

ELT TO THE BLIND LEARNERS IN SCHOOL

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Abstract: *Teaching English to blind students is crucial, just as it is to everyone else in the world. The increasing global interest in teaching English as a second language indicates that blind people's language learning needs cannot be ignored. Teachers also face difficulties when teaching blind kids in English. Having said so there are one or two things teachers who are not trained to teach the blind may need to know before they can be an effective teacher to a blind student.*

Key words: *Blind students, Teaching English, English language, Challenges.*

English language instruction has historically sparked heated discussions among educators, psychologists, legislators, and language teachers. The relevance of teaching English has increased due to the developing world's increasing need for the language. As the official language, the medium of instruction in educational institutions, and the language of intercultural communication, it has significant functions.

Due to the growing need for proficient English communication, there is a global need for English language training. In a similar vein, the importance of teaching blind kids English has increased over time. The topic of non-disabled pupils' acquisition of second languages has received sufficient scientific support, providing methodological rigor to language teachers. There isn't much research on teaching language to blind pupils, although the literature does discuss the challenges faced by English language teachers while teaching these kids the language. According to Galetova (2012), there is a growing population of blind individuals, which makes education vital. However, systematic study in this field is lacking.

Despite the fact that blind students value English just as much as other students, there is a dearth of research on the topic particularly in the area of teaching and assisting blind students in learning foreign languages (Coşkun, 2013). Guinan (1997) and Araluce (2005) claim that there is a general disregard for the needs of blind individuals when it comes to learning foreign languages. While Araluce (2005) contends that blindness will not in any way hinder language learning as long as fundamental methodological and pedagogical conditions are upheld, blind people will actually have an advantage over sighted people in language learning due to their superior oral sensitivity and memory.

Language teaching to blind learners: Assessment of challenges and needs

In the academic circles, everyone agrees that blind students have special learning demands. Despite their best efforts, teachers will not be able to successfully guide the learning of blind pupils if they are unaware of their requirements and potential.

Unawareness of the difficulties involved in teaching blind youngsters may cause the failure of the learners in the classroom and subsequently in society. Making out difficulties becomes much more relevant in a situation like Pakistan where the requirement for comprehension is crucial but lacking. As a result, this part examines the research and scholarly views that focus on what it means to teach blind students in a language classroom.

According to Sharlin (2015), the challenges that educators face depending on whether a student has a congenital or acquired vision impairment are different. Students who are naturally blind adapt to their surroundings and their circumstances. They also have fully developed other senses. Conversely, those who became blind later in life experience a terrible emotional condition. They still haven't found peace with their situation. Such students require more attention and tailored teaching methods. As a result, teachers face a variety of difficulties depending on whether a handicap is innate or develops later in life. Additionally, he makes it clear that blind pupils are susceptible to distractions just like other students. They must, in fact, exert greater effort to avoid boredom and distraction. Such circumstances frequently develop when there is no external support.

According to Kocyigit and Artar (2015), there is a challenge that both teachers and their blind students face known as an emotional challenge. The results of their investigation indicate that the teachers engaged in positive discrimination because they are compelled to feel sympathy and compassion for their blind students. Their blind students express the same feelings in various ways. Concerns about adaptation and teacher and peer attitudes plague them. The research draws attention to the difficulty with professionalism. The blind student may be pushed by positive discrimination to consider their "oddity," which causes them to experience inferiority complex. Teachers, on the other hand, must dispel any such concerns about their students through their impartial attitude.

The study by Kocyigit and Artar (2015) highlights other issues with the assessment procedure. Students who are proficient in braille have little trouble answering questions on tests, while those who struggle with the braille and must rely on others to explain questions and write answers for them highlight challenges since they must rely on memory and ask the helper to read the material again. As a result, it necessitates dependency and extra mental effort. Therefore, a reading and writing mechanism introduction is crucial.

In order to teach the blind about items, Kashdan and Barnes (1998) highlight the inclusion of a multisensory approach, particularly the use of touch. Without the chance to employ their senses, as is frequently the case, blind students tend to become passive recipients rather than actively exploring, which is essential for the growth of comprehension. According to Kashdan and Barnes (1998), some researchers think that blind people's haptic mechanisms play a significant role in how they conceptualize the

world. By stimulating this sense and developing ways to use it, we can help blind people feel more integrated and inspire them to learn specific languages.

A concern regarding the teachers of blind students is raised by Lerner (1991). He asserts that non-disabled teachers have reservations about the capacities of impaired students to learn. Such bias results from naive assumptions about the scope of learning processes. Although a learning deficit, such as the inability to construct fundamental concepts in the learning of a foreign language, is likely to develop in individuals with any kind of disability, it is not overwhelming.

Lerner (1991) emphasizes the significance of a multi-sensory approach in language learning as a result. In order for students who have a learning disability in one particular area, like vision, to have the chance to overcome it through other manifestation through several channels.

Ginan (1997) urges that the blind learners need qualified professionals. She makes the argument that if the teacher is unaware of the specific needs of the blind students, how is it that he uses the theories and methods to identify and solve the special obstacles that the students with blindness face. She feels that a trained instructor can make a significant difference in a student's success or failure because it all relies on how far he is prepared to go.

Başaran (2012) investigated the way English (foreign language) is taught to visually impaired students. He looked at the challenges EFL teachers face when instructing visually impaired students in English. The research revealed that none of the EFL instructors had any professional experience instructing children who are visually challenged. According to Basaran, it is a major issue that there are students in the classroom who have multiple disabilities. Other issues include the curriculum being inappropriate, verbalism among blind students, problems with families, a lack of resources, and the teachers' frequent use of outdated grammar-translation methods. Contrary to early research that suggested blind learners have their own learning style, the teachers taught the blind students in a manner comparable to how they educate sighted and non-impaired pupils.

Galetova (2012) focused her research on lesson planning for the English language instruction of blind students with the goal of identifying discrepancies between lesson plans for sighted students and blind students. Teaching blind children is a challenge since there is a lack of methodological support in the literature. As a result, the primary obstacles are a lack of lesson planning activities and a lack of similar assistance.

The issues that blind students and teachers faced when teaching and learning English in an inclusive setting, their strategies for overcoming these difficulties, and the unique needs of students in terms of the teaching strategies and methods employed, the learning resources offered, and the opportunities suggested to enable better teaching and/or learning were investigated by Kocyigit and Artar (2015). The study found that blind students' unique learning styles, personality traits, and habits have a special impact on the teaching and learning process. Because each of these students is unique, it is clear that no

single teaching strategy will work for all blind students. It is the responsibility of the instructors to modify their instruction in accordance with each student's strengths and shortcomings. The teachers relied on trial and error methods and did not receive enough academic and pedagogical support, but the outcomes highlighted the importance of the role played by administrators, curriculum designers, students, and families in enhancing the learning process.

It is true that blind students have particular demands, and they face particular difficulties in their academic work. The severity of their sickness, their concerns about the environment, their lack of experience, the world's design for the sighted, and the training and viewpoint of the teacher all contribute to the extraordinary requirements that learning for blind children implies. The educators can create a successful approach to satisfy the needs of the students for seamless learning when they have a greater understanding of the demands of blind learners.

CONCLUSION

The paper indicates that the importance of English language teachers are to blind students' language acquisition, but also highlights the difficulties they encounter when instructing blind pupils in English. Students in a blind classroom come in a wide range of variances and differences. The teachers of blind pupils must deal with students who have varying degrees of vision, varying racial backgrounds, varying ages, and varying learning styles. They have to cope with pupils that have a variety of difficulties. Students' understanding of items is too limited, and the necessary instructional resources are not available. These educational resources can be utilized for their better learning. The braille medium has some built-in restrictions, and neither teachers nor pupils are proficient enough to use it. There are no training programs for teachers on how to teach language to blind children, and teachers are skeptical of the capacities of people with disabilities to learn. If none of these obstacles are removed, language teachers working in blind institutions will continue to experience performance issues.

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