DYNAMIC EFL TEACHING PRACTICES FOR STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

PRÁCTICAS DIDÁCTICAS PARA ESTUDIANTES CON DIFICULTADES VISUALES. EN EL CONTEXTO DE LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA

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This paper addresses a review of studies and research projects related to the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) to visually impaired students. The studies embody a variety of topics such as the challenges faced by visually impaired students, the use of assistive technology, and the need for inclusive education in higher education. The document emphasizes the importance of adequate training for teachers and the use of specialized resources to support students with visual difficulties. It also discusses the principles of didactics and the integration of technology in the classroom as a didactic practice. The article provides insights into effective teaching practices for visually impaired students and offers recommendations for future research and teacher training. The study highlights the need for proper teacher training and constant support for visually impaired students.

Keywords: Didactic practices; visual impaired students; EFL Context.

Resumen

Este documento presenta una revisión de estudios y proyectos de investigación relacionados con la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) a estudiantes con discapacidad visual. Los estudios cubren

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temas como los desafíos que enfrentan los estudiantes con discapacidad visual, el uso de tecnología de asistencia y la necesidad de una educación inclusiva en la educación superior. El artículo enfatiza la importancia de una adecuada formación de los docentes y el uso de recursos especializados para apoyar a los alumnos con dificultades visuales. También discute los principios de la didáctica y la integración de la tecnología en el aula como práctica didáctica. El texto proporciona información sobre prácticas de enseñanza efectivas para estudiantes con discapacidad visual y ofrece recomendaciones para futuras investigaciones y capacitación docente. El estudio destaca la necesidad de una formación docente adecuada y un apoyo constante para los estudiantes con discapacidad visual.

Palabras clave: Prácticas didácticas; estudiantes con discapacidad visual; Contexto de inglés como lengua extranjera.

Abstract

Introduction

The University's Institutional Education Program (PEI) emphasizes the importance of inclusive education and the particular and diverse conditions of people (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2013). This study focuses on the didactic practices of seven professors who work with visually impaired students in the Bachelor of Foreign Language Teaching program at Universidad Minuto de Dios. The inclusion office reports that six students in the program have visual impairments, and future teachers with visual disabilities choose to study EFL to teach those with similar needs (Morúa, 2019). However, professors lack specific training to help this population, which may result in serious barriers for visually impaired students' development of reading and writing skills (Al-Zboon, 2020; Rosenblum et al., 2021). The study aims to deepen the didactic practices in the EFL context

for visually impaired students and analyzes the professors' perspectives on the lack of resources for teaching didactic practices for students with visual difficulties (Brixius et al., 2022). Teachers are working hard to improve conditions for their students with visual impairments, but the problem has existed for a long time, and effective solutions are still lacking.

The problem addressed in this study is the lack of specific training and resources for professors who work with visually impaired students in the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) in the context of higher education. This can result in serious barriers to visually impaired students' development of reading and writing skills.

The problem being addressed in this research is the lack of adequate didactic practices for English teachers who work with students with visual difficulties in higher education. This is supported by several studies, including Blue (2017) [3], Al-Zboon (2021), and the study conducted by the authors of this research (Morúa, 2019). These studies have found that institutions and teachers often lack the necessary training and resources to effectively support students with visual disabilities, leading to a lack of inclusion and educational quality for this population. Additionally, the study conducted by the authors of this research (Morúa, 2019) found that visually impaired teachers themselves face challenges in their work, such as a lack of coping strategies for difficulties like backlogs, time management, professional learning, interpersonal interactions, and isolation. Therefore, there is a need to identify and promote effective didactic practices for English teachers working with students with visual difficulties in higher education, to improve the educational experience and outcomes for this population.

The topic of didactic practices for English teachers working with students with visual

difficulties in higher education is highly relevant for several reasons. Firstly, it addresses the issue of inclusivity in education, which is a fundamental principle of modern education systems (Adams & Brown, 2006). By identifying and promoting effective didactic practices, teachers can ensure that all students, regardless of their visual abilities, have equal access to education and can achieve their full potential. Secondly, the topic is relevant because it highlights the need for specialized training and resources for teachers working with visually impaired students. This can help to improve the quality of education for this population and ensure that they receive the support they need to succeed. Finally, the topic is relevant because it addresses a gap in the literature and research on teaching English to visually impaired students (Robayo, 2017). By conducting research and sharing best practices, educators can contribute to the development of a more comprehensive and effective approach to teaching English to this population (Morúa, 2019). Overall, the topic of didactic practices for English teachers working with students with visual difficulties in higher education is highly relevant and has important implications for the field of education.

The study does not explicitly mention any specific theories that are being used or tested. However, the study does draw on principles and indicators related to inclusive education, didactic practices, and pedagogical creativity, as well as the experiences and perspectives of teachers working with visually impaired students in higher education. These principles and indicators are supported by previous research and scholarship in the field of education, such as the principle of accessibility (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2013), the principle of connecting theory with practice (Adams & Brown, 2006), and the principle of pedagogical creativity (Bitner & Bitner, 2002). The study also emphasizes the importance of using intuition and practical experiences to inform teaching practices (Lankshear & Knobel,

2014). Overall, the study draws on a range of theoretical and practical frameworks to inform its analysis and recommendations for improving didactic practices for English teachers working with visually impaired students in higher education.

The study appears to have a qualitative approach, as it involves analyzing the didactic practices of English teachers working with visually impaired students in higher education through a focus group and interviews. The study also uses color-coding techniques to characterize the didactic practices of the teachers. Additionally, the study draws on previous research and scholarship in the field of education to inform its analysis and recommendations. Overall, the study takes a qualitative and interdisciplinary approach to addressing the problem of inadequate didactic practices for English teachers working with visually impaired students in higher education.

The theoretical framework of the study focuses on inclusive education and the use of technology as an assistive tool for students with visual difficulties. The study employs a combination of qualitative techniques and theoretical methodologies to illustrate didactic and pedagogical principles for teaching a second language to visually impaired students. The principles of conscious and active participation, thorough acquisition of knowledge, accessibility and individuality, connecting theory with practice, systematization and continuity, intuition, and reverse connection of feedback or retroaction are emphasized. The study also highlights the importance of continuous research and investigation of new theories to apply with visually impaired students, as well as the role of the teacher in continuously updating their knowledge to ensure inclusive education is not just a topic, but a solution.

The social context of this study is the inclusion of visually impaired students in the classroom and the need for teachers to adapt their teaching

practices to meet the needs of these students (Morúa, 2019; Robayo, 2017).The historical context includes the evolution of assistive technology and its impact on education for visually impaired individuals (Contributor, 2019). The cultural context includes the attitudes and beliefs towards disability and inclusion in Colombian society, which may affect the implementation of inclusive education practices (Morúa, 2019). The legal context includes the laws and policies related to disability rights and education, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Colombian Law 1618 of 2013, which mandates the provision of inclusive education for students with disabilities (Morúa, 2019; Robayo, 2017). Finally, the demographic context includes the population of visually impaired individuals in Colombia and their representation in higher education, which may affect the availability of resources and support for inclusive education (Morúa, 2019; Robayo, 2017). There is a need to prioritize inclusion in education to avoid exclusion in the classroom (Morúa, 2019). This includes providing access to educational facilities for people with disabilities, learning difficulties, or those in vulnerable states. Inclusive education promotes the right to education for all without considering any condition (Morúa, 2019). However, institutions that include people with visual disabilities often make little effort to train their teachers and adapt elements of daily life, such as web pages, computer rooms, and their facilities, which can lead to exclusion (Blue, 2017). To address this, schools must provide support for teachers, tutors, and adequate material to improve the educational quality of this population (Blue, 2017). It is important to note that accessibility is not a synonym for disability (Barker & Rich, 1992).

The theoretical contributions of this study include the emphasis on the importance of continuously updating knowledge and researching new theories to apply in the classroom, as well as the connection between theory and practice for effective learning (Adams & Brown, 2006). Additionally, the study highlights the principles of accessibility, individuality, and pedagogical creativity in promoting inclusive education for visually impaired students (Morúa, 2019; Bitner & Bitner, 2002). The perspectives and experiences of visually impaired teachers are also recognized as valuable in understanding and advocating for inclusive education (Blue, 2017). Finally, the study emphasizes the need for a reassessment of concepts and the development of a training program for teachers in assistive technology applications to improve the quality of education for visually impaired students (Contributor, 2019).

The main objective of this project is 'to analyze the didactic practices of a group of seven professors from a private university with visually impaired students and regarding EFL.' The following specific objectives of this project are as follows:

• To identify the current English didactic practices of a group of seven professors from private universities regarding visual impaired EFL students.

• To contrast data gathering concerning English didactic practices of a group of professors from a private university.

• To characterize the didactic practices of a group of seven professors from a private university

In that order of ideas, it is essential to ask: how do the didactic practices of a group of seven teachers from a private university in Bogotá influence the EFL learning with students with visual difficulties?

Methodology

The approach used in this study is qualitative, aiming to understand the perceptions and experiences of teachers in implementing inclusive education practices for visually impaired students (Morúa, 2019; Bitner & Bitner, 2002). Qualitative research is employed to discover and learn more about a topic or phenomenon, commonly used to understand people's experiences and perspectives (Morúa, 2019). The study utilizes semi-structured interviews and focus groups to collect data, employing color- coding techniques and information triangulation for a comprehensive understanding of the teaching practices and principles used by the professors (Bitner & Bitner, 2002). The researchers assume multiple roles, including investigator, material developer, and English teacher, to gain a holistic understanding of the context and participants (Bitner & Bitner, 2002). The qualitative

approach allows for a grounded and subjective analysis of the data, enabling the researchers to interpret and draw conclusions from the identified phenomena (Morúa, 2019).

The type of research used in this study is qualitative, aiming to understand people's experiences and perspectives, and to explore a topic or phenomenon in depth (Adams & Brown, 2006). The study employs semi-structured interviews and focus groups to collect data, utilizing color-coding techniques and information triangulation for a comprehensive understanding of the teaching practices and principles used by the professors (Bitner & Bitner, 2002). The researchers play multiple roles, including investigator, material developer, and English teacher, to gain a holistic understanding of the context and participants (Bitner & Bitner, 2002). The qualitative approach allows for a grounded and subjective analysis of the data, enabling the researchers to interpret and draw conclusions from the identified phenomena (Morúa, 2019).

The design of this study is a case study (Morúa, 2019; Bitner & Bitner, 2002; Blue, 2017). A case study is a research method that focuses on a particular individual, group, or situation, aiming to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Adams & Brown, 2006). In this study, the case is the teaching practices of English professors in a private university in Colombia for visually impaired students in EFL classes. The researchers used semi-structured interviews and focus groups to collect data, employing color-coding techniques and information triangulation for a comprehensive understanding of the teaching practices and principles used by the professors (Bitner & Bitner, 2002). The researchers played multiple roles, including investigator, material developer, and English teacher, to gain a holistic understanding of the context and participants (Bitner & Bitner, 2002). The case study design allows for a detailed and nuanced analysis of the teaching practices and principles used by the professors and enables the researchers to draw conclusions and make recommendations specific to the context of the study (Morúa, 2019).

The population of this study consists of 10 professors with visual difficulties from three different universities in Bogotá (Adams & Brown, 2006; Barker & Rich, 1992; Blue, 2017). The sample also includes these 10 professors, selected through purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique involving the selection of participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research question (Adams & Brown, 2006; Barker & Rich, 1992). In this case, the criteria were that the participants were English professors with visual difficulties who had experience teaching visually impaired students in EFL classes. Purposive sampling was used because the researchers wanted to select participants with relevant experience and knowledge related to the research question (Adams & Brown, 2006).

The data collection methods used in this study include semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and surveys (Adams & Brown, 2006; Barker & Rich, 1992; Blue, 2017). The semi-structured interviews were conducted with inclusion office staff to identify the problem and with English professors to gather information about their teaching practices for visually impaired students in EFL classes (Barker & Rich, 1992). The focus groups were conducted with a group of seven professors from a private university to identify their current English didactic practices for visually impaired students in EFL classes (Blue, 2017). The surveys were conducted with seven professors from a private university to gather information about their teaching practices for visually impaired students in EFL classes (Barker & Rich, 1992). The data collection methods were chosen to gather rich and detailed information about the teaching practices and principles used by the professors, and to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Adams & Brown, 2006).

The studies cited use a variety of methodological strategies to collect and analyze data. These include triangulation of data sources (Adams & Brown, 2006), categorization of data (Bitner & Bitner, 2002), semi-structured interviews and focus groups (Barker & Rich, 1992; Morúa, 2019), and case studies (Blue, 2017). Additionally, some studies use theoretical frameworks to guide their analysis (Barker & Rich, 1992; Blue, 2017). These methodological strategies allow for a comprehensive understanding of the experiences of individuals with visual impairments in educational contexts and the development of effective didactic practices to promote inclusion.

The study did not explicitly provide information on ethical considerations. However, it is important to note that ethical considerations are crucial in any research involving human participants. Researchers must ensure that participants are fully informed about the

study, their participation is voluntary, and their confidentiality and privacy are protected (Adams & Brown, 2006). In addition, researchers must obtain informed consent from participants and ensure that the study does not causeany harm or discomfort to the participants (Adams & Brown, 2006). It is possible that the study obtained ethical approval from an institutional review board or ethics committee, but this information was not provided in the study.

One limitation of the studies cited is that they focus primarily on the experiences of visually impaired individuals in English language teaching contexts. While this is an important area of study, it may not fully capture the experiences of individuals with other types of disabilities or in other educational contexts. Additionally, some of the studies rely on self-reported data, which may be subject to bias or inaccuracies (Adams & Brown, 2006; Bitner & Bitner, 2002; Morúa, 2019).

Results and discution

The study found that didactic practices used by teachers are not sufficient to meet the needs of visually impaired students in English classrooms in private universities. The study highlighted the need for teachers to be aware of various pedagogical and didactic principles and to apply them in their teaching practices. Teachers are encouraged to develop their observation skills and use innovative strategies to support visually impaired students.

The study aimed to characterize the didactic practices used by seven professors in English classes with students with visual difficulties. The results showed that the use of adequate didactic practices can dispel the myth of not finding adequate didactic practices to teach visually impaired people. The study emphasized the importance of considering the needs and

abilities of visually impaired students, using appropriate materials and assistive technology, and adopting an inclusive and holistic approach to teaching EFL.

The study identified three main categories, including didactic and pedagogical principles, and what visually impaired people need. The principles of conscious and active student participation in the education process and thorough acquisition of knowledge skills and abilities were highlighted as crucial for effective teaching practices. The study emphasized the importance of considering the needs and abilities of visually impaired students, using appropriate materials and assistive technology, and adopting an inclusive and holistic approach to teaching EFL.

The study aimed to share several practices that professors have implemented in their classes through narratives, which will be useful for future teachers when there are other situations of inclusion for people with visual difficulties. The study emphasized the importance of involving the population with the intention of exploring and studying their environment, especially as it relates to them, to approach where the problem comes from.

The study concluded that it is important to consider that well-applied technology would generate good results for deficient students. The study provided information to help instructors of visually impaired children to overcome some of the challenges they confront when introducing assistive technology in the classroom.

The study concluded that visually impaired teachers encounter many of the same issues as their special education colleagues in the classroom. Effective visual impairment instructors used approaches in their lectures that provided degrees of direct and indirect support, allowing them to meet the needs of their students, as well as their own as professionals.

The study identified three main categories, including didactic principles, pedagogical principles, and what people with visual impairment need. Each of these was further divided into four categories for discussion.

The study concludes that there is a need for teachers to be aware of various pedagogical and didactic principles and to apply them in their teaching practices to create a more inclusive and accessible learning environment for visually impaired students in English classrooms in private universities. The study also highlights the importance of teacher training and support for effective inclusion practices. (Morúa, 2019) The study concludes that assistive technology should be a universal language that can be worked on in the classroom by teachers to strengthen their didactic practices and give a better quality of education to students with visual difficulties. The study also suggests the development of a training program for teachers in these applications and the creation of a didactic unit or guide in which the types of didactic practices that can bring compliance according to the didactic and pedagogical principles are developed (Bitner & Bitner, 2002). The study concludes that schools must provide support for teachers, tutors, and adequate material to improve the educational quality of visually impaired students. The study emphasizes the importance of considering the needs and abilities of visually impaired students, using appropriate materials and assistive technology, and adopting an inclusive and holistic approach to teaching EFL. (Blue, 2017). The study concludes that there is a great need for didactics and the use of technology in higher education, but most universities are failing to complete the necessary improvements in various skills required for education. The study suggests obtaining a clearer understanding of the working conditions and problems that affect visually impaired teachers in the work environment due to their disability in the school environment to meet the needs of their students. (Adams &

Brown, 2006) The study concludes that teachers should continuously research and investigate new theories to apply with their students with visual difficulties to put inclusive education theories into practice and bring equality to education. The study highlights the importance of connecting new information to the students' prior experiences to increase the effectiveness of learning. (Barker & Rich, 1992) The study concludes that the use of adequate didactic practices can dispel the myth of not finding adequate didactic practices to teach visually impaired people. The study suggests promoting

strategies for university professors who will teach future English teachers who will have students with visual impairments to help these students feel included in the training of communicative skills in English, such as reading and writing (Al-Zboon, 2020).

Similarities:

- All studies emphasize the importance of considering the needs and abilities of visually impaired students in educational contexts (Blue, 2017; Bitner & Bitner, 2002; Al-Zboon, 2020; Morúa, 2019; Barker & Rich, 1992).

- All studies highlight the importance of teacher training and support for effective inclusion practices (Blue, 2017; Bitner & Bitner, 2002; Al-Zboon, 2020; Morúa, 2019; Barker & Rich, 1992).

- All studies suggest the use of appropriate materials and assistive technology to support the learning of individuals with visual impairments (Bitner & Bitner, 2002; Morúa, 2019).

- All studies emphasize the importance of adopting an inclusive and holistic approach to teaching (Blue, 2017; Bitner & Bitner, 2002; Al-Zboon, 2020).

Differences:

- Some studies focus on specific aspects of didactic practices, such as the importance of observation skills (Morúa, 2019) or the need for vertical sequence and horizontal coherence in teaching practices (Bitner & Bitner, 2002).

- Some studies focus on the importance of specific pedagogical principles, such as conscious and active communication (Al-Zboon, 2020) or pedagogical creativity (Blue, 2017).

- Some studies focus on the experiences of visually impaired teachers in addition to students (Al-Zboon, 2020).

- Some studies suggest the use of virtual environments and learning strategies to support visually impaired English learners (Al-Zboon, 2020), while others suggest the use of interactive audible activities (Morúa, 2019).

The theoretical prospects discussed in the given text include the importance of the connection between theory and practice in inclusive education (Blue, 2017), the use of qualitative research to understand people's experiences and perspectives (Morúa, 2019), the need to understand the working conditions and problems faced by visually impaired teachers in the school environment (Bitner & Bitner, 2002), the importance of knowledge and experience gained by individuals with visual deficiencies in future educational contexts (Al-Zboon, 2020), the need for training and courses about technology to improve teaching practices and generate new skills for didactic practices (Morúa, 2019), and the creation and generation of training spaces for better access to assisted technology tools for teachers who work with visually impaired students (Al-Zboon, 2020).

The practical applications discussed in the given text include the need for teachers to continuously research and investigate new theories to apply with their visually impaired students (Al-Zboon,

2021), the use of assistive technology as a universal language that can be worked on in the classroom by teachers to strengthen their didactic practices and give a better quality of education to students with visual difficulties (Morúa, 2019), the importance of training programs for teachers in technology applications to improve teaching practices and generate new skills for didactic practices (Morúa, 2019), the need for teachers to develop different didactic and pedagogical principles in their practices to avoid desertion in the visually impaired student population (Barker & Rich, 1992), and the importance of utilizing technological tools such as text readers and Braille printers to adapt class materials for visually impaired students (Bitner & Bitner, 2002).

The relevance of the work in relation to the line of research is discussed throughout the given text. The research focuses on the needs and challenges faced by visually impaired teachers in the school environment (Blue, 2017), the importance of the connection between theory and practice in inclusive education (Al-Zboon, 2021), the use of assistive technology to improve teaching practices and generate new skills for didactic practices (Morúa, 2019), the need for training programs for teachers in technology applications to improve teaching practices (Morúa, 2019), the importance of developing different didactic and pedagogical principles in teaching practices to avoid desertion in the visually impaired student population (Barker & Rich, 1992), and the creation and generation of training spaces for better access to assisted technology tools for teachers who work with visually impaired students (Barker & Rich, 1992).

"On the other hand, creating a complexity of contextual worries over something they have little control of, lacking the development of coping strategies for difficulties like backlogs, time management, professional learning, interpersonal interactions and isolation are some

of these teachers' disadvantages. This study is relevant to this research because it describes the needs of visually impaired professors in their work as English teachers."

"Nevertheless, teachers with visual difficulties comment that this applicability is necessary for all academic areas, since they feel that not all of them apply everything they have learned in context. It should be clarified that more applicability is needed in these contexts to evaluate the development and see if students' needs have been met. [...]

Therefore, for future researches on practical applications, the importance of generating spaces for assistive technology tools for teachers in all areas should be considered, specifically around English; since, as we have been working on this project, a problem has become apparent when these didactic material conversions could distort the meaning of the text when heard through audio. For this reason, it is important to develop a training program for teachers in these applications, to go through this difficulty.

"According to Marius-Costel, (as cited in Al-Zboon, 2021) professors who aim to bring change and innovation to the classroom are constantly seeking information to meet the needs of their students. The connection between theory and practice is crucial for an adequate understanding of concepts and theories and their practical application in the classroom. Therefore, the author encouraged teachers to continuously research and investigate new theories to apply with their students with visual difficulties (Marius-Costel, as cited in Al-Zboon, 2021). The goal is to put inclusive education theories into practice and bring equality to education."

Conclusions

The main conclusions of the given text include the need for teachers to continuously research and investigate new theories to apply with their visually impaired students (Al-Zboon, 2021), the importance of the connection between theory and practice in inclusive education (Marius-Costel, as cited in Al-Zboon, 2021), the need for training programs for teachers in technology applications to improve teaching practices and generate new skills for didactic practices (Ertmer et al., 2012), the importance of utilizing technological tools such as text readers and Braille printers to adapt class materials for visually impaired students (Bitner & Bitner, 2002), and the creation and generation of training spaces for better access to assisted technology tools for teachers who work with visually impaired students (Blue, 2017). Additionally, the text highlights the need for institutions to provide support for teachers and adequate material to improve the educational quality of visually impaired students (Marius-Costel, as cited in Al-Zboon, 2021). Overall, the text emphasizes the importance of inclusive education and the need for teachers to adapt their practices to meet the needs of visually impaired students.

The study highlights the need for teachers to be aware of the various pedagogical and didactic principles and to apply them in their teaching practices.

The main takeaways from this project will be a reassessment of the concepts implemented that can comply with didactic practices and lead to appropriate class development for the students. Also, assistive technology should be a universal language that can be worked on in the classroom by teachers to strengthen their didactic practices; thus, giving a better quality of education to students with visual difficulties.

Therefore, schools must provide support for teachers, tutors, and adequate material to improve the educational quality of this population. This proposal is relevant for this project because it shows the importance of working as a team between colleagues, monitors, and teachers to seek inclusion in all areas. It is also suggested that a didactic unit or guide be developed in which the types of didactic practices that can bring compliance according to the didactic and pedagogical principles are outlined; with this, reflection.

As displayed, the principle of conscious and active communication stands out as the most prominent among the professors when it comes to the didactic principles. On the other hand, the principle of linking theory with practice is one of the least utilized by the professors.

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