the visually challenged students' names are not mentioned along the class; it could be said that they are somehow ignored. It may occur because it is sometimes assumed that the student with visual limitations is not done with the task in progress, or that the student does not want to participate. In other words, the learner with visual deficiencies is not integrated in the class activities as he/she should be.

Third, the time devoted to helping student A is not adequate since the teacher works with the student after class, that is, during break time. Although the time may be enough, the student's recreational period is affected; Student A said that this practice is not fair to her because she has no time to rest, and it makes her feel tired.  Also, the teacher's attention is crucial for the students with visual limitations as they reported it. The instructor does not

take in- class time to help the student with visual problems because she spends this time

checking the rest of students' work; consequently, she helps student A at the end of the

class. However, the class finishes before the teacher can work with student A most of the

time. Fourth, pair and group work activities are not implemented during the class. In spite

of the fact that the SVI in this study said that they like group activities that encourage peer

collaboration, teachers rarely implement them. In fact, individual work is predominant in

the EFL classes that were observed. Grouping students may take more time for the teacher

than asking them to work individually since students may have to move from their seats, or

they may not understand instructions, may misbehave, etc.  This is why, sometimes;

instructors prefer to implement individual work rather than group work.

Fifth, warm- up activities are not implemented in the EFL lessons observed. These

activities are necessary to motivate students, involve them in the topic, and introduce the

topic, among other positive purposes. All students need to be motivated, especially those

who have visual problems because their limitation may represent one more obstacle to be

overcome. The teachers, who are participants of this research study, did not bring a warm-

up to the class. Sixth, teachers do not consider visually challenged students' needs and

opinions. Based on the interviews done, students agreed that activities in the classroom are

neither appealing nor useful for them to learn the language. Students A and B concluded that

they like more listening activities like songs, and games to learn more vocabulary. However,

the core of the lessons observed was mainly reading tasks.

Seventh, inclusive activities should be fostered in the classroom.  Participants were

not included in the classroom dynamics most of the time, and classmates do not consider

them when working or participating. Teachers do not make use of any strategy in order to

include them or help them to socialize and share with their peers. Eighth, there is no an

official account or percentage of students enrolled in high schools in Pérez Zeledón, there

are only estimates of students with any type of visual deficiency enrolled in the public high

schools of the region based on HK institute. Ninth, teachers from both institutions

interviewed agreed that they are not well trained to deal with blind or visually challenged

students. There is not preparation in college, and the only training that they have is from the

HKI. The MEP recommends EFL teachers to contact this institute in case they need any

help to assist the visually challenged learners, so when teachers feel that they need some

information or support, they go to the institute, and ask for assistance. They also added that

the time they have to cope with a student with visual needs and the rest of the group is not

enough. Tenth, MEP does not have a specific curriculum to teach students with visual

problems, every teacher plans as he/she considers appropriate. Eleventh, there is no an

official protocol to follow in public institutions to teach students with visual challenges.

Every institution has a committee that is in charge of dealing with the cases of VI. Each

committee has a plan to follow, but sometimes their objectives are not achieved.

Twelfth, kinesthetic activities are not implemented in the EFL classes where student

A and B studied. Writing and reading exercises were the most common activities. Thirteen,

based on the perspectives of the English teachers interviewed in this study, it is difficult for

the language teacher to devote time to preparing inclusive lessons due to the extra

administrative work they are asked to do and the group size. Fourteen, teachers, parents and

the students work as a team to provide support to SVI. Also, the support of committees and

the authorities in the institution is given when extra help is necessary.  The HKI is an

appropriate source of information and extra help for teachers, parents and learners with VI.

Fifteenth, volunteers or teacher assistants could be hired in order to help those

teachers who have in their classrooms students with visual needs. Sixteenth, when teachers

are willing, and they have the support from authorities, improvements to help students with

visual needs or any other disability could be made. Bureaucracy from governmental

authorities and MEP causes lack of efficient and effective solutions to provide technical

support to students. Seventeenth, access to technological devices for the benefit of SVI is

poor in the institutions where the research project took place; thus, the use of tablets,

internet, laptops or computers as well as projector devices or mp3 players is not

encouraged. Eighteenth, in general, instruction in both high schools needs to be improved

regarding inclusion in the EFL classrooms

Recommendations

The goal of this research was to contribute to the improvement of the instruction

given to students with a visual limitation. For this reason, it is essential to provide a series

of recommendations for teachers. First, teachers should use a variety of strategies to teach

students with visual challenges, it would facilitate their learning and their needs may be

satisfied. In addition, before using specific strategies, teachers should do research, observe

and try to know their students in order to take actions and use the most suitable strategies.

Second, teachers should foster the visually challenged students' participation in class. In

this way, students may be integrated and they may understand that they are important

members of the class as the rest of their classmates.  Moreover, by making the visually

challenged learners participate, their work could be monitored and their learning could be

assessed. Third, teachers should organize their time in class better so that all students can

be helped, especially the students with visual limitations. A way to do this is by helping the

learner with VI first and then continuing with the rest; in this way, when the rest of students

start to solve the exercise, the student with visual problems is maybe about to finish the

task. Instructors should not use recess to help the visually challenged learner since learners deserve to take a break as their peers do, to socialize and relax for a while.

Fourth, teachers should implement pair and group work activities in the EFL lesson because these allow the learner with VI to interact with his/her classmates and be supported by them. If learners express their preferences for certain activities, the teacher should analyze the possibility of implementing those activities. If instructors find that the student with visual deficiencies is benefited when working in pairs or groups, they should try to implement these activities as much as possible. Fifth, warm- up activities should be implemented every day. They allow the learner to feel interested in the class, the topic, to feel motivated and learn in general. Dynamic warm-ups such as games work better because the student with visual limitations has the opportunity to use his/her body and sense of touch. Also, songs are suitable tools for warm-ups since they stimulate the students' sense of hearing. Teachers should take time to prepare warm-ups that could engage SVI and catch their attention to learn. Sixth, activities must be adapted considering the needs of all the students and specifically, those who are at disadvantage in order to provide accurate practices to learn the language. Activities to practice the language must be accompanied with audio material, the use of technological devices, when possible, and games that are useful to foster tolerance and group work in the class.

Seventh, activities to foster inclusion must be implemented in classrooms with students with visual limitations. Teachers and classmates are to participate for the effective inclusion in the language classroom of visually challenged students. Eight, it is necessary to track down students that enroll in public high schools in order to analyze the percentage of the general population subdivided according to the different visual diseases and causes of

blindness or visual loss. Percentages help to describe the frequency of cases, comprehend the population itself, and to determine the percentage of school dropouts with visual challenges to later propose and implement solutions to this problem.  Ninth, based on the English teachers experience in both institutions, they require more training and information because universities do not prepare them to deal with VI, there is lack of information regarding the correct treatment, instruction, assessment and assistance to students with different visual abilities. English teachers must be prepared to teach, manage and create an inclusive environment in every lesson.

Tenth, MEP should provide specific guidelines and materials to work with an adapted curriculum for visually challenged learners in order to satisfy all their needs, and at the same time, guide teachers and facilitate their work. Eleventh, there should be an official standard protocol to follow in all public institutions to teach students with visual challenges. All committees should have coordination with each other and have a set of steps to follow in order to have a more organized educational system. Twelfth, kinesthetic activities should be constantly implemented in the EFL class where students with visual limitations study since this learning style is the one that facilitates their learning and helps them absorb knowledge. Thirteenth, administrative work such as lesson planning, material designing and evaluation procedures should be facilitated to those teachers that have students with special needs to have extra time to prepare more appropriate lessons and more time to analyze and assess the case and the development of the student.

Fourteenth, communication among teachers, students and parents of students with visual limitations must be facilitated to reach agreements regarding the extra support the student with visual limitations lacks. This could be done by means of meetings and interviews with teachers and students, and teachers and parents. When teachers, parents and

the visually challenged students need extra help committees should have the responsibility to

help them and transfer the inquiries to the HKI and the authorities in order to look for

solutions. Fifteenth, teachers and parents of SVI should demand that governmental

authorities hire extra special education personnel for blind or visually challenged students for

the benefit of both, English teachers and students with visual needs.  Sixteenth,

teachers' personality and personal life should be considered; they also have needs within the

work they are doing, and the system might cause lack of motivation and interest to look for

better solutions in order to help students with visual limitations.

Seventeenth, more technological devices should be used in language lessons in

order to provide real opportunities to SVI. Teachers should adapt their lessons based on the

specific and general needs that a student with a visual deficiency might present since each

case is unique. Eighteenth, it is necessary to provide easy access to innovative information

about visually challenged students in Costa Rica to EFL teachers by creating alliances

among the HKI, public and private universities and the Ministry of Public Education.

Nineteenth, reflecting on the points observed in this research project, a booklet was

designed. It includes a set of recommendations, strategies and techniques directed to

teachers, parents and students in order to help pupils to learn English when having visual

challenges. Also, a set of creative and updated activities that exemplifies techniques and

strategies to implement into the high school classrooms in order to include a student with

visual needs in the group was proposed. The booklet was carefully designed to help those

teachers who need extra preparation and parents who do not know how to help their

children to practice English at home. Finally, this work also intends to provide teachers

with clues to create inclusive and appealing lessons for learners with visual limitations.

Proposal description. This design consists of guidelines for teachers, parents and students in order to expand teachers' possibilities to teach students with any visual challenge and to help parents and children dealing with any visual difficulty in the EFL high school learning. Guidelines and Teaching Activities for MEP Contents: Inclusion in the EFL Classroom, and English Teaching to Visually Challenged Students: Parents and Students' Guide proposal provides lesson samples that follow MEP recommendations in form of a booklet. It includes warm-ups, while and consolidation activities that are recommended to teach a group in which there is a student with any visual challenge. The activities suggested are practical and easy to be adapted in order to provide teachers with the possibilities to include them in their lessons plans when necessary. Some activities make use of technology. It provides a solution to the problem English teachers deal with when targeting to plan inclusive and effective language classes for students with visual deficiencies. It will not supply a complete document per level, but the activities included are used as samples so that teachers adapt the activity for later use with the corresponding topic to study. Finally, parents and students are provided with a booklet that includes recommendations and pieces of advice to support their kids, and for students to improve their English learning process at home and school. This booklet is also useful to support committees to welcome students to the high school and it may work as a guide to be ready to learn the language.

References

Ades, L. (2011, July). Guidelines for the diagnosis and management of Marfan Syndrome.

47:476- 485. Australia: Australian Clinical Practice Guidelines. Retrieved from

https://www.clinicalguidelines.gov.au/portal/2094/guidelines-diagnosis-and-

management-marfan-syndrome

Agencia de Cooperación Internacional del Japón y Consejo Nacional de Rehabilitación y

Educación Especial. (2006). Necesidades y oportunidades de las personas con

discapacidad en Costa Rica (1st  ed). San José: La Agencia y el Consejo.

Agencia de Cooperación Internacional del Japón y Consejo Nacional de Rehabilitación y

Educación Especial. (2007). [Graph ilustration, Matrícula inicial en educación

especial MEP, 2005]. Situación de la discapacidad en la Region Brunca (1st ed).

San José :La Agencia y el Consejo.

Alvez, C.,  Martins, G., Rabello, S., Rodrigues, M., & Montiero, K. (2009). Assistive

technology applied to education of students with visual impairment. Revista

Panamericana Salud Pública,(26), 148-52. Retrieved from

http://www.scielosp.org/pdf/rpsp/v26n2/07.pdf

Armstrong, T. (2009). Multiple intelligences in the classroom. ( 3rd ed.). USA, Virginia:

ASCD.

Araya, C., & Córdoba, G. (2008). Teacher knowledge in English language teaching: An

analysis of its socio-historical construction in the western central region of Costa

Rica. Actualidades Investigativas en Educación, 8,1-22. Retrieved from

http://revista.inie.ucr.ac.cr/index.php/aie/article/viewFile/245/244.

Artiles, A. & Ortiz, A. (Ed.). (2002). English language learners with special education

needs: Identification, assessment and instruction. USA: Center for Applied

Linguistics and Delta Systems.

Beech, M. (2003). Accommodations and modifications: What parents need to know.

Florida: Florida Developmental Disabilities Council. Retrieved from

http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7690/urlt/0070070-ac-mod-parents.pdf

Bishop, V. (2004). Teaching visually impaired children. (3rd ed.). Springfield, IL: Charles

C. Thomas.

Braille. (2006). In Cambrigde dictionaries online. Retrieved from

http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-spanish/braille?q=Braille

British Columbia Council. (2009). A Guide to adaptations and modifications. Retrieved

from https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/docs/adaptations_and_

modifications_guide.pdf

Calderón, D. (2013). Circular DVM-AC-003-2013. República de Costa Rica. Retrieved

from http://www.apse.or.cr/NUEVA_WEB/Cuerpo/2013/3Marzo/fts/apoyos.pdf.

Carney, S., Engbretson, C., Scammell, K., & Sheppard, V. (2003). Teaching students with

visual Impairments.1- 125. Retrieved from http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/vision.

Centro Nacional de Recursos para la Educación Inclusiva (CENAREC). (2012). Educación

Especial en CR, Desafíos. La educación especial en Costa Rica: Antecedentes,

evolución, nuevas tendencias y desafíos. Retrieved

from http://www.drea.co.cr/educacion_especial/documentos/educacion_especial_E

n_costa_rica_cenarec.pdf.

Consejo Nacional de Rehabilitación y Educación Especial. (2011). Población con

 discapacidad región central sur, Costa Rica. [Características generales de la región

 central sur por tipo de discapacidad INEC, 2011].

Creswell, J.  (2014).   Research Design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods

 approaches. (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cruz, C. (2011). The teaching of English to a learner with visual impairment: A

 case study. (Master's thesis).Universidad Nacional, Costa Rica.

Duarte S.A. & Escobar L.A. (2008).  Using adapted material and its impact on

 university students' motivation. Profile Issues in Teachers' Professional

 Development, (9), 63-88. doi: 07902008000100005

Dunn, R., Beaudry, J., & Klavas, A. (2002). Survey of research on learning styles.

 California Journal of Science, 2(2), 75-88.

 http://citirx.4arc.com/csta/pdf/30learnjournal.pdf#page=76

Galetová, I. (2012).  Lesson planning for visually impaired students of English (Final

 Work,  Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic). Retrieved from

 http://is.muni.cz/th/teacher 104817/pedf_c/plny_text_prace.docx%E2%80%8E.

Gall, M, Gall, J., & Borg W. (2003). Educational research: An introduction. Boston:

 Person Education.

Giangreco, M.F., & Doyle, MB. (2000). Curricular and instructional considerations

 for teaching students with disabilities in general education classrooms. In. S. Wade

 (Ed.), Inclusive education: A case book of readings for prospective and practicing

 teachers ,1, pp. 51-69. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Retrieved

 from:http://www.uvm.edu/~cdci/archives/mgiangre/Chpt3CurrInstr2000.pdf

Gross, M. (2006). University inclusion: Strategies for an equal academic achievement.

    Universidad De Costa Rica. San José: Icevi. Retrieved from

    http://icevi.org/publications/icevi_wc2006/09_inclusive_educational_practices/Pape

    rs/la_025_martha%20gross.pdf

Hoffman, R., Snyder, M., Devgan, U., Allen, A., Yeoh, R., & Braga-Mele, R. (2013).

    Management of the subluxated crystalline lens. 39:1904-1915. Oregon: Elsevier.

    http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrs.2013.09.005

Inclusion. (2006). In Cambrigde dictionaries online. Retrieved from:

    http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-spanish/inclusion

Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos. (2011). X Censo Nacional de Población y VI

    de Vivienda: Resultados Generales .1st ed. San José. Retrieved from

    http://www.cipacdh.org/pdf/Resultados_Generales_Censo_2011.pdf.

Jalali, S. (2003). Retinal Detachment. Community Eye Health, 16 (46), 25-26. Retrieved

    from http://www.cehjournal.org/wpcontent/uploads/download/ceh_16_46_025.pdf

Jhonson, D. (1992). Approaches to research in second language learning. N.Y: Logman.

Jones, W. (2004). (1st ed.) Care of the patient with retinal detachment and related

    peripheral vitreoretinal disease. USA: American Optometric Association.

    Retrieved from https://www.aoa.org/documents/CPG-13.pdf

Keefe, J & Jenkins, J. (2013). (2nd ed.). Instruction and the learning environment. New

    York: Routledge.

Kent, D. (2012). What is braille? (1st ed.). Guandong, China: Enslow Publisher.

Koening, A., & Holbrook, C. (Eds.). (2000). (2nd ed.) Foundations of education:

    Instructional strategies for teaching: Instructional strategies for teaching children and

    youths with visual impairments. New York: AFB Press.

Ley  7600 sobre Igualdad de oportunidades para las personas con discapacidad, 29 mayo

     1996,Centro Regional de Recursos para la Inclusión Educativa, Costa Rica (2004).

     Retrieved from http://www.munialajuela.go.cr/documentos/LEY7600.pdf

Loeys, B., Dietz, H., & Braverman, A. (2010). The revised Ghent nosology for the Marfan

     syndrome. 47. 476-485. Gent,Belguim: BMJ. doi: 10.1136/jmg.2009.072785

Marshall, M.,N. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. Family practice,13, 522-

     526 doi:10.1093/fampra/13.6.522.

Mckenzie, A., & Lewins, S. (2008).  The role and training of paraprofessionals who work

     with students who are visually impaired. Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness,

     102.8. August. 459. Retrieved from

     http://crawl.prod.proquest.com.s3.amazonaws.com/fpcache/f4bff5fa3cc526c4a5da3

     c4b0e887e16.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJF7V7KNV2KKY2NUQ&Expires=14

     64788713&Signature=wsKTtdevaXgHF27GHS2gjkbW%2BvQ%3D

Ministerio de Educación Pública. (2009). La transversalidad en los programas de estudio.

     Relanzamiento de la Educación Costarricense. San José: MEP. Retrieved from:

     http://coned.ac.cr/miconed/programasMep-2009-1/ingles/Diversificada.doc

Navarro, D; & Piñeiro, R. (2010). Enseñanza y aprendizaje de inglés como  lengua

     extranjera; estudio de casos. Patria Grande, Revista Centroamericana de

     Educación. 1, 1-14. Retrieved from http://www.ceducar.info/OJS,

     2012http://www.ceducar.info/OJS.

Organización Panamericana de la Salud. (2004). La discapacidad en Costa Rica: Situación

     actual y perspectivas. Report no. 14. San José. Retrieved from

     http://www.bvs.sa.cr/php/situacion/discapacidad.pdf.

Presidencia de la República. (2009). Costa Rica Multilingüe  2008-2017 Digital version.

Retrieved from

http://www.aliarse.org/documentos/Congreso_II/Marta%20Blanco.pdf

Programa Sociedad de la Información y Conocimiento (2011). TIC y personas con

discapacidad en Costa Rica, 9. 2011 Annual report of the Programa Sociedad de la

Información y Conocimiento, Costa Rica University. Retrieved from

http://prosic.ucr.ac.cr/informe-2011

Salandanan, G. (2008). Teaching approaches & strategies. Quenzon, Philippines: Kathan

Publishing.

Sandoval, J., Saldarriaga, W., & Isaza , C. (Abril-Junio,2014) Síndrome de Marfan:

Mutaciones nuevas y modificadoras del gen FBN1. IATREIA, 27, 206-215.

Retrieved from http://www.scielo.org.co/pdf/iat/v27n2/v27n2a08.pdf

Spungin, S.  & Ferrell, K. (2007). The role and function of the teacher of students with

visual impairments. Position paper of the Division on Visual Impairments, Council

for Exceptional Children. Arlington, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

Retrieved from http://www.perkinselearning.org/scout/resources-teachers-students-

visual-impairments

Sofia, C. (2016, March).  Foreign Language Learning for the visually impaired in the

Region of Central Macedonia, Greece: Problems and Suggestions. US-China

Foreign Language, 14, 214-226. Retrieved from

http://www.davidpublisher.org/Public/uploads/Contribute/56ef90cd605a0.pdf

Udvari-Solner, A., & Frentz, J. (1996).  Learning individually: The key to curricular

adaptations. Disability Solutions, 1(2). 1-16. Retrieved from http://dsagsl.org/wp-

content/uploads/2014/04/Learning-Individually-The-Key-to-Curricular-

Adaptions.pdf

Appendices

Appendix A: Teachers' Booklet

Appendix B: Students and Parents' Booklet

Appendix C: Diagnosis Instrument

Appendix D: Instrument # 1 Interview with Parents

Appendix E: Instrument # 2 Interview with the Students

Appendix F: Instrument # 3 Questionnaire for the EFL Teachers

Appendix G: Instrument # 4 Observation Checklist

Appendix H: Instrument # 5 Log

Appendix I: Instrument # 6 Questionnaire for the Support Committees

Appendix J: Instrument # 7 Questionnaire for the English Regional Advisor

Appendix K: Instrument # 8 Questionnaire for the Specialist from the HKI

Appendix L: Instrument # 9 Interview with the MEP Regional Coordinator of

Special Education

Appendix M: Instrument # 10 Didactic Materials

**English Teaching**

**Recommendations for EFL Teachers
When Working with Visually Challenged
Students in the Classroom**

Guidelines and Teaching Activities for
MEP Contents

# INCLUSION *In*
## *The* EFL CLASSROOM

Carolina Solano

Elvira Gutiérrez

Universidad Nacional

Costa Rica

2017

# Contents

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

This booklet is composed of a set of thirty activities that can be adapted. These activities are classified in warm-ups, while activities and consolidations. Each activity includes the guidelines and material needed. They can be adapted according to the topic taught, and they can be constantly used. Contents of tenth grade will be used to exemplify each activity; that is, topics can be changed, but activities can be kept. The topics are Achievements of Our National Athletes, Costa Rican Art, Music and Crafts; Words with Same/Different Meaning (synonyms/antonyms), Costa Rican Typical Food, Holidays and Celebrations in Costa Rica with some celebrations in English speaking countries, Causes and Effects of Natural Resources Misuse, Tourist Attractions Offered by Costa Rican Communities. Songs, game-like activities, videos, task-based, content – based activities are part of the booklet. Also, the Communicative Approach will be considered the basis to design the activities since it is the approach proposed by MEP. In addition, theory that backs up the design of the activities is provided to show evaluation concepts.

# PART I

# Theory behind the Booklet

# Theory behind the Booklet

For the purpose of backing up the activities included in this booklet, some important theoretical points are presented in this section. The activities are specially designed to teach students with visual impairment. The booklet designers considered group work, kinesthetic, tactile and auditory learning style, and technology to design the activities because according to the theory, activities that include these aspects are greatly beneficial to facilitate the students' learning process. For this reason, each feature is described as follows.

## Group Work and Students with Visual Impairment

Learners with visual limitations need to be in contact with their peers in order to be supported and to have effective interaction with them so that learning takes place. On this account, Cox and Dykes (2001) affirmed that

> Students need opportunities to become acquainted with their classmates. Because students with visual impairments may not readily associate names and faces through incidental classroom experiences, teachers need to design appropriate experiences to help build relationships among all students in a class. (p. 68)

Through the interaction that visually challenged learners have with their classmates, they will develop not only linguistic but also social skills. For this reason, pairs and group work should be implemented in the EFL class where a visually challenged student is present. Moreover, group work contributes to fostering cooperative learning that could improve the visually challenged learner's performance in the English class.

5

## Tactile, Kinesthetic, and Auditory Learning

As students with visual limitations do not have their sense of vision well-developed, they need to make use of their other senses such as the sense of touch to perform classroom tasks. According to this idea, Cox and Dykes (2001) argued that "students with visual impairments use tactile and kinesthetic input to learn about their environments" (p. 72). Thus, it is essential for students with visual loss to become familiar with the materials and objects that they will need to perform class activities since in this way, they may gain confidence. In order to familiarize with the class materials, students can use their sense of touch as "tactile and kinesthetic input can provide students with information about objects they come in contact with and use" (Cox & Dykes, 2001, p. 72).   This is why teachers should implement activities that are oriented to the styles previously mentioned. In addition, visually challenged learners make use of their sense of hearing as a tool to perform classroom activities. Actually, "efficient listening is crucial to classroom success for students with visual impairments" (Cox and Dykes, 2001, p. 72). It is important to consider that through listening, students gain pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary input, consequently,  when visually challenged students improve their listening skill, they "increase their spoken and written communication and reading skills" (Heward, 2000 as cited in Cox & Dykes, 2001, p. 72). Therefore, appropriate auditory input may help the student with visual problems to progress in his/her way to learn the language in an integral manner.

## Visually Challenged Learners and Technological Adaptations

When dealing with learners who have a visual condition, teachers need to find tools that contribute to an optimal student's development in the classroom. One of the most useful tools to teach English to visually challenged students is technology. Based on this assumption, Cox and Dykes (2001) stated that "technological advances have created many products that are advantageous for students with visual impairments, both for input and output of information (p. 73). Not only is the input that students receive significant but also what they produce by using these technological devices. Internet plays an important role in the learning process of a student with visual limitations since it allows teachers to provide students with visual impairment with opportunities to participate in an inclusive environment (Serrano, Palomares & Garrote, 2013, p. 70). Consequently, having access to the web should be a usual practice in classrooms where there is a learner with a visual limitation. Also, it is true that there are technological programs that were designed to facilitate the learning process of a student with visual limitations. However, it is necessary that teachers learn to use these programs to incorporate them in class and take advantage of them by designing activities accessible for all students (Serrano, Palomares & Garrote, 2013, p. 73). If instructors do not feel well prepared to use the internet, specialized software or any technological devices, they should look for training so that adequate instruction is given to visually challenged learners.

## Why Designing a Booklet of Activities for Visually Challenged Learners?

Because learning English as a foreign language is a challenge, it is even harder if the learner has some visual limitations. Consequently, teachers are their facilitators to learn the language in a more adapted manner. This booklet provides suggestions to teachers, parents and visually challenged students when leaning English as a foreign language in public high schools in Costa Rica. Further, it includes activity samples for teachers to carry out during their lessons when having a visually challenged student. Activities are subdivided into warm-ups, while and consolidation activities that teachers can select and adapt depending on the topic under study. It means that it is a model and reference to EFL teachers.

There are some actions teachers, parents and visually challenged learners perform in order to cope with the extended demands to learn English. It is necessary that teachers, parents and students work together to reach an improved language-learning process and obtain appropriate and practical information such as the recommendations, tips, and strategies included in this booklet which create more educated and prepared parents, teachers and students. Also, classroom activities and materials are good samples and options to put into practice during English lessons. It demonstrates that having a visually challenged student does not mean that classes cannot be practical for teachers or interesting, fun and appealing to all students. The use of technology, for instance, offers varied materials, apps, web pages that teachers and students have to take advantage of, as well as parents, to advise their child according to the English learning demands. The use of games, appealing materials and technology creates a more accessible environment within the classroom for students with visual impairment.

More importantly, it is necessary to consider the aspects that are not commonly present in the language lessons. Technology is randomly implemented and this work intends to point out its vital relevance when learning a language. The document *TIC y personas con Discapacidad en Costa Rica* (2011), highlights that the basic principles of accessibility include also information technologies. The changes that technology has created in society are vast, and there is a wide variety of advantages that offer technological advances as well as many expectations to facilitate the lives of many people including people with disabilities (p.6). Consequently, the use of technology facilitates inclusion of visually challenged students to the English classes, and in this booklet, samples of technology usage are included. Even though the booklet provides distinct recommendations to consider when teaching English to a visually challenged learner, it does not intend to provide extra work for teachers. It is recognized that instructors could make the difference in the classroom by making use of basic strategies and every tool available to teach English. This booklet is a reference for those teachers who need extra support and an invitation to reach fair learning and inclusion for the sake of students with any visual impairment.

# PART II

# Guidelines to Instruct EFL Students with Visual Impairment

## Understanding Visual Impairment

Visual impairment has different connotations to different people. However, it is a term that refers to different degrees of visual deficiencies, not only one. Carney, Engbretson, Scammell and Sheppard, (2003) explained that "the nature and degree of visual impairment may vary significantly, so each student may require individual adaptations to instructional practices and materials in order to learn effectively" (p.3). Specific considerations are to be implemented depending on the different cases of visual impairment that a person has. Based on Carney et al., (2003) visual impairment levels are summarized in the next chart.

To comprehend how vision is measured; the top number refers to the distance a person with visual deficiency  has to be in order to see an object (letters, objects, people, and others), and the bottom number refers to the normal distance a person with good vision could see the same objective. The distances are measured in feet. For example, 20/400 sighted person needs to be 20 feet close to a poster in a room in order to see well meanwhile a person with good vision could see the same poster at 400 feet. A person with 20/20 vision has the appropriate sight measurement.

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

| VISUAL IMPAIRMENT | |
|---|---|
| **Blind** | 20/400 down to complete sightlessness with the best possible correction. Most people with a visual impairment have at least some sight like lights and shadows. Correction lenses are helpless when a person is in 20/400. |
| **Legally Blind** | 20/200 down to complete sightlessness with the best possible correction. |
| **Partially-sighted** | When a person cannot, after eye correction, read, travel and see normally. People who are partially sighted often need vision aids and special education. It means that they wear lenses, but it is not enough to see normally. |
| **Low Vision** | Visual acuity between 20/70 and 20/400 after all corrective possibilities. People with low vision cannot read the newspaper at a normal viewing distance, even with glasses (p. 3). |

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

It is useful to understand what visual impairment refers to in order to widen the comprehension of the different settings the teacher might have in the EFL classroom. Also, it is indispensable to recognize students' needs to design activities and develop the steps when performing them in the classroom appropriately.

**Recommendations to EFL Teachers when Working with a Visually Challenged Student**

1. The visually challenged learner does not learn in the same way as the rest of students do; it is indispensable to "[u] nderstand the effect that disabilities have on students" (Cox & Dykes, 2001, p. 74). Vision loss may affect the student negatively when performing tasks in class or at home. For this reason, special attention should be given to them and to their needs.

2. Use a variety of strategies to teach students with visual challenges. It would facilitate their learning and their needs may be satisfied. In addition, before using specific strategies, do some research so that you use the most suitable strategies according to your specific needs in the classroom; observe and try to know your students in order to take action.

3. Foster the visually challenged student's participation in class. In this way, students will feel integrated, and they will understand that they are important members of the class as the rest of their classmates. Moreover, by making them participate, their work could be monitored and their learning could be assessed.

4. Organize better your time in class so that all students can be helped, especially the students with visual limitations. A way to do this is by helping the learner with visual impairment first and then continuing with the rest; in this way, when the rest of students start to solve the exercise, the student with visual problems is about to finish

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

with the task. Do not use the break time to help the visually challenged learner since they deserve to take a break as their peers do to socialize and relax for a while or to satisfy their physical needs.

5. Implement pair and group work activities because it allows the learner with a visual condition to interact with his/her classmates and be supported by them. If learners express their preferences for certain activities, you should analyze the possibility to implement those activities. If you find that the student with visual deficiencies is benefited when working in pairs or groups, try to implement these activities as much as possible.

6. Implement warm- up activities every day. It may allow the learner to feel interested in the class, the topic, and to feel motivated towards the topic and learning in general. Dynamic warm-ups such as games work better because the student with visual limitations has the opportunity to use his/her body and sense of touch. Also, songs are suitable tools as warm-ups since they stimulate the students' sense of hearing. You should take time to prepare warm-ups that could engage students with visual impairment and catch their attention to learn. Both are principles of the Communicative Approach.

7. Consider that you as the teacher are a guide and a facilitator of their learning process; open the window for the student to learn successfully in an equal environment for everyone. It is essential that you "[p]rovide [your] students with educational opportunities that will lead to successful academic and social experiences" (Cox & Dykes, 2001, p. 74). It will facilitate the students' learning and the learning environment becomes more appealing and comfortable for them to practice the language.

## Specific Guidelines

Students with visual deficiencies need more attention in the classroom. There are some specific recommendations that make the

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

difference in a class with one or more students with any visual impairment. Carney et al., (2003, pp.17-21) pointed out the most important tips when teaching a student with any degree of visual impairment. The following is a summary of the most relevant points they mentioned about the adjustments to consider in the classroom.

## Welcoming the Student

- Introduce the student with low vision as you would any other student.
- Encourage the student to answer questions posed by other students about the eye condition.
- Verbalize praise and disapproval or use gestures such as a hand on the shoulder. Students with low vision may miss the message sent with facial expressions and body language.
- Be specific with descriptive language when explaining the location of a person or object.
- Talk directly to the student by using direct eye contact.
- Encourage the student to look at you when being addressed or when speaking to you.
- Encourage the student to look directly at people when conversing with them.
- Use a normal tone of voice.
- Feel comfortable using terms such as "look" and "see". They will be part of the student's vocabulary.

## Safety Tips

- Students with visual impairments face an extra challenge when traveling around the school building. Most areas of the school present potential problems. Procedures such as fire drills, changing classes, going to the library and assemblies require that a plan of action be in

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

place. Assess each room that the student will be using for potential hazards. These suggestions will help provide a safe environment.

- Familiarize the student with the school building as soon as possible.
- Limit clutter in the hallways, stairs and classrooms that the student will be using.
- Students with low vision should become familiar with the location of all furniture and fixtures in the room. If furniture must be relocated, be sure to inform the student.
- Highlight the edges of stairs and steps with contrasting colored tape or paint.
- Train teachers and other students in the sighted guide technique.
- When going on a field trip or traveling in an unfamiliar environment, arrange for a buddy.
- Unless the student is familiar with your voice, identify yourself when conversing with them. Have other students do the same. Always tell the student when you are leaving them.

## Seating Arrangement

- The seating in the classroom will depend on the functional vision of the student.  Usually a student with a visual impairment will sit in front of the classroom to be in closer proximity to the teacher and board.
- If the right eye is stronger, being on the left side of the classroom is best and vice versa.
- Source of lighting needs to be considered. A student with a visual impairment should not face direct light from windows or lighting. The teacher should avoid standing directly in front of a window or light source when teaching.
- If the student uses a reading stand or tilt-topped desk, be sure the desk provides for good posture to decrease fatigue. The student's feet should

be flat on the floor and the reading stand tilted so that the student does not have to bend his/her neck uncomfortably.

- For group activities such as story time or videos, the student may require preferential seating.
- A sound field system may be considered for amplification of the teacher's voice and reduction of extraneous noises.

## Teaching Tips

- A program plan is usually developed on an annual basis by the student's support team and is reviewed regularly.
- Plan ahead. If a student with low vision requires enlarged texts, audiocassettes [recordings] or printed materials, they should be ordered or prepared ahead of time.
- Talk while you teach. The student may miss visual cues and written instructions.
- Teach in close proximity to the student when doing demonstrations or using visual aids.
- Verbalize notes as you write on the board. If a student cannot see or keep up with board work, provide him with an enlarged print copy or a scribe to write the notes using NCR (no carbon required) paper. Print may be easier to read than cursive writing.
- Allow the student to go up to the board or move the desk closer in order to view or copy the material.
- Check regularly to ensure that the student is taking accurate notes.
- Provide extra time to the student. He/she will take longer to complete most tasks. The quantity of work required may be decreased.
- Consider oral exams or a scribe to write exam answers.
- Use tactile, concrete and real life material as much as possible. This provides opportunities for kinesthetic and tactile learning.

17

- Sufficient desktop and shelf space is needed to accommodate special materials. The student will need to learn to organize his/her notes, desk, shelves and locker. Color coding notebooks and files may help. Maintaining organization should become the student's responsibility.

- Alternate visual tasks with non-visual tasks to avoid eye fatigue.

- The student with low vision requires the same discipline and behavior expectations as other students.

- Say, "Tell me what you see" rather than "Can you see this?" when checking if a student can see specific visual material.

- Try to relate new learning to the student's experiences and knowledge. This will help to bridge gaps in learning.

- If a large volume of reading is required, consider having a teacher assistant or another student read the material to the student, or obtain it on audio tape.

- Skip the non-essentials. Older students can highlight important information in print material. Point out parts of the text that can be skipped.  Provide outlines, point form notes, identify key concepts to help avoid fatigue and frustration when studying.

- The student with low vision may need extra explanation of some materials.

- Hand-over-hand techniques work well to demonstrate certain skills.

- Encourage the student to be assertive. He/she needs to learn when and how to request and refuse help and how to make his/her needs known.

- Encourage independent effort and incorporate proactive measure to reduce the likelihood of the student becoming dependent on others.

- The level of illumination required will depend on the student's visual disability. Some students can be extremely light sensitive. Natural, artificial, day and night lighting present different functional problems and require different solutions for each student. To determine the best

lighting, the student and teacher must experiment with lighting conditions.

- Bold, sharp print provides good contrast.
- When enlarging print copies, try to achieve clear, non-blurry copies.
- Black and white or black and yellow provide the best contrast. Intense blue, green or purple on a buff or light yellow background may be preferable if glare is a problem. Experiment with the color of paper the student prefers.
- Keep the chalkboard as clean as possible.
- A white board provides good contrast if glare can be eliminated and a dark marker is used.
- Reduce visual distractions around an object.

Carney et al., (2003, pp.17-21)

These guidelines provide the most important points teachers need to make changes in order to facilitate the learning process and socialization in the classroom. It looks it is extra work, but most of these considerations are possible to put into practice and make a real change when teaching a language. To add more, the Virginia Department of Education (2010) mentioned that a visual impairment can socially isolate a student, impede typical social interactions, or limit social skill development. A student with visual loss is not able to see others' expressions easily and when participating in conversations and activities may experience awkward and confusing interactions. Social skills sometimes have to be instructed to a student with a visual impairment (p. 9).Thus, teachers are to guide the rest of students to comprehend how to help a classmate with visual impairment. It is appropriate to prepare the rest of the class to recognize the differences and not to take it as lack of respect to avoid conflicts or segregation in the classroom. Tolerance, respect and solidarity are values that are fostered when accepting students' differences in a classroom.

# PART III

# Activities to Teach an EFL Class with Visually Challenged Students

# EFL Activities Chart

| | Title | Page | Skills Reinforced | Grouping Arrangement |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Warm- up Activities** | 1. **You Are an Artist**<br>2. **Simon Says**<br>3. **Charades**<br>4. **Chinese Whisper**<br>5. **Pin the Attraction on the Map**<br>6. **Bingo**<br>7. **ABC Celebration**<br>8. **Animals Race**<br>9. **Sentence Connection**<br>10. **Balloons** | 24<br>25<br>26<br>27<br>28<br><br><br>29<br>30<br>31<br>32<br><br>33 | 1. Speaking<br>2. Listening<br>3. Speaking<br>4. Listening<br>5. Listening and Speaking<br>6. Listening<br>7. Speaking<br>8. Speaking<br>9. Reading<br>10. Speaking | 1. Pair work<br>2. Group work<br>3. Group work<br>4. Group work<br>5. Pair work<br>6. Pair work<br>7. Pair work<br>8. Group work<br>9. Group work<br>10. Group work |
| **While Activities** | 1. **Brochure**<br>2. **Working at a Costa Rican Typical Food Restaurant**<br>3. **The Best Athletes**<br>4. **Christmas Card**<br>5. **Save the World**<br>6. **Tour Guide**<br>7. **Let`s Go to the** | 36<br>37<br><br><br><br>38<br><br>39<br>40<br>41<br>42 | 1. Writing and Speaking<br>2. Speaking<br>3. Reading, Writing and Speaking<br>4. Listening and Writing<br>5. Listening, Writing and Speaking | 1. Group work<br>2. Group work<br>3. Pair work<br>4. Pair work<br>5. Pair work<br>6. Pair work<br>7. Pair work<br>8. Group work<br>9. Pair work<br>10. Pair work |

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Arts Market<br><br>8. Help Me Doctor!<br>9. Let`s Cook!<br>10. What Do You Think? | 43<br>44<br>45 | 6. Speaking and Listening<br>7. Speaking<br>8. Speaking<br>9. Speaking<br>10. Listening, Writing and Speaking | |
| **Consolidation Activities** | 1. What´s My Problem?<br>2. Draw Me<br>3. Airplane Game<br>4. Holidays Conquest<br>5. E-mail Me<br>6. Board Game: The Environment<br>7. My Wordbook (app)<br>8. Tag Holidays<br>9. Bingo Trivia<br>10. Fly Swatter | 48<br><br>49<br>50<br>51<br><br>52<br>53<br><br>54<br><br>55<br>56<br>57 | 1. Listening and Speaking<br>2. Listening and Speaking<br>3. Speaking<br>4. Listening<br>5. Writing<br>6. Speaking<br>7. Reading and Writing<br>8. Writing and Listening<br>9. Speaking<br>10. Listening and Writing | 1. Group work<br>2. Pair work<br>3. Group work<br>4. Group work<br>5. Pair work<br>6. Group work<br>7. Pair work<br>8. Group work<br>9. Group work<br>10. Group work |

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

# Warm- up
## Activities

Warm-ups are an essential part of the lesson since they motivate students to study a specific topic; they should be fun, catch students' attention and make them learn at the same time in a stress-free atmosphere. Warm-ups must not be absent in the EFL lesson since "students need a chance to settle down into the class and get their minds focused on the lesson ahead" (*Why You Should Always Start with a Warmer*, 2015).The following warm-ups try to illustrate the aspects mentioned before, and they can be adapted to any topic, what makes the difference is the teacher's willingness to implement and adapt each of them.

# Activities

**Warm-up:** *You Are an Artist*
**List of materials**: Play dough, temperas
**Time allotted**: 10 minutes
**Skills reinforced:** Speaking.
**Grouping arrangement:** Pair work.

## Step by Step Procedure

1. In pairs, ask students to choose one color of play dough and take some of it along with some tempera.
2. Ask them to create a piece of craft with the play dough ad tempera and show it to the class.
3. When they come to the front, ask them to say why they decided to create that piece of craft and why that color.
4. Tell them that they all are artists and praise their effort.

## Implications

Students may start using the play dough to play with or bother their classmates; they also may use it for something else that is not the purpose of the activity, so monitor their work to avoid it.

## Benefits for the SVI:

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since his/her classmate may help him/her carry out the task. Also, the SVI may feel as included as the rest of students in the class because he/she will do the same as the rest.

## Warm –up

**2**

### Step by Step Procedure

1. Ask students to sit in a circle, or make a group.
2. Choose one student to be the leader, Simon.
3. Ask Simon to order different things to be done; these commands must be obeyed only when the order begins with "Simon says." Commands may be: act like a dentist, act like a singer, act like a journalist, etc.
4. Tell students that when someone follows an order that does not begin with "Simon says," he or she is out of the game.
5. Repeat the rounds until only one student is left.
6. Praise the winner student.

   (Adapted from: http://www.wikihow.com/Play-Simon-Says)

### Implications

 Mare sure the visually challenged learner does not have the role of Simon since it is more productive for him/her to carry out the commands than to read them. Students who are eliminated may start speaking Spanish and about other matters, not about the class topic, so monitor their behavior.

### Benefits for the SVI:

The SVI may participate as the rest of his/her classmates do and he/she may benefit from group work. Furthermore, he/she will use his/her sense of touch rather than his/her sense of sight. The SVI will be using his/her kinesthetic learning style to carry out the task.

## Warm –up

<table>
<tr><td>3</td><td>**Warm-up:** *Charades*<br>**List of materials**: cards with vocabulary about illnesses<br>**Time allotted**: 10 minutes<br>**Skills reinforced:** Speaking.<br>**Grouping arrangement:** Group work</td></tr>
</table>

### Step by Step Procedure

1. Divide the class into two.
2. Ask each group to choose a student to go to the front.
3. Tell them that they have three minutes to guess as many diseases as possible and that the team that guesses more words is the winner.
4. Ask the chosen student to describe an illness that you will show him/her on a card.
5. Keep track of the number of words each group guesses effectively.
6. Praise the winning group.

### Implications

The representative students may not be able to describe certain illnesses, if so help them. Also, cards with the illnesses should be carefully designed so that they are not too challenging for students to describe.

### Benefits for the SVI:

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in groups since his/her classmates may help him/her carry out the task. Moreover, he/she may feel integrated in the group and the activity itself.  If the SVI is in charge of

miming the words, he/she will be using his/her kinesthetic learning style to carry out the task.

## Warm –up

4

### Step by Step Procedure

1. Divide the class in two.
2. Ask each group to stand in line, facing the board.
3. Give a maker to the last student in the line.
4. Tell them that they will have to whisper a sentence in their classmates' ears, and they will have to do it until the last student in the line listens. The last student in the line runs to the board and writes what he/she just listened. Also, tell them that the first group to finish writing the sentences correctly is the winner.
5. Tell them that they can repeat the sentence no more than twice.
6. After one of the group finishes, check the sentences written and praise the winning team.

### Implications

Make sure that the visually challenged learner is not in the back of the line since it is more productive for him/her to listen and say the sentences than to read them. Monitor that students actually whisper the phrases since they sometimes tend to say the phrases aloud. Also, make sure they do not cheat their opponents' answers.

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in groups since his/her classmates may help him/her carry out the task. Moreover, he/she may feel integrated in the group and the activity itself.

His/her performance of the activity will rely more on his/her sense of hearing rather than on his/her sense of sight.

## Warm –up

5

**Warm-up:** *Pin the attraction on the map*
**List of materials**:   cards with Costa Rican Tourist attractions
**Time allotted**: 10 minutes
**Skills reinforced:** Listening, Speaking.
**Grouping arrangement:** Pair work.

**Step by Step Procedure**

1. Draw a big map of Costa Rica on the board divided by provinces.
2. Ask students to get in pairs. Give a card with a tourist attraction to each pair.
3. Blindfold one student per pair.
4. Tell your students that the student that is blindfolded has to follow his/her partner's instructions to get to the map.
5. Spin the blindfolded player in circles for a few seconds until they get a bit dizzy and lose their sense of direction.
6. Have the blindfolded player try to pin the tourist attraction on the corresponding province, following his/her classmate's directions. When they place the attraction on the correct province, remove their blindfold.
7. Allow the second pair to take a turn. Leave all the tourist attractions wherever they had been placed until all players have had a chance.

8. Select the winner. The winner(s) is the player who placed his attraction on the correct province.

(Adapted from: http://www.wikihow.com/Play-Pin-the-Tail-on-the-Donkey)

## Implications

Make sure that the visually challenged learner has the role of the blindfolded. Also, make sure the blindfolded students are not actually seeing.

### Benefits for the SVI:

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since his/her classmate may help him/her carry out the task. Also, they will use their sense of hearing more than their sense of sight.

Warm –up

6

**Warm-up:** *Bingo*
**List of materials**: Bingo cards, tokens, beans or corn.
**Time allotted**: 10 minutes
**Skills reinforced:** Listening.
 **Grouping arrangement:** Pair work.

### Step by Step Procedure

1. Seat students in pairs.
2. Give each pair a bingo card.
3. Tell them that they will play bingo and that you will call out the words. They will have to place a bean or corn grain if they have the word on their bingo card.
4. Tell them that they will play full card and that they have to shout *bingo* when they have all the spaces marked.

5. After the winner students have come, check if the card is correct and praise them. In case the card is incorrect, continue playing until there is a winner.

**Implications:**

Pick up the corn grains you provided for the game immediately. It stops students from using them for other purposes. You should reuse the same material with other groups.

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since his/her classmate may help him/her carry out the task. His/her performance of the activity will rely more on his/her sense of hearing rather than on his/her sense of sight

Warm –up

7

**Warm-up:** *ABC celebration*
**List of materials**: none.
**Time allotted**: 10 minutes
**Skills reinforced:** Speaking.
**Grouping arrangement:** Pair work.

**Step by Step Procedure**

1. Ask students to sit in pairs facing each other.
2. Write the target structure on the board. For example, *I will celebrate New year's Eve with my family, we will have (activities) on that day, what about you? We will have (balloons).*
3. Tell your students that this is an "ABC celebration" which means they have to take one thing that starts with every letter of the alphabet – one thing that starts with A, one that starts with B, etc. all the way to Z.

4. Explain to them that one partner should hold his hands in front of the other, palms up and that the other partner should say the target sentence and slap the first partner's hands (illustrate the activity by playing with one student.)

5. Tell them that they must continue until they get to Z.

6. As they play, go around and give hints to pairs who are stuck on difficult letters.

(Adapted from Helgesen, 2002, n. p).

## Implications

Some letters may not have a word related to celebrations, so tell your students that they can say pass in that case.

## Benefits for the SVI:

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since his/her classmate may help him/her carry out the task. Also, they will use their sense of hearing more than their sense of sight.

## Warm –up

**8**

**Warm-up:** *Animal Race*
**List of materials**: a poster with two freeways, two different animals, questions about natural resources misuse.
**Time allotted**: 10 minutes
**Skills reinforced:** Speaking.
**Grouping arrangement:** Group work.

## Step by Step Procedure

1. Stick the poster on the board.

2. Divide the class in two teams.

3. Ask them to choose one animal.

4. Tell them you will ask questions about natural resources misuse, and that they will have to answer correctly in order to advance one space on the freeway.
5. Also, tell them that the first team that gets to the finish line is the winner.
6. Praise the winning group.

## Implications

 Students may want a specific animal, so raffle each animal.

### Benefits for the SVI:

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in groups since his/her classmates may help him/her carry out the task. Moreover, he/she may feel integrated in the group and in the activity itself.

## Warm –up

### 9

**Warm-up:** *Sentence connection*
**List of materials**: envelopes, scrambled sentences with linking words.
**Time allotted**: 10 minutes
**Skills reinforced:** Reading.
**Grouping arrangement:** Group work.

### Step by Step Procedure

1. Divide the group in three teams.
2. Give each group an envelope with some scrambled sentences.
3. Ask them to unscramble the sentences using the linking words correctly.
4. Tell them that the group that finishes first wins.
5. Praise the winning group.

## Implications

Make sure all students participate in the activity since sometimes just one or two students order the sentences. A variation to this activity is to ask students to write down the sentences on the board to later check with the whole group the sentences. If you check orally, students might pay less attention.

## Benefits for the SVI:

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in groups since his/her classmates may help him/her carry out the task. Moreover, he/she may feel integrated in the group and the activity itself.

## Warm –up

**10**

**Warm-up:** *Balloons*
**List of materials**:  one balloon for each group of about 8 students.
**Time allotted**: 10 minutes
**Skills reinforced:** Speaking.
**Grouping arrangement:** Group work.

## Step by Step Procedure

1. Divide the class in two or three teams.
2. Ask each group to stand in a circle.
3. Call out the topic (example: *Costa Rican Athletes)* and toss the balloon in the air.
4. Tell each team that the person standing near the balloon  must call out the name of one member of that vocabulary set (*Andrey*

*Amador*) and toss the balloon back into the air. The person that is close to the balloon must add the next example.

5. They continue as long as they can.

6. Tell them that they must not repeat a word already used.

(Adapted from Helgesen, 2002, n. p).

## Implications

Make sure students do not toss the balloon without saying the name of an athlete. Consider time constraints.

## Benefits for the SVI:

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in groups since his/her classmates may help him/her carry out the task. Moreover, he/she may feel integrated in the group and in the activity itself.

# While

# Activities

While-activities are the lesson core. Students practice and produce based on the skills being reinforced. For this reason, these activities should be planned carefully, considering students' needs and the topic under study so that learners are benefited from the activity they developed. Teachers should focus on the objective of the class to design these activities and make sure the objective is enhanced. Finally, instructors should prepare students adequately so that they can succeed in performing the task.

# Activities

**While activity :** *Brochure*
**List of materials**: cut outs, markers, glue, scissors, any other material to decorate, brochures.
**Time allotted**: 25 minutes
**Skills reinforced**: Writing and Speaking.
**Grouping arrangement:** Group work.

## Step by Step Procedure

1. Ask students to work in groups of three.
2. Tell them that they will design a brochure to advertise a specific tourist attraction.
3. Show them some brochure samples for them to have an idea.
4. Provide some material to elaborate the brochure.
5. Ask them to look for some information on the internet to include in the brochure by using their phones or going to the computer lab.
6. When they finish, ask them to come to the front and present their work.
7. Make a collage with all the brochures designed.

## Implications

Consider that students may use the internet for other purposes like checking Facebook, Whatsapp, among others, so make sure they use it for the task by constantly checking their progress. Also, set around 15 minutes (it depends on each group) to use the web to look for the information they require. If students need to move to the computer lab, it will take them more time.

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in groups since his/her classmates may help him/her carry out the task. Moreover, he/she may feel integrated in the group and the activity itself.

## While Activity

**2**

> **While activity :***Working at a Costa Rican Typical Food Restaurant*
> **List of materials**:  Handout with instructions
> **Time allotted**:  20 minutes
> **Skills reinforced**: Speaking.
> **Grouping arrangement:** Pair work

**Step by Step Procedure**

1. Ask students to work in pairs. Tell them that they will prepare a role-play about Costa Rican typical food.
2. Provide them with the handout with the instructions and the situation.
3. Take notes on students' mistakes for later correction.

**Implications**

Organize the time they have to get ready, prepare, practice and present in order to have the same time for all groups and to keep students from wasting the time.

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since his/her classmate may help him/her carry out the task.

## While Activity

# 3

**While activity :** *The best athletes*
**List of materials**:  Readings about different Costa Rican athletes, sheets for students to write.
**Time allotted**:  20 minutes
**Skills reinforced**: Reading, Writing and Speaking.
**Grouping arrangement:** Pair work.

### Step by Step Procedure

1. Ask students to work in pairs.
2. Provide one of them with a text about a Costa Rican national athlete. Each student must have a different athlete.
3. Ask them to read the text silently.
4. Ask them to report what they read to the other student.
5. Their partner will say what the most interesting aspect for him/her is according to what their classmate said.
6. Next, ask each student to write everything that they remember about what their classmates said and read.

### Implications

Make sure that the visually challenged learner gets the role of the listener, not the reader.

### Benefits for the SVI:

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since his/her classmate may help him/her carry out the task. Also, on some occasions, they will use their sense of hearing more than their sense of sight.

# 4

**While activity :** *Christmas card*
**List of materials**: listening track about Christmas, paper to design cards, color pencils, glue, cut outs, markers, stickers, and any other material to decorate cards.
**Time allotted**: 20 minutes
**Skills reinforced**: Listening and Writing .
**Grouping arrangement:** Pair work.

## Step by Step Procedure:

1. Ask students to work individually
2. Give them the handout with the listening exercise.
3. Tell them that they will listen to a track and solve the exercise in pairs.
4. Individually, ask them to design a Christmas card for someone who they really love.
5. Ask them to show their card and praise their effort.

## Implications

If your group is large, consider asking volunteer students to present their cards.

## Benefits for the SVI:

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since his/her classmate may help him/her carry out the task. Also, he/she will be using his/her hands to create the card and as a consequence his/her kinesthetic learning style. The SVI will be using his/her sense of hearing to perform the task.

## While Activity

**5**

**While activity :** *Save the world*
**List of materials**: Video called "conservation of our natural resources," computers.
**Time allotted**: 20 minutes
**Skills reinforced**: Listening, Writing and Speaking.
**Grouping arrangement:** Pair work.

### Step by Step Procedure

1. Ask students to sit in pairs.
2. Tell them that they will watch a video about the conservation of natural resources.
3. Play the video: "Conservation of our natural resources." (Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ujm7l3h-CKk
4. Ask them to talk about the video in pairs.
5. Ask them to type a short article in pairs for a newspaper to sensitize people regarding the issue.
6. Ask them to send the short article by e-mail to you.
7. Check them at home, give them back to your students and ask them to correct their mistakes and send the short article again.
8. Design a collage and stick all of their pieces of writing.

### Implications

Make sure both students take part in the task. Also, you can ask them to take notes in order to remember what they want to write in the article. It is optional if the teacher allows them to do extra research to write the short article. Provide the video or the link if you consider it necessary.

### Benefits for the SVI:

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since their classmate may help their carry out the task. Also, they will use their sense of hearing more than their sense of sight.

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

## While Activity

6

**While activity :** *Tour guide*
**List of materials**: sheet with questions about Costa Rica, blindfolds, baskets.
**Time allotted**: 10 minutes
**Skills reinforced:** Speaking and Listening.
**Grouping arrangement:** Pair work.

### Step by Step Procedure

1. Ask students to get in pairs.
2. Assign roles to each student. One is a tour guide. The other is a tourist. The tourist is blindfolded.
3. Tell them that the tour guide should take the tourist around the classroom, giving directions and pointing at things that are interesting. The tour guide may not touch the tourist and only spoken instructions are allowed. The tour guide should encourage the tourist to touch and pick up cards that contain a tourist attraction.
4. Tell them that the tourist must collect as many cards as possible and put them in a basket that the tour guide holds and that the pair that collects more cards is the winner.
5. After five minutes, ask them to stop and bring the cards collected to your desk.
6. Praise the pair with more cards collected.
7. Give the cards collected by all the pairs to different pairs, and ask the tour guide to describe the picture to the tourist. The tourist has to guess what the tourist attraction is, if he/she would like to travel to the place where the tourist attraction is and why.

### Implications

If your class is large, consider providing few cards for each pair to save time.

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since his/her classmate may help him/her carry out the task. Also, he/she will use his/her sense of hearing more than his/her sense of sight. The SVI will use his/her kinesthetic learning style.

## While Activity

**7**

**While activity :** *Let's go to the arts market!*
**List of materials**: Realia, different objects made of distinct materials such as vases, decoration, ceramic objects.
**Time allotted**: 40 min
**Skills reinforced**: Speaking.
**Grouping arrangement:** Pair work.

### Step by Step Procedure

1. The teacher gives different pieces of art, and crafts made of distinct materials to students.
2. Individually, students are asked to describe the object they have.
3. Then, they have to show each object to the rest of the class in order to sell it.
4. If it is necessary, students can be given a list of vocabulary words related to materials used to create pieces of art and crafts.
5. In the end, students have to choose the best object offered in the market.

### Implications

If it is a large group, the teacher needs a lot of objects. Thus, the teacher can ask students, as homework, to bring any typical sample of art or craft they have at home. Then, they can exchange the objects to describe them.

### Benefits for the SVI:

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since his/her classmate may help him/her carry out the task.

**8**

**While activity :** *Help me doctor!*
**List of materials**: List of common illnesses or diseases, List of treatments or recommendations.  Some fake bills and doctor costumes if possible.
**Time allotted**: 50 min
**Skills reinforced** : Speaking..
**Grouping arrangement:** Group Work.

### Step by Step Procedure

1. The teacher asks five or more students (depending on the group size) to take the role of a doctor. (The teacher or students can bring objects and clothing to make costumes). The rest of the group will have the role of patients that need some treatment for their diseases or illnesses. Each student is given one illness or disease.

2. Doctors have to prepare recommendations and treatments for their patients. Patients have to explain to doctors all the symptoms they feel according to the illness or disease they have.

3. At the end of the activity, patients must tell the teacher if the treatment the doctor recommended was effective or not and justify why it was not effective.

4. The doctors that provide effective treatments will get their payment with the fake bills.

### Implications

To develop the activity will take more time if it is a large group. Doctors will need extra support from the teacher if their English level is low. The teacher can also allow the use of the internet to look for information about treatments or diseases. Patients will have to check doctors' work, so they

have to review the material to know if their recommendation was correct or not.

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in groups since his/her classmates may help him/her carry out the task. Moreover, he/she may feel integrated in the group and the activity itself.

## While Activity

**9**

**While activity :***Let´s cook!*
**List of materials**: food, dishes, cooking utensils, a table, table cloth, cooking towels.
**Time allotted**: 1 hr
**Skills reinforced**: Speaking.
**Grouping arrangement:**  Pair work

**Step by Step Procedure**

1. The teacher provides a list of Costa Rican typical food and recipes for students to show the class. Students can choose one or look for a different one to show it. The recipes should be provided in advance in order for students to bring all the instruments they need to present the recipe and to get ready.

2. In pairs, the students bring the real ingredients for a demonstration. They have to mention all the ingredients and explain the whole process to the class. It is recommended that students bring a real sample of the dish they prepared, but this is optional.

**Implications**

Ask students to bring a sample of each ingredient to avoid wasting materials. Also, prepare a real-kitchen setting to make it more appealing.

This will take extra work or time, but ask students to bring what is necessary for them to prepare their recipes.

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since his/her classmate may help him/her carry out the task. Also, the SVI will be using his/her kinesthetic learning style to perform the task.

While Activity

# 10

**While activity :** *What do you think?*
**List of materials**: Video
**Time allotted**: 40min
**Skills reinforced** : Listening, Writing and Speaking.
**Grouping arrangement:** Pair work.

**Step by Step Procedure**

1. The teacher plays the video "Look up" three times. (Video link: https://www.youtube.com/user/GaryTurkFilm)
2. After watching the video, students are asked to write a list of disadvantages of the use of modern tech into people's lives, based on the video.
3. The teacher can provide a list of main ideas for students to understand the video best.
4. Then, in a round table, student share their thoughts about the use of technology.
5. Finally, students are asked to mention what other technological devices have caused disadvantages to people.

**Implications**

If it is hard to play a video in a computer, it is necessary to have a video projector. If this is not possible, the teacher could send the video to

students' cell phones for them to play it in pairs. Also, if students have computers, they can go to watch the video first and take notes to later write the list. To do this, access to the internet is necessary too. Remember to ask the student with visual challenges to sit in the front and ask classmates to help him or her when necessary.

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since his/her classmate may help him/her carry out the task. Also, he/she will use his/her sense of hearing more than his/her sense of sight.

# Consolidation
## Activities

Consolidation activities are essential in the lesson structure because they conclude what students have been learning during the whole lesson. These activities help teachers make sure students have understood the topic taught, and as a consequence, students' understanding is assessed. This is why consolidation activities should be engaging and never absent in the EFL lesson

47

# Activities

**Consolidation:** *What´s My Problem?*
**List of materials**: post-it notes or paper and tape.
**Time allotted**: 10 minutes
**Skills reinforced**: Listening and Speaking skills.
**Grouping  arrangement:** Group work.

**Step by Step Procedure**

1. Write ailments or problems related to common illnesses and diseases on post-it notes and stick one post-it note on each student's back.

2. The students must mingle and ask for advice to cure or relieve the illness or disease they have stuck on their backs and ask "what´s my problem?" to other students to solve their problem with pieces of advice.

3. Students should be able to guess their problem based on the advice they get from their peers.

4. Use more complicated problems to make the game more interesting.

**Implications**

 Students might need more time to finish if it is a large group. The teacher can write a pattern to provide the advice and the common verbs used to give pieces of advice on the board if students require extra help.

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in groups since his/her classmates may help him/her carry out the task. Moreover, he/she may

feel integrated in the group and the activity itself. The SVI will be using his/her sense of hearing to perform the task.

## Consolidation Activity

**2**

**Consolidation:** *Draw Me*
**List of materials**: paper, color pencils
**Time allotted**: 10 minutes
**Skills reinforced**: Listening and Speaking.
**Grouping arrangement:** Pair work.

### Step by Step Procedure

1. In pairs, students are given one sheet of paper.  The two students sit in the front of the classroom.  They describe a person and the rest of the class draws the person being described.
2. It is more interesting if the person being described is known by everyone.
3. Once the students have finished describing that person, they reveal who she or he is, and each student shows his/her drawing.
4. It is a good idea to encourage students to ask the interviewee questions about who they are describing.

### Implications

If the student who has to describe the person does not know who to describe, be ready with some pictures of famous people for them to describe. Also, you can provide extra adjectives if students do not know a lot of vocabulary. Consider yourself the person who will describe the famous person if necessary. Students will not want to draw if they are not good at it. Ask them to make an effort and offer prizes to motivate them.

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since his/her classmate may help him/her carry out the task. Also, he/she will use his/her sense of hearing more than his/her sense of sight.

Consolidation Activity

3

**Consolidation:** *Airplane Game*
**List of materials**: Paper airplane, questions and a target signal.
**Time allotted**: 10 minutes
**Skills reinforced**: Speaking.
**Grouping arrangement:** Group work.

**Step by Step Procedure**

1. Design a colorful and big target (with points - like a dart board) in the middle of the whiteboard.
2. Then, divide the class in two.
3. Ask students to make paper airplanes and launch them after they answer your question in sentence form.
4. If students do not answer correctly, they cannot throw their airplanes.
5. Provide a prize to make the target points mean something, thus raising their interest.

**Implications**

If it is a large group, it could take more time. Ask open questions in order for them to provide full-sentence answers. Also, prepare extra paper and airplanes in case they cannot create their own. Use recycled material to avoid wasting paper.

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in groups since his/her classmates may help him/her carry out the task. Moreover, he/she may feel integrated in the group and the activity itself. The SVI will be using his/her kinesthetic learning style to carry out the task.

Consolidation
Activity

4

**Consolidation:** *Holidays Conquest*
**List of materials**: audio recording about holidays, a set of images mentioned in the recording with others included as distracters.
**Time allotted**: 15 minutes
**Skills reinforced**: Listening.
**Grouping arrangement:** Group work.

**Step by Step Procedure**

1. The teacher plays a recording about holidays two or three times. It depends on the students' level.
2. Then, the group is divided into subgroups of three members each. If the group is small, this activity can be done in pairs.
3. Students are asked to listen carefully, choose the images that represent the ones mentioned in the recording, and put them in the order they were heard.
4. The group that arranges the appropriate images in the correct order is the winner.

**Implications**

The teacher has to know how to download audios appropriately. Also, depending on the topic, they can be hard to find. However, they can record themselves, a native English speaker or another English teacher. They can also read during the activity. This recording can be given to the visually challenged student for future practice. Pictures provided must be colorful, clear and big.

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in groups since his/her classmates may help him/her carry out the task. Moreover, he/she may feel integrated in the group and the activity itself. The SVI will be using his/her sense of hearing more than his/her sense of sight.

## Consolidation Activity

### 5

**Consolidation:** *E-mail me*
**List of materials**: Computers, laptops, tablets or cell phones with internet access.
**Time allotted**: 20 minutes
**Skills reinforced**: Writing.
**Grouping arrangement:** Pair work.

**Step by Step Procedure:**

1. The teacher asks students to pair up. Then, he asks students to write an e-mail about the topic under study. In this case: Careers, Jobs and Lifestyles.
2. Students write short emails (number depends on the conversation they have with their classmates, but minimum 6 emails.) to their corresponding pair. They have to mention what their favorite careers or job is, activities performed, and why they prefer that career or job.
3. Each student reads the email sent and mentions a summary of what each classmate expressed.

**Implications**

It is recommended that the student with visual impairment use a laptop; it could be difficult to find one. However, if the student is accustomed to using the phone, it is a good possibility to try using it. Internet access might be difficult, but it is possible for the teacher to provide internet with a phone with portable Wi-Fi option. The teacher has to be well prepared to use it. Most cell phones have this option, so it is possible to provide Wi-Fi

access to a certain number of users with a single phone. The teacher must inform the students in advance in order for them to get ready to use the internet when it is required. All the students must have an e-mail account, if not, another option would be to have students text their classmates instead of sending an e-mail.

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since his/her classmate may help him/her carry out the task.

Consolidation Activity

6

**Consolidation:** *Board Game: The environment*
**List of materials**: Board game sample, dice (four or more depending on the group size), totems , questions about the topic.
**Time allotted**: 25 minutes
**Skills reinforced**: Speaking.
**Grouping arrangement:** Group work.

**Step by Step Procedure**

1. The teacher subdivides the group into groups of three or four. Then, s/he provides a board game per group with the small totems and one die.
2. Then, students are asked to play the game by throwing the die each turn. They have to answer questions correctly in order to advance to the number the die indicates.
3. The one that gets to the finish line is the winner. Provide prizes for the winners.
4. The teacher has to check that students are answering correctly and according to the topic being studied.

**Implications**

The teacher has to adapt each board game according to the topic. This could take time, however, on the internet there are a lot of board game

samples to adapt or ready to print. If it is difficult to find small totems, print figures or use coins, small toys or any small object available.

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in groups since his/her classmates may help him/her carry out the task. Moreover, he/she may feel integrated in the group and the activity itself.

## Consolidation Activity

## 7

**Consolidation:** *My wordbook (app)*
**List of materials**: cellphone, tablet, internet access.
**Time allotted**: 20 minutes
**Skills reinforced**: Reading.
**Grouping arrangement:** Pair work.

**Step by Step Procedure**

1. Students are asked to download the app "My Wordbook."
2. At the end of the class, the teacher asks students to work in pairs and create a short vocabulary list using the app. They are requested to include the words they studied before.
3. Students include the meaning, pictures and pronunciation of the words they need to remember the most. The teacher is a guide to help them use the app, find meanings and pronunciation.

**Implications**

Ask students to download the app in advance since it could take more time during classes. Also, test the app before using it in class in order to provide help to your students if it is necessary. Since it includes pronunciation, it could be hard for the teacher to help everyone in the

class; however, you can allow them to use a virtual translator or dictionary, too.

**Benefits for the SVI:**

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in pairs since his/her classmate may help him/her carry out the task. Also, he/she will benefit from technology.

## Consolidation Activity

**8**

**Consolidation:** *Tag holidays*
**List of materials**: Large piece of paper, markers, pen.
**Time allotted**: 20 minutes
**Skills reinforced**: Writing and Listening.
**Grouping arrangement:** Group work.

### Step by Step Procedure

1. Fold a large piece of paper into lines.
2. Then, start a sentence in the first line related to "Holidays and celebrations in Costa Rica with some Celebrations in English speaking countries." For instance, In Costa Rica, we celebrate mother´s day by giving ..... One day I gave my mother a......
3. Then, pass the folded paper to each classmate to continue writing about holidays and stories related to that day.
4. When they finish, read aloud the whole explanation of holidays and stories to the class.
5. To make it easier for students, provide more patterns for them to fill out.

### Implications

If it is a large group, it will take more time for them to think and write. Ask students to prepare their sentences before their turn. Also, you can

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

provide incomplete patterns of paragraphs for them to fill out. If it is too difficult for the visually challenged learner to write fast, do the activity with pairs. This will also save time and provide a better environment for all the students.

## Benefits for the SVI:

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in groups since his/her classmates may help him/her carry out the task. Moreover, he/she may feel integrated in the group and the activity itself. The SVI will be using his/her sense of hearing to perform the task.

### Consolidation Activity

## 9

**Consolidation:** *Bingo Trivia*
**List of materials**: Board, piece of paper, whiteboard marker.
**Time allotted**: 20 minutes
**Skills reinforced:** Speaking .
**Grouping arrangement:** Group work.

## Step by Step Procedure

1. Draw a bingo grid on a piece of paper.
2. Fill the squares with 'W', 'Q', '+s', and '-s'.
3. Draw the same grid on the board without the letters; write numbers in each space on the grid for students to choose.
4. Divide students into groups and decide which team goes first.
5. One team decides how many points they want to use and chooses a square number on the grid.
6. 'W'= give them a word to spell or a word to explain the meaning.
7. 'Q'= question based on the topic. For instance, technology.
8. '+s'= automatically get the number of points they bet.
9. '-s'= automatically lose the number of points they bet.

10.       Team with more points wins.

(Adapted from: http://www.teachenglishinasia.net/efl-esl-games/efl-esl-listening-games).

## Implications

If it is a large group, it could take more time to play. Make a bigger grid and have questions and words about the topic ready to develop the activity faster. You can also set the time they have to play, and when time is over, the winner is the one with more points. Some students might not participate, thus do not allow the same student to answer. Give them a ball to pass to each student; the student with the ball has to do the following task with the help of his/her classmates.

## Benefits for the SVI:

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in groups since his/her classmates may help him/her carry out the task. Moreover, he/she may feel integrated in the group and the activity itself.

## Consolidation Activity

## 10

**Consolidation:** *Fly Swatter*
**List of materials**: Board, piece of paper, whiteboard marker.
**Time allotted**: 20 minutes
**Skills reinforced**: Listening and Writing.
**Grouping arrangement:** Group work.

## Step by Step Procedure

1. Divide the group into subgroups**.** Give each team a list of words.
2. Have each team select a leader.
3. The teacher says one word from the list several times (two times if it is an easy word).

4. Teams search for the word, and then have a leader go to the board and write it.
5. Leaders must give the teacher a hi-five after writing the word correctly.
6. The first leader to give the teacher a hi-five gets five points.
7. The next leader to finish gets four points, the next one three, etc. You can give more points to difficult words.
(Adapted from: http://www.teachenglishinasia.net/efl-esl-games/efl-esl-listening-games).

## Implications

Provide a list with big font size to help the visually challenged student to read. Also, you can ask them to create sentences using the word chosen. Ask each member of the group to provide ideas to write on the board.

## Benefits for the SVI:

In this activity, the SVI may benefit from working in groups since his/her classmates may help him/her carry out the task. Moreover, he/she may feel integrated in the group and the activity itself. The SVI will be using his/her sense of hearing rather than his/her sense of sight. The SVI will be using his/her kinesthetic learning style.

## Conclusion

Recommendations and sample activities were provided in order to guide teachers when designing plans to teach English in public high schools in Costa Rica. Contents are based on MEP curriculum for students of tenth level, but teachers can adapt the content according to their needs. The use of technology has become very significant to people with visual impairment, for it provides more effective opportunities to adapt learning and everyday activities as well, thus, it is indispensable to adapt this resource into English lessons as much as possible. Inclusion and effective learning are the objectives. Instructors have a huge challenge into the language classroom; however, a few changes are needed to make the difference.

The activities that are implemented in the EFL classroom should be carefully planned, especially when there are students with visual impairment since they need special attention. Dynamic activities, considering the tactile or kinesthetic learning style, the listening skill, group work among others are some key elements when planning a class or designing materials for visually challenged learners.

Technology is a useful source for teaching students with visual problems since there is a great variety of materials, applications and information that teachers and students could use for their benefit.

The student with visual problems has the same right to learn and succeed in his/her attempt. Teachers and parents are responsible for facilitating this process for them. As a consequence, recommendations and activities should be taken into consideration in order to reach the goal mentioned.

## References

*Andrey Amador.* (2016). Retrieved from
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrey_Amador

Carney, S., Engbretson, C., Scammell, K., & Sheppard V. (2003). Teaching students with visual impairment. Special education unit. Saskatchewan Learning. Retrieved  from http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/vision.

Coon, M., Ferrell, K., & Klott, K. (n. d). Retrieved from http://www.liceodepoas.ed.cr/uploads/4/3/0/4/43041915/bachillerato_prep_peace_corps.pdf.

Cox, P., & Dykes, M. (2001). Effective classroom adaptations for students with  visual impairments. *TEACHING Exceptional Children, 33* (6), 68-74. Retrieved From http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/sites/pathstoliteracy.perkinsdev1.org/files/uploaded-files/Effective-Classroom-Adaptations_CEC_2001.pdf.

*Christmas Day.* (2016). Retrieved from http://www.dailyesl.com/christmas.htm.

Helgesen, M. (2002). *Let's get physical. Retrieved from:* http://www.mgu.ac.jp/~ic/helgesen/physical/physical_-prehtml.htm.

*How to play Simon says.* (n. d)**.**Retrieved from http://www.wikihow.com/Play-Simon-Says.

*How to play pin the tail on the donkey.* (n. d.). Retrieved from http://www.wikihow.com/Play-Pin-the-Tail-on-the-Donkey.

Serrano, I., Palomares, A., & Garrote, D. (2013). Propuestas innovadoras para favorecer el uso de las TIC y propiciar la inclusión educativa del alumnado con discapacidad visual. *Revista de la Facultad de Educación de Albacete, 28*, 61-74. Retrieved from http://riberdis.cedd.net/bitstream/handle/11181/4209/Propuesta

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

sinnovadorasparafavorecerelusodelasTIC.pdf?sequence=1&rd=00312
22839529161.

Teach English in Asia. (2015). ESL/EFL listening games. Retrieved from:
http://www.teachenglishinasia.net/efl-esl-games/efl-esl-listening-
games.

Turk, G. (2014). Look up. [video link]. Retrieved from
https://www.youtube.com/user/GaryTurkFilm.

Virginia Department of Education. (2010). EFL teaching in Virginia to
visually impaired students. Retrieved from
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/disabilities/sensory_disabili
ties/visually_impaired_blind/visually_impaired_guidelines.pd.

Zakhareuski, A (2007-2015). *Why you should always start with a
warmer.* Retrieved from http://busyteacher.org/7610-why-you-
should-always-start-with-a-warmer.html.
http://www.eslprintables.com/

## Material for warm-up # 2

| *Commands* |
|---|
| **Act like a doctor** |
| **Act like a teacher** |
| **Act like a driver** |
| **Act like a police officer** |
| **Act like a waiter/waitress** |
| **Act like a firefighter** |
| **Act like a dancer** |
| **Act like a singer** |
| **Act like an actor/actress** |
| **Act like a housewife** |
| **Act like a secretary** |
| **Act like a tour guide** |

# Material for warm- up # 3



Stomachache



Toothache



Runny nose



Cough
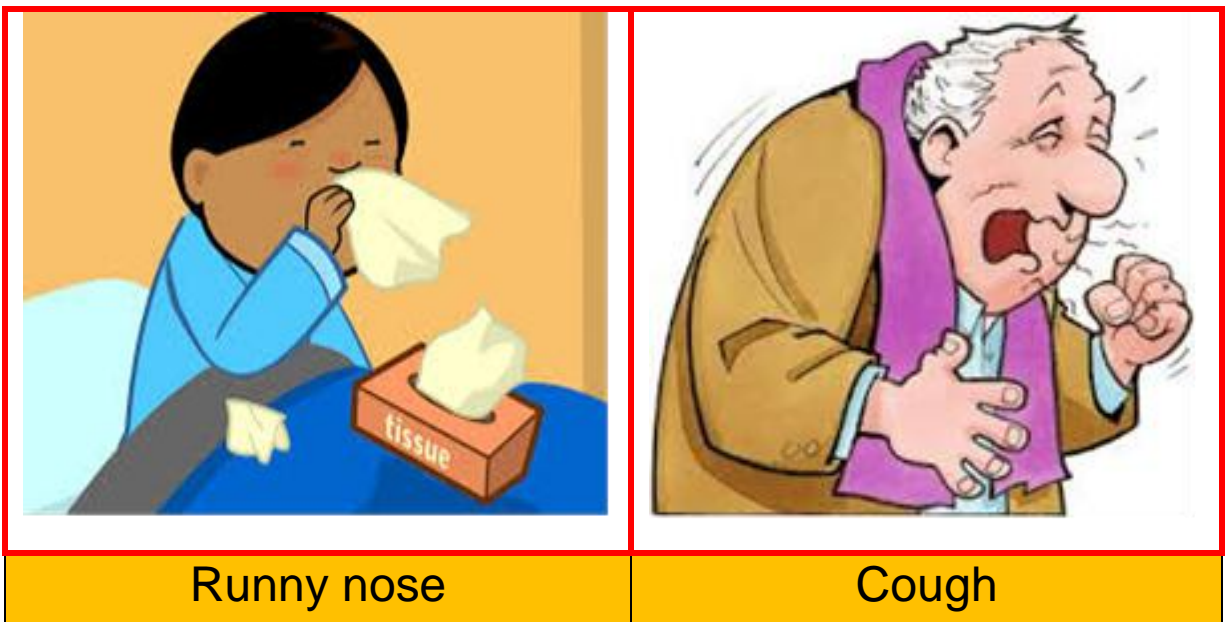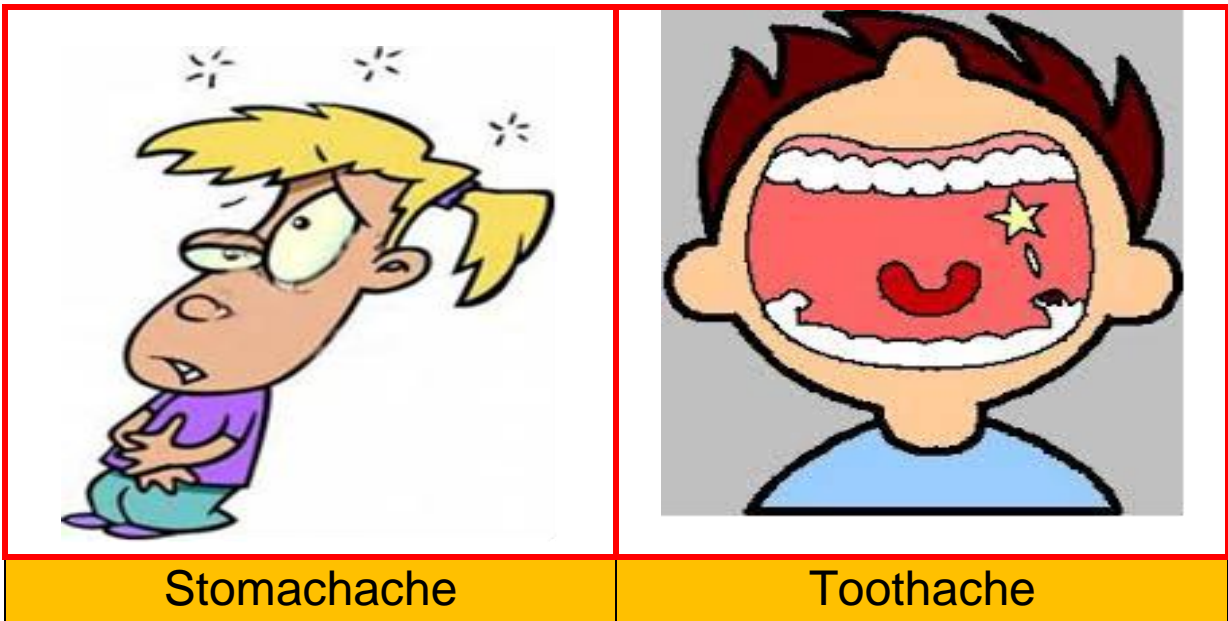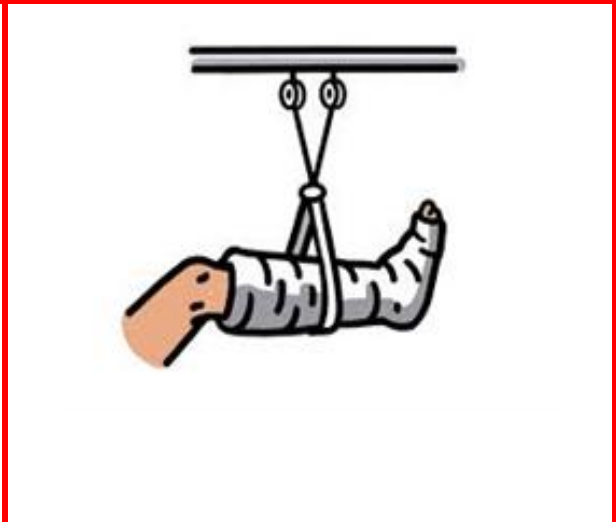
| | |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| **Measles** | **Broken leg** |

| | |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| **Sore throat** | **Sprained ankle** |

64

| | |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| Fever/temperature | Vomit/throw up |
|  |  |
| Flu | Diarrhea |

| | |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| Heart attack | Backache |

| | |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| Earache | Bleeding nose |

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*
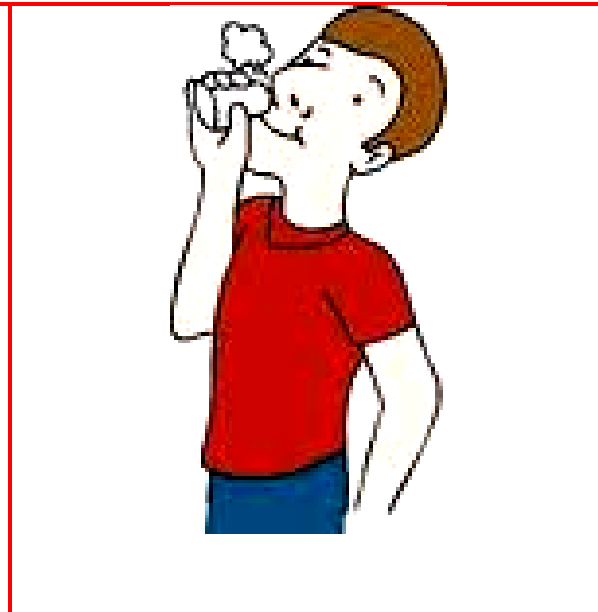
| | |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| Blisters | Dehydration |

Citizens are people who live in a particular country.

Foreigners are people who come from another country.

To elect is to choose by vote.

Freedom of speech is the right to express your opinions.

# Material for warm-up # 5

## Alajuela

Arenal Volcano National Park

Poas National park

Zoo Ave

## Puntarenas

Manuel Antonio National Park

Monteverde Cloud Forest

Corcovado National Park

## Cartago

Irazu Volcano National Park

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

Guayabo National  Monument

Orosi

Tapanti National Park

Costa Ballena

Guanacaste

Tamarindo  Beach

Rincón de la Vieja National Park

Palo Verde National Park

Playa Hermosa

Santa Rosa National Park

San José

Jade Museum

San Gerardo de Dota

La Sabana Metropolitan Park

Los Quetzales National Park

Limón

Tortuguero  National Park

Cahuita National Park

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

Talamanca  Mountains

**Heredia**

Braulio Carrillo National Park

La Paz Waterfall Gardens

Barva Volcano

# BINGO
## *Costa Rican Typical food*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Turnovers** | **Rice Pudding** | **Meat Stew** |
| **Gallo Pinto** | **Chicken Rice** | **Casado** |
| **Tortillas** | **Horchata** | **Gallo** |
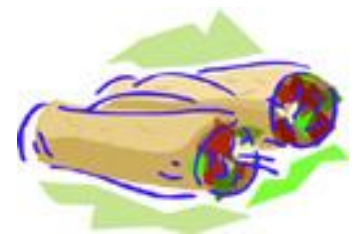
73

# BINGO
## *Costa Rican Typical food*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Fried pork rinds** | **Chopped Vegies** | **Chorreada** |
| **Ceviche** | **Fruit drink** | **Tamal** |
| **Stuffed pepper** | **Sour Cream** | **Tamal asado** |

74

# BINGO
## *Costa Rican Typical food*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Fried pork rinds** | **Chopped Vegies** | **Chorreada** |
| **Ceviche** | **Fruit drink** | **Tortillas** |
| **Stuffed Pepper** | **Coffee** | **Tamal asado** |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Turnovers | Rice pudding | Meat Stew | coffee |
| Rice and beans | Chicken Rice | Casado | |
| Tortillas | Horchata | Gallo | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Fried pork rinds | Chopped Vegies | chorreada |
| Ceviche | Fruit drink | Tamal |
| Stuffed pepper | Sour Cream | Tamal asado |

# Material for warm-up # 8

## QUESTIONS/ TASKS

1. Water pollution is the contamination of water bodies (e.g. lakes, rivers, oceans, aquifers and groundwater), very often by human activities                                                T/F?

2. What are natural resources?

3. Give examples of natural resources.

4. Give some examples of pollutants.

5. What can we do to take care of nature?

6. What is air pollution?

7. Mention five different kinds of pollution.

8. Industrial pollution is a natural source of pollution.     T/F?

9. Air pollution causes irritation of eyes on humans.        T/F?

10.        Trees are contaminated by water pollution.        T/F?

11.        Water pollution may harm lung tissues of animals. T/F?

12.        Air pollution provokes skin cancer in animals.     T/F?

13.        Water pollution damages children's brains.        T/F?

14.        Water pollution may affect plants negatively.       T/F?

15.        Soil contamination may affect the food chain.       T/F?

16.        Volcanic eruptions are non-natural sources of pollution. T/F?

1.

My teacher    Is

fun

**and**    clever

2.

In addition  to

Complaining

About

the   service

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

she didn't

like the food.

3.

the room was too
small

It was not also

cleaned very
well

4.

The meeting was very
boring.

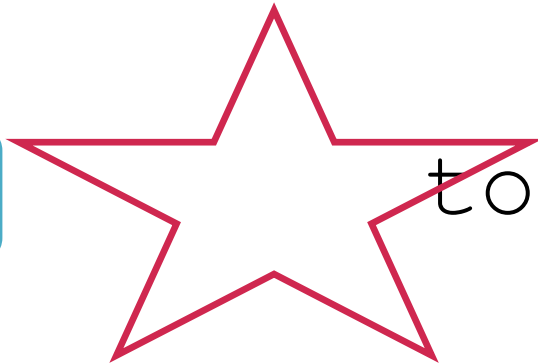Moreover, it was not very

useful

5.

By the time we arrived

we were pretty tired. We were

hungry ☆ too

**6.** Not only was the room small but also the view was of a car park.

**7.** Although he worked very hard,

he         didn't get

the promotion.

8.

I can't   come

tonight

So  Let's arrange

another

meeting

It was ⬜ a

beautiful

day yet

did not

Want ⬜ to

go

outside

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

**Instructions:** In groups of three, prepare a role-play based on one of the next situations.

**Situation 1**

**Student A**: You are a Costa Rican. Today, you are working at the Typical Food restaurant called "Costa Rica Es mi Orgullo". Many Americans visit this restaurant because the food is delicious. However, some of them are very curious about the ingredients and origins of Costa Rican typical dishes. Be ready to provide enough information so that you are a knowledgeable waiter and people come more to your restaurant.

**Student B**: You are an American. Today, you are visiting the Typical Food restaurant called "Costa Rica Es mi Orgullo". You usually visit this restaurant because the food they offer is delicious. However, you are very curious about the ingredients and origins of Costa Rican Typical dishes. Be ready to ask enough questions so that you know enough information about the Costa Rican food and what you are eating.

**Student C:**    You are Costa Rican, you are student B's friend, you are visiting the Typical Food restaurant called "Costa Rica Es mi Orgullo". You usually visit this restaurant because the food they offer is delicious and is very traditional of Costa Rica. Although you know some information about Costa Rican Typical food and you help your friend to solve his/her doubts, you are missing some

more information. Be ready to ask and answer questions about Costa Rican typical food.

**Situation 2**

**Student A:** You are a Costa Rican. Today, you are working at the Information center called "Costa Rica: Comida con Sentido". Many Americans visit this center because they are interested in knowing about what they eat in Costa Rica, the food ingredients and origins. Be ready to provide enough information so that you help your customers know more about Costa Rican typical food.

**Student B**: You are an American. Today, you are visiting the Information center called "Costa Rica: Comida con Sentido". You will visit this center because you are interested in knowing about what you eat in Costa Rica, the food ingredients and origins. Be ready to ask enough questions so that you know more about Costa Rican typical food.

**Student C:**    You are Costa Rican, you are student B's friend. Today, you are joining your friend to the Information center called "Costa Rica: Comida con Sentido". Although you know some information about Costa Rican food, and you help your friend to solve his/her doubts, you are missing some more information. Be ready to ask and answer questions about Costa Rican typical food.

## Claudia Poll

Claudia Maria Poll Ahrens holds a distinct place among Costa Ricans, as the only Costa Rican to ever win an Olympic gold medal. As a short-distance swimmer, she also has won more Olympic medals than any other Costa Rican. She attained this status during the Atlanta Olympic Games in 1996, winning the 200-meter freestyle. Later, at the 2000 Sydney Games, she won two bronze medals. Her gold was not only the first for a Costa Rican, but for any person from Central America.

Poll was born in Nicaragua on December 21, 1972 to parents who had emigrated from Germany. Her family moved to Costa Rica when she was very young after an earthquake and rising political tensions. Her family includes her older sister, Silvia, also an Olympic medal-winning swimmer. Aside from swimming, Poll graduated from university with a degree in Business Administration in 1998. She had her first child, a daughter, in 2007, just a year after setting records at the Central American and Caribbean Games.

*Taken from: Coon, Ferrell & Klott (n. d).*

# Pablo César Wanchope

During his career with the Costa Rican national soccer team, Paulo Wanchope scored 45 goals, the second most in the history of the team. He is one of the most famous soccer players in Costa Rica's history. Born Pablo César Wanchope Watson in Heredia in 1976, he was known as Paulo Wanchope as a player. Wanchope began his soccer career with CS Herediano, a soccer team playing in Costa Rica's top league. When he was just 20 years old, he was signed to play for Derby County of the English Premier League. He played for Derby County with great success for two years and was then sold to West Ham United, and then was sold to Manchester City.

During his time at Manchester City, Wanchope suffered multiple injuries to his knee, but still scored some important goals for the team. After seven seasons in England, Wanchope played professionally in Spain, Argentina, Qatar, Costa Rica, Japan, and the United States. He was never able to play as well as he had before his knee injury though. On the international scene, Wanchope achieved his greatest success in the 2006 World Cup, when he scored two goals in a single game. He also played in the 2002 World Cup. Wanchope retired in 2007.

## Hanna Gabriels

Hanna Gabriel Valle is a Costa Rican world champion boxer. She is the current world champion in the junior middleweight (70 kgs) category for the World Boxing Organization. She was born in 1983 and was raised in an athletic family; her father was a boxer and her brother is a professional soccer player. As a teenager, Hanna competed in track and field, but injuries forced her to stop running.

After many years without competing in any sports, Hanna's father recommended she start boxing to stay healthy. She began competing in 2007 and won her first fight by knockout. Her career record is 11-0-1 and she has won six of her fights by knockout. She first won a world championship in 2009, but soon lost the title. After again winning the junior world championship in 2010, she has successfully defended it twice.

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

**Bryan Ruiz González**

Bryan Ruiz González is an internationally known soccer player from Costa Rica. He currently plays for FC Twente and the Costa Rican national team. He has occasionally been the captain of the Costa Rican national team. He plays as a forward but can also play as a midfielder. In two years playing for Twente he has scored 33 goals. He has also scored nine goals for his national team. Ruiz was born in 1985 in San José. He began playing professionally for Alajuelense, a team in Costa Rica's top professional league, when he was 18 years old.

After playing three seasons with Alajuelense, Ruiz moved to KAA Gent of the top league in Belgium. He would play two seasons there, and would be the team's top scorer and captain during one of those seasons. He then moved to his current team, Twente. During the 2009-10 season, Ruiz was the top scorer for Twente and helped them become the champions of the top league in the Netherlands.

*Taken from: Coon, Ferrell & Klott (n. d).*

## Rolando Fonseca

Rolando Fonseca is one of the most famous players in Costa Rican soccer history. His 47 goals for the Costa Rican national team are the most by any player in the country's history. He has played for the national team during most of two decades and finished his international career in 2011 with 112 appearances. Professionally, he has had a long and successful career both in his native Costa Rica and abroad. At three different times, he has played for Comunicaciones of the Guatemalan league. He played for both Saprissa and Alajuelense in Costa Rica, winning two championships with Saprissa and four with Alajuelense. Fonseca will be remembered both for his great goal scoring ability and his longevity, playing top-level soccer for more than twenty years.

*Taken: from Coon, Ferrell & Klott (n. d).*

**Andrey Amador**

Andrey Amador Bikkazakova (born 29 August 1986) is a Costa Rican professional road bicycle racer for UCI ProTeam Movistar Team.

His paternal grandmother is Spanish while his mother is a Russian immigrant who arrived in the country after meeting and marrying his Costa Rican father. He started cycling professionally at the age of 20 in 2006.[2] Amador was selected to carry the flag for Costa Rica at the 2011 Pan American Games opening ceremony.[3] He is the first Costa Rican to ever ride the Tour de France. In 2012, Amador won a mountainous stage 14 in the Girod'Italia after breaking away from the group during the final descent right before the final climb. Though he was caught right at the finish of the climb he won the sprint in the end. In 2013, he finished 8th overall in the Tirreno-Adriatico. *Taken from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrey_Amador*

I read

about...._____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____


My classmate told me

about..._____

_____

_____

_____

_____

# Material for while activity # 4

> **Christmas**     **Birth**     **Recognized**    **Parents**
>
> **Church**     **Santa Claus**    **Gatherings**
>
> **Giving spirit**    **Volunteer service**    **Secular holiday**

In many parts of the world, Christmas is the day when people celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem two thousand years ago. People who remember 1_____ as a religious holiday celebrate the 2_____ of Jesus and his coming into this world. To them, he is 3_____as the Son of God and the Savior of the world. According to the Bible, Jesus was born in a manger because there was no room for him and his 4_____, Mary and Joseph, in an inn. Today, people often attend 5_____, organize family 6_____ and decorate their homes and businesses (with Christmas flowers from Pro Flowers or with real or artificial Christmas trees). People feel the 7_____and donate their time and money to worthy causes, or provide 8_____ to the needy. Christmas is also celebrated as a 9_____when parents and children talk about 10_____ and Rudolf the Red Nose Reindeer.

Red-eyed leaf frog



Colonial Nicoya

Exotic beach

Volcano

English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students

**Surfing big waves**


**Calypso music**

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

Sea Turtle


Morpho Butterfly

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

San Luis Waterfall



Zarcero

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

Museum of Art



Plaza de la cultura

**Precolumbian Art museum**



**Gallo Pinto Breakfast**

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

Toucan

Celeste River

*English Teaching Guidelines and Activities for Working with Visually Challenged Students*

# English Teaching to

## Visually Challenged Students

# *Parents and Students' Guide*

**Recommendations to Parents and Students with Visual Impairment when
Learning English as a Foreign Language**

Carolina Solano, Elvira Gutiérrez

Universidad Nacional

Costa Rica

2017

## Contents

*Visual Impairment- Guidelines when Learning English.*

## Introduction

In this booklet you will find practical and useful tips or recommendations for both parents to advise and guide their children when studying English and students with visual impairment when learning English as a foreign language. In some cases, parents do not know anything about the language, but by knowing what tools and strategies are available to cooperate with the  language learning process successfully, they support their children greatly. It includes techniques to help them study at home, technological materials available and tips to get ready for the English test. Learners with visual limitations need to know themselves in order to foster their strengths and facilitate their learning. Learning a language is a complex process and every student must be guided and supported. For this reason, in this booklet some recommendations for students with visual problems are provided as a way to support and guide them in their way to learn English successfully.

# PART I

*Recommendations for parents with Visualy Challenged Students*

# Recommendations for Parents with Visually Challenged Students

Family plays a meaningful role in the educational area of students with visual problems. The support every family member provides means an opportunity to be more adapted into the educational environment. In the educational institution, the "coordination of all team members, including family members helps to assure a shared focus on student success" (Virginia Department of Education, p.17, 2010). Thus, parents or custodians in charge of the student who has a visual challenge are to be present into the academic life of the student to assure a successful process. The following are suggestions to help parents or custodians to deal with the fact of practicing and studying English as a foreign language outside the school without the guidance of the teacher.

# Techniques to Practice English at Home with the Student

1. Before studying, get in contact with your child's language teacher in order for him or her to provide information about the progress and difficulties your child has when learning the language. Based on the teacher´s information, you could know the weaknesses your child has to learn the language.

2. Ask the teacher for recommendations of materials to practice the topics demanded, if possible. The teacher could provide more appropriate materials to more extended language practices.

3. Prepare an appropriate place to study. Take into consideration your child's needs when reading or writing, such as light, space, font size and color or materials.

4. Learn to use the Spanish/ English dictionary and translator. You can use the physical dictionary, any application or virtual dictionary/ translator. It is recommended to use virtual dictionaries because they provide the pronunciation of words.

   Read the material your child is learning. This will help you to understand better the information under study. If possible, read practices when studying to help the student to get accustomed to listening and providing oral answers.


Picture taken from: www.buzzsprout.com

*Make use of technology*

**5.** Make use of technology. If you have internet access, it is possible to download magnifier apps, dictionaries, language learning applications, webpages and audio material to help the pupil with English practices that are not provided in classes. Also, it is possible to amplify the font letter in computers and laptops; this facilitates the usage to the child with visual impairment, and provides tools to study.

# Useful Technological Materials to Use at Home

The following information provides webpages, apps, and video broadcasting pages that are useful to practice and learn English at home. It is recommended to use the webpages or apps to later guide the student to use it and take advantage of them.

**Phone / tablet applications:**

**1.** Bussu app:

This app is available to android phones, and you can learn vocabulary and listening practices depending on the level you want to practice.

**2.** My wordbook app:



Picture taken from: www.buzzsprout.com

*It is recommended to get familiar with webpages or apps to later guide the student to use it and take advantage of them.*

This app is to create vocabulary lists. It is useful to learn the vocabulary and to save it for future practice. In this app, the student can save the word, meaning, picture and the pronunciation. Also, it is possible to share the vocabulary list if any other classmate has the same app. This last aspect is useful for teachers, the teacher can have the same app and share vocabulary to be studied for the student to be prepared in advance.

**3.** Lupa app:

This app functions as a magnifier; it will help to zoom up texts to facilitate reading. This app does not work to practice the language, but it is useful to read books or photocopied materials given to study. This will help a lot to look up words in the dictionary too.

**4.** Access Note app:

This app allows taking notes by using the voice. It is useful to record the teacher giving explanations to later study at home. However, it is only available for iphone users. There are different apps available for people with visual impairment and iphone users such as *Access world app* or *Learning ally app* that if you have one, check on the web or in iphone app store.

**6.** Duolingo:

This app provides language practices in different languages. Enter into the app, then, select the language. The app will give you a tour of how to use it. It starts with sentences in Spanish, then, you click on the words you do not know to see the translation. Later, it provides more practices.

**Webpages:**

**1.** www. englishclub.com
> In this webpage, go to "Learn English-for learners" section in the top of the page. Then click on it. There you will be able to choose to practice grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary. Select the aspect you want to make your child practice.

9

**2.** http://a4esl.org/

This webpage has many exercises to practice grammar and vocabulary mainly. Practices go from easy to difficult. You have to select the level, and then look for the grammar point or vocabulary topic you need to practice with your kid.

**3.** http://www.esl-lab.com/

Here you can find listening practices to every level with varied topics. Select the level and look for the topic to start practicing. There are plenty of topics; try to look for the ones that are related to the topics your child is studying.

**4.** http://www.manythings.org/

The webpage is focused on ESL and EFL students. There are quizzes, practices, word games, puzzles and other practices useful to enhance every skill.

**5.** http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish

In this webpage you click on "courses" section, then choose the level to practice. In every level you will find practices including grammar, reading, listening, and explanations.

# Recommendations to Help the Learner to Get Ready for the Test

1. Make a list of the words the student does not know. Practice orally.
2. Review the lessons' material and the type of practices to help the learner to get familiar with the exercises.
3. Arrange a special accommodation for your kid in the high school; allow extra time or readers for the test and larger font size.
4. Ask the teacher to allow the student to use the magnifier if the student is accustomed to using it during classes.
5. Ask the student to sit near a window to get more light.

These are basic suggestions parents can follow to provide better support to children with visual impairment. In some cases, it is impossible for the parents to study the language with their child; it is recommended for parents to look for another person that could help their child to study. Ask in the institution if there is a possibility to offer tutors or extra lessons to practice the language. Take advantage of technology; nowadays, it is easier to have access to technology, help your child to get accustomed to it, too. This will provide not only wider opportunities to learn English, but also to their everyday life.

# PART II

*Recommendations for Students*

*with Visual Limitations*

# Recommendations for Students with Visual Impairment

First of all, visually challenged learners must not be underestimated because they have a visual limitation since "students who are blind or vision impaired generally have determination, adaptability and assertiveness skills enhanced by their life experiences" (Al-Mahmood, McLean, Powell & Ryan, 1998, p. 1). Daily tasks may be more challenging for students with visual problems; for this reason, they could be more prepared to deal with different situations. However, there are specific aspects that may help the learner



*"students who are blind or visually challenged generally have determination, adaptability and assertiveness skills enhanced by their life experiences"*

with visual loss overcome obstacles more easily when learning. In this section, you find practical and useful tips or recommendations for students with visual problems to cope with the different demands that studying English represents.

In some cases, students do not know how to deal with their condition in the EFL class; they do not learn as the rest of students do because of the fact that they do not have the necessary tools to fulfill the tasks required. It is not that they are not able to do it, but that they may not be provided with the adequate opportunities, environment, and tools to succeed in their learning process. Consequently, this segment includes recommendations regarding personality, in-class activities and studying at home.

# Visually Challenged Students' Personality:  An Essential Component of the Learning Process

### Recommendations

1. Knowing your own learning style, and what works for you is a brilliant beginning to successful study (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 3). There are tests to know what the learning style of each individual is.  You should take these tests so that you are aware of your learning style and able to take advantage of it.

2.  Being positive will help you greatly. This is why, you should "focus on the strengths [you] have [and] remind [yourself] of [your] successes and achievements" (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 3).  You should have a positive attitude and try to participate in activities performed in class, for example, volunteering

in playing games or answering questions since participation is a key element to learn effectively.

3. Be reluctant to take stereotypes and limitations imposed by others (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 4). These stereotypes and limitations may try to stop you from learning in a relaxing environment equal for everyone.

4. Reward yourself for completed goals (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 6). In this way, you will raise your motivation toward studying and achieving more goals.

5. Value yourself and find your own identity, that is "develop a sense of [your] own identity and self-worth; [you are] a person with talent and creativity independent of [your]… assignments (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998,p. 6). A visual limitation cannot stop you from succeeding since more is needed for that. Take advantage of your talent and put it into practice.

6. Have days when you do not think about study (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 7). Not only is the time to study significant but also the time to socialize and have fun. These days should be spent on relaxing and thinking positively, doing what you like to do the most.

7. Surround yourself with positive and supportive people (Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 8). These people will foster your positive thinking through the leaning process.

# Improving in – class Performance

## Recommendations

**1.** There are plenty of technological devices that you could take advantage of. For this reason, a recommendation to improve you in-class performance, you should "Investigate adaptive technology that is available" (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 4). This source of technology comes to facilitate your performance of in class activities greatly. Some examples of technology are closed circuit magnifiers, or other magnifying devices, as well as large print computer terminals, or telescopic lenses, among others (Allegheny College, 2015, *Visually Impaired Students*, para. 12). You should use these implements currently so that tasks are carried out more easily.

**2.** Obtain any overheads in enlarged format prior to a lecture and use a magnifier or a monocular. It will help you be ready to your tutor's speech (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 12).In the same way, you will get familiar with the teacher's presentation.

**3.** Sit in the front to help maximize concentration and visibility (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 12). In this way, you will avoid distractions.

**4.** Increase concentration by focusing on the content or by asking questions (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 12). This is the best way to direct your attention to the topic and the class.

**5.** Ask for any written information on the board to be read out to you. (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 12). It will help you minimize misunderstandings.

**6.** Ask to have an explanation of the content of videos earlier prior to the session or have

another student describe it (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 13). In this way, you will be familiar with the video.

7. Arrange to get notes or tape recorded lectures/tutes [you] cannot attend (check with your lecturers, some will tape lectures routinely)(Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 13). Do not miss any information that may be important.

8. Provide feedback to your lecturer and tutors on what is working for you and what is not (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 13). If you tell your teachers what is effective for you and what is not, they will probably keep on working to instruct you in the best way.

9. [Have] a correct posture and seating [because it] can affect concentration (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 17).Concentration is essential for the performance of in-class activities.

**10.** Try working and brainstorming with another student (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 17). Sharing knowledge with another classmate will be a meaningful experience for you and you will possibly remember what you both were talking about.

These strategies are relevant to reach the goal of learning productively since there are plenty of resources that can be used, the teacher, classmates, seating, technology, among others. Also, when you consider it necessary, you should say the teacher if you need extra time or explanation about any topic. Communication is essential since you are "the 'expert' about [your] particular needs" (Allegheny College, 2015, *Tips for Positive Communication,* para. 8). You should express your needs to the teacher, your parents, and the support committee among other personnel so that these needs can be satisfied.

# Studying at Home

## Recommendations

1. Organize a quiet study area at home, with plenty of space for equipment and materials (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 5). It will help you concentrate more on your task.

2. Establish a system for storing your tapes, disks and large print (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 5). In this way, you will be more organized.

3. Get to know your adaptive technology equipment (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 5) because it will help you to use it effectively.

4. Arrange to have manuals in alternative formats for any troubleshooting (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, pp. 5- 6). Problems are never absent, so be prepared to deal with them.

5. Use a year planner to map out important dates, assessment tasks and exams; a talking

electronic diary may be useful for this (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 5). It is an effective way to organize your assignments and commitments.

6. Use a prioritized daily 'To Do' list (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 6). You will do your assignments and tasks in order of importance.

7. Break tasks into smaller manageable segments, and schedule difficult and more demanding tasks for when you're at your greatest concentration span (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 6). Then when you are tired, you will have less complex tasks to do.

8. Set regular times to meet with readers and other students in study groups (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 6). Studying in group is easier and more meaningful.

Another recommendation is to implement auditory techniques at home when studying for a test or reviewing material for the English class.

For example, you can tell your mother to read aloud what you have written in your notebook or a text in the specific textbook that is being used. In this way, you will reinforce your listening skill and take advantage of your sense of hearing. Similarly, you can ask your teacher to record him/herself reading some texts or words so that you can listen over and over again to the track in order to review pronunciation, vocabulary or grammar. Finally, you can research online and look for audio-visual material from websites such as elllo or eslab.  If you put these tips into practice, you will probably succeed in your way to learn a foreign language, or any other subject that you study. Discipline and perseverance are two key values that you can practice so that the aspects mentioned above work effectively.



Picture taken from:http://evolllution.com/

*Visual Impairment- Guidelines when Learning English.*

## References

Allegheny College. (2015). *Students who are blind or have a visual impairment.* Meadville. Retrieved from:http://sites.allegheny.edu/disabilityservices/students-who-are-blind-or-have-a-visual-impairment/.

Al-Mahmood, R., McLean, P., Powell, E., & Ryan, J.( 1998). Towards success in tertiary. Study with vision impairment. *Towards success in tertiary study, 4.*1-29.Retrieved from: http://services.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/68891 2/TowardsServicesVision.pdf.

Helgesen, M. (2002). *Let's get physical.* Retrieved from: http://www.mgu.ac.jp/~ic/helgesen/physical/physical_-prehtml.htm.

Virginia Department of Education. (2010). *EFL teaching in Virginia to visually impaired students.* Retrieved from: http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/disabilities/sensory_disabili ties/visually_impaired_blind/visually_impaired_guidelines.pdf.

# Aprendizaje del Inglés

# y estudiantes con discapacidad

# visual

## *Guía para padres y estudiantes*

**Recomendaciones para padres con hijos con discapacidad visual y estudiantes con discapacidad visual**

**para el aprendizaje de inglés como idioma extranjero.**

**Carolina Solano, Elvira Gutiérrez**

**Universidad Nacional**

**Costa Rica**

**2017**

## Contenidos

## Introducción

En este folleto encontrarán recomendaciones y tips prácticos para padres de estudiantes con discapacidad visual y que estén aprendiendo inglés como idioma extranjero. En algunos casos, los padres saben poco del idioma, pero sabiendo que herramientas y estrategias hay disponibles para cooperar con el aprendizaje del idioma exitosamente, pueden ayudar a su hijo o hija significativamente. Este folleto incluye técnicas para ayudarle al estudiante en casa, recomendaciones de material tecnológico disponible y tips para ayudar a su hijo o hija con discapacidad visual a la hora de un examen. Los estudiantes con limitaciones visuales deben conocerse ellos mismos para así mejorar sus fortalezas y facilitar su aprendizaje. Aprender un idioma es un proceso complejo y todo estudiante debe ser guiado y apoyado. Por este motivo, en este folleto también se incluyen recomendaciones directas para el estudiante con limitación visual como una manera de apoyarlos y guiarlos en el camino del aprendizaje del inglés exitosamente.

# PARTE I

*Recomendaciones para padres de estudiantes con discapacidad visual*

La familia juega un papel significativo en el área de la educación de un estudiante con problemas visuales. El apoyo que cada miembro de la familia provee significa una oportunidad para estar más adaptados en el ambiente educativo. En la institución educativa, "la coordinación de todos los miembros, incluyendo los miembros familiares, ayuda a asegurar un enfoque compartido en el éxito del estudiante" (Virginia Department of Education, p.17, 2010).

Por lo tanto, padres o custodios a cargo de un estudiante que presenta retos visuales deben estar presentes en la vida académica del estudiante para asegurar un progreso exitoso. A continuación hay recomendaciones para ayudar a los padres a enfrentar el aprendizaje del inglés estudiar inglés fuera de la escuela sin guía de un profesor.

# Recomendaciones para padres con estudiantes con limitaciones visuales

1. Antes de estudiar, contacte al profesor de su hijo o hija para que él o ella le provea información sobre el progreso y dificultades de su hijo para aprender el idioma. Basados en la información del profesor, usted podrá saber las debilidades de su hijo para aprender el idioma y trabajar en ello.

2. Pregunte al profesor recomendaciones de materiales para practicar los temas que se le solicitan,si es posible. El profesor podrá brindar material más apropiado o más práctica sobre el tema.

3. Prepare un lugar adecuado para estudiar. Considere las necesidades de su hijo para leer o escribir, como lo son la luz, el espacio, el tamaño de letra, color o materiales.

**4.** Aprenda a usar el diccionario Español/Inglés y un traductor. Usted puede usar el diccionario físico, cualquier aplicación virtual de diccionario-traductor. Se recomienda usar diccionarios virtuales como preferencia porque brinda la opción de pronunciación de las palabras.



Picture taken from: www.buzzsprout.com

*Hagan uso de la tecnología.*

**5.** Lea el material que su hijo está aprendiendo. Esto le va ayudar a comprender mejor la información que está estudiando. Si es posible, leer prácticas cuando está estudiando para ayudar al estudiante a acostumbrarse a escuchar en inglés y brindar respuestas orales.

**6.** Haga uso de la tecnología. Si usted tiene acceso al internet es posible descargar aplicaciones de magnificadores, diccionarios, aplicaciones para aprender idiomas, páginas y material auditivo para ayudar al estudiante con las prácticas de inglés que no le brindan en la clase. También, es posible aumentar el tamaño de letra de computadoras y laptops. Esto facilita el uso al estudiante con problemas visuales y brinda herramientas para el estudio.

# Materiales tecnológicos útiles para el uso en casa

La siguiente información brinda una recopilación de aplicaciones (apps), páginas para videos y páginas web que son útiles para practicar y aprender inglés en casa. Es recomendado que se usen las páginas web o las aplicaciones con antelación para luego guiar al estudiante durante la práctica.

## Aplicaciones para celulares o tablets

1. Bussu app:

   Esta aplicación está disponible para celulares android y se puede aprender vocabulario y actividades de escucha dependiendo el nivel de inglés que se quiera practicar.

2. My wordbook app:

3. Esta aplicación es para crear listas de vocabulario. Es útil para aprender vocabulario y guardarlo para prácticas futuras. En este app, el estudiante puede guardar la palabra, el significado, la foto y la pronunciación. El estudiante puede guardar la lista. Es posible compartirla con cualquier otro compañero que tenga la misma app. Esta última característica es también útil para los profesores, el profesor puede tener el app y compartir vocabulario por estudiar para el estudiante y así podrá estudiarlo con antelación.



Picture taken from: www.buzzsprout.com

*Se recomienda a los padres familiarizarse con las páginas web, y/o aplicaciones para poder orientar a sus hijos al usarlasy así poder sacar mayor ventaja de ellas.*

**4.** Lupa app:

El app funciona como un magnificador, esto le puede ayudar para aumenta textos y facilitar la lectura. Este app no es para practicar el idioma pero es necesario para la lectura de libros o material fotocopiado que se le den al estudiante. Esto también será útil en caso que usen el direccionarlo.

**5.** Access Note app:

Esta aplicación permite tomar notas usando la voz. Puede ser necesario para grabar al profesor dando explicaciones para luego estudiarlo en casa. Sin embargo está disponible solo para usuarios de iphone. Existen varias apps disponibles para usuarios iphone como "Access world app" ó "Learnign Ally" un app de audio para personas con limitación visual. En caso de tener un celular iphone puede consultar en la web o en la tienda iphone las aplicaciones disponibles.

**7.** Duolingo:

Esta aplicación provee prácticas en diferentes lenguajes. Después de descargar la aplicación, entre y luego elija el lenguaje, en este caso inglés. Este app le dará una visita guiada de cómo usarlo. El ejercicio inicia con oraciones en español, luego de click en las palabras que no conoce para ver la traducción. Sucesivamente, le irá mostrando más prácticas.

**Páginas web:**

**1.** www. englishclub.com

En esta página web, diríjase a "Learn English-for learners" al inicio de la página principal. Después de click. Ahí usted podrá elegir practicar gramática, pronunciación o vocabulario. Elija el aspecto que desee para que haga practicar a su hijo o hija.

**2.** http://a4esl.org/

Esta página web tiene muchos ejercicios para practicar gramática y vocabulario, principalmente. Las prácticas van de nivel fácil a difícil. Usted debe elegir el nivel y luego elegir el punto gramatical o tema de vocabulario que necesita practicar con su hijo o hija.

**3.** http://www.esl-lab.com/

Aquí usted puede encontrar prácticas para la escucha en todos los niveles con diferentes temas. Elija el nivel y busque el tema que desea practicar. Hay muchos temas: trate de buscar los temas que más se relacionen a los que su hijo o hija está estudiando.

**4.** http://www.manythings.org/

La página está enfocada en prácticas de inglés como segunda lengua (ESL) e inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL). Hay muchos exámenes cortos, prácticas, juegos, juego de letras y otro tipo de ejercicios útiles para mejorar cada habilidad en el idioma.

**5.** http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish

En esta página de click en la seccion de "courses", luego elija el nivel por practicar. En cada nivel usted encontrará prácticas incluyendo gramática, lectura, escucha y explicaciones.

# Consejos para ayudar al estudiante antes de un examen

1. Realice una lista de las palabras que el estudiante no sabe y practiquen oralmente.
2. Revise el material de las lecciones pasadas y el tipo de actividades realizadas para que el estudiante se familiarice con el formato.
3. Coordine adecuaciones para las evaluaciones que tendrá su hijo en el colegio, solicite tiempo extra, letra más grande o un lector para desarrollar el examen.
4. Solicite al profesor permiso para que el estudiante haga uso del magnificador, si el estudiante está acostumbrado a usarlo durante clases.
5. Solicite al estudiante buscar un sitio apropiado según su necesidad, por ejemplo, cerca de la ventana para tener más luz.

Estas son recomendaciones básicas que puede seguir para darle un mejor apoyo a estudiantes con problemas visuales. En algunos casos, no es posible que los padres estudien el idioma con sus hijos. Se les recomienda que busquen ayuda extra para que ayuden al estudiante a practicar el idioma. Solicite en la institución educativa, si hay alguna posibilidad de tener tutores o horas extra para practicar el idioma. Aprovechen la tecnología al máximo, hoy en día es más fácil tener acceso a ella. Ayude a su hijo o hija para que se acostumbre a usarla. Esto no solo le podrá brindar mayores oportunidades de aprendizaje del inglés, pero también para su vida cotidiana.

# PARTE II

## Recomendaciones para estudiantes con deficiencias visuales

# Recomendaciones para los estudiantes con discapacidad visual

Los estudiantes con una limitante visual no deben ser subestimados por su discapacidad ya que "los estudiantes ciegos o con problemas visuales generalmente tienen determinación, capacidad de adaptación y habilidades de reafirmación personal logradas a través de su experienciade vida" (Al-Mahmood, McLean, Powell &Ryan, 1998, p.

**"Los estudiantes ciegos o con problemas visuales generalmente tienen determinación, capacidad de adaptación y habilidades de reafirmación personal logradas a través de su experiencia de vida"**

1). Las tareas diarias podrían ser un poco demandantes para una persona con discapacidad visual. Por tal razón, estos individuos deberían ser preparados para lidiar con diferentes situaciones. Sin embargo, existen aspectos específicos que podrían ayudar al estudiante con problemas visuales a superar más fácilmente obstáculos en su aprendizaje. En esta sección, encontrarás recomendaciones muy prácticas y útiles para que personas con discapacidad visual puedan enfrentar las distintas exigencias que estudiar inglés conlleva.  En algunos casos, los estudiantes no saben cómo lidiar con su condición en la clase de inglés y ésto hace que no puedan aprender en la misma forma en que sus compañeros lo hacen debido a que no tienen las herramientas necesarias para cumplir con las tareas requeridas. Esto no significa que ellos no sean capaces de aprender, sino que no son proporcionados con las oportunidades

adecuadas, el ambiente y las herramientas para ser exitosos en su proceso de aprendizaje. Por tal razón, esta sección ofrece recomendaciones con respecto a personalidad, actividades de la clase y estudio en casa.

## La Personalidad del individuo con una limitante visual: componente esencial de su proceso de aprendizaje

### Recomendaciones

1. Saber tu estilo de aprendizaje, y que te funciona es un brillante comienzo para un camino académico exitoso (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 3). En la actualidad, existen exámenes para saber el estilo de

aprendizaje que cada persona posee. Deberías hacer tales exámenes para que así seas consciente de tu estilo y lo uses a tu favor.

2. Ser positivo te ayudará enormemente. Por eso, "enfócate en tus fortalezas y no olvides tus éxitos y logros" (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 3). Debes tener una actitud positiva y tratar de participar en las actividades que se hacen en clase, por ejemplo, ser voluntario para jugar o contestar preguntas ya que la participación en clase es un elemento indispensable para aprender de una forma efectiva.

3. Rechaza estereotipos y limitaciones impuestas por otros (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 4). Estas ideas podrían evitar tu aprendizaje en un ambiente cómodo de igualdad.

4. Al lograr tus metas, premia tu esfuerzo. (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 6). De esta forma, acrecentarás tu motivación hacia el aprendizaje y el logro de más metas.

5. Valórate a ti mismo(a)y encuentra tu sentido de identidad propia, esto significa, desarrolla el sentido de tu propia identidad y valor, eres una persona con talento y creatividad, independiente de tus deberes(Al-Mahmood et al., 1998,p. 6). Un problema visual no puede interrumpir tu éxito, se necesita más que eso, aprovecha tu talento y pónlo en práctica.

6. Toma días en los que no pienses en tus estudios(Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 7). El tiempo que utilizas para socializar y divertirte es tan importante como el tiempo para estudiar. Usa estos días para relajarte, llenar tu mente de pensamientos positivos y hacer las cosas que más te gusta.

**7.** Rodéate de gente que sea positiva y te brinde apoyo (Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 8). Estas personas fomentarán tu pensamiento positivo hacia el proceso de aprendizaje.

## ¿Cómo mejorar el rendimiento en la clase?

### Recomendaciones

**1.** Estamos rodeados de tecnología por lo que resulta importante "investigar la tecnología adaptable que esté disponible (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 4). Este recurso facilitará considerablemente tu rendimiento en las actividades de la clase. Algunos ejemplos tecnológicos son lentes de aumento de circuito cerrado, u otros aparatos de aumento, así como un ordenador de letra

grande, o lentes telescópicos, entre otros (Allegheny College, 2015, *Visually Impaired Students*, para. 12). Debes usar estas herramientas a menudo para llevar acabo tus tareas más fácilmente.

2. Obtén diapositivas en un formato aumentado previo a una explicación de tu profesor(a), y utiliza una lupa o un monocular. Lo anterior te ayudará a estar preparado para el discurso de tu instructor(Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 12).De esta manera, te vas a familiarizar con el contenido de la presentación de tu instructor.

3. Siéntate en el frente para maximizar tu concentración y visibilidad(Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 12). De esta forma evitarás distracciones.

4. Enfócate en el contenido o  haz preguntas para aumentar tu concentración (Al-

Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 12).Ésta es la mejor manera de dirigir tu atención hacia el tema y la clase en sí.

5. Solicita la lectura para ti de toda información escrita en la pizarra (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 12) para que no haya malentendidos ni se te escape ninguna información.

6. Solicita una explicación del contenido de videos previo a la clase o solicita que un compañero describa el video para ti (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 13). Así, vas a familiarizarte con el contenido de ése video.

7. Trata de tener notas o grabaciones de las sesiones a las que no puedes asistir (habla con tus profesores, algunos graban sus explicaciones rutinariamente) (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 13). No dejes escapar ninguna información que sea importante.

**8.** Retroalimenta tus instructores y tutores acerca de lo que te ésta funcionando y lo que no (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 13). Si le comunicas a tus profesores lo que es y no efectivo para tu aprendizaje, probablemente ellos tratarán de continuar ayudándote de la mejor manera.

**9.** Ten una postura correcta y un lugar apropiado donde sentarte porque ambos podrían afectar tu concentración(Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 17). La concentración juega un papel muy importante en la realización de las actividades de clase.

**10.** Prueba trabajar y hacer una lluvia de ideas con otro estudiante (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, pp. 12-13, 17). Compartir tu conocimiento con alguien más, será una experiencia significativa y probablemente vas

a recordar lo que ambos estuvieron hablando.

Estas estrategias son relevantes para alcanzar el aprendizaje de una manera productiva debido a que hay

una gran cantidad de recursos que se pueden utilizar; tu instructor, compañeros, ubicación de asiento, tecnología, entre otros. Además, cuando lo consideres necesario, puedes solicitarle a tu profesor(a) tiempo o una explicación extra acerca de cualquier tema. Esta comunicación es esencial ya que eres el experto con relación a tus necesidades particulares (Allegheny College, 2015, *Tips for Positive Communication,* para. 8). Debes expresar tus necesidades a tu instructor, tus padres, y el comité de apoyo de tu colegio para que así éstas sean satisfechas.

# Estudio en casa

## Recomendaciones

1. Organiza un área silenciosa de tu casa, con suficiente espacio para el equipo y material que necesitas (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 5). Esto te ayudará a concentrarte más en lo que estás haciendo.

2. Establece un mecanismo para guardar tus grabaciones, discos y textos en letra grande(Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 5). De esta forma, serás más organizado(a).

3. Familiarízate con tu tecnología de adaptación (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 5) ya que ésto propiciará que la uses de una mejor manera.

4. Ten manuales en formatos alternativos para resolver cualquier problema (Al-Mahmood et al.,

1998, p. 5).Podrían presentarse problemas por lo que debes estar preparado para enfrentarlos.

5. Utiliza un planificador anual para recordar citas importantes, tareas y exámenes; un audio diario electrónico podría ser útil para este fin(Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 5). Ésta es una manera efectiva de organizarte con tus tareas y compromisos.

6. Utiliza una lista diaria de tareas por hacer en orden de prioridad(Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 6).  Organiza las tareas por orden de importancia.

7. Divide las tareas en segmentos más pequeños y manejables, programa las áreas más difíciles y demandantes para el tiempo en que tu concentración esté en su más alto nivel. (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 6). Así, cuanto te sientas cansado o desconcentrado, las tareas que tengas que hacer serán más fáciles.

**8.** Establece tiempos regulares para reunirte con lectores y otros estudiantes en grupos de estudio (Al-Mahmood et al., 1998, p. 6). Estudiar en grupo es más fácil y más significativo.

Otras recomendaciones son implementar técnicas auditivas en el hogar a la hora de estudiar para un exámen o repasar materia. Por ejemplo, puedes decirle a tu mamá que lea en voz alta lo que escribiste en tu cuaderno de clase, o un texto del libro de trabajo en clase. De esta manera, reforzarás tu habilidad auditiva y aprovecharás tu sentido de escucha. De igual forma, puedes pedirle a tu profesor(a) que se grabe así mismo(a) leyendo algún texto o palabras para que lo/la puedas escuchar una y otra vez, así tendrás la grabación para practicar pronunciación, vocabulario,  gramática entre otras. Finalmente, puedes investigar en internet y

buscar material audiovisual en páginas web como elllo o eslab.

Si pones estos consejos en práctica, probablemente vas a ser exitoso en tu camino al aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera o cualquier otra materia que te propongas. Disciplina y perseverancia son dos valores aliados que debes practicar para que los aspectos antes mencionados funcionen efectivamente.



Picture taken from:http://evolllution.com/

## References

Allegheny College. (2015). *Students who are blind or have a visual impairment.* Meadville. Retrieved from:http://sites.allegheny.edu/disabilityservices/students-who-are-blind-or-have-a-visual-impairment/.

Al-Mahmood, R., McLean, P., Powell, E., &Ryan,J.( 1998). Towards success in tertiary. Study with vision impairment. *Towards success in tertiary study, 4.*1-29. Retrieved from: http://services.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/68891 2/TowardsServicesVision.pdf.

Helgesen, M. (2002). *Let's get physical. Retrieved from:* http://www.mgu.ac.jp/~ic/helgesen/physical/physical_-prehtml.htm.

Virginia Department of Education.(2010). EFL teaching in Virginia to visually impaired students. Retrieved from: http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/disabilities/sensory_disabili ties/visually_impaired_blind/visually_impaired_guidelines.pdf.

**Universidad Nacional**
**Licentiate in Applied Linguistics**
**Students:** Elvira Gutiérrez Pineda
Carolina Solano Hidalgo
**Diagnostic instrument: Questionnaire for teachers**

**Objective:** To gather information about the support that teachers have received from educational authorities in their corresponding places of work regarding the teaching to students with visual impairment.

Dear teachers, we are very grateful for your willingness to help us. Your answers will be totally confidential and they will be used for academic purposes ONLY.

**Instructions**: Read the questionnaire and answer in a written way. If you have any doubt, you can ask the researchers.

1. Do you have, or ever had any student with visual problems in your class?

   (     ) Yes                     (     ) No

2. How do you teach this/these student(s)? Explain.

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. Are you well prepared to deal with any case of a student with visual impairment or blindness?

   (     ) Yes       (     ) Partially             (     ) No

   3.1.    Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Have you received any training on teaching students with visual problems oriented to English teaching?

(      ) Yes            () No

4.1.    Which one?

_____
_____
_____

5. Has the institution where you work supported you in the process of teaching students with visual impairment? In which way?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

6. How is the institution prepared regarding materials, infrastructure, or organization in general to deal with cases of visual impairment?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

7. What would you recommend the institution in order to provide more support to students with visual problems and to you as a teacher?

_____
_____
_____
_____

_____
_____

8. Do you consider necessary to have more support from your educational authorities and institution in order to teach students with visual impairment?
   Yes (   ) No (   ) why?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

9. What is the importance of knowing how to deal with learners with visual problems in the class?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

**Thank you very much for your insights, time and attention!!!!!!**

Universidad Nacional
Sede Regional Brunca
Licenciatura en Lingüística Aplicada con énfasis en Inglés
Profesor colaborador:    _____
Institución:            Colegio Fernando Volio
Investigadores:         Carolina Solano Hidalgo
                        Elvira Gutiérrez Pineda
Fecha: _____         Hora: _____
Nombre del participante:_____.
Instrumento # 1: Entrevista para los padres

**Objetivo:** Conocer la percepción  del padre o madre  sobre la enseñanza del inglés que recibe su hija.

**Instrucciones:** El entrevistador considera las siguientes preguntas tomando nota  de forma digital o escrita de sus respectivas respuestas. En caso de ser necesario, hará uso de las preguntas opcionales para corroborar información.

1. ¿Cuáles son algunas necesidades particulares de su hija?
2. ¿Qué opina usted sobre la enseñanza del inglés que recibe su hija?
3. ¿Existe algún proyecto o seguimiento para apoyar a su hija ante su condición?
4. ¿Le gustaría a usted que existan cambios en la enseñanza el inglés en beneficio del aprendizaje de su hija? ¿Cuáles?
5. ¿Qué recomendaría usted al profesor de inglés para ayudar a su hija a aprender el idioma?

Preguntas opcionales

1. ¿Por qué considera que la clase de inglés es apropiada para su hija?
2. ¿Qué tipo de apoyo recibe su hija por parte de la institución o la profesora de idioma?
3. ¿Qué recomendaciones haría para mejorar la enseñanza del inglés para su hija?

Sede Regional Brunca

Licenciatura en Linguística Aplicada con énfasis en Inglés

Profesor colaborador:  _____

Institución:          Colegio Fernando Volio

Investigadores:       Carolina Solano Hidalgo

                      Elvira Gutiérrez Pineda

Fecha: _____  Hora: _____

Nombre del participante:_____

Instrumento # 2: Entrevista para la participante

**Objetivo:** Conocer  la percepción de la participante sobre la enseñanza del inglés que recibe y su aprendizaje.

**Instrucciones:** El entrevistador considera las siguientes preguntas tomando nota  de forma digital o escrita de sus respectivas respuestas. En caso de ser necesario, hará uso de las preguntas opcionales para corroborar información.

1. ¿Le gusta el inglés? ¿Por qué?
2. ¿Le gusta algún cantante o música en inglés? ¿Cuál, que tipo de música ?
3. ¿Aprende mucho en las clases de inglés? ¿Por qué?
4. ¿Qué ha aprendido en las clases de inglés?
5. Que le parece más fácil de lo que ha aprendido en las clases de inglés?
6. Que le parece más difícil de lo que ha aprendido en las clases de inglés?
7. ¿Qué es lo que más le gusta de la clase de inglés? ¿Porqué?
8. ¿Cómo le gustaría que cambien las clases de inglés?  (materiales, actividades, el lugar, horario, trato de su profesora, etc.).
9. ¿Qué tipo de actividades le gustan más durante la clase de inglés? (juegos, lecturas, canciones, dinámicas, concursos, etc)

Preguntas Opcionales

1. ¿Qué actividades, tareas, trabajos y prácticas  de las que su profesora realiza en clases de inglés le gustan más? ¿Por qué?
2. ¿Qué tipo de actividades le gustaría que se practiquen más durante la clase de ingles?

**Universidad Nacional**
**Licentiate in Applied Linguistics**
**Students:** Elvira Gutiérrez Pineda
Carolina Solano Hidalgo
**Instrument #3: Questionnaire for the EFL teacher**

**Objective:** To gather information about the teaching strategies the teacher uses to instruct an EFL student with visual impairment.

Dear teacher, we are very grateful for your willingness to help us. Your answers will be totally confidential and they will be used for academic purposes ONLY.

**Instructions**: Read the questionnaire and answer in a written way. If you have any doubt, you can ask the researchers.

1. Do you use any specific teaching strategy to instruct students with visual impairment in your class?
   (    ) Yes            (    ) No
   2.1 Which one?

   _____
   _____

2. Have you seen any positive or negative results in the student's learning process by using specific teaching strategies?(    ) Yes     (    )No
   3.1. Explain

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. What aspects do you take into account when teaching a student with a visual disability? Explain.

   _____
   _____
   _____

_____
_____

4.  What would you recommend teachers who haven't dealt with students who have any visual impairment?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

5.  In your opinion, what are some recommendations to improve language teaching to students with visual problems in public institutions?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

**Thank you very much for your insights, time and attention!!!!!!**

UNA◉
UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL
C O S T A   R I C A

**Objective**: This instrument is aimed to gather valuable information about teaching strategies used to instruct a student with a visual problem. It includes three aspects: personal delivery, presentation and the use of visual aids.

**Instructions**: Get familiar with the classroom environment and other factors surrounding the student. Write a √ in the corresponding box. (Yes, Noor Not Observed).

| Aspect | Yes | No | Not Observed |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1.Personal Delivery** | | | |
| Does the teacher face the class when speaking? Does she speak clearly in a normal voice, not loudly, slowly or with exaggeration? If in doubt she asks the student if the pace is right? | | | |
| Does the instructor identify herself by name in case the student does not recognize her voice? | | | |
| Does the teacher indicate verbally when she is entering or leaving the student's presence. | | | |
| Does the teacher stand where glare is minimized? | | | |
| Does the instructor convey orally whatever she has written on the board or shown on overheads, particularly charts and diagrams? | | | |
| Does the teacher offer the student a seat near the front, or slightly to one side of the projector or board display? | | | |
| Does the teacher eliminate background noises as much as possible? | | | |

## 2.Presentation

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Does the instructor express written information verbally e.g. when viewing overheads or writing on the board? | | | |
| Does the teacher try to follow a logical structure for the session? | | | |
| Does the instructor allow extra time for the learner to read through slides, assimilate information and respond before going on to the next stage? | | | |
| Does the teacher provide reading material and slides in advance in order to prevent exclusion and reduce delay? | | | |
| If the teacher speaks to the student in a group, she tries to ensure that only one person at a time speaks so that the student can follow the thread of the conversation more easily? | | | |

## 3.Use of Visual Aids

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Does the instructor ensure that apart from notices on the board, there are also verbal announcements? | | | |
| Does the teacher ask the student if assistance is required? | | | |
| When introducing new vocabulary, the teacher gives an oral explanation and spelling?. | | | |
| Does the teacher allow time for the learner to absorb what's on the screen? | | | |
| Does the instructor always read out what is written when using a whiteboard? | | | |
| When using slides, does the teacher use at least 24 point text and keep designs simple? | | | |
| When using videos and tapes, does the teacher inform the student in advance? | | | |
| Does the instructor use color and imagery to highlight key points or important details? | | | |

Adapted from:*http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/assets/documents/SuggestedTeachingStrategiestousewithBlindandPartiallySightedStudents.pdf*

Comments_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

**Universidad Nacional**
**Licentiate in Applied Linguistics**
**Students:** Elvira Gutiérrez Pineda
Carolina Solano Hidalgo
Instrument # 5: Log

**Objective**: This instrument is aimed to gather valuable details about the classroom, the teacher's strategies, the participant under study, the English class and any other essential feature the researchers consider necessary to write down.

**Instructions**: Get familiar with the classroom environment, building access , and other factors surrounding the student. Describe each of them in detail.  Write down your description.

Date:_____ Time:_____ Classroom:_____

Level:_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Universidad Nacional
Licenciatura en Lingüística Aplicada

Investigadores: Elvira Gutiérrez Pineda
Carolina Solano Hidalgo

Instrumento # 6: Cuestionario para los comités de apoyo

**Objetivo:** Obtener información esencial sobre el abordaje que se le da a los problemas visuales de los estudiantes en las instituciones educativas.

Estimados señores, le agradecemos por colaborar con esta investigación. Sus respuestas serán utilizadas para propósitos meramente académicos.

**Instrucciones:** Lea cuidadosamente el cuestionario y conteste de forma escrita. Si tiene alguna duda, consulte a los investigadores.

1. ¿Creen ustedes que los estudiantes con problemas visuales reciben una educación inclusiva en esta institución?

   (        ) si     (        ) no

   1.1  Explique.
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. ¿Cuántos casos de alumnos con problemas de la vista han tenido durante su labor como comité de apoyo?
   _____

3. ¿Qué mecanismos utiliza su comité para abordar los problemas visuales que presentan o podrían presentar estudiantes de la institución?
   _____
   _____
   _____

   3.1 ¿Cuáles mecanismos de los antes citados han dado un resultado efectivo? ¿Por qué?
   _____
   _____

_____

_____

4. ¿Qué apoyo le brinda su comité a educandos con problemas de la vista?

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. ¿Con qué herramientas cuanta su comité de apoyo para brindar ayuda a estudiantes con una limitante visual?

_____

_____

_____

6. ¿Han capacitado ustedes a los docentes de esta institución para lidiar con estudiantes que tienen un problema visual?

(        )si    (        )no

7. ¿Consideran ustedes que los docentes de esta institución están lo suficientemente preparados para instruir a educandos con una limitante visual?
(        ) si    (        )no
7.1 Explique.

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. ¿Qué recomendaría su comité a maestros/profesores de otras instituciones educativas que tienen bajo su cargo a alumnos con un problema visual?

_____

_____

_____

¡Gracias por su colaboración!

**Universidad Nacional**
**Licentiate in Applied Linguistics**
**Researchers:**
Elvira Gutiérrez Pineda
Carolina Solano Hidalgo
**Instrument # 7: Questionnaire for the English Advisor**

**Objective:** To gather information about English teaching materials and support that exists in the region for EFL teachers to deal with students with low vision or blindness.

We are very grateful for your willingness to help us. Your answers will be totally confidential and they will be used for academic purposes ONLY.

**Instructions**: Read the questionnaire and answer in a written way. If you have any doubt, you can ask the researchers. At the end of this document you can write, if necessary, any other opinion that you consider relevant to mention and was not taken into consideration.

1. Is there any program to train English teachers to deal with students with visual impairment? If any, which one (s)?

2. What recommendations or guidelines are given to English teachers when they have to instruct students with visual impairment?

3. How are English teachers supervised regarding the correct inclusion and instruction of students with visual impairment?

4. Based on your experience, do you consider that EFL teaching to visually challenged leaners in Pérez Zeledón is inclusive? Why?

5. Is there any English teaching material available for teachers to instruct students with visual impairment? If any, which one?

Comments:

_____
_____
_____
_____

**Thank you very much for your insights, time and attention!!!!!!**

**Universidad Nacional**
**Licenciatura en Linguistica aplicada**
**Investigadores:**
Elvira Gutiérrez Pineda
Carolina Solano Hidalgo
Instrumento# 8: Cuestionario para el/la especialista del
Instituto Helen Keller

**Objetivo:** Conocer las ayudas o apoyos que brinda el instituto Helen Keller a profesores y estudiantes que tengan discapacidad visual, así como información de importancia para comprender la situación actual en el cantón sobre este tema.

➢ La información que será recopilada es única y exclusivamente para uso académico.
➢ Al final del cuestionario se le brinda un espacio para que brinde información extra si lo considera necesario.

1. ¿Cuál es la incidencia de estudiantes con problemas visuales en Pérez Zeledón?
2. ¿Qué tipo de ayudas o capacitaciones se le brindan a profesores, padres y a los estudiantes con problemas visuales?
3. Considera usted que las capacitaciones brindadas a educadores de Inglés han logrado su objetivo? ¿Por qué?
4. ¿Cuál es la respuesta de los profesores ante las capacitaciones?
5. ¿Considera que la enseñanza en el cantón es inclusiva para estudiantes con baja visión o ceguera? ¿Por qué?
6. ¿Cómo se puede lograr inclusión en el aula y en la institución para estudiantes con problemas visuales y cuál es la importancia de la inclusión en el centro educativo?
7. ¿Qué tipo de materiales, técnicas y acciones son las más apropiadas para instruir estudiantes con discapacidad visual?
8. ¿Existe algún tipo de material o ayudas para profesores de inglés? ¿Cuale(s)?

Comentarios:

_____
_____
_____
_____

**¡Muchas gracias por su tiempo y colaboración!**