



Universidad Austral de Chile
Facultad de Filosofía y Humanidades
Pedagogía en Comunicación en Lengua Inglesa

Lead Advisor:
PhD. Amalia Ortiz de Zárate Fernández

**Drama Techniques as an Effective Way to Teach English
to Visually Impaired Students**

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Pamela Castillo Pinuer

Francisca Siebert Hechenleitner

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Abstract

Integration and inclusion are two different concepts which tend to be confused. In order to achieve inclusion students have to participate actively during the lessons, sharing their opinions and interacting with their classmates, because only being present in the classroom (integration) is not enough for developing an appropriate learning process. This research project intends to propose drama techniques as an effective way for achieving inclusion, focusing on the physical, emotional and cognitive characteristics of visually impaired students. In addition, considering the grounds of inclusive education and the principles of drama techniques, a teaching proposal has been developed as well as a set of activities and tips that can be used in an inclusive classroom with the purpose of having visually impaired students engaged during the English lessons.

Key concepts: inclusion, drama techniques, visually impaired.

Introduction

The inclusion of children with disabilities into regular schools has been an enormous challenge for teachers since 2010, year in which the law 20.422 came into effect. Even though it is established by the law that children with different needs have to be integrated during the whole lesson, it is a reality that sometimes the strategies and methodologies used by English teachers during the class are excluding children rather than including them. Moreover, to facilitate the learning process, students should participate actively in the lesson; not only being present in the classroom but also being aware of their importance in it, creating positive relationships and interacting with all their classmates.

In contrast to the latter, the reality is that the Chilean law is focused on integration rather than inclusion. This comes into view due to the fact that 80% of the teaching methods and resources used by teachers need the visual perception (Rodríguez, 2005, 129), which makes it almost impossible for visually impaired students to participate in the classroom; consequently, visually impaired students feel segregated during the lessons. This implicates that what tends to take place inside the Chilean classrooms is integration; yet, it is fundamental to start focusing the educational system on inclusion.

Bearing this situation in mind, it can be appreciated that the current state of affairs regarding the classroom with visually impaired students should not remain the same as it has been during the past years, which is why there is an urge for the development of special education methodologies focused on communication and interaction and fostering collaborative work among peers, so as to make all students participate and work towards inclusion.

Taking this into account, a teaching proposal will be developed with the purpose of suggesting drama techniques as an effective way to include students with visual impairment in the English lessons, making them participate actively during the class. It is important to mention

that the following work is the result of a bibliographical research that includes books, online publications, articles and personal communications with some institutions that collaborated with information about the topic of inclusion. The information gathered will be viewed in the light of inclusion in order to develop the teaching proposal. This research will be divided into three chapters: Theoretical Framework, Discussion and Teaching Proposal. In the First Chapter, the aspects and experiences of different educational systems will be reviewed regarding the topic of special education, as well as the grounds of inclusive classrooms, the characteristics of visually impaired students, the basis of drama techniques, and the different types of drama activities.

In the Second Chapter, a discussion on how effective drama techniques can result when working with visually impaired students will take place. The relationship among said techniques and the development of social, emotional, communicational skills, etc. and the advantages and disadvantages of working with drama techniques in an integrated classroom will also be exposed. Besides, possible problems and solutions will be analyzed in order to overcome potential obstacles and difficulties when working with these techniques.

Finally, in the Third Chapter, some recommendations (tips) to achieve active inclusion of students with visual impairment will be included. In that very chapter, some sample activities will be presented; those activities fall into different categories and they all aim at inclusion by focusing mainly on interaction, team work and communication among students. Most of the proposed activities are meant for elementary students, but its contents and objectives can be easily adapted in order to fit the needs of any upper level.

1. Theoretical Framework

1.1 State of the Art

In this section the reality of inclusive education in Chile and in some developed countries will be described, taking into account the main objectives and characteristics of each educational system. In order to understand the realities of these countries, it is important to mention the difference between integration and inclusion; Richard Rieser (n.d.) mentions that “integration is a state [and] inclusion is a process”, which means that integrated students are present in regular school having the chance to participate in the class, whereas included students participate actively during the lessons having an important role in the development of the class.

1.1.1 Inclusive Education

Inclusion is an important aspect of education that has taken importance all over the world, becoming one of the main topics in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). According to this institution, “inclusive education is based on the right of all learners to a quality education that meets basic learning needs and enriches lives (...) [and] the ultimate goal of inclusive quality education is to end all forms of discrimination.” (UNESCO, 2012) This inclusive perspective has been spread among the countries, and has been taken into consideration in several educational systems.

1.1.1.1 Inclusive Education in the World

This section goes over important characteristics of inclusive education in some developed countries with a significant history on their educational system. The United Nations Convention on the Rights on Persons with Disabilities states that “education for disabled children should be inclusive” (Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education-CSIE, 2010). In Article 4 of the convention, it is stated that according to the right of inclusive education “States Parties recognize

the right of persons with disabilities to education (...) without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity” (UN Convention on the Rights on Persons with Disabilities, Article 4, as cited in CSIE, 2010). The convention also states that students with learning needs should have the chance to develop their talents and creativity. In addition, States have to teach children how to develop social skills. These establishments should be followed by the member states that are part of this organization; and for the purpose of this research, the inclusive education policies of the UK and the USA will be described, as these countries are members of the UN since 1945, and both policies were written under the requirements of the United Nations.

The United Kingdom

The UK inclusive educational program works under the requirements of the United Nations. According to the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE, 2011) the “legislation in the UK prohibits discrimination in education and supports inclusive education. The UK also has obligations under international human rights law to provide inclusive education for all children.” Taking this requirements into account, in October, 2010, the Equality Act came into force, stating that “it is unlawful for any education provider, including a private or independent provider, to discriminate between pupils on grounds of race, sex, disability (...) access to benefits or services, exclusions, and in the employment of staff” (CSIE, 2012). In addition, the Equality Act explains that disability discrimination occurs when a student is “treated unfavorably because of something related to his/her disability”. Furthermore, it is stated that schools have to make changes in infrastructure in order to make the students with disabilities feel comfortable. The similarities between the Equality Act and the establishments made by the United Nations are apparent; furthermore, there are also some agreements with the Chilean Act No 20,442 regarding discrimination and changes in infrastructure.

The United States

The United States has also a policy that follows the establishments of the United Nations. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2008) “inclusion in the US system refers to a commitment to educate each child, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the school or classroom she/ he will otherwise attend.” (p.2). Thus, it includes giving the necessary support to children with learning needs in regular schools. In 2004, the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* came into effect; it guarantees

the basic education rights of children with disabilities and ensures that they receive a free and appropriate public education. While IDEA does not require inclusion, it does require that children with disabilities be educated in the least restrictive environment appropriate to meet their unique needs. (U.S. Department of Education, 2008, p.2).

IDEA requires special education teachers and thus guarantees a qualified education; this is why the U.S. government decided to support “a broad system of training and professional development programs and activities geared to these teachers. This report will address the programs developed to assist teachers of children with special needs in becoming more highly qualified.” (p.2). The U.S. Department of Education (2008) states that in 2001, 96% of disabled students were attending regular schools, and just 4% of students with disabilities attended special institutions, which are especially dedicated to teach children with different educational needs. This way, it is seen that students with different needs prefer to attend regular schools, which shows that they feel comfortable in an environment where trained teachers may teach them along with all kind of students.

1.1.1.2 Inclusive Education in Chile

Inclusive education in Chile is an issue that emerged a few decades ago. According to the MINEDUC (2005), the first schools for children with special needs were built during the 60s. In 1978 a new understanding of education arose, thanks to the Warnock report, which stated that education objectives were the same for all children, including kids with educational needs. In the 80s, students with special needs were integrated in regular schools; however, there were several difficulties, like students' isolation, infrastructure of schools and the insufficient training of regular teachers. In the 90s, and thanks to the intervention of the UNESCO and the UNICEF, the Supreme Decree No 490/90 came into force, setting rules to integrate students into regular schools. Years later, an Integration School Program was implemented and Act No 20,442 was promulgated, trying to solve the problems previously mentioned.

The Integration School Program

The Integration School Program is used by the Ministry and schools to guarantee the quality of education and to administer issues regarding inclusion. The MINEDUC (2010) states that in order to give all students a good education, the program tries to make children with special needs participate actively during the lessons, without making any differences among them. The main purpose of this program is to administer the school system through an online support tool, which helps the schools that are applying for the benefit to follow the stages of their application forms, and to be updated with the resolutions and evaluations. Additionally, it is stated that through this program it is possible to have access to a record of the schools' main activities related to the Integration Program, which allows the Ministry to follow the students' educational progress (MINEDUC, 2010). This Program makes the process more transparent, as it is possible to follow the students' educational needs and improvements.

Act No 20,422

On February 10th, 2010, Act No 20,422 came into effect (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional, n.d.). The act establishes the rules for equal opportunities and social inclusion of people with special needs, with the aim of obtaining full inclusion, assuring that they will stand up for their rights, thus eliminating discrimination . The Act states that regular schools that receive a subsidy from the Government will have to incorporate the necessary innovations, curricular adaptations as well as infrastructure changes in order to fulfill the total inclusion of students with special needs. In addition, regular schools will have to incorporate supportive materials to give children with special needs the opportunity to be part of all the courses. Thus, the Act No 20,442 regulates the necessary aspects needed to achieve active inclusion of all students.

In order to have a complete understanding of this Act, its most important articles are reviewed. Article 23 states that the Government is in charge of promoting the elimination of architectonic barriers and encouraging universal accessibility to education. Moreover, Article 34 specifies that access of children with special needs to public and private schools must be guaranteed. In addition, it is explained that schools need to have special educational plans for students who have different abilities. Article 36 states that all the innovations, taking into account infrastructure, curriculum and teaching materials, have to assure the permanence of all students in regular schools. On the contrary, if inclusion is not possible, she/he will have the right to be taught in a different classroom within the same school (unless the student prefers to go to a special school). Article 39 states that the Ministry of Education has to guarantee active participation of the students in all the activities related to their learning process and cultural development. Finally, in Article 42, it is emphasized that schools have to encourage the respect

for differences among students. Taking these aspects into account, the aim of Act No 20,442 is that all students can have permanent access to education, by having the chance to participate actively and without barriers inside the schools.

There are many schools trying to include students with special needs, such as children with deafness, Asperguer's syndrome, Down's syndrome, and blindness, among other. In regards to blind children, in Valdivia, our local reality, there are 3 schools with integrated students who are visually impaired (10 students in total) (DAEM Valdivia, personal communication, May 2012). And, even though it is fundamental to integrate those students during the lessons, it has not been easy. According to Antonio Rodríguez (2005) the 80% of learning methods used in class need the visual perception, even though they can be acquired through different ways (p. 129). This high percentage demonstrates that the main objectives of the Integration School Program and the Act No 20,422 are not being taken into consideration by a significant fraction of the teachers' population.

1.1.1.3 Foundations for Visually Impaired People

Visually impaired people received support from several organizations in the world. In this section, there are going to be reviewed some foundation for the blind that has been working for giving them the necessary support.

Foundations in the World

Organización Nacional de Ciegos Españoles (ONCE) is a Spanish foundation aiming at giving people with visual impairment the necessary tools in order "to reach full autonomy and social integration" (ONCE, 2012),¹ improving the quality of their lives. This organization is not only committed to visually impaired people, but also to people with other needs, giving them the

¹ "alcanzar la plena autonomía e integración social" (ONCE, 2012).

necessary help to gain access to the labor market. Additionally, the ONCE is dedicated to help visually impaired people from all over the world, supporting especially the associations from Latin America; this way emerged the FOAL (*Fundación ONCE para la Solidaridad con Personas Ciegas de América latina*). Regarding education, the ONCE aims at “assuring the right for education of visually impaired children in developing countries” (*ibid*, 2012), trying to guarantee social inclusion and equal opportunities.

Another important foundation that works with visually impaired children is Perkins Schools for the Blind which is “committed to helping marginalized populations who are blind, deaf-blind, or blind with additional disabilities unlock their potential and realize their unique value as members of their communities” (Perkins International, n.d.). This organization states that all children have right to receive good education, and their aim is to give them opportunities to attend school, working with their followers in 65 different countries. Perkins International (n.d) affirms “that when these children have the opportunity to receive an education, their lives, in addition to the lives of their families and communities, are remarkably transformed.”

Sightsavers is an international organization that “works to combat blindness in developing countries, restoring sight through specialist treatment and eye care” (Sightsavers, n.d.), in addition it also helps children with an irreversible injury in their eyes by giving them education and training. The main goal of this organization is that “governments ensure that all disabled children have the opportunity to receive a quality education”² (*ibid*, n.d.), thus, Sightsavers support governments by training teachers in order to be capable for teaching children with visual impairment.

² “gobiernos aseguran que todos los niños discapacitados tengan la oportunidad de recibir una educación de calidad” (*ibid*, n.d.).

Foundations in Chile

There are several organizations in Chile that aim at helping visually impaired people to become independent members of our society by offering education, access to culture, and training in order for them to have equal work opportunities.

Fundación Luz para niños ciegos is located in Providencia, Santiago and is one of the most important organizations for the visually impaired in our country; it offers to the blind and low vision population “free educational and rehabilitation services that are innovative, effective and high quality, developed by a multi-professional team, committed to the mission and with deep knowledge and experience in the field”³ (Fundación Luz, 2012). This organization also generates job positions as massage therapists for blind or visually impaired people and offers training in this field as well as in informatics, among others (*ibid*, 2012). Apart from offering education and work opportunities, *Fundación Luz* also promotes the recognition of the different personal and professional abilities of individuals with visual impairment in order to create awareness and equal opportunities in our society.

Corporación para ciegos is another Chilean corporation devoted to helping the blind and visually impaired population in our country, it’s mission is “[t]hat all blind people in Chile can be included in the society, respecting their differences and giving them the opportunity to have access to paid jobs in a just way”⁴ (Corporación para Ciegos, 2012), and it’s vision is “[t]o give

³ Fundación Luz ofrece gratuitamente a la población ciega y de baja visión y sus familias servicios educativos y de rehabilitación innovadores, efectivos y de alta calidad, desarrollados por un equipo multiprofesional comprometido con la misión, con profundos conocimientos y experiencia en el área. (Fundación Luz, 2012)

⁴ “Que todos los ciegos de Chile puedan ser incluidos en la sociedad, respetando sus diferencias y entregándoles posibilidades de acceder a trabajos remunerados en forma justa” (Corporación para Ciegos, 2012).

education, training, culture and entertainment to people with partial or total blindness”⁵ (*ibid*, 2012)

⁵ Entregar educación, capacitación, cultura y entretención a personas con ceguera parcial o total” (Corporación para Ciegos, 2012).

1.2 Antecedents

Research Questions:

- Is it possible to incorporate drama techniques in a classroom with visually impaired students?
- Can drama techniques make visually impaired students engage in the English lessons?

Hypothesis:

- The use of drama techniques in the classroom when teaching English to visually impaired students will help them to be more engaged during the lessons.

General Objective:

- To propose drama techniques as an effective way for the inclusion of visually impaired students in the English classroom.

Specific Objectives:

- To detect what this kind of students' main needs are when learning English.
- To identify suitable activities based on the principles of drama techniques.

Justification:

The importance of this research lies on the existence of the law No 20,422 which aims at providing equal opportunities and social inclusion for people with special needs. The details of this law were explained in the section State of the Art, but it is important to emphasize how it establishes that subsidized schools must incorporate the necessary changes in order to achieve the inclusion of all students and facilitate their access to all of the courses. In this regard, teachers should be prepared to face the reality of having special needs students in the classroom and adapt their methodologies and activities in order to involve said students in the classroom and in the learning process. When there is an effective inclusion, children actively participate

during the class, thus not only will they learn English, but also acquire the language. Regarding the inclusion of visually impaired students, it is suggested that the implementation of drama techniques in the classroom will help them to be engaged and feel more comfortable during the lessons, by lowering their affective filter and encouraging them to actively participate in class.

1.3 Inclusive Classrooms

When considering an inclusive environment it is fundamental to review some important characteristics inside the classroom such as the importance of inclusion, the relationship among classmates, the development of suitable lessons and the existence of different educational needs.

1.3.1 Integration v/s Segregation

Integration and segregation are two ground concepts of inclusive education. Victor Molina (n.d) states that under an integrated perspective the differences are used to enrich the environment, giving culture the capacity to develop faster; on the contrary, under a segregated perspective people tend to isolate the differences and privilege certain elements, causing a cultural paralysis without promoting the acceptance of diversity (p. 19). According to the Ministry of Education (2005), in 1998 there were 5,335 students integrated in regular schools, by the year 2005, that number increased to 29,473. Notwithstanding, as said by Susan Stainback, William Stainback and Jeanette Moravec (2007, p. 90), most of the time the integrated students around the world not only need to be present in the classroom, but also to participate actively during the lessons. The authors add that during the last few years, schools have tried to include students as much as possible, but teachers have not been thought about the proper methods for accomplishing that goal (p. 90). That is why it is important to consider how to develop a suitable plan for integrated students without making differences among them during the lessons. Alison Ford, Linda Davern and Roberta Schnorr (2007) stated that some teachers try to respond to their students' needs by treating them and teaching them separately, which means that the students with special needs have a different curriculum (p. 55). This reality can create a huge separation between classmates, because the students work in different tasks. In this regard, Paco Jiménez (1999) states that having a different curriculum for students with different needs is described as a

segregated and discriminatory method. In addition, Stainback, Stainback and Morovec (2007) agree, stating that the elaboration of completely different objectives and curriculums for one class can cause segregation or isolation of students inside the classroom. Moreover, Ford *et al.* (2007) mention that when teachers have to face two different curriculums for just one course, they probably feel overwhelmed because of the demanding work that both curriculums mean to them. This fact assures that having two curriculums for one course is negative for both the teachers and students.

Taking this reality into account, teachers can make different decisions that sometimes are not the best option for students. Ford, *et al.* (2007) state that it is possible that some teachers decide that it is better for the class that the kid with special educational needs goes to a special school so that he does not affect the learning process of the rest of the students (p. 60), which will inevitable create in the kid the sense of segregation. Making a few adaptations to the curriculum, instead of changing it completely, will help the teacher to develop a class including all the students. In this sense, it is necessary to create activities that can be adapted to all kinds of learning needs and styles (Stainback, Stainback & Morovec, p. 91). Jiménez (1999) states that the best option is to have a common curriculum because it aims to have cultural diversity inside the classroom, as it represents the cultural ground that is shared by all the students creating an environment that helps the existence of equal opportunities (p. 216). Teachers' decisions can make a huge difference when trying to achieve inclusion, which is why schools should have clear parameters for teachers to follow.

1.3.1.1 Respect among Classmates

When talking about inclusive classrooms, it is important to create an environment of respect among students. According to Stainback, Stainback and Jackson (2007), everybody

benefits from inclusive classrooms; because they create communities in which all students get support and comprehension (p. 24). Moreover, the authors mention that when the system is sensitive and responds to the differences in each individual, every member of the school, including students and teachers, gets benefits (p. 25). They also say that the ground of inclusive education is that every child belongs to the group and everyone can learn within the community (p. 26). Jiménez (1999) adds that the classroom should become a place in which the exchange of experiences and culture takes place, and the differences between the students can be openly expressed (p. 298). The classroom should be a place where students feel comfortable with their own characteristics and can express themselves without being afraid of rejection.

Inside an inclusive classroom, it is the teacher's task to encourage respect among students. Ford *et al.* (2007) state that students learn to respect themselves by accepting their individualities, besides, by having the chance of recognizing differences among classmates they can learn to accept those differences without following social stereotypes (p. 77). Furthermore, the authors add that it is important that the teacher gives the students the opportunity to help each other, because that way, students will develop positive attitudes towards themselves and their classmates, so that they will be respectful and caring students (p. 69). Classroom environment plays a crucial role when promoting respect; it is fundamental that all students accept themselves and their classmates the way they are.

1.3.1.2 Development of a Suitable Lesson

In order to have an organized lesson with appropriate objectives and activities, there are some guidelines that teachers can follow. York and Forest (as cited in Stainback, Stainback and Jackson, 2007) say that one of the most important things to take into account when planning a lesson is to be flexible, because sometimes the strategies do not work as planned and need to be

revised; this can lead the teacher to check the class objectives until the active participation of all students is obtained (p. 29). In order to have all students engaged in the lessons, Stainback, Stainback and Jackson (2007) say that classes have to be organized heterogeneously, by having them grouped with classmates that have different abilities, so that children and teachers can be stimulated and motivated during the lessons (p. 25). If the students are not engaged with the lessons, they are not going to participate in the activities. Furthermore, the authors mention that in an inclusive classroom, teachers should not have total control and responsibility for the class; on the contrary, they should promote the learning process by supporting their students, so that they can make their own decisions in relation to their learning process (p. 28). In this regard, Jiménez (1999) adds that it is beneficial that the teacher acts as a mediator between the students and their learning process, as having a mediator teacher does not only help with the progress of constructive activities, but also with the development of social and affective skills of the class, taking into account their possibilities and learning styles (p. 202). Giving the students the responsibility of making their own choices can help them to be motivated during the class.

Regarding didactic material, Ferguson and Jeanchild (2007) say that it is helpful to organize the material and information in order to encourage students to help each other and work together for obtaining common objectives (p. 189). According to Ford, *et al.* (2007) this is called cooperative learning, which helps children to work with their classmates in order to reach common goals.

The authors state that these methods make it easier to include students actively because of the characteristics of cooperative approaches (small groups, direct interaction, social skills, personal responsibility during the activities, etc.) (p. 68). Additionally, Jiménez (1999) says that it is essential to maintain the process of interaction within the class through the development of appropriate activities (p. 201). An appropriate participation and engagement of students during

the lesson will be achieved if the teacher plans his/her lessons thinking about all the students, without leaving aside their needs, learning styles and preferences.

Regarding activities used in class, it is necessary to have a wide variety of them, in order to meet all students' abilities and create communication among them. Ford, *et al.* (2007) state that activities related to art and music can develop communication and social skills, which will create a sense of belonging to the group (p. 61). Activities that are related to personal experiences make it possible to adjust the lesson to a wider range of students, giving them the opportunity to share experiences among them (*Ibid*, p. 67). Stainback, Stainback and Jackson (2007) add that activities that promote the comprehension of personal differences and the value that each classmate has within the lesson are very helpful to the development of a class (p. 28). In this regard, Ferguson and Jeanchild (2007) say that it is important to maximize the interaction between students (p. 189). Moreover, the authors state that teachers should be able to guarantee that students will learn how to apply what they have acquired in natural contexts (p. 185). Thus, activities should not only convey contents on a variety of manners, but also teach social abilities in order to be used in real contexts.

When planning a lesson there are several aspects to be considered; it is important not only to be aware of students' needs, but also to be aware of students' interests. Stainback, Stainback and Moravec (2007) emphasize the importance of considering students' opinions and needs, because when those aspects are not present in activities, it is easier to have students showing indifference to their participation in class (p. 91). Some students will not feel identified with those methods and will be distracted during the class. This is the reason why Ford, *et al.* (2007) state that the contents seen in class need to be organized according to general and significant activities that will be able to stimulate students in different levels (p. 69). Notwithstanding,

talking about general activities does not mean easy activities or effortless classes, on the contrary, according to Jones and Jones (as cited in Stainback, Stainback & Moravec, 2007) preparing easy objectives and activities when students are able to do more, does not help students at all; actually, the authors add that it is proven that students get better results when teachers have higher expectations upon their students (p.99). For this reason Stainback, Stainback and Moravec (2007) state that the curriculum should stimulate students to do their best, giving the necessary adaptations when needed (p. 99). In this sense, Jiménez (1999) affirms that the curricular planning requires to be treated by teachers in a flexible and relevant way, being adapted to all students' personal development (p. 200). Classes should be suitable for all kinds of students, having several activities during the class, aiming to reach different learning styles and promoting communication among students.

1.3.2 Different Educational Needs

Teachers who work in schools that have implemented the Integration School Program have to face different challenges as they have to teach to all students no matter the difficulties they could present; and even though they count with the support of special education teachers, they are faced with the issue of different educational needs. "We understand by educational needs the ones presented in boys and girls that come from a disability, giftedness or any other circumstance associated to his/her capacities or limitations."⁶ (Luque & Romero, 2002, p. 25). These educational needs can be behavioral disorders, cognitive disabilities or physical disabilities.

⁶ "Entendemos por N.E.Es, aquellas que tienen alumnos y alumnas derivadas de discapacidad, sobredotación o cualesquiera otra circunstancia asociadas a sus capacidades personales o limitación de las mismas" (Diego Luque, 2002, p. 25).

1.3.2.1 Behavioral Disorders.

When teaching, there is always a group that behaves badly; those students are called trouble makers, but indeed, the only thing they need is to be more stimulated. According to Hernán Ahumada (n.d) the most common behavioral disorder is the one called attention deficit, which commonly appears during primary school and affects the learning process (p. 79).”This syndrome is associated to conduct disorders, [and] alteration of the upper motor functions: dyspraxia, agnosia, dysphasia, hyperactivity, and attention and concentration disorders”⁷ (*Ibid*, p. 79). The author adds that behavioral disorders can be seen in any student and any school, and normally they affect children with a normal, or even superior, range of intelligence (p. 80).

1.3.2.2 Cognitive Disabilities

Cognitive disabilities not only affect intellectual functions, but also general functions of a person, like his personality (Luque & Romero, 2002, p. 83; Ahumada, n.d., p. 78). This fact makes it difficult for the person to carry out a normal life, as they have problems when communicating, taking care of themselves, socializing, etc. There are some common causes of cognitive disabilities, like “severe damage in the central nervous system and in the metabolism, genetic defects, disease, or degenerative syndromes that interfere during labor or development, leaving sequels that affect learning and adaptation capacities”⁸ (Ahumada, n.d, p. 78) This disability can be classified into different degrees, ranging from mild to profound (*Ibid*, p. 78). Such range is divided according to the person’s IQ, which can be noticed in his/her behavior.

⁷ “Este síndrome trae asociado trastornos de conducta, alteraciones de las funciones motoras superiores: dispraxia, disgnosias, disfasia, hiperkinesia, y alteraciones de la atención y concentración” (*Ibid*, p.79).

⁸ daños severos tanto del sistema nervioso central como en el metabolismo, malformaciones genéticas, enfermedades o síndromes degenerativos que intervienen durante el parto o el desarrollo dejando como secuela un déficit que afecta la capacidad de aprender y adaptarse al medio. (Ahumada, s.f., p.78)

1.3.2.3 Physical Disabilities

Sensory disabilities are part of the spectrum of physical disabilities, and they are caused by the loss of one of the 5 senses, and the two most common are deafness and blindness. According to Ahumada (n.d, p. 79) there are two types of deafness, total and partial; both are caused by an injury on the auditory cortex. Most of the times, the loss of hearing carries out the impossibility to speak because, normally, people learn to speak through imitation; however, Luque and Romero (2002) state that there are some deaf people that learn how to speak through the visual system (p. 100); the author adds that it depends on the moment when the person loses his/her hearing (before or after speech) (p. 101). On the other hand, blindness can also be categorized as partial or total, and its main causes are the “injury of the eye itself, in the pathways of nerve impulses and/or in the centers that process visual information, which are located in the brain cortex”⁹ (Ahumada, n.d, p. 79). Both of these impairments play a crucial role in the students’ communication system and in their learning process, which is why it is important to take them into account when teaching a class with sensory impaired students.

1.3.3 Visually Impaired Students and the Inclusive Classroom

In order to include students with visual impairment in regular classrooms, authentic engagement is needed, which means that they should participate actively during the lessons. Jessica Thonn (2005) states that “the L2 classroom depends significantly on vision: from teacher's notes written on the board, to handouts, from video scenes to textbooks, from computer screens to pictures.” In general terms, visual stimulation is used by most people to convey messages, which make it hard for visually impaired people to feel part of some situations.

⁹ “lesiones del órgano mismo, de las vías de conducción de los impulsos nerviosos y/o de los centros procesadores de la información visual situados en la corteza cerebral” (Ahumada, en Araneda & Ahumada, eds., s.f, p. 79).

1.3.3.1 Suitable Activities

Having appropriate activities, able to reach students with visual impairment, determines the course of the lesson by having direct influence on the participation of students. In this regard, Luque and Romero (2002) state that students with visual impairment have problems with tasks that concern temporal space and laterality (p. 114), which require students to move around the classroom at specific moments within the lesson. Another possible difficulty is related to the learning of specific concepts when the teacher relies only on visual methods for their illustration (*Ibid*, p.114). In this regard, teachers should avoid using flashcards, miming, etc. Luque and Romero (2002) assure that during a lesson, perception is the only factor that can make a difference among students' understanding of the information. Hence, figurative materials (i.e. used with a more imaginative meaning than the literal) should not be used with little children; on the contrary, verbal communication is the most appropriate to use at the beginning of the learning process (*Ibid*, p.114). According to Penny Cox and Mary Dykes (2001),

students with visual impairments lack opportunities for incidental learning that occur for their sighted peers almost constantly (Hatlen & Curry, 1987). Without such opportunities, associating words with elements of the environment is difficult. Thus, it is important that such associations be supplemented with input from other senses and through alternative activities. (p. 68)

Teachers need to incorporate tactile activities as well as auditory, because according to Luque and Romero (2002) the development of tactile, hearing and language development “are fundamental for the cognitive, personal and social development and for a compensatory education” (p.114). In this regard, teachers have to plan classes with a variety of activities, taking

into account the senses that are more suitable for visually impaired students, such as tactile and auditory.

1.3.3.2 Classroom Arrangement

Apart from including suitable activities, a classroom with visually impaired students should be arranged under some specific patterns, in order to facilitate students' daily tasks. It is important to take into account what students require when organizing the classroom, having structured diagrams that suit the students' needs (López, as cited in Jiménez, 1999, p. 299). The arrangement of the tables should always remain the same, and the location of didactic material, books, etc. should be known by the student. Additionally, "physical orientation of students to classroom routines or other events that take place during the day is important and must occur as soon as possible once the student is assigned to the classroom." (Cox & Dykes, 2001, p. 68) Students will learn those routines and paths through repetition, so it is important that the teacher starts with this process at the beginning of each year and incorporates other students in order to create social bonds among classmates. According to Ochaíta and Espinosa (2001), teachers should encourage students to get to know the place and move autonomously, thus avoiding possible risks and excessive overprotection (p. 231). Inside the school, and especially inside the classroom, pathways should be unobstructed, doors should be completely open or closed, and every once in a while, there must be an evaluation of the environment in order to assess potential hazard areas (Cox & Dykes, 2001, p. 71). How students move is a crucial aspect of their integration into a regular school, as when they are moving freely around the school without taking risks they feel part of the educational community as well as independent individuals.

1.4 Characteristics of Visually Impaired Students

Visual impairment does not only mean complete and utter blindness, but can also refer to a great number of anomalies in a person's vision that can have many different origins and characteristics (Ochaíta & Espinosa, 2001, p. 215). Students that are born with visual impairment are not in the same condition as the ones who present this situation as they grow up. It is an equally important factor, whether the blindness happened gradually or in a sudden way (*Ibid*, p. 215). Hence teachers need to acknowledge all these variables when preparing themselves for teaching a class with visually impaired students in order to understand their different progress rates.

1.4.1 Social and Emotional Skills

Visually impaired children tend to create strong relationships with people who are close to them, as they need to have guidance at the beginning of their development, when they still do not know some physical environments (Luque & Romero, 2002, p. 111). According to some studies of kids who have normal vision, "the first interactions between adult-baby seem to indicate that vision is fundamental for these communicative exchanges which are significant for childhood development."¹⁰ (Ochaíta & Espinosa, 2001, p. 219). However, Ochaíta (2001) argues that visually impaired children develop alternative ways to establish non verbal communication with adults (p. 219). For example, children can recognize voices and smells, especially of those who are closely related to them (Eimas & Steiner, as cited in Ochaíta & Espinosa, 2001, p. 219). Another alternative form of communication of visually impaired children is the use of their hands. According to Ochaíta & Espinoza (2001), tactile communication develops after hearing

¹⁰ "las primeras interacciones adulto-bebe parecen indicar que la visión es fundamental para estos intercambios comunicativos que son trascendentales para el desarrollo infantil" (Esperanza Ochaíta & M^a Angeles Espinosa, en Palacios, 2001, p. 219).

and smelling, but only if people around them respond in a positive way to these communicative forms (p.220).

1.4.2 Sensory Skills

The development of other senses, such as hearing, touch, taste and smell, plays an important role during the life of visually impaired children. These senses make up for several stimulations that, otherwise, would be received through visual stimuli (Rodríguez, 2005, p. 127). Children will use their sense of smell in order to recognize a flower or a person's clothes; moreover, he/she will always be aware of different sounds in the environment. Notwithstanding, to facilitate an appropriate sensory development, adults must stimulate all the senses properly (Luque & Romero, 2002, p. 112). If a child with visual impairment is not encouraged to use his/her other senses in order to develop a normal life since early childhood, it will become more and more difficult to develop the needed sensory skills. In this regard, Luque and Romero (2002) state that "the connection hand-sound in a child with visual impairment shows us that hearing can substitute vision"¹¹ (p. 112). Even though developing the necessary skills is difficult and takes a long period of time, visually impaired children can communicate and develop a normal life when the necessary stimuli are present.

1.4.3 Tactile, Kinesthetic and Auditory Learning

Every child has his/her own learning style, the same happens with visually impaired children, the only difference is that their learning process depends on their tactile, kinesthetic and auditory senses. "The kid with visual impairment sets relations with the environment by using

¹¹ "La relación mano – sonido en el ciego nos dice como la audición puede convertirse en sustituto de la visión" (Luque, 2002, p. 112).

data gathered through hearing, tactile and kinesthetic perception”¹² (Piantoni, 2001, p. 175; Cox & Dykes, 2001, p. 72). Thus, the visual materials used by teachers need to be adapted in order to reach the requirements of all students, including visually impaired children (Cox & Dykes, 2001, p. 72). For the accomplishment of this goal, one method can be adapting some material; for example maps, charts or images can be modified in order to be in relief; thus, visually impaired children will be able to interpret them by touching. The authors add that it is helpful to bring objects that students can touch, providing them with “the opportunity to use their tactile and kinesthetic senses” (p.72). In this regard, it is a good idea to use objects in class in order to teach vocabulary; for example, if students are learning about pieces of clothing and their names, the teacher can bring some baby clothes with the purpose of giving them to the students so they can touch them. Tactile and kinesthetic methods are suitable because these students learn by doing, which helps them acquire what they have been taught.

Regarding auditory learning, it is important to mention that, even though it is the most common sense used by visually impaired students, teachers should not overuse it during lessons. Some reasons are stated in Cox and Dykes (2001), by expressing that

auditory language triggers the creation of mental images that correspond with words.

Images are recalled to assist students in comprehending verbal language (Barraga & Erin, 1992). A student with visual impairments is likely to have fewer and less detailed mental images to correspond with verbal language. Such images may differ according to a student’s individual experiences and verbal input he or she has received from others (Whitmore & Maker, 1985) (p. 72).

¹² “El niño invidente establece relación con el ambiente utilizando los datos de la percepción auditiva, táctil, cinestésica” (Piantoni, 2001, p. 175).

In this regard, it is fundamental that teachers give students the necessary time to process the information; moreover, teachers should assess if they were able to convey appropriate messages, by observing whether students are responding correctly or not. “Efficient listening is crucial to classroom success for students with visual impairment. Improved listening skills help students with visual impairment increase their spoken and written communication and reading skills” (Heward, as cited in Cox & Dykes, 2001, p. 72). It is necessary to practice listening skills throughout the year, that way, all students will be favored, not only the ones with visual impairment.

Another subject related to the different ways in which people learn, is the topic of Multiple Intelligences proposed by Howard Gardner (1993, as cited in Ortiz de Zárate, Ramírez, Renftel & Walper, 2012). The author states that there are 7 types of intelligences: the intrapersonal intelligence, the interpersonal intelligence, the logical-mathematical intelligence, the linguistic intelligence, the musical intelligence, the spatial intelligence, and the bodily kinesthetic intelligence. These “forms of intelligence are an effort to lay out seven intellectual regions in which most human beings have the potential for solid advancement” (Gardner, 1993, p. 372, as cited in Ortiz de Zárate, Ramírez, Renftel & Walper, 2012). Additionally, Herber Puchta and Mario Rinvulcri (2005) mention that the different intelligences do not exist in isolation in one individual (with the exception of specific cases), but on the contrary, most people possess more than one intelligence, which can be used together in order to solve everyday tasks. Furthermore, students’ motivation depends mostly on how they feel during the lessons, this is to say whether they feel identified or not with the different tasks developed during the class (Puchta & Rinvulcri, 2005), but, “unfortunately, traditional education considers that the intelligent students are the ones who have their linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences

more developed and, therefore, excel in their results in these specific subjects of the curriculum” (Ortiz de Zárate, Ramírez, Renftel & Walper, 2012), which make that the students who present a different type of intelligence feel unmotivated and even frustrated during the lessons, because they are not represented by the intelligence that the activity addressed.

1.5 Drama Techniques for Teaching English

When talking about drama techniques –such as role plays, interviews, dialogues, improvisation, etc.– for educational purposes or drama-in-education, theater is not necessarily involved: as Logamurthie Athiemoolam (2004) states “drama-in-education (D.I.E) is the use of drama as a means of teaching across the curriculum (...) [it] is an improvisational, nonexhibitional, process-centred form of drama” (p. 4), which means that drama techniques are more concerned with the voice and body communication used in the drama activities. McCalsin (as cited in Athiemoolam, 2004, p. 4) supports this idea by adding, “the objective is understanding rather than playmaking, although a play may be made in the process. Attitudes rather than characters are the chief concern as the focus is on process rather than product,” so even though the use of drama techniques in the classroom can result in a play, this is not its main objective. In addition, Charlyn Wessels (1987) states that “drama is what happens when we allow our students to explore the foundations of the surface reality [situation, problem, solution]. When we give them the background to a situation, or allow them to guess at it” (p. 8) teachers give students the chance to develop perception and thus they retained the information. The author explains this by saying that if a learner of English asks you ‘What is a blind person?’ you might simply reply, ‘A blind person cannot see’, and this would probably satisfy him intellectually. But if you reply, ‘Shut your eyes and try to find your pen on the desk in front of you’, you would be involving him in the actual experience of being blind, and would thus satisfy

him not only intellectually, but emotionally as well (...). He would be more likely to remember the meaning of the word as a result of this moment of direct experience. (Wessels, 1987, p. 7).

The characteristic of drama techniques of involving students in meaningful contexts, benefits them in various ways. In a study developed by Andrea Lizasoain, Amalia Ortiz de Zárate, Katherina Walper and Yasna Yilorm (2011), it was proven that when using these techniques “students feel motivated; they lower their anxiety, inhibition and frustration levels; they increase their self-esteem and heighten their self – assurance; [and] they develop positive aspects of their personality”¹³ (p. 132). In this sense, the authors mention that drama is not only an efficient method to teach a second language, but also to enrich the students’ daily lives, by improving their communications skills.

1.5.1 Drama Techniques and the Natural Approach

The Natural Approach aims at acquisition (Krashen, 1982, p. 138). Stephen Krashen (1982) states that for the acquisition of a second language, comprehensible input is required, which means that “Natural Approach teachers utilize realia, pictures, and students' previous knowledge to make their speech comprehensible from the first day.” (p. 138). Additionally, teachers use their bodies and their voices in order to make their speech comprehensible. Students do not have the need to produce any language at this stage, which is called “silent period” (Brown, 2007, p. 79). The author adds that the students’ language production increases progressively with time, until acquisition is obtained (p. 79). According to a study developed by Douglas Brown (2007) when the learners’ production stage was delayed and not rushed by the teachers, students got benefited, because speech occurred spontaneously after receiving a

¹³ “los alumnos se sienten motivados; bajan los niveles de ansiedad, inhibición y frustración; [y] aumentan su autoestima y la seguridad en sí mismos.”

consistent amount of input, since learners are more relaxed than when they are under pressure (p. 79).

The Natural Approach and the use of drama techniques share “the goal of basic interpersonal communication skills, that is, everyday language situations” (Brown, 2007, p. 79), also, it is stated by Andrea Lizasoain and Amalia Ortiz de Zárate (2009) that “the use of drama techniques is supported by Krashen’s [the Natural Approach] theory”; the authors add that “the focus of instruction is on meaning rather than on form and there is plenty of opportunity to use language meaningfully. However, theater techniques go a step further because they also centre on other meaning conveyors, such as grammar structures, and pronunciation and intonation”.

1.5.2 Drama Techniques and the Communicative Approach

The Communicative Approach, like the Natural Approach, is also related to the use of drama techniques in the classroom. According to Jack Richards and Theodore Rodgers (1996) “there is no single text or authority in it [The Communicative Approach], nor any single model that is universally accepted as authoritative” (p. 66), which means that there is not only one official definition of this approach, but there are many different descriptions of it. The authors explain that for some linguists, it does not mean anything more than an integration of grammatical and functional teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p.66). Littlewood (as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 66) adds that “one of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language”, this means that equal importance is given to both, semantics and pragmatics. Furthermore, it is also stated that the Communicative Approach is the use of “procedures where learners work in pairs or groups employing available language resources in problem-solving tasks” (*Ibid*, p. 66), that is to say, this approach is based on the acquisition of

the linguistic means, in order to be able to perform different kinds of functions (*Ibid*, p. 71). This is closely related to the use of drama techniques since the aim of both, the Communicative Approach and drama techniques, is to create a more natural setting for practicing the foreign language. Moreover, it is also mentioned that some degree of enthusiasm is involved in these types of activities, which helps with the issue of students' motivation (Brown & White, 2012, p. 433). In addition to the latter "a methodology using theater techniques is very similar to the Communicative Approach in that it focuses on meaning and in oral expression" (Lizasoain & Ortiz de Zárate, 2009). Considering the previous information, it is seen that both, the Communicative Approach and the Natural Approach are the basis of drama techniques.

1.5.3 Drama Techniques Classification

As it was mentioned before, drama techniques can be a tool for increasing motivation of both students and teachers in the classroom. The varieties of drama activities range from completely controlled tasks to open communication activities (Kao & O'Neill, 1998, p. 4) and will be explained below.

1.5.3.1 Controlled Activities

The controlled (also referred to as 'closed') activities are the ones that usually require participants to use "some pre-determined sentence patterns or structures to complete some tasks." (Kao & O'Neill, 1998, p.5) A role play which has previously been scripted and/or rehearsed is considered a kind of informal performance, even though it does not involve a live audience, props and costumes (*ibid*, p.5). The authors state that these types of controlled role plays give learners the opportunity to internalize the target language after the repetition of the dialogues and that they also encourage students to practice specific aspects of the language (idioms, linguistic structures, certain items of vocabulary, etc.) in order to provide a more

realistic context for their use (p. 6). However, in situations when the script is not given to the students, so that they have a certain freedom on what their character says, if the situation in which the role play takes place is selected with the purpose of using a specific language function or structure or, if the attitudes and values of the character are pre-determined by the teacher, prior to the performance, then, we are also referring to a closed activity (*ibid*, p. 7).

1.5.3.2 Semi-controlled Activities

Semi-controlled activities, as the name indicates, move toward increasingly open communication and do not have as many rules as the completely controlled ones (Kao & O'Neill, 1998, p. 9). According to Shin-Mei Kao and Cecily O'Neill (1998), the semi-controlled techniques provide a social and linguistic environment where all students have the opportunity to participate with their peers in an authentic scenario. This scenario (from now on, referred to as Strategic Interaction: SI), is closer to the structure of drama and it emphasizes tension and authenticity. The authors state that in the SI approach "the language classroom where students endlessly practice out-of-context dialogues is recognized as artificial and largely ineffectual" (p. 9), which is why it is encouraged that, instead of this non-authentic practice, the classes focus on comprehension of the message, instead of the accuracy of grammatical structures, as it is explained in the following words:

the technique stresses fluency over accuracy, while comprehension is the main aim. This process is quite different in both its aim and its outcomes from the kind of "performance" required when prepared scripts are memorized and presented. SI establish [sic] situations that contain genuine challenges, and require students to comprehend the cultural and social attitudes on which these situations are based. (Kao & O'Neill, 1998, p. 9)

For this purpose, sometimes, students are even allowed to create their own dialogues and make their own decisions regarding the outcomes of the activities, because of the nature of the objectives of SI, which are “to increase the fluency and authenticity of the student’s speech and their confidence in speaking” (*Ibid*, p. 11).

1.5.3.3 Open Communication Activities

Of all the drama techniques, the open communication activities are closest to the drama process. In opposition to the other types of tasks, these activities “are concerned with the development of a wider context for exploration –a dramatic world created by the teacher and students working together within the experience” (Kao & O’Neill, 1998, p. 12). Thus, open communication activities involve a greater use of the creativity of both students and teacher and its aims are “to develop students’ insight” and “to help them understand themselves and the world in which they live” (*ibid*, p. 12), which differs from the more grammatical focus of the rest of the activities. It is also more complex, as it is explained below:

process drama shares some of the elements found in SI but uses them in a more complex, immediate and flexible format. It requires language to be used in meaningful, authentic situations, where the focus is on problem posing and resolution. Teachers (...) diagnose the students’ language skills and understanding, support their communicative efforts, model appropriate behavior within the situation, question their thinking and extend and challenge their responses. (Kao & O’Neill, 1998, p. 12-13)

Accordingly, these types of activities involve much more than only a second language acquisition purpose and they go further and deeper than the controlled communication activities and semi-controlled ones. Kao and O’Neill (1998) explain that they also aim to generate new classroom relationships; this is the reason why open communication activities work with

different groups during a lesson: they usually start with a *large group* or the *whole group*, and as the drama continues, they are more likely to work with *small groups* or *pair work* (p. 15), because “the objectives of process of drama in the second language classroom are to increase the fluency and confidence of the students’ speech, to create authentic communication contexts” (*ibid*, p. 15); and if the groups become smaller, each student has a bigger chance to increase his participation in the group, thus to improve his oral skills.

1.5.4 Advantages and Disadvantages

Working with drama techniques in the classroom can have both advantages and disadvantages, which will depend on the type of activity that the teacher chooses. One possible problem with controlled activities, for example, is that the variety of situations that the teacher can anticipate is limited, which means that “no matter how realistic the situation appears to be, something unexpected might happen in the scene in real life” (Kao & O’Neill, 1998, p. 7). This can be an obstacle for the development of the activity, especially when dealing with students that have an elementary level of the language, because they might find themselves struggling to move on with the task. Regarding advantages of controlled activities, the authors say that “even these simple beginnings offer the possibility of enlarging the context and building on its interactive possibilities in order to generate a more dynamic encounter, both socially and linguistically” (*ibid*, p. 7). Therefore, a more meaningful context for the practice of the language is provided to the learners when such tasks are included in the learning process. On the other hand, semi-controlled activities show an important advantage, which is that “SI promotes a feeling of control (...), and this growing competence and ownership can be genuinely uplifting” (Di Pietro, as cited in Kao & O’Neill, 1998, p. 11). Hence, such activities can have a positive impact on students’ confidence inside the classroom, which would result in a more comfortable experience

for them. In this sense, when using drama techniques, teachers should be aware of their students' abilities and social characteristics, so that students can be benefited from the advantages of the tasks and also prepared when facing the possible obstacles that might appear.

1.5.4.1 Student's Perceptions of the Class

The students' attitude toward the class, which will depend partly on their perception of it, is relevant for the development of the lesson. According to Kao and O'Neill (1998) when teachers use drama in the classroom, students feel more represented because they are being taken into account (p. 17), which could be reflected on an increasing interaction among students and also with the teacher. The authors add that

our experience of working with different groups and levels of learners shows that drama activities receive mostly positive comments from the participants. This does not, however, mean that drama works for everybody! Some language learners did express negative opinions, directly or indirectly, toward drama approaches. (*ibid*, p. 111)

It is shown in the latter that even though students' perception of drama activities tends to be positive; there is also a segment of the students that does not have the same opinion about it and which could not be benefited from this as much as the rest. However, most students felt that participating in improvisations made them feel less embarrassed than other types of classroom activities (*ibid*, p. 85).

1.5.4.2 Teacher's Experiences during the Class

The opinion of teachers is important, since they are the ones that need to introduce drama techniques into the classroom and lead the activities. Susan Stern (as cited in Kao & O'Neill, 1998) conducted an informal survey to determine how the different drama activities influence language learners from a psycholinguistic perspective. The results confirmed that "the teachers

shared a common view about the positive effects of drama on the students' learning" (*ibid*, p. 85). They also reflected that "students' speech became more fluent and their intonation and inflection more native-like, especially during improvisations" (*ibid*, p. 86). In other words, the teachers' perception of the activities was positive as they observed a significant progress on their students' oral skills.

1.5.4.3 Student's Academic Results

Taking into account the positive opinion about drama techniques of both, teachers and learners, the outcome of such techniques should reflect that the new method is indeed successful for the acquisition of the language. Kao & O'Neill (1998) say that, among other results observed, it was seen that students were able to "ask and answer questions, interpret responses, pose and solve problems, work in movement and speech, and react appropriately and resourcefully within the fictional situation and the target language." (p. 23) That is to say, when using drama techniques, students not only improve their language level, but also their communication skills as the combination of movement and words helps them to convey messages easily and successfully.

2. Drama Techniques for Teaching English to Visually Impaired Students

2.1. Drama Techniques and Visually Impaired Students

Drama techniques have a positive impact on the development of the learner (Basom, 2005), improving several aspects of their lives, such as social skills, emotional skills and communicational skills. Such improvements can be positive for all children, giving them several advantages, which will enrich their daily lives (Lizasoain, Ortíz de Zárate, Walper & Yilorm, 2011); those advantages can also benefit pupils with visual impairment as most characteristics of drama techniques, like the use of the body and the voice in realistic scenarios, can be employed in order to include these kids in almost every task.

2.1.1 Social and Emotional Skills

The development of social and emotional skills in individuals with visual impairment is significantly important as they do not only rely on their own abilities, but also on the people around them, which is why they create such strong bonds with the ones that are involved in their lives, building a support network that can be sustained through the use of drama techniques, as they promote collaborative work. Jonas Basom (2005) states that these techniques hearten people to improve their social and emotional skills, because they increase learners' self confidence encouraging them to trust in their own ideas and abilities as well as others'; based on this information, it could be said that drama techniques facilitate the development of team work and good relationships among the group, since, by being more confident they feel freer to interact with others and they become less insecure. Moreover, if they also trust in their classmates' abilities, they will probably be more open to other people's ideas and will be comfortable with the variety of points of view, in contrast to a hostile environment where classmates do not have a

good communication among peers and do not trust each other; no team work could be carried out in such an atmosphere, even less inclusion.

Basom (2005) adds that drama allows students to “express a range of emotions ...reducing antisocial behaviors.”, in other words, drama and drama techniques can become a great opportunity to unleash some of people’s repressed feelings (in case they have any) because it can be relieving for them to have a chance to be heard in a safe environment, concept that refers to a place where individuals are comfortable and present a low affective filter. It is believed that learners that do not feel resentment, anger or any other strong emotion are less likely to become antisocial and/or refuse to collaborate with the class and, as it was mentioned before, a good classroom environment, where there is respect for every person inside the group, is more suitable for achieving inclusion.

Having strong social and emotional skills aids pupils with visual impairment to higher their self esteem, so that they can be aware of their abilities and differences among their peers; this way, visually impaired children will participate and express themselves feeling that they are part of the group and being conscious of their importance inside of it.

2.1.2 Interaction among Students

In order to achieve this ideal situation where learners are conscious of their abilities, teachers should prepare tasks that require interaction between classmates and that make kids adopt a specific role inside the group; this way children develop cooperative learning, a concept which was explained in the previous chapter, which refers to what happens when children work together in order to reach common goals. In order to accomplish this type of learning, it is important to work with small groups, to promote direct interaction and personal responsibility

(Ford, *et al*, 2007, p. 68); these characteristics bolster the teacher to become a mediator instead of a mere provider of information, encouraging pupils to be aware of their abilities and to increase their self-esteem. Each of these groups should be composed of individuals with different abilities in order to create an atmosphere where they are aware of all the differences inside the classroom, encouraging them to be of assistance to each other during the class taking advantage of the variety within the group and understanding the differences as a positive aspect.

Another effective task that encourages people with visual impairment become more self-confident is exposed by Xu Jianing (2007); the author states that the use of storytelling in the classroom makes easier for children to “express themselves spontaneously and creatively,” making kids immerse in an imaginary world, which facilitates free expression since they are not actually being *themselves*, but interpreting different characters, so they do not feel as exposed as when performing a different task; this makes learners lower their anxiety levels and encourages them to interact with all classmates in a respectful way.

As it was mentioned in the previous chapter, interaction among peers creates a good atmosphere, promoting attitudes of respect among children and increasing communication, which is the ground of inclusive education. This is one of the main reasons why this research proposes that drama techniques can become a tool for including visually impaired pupils in the English language class, since a positive attitude towards inclusion will involve all participants in the learning process. If this is not achieved and learners with visual impairment do not participate actively during the lesson by communicating with their classmates, there will not be any inclusion, only integration will take place.

2.1.3 Communication and Visually Impaired Students

Communication skills are essential for everyone, but especially for people with visual impairment since, even though they can express themselves using body language, they cannot perceive the gestures of other people, so communication can become difficult if the interlocutor overly relies on body language and gestures and not on the use of voice. Visually impaired pupils need to be involved in activities that promote communication through other senses such as the sense of touch and hearing. People with visual impairment need to hear different tones and volumes in order to interpret what they hear and recognize the intention of the interlocutor, and they need to touch what is around them, for instance: their classmates, didactic material and objects in the classroom.

In relation to the latter, Juan Domingo Ramírez and Carolina Erber (2003) state that the use of drama develops our ability to transmit what we think through active participation and the creation of dialogues (p. 82). Additionally, Basom (2005) says that drama techniques enhance communication, by improving “voice projection, articulation of words, fluency with language and persuasive speech.” Taking this into account, teachers must work with their voice because it plays a crucial role when considering a classroom with visually impaired learners, since their main means of communication are listening and speaking. It is important to use different tones, volume and speed, in order to make speech meaningful. In this regard, Lizasoain *et al* (2011) state that drama develops the ability to express ideas and feelings; additionally, it aids to control the body as a means of expression, creating a space to work with people in a realistic way, which also supports using these kind of activities as a means of inclusion in the English language classroom.

The idea of working with realistic tasks brings up the concept of meaningful learning, which is related to the importance that kids give to certain topics; that is to say, when pupils are engaged in what they are doing, and when tasks are directly related to their everyday reality, kids learn by making connections and acquire what they have been working with. Based on the latter, it is beneficial for visually impaired children to carry out these kinds of activities, since, as mentioned before, they make it possible for individuals to express themselves in authentic situations by using their bodies, their voices and their abilities to convey orally what they think and feel about different topics, which can be valuable as a preparation for real interactions.

2.2 The Relationship between Drama Techniques and the Natural and Communicative Approaches

Regarding acquisition of a second language, it has been mentioned that drama techniques have a direct association with the Natural and Communicative Approaches. On the one hand, the main aim of the Natural Approach is acquisition (Krashen, 1982, p. 138), basing activities on topics that are meaningful for the learners. This approach uses comprehensible input, which depends mainly on the use of the body, voice and objects that can assist pupils to easily understand the message given without the need of explicit explanations or the use of the L1. On the other hand, the Communicative Approach, as its name suggests, aims at communication among classmates, giving them the tools to solve real life problems through the use of language (Littlewood, as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 66), then, realistic scenarios are needed so as to fulfill the communicative tasks successfully.

It is seen that both approaches provide the grounds for drama techniques, as children use their bodies and play with their voices in order to discuss situations that are meaningful to them

and put themselves in real life problems that can create awareness about the importance of the English language beyond classes.

2.3 Drama Techniques for Teaching English to Visually Impaired Students

There is an urge for the development of special education methodologies that are based on communication, especially for children with visual impairment as they lack of that 80% of information that is received through vision (Oxley, as cited in Ramírez & Erber, 2003, p. 66) and, therefore, they need to make up for it by the use of other information channels. For example, the use of irony and sarcasm; when someone is telling something with his/her voice and some other thing with his/her facial and bodily expression. As visually impaired children grow up, they need to compensate for the lack of vision by developing other communication techniques through the use of their bodies and voice in order to unveil the subtleties of language; that is why drama techniques can be an appropriate choice for teaching, since they involve the use of other senses for communicating.

It is widely recognized that pupils with visual impairment learn by using their tactile (kinesthetic) and auditory senses (see section 1.1), which is why teachers need to develop different activities that involve at least one of the senses previously mentioned. However, it is important to be aware that in order to achieve acquisition, it would be better that activities used in the classroom use more than just one sense. The more senses an activity entails, the more the learners will associate the contents with previous knowledge, which lends a hand with the process of acquisition.

2.3.1 Introducing Drama Techniques in the Classroom with Visually Impaired Students

It has been mentioned that drama techniques foster the use of people's voice and body; additionally, it was also mentioned that there are different types of drama activities, such as controlled, semi controlled and open communication activities (Kao & O'Neill, 1998, p. 5-16). In order to make the most of students' abilities when working with their bodies and voices, it is necessary to choose the correct type of task. Besides, in view of inclusion, it is essential to promote active participation among the people who are being taught, without making them feel anxious, so as to avoid heightening their affective filter.

In this sense, at the beginning of the learning process it is better to work with controlled activities, as in this stage, learners can work with structured patterns to get familiar with the target language (English). An example of a controlled (or closed) activity can be a role play, in which the actors are given either a dialogue or the specific mood or emotion of the character in a given situation.

Once the basics of the language are known by the subjects and they feel comfortable with them, the teacher can move on and implement semi-controlled activities in the lessons. As it was mentioned in the first chapter, these activities aim at comprehension and fluency, increasing the learner's self confidence in relation to the second language. Semi-controlled activities do not have as many rules as the controlled ones, so it is easier for the kids to express themselves more freely; moreover, as the aim of these activities is not accuracy, it is less probable to have anxious pupils during the class, so the affective filter remains low. Some examples of semi-controlled activities can be the creation of dialogues and/or endings to a story.

Finally, when children have gained more knowledge and a higher language level, the teacher can introduce the open-communication activities. Kao and O'Neill (1998) state that at first it is better to work with the whole class, and later, as the class gain more confidence and increase their vocabulary and grammar structures, the number of people per group should decrease (p. 15), that is to say, after working with the whole class, pupils can be divided into two groups, groups of four, couples and when they feel prepared to do so, work individually. When working with the whole class, the kids can participate taking short turns; this leads the groups to be relaxed as they are not forced to produce the language in an extensive way. When the teacher perceives that the learners are ready to produce more complex and longer sentences, the groups can be organized with fewer people; this way, kids express themselves using their creativity in a stress-free manner, establishing bonds and a good relationship with their classmates, therefore achieving what Ford *et.al.* (2007) call collaborative learning. Nevertheless, this whole process will depend on the cognitive, affective and social characteristics of the group, because everyone responds differently to certain situations. Actually, Lizasoain and Ortiz de Zárate (2009) state that it is better to start “with pair group rather than group work because it is easier to talk to only one person as no one else is looking at you” (p. 9). In this sense, it can be seen that besides the type of activity, teachers’ perception of their class will also lead to important decisions when organizing the class.

Considering the different types of drama activities, teachers can adapt tasks in order to fit with the most appropriate kind (controlled, semi-controlled and open-communication activities). For example, activities that involve storytelling: As we all know, stories have always played a significant role in children's growth, as they are not only beneficial for children because they stimulate their imagination and understanding of the world, but also because they develop

children's language ability (Aiex, 1988; Cooper, 1989; Koki, 1998; Zobairi & Gulley, 1989, as cited in Jianing, 2007). Taking this into account, it can be said that stories are a tool that improves children's development in various positive ways, and that they can also encourage pupils to take interest in learning. As Wright (1995) states, "[stories] which rely so much on words, offer a major and constant source of language experience for children", meaning that telling stories with a teaching purpose is not only an opportunity for subjects to receive input but also to engage all children in the class, which supports the idea of using these kinds of activities when teaching a foreign language in an inclusive classroom with visually impaired learners.

During the first stage, when the teacher is supposed to use controlled activities, storytelling can be a great way to get kids interested in the language. Teachers can adapt short dialogues in order to ask the group to work with those patterns orally. Later, when kids are more confident about their knowledge and language level the teacher can ask them about their thoughts and opinions; they can change the end of the story; retell it; or relate the story with their own reality, among other options..

It can be seen that is it possible to adapt tasks in order to reach learners' needs during the process of learning, but teachers must know their pupils' levels and abilities in order to choose the best method and activity.

2.3.2 Possible Problems and Solutions when Introducing Drama Techniques in a Classroom with Visually Impaired Students

Even though drama techniques are a great way to teach English to visually impaired students and to include them actively during the lessons, there are some aspects of the Chilean reality – regarding public schools – that become obstacles when implementing these techniques

in the classroom. Most Chilean public schools have more than 40 people per class, which makes it difficult for the development of tasks that encourage movement, communication and active participation, because sometimes all children might want to participate and express their thoughts, but it would take too much of the class time to do that; this can be prevented by prioritizing team work, so that everyone in each group has a different task to complete simultaneously, thereby everyone will participate during the activity complementing their work.

Additionally, when working with large amounts of people, the implementation of effective classroom management techniques that can promote good behavior and positive attitudes towards the differences is needed, because, even though drama techniques encourage good relationships among classmates, at the beginning, when learners are still not accustomed to this kind of layout, it is important that they are aware of all the differences present in their classroom, developing respectful attitudes towards themselves and towards the teacher, so that he/she can guide them and solve any problem that might arise in the process.

Another obstacle is the arrangement of the classroom, because drama techniques usually need enough space for the children to move around in order to perform the activities. According to López (as cited in Jiménez, 1999, p. 299), visually impaired people need structured diagrams inside the classroom, that is to say, the objects inside the room must always remain in the same position, for them not to have difficulties when moving around. If an activity needs space for the kids to move freely, it will be a problem for children with visual impairment, because they would be taking risks during the task. A possible solution is to perform those kinds of activities in an open space, like the gym or the school playground, or they can get in pairs with the purpose of assisting each other move around the classroom. If the teacher considers that these solutions are

not enough for keeping children away from possible hazards, he/she can choose activities that do not require classroom arrangement.

As any other type of activity, drama techniques can present both advantages and disadvantages, but the most important thing is that teachers can, and should, look for adaptations and changes whenever an obstacle arises, so that they can perform any kind of activity. Doing so, teachers can reach the goal of inclusion inside the schools helping children to develop social and emotional skills while acquiring a foreign language in a meaningful manner.

3. Teaching Proposal

This section goes over some activities based on drama techniques that can be used to include students with visual impairment in the English lessons. These activities have been selected mainly because they incorporate the use of many different senses other than vision and privilege communication and interaction among students. Additionally, these activities aim at making students feel comfortable during the class, building good relationships with their classmates and expressing their opinions in a relaxed manner.

It is important to mention that the following tasks can be modified whenever necessary with the purpose of teaching other contents besides the ones exposed below, in order to fit the level of English, or in any other particular situation; additionally, they can be used with all ages, as their development mostly depends on the language level that the students have. As mentioned earlier, the activities chosen involve different senses, as well as the use of voice and body which makes them suitable for different kinds of learners, including visually impaired ones. In some cases it may be useful to complement the activity with Braille cards in order to give visually impaired students something to reinforce the information they are listening to, so that they can keep a record of the contents and review them at home if they wish. This way, students will also develop reading and writing skills; this is particularly important when dealing with a language such as English in which pronunciation and spelling do not have direct equivalence. With the purpose of creating Braille cards, it is important that the teacher keeps constant contact with the special education teacher of the school, so that he/she can have access to support materials, for instance, the Braille printer.

Regarding lesson planning, it is important to mention that teachers should plan their classes in advance, since, as exposed above, if they require additional materials, they have to contact the special education teacher. Additionally, Wessels (1987) states that “[the] success of any drama lesson depends partly on careful planning (...) [as] you need to decide how much time you want to spend on each stage of the lesson” (p. 25). Additionally, in order to take the most of drama techniques, it is important to be consistent and to repeat the activities with different contents at least five times during the year because students are not accustomed to this methodology, so that they need to get used to it.

The activities have been divided into three sections the first section, getting to know each other, deals with activities related to the creation of strong relationships among students; the second section, developing collaborative work abilities, intends to give the students the chance to work together helping each other and complementing their abilities; and the third section communication and production, enhances the use of the second language in meaningful contexts.

NOTE: in order to avoid gender bias and the permanent use of he/she, from now on the pronoun she will be used to refer to a single student.

3.1 Tips

The following section develops some tips for the teachers to work with visually impaired students; additionally it is stated in which activities that tip can be useful.

1. Whenever rearranging the classroom, the teacher can make students organize the class furniture as fast as possible by playing a well known song and asking them to finish before the chorus starts. Additionally, as the students know the song, the teacher can tell them to sing it while arranging the desks; thus, children will organize the classroom in a fun way and practice pronunciation.
 - **Activity 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12.**
2. If an activity needs to move the chairs and there is not enough space to do so, the teacher can ask the students to make a circle without moving the tables leaving some of them inside the circle.
 - **Activity 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12.**
3. When an activity requires group formation, the teacher can prepare little pieces of paper with different animal names written on it (the number or different animals will depend on the amount of groups that the teacher wants to form). The teacher has to give each student a piece of paper, and the students have to walk around the classroom miming and making the sound of the animal they got. The students have to get together with the classmates that are making the same sound. Once all the students have met with their partners the groups are formed (Adapted from Boal, 1992, p.135).

4. **Activity 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15.** Another way of forming groups is to have students get together according to their place among their siblings (oldest, middle, youngest, or only child). After the groups are formed students may list the advantages and disadvantages of their place in the family (Jones, 2007, p 116). This can also work as a warm-up activity, since students will have to walk around the classroom and talk to each other in order to find out who should be in the same group. Another possibility is that the teacher starts saying numbers, and students get together quickly according to the numbers they heard (Boal, 1992, p. 116). This way, the teacher can form groups faster and the students can practice numbers.
- **Activity 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15.**
5. In regard to classroom discipline, it is important to have constant rules. Bear in mind that students are always testing the teacher so as to establish whether her spoken rules are actually the rules she practices (Mackenzie & Stanzione, 1996, p 103), so, it is essential to always stick to what you said at the beginning of the activity.
- **Activity 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13.**
6. The teacher can give visually impaired students Braille cards in order to reinforce the contents.
- **Activity 2, 6, 15.**
7. It is important to have contact with the special education teacher with the purpose of having the needed materials on time. In order to do so, teachers' may arrange weekly meetings with the special education teacher in order to discuss students' progress, work out the materials needed, asking for photocopies, etc.

8. For the activities that require the students to move, the teacher can form couples so that the visually impaired students do not take any risks as their partners will be helping them during the activity. Another possibility is to have some students helping the teacher to check if there is any behavioral problem.


- Activity 2, 6, 7, 9.

9. Teachers have to provide body orientation, for example: “move to the left, the board is straight ahead of you, (...) etc. Additionally, they should ask students to read aloud written information. (Malburg, 2011).
10. It is important to identify the students by name and to notify the students whenever the teacher leaves or enters the classroom (Malburg, 2011).
11. Always use a tactile or auditory signal when necessary instead of a visual cue. For example, for clean up or lining up, try hand clapping signals or a song. Instead of showing just pictures, try adding sound effects (Malburg, 2011).
12. When presenting a new topic or giving directions, “use the terms “straight,” “left,” and “right” to help guide the student, and avoid terms such as "over here,” “there,” which have no meaning to him” (Torreno, 2012).
13. Teachers should work with all the senses and use real objects (Torreno, 2012), so that the students can create mental images.


3.2 Activities

3.2.1 Getting to Know Each Other

1) “This is my name”
<p>Age group: All</p> <p>Language Level: Elementary upwards</p> <p>Sense: Hearing</p> <p>Type of drama activity: Controlled</p> <p>Time: 15 min.</p> <p>Content Objective: The students will be able to get to know each other.</p> <p>Language Objective: The students will be able to introduce themselves and produce sentences with ‘like’ and 3rd person singular.</p>
Teaching Materials:
➤ None
Classroom Management
<p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <p>➤ Clear space in the classroom or ask the students to do so. If there is not enough space, the teacher can ask the students to make a circle without moving the tables leaving some of them inside the circle.</p> <p>Group formation</p> <p>➤ All together (forming a circle)</p> <p>Rules</p> <p>➤ None</p>
Steps (Teacher):
<p>Preparation:</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students to stand up and form a circle. 2. Tell one student to introduce herself. 3. Explain to the students that the classmate next to the person who has just introduced herself has to do the same, and so on. 4. When all the students have introduced themselves, ask them to repeat the previous instructions but adding what they like to do. (Ex: I’m X, I’m from Y and I like Z ...) 5. It is helpful to give the students an example, thus the teacher can start with the activity. 6. The student next to X has to say the information of her classmate and his own information (She is X, and she likes... I’m Z, and I like...) 7. If one student does not remember the information, ask someone to help her.

Steps (Students):
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stand up and make a circle. 2. (To the student who is standing next to the teacher) Say my information and your own. For example, “She is W and she is from X. I am Y and I am from Z.” 3. (To the third student) You have to give the information of the second student and your own. For example, “She is Y and she is from Z. I am A and I am from B.” 4. Keep going until everyone participates. 5. (Second round) Start again, but this time say your name and something you like to do. 6. (To the next student) Repeat your classmate’s information and add your own. 7. Keep going until everyone participates. 8. If one of you does not remember the information of the previous classmate, ask for help, and a different student can help you.
Comments and Suggestions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If students’ language level is elementary, the teacher can ask them to say only their names. ➤ If they have an advanced level, they can share more specific information about themselves like the places where they live, their age, etc. ➤ This task works well at the beginning of the year; especially when the teacher has just arrived or when new classmates have joined the school. ➤ It is useful to have all the students sharing information about them, facilitating the creation of bonds and good relationships among students which is fundamental for visually impaired students. ➤ Also if all your students already know each other and you want to practice the language content you can ask them to say the neighborhood they live in.
Reference/Acknowledgement:
<p>Adaptation from Levy, G. (2005). <i>112 Acting Games: A Comprehensive Workbook of Theatre Games for Developing Acting Skills</i>. (p. 45). Colorado Springs: Meriwether Publishing</p>
Picture:


<p>2) <i>“Murder in the classroom”</i></p>
<p>Age Group: All Language Level: Elementary upwards Sense: Touch/Hearing Type of drama activity: Semi-controlled Time: 15 – 20 min. Content Objective: Students will be able to interact with each other in a fictitious scenario. Language Objective: Students will be able to produce sentences using present simple/continuous.</p>
<p>Teaching Materials:</p>
<p>➤ One bit of paper per student (folded so that no one can see the content).</p>
<p>Classroom Management</p>
<p>Classroom Arrangement ➤ None Group formation ➤ All together Rules ➤ Walk slowly and carefully. ➤ The students who are “killed” must sit on their desk.</p>
<p>Steps (Teacher):</p>
<p>Preparation: ➤ Write pieces of paper. One of the pieces of paper has to have “killer” written on it, the rest should say “innocent”.</p> <p>Class: 1. Agree on a killing signal together with the students. 2. Hand out the bits of paper to each student. 3. Tell your students the bits of paper you are giving them will mark one as the killer. 4. Ask your students to open their paper without showing its content to anyone else. 5. Students should walk around the classroom and each time they encounter someone else they accuse her of being the killer by describing them (ex. If the person they encounter is wearing a purple coat, they say something like “The killer wears - is wearing - a purple coat”). 6. After 10 minutes of having the students accusing each other, the killer should start killing them one by one. The students who get murdered must exit the group and stay apart. 7. The killer must kill all her classmates by using an agreed signal (for instance, two taps on the shoulder, coughing, etc.). 8. The students should try to find the killer before everyone has been killed. Once the killer has been discovered the remaining students must accuse her</p>

<p>“you are the killer”.</p>
<p>Steps (Students):</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This game is called “murder in the classroom”, and one of you is going to be the killer who has kill the rest of the classmates using an agreed signal (the teacher and the students agree on a signal). 2. (As you hand out the bits of paper) Do not show your paper to others. 3. If your paper says “innocent”, it means that you are not the killer and if your paper says “killer”, then you are her. 4. Walk around the classroom and accuse each other of being the killer using sentences describing your classmates. For example, if the person in front of you is wearing a purple coat, you say something like “The killer, wears (is wearing) a purple coat”. 5. (After 10 minutes) If you are the killer you should start killing using the agreed signal. 6. If you are an “innocent”, try to find the killer before everyone gets “killed”. 7. If you get “killed”, you have to exit the group and sit on your desk.. 8. If you think you found the “killer”, raise your hand and say the name out loud.
<p>Comments and Suggestions:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The students who get “killed” should sit on their desks. ➤ As the students will be walking around the classroom, it is important to tell them that they should walk slowly, in order not to create difficulties for visually impaired students. ➤ If the students’ level of English is higher, the teacher can ask them to use more complex sentences. For instance conditionals: “If I were the killer, I would be wearing a purple coat”. ➤ This activity aids at making students interact with each other and describe their classmates using conditionals. For visually impaired students this can be an opportunity to bond with the rest of the class since they will have to identify their classmates’ outfits by touching them, which makes the interaction friendlier.
<p>Reference/Acknowledgement:</p>
<p>Adaptation from Boal, A. (1992). <i>Games for actors and non-actors</i>. (p. 156). London: Routledge.</p>
<p>Picture:</p>


3.2.2 Developing Collaborative Work Abilities

3) “Music in your head”
<p>Age group: All Language Level: All Sense: Hearing Type of drama activity: Controlled Time: 15 min. Content Objective: Students will be able to concentrate in order to synchronize their singing. Students will be able to identify the lyrics of a song through listening. Language Objective: Depends on the song chosen.</p>
Teaching Materials:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A laptop and speakers or a CD player, etc. (Any electronic device that can be used to play a song).
Classroom Management
<p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ None <p>Group formation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ None <p>Rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ None
Steps (Teacher):
<p>Preparation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose a song that fits the age and language level of the group and that relates to the contents of the course (It could have vocabulary or a specific grammar structure that the class is working on). <p>Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students to carefully listen to the song you will play. 2. After playing the song at least 2 times, play it again and this time ask the students to sing along. It can be a song the students know and have proposed for the activity or it can be the chorus of a new song in order to introduce new contents. 3. When students finish singing along, establish a signal (like clapping your hands) and explain that they will listen to the song “in their heads” now, and only when you do the established signal they will have to start singing out loud the bit that they were “listening to” mentally. 4. Ask students to start “listening” to the song in their heads and then do the signal at some point. 5. If they coincide it will show how concentrated they were in the activity and also, students will get more familiar with the content (the grammar, vocabulary, intonation, etc.) of the song that they would if they only listened to it.
Steps (Students):
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Listen carefully to the following song (as many times as necessary), paying attention to the lyrics and rhythm. 2. Listen again and sing along this time.

3. Now, “listen to the song” in your head and when I clap my hands start singing out loud the part that you were “listening to” in your head.
4. Start “listening and singing” in your heads!

Comments and Suggestions:

- It is not necessary to use to the entire song, although it can be done but the activity would last longer.
- It is recommended that the song is a well known one, but if the song chosen is not one that students are familiar with, the teacher can give them the lyrics after listening the first time in order to help them. If the teacher decides to do so, she has to contact the special education teacher in order to have the Braille versions on time.
- Since this activity does not require movement the teacher will not need to rearrange the classroom and there are no potential risks of having students running around the classroom.
- As the students have to be synchronized, this activity will help them to develop team work abilities and concentration. Additionally, as the main sense used in this task is hearing, students with visual impairment will not have any problems when developing the activity; on the contrary, as they have this sense more developed, they can help their classmates which can heighten their self-confidence.


Reference/Acknowledgement:

Adaptation from Boal, A. (1992). *Games for actors and non-actors*. (pag. 42). London: Routledge.

Picture:



4) “Count off”
<p> Age group: All Language Level: Elementary Sense: Hearing Type of drama activity: Controlled Time: 10 - 15 min. Content Objective: The students count numbers together in order to be synchronized. Language Objective: The students practice numbers. </p>
Teaching Materials:
<p>➤ None</p>
Classroom Management
<p> Classroom Arrangement ➤ Clear the classroom or ask the students to do so (move the desks in order to have enough space to form a circle, or form the circle between the desks). Group formation ➤ All together standing in a circle; they should be touching their classmates’ shoulders. Rules ➤ Concentrate and hear your classmates’ breathing. </p>
Steps (Teacher):
<p> Preparation: ➤ None Class: 1. Tell them that they have to count as a group. 2. If a student makes a mistake the whole group should start again. 3. You should advice the students to hear their classmates’ breathing, so that they know when to say the number. 4. Tell them that if they reach number 30, they will have a prize. </p>
Steps (Students):
<p> 1. Stand up and form a circle. You should touch your classmates’ shoulders. 2. In this activity you have to count as a group, so that if I close my eyes I can hear just one voice. 3. While you are counting. You should not make mistakes nor count at a different pace. 4. If someone makes a mistake, you have to start all over again. 5. Please, listen to your classmates’ breathing so that you can know when to start counting. Not only should you count together, but also breathe together. 6. If you reach number 30, you will have a prize. </p>

Comments and Suggestions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students have the opportunity to develop team-work abilities, which is beneficial to all the students but especially to visually impaired ones, because this type of games will strengthen the support network they need. ➤ Every student is important in this task because they need to reach the goal together. ➤ Students can concentrate on what is happening around them, as they need to hear their classmates' breathing. If they do not concentrate or do not work as a team, they will not achieve what the teacher requested.
Reference/Acknowledgement:
<p>Adaptation from Levy, G. (2005). <i>112 Acting Games: A Comprehensive Workbook of Theatre Games for Developing Acting Skills</i>. (p. 76). Colorado Springs: Meriwether Publishing.</p>
Picture:


<p>5) “The circle of knots”</p> <p>Age group: All Language Level: Elementary upwards Sense: Hearing Type of drama activity: Semi-controlled Time: 10 – 15 min. Content objective: Students will be able to work as a team and free themselves from the “knots” by listening to their classmates instructions. Language objective: Students will be able to follow instructions.</p>
<p>Teaching Materials:</p>
<p>➤ None</p>
<p>Classroom Management</p>
<p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <p>➤ Clear the classroom or ask the students to do so (move the desks in order to have enough space to form a circle, or form the circle between the desks).</p> <p>Group formation</p> <p>➤ Ask the students to stand up and form groups of 10 people aprox. If the class is a small one, it is not necessary to divide them.</p> <p>Rules</p> <p>➤ Close your eyes</p>
<p>Steps (Teacher):</p>
<p>Preparation:</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students to stand up and to follow your commands. For example: Lift your left arm. The students must use their bodies when following your instructions. 2. Once the students have mastered the main commands you have to form groups of ten students approximately. 3. Groups should be in a circle and with their eyes closed (except one student per group), students will have to extend their hands in front of them and hold two other hands. Everyone should now be holding hands with two different people. 4. After the groups become “knotted” the person who is not in the circle will have to “guide” their classmates into freedom by giving instructions to them (ex. “Fernanda, raise your left arm”)
<p>Steps (Students):</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stand up and follow my commands using your bodies (like Simon says). For example: Lift you left arm. 2. Now, form groups of 10 people (depending on the size of the class). 3. In your groups, form a circle and choose one classmate to step outside; this person will be your guide.

4. With eyes closed, extend your arms in front of you and find other hands to hold. You do not have to see your classmates' hands.
5. Each guide will have to give instructions to her group in order to help them get untangled.
6. The groups cannot stop holding hands in the process.
7. The first group to finish wins.

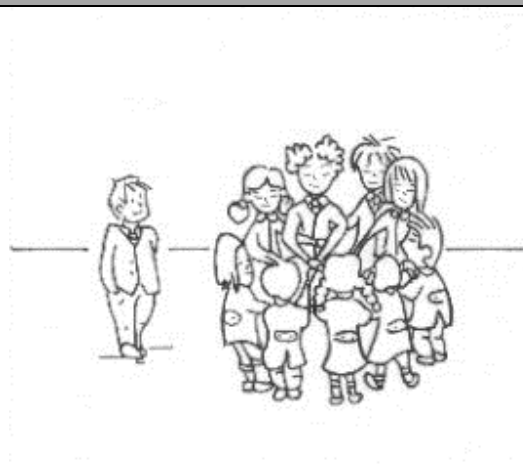
Comments and Suggestions:

- This activity can be done entirely with eyes closed when the student's level is intermediate upwards or if the teacher feels that the group is capable of doing it.
- Otherwise, if the students do not have the language level, after finding another hand to hold, they might be allowed to open their eyes in order to facilitate the process of getting untangled.
- The teacher can also include requests and commands to the activity so that the instructions given by the guide are: "Fernanda must lift her right arm", "Fernanda should move to the left", etc.
- If it is an advanced class this activity can be used for practicing conditionals, inversions or any chosen structure, for example: "If Fernanda lifted her right arm, Pedro could go under it".
- As all the students have their eyes closed, all of them will be in the same position eliminating the differences between students with a normal sight and visually impaired ones, creating a positive environment of inclusion.

Reference/Acknowledgement:

Adaptation from Boal, A. (1992). *Games for actors and non-actors*. (p. 67). London: Routledge.

Picture:



6) “Animal noises”
<p>Age Group: All</p> <p>Language Level: Elementary</p> <p>Sense: Hearing & Vision/Touch</p> <p>Type of drama activity: Controlled</p> <p>Time: 10 - 15 min.</p> <p>Content Objective: Students will be able to listen and recognize a specific animal noise.</p> <p>Language Objective: Students will be able to recognize vocabulary of animals.</p>
Teaching Materials:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pictures of different animals (one per couple). The pictures must be in relief. ➤ Bring bits of paper with the name of one of the animals on each. No names can be more than once and all the pictures need to have their respective name on a paper ➤ A scarf or something to blindfold the students.
Classroom Management
<p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ None <p>Group formation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Couples <p>Rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The blindfolded student must walk only when she hears the noise of the animal.
Steps (Teacher):
<p>Preparation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make flashcards with animals (in relief). 2. Cut pieces of paper with different names of animals in them. <p>Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stick the pictures of animals on the wall. There must be enough pictures so that each couple has their own. 2. Ask the students to join in pairs (if there are too many students in the class you can get them in groups of 3 or 4). 3. One person per couple will be blindfolded. 4. The bits of paper with the name of the animals will be handed out to the person in each couple that is not blindfolded. 5. When everyone has their animal, all the couples will get together with their blindfolded partners and make the noise of the animal until the blindfolded partner guesses which animal they have. 6. When the blindfolded partner has guessed the name of the animal, her partner says “Yes, x!” (ex. “Yes, Fernanda!”) and then moves far away from them while still making the noise. 7. The blindfolded partner must (carefully) try to follow the noise of the animal

<p>only by listening.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> After the students have been wandering around the classroom for a while, the teacher should tell them to look for their picture now, so the partner who is not blindfolded has to choose the picture that they think corresponds to their animal and lure the blindfolded partner there with the noise of the animal. When both partners have reached destination the blindfold is taken away and now the student have to agree whether they both think that is the correct picture or not. If they decide that the picture the first partner chose is not the correct one, then they can chose another one and stick the name of the animal (the paper that was originally given to them) close to the picture. As a class, they go through all the pictures and decide if the names are labeled correctly.
<p>Steps (Students):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Join in pairs. One of you has to be blindfolded. The other will receive a bit of paper with the name of an animal in it. The student with the paper will approach the blindfolded student and make the animal noise until he guesses the animal. When the blindfolded partner guesses you should say “Yes, x” (ex. Yes, Fernanda”) for your partner to be sure that you are talking to her. Now, the partner making the noise should start walking away from the blindfolded classmate and she should try to follow her only by listening. When I tell you, the person making the noise will have to choose one of the pictures on the wall (the one you think your animal corresponds to) and go towards it making the noise of the animal. The blindfolded student should only follow her partner if she is making the noise, if she stops, that means you must stop too. The blindfolded partner will keep following you until you both reach the picture. Once you both get to the picture, the blindfolded partner will take off the blindfold and together you will decide whether the picture is the correct one or not. If you do not agree, you have to choose a picture that you both think that is the correct animal. Finally, we will review all the images and correct all together the ones that are incorrect.
<p>Comments and Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The partner that is not blindfolded is responsible for her partner’s safety. ➤ In case the person who is not blindfolded notices that her partner is about to collide into something or someone she can stop making the sound so as to make her partner stop walking. ➤ The blindfolded person will only walk as long as her partner is making the noise. Check noise everywhere ➤ Visually impaired students will be completely engaged with this task as

some classmates will be in the same position; furthermore, this activity entails two senses that are fundamental for students with visual impairment (listening and touch), which makes the task more attractive to them.


Reference/Acknowledgement:

Adaptation from Boal, A. (1992). *Games for actors and non-actors*. (p. 107). London: Routledge

Picture:



7) “Guide”
<p>Age Group: All Language Level: All Sense: Touch Type of drama activity: Controlled Time: 10 min. Content Objective: The students will be able to trust in their classmates. Language Objective: The students will be able to recognize classroom objects.</p>
Teaching Materials:
➤ None
Classroom Management
<p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Group formation</p> <p>➤ Couples</p> <p>Rules</p> <p>➤ Walk slowly and carefully.</p>
Steps (Teacher):
<p>Preparation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bring a scarf or any piece of cloth that can be used as a blindfold. <p>Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students to join in pairs 2. Tell them that one of them has to be blindfolded. 3. Explain to the students that the blindfolded student will be guided by her classmate. 4. Tell the guides to take their classmates gently by the arm and walk around the classroom carefully. 5. The student who is blindfolded has to recognize the objects that she is touching and name them in English. 6. Once they have walked around the whole classroom, ask them to change roles and repeat the process.
Steps (Students):
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Join in pairs and choose one classmate in each couple to be blindfolded. 2. If you are blindfolded, you will be guided by your partner through the classroom. 3. If you are a guide, you must take your classmates gently by the arm and walk slowly and carefully around the classroom. 4. If you are a guide, you have to make stops next to different objects of the classroom, and the blindfolded students have to touch the objects, recognize them and name them in English. 5. When you have walked around the entire classroom, you have to change roles.

Comments and Suggestions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This task develops attitudes of respect, because all the students will have to walk around the classroom with their eyes closed, thus they will feel the same as visually impaired students. ➤ Even though this activity gives the opportunity to students with normal sight to feel the same as their classmates with visual impairment, it is difficult to carry it out in a class with behavioral problems, because, since half of the class is blindfolded, there could be an accident if some of the students misbehaved. ➤ This can be solved by splitting the class into two groups. While one group is carrying out the activity, the other group can observe and check if someone is not following the instructions of the task. ➤ As visually impaired students know the position of the objects inside the classroom, there should not be problems they have to be the guides. Notwithstanding, it could be helpful if the teacher or another student can be closer in order to help that couple if there is any problem, or if the visually impaired student becomes disoriented.
Reference/Acknowledgement:
<p>Adaptation from Maley, A. & Duff, A. (1982). <i>Drama techniques in language learning: a resource book of communication activities for language teachers</i>. (p. 17). Cambridge: Cambridge University.</p>
Picture:


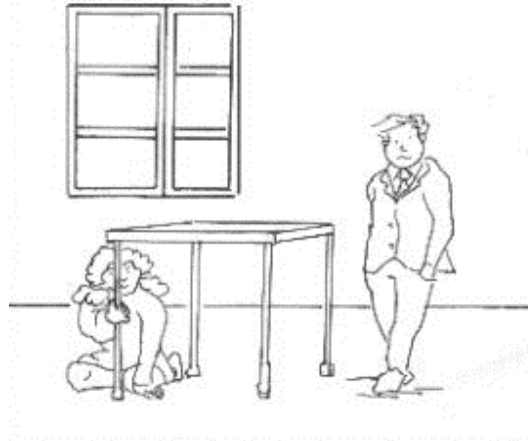
8) “The Preposition Game”
<p>Age Group: All</p> <p>Language Level: Elementary upwards</p> <p>Sense: Hearing & Vision/Touch</p> <p>Type of drama activity: Controlled</p> <p>Time: 10 min.</p> <p>Content Objective: The students show the prepositions they hear.</p> <p>Language Objective: The students recognize prepositions through listening.</p>
Teaching Materials:
➤ A chair or a desk per couple
Classroom Management
<p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Group formation</p> <p>➤ Couples</p> <p>Rules</p> <p>➤ None</p>
Steps (Teacher):
<p>Preparation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange the classroom so there is a chair or a table per couple. <p>Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students to join in pairs. 2. Tell them that one of them will call out a preposition. 3. The second student will take up the correct position, using either a chair or a desk. 4. Then, after five prepositions, ask them to change roles.
Steps (Students):
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You have to join in pairs and stand next to one chair (or desk). 2. One of you has to call out different prepositions. 3. The other student has to take up the correct position, using the chair (or the desk). 4. After saying 5 prepositions, you should change roles.
Comments and Suggestions:
<p>➤ This activity can also work with the whole group, meaning that the teacher names a preposition and the students show the correct position using their chairs or desks.</p> <p>➤ It is important that the students have enough space in order to perform the activity without taking risks.</p> <p>➤ If the classroom is too crowded, there are many chances that they can collide into each other. If this happens, the best option is to perform the task with the whole group or splitting it into two.</p> <p>➤ Students use their body in order to show the preposition, which is significantly helpful when considering the inclusion of visually impaired students, as normally, it is not so common for them to move or use their</p>

bodies during the activities.

Reference/Acknowledgement:

Adaptation from Wessels, C. (1987). *Drama*. (p. 42). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Picture:



3.2.3 Communication/ Production

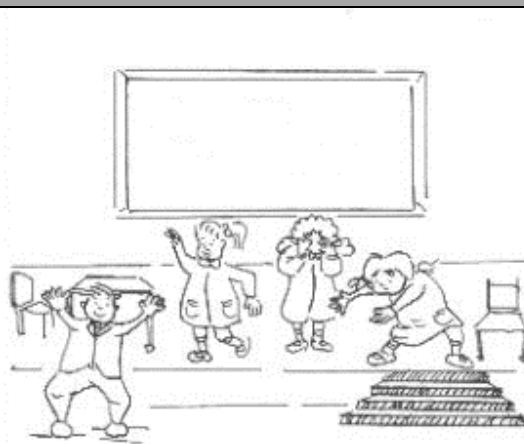
9) “Walk, stop, justify”
<p>Age Group: All</p> <p>Language Level: Elementary upwards</p> <p>Sense: Hearing (& body movement)</p> <p>Type of drama activity: Open communication</p> <p>Time: 15 – 20 min.</p> <p>Content Objective: Students will be able to work with their imagination giving reasons for the positions they have at a certain moment.</p> <p>Language Objective: Students will be able to describe their position using present continuous and/or simple (depending on the language level).</p>
Teaching Materials:
➤ None
Classroom Management
<p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <p>➤ Clear space in the classroom (or ask the students to do so).</p> <p>Group formation</p> <p>➤ Whole group</p> <p>Rules</p> <p>➤ Walk carefully.</p>
Steps (Teacher):
<p>Preparation:</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask your students to carefully walk around the classroom in strange and unusual ways. 2. Every now and then ask them to stop. You can use a pre-established signal for stopping or just say “stop”. 3. When the teacher tells students, they should freeze where they are, and one by one justify their strange position by saying something that makes sense (ex. Student 1: “I am walking my dog and it is pulling me to the side”. Student 2: “I am riding a bicycle”, etc.)
Steps (Students):
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stand up and walk around the classroom carefully (walk, do not run!) in strange and unusual ways. 2. Whenever I say ‘stop’ you must freeze right where you are. 3. I will appoint a group of students to justify her position and give reasons for it. The rest can remain in neutral position. 4. Use your imagination and have fun!
Comments and Suggestions:
➤ It is not recommended to ask all students to justify in the same round because they can get tired of holding the same position while waiting for their turn to speak.

- It is recommended that teachers ask around 5 people to describe their position each time they say “stop”, depending on the amount of students in the class.
- In upper – intermediate or advanced classes, a variation of this activity can be done by asking students to make up a story combining their justifications (ex. Student 1: “I was walking my dog and it was pulling me to the side” Student 2: “When suddenly, a bicycle crashed into a store right in front of me”, and so on.
- The use of the body and the explanations given by the students make visually impaired students totally engaged in the task, as they can imagine their classmates. Additionally, all the students can have fun together when listening to the unusual explanations.

Reference/Acknowledgement

Adaptation from Boal, A. (1992). *Games for actors and non-actors*. (p. 98). London: Routledge.

Picture:



10) "The Senses"
<p>Age Group: All</p> <p>Language Level: Elementary upwards</p> <p>Sense: Hearing/Taste/Touch</p> <p>Type of drama activity: Open communication</p> <p>Time: 15 min. per sense.</p> <p>Content Objective: The students use and develop different senses.</p> <p>Language Objective: The students describe specific situations using past tenses.</p>
Teaching Materials:
➤ A bag with different objects.
Classroom Management
<p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Group formation</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Rules</p> <p>➤ None</p>
Steps (Teacher):
<p>Preparation:</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hearing: Ask the students to close their eyes and listen to all the sounds around them. Then, tell them to share orally what they have heard. 2. Taste: Ask the students to close their eyes again and concentrate on the last thing they ate or drank before coming to class. After some minutes, tell them to share the image of the piece of food they imagined, the taste of it and whether they like it or not. (For example they can share if they ate something sweet, citrus, bitter, etc.) 3. Feeling: Ask the students to join in pairs. Tell them that one student has to be blindfolded and the other one has to give her five different objects to recognize through the sense of touch. The teacher will provide the objects from a big bag (try to use unusual objects with advanced levels). When the first student has successfully identified all the objects, ask them to change roles. The student who will give the objects to her classmate has to choose different objects to the ones previously used.
Steps (Students):
<p>A. Hearing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close your eyes and listen to the sounds around you. 2. You have two minutes to concentrate on the sound. 3. Now, I will call for volunteers and you have to share what things you have heard. 4. While describing the sounds try to use past tense.

B. Taste

1. Close your eyes.
2. You will have two minutes to concentrate on the last thing you ate or drank.
3. Then, I will call for volunteers and you have to share what you have eaten. You have to describe the taste and tell your classmates if you liked it or not giving reasons for your descriptions.
4. You have to try to use the past tense in order to communicate your ideas.

C. Feeling

1. Get in pairs and decide which one is going to be blindfolded.
2. The student who is not blindfolded has to show her classmate five different objects she will take from my big bag.
3. The other student has to touch the object, describe it using past tense and name it.
4. Then, change roles and choose different objects.

Comments and Suggestions:

- It is not necessary to carry out the three parts of the activity in just one class; the teacher can choose which sense is the most appropriate according to the contents they have seen in the lesson.
- This activity is appropriate for classrooms that integrate visually impaired students because all the students are in the same condition, as they all have to close their eyes at one point of the activity; additionally, since students do not have to move during the activity, the classroom remains the same, and visually impaired children do not take risks.
- The teacher can list on the board the vocabulary named by the students, but, if so; she has to give visually impaired students a Braille document with that information, too.

Reference/Acknowledgement:

Adaptation from Wessels, C. (1987). *Drama*. (p. 35). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Picture:



11) “Word Association”
<p>Age Group: All</p> <p>Level: Elementary upwards</p> <p>Sense: Hearing</p> <p>Type of drama activity: Semi-controlled</p> <p>Time: 10 min.</p> <p>Content Objective: The students associate words in a logical/illogical manner.</p> <p>Language Objective: The students practice simple present, past tense, present perfect and general vocabulary based on their previous knowledge.</p>
Teaching Materials:
➤ None
Classroom Management
<p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <p>➤ Move the desks backwards in order to leave a 3 to 5 meters of clear space in the classroom or ask the students to do so.</p> <p>Group formation</p> <p>➤ Ask the students to form a circle in between the desks.</p> <p>Rules</p> <p>➤ Very quick responses.</p>
Steps (Teacher):
<p>Preparation:</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students to stand up and form a circle. 2. Tell them that you will fire¹⁴ a word and the student next to you has to say the first word that comes to her mind. 3. Tell them that each student has to react to the word given by the previous classmate. 4. After all the students have said a word you will start to ask them WHY. 5. Ask them to give reasons why they chose that word. They must answer using past tense.
Steps (Students):
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please stand up carefully and form a circle. 2. I will say a word and the student next to me has to say the first word that comes to her mind. 3. Each one of you has to react to the word given by the previous classmate by saying another word. 4. After all the students have said a word, I will ask you WHY? 5. We will repeat the same procedure, but whenever I ask you why you have chosen that word you will have to give reasons using past tense.

¹⁴ Say, ask and respond quickly.

Comments and Suggestions:

- In order to perform this activity effectively, the teacher needs to encourage the students to be fast and to call out the first word that comes to their minds; otherwise, they could choose a simple or obvious word that will not challenge their classmates to give original explanations on why they have chosen that specific word.
- If the students' language level is intermediate or above, the teacher can ask them to say phrases in order to create a story.
- This task develops students' imagination as they have to give reasons why they thought of that word (or phrase) and not of different one.
- Since students work with their imagination, there are no differences between the performances of visually impaired students and students with normal sight, which makes it easy to achieve inclusion successfully.

Reference/Acknowledgement:

Adaptation from Wessels, C. (1987). *Drama*. (p. 48). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Picture:



12) “My Vacation”
<p>Age group: All</p> <p>Language Level: Elementary upwards</p> <p>Sense: Hearing</p> <p>Type of drama activity: Open communication</p> <p>Time: 20 min.</p> <p>Content Objective: The students imagine a place where they would like to go.</p> <p>Language Objective: The students describe a place using present simple and continuous.</p>
Teaching Materials:
➤ None
Classroom Management
<p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <p>➤ A chair in front of the classroom is needed.</p> <p>Group formation</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Rules</p> <p>➤ None</p>
Steps (Teacher):
<p>Preparation:</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students to close their eyes. 2. They will imagine a place where they would like to be or to go on vacation. 3. Ask for a volunteer for describing the place she imagined using present simple and continuous tenses. 4. Then, ask for another student and so on.
Steps (Students):
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staying at your desks close your eyes and imagine a place where you would like to be or go on vacation. 2. After some minutes, I will ask for some volunteers who will come in front and share their favorite places. 3. You must describe the places in detail and answer your classmates' questions if necessary. 4. If the students who are listening to their classmates have questions, they can ask them.
Comments and Suggestions:
<p>➤ This activity is suitable to make the students strengthen the speaking skill.</p> <p>➤ As they will talk about something they like, they will be motivated to share their thoughts.</p> <p>➤ If the students have an advanced level of English, that teacher can prompt students to produce sentences using more complex structures as future</p>

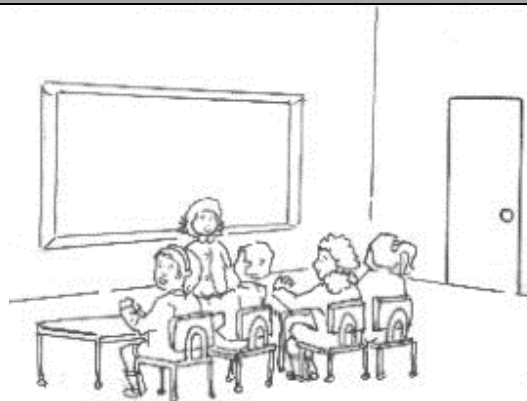
conditional. Always implicitly.

- The teacher can adapt the contents of the activity according to the students' progress in the curriculum; they can share their favorite meals, hobbies, movies, etc.
- Since this task is based on imagination, all the students will be in the same position. There will be no differences among them, thus visually impaired students will feel comfortable and relaxed; furthermore, as the teacher will ask for volunteers, if some students do not feel ready to produce the language in front of an audience, they will not be forced to do that. Notwithstanding, as they will be motivated, they will be encouraged to talk in a relaxed manner. Besides, since this activity does not require the students to move constantly, the classroom remains the same, which is a plus for visually impaired students, who need structured patterns.

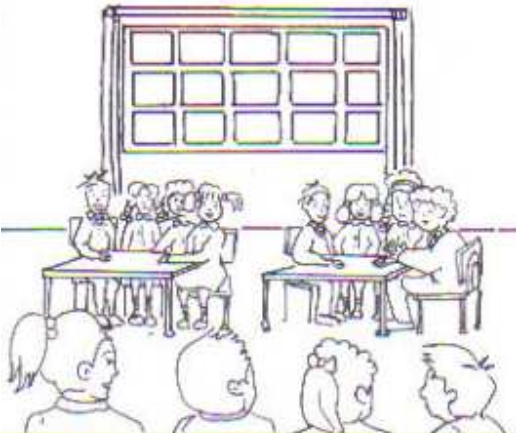
Reference/Acknowledgement:

Adaptation from Levy, G. (2005). *112 Acting Games: A Comprehensive Workbook of Theatre Games for Developing Acting Skills*. (p. 66). Colorado Springs: Meriwether Publishing.

Picture:



13) “Tell the Truth”
<p>Age group: All</p> <p>Language Level: Pre-intermediate upwards</p> <p>Sense: Hearing</p> <p>Type of drama activity: Open communication</p> <p>Time: 30 min.</p> <p>Content Objective: The students improvise a story in front of a group.</p> <p>Language Objective: The students tell a story using past tense and practice question forms.</p>
Teaching Materials:
➤ None
Classroom Management
<p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Group formation</p> <p>➤ Form groups of four.</p> <p>Rules</p> <p>➤ Choose anecdotes that the rest of the students do not know.</p>
Steps (Teacher):
<p>Preparation:</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Form three groups of students. 2. Ask them to share real anecdotes about their childhood. 3. Each group should choose the best story in order to share it with the rest of the class. 4. One group will come in front and will tell the story chosen by them. 5. All the students of the group have to participate when telling the story. This way, each student will tell a different part of it. 6. Tell them that they have to pretend that the story happened to all of them. 7. Then, the rest of the class will ask questions to each classmate. 8. They will say which student they think is telling the truth by observing their body language and changes of voice.
Steps (Students):
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Form three groups. 2. In your groups, share anecdotes from your childhood. Try to choose anecdotes that your classmates have not heard before. 3. Then, each group will choose the best story and share it in front of the class. 4. Your whole group has to participate telling the story, pretending that it was of each member of the group. 5. When your group has finished, the rest of the classmates will ask questions to each student of the group, and they will have to answer pretending that everything they say really happened. 6. Taking into account the answers given by the students and the way in which

<p>they told the story, you should say which classmate you think is telling the truth, which means that she owns the story.</p> <p>7. You should observe your classmates' body language and changes of voice before making you decision.</p> <p>8. Then, it will be another group's turn.</p>
<p>Comments and Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The teacher can vary the number of groups depending on the amount of students and time available. ➤ This task is fun and keeps the students relaxed, because they can share and remember amusing stories of their childhood. ➤ This activity does not exclude visually impaired students because, since they know their classmates, and they can differentiate whether their voices are changing or not. ➤ Students may get to know each other in a deeper way, as they do not have the time to sit and share anecdotes of their lives during lessons. This will create a positive environment among students since they will get to know each other better.
<p>Reference/Acknowledgement:</p> <p>Adaptation from Levy, G. (2005). <i>112 Acting Games: A Comprehensive Workbook of Theatre Games for Developing Acting Skills</i>. (p. 197). Colorado Springs: Meriwether Publishing.</p>
<p>Picture:</p> 

14) “Alien Interview”
<p>Age group: All</p> <p>Language Level: Elementary upwards</p> <p>Sense: Hearing</p> <p>Type of drama activity: Open communication</p> <p>Time: 15 min.</p> <p>Content Objective: The students will be able to ask, answer questions and interpret messages in an original way.</p> <p>Language Objective: The students will be able work with different question forms and answer using their imagination.</p>
Teaching Materials:
➤ None
Classroom Management
<p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Group formation</p> <p>➤ Groups of three.</p> <p>Rules</p> <p>➤ None</p>
Steps (Teacher):
<p>Preparation:</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students to form groups of three. 2. Tell them that the Earth was visited by aliens who only speak ‘Alienese’, but they have trained some humans to be translators. Today, some scientist will interview the aliens in order to know about their lives on their planet. 3. Then, tell them that each person in the group has to perform a character, so that one student will be the scientist, another one the translator and the last one will be the alien. 4. Encourage them to be original when asking questions and answering them. 5. Tell the aliens that they have to create a new language working with their voices in order to let the translator know what they want to express. 6. After five minutes, the students should change roles; hence all the students will have the chance to be all the characters.
Steps (Students):
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You have to form groups of three students. 2. Now, listen carefully. Imagine that the Earth has been visited by aliens who only speak ‘Alienese’, but they have trained some humans to be translators. Today, a scientist will interview the alien in order to know about life on their planet.

3. Each one of you has to represent one character: the alien, the scientist and the translator.
4. So, the scientists should ask the aliens about her lives, and the translator will decode the message and say the same thing to the alien in 'Alienese', then, the alien has to answer in their own language and the translator will interpret the message.
5. After five minutes you should change roles, so that each one of you interprets one of the characters once.
6. When creating your 'Alienese' language you have to use different tones and play with your voices as well as with your facial expressions.

Comments and Suggestions:

- As the students will use their voices in a creative manner, giving their classmates the chance to make up original responses, it is not an impediment that visually impaired students cannot see their classmates' gestures.
- If the number of students are not multiple of three, the teacher can ask one group to have more than one alien, scientist or translator.


Reference/Acknowledgement:

Swale, J. (2009). *Drama games for classrooms and workshops*. (p. 144). London: Nick Hern Books.

Picture:



15) "Do you agree?"
<p>Age group: All</p> <p>Language Level: Upper-intermediate upwards</p> <p>Sense: Hearing</p> <p>Type of drama activity: Open communication</p> <p>Time: 10 - 15 min.</p> <p>Content Objective: Students will be able to develop their interpersonal skills.</p> <p>Language Objective: The students will practice the 3rd person singular.</p>
Teaching Materials:
➤ A short story (in tape or printed so that the teacher reads it to the class)
Classroom Management
<p>Classroom Arrangement</p> <p>➤ None</p> <p>Group formation</p> <p>➤ Form groups of three. Each group must have a Student A, Student B and Student C.</p> <p>Rules</p> <p>➤ None.</p>
Steps (Teacher):
<p>Preparation:</p> <p>➤ Look for a short, simple story in which there is a conflict among characters so that students may sympathize with one or the other.</p> <p>Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell all students to listen carefully to the story. 2. Explain that all groups must have a Student A, Student B and a Student C. 3. After the story is over, Student A must tell to her group which character in the story she sympathizes with the most and give reasons. 4. After Student A is finished talking, Student B must repeat what her classmate just said while Student C listens carefully. 5. Finally, Student C must interpret Student B's words and tone of voice so as to try to establish whether she (Student B) agrees with Student A or not.
Steps (Students):
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Form groups of three. 2. In each group, decide who is Student A, Student B and Student C. 3. Listen carefully to the following story. 4. Student A has to tell her group which character in the story she agrees with the most and why. 5. Student B must pay attention to her classmate's words. 6. Student B has to repeat what Student A just said. 7. Student C must pay attention and try to guess whether Student B agrees with what Student A said. 8. Now, based on her classmate's words, tone of voice, etc., Student C has to

tell the group if she thinks Student B agrees with Student A.
Comments and Suggestions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This activity can be adapted for elementary students by working only with likes and dislikes. ➤ Since this task does not involve movement, the classroom remains the same, which is a plus for visually impaired students, who need structured patterns. ➤ By working with listening skills, students with visual impairment will not feel left out of the activity, since everyone is in the same position. ➤ Students will develop their intrapersonal skills, by establishing a classmate's attitude towards a specific character only by listening to her tone of voice.
Reference/Acknowledgement:
Adaptation from Feinberg, M. (2009). <i>TESOL A Games</i> [Class Handout]. TESOL A, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland.
Picture:


3.3 Reference Guide

	Activity	Level	Sense	Type of Drama Activity	Preparation/ Materials	Classroom Management	Structures/ Functions / Vocabulary
1	This is my name	Elementary upwards	Hearing	Controlled	None	Classroom arrangement Group formation	Personal information
2	Murder in the classroom	Elementary upwards	Touch Hearing	Semi-controlled	Bits of paper	Rules	Conditionals
3	Music in your head	All	Hearing	Controlled	Laptop + speakers and a song	None	Depends on the song chosen
4	Count off	Elementary	Hearing	Controlled	None	Classroom arrangement Group formation Rules	Numbers
5	The circle of knots	Elementary upwards	Hearing	Semi-controlled	None	Classroom arrangement Group formation Rules	Part of the body/giving directions
6	Animal noises	Elementary	Hearing & Vision Touch	Controlled	Animal flashcards, animal labels & sth to blindfold students	Group formation Rules	Animals
7	Guide	All	Touch	Controlled	Sth to blindfold students	Group formation Rules	Classroom Objects
8	The preposition game	Elementary upwards	Hearing & Vision Touch	Controlled	None	Classroom arrangement Group formation	Prepositions
9	Walk, stop,	Elementary upwards		Open communication	None	Classroom arrangement Rules	Giving information

	justify						
10	The senses	Elementary upwards	Hearing Taste Touch	Open communication	None	None	Simple past
11	Word association	Elementary upwards	Hearing	Semi-controlled	None	Classroom arrangement Group formation Rules	Vocabulary Association
12	My vacation	Elementary upwards	Hearing	Open communication	None	Classroom arrangement	Future tense/ Locations
13	Tell the truth	Intermediate upwards	Hearing	Open communication	None	Group formation Rules	Past tense
14	Alien interview	Elementary upwards	Hearing	Open communication	None	Group formation	Question forms
15	Do you agree?	Intermediate upwards	Hearing	Open communication	A taped or printed story	Group formation	3 rd person singular

Conclusions

In order to achieve inclusion, not only it is important for visually impaired students to be physically present in the classroom, but also to participate actively during the lesson so as to become part of the group. Unfortunately, when the law No 20,422 was promulgated, Chilean teachers were not trained nor given any tools for facing this new reality. Proper training and teaching resources are fundamental when asking teachers to achieve active inclusion during their lessons. As it has been proven throughout this research paper, drama techniques involve a great deal of interaction and active participation of pupils during the whole the lesson This is the reason why this teaching proposal aims at becoming a guide for teachers by suggesting drama techniques as an appropriate and effective way to achieve the inclusion of visually impaired children in an EFL classroom, as well as giving them several tips to overcome the possible difficulties they could find during the implementation of the said techniques.

Visually impaired students receive the information of their surroundings through the senses they have more developed so teachers should prepare tasks that make use of senses such as the auditory or the tactile. In activities that entail the use of the voice, children with visual impairment have the opportunity to hear the voices of the classmates and teachers they know well in a completely different way, using a different pitch and volume in order for visually impaired students to understand a message that goes beyond simple plain words that are being uttered; thus, compensating for the sight of the body performing its language to convey meaning. Furthermore, visually impaired students should touch what is around them and use their bodies with the aim of creating stronger associations between different objects and the respective denomination in the foreign language. Additionally, it is important not to leave aside the use of the body which is a key

element of drama techniques because it helps visually impaired students to be involved with their environment and to foster personal relationships with their partners and teachers. Another important feature to take into account when planning a lesson for visually impaired students is the theory of multiple intelligences. All students learn in different ways and teachers have to reach the students' learning styles through the development of appropriate activities. When teachers consider their students' needs and styles, not only visually impaired students are benefited, but also the rest of the pupils because the more senses and learning styles an activity entails, the more the students will feel motivated and participate during the lesson; and, when considering an effective learning process, students' participation is essential.

Nevertheless, something that is even more important is the relationship that students with visual impairment create with their peers. Visually impaired children must develop strong bonds with the people around them as they need to have a support network, especially when being at school and working in different tasks, as they need to feel assisted by their peers and teachers in order to trust in their surroundings. At this point it is important to mention that drama techniques are effective not only in inclusive classrooms but also to foster relationships among students whether they have special needs or not. All students have to feel important within the group, being aware of all the differences inside of it in order to use those differences to strengthen the possible weaknesses of the group, and drama techniques can provide the necessary tools for heightening students' self esteem and developing team work abilities. Consequently, when generating an environment where collaborative learning is developed, all students can be conscious of their importance, roles and abilities, being respectful towards their classmates' opinions and differences.

It is fundamental to work with tasks that promote communication and collaborative work, since they are the ground for inclusive education. Drama techniques work under the idea of realistic scenarios where students work collaboratively to solve real life problems through games, the creation of dialogues, the use of the voice and the body, the use of the imagination, the creation of a safe space where communication and team work is of the utmost importance. In such an atmosphere, students must share their opinions and express their feelings in a relaxed way in order to be involved in a positive atmosphere and, therefore, not feel insecure about their capabilities or about their level of English; in addition, collaborative work will make students help each other enhancing a positive classroom environment.

Achieving inclusion in the Chilean reality might sound difficult for any teacher, but it is important to give all students the chance and the necessary tools to acquire a second language in an inclusive environment controlling the use of segregating methods and resources though those might seem like the easiest path. It is fundamental to consider alternative methodologies that can give students more than just the acquisition of the foreign language, but also personal benefits that will encourage them to be self-confident, heightening their self-esteem and developing their autonomy. These benefits will provide visually impaired students with the necessary strength to face their future lives being aware of their abilities and developing as citizens that share and offer all their talents to our contemporary society.

Further research

Notwithstanding, there are some areas, in regard to this topic, that require further research and that could help the Chilean educational system to be closer to the “ideal

classroom,” where inclusion and the coexistence of different needs are possible. Some of the topics to be developed are the assessment of visually impaired students when working with drama techniques and the incorporation of drama techniques in a classroom with students who present other special needs.

The importance of inclusive education will significantly grow over time; hence, teachers should be prepared to face a classroom that includes students with special needs, being aware of the different methodologies that can be used to achieve inclusion and leaving the mere integration in the past.

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