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INCLUSIVE EDUCATION OF LANGUAGE DISORDERS

Essay

Submitted for partial fulfillment of
The Master degree in Phoniatrics

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List of Contents

List of Tables

Table No.	Title	Page No.

List of Abbreviations

AAC............... : Augmentative and Alternative Communication

ADHD............ : Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder

ASL................ : American Sign Language

BDMH .... : Brain damaged motory handicapped

CWPT .... : class-wide peer tutoring

DI .... : Differentiated Instruction

DRO............... : Differential Reinforcement of Other behavior

HI .... : Hearing Impairment

ID .... : Intellectual Disabilities

IEP .... : Individual Education PIan

LD .... : Learning disability

MR .... : Mental retardation

NCLB............. : No Child Left Behind Act

PALS.............. : Peer-assisted learning strategies

PDD .... : Pervasive developmental disorders

RTI................. : Response to intervention

SEE .... : Signed Exact English

SEN................ : Special educational needs

SLI .... : Specific language impairment

UDHR............ : Universal Declaration of Human Rights

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INTRODUCTION

A dominant problem in the disability field is the lack of access to education for both children and adults with disabilities. Education is a fundamental right for all, enshrined in the universal declaration of Human Rights, and protected through various international conventions. In a majority of countries, there is a dramatic difference in the educational opportunities provided for disabled children and those provided for non-disabled children *(Lindqvist, 1999).*

Inclusive education is one of the greatest challenges facing educational systems throughout the world today, whether we are referring to developing, transition or developed countries. Providing an effective and high-quality education for all children and young people remains the main challenge *(Acedo et al., 2009).*

Inclusive education is a phenomenon that is gaining worldwide focus and attention and has been described as a social movement against exclusion in education *(Slee and Allen, 2005).*

Transforming a traditional school environment into an inclusive environment presents challenges *(Hutchinson, 2007).* The movement to an inclusive educational environment

requires a transformation of the philosophy, values, and practices of the educational community *(Artiles et al., 2006; Hutchinson, 2007).*

Exclusion from education exists in every country, in different forms and to varying degrees. Individuals or groups might be excluded for reasons based on race, socio-economic status, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, and physical or intellectual capacities. But some students are excluded within the education system itself: they may drop out or they may find themselves in a situation that does not provide them with the most appropriate responses to their basic learning needs and therefore they cannot gain access to the knowledge, skills and competencies they need to integrate successfully into society. Therefore the challenge is to overcome all forms of exclusion, both from education and within education *(Acedo et al., 2009).*

The fundamental principle of the inclusive schools is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities. There should be a continuum of support and services to match the continuum of special needs encountered in every school *(Thomas and Glenny, 2002).*

Inclusive education, according to its most basic definition, means that students with disabilities are supported in chronologically age appropriate general education classes in their home schools and receive the specialized instruction delineated by their individualized education programs (IEP's) within the context of the core curriculum and general class activities *(Halvorsen and Neary, 2001)* .

Inclusion is concerned with the learning, participation, and equal opportunities for all children, youth, and adults with a specific focus on the groups vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion from society life. It could be applied to children with special educational needs, including those considered to have emotional, behavioral, sensory, physical, or mental disabilities *(UNESCO, 2006).*

AIM OF THE WORK

This study aims to review the role of inclusive education in language disorders and to clarify its characteristics and benefits, in order to provide a vision for improving the quality of education for children with language disorders.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

What is inclusive education?

Inclusion is a vision, a road to be traveled, but a road without ending since it is a process and a road with all kinds of barriers and obstacles, some of them invisible and some of them are in our own heads and hearts *(Mittler, 2000a)*. Inclusion involves diversity, change of mind-set, values for schools and for society, social justice, universal human rights and equal opportunity. Inclusive education allows all students to have access to any school of their choice in their area regardless of their strengths, weaknesses and disability *(Charema, 2010)*.

Inclusive education provides one of the most powerful tools in breaking down stereotypes and negative attitudes towards disabled people *(Campbell, 2001)*.

The definition and practice of inclusive education can vary significantly not only between cultures and educational systems but also within cultures and educational systems *(Dyson, 1999)*. There is no universally agreed definition of inclusion *(Booth et al., 2006)*. Inclusive education is not limited to the inclusion of those children or young people with disabilities. Inclusion is inclusion of all regardless of race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, language, socio-economic status, and any other

aspect of an individual's identity that might be perceived as different *(Polat, 2010).*

Inclusion is a term considered by most educators to represent the practice of including all students, regardless of their abilities and backgrounds in age-appropriate classrooms and schools that meet all students' needs *(Kavale and Forness, 2000).*

Inclusion is seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all children, youth and adults through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision that covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children *(UNESCO, 2003).*

Inclusion promotes a philosophy of acceptance and belonging of all students. General education classes are structured to meet all students' needs by utilizing educational strategies and collaboration among educators to provide specially designed instruction and supplementary aids and services primarily in the general education classroom *(Moore et al., 1998).*

In defining inclusion, it is important to highlight the following elements:

Inclusion is about

- Welcoming diversity

- Benefiting all learners, not only targeting the excluded

- Children in schools who may feel excluded

- Providing equal access to education or making certain provisions for certain categories of children without excluding them

Inclusion is NOT about

- Reforms of special education alone, but reform of both the formal and non-formal education system

- Responding only to diversity, but also improving the quality of education for all learner

- Special schools but additional support to students within the regular school system

- Meeting the needs of children with disabilities only

- Meeting one child's needs at the expense of another child *(UNESCO, 2005).*

Over approximately the last 15 years, the concept of inclusive education has evolved towards the idea that all

children and young people, despite different cultural, social and learning backgrounds, should have equivalent learning opportunities in all kinds of schools. The focus is on generating inclusive settings, which should involve: (a) respecting, understanding and taking care of cultural, social and individual diversity (responding to the expectations and needs of students); (b) providing equal access to the quality of education; (c) close co-ordination with other social policies *(Opertti and Belalcazar, 2008).*

According to *Tutt (2007),* the main challenge is to provide inclusive settings in all schools, through the provision of a diverse continuum of services that are part of a school network linked to other social policies.

An inclusive educational strategy implies the careful, detailed consideration of the specificity and uniqueness of each child and adolescent so as to provide them with effective educational opportunities throughout their lives. In these terms, inclusive education is about the ways and the modalities by which teachers and students interact with each other and generate mutual empathy and closeness; how they understand and respect their diversities and jointly create suitable, attainable conditions for achieving relevant, pertinent learning opportunities for all *(Opertti and Belalcazar, 2008).*

In overall terms, inclusive education implies four key elements:

1. It is essentially a process of looking for the most appropriate ways of responding to diversity, as well as trying to learn how to learn from differences.

2. It is linked to the motivation and development, through multiple strategies, of students' creativity and their capacity to address and resolve problems.

3. It comprises the right of the child to attend school, express his/her opinion, experience quality learning and attain valuable learning outcomes.

4. It implies the moral responsibility to prioritize those students who are at risk of becoming marginalized and excluded from school, thus obtaining low learning outcomes

(Skidmore, 2004)

Human Rights

Inclusive education has been described as an issue of human rights *(Daniels and Garner,1999)* and also an issue that lends itself easily to international human rights declarations *(Artiles and Dyson,2005).* At the core of inclusive education is the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) which states that: everyone has the right to education…and that education shall be directed to the full development of human