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# ENGLISH TEACHING FOR BLIND STUDENTS: ADAPTATION SUGGESTIONS FOR DIDACTIC ACTIVITIES OF A TEXTBOOK

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ARTICLE

## ENGLISH TEACHING FOR BLIND STUDENTS: ADAPTATION SUGGESTIONS FOR DIDACTIC ACTIVITIES OF A TEXTBOOK

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**ABSTRACT:** The purpose of the present work is to present adaptation suggestions of activities from an English language textbook, to be used by blind students in the sixth year of Basic Education. In this qualitative research, inscribed in the area of Applied Linguistics, we sought to provide a Review of Literature on research about the adaptation of materials for blind students, which comprised our previous studies. Highlights of themes approached include the lack of research and of adapted materials for blind students, the lack of preparation of teachers to deal with the specificities of those students and problems in the development of autonomy and inclusion of blind students in class. In addition, we searched on those studies for understanding and ideas of methodologies and adaptations of didactic materials for the proposals developed in the English field. In a second moment, the sixth grade English textbook most chosen by public schools in Santa Maria in 2021, entitled "Way to English for Brazilian Learners - 6" (FRANCO; TAVARES, 2015), was analyzed. Furthermore, the analysis of the textbook revealed that the most relevant section to be adapted is the "Vocabulary Corner", which encompasses vocabulary activities referring to all units of the book. After this process, adaptations for six activities in the book were suggested, built on the basis of the Literature Review, in order to make them inclusive and accessible for blind students.

**Keywords:** blind students, English language, teaching, adaptation.

## ENSINO DE INGLÊS PARA ESTUDANTES CEGOS: SUGESTÕES DE ADAPTAÇÃO PARA ATIVIDADES DE UM LIVRO DIDÁTICO

**RESUMO:** O objetivo do presente trabalho é apresentar sugestões de adaptação para atividades de um livro didático de Língua Inglesa (LI), para serem utilizadas por alunos(as) cegos(as) do sexto ano do Ensino Fundamental. Nesta pesquisa qualitativa, inscrita na área da Linguística Aplicada, buscou-se realizar uma Revisão de Literatura sobre pesquisas em adaptação de materiais para alunos(as) cegos(as), as quais compuseram os estudos prévios. Destacam-se temas como a falta de pesquisas e materiais adaptados para esse público, o despreparo dos professores para lidar com as especificidades desses(as) alunos(as) e problemas no desenvolvimento da autonomia e da inclusão de alunos(as) cegos(as) nas aulas. Além disso, buscamos, nesses estudos, compreensão e inspiração sobre metodologias e adaptações de materiais didáticos para as propostas a serem desenvolvidas na área de LI. Em um segundo momento, foi analisado o livro didático de LI do sexto ano mais escolhido por escolas públicas de Santa Maria/RS

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em 2021, intitulado “Way to English for Brazilian Learners - 6” (FRANCO; TAVARES, 2015). Ademais, a análise do livro didático revelou que a seção mais relevante a ser adaptada é denominada “Vocabulary Corner”, por englobar atividades de vocabulário referentes a todas as unidades do livro. Após esse processo, foram sugeridas adaptações para seis atividades do livro, construídas com base na Revisão de Literatura, com o intuito de torná-las inclusivas e acessíveis também para alunos(as) cegos(as).

**Palavras-chave:** alunos cegos, Língua Inglesa, ensino, adaptação.

## **ENSEÑANZA DE INGLÉS PARA ESTUDIANTES CIEGOS: SUGERENCIAS DE ADAPTACIÓN A ACTIVIDADES DE UN LIBRO DIDÁCTICO**

**RESUMEN:** El presente trabajo tiene como objetivo presentar sugerencias de adaptación para actividades de un libro didáctico de Inglés, para ser utilizadas por alumnos(as) ciegos(as) del sexto año de la Escuela Primaria. En esta investigación cualitativa, inscrita en el área de la Lingüística Aplicada, buscó lograr una Revisión Literaria sobre investigaciones en adaptación de materiales para alumnos ciegos, cuáles hacen parte de los estudios previos. Destaca temas como la falta de investigaciones y materiales adaptados para alumnos ciegos y también la falta de preparación de los maestros para manejar con los detalles de estos alumnos y los problemas en el desarrollo de la autonomía y de la inclusión de alumnos ciegos en las clases. Además, buscamos en estos estudios comprensión e inspiración sobre metodologías y adaptaciones de materiales didácticos para las propuestas que van a ser desarrolladas en el área de la Lengua Inglesa. Luego, fue analizado el libro didáctico de Inglés del sexto año más elegido por las escuelas públicas de Santa María, RS, en 2021, nombrado “Way to English for Brazilian Learners - 6” (FRANCO; TAVARES, 2015). Todavía, el análisis del libro didáctico ha revelado que la sección más necesitada de adaptación es llamada “Vocabulary Corner”, la cual abarca actividades del vocabulario referentes a todas las unidades del libro. Después de ese proceso, fueron sugeridas adaptaciones para seis actividades del libro, hechas con base en la Revisión Literaria, con el intuito de hacerlas inclusivas y accesibles también para alumnos(as) ciegos(as).

**Palabras clave:** alumnos ciegos, Inglés, enseñanza, adaptación.

## INTRODUCTION<sup>4</sup>

Teaching an additional language is a challenging and demanding task since teachers need to be aware of the necessity to create a safe and productive environment, in which students feel comfortable to express themselves, creating a good rapport (HUGHEY, 2011). The main purpose of an additional language class is to make students think about and use language critically by means of engaging themselves in multimodal genres so that they comprehend language as “constitutive of situated social practices” (MOTTA-ROTH, HEBERLE, 2015, p. 2).

In order to be comprehended by sighted students, teachers of English as an Additional Language (EAL) usually make use of visual materials, such as pictures, photos, videos, flash cards, maps and posters. Although these materials act as realia and help learners to understand the English language, they need adaptation to be used by non-sighted students. These students require a tangible or audible exemplar of the didactic material, which can be examined through other senses (RESOURCES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE TO LEARNERS WITH BLINDNESS OR VISUAL IMPAIRMENT, 2022).

Even though the Brazilian Education Ministry provides adaptations in Braille textbooks available from the National Textbook Program (Programa Nacional do Livro Didático – PNLD<sup>5</sup>) and required by schools, it is important for the teachers to be familiar with other adapted materials, in order to be able to choose the best method according to the students’ abilities and learning styles. Such adaptations are meaningful not only for blind students, who will be included in activities they would not be able to participate otherwise, but also for teachers, as they can explore different materials that may work for the whole group, either sighted or non-sighted learners.

Through searching on journal platforms for works concerning the EAL learning-teaching process of blind students, it is possible to observe the lack of discussion of this theme within the Applied Linguistics area, which indicates the lack of research on the theme and also interferes in the teachers’ search for forms of adaptations. Such an issue reinforces the importance of conducting research on adapted didactic materials for blind students, exposing tangible and audible options to be used for that audience.

The aim of this study is to present adaptations for didactic activities of the most used textbook in Santa Maria, RS, in 2021, used by sixth graded blind students. To do so, a Review of Literature was conducted, regarding previous works on teaching and learning process of blind students. Based on the results of this research, an adaptation of selected didactic activities headed to blind students is then suggested. Before discussing those forms of adaptations, we present, in the following sections, the national inclusion of the non-sighted people in social and educational contexts by debating some historical perspectives on national legislation and historical landmarks, as well as the main perspectives on the teaching of blind students.

### **Historical landmarks: Legislation and Speeches on Disability**

Presently, many types of physical, mental and sensorial impairments are broadly known and discussed in Brazil, along with the education of impaired students. However, not long ago, those students used to be addressed by means of pejorative and discriminative terms. Until the 1970’s, people with any disability were segregated from society and deprived of their rights, such as to receive a proper education. Nationally, the situation started changing in the 60’s and 70’s decades, with the creation of the first Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education and of the National Center for Special Education

<sup>4</sup>The data, reviews and conclusions of this paper were published in the first author’s final graduation work, supervised by the second and third authors. The graduation work has not been published as a paper in a journal.

<sup>5</sup>Plano Nacional do Livro Didático (PNLD), which stands for National Textbook Program, is a program created by the Brazilian Ministry of Education, in order to evaluate and provide didactic and literary books to basic and infant educational institutions in Brazil. Retrieved from: <<http://portal.mec.gov.br/component/content/article?id=12391:pnld>>. Access on: Jul. 17, 2022.

(CENESP)<sup>6</sup>, which began to regularize, respectively, the “normalization”<sup>7</sup> of people with disability and their right to education (ALVES, 2017, p. 15). Since then, three other laws regarding guidelines and bases of national education emerged: Law 4.024/61 (1961), concerning education and ensuring the Brazilian population the right to schooling; Law 5.692 (1971), establishing guidelines and bases for high school education, among other measures; and Law 9.394/96 (1994), which is current, asserting the responsibilities of the governments (municipal, state and federal) with the three Brazilian educational stages (preschool, primary school and high school).

Globally, the 90's decade witnessed significant landmarks in favor of people with impairments. The World Declaration on Education for All asserted that every single person has the right to education and must have access to basic conditions of learning (UNESCO, 1990). In 1994, the Salamanca Statement was announced by the United Nations to ensure social and educational inclusion, stating that people with special needs must receive equal education, regardless of any limitation (FIGUEIREDO; KATO, 2015).

From 2000 onwards, other laws and decrees were proclaimed in Brazil. The most relevant ones include the National Guidelines for Special Education in Basic Education (Diretrizes Nacionais para Educação Especial na Educação Básica) and the National Special Education Policy from the Perspective of Inclusive Education (Política Nacional de Educação Especial da Perspectiva da Educação Inclusiva). The latter policy guarantees the right of students with any disability to attend public schools, while the former aims to put that democratization into practice, ensuring accessibility and inclusion to all (ALVES, 2017).

Although the legislation has advanced throughout the years, nationally and internationally, attitudes of segregation are unfortunately still present in our society, due to poor accessibility, stereotypical thoughts, lack of educational and professional opportunities and inadequacy of legislation, for example (GARCÍA, 2014). Inclusive perspectives and efforts are necessary to help ensure there are more tolerant and egalitarian communities, with equal opportunities to all citizens.

## **Visual Impairment and Blindness**

According to the classification provided by Santos et al (2018), based on data from the World Health Organization (WHO) published in 2010, there are at least four levels within the visual spectrum. They are divided into: 1) no visual impairment, 2) moderate visual impairment, 3) severe visual impairment, and 4) blindness, and are available in Table 1.

TABLE 1 - Visual Impairment: Classification by WHO

<i>Visual impairment classification, according to WHO (2010)</i>	
Classification	Visual Field*
No visual impairment	1.0 > 0.3
Moderate visual impairment	0.3 > 0.1
Severe visual impairment	0.1 > 0.05
Blindness	>0.05 ou VF < 10°

*Note.* \* In the best eye with the best optical correction.; VF = Visual Field; WHO = World Health Organization.

Source: Santos et al (2018).

Based on this classification, we consider: 1) a person with “no visual impairment” as someone with mild vision loss or near-normal vision, that is, perceiving light; 2) “moderate visual

<sup>6</sup>The National Center of Special Education (CENESP) was created in 1973, with the purpose of managing special education in the country, establishing that every student with special needs should receive accessibility to develop their abilities. Available at: <<https://www.diariodasleis.com.br/legislacao/federal/61174-cria-o-centro-nacional-de-educação-especial-cenesp-e-doutras-providencias.html>>. Access on: Jul. 17, 2022.

<sup>7</sup>We opted for translating the original quotes from Portuguese to English, in order to keep the flow of the reading in English. The responsibility of the translations relies on the present work's authors.

impairment" as moderate low vision, still perceiving light; 3) "severe visual impairment" as grave low vision, but perceiving a little of light; and 4) "blindness" as profound to total visual impairment, perceiving no or almost no light. Thus, it is possible to say that blindness is one type of visual impairment, which is the most severe one.

According to WHO, in 2019, there were nearly 39 million blind people around the world, of which over 1,5 million are from Brazil (CEGUEIRA AFETA 39 MILHÓES DE PESSOAS NO MUNDO, 2019), based on the last census by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). Furthermore, as reported by an IBGE survey published in 2015 (VILLELA, 2015), the South region of Brazil has the biggest proportion of people with some level of visual impairment, representing 5.4% of its population.

Although the majority of people with visual impairment or blindness are over the age of 50 (BLINDNESS AND VISION IMPAIRMENT, 2021), we cannot disregard the younger masses who live in the same conditions and do not receive assistance, especially when it comes to blind children attending school. Based on these data, we decided that the target audience for the didactic adaptation proposal would be students with blindness, which is the last stage of visual impairment. By addressing these audience, such an adaptation may be used for students of all visual levels.

## Perspectives for teaching blind students

By analyzing recent didactic materials and textbooks, it is possible to observe that most of them present a lot of visual elements and multimodal texts, such as images, drawings, maps and posters. Although those elements are important in the education, language teaching materials do not need to be solely visual (TEACHING LANGUAGES TO BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS, 2022), as there are other options of teaching methods that encompass non-sighted students as well.

Undoubtedly, there are certain challenges EAL teachers may find when having blind students in class: students may be unmotivated or discouraged, both the student or the teacher may be unfamiliar with Braille and other accessible materials, the blind students may not feel included by their own classmates, among others (BENWELL, 2022)<sup>8</sup>. Therefore, it is important for teachers to be patient and try to create a comfortable environment, in which students are not afraid of speaking out and making mistakes. As teachers, we need to keep in mind that a blind student is first and foremost a student and their condition comes secondly, that is, blind students need to receive equal treatment as their sighted classmates, even though their learning methods may be different.

As challenging as teaching an additional language to a blind student may be, it is also a rewarding experience, as both student and teacher will learn through the joint construction of different knowledge. In this two-way path, students may feel more confident and succeed, one day at a time, in learning a new language, while the EAL teacher will discover different materials and learn a bit each day on how to cope with a blind student in class.

Based on such considerations, our research questions are: How can a blind student learn an additional language, without the access to printed didactic activities and adapted materials, in regular classrooms? Can visual and printed activities be adapted with everyday materials? What are the teacher's options to make the EAL printed activities reach the blind student? In order to answer those questions, we suggest adaptations for didactic activities based on a Review of Literature on the teaching and learning process of blind students, which is presented after the Methodology.

## METHODOLOGY

The present work is qualitative research, as it "grounded in a philosophical position which is broadly 'interpretivist' in the sense that it is concerned with how the social world is interpreted,

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<sup>8</sup>Tara Benwell is a member of the website EnglishClub, in which students can practice and learn English, while teachers access a variety of didactic materials, which include information on difficulties in the teaching and learning process. Available at: <<https://www.englishclub.com/learning-difficulties/visual-impairment.htm>>. Access on: Jul. 17, 2022.

understood, experienced, produced or constituted” and “based on methods of data generation which are both flexible and sensitive to the social context in which data are produced” (MASON, 2002, p. 3). From this perspective, the researcher isn’t and “cannot be neutral, or objective, or detached, from the knowledge and evidence they are generating” (MASON, 2002, p. 7).

Although this research is subscribed to the qualitative approach, it was also necessary to adopt procedures from the quantitative approach, which supported the analysis with quantified data organized in tables and graphics, for example (SILVA, 2016; SANTADE, 2014). According to Santade (2014), while quantitative research organizes numerical information through statistical procedures, qualitative research concerns a structured and interpretative analysis of information. Combined, such approaches help the “accuracy of the description and analysis of the collected data”, reaching faithful authentic results and conclusions (SANTADE, 2014, p. 102). The quantitative approach helped us with the collection and quantification of data both in theoretical (collecting articles to the Review of Literature) and practical (gathering data of the sixth grade English textbooks used in public schools of Santa Maria, RS, in 2021) moments. On the other hand, the qualitative approach was useful to the moment of analysis and perceptions of such data, which are the basis for our adaptation proposal.

At the same time as we are involved in researching social issues in which language is a constitutive element, we seek not only to discuss, but also to promote interventions for the problems studied (SCHLATTER, 2009), which configures an Applied Linguistics approach. According to Mason (2002), “qualitative research should be conducted as a *moral practice*, and with regard to its political context” (p. 8). In the present work, we are foraging solutions for the lack of adapted EAL materials for blind students attending the 6th grade. For this reason, this research can also be described as propositional, since we offer an adaptation for EAL activities that do not address to blind students’ learning needs.

In the next two sections, we present the Review of Literature regarding adapted materials for blind students, as well as the choice of textbook and unit, which supports the adaptation suggestions.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section concerns the exploratory research about previous studies on adaptation of didactic materials for blind students. In that research, different Applied Linguistics journal websites were consulted, but we could not find any results searching for keywords such as “blind”, “blind students” and “blindness” (in English and in Portuguese languages). Such data reinforce the importance of studies regarding adaptation of materials for blind students, which help to assist teachers on regular classes to include those students in all didactic activities.

Due to the lack of papers in Applied Linguistics journals, we opted for searching texts on the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) platform. Using the research strategies available, the texts resulting in the investigation present in their title the word “blind” and also include the words “teaching” and “school” in their title, abstract or keywords. In addition, some research filters were applied: a) the journal of publication should be related to education; b) the texts should be open access; c) within the genre category (Tipos de Literatura), the texts should be either articles or review articles. This search resulted in nine papers.

Taking into consideration the purpose of the present work, the following criteria of inclusion were adopted: a) the text should be a paper published on SciElo; b) it should be related to adaptation or didactic materials for blind students; c) it should be available online and for free; d) it should be related to blind students in the school context, even though the themes are varied and not specifically associated to the languages field.

Applying these criteria and reviewing the nine resulting papers, five of them remained and comprised the Review of Literature and are presented in Chart 1. The other four texts did not attend all the inclusion criteria established and were excluded.

CHART 1 – Selected works for the Review of Literature

N.	Title, Author, Year	Keywords	Abstract with highlights
1	<b>Experimental activities in the Early Years of Elementary School:</b> Analysis on a backdrop with blind students. (BIAGINI; GONÇALVES, 2017).	Experimentation; <b>Blind</b> and sighted; Science teaching.	The research's purpose is to investigate limits and potentialities of an <b>experimental activities methodology for teaching and learning</b> in Natural Science in a class of 3rd-year <b>elementary school</b> attended by seers and one <b>blind student</b> . [...]
2	Oral History: a Method for Investigating Physics <b>Education of Blind Students.</b> (FERREIRA; DICKMAN, 2015).	Special Education; Physics Education; Oral History; <b>Blind Student.</b>	In this paper, we discuss the role of oral history in qualitative research, as an essential tool for collecting data from <b>blind students</b> or their teachers, [...]. The analysis of the <b>blind students' narratives</b> provides data that indicate the <b>best choices</b> the researcher should make when elaborating strategies and didactic materials appropriate to <b>blind students</b> [...].
3	<b>Inclusion of Blind Students in Mathematics Classes: development of a teaching kit.</b> (ULIANA, 2013).	Teaching Material Kit; <b>Blind Student;</b> Mathematics.	This article presents the <b>development</b> and testing of an <b>educational kit</b> [...]. The kit enables blind people, using the sense of touch, to carry out various mathematical activities involving plane geometric figures and graphs of polynomial functions. [...] The material was tested by one <b>6th grade blind student in a public school</b> in the state of Rondonia [...].
4	The <b>planning</b> of Mechanics and Modern Physics <b>teaching activities for blind students:</b> difficulties and alternatives. (CAMARGO; NARDI, 2006).	Education; Special Education; Educational Media.	We report here partial outcomes of a study aimed to verify future High School teachers performance when [...] were asked to <b>plan</b> Mechanics and Modern Physics topics to a students class which <b>included visual handicapped pupils.</b> [...] as alternatives, future teachers showed creativity in order to surpass passive aptitudes related to this educational problem and working out <b>methodological strategies deprived of the relation knowing/seeing.</b>
5	Reports by Blind Musicians: Supporting the <b>Teaching</b> of Music for <b>Students with Visual Impairments.</b> (OLIVEIRA; REILY, 2014).	Special Education; Music Education; <b>Visual impairment;</b> Inclusion.	This qualitative study aimed to <b>understand significant issues regarding access to music learning faced by blind musicians.</b> [...] The article intends to reveal music learning characteristics and <b>needs of students with visual impairments</b> , so as to <b>improve music teachers' professional practice within the regular school context</b> , as well as to discuss implications for teacher certification in university courses for <b>future teachers of students with visual impairments.</b>

Source: The authors, based on Biagini and Gonçalves (2017), Ferreira and Dickman (2015), Uliana (2013), Camargo and Nardi (2006), Oliveira and Reily (2014).

The data from those five papers indicate that they complement each other with teaching pedagogies necessary to teach and include a blind student in class. Those pedagogies are related to:

- Lack of previous research available about the education of blind students in many areas, including the English field (OLIVEIRA; REILY, 2014);
- Unpreparedness of teachers to deal with students' needs (including blind students), due to the lack of related contents in teacher education (FERREIRA; DICKMAN, 2015; ULIANA, 2013; CAMARGO; NARDI, 2006; OLIVEIRA; REILY, 2014);

- Student's autonomy/independence (BIAGINI; GONÇALVES, 2017; FERREIRA; DICKMAN, 2015; ULIANA, 2013; CAMARGO; NARDI, 2006; OLIVEIRA; REILY, 2014);
- Lack of adapted materials headed for blind students (BIAGINI; GONÇALVES, 2017; FERREIRA; DICKMAN, 2015; ULIANA, 2013; CAMARGO; NARDI, 2006; OLIVEIRA; REILY, 2014);
- Problems with inclusion of blind students in the regular classroom (FERREIRA; DICKMAN, 2015; ULIANA, 2013; CAMARGO; NARDI, 2006; OLIVEIRA; REILY, 2014);
- Ideas for the adaptation proposal (BIAGINI; GONÇALVES, 2017; FERREIRA; DICKMAN, 2015; ULIANA, 2013; CAMARGO; NARDI, 2006; OLIVEIRA; REILY, 2014).

As mentioned in the previous section, it was difficult to find previous studies about didactic materials for Brazilian blind students when generating data for the Review of Literature, so much so none of the articles address EAL language materials. However, that lack of research on materials for blind students does not seem to be a problem exclusively related to the English language field as other research from our review indicated the same difficulty in the Physics (FERREIRA; DICKMAN, 2015) and Music (OLIVEIRA; REILY, 2014) fields, for example, and the necessity of deepening on the issue. Such data indicate a research gap in many educational fields and the need to learn from our colleagues and special educators how to include and adapt materials of all school disciplines for blind students.

The lack of research in the educational area affects the classroom context, since there is not enough widely available guidance for teachers to adapt printed materials for blind students by themselves. Other difficulties relate to the lack of preparation in teacher education undergraduate courses (FERREIRA; DICKMAN, 2015; CAMARGO; NARDI, 2006; OLIVEIRA; REILY, 2014), in which future teachers only get a glimpse on the special education themes. Such a fact is demonstrated in Oliveira and Reily's research (2014). Through semi-structured interviews with five blind music students, the authors investigated the learning process of those students, "in order to unveil problems faced by them regarding the access to and learning of music" (OLIVEIRA; REILY, 2014, p. 407). One of the results indicated a possible lack of disciplines in undergraduate courses addressing the specificities of students with disabilities (OLIVEIRA; REILY, 2014, p. 417). Another related example occurs in the context of teacher education undergraduate courses of Universidade Federal de Santa Maria (UFSM), including the English Major<sup>9</sup>, in which there is only one course in the curriculum concerning the different spectrums of special education. In addition, Ferreira and Dickman (2015, p. 245) cite daily problems faced by in-service teachers, such as "violence, low pay, indiscipline and institutional assessments", which may interfere in the search for continued education specialized on adaptations for impaired students.

The scarcity of information and pre and in-service teacher education may result in the underdevelopment of the blind student's autonomy, since the unprepared teacher may not provide them with the necessary support and may end up overexplaining the activities or even giving away the answers. Biagini and Golçalves (2017) demonstrated the results of a group activity proposal for a third year elementary school class formed by sighted and one blind student. The proposal consisted in dividing the class into groups of four, in which each student would play a different role (reader, writer, communicator, and coordinator) to analyze a text selected by the researchers. As a result of the experiment, the blind student demonstrated a lack of independence to conclude activities alone, regularly requiring the help of the teacher or colleagues even for simpler exercises:

João was frequently "supported" by his classmates. For example, every day one of them was drafted by the teacher to accompany João during school break. However, the classmates'

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<sup>9</sup>For example, in the English Major at UFSM, the course "Fundamentos da Educação Especial "A" (Principles of Special Education "A") is offered in the second semester of the curriculum. There are no other courses in the obligatory curriculum attending the specificities of teaching impaired students, such as blind students. Available at: <<https://www.ufsm.br/cursos/graduacao/santa-maria/lettras/informacoes-do-curriculo>>. Access on: Jul. 17, 2022.

attitude of solidarity went along with one problem: the lack of opportunity for the development of João's autonomy (BIAGINI; GONÇALVES, 2017, p. 10).

The results by Biagini and Gonçalves (2017) are an example of the blind student's dependence on teacher assistance, which is related to unpreparedness of the teacher and lack of information on how to deal with a blind student in class. That situation may also impact on blind students' socialization and introspection, as in João's case. He only participated in group and oral activities responding to the interventions of his colleagues and teachers, even though such activities were planned considering his impairment (BIAGINI; GONÇALVES, 2017).

It is also important to remember not to impose all the responsibility exclusively on in-service teachers, who mostly are overcharged and are not given the working conditions and necessary time to adapt materials. In the case of many public schools, the deficiency of tactile resources available to be used as didactic materials in many disciplines also represents a problem (ULIANA, 2013). Such matter was one of the motivations to Uliana's research (2013), which aimed to construct and experiment a pedagogical kit to teach Math for blind students. In semi-structured interviews, both teachers and students highlighted the necessity of having adapted materials specifically designed for blind students available at school, among other factors reported in Chart 2.

CHART 2 – Summary of factors highlighted by Uliana (2013)

Students	Teachers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a Resource Room available for students.</li> <li>• There are no books printed in Braille available.</li> <li>• They present an age/grade discrepancy of seven years on average.</li> <li>• They complained about the lack of teachers' qualification to address their educational difficulties, especially in Math.</li> <li>• They manifested the necessity of having pedagogical materials that enable the access to curricular contents in full.</li> <li>• They consider learning Math difficult.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both teach other students with disabilities.</li> <li>• They complained about the lack of professional qualification.</li> <li>• They mentioned that inclusion in the schools they work in is only in theory.</li> <li>• They highlighted the necessity of having pedagogical materials specifically headed for blind students.</li> <li>• They already improvised some pedagogical materials to address the demands of their students with disabilities.</li> <li>• Both do not know how to operate the Soroban and do not master the reading and writing in Braille.</li> </ul>

Source: Translated from Uliana (2013, p. 607).

It is important to notice that, even though there was a resource room<sup>10</sup> for special educational services, there were no pedagogic materials available for blind students to access all the curricular content, leaving many gaps in their learning process. Consequently, the teacher was required to design an improvised material, often without financial assistance, to supply the demand for adapted material unavailable at school.

In addition, problems of inclusion of the blind student in class (CAMARGO; NARDI, 2006; ULIANA, 2013; OLIVEIRA; REILY, 2014; FERREIRA; DICKMAN, 2015) also require our attention. According to Ferreira and Dickman (2015), the inclusion of blind people in all contexts works in theory, but it is still a challenge when it meets the classroom setting. In their research, the authors aimed to explain how the oral history methodology contributes to the understanding of blind students in the learning of Physics. The oral history method consists in giving voice to a forgotten minority, with the

<sup>10</sup>The Resource Rooms ("Salas de Recursos", in Portuguese) aim to support the offer of special educational services, as they provide complementary or supplementary materials to encompass the necessities of students with disabilities, pervasive developmental disorders, high abilities or giftedness in regular schools. Such resources help to guarantee the conditions for those students to have access, to participate and learn properly in regular classes. Available at: <<http://portal.mec.gov.br/pet/194-secretarias-112877938/secad-educacao-continuada-223369541/17430-programa-implantacao-de-salas-de-recursos-multiplicacionais-novo>>. Access on: Jul. 17, 2022.

intent to deepen the personal previous experiences of those people and to overcome further difficulties. Such a method gives blind students freedom to describe their experience with different materials and teaching approaches, so as to advise the teacher of strategies that may or may not succeed for a specific student's learning. The oral history method brought good results to Ferreira and Dickman's research (2015), showing itself as one solution for the lack of inclusion of the blind student in class:

[...] with such methodology, the researchers got closer to the narratives of both teachers and students in the strategy of reformulating and building materials or didactic resources that enable greater inclusion of blind students and, at the same time, it was possible to make methodological procedures suitable for curricular contents available to the teacher (FERREIRA; DICKMAN, 2015, p. 256).

Other methods can also be explored to avoid problems of segregation in class. Camargo and Nardi (2006) researched on the lack of inclusion of blind students in Physics classes, aiming to introduce that issue to undergraduate teachers and to identify possible solutions to the problem. Their investigation was guided from a preparatory and a practical moment, in which future Physics teachers could build a course with activities aimed at both 35 sighted and two non-sighted students. Given this circumstance, the undergraduate students faced difficulties in finding methods that do not rely on visual resources, since many teachers of Physics mostly use the blackboard and visual experiments. Aiming to increase the inclusion of blind students in class, and to find solutions for that problem, the undergraduates presented Physics activities involving complementary and collaborative roles, such as oral exposition, reading and discussion in groups and even plays (CAMARGO; NARDI, 2006).

Such ideas for teaching methods to include blind students in class are relevant not only for the Physics area, but for all educational fields, as they can be adapted and used in other disciplines. In the present work's case, for example, although the articles from the Review may differ from our research's proposal in terms of pedagogical objectives, actions and educational area, they still bring valuable contributions to the development of our adaptation of EAL activities for blind students.

For Biagini and Gonçalves (2017, p. 8), some important aspects to be considered are "cooperation, solidarity and respect for differences" between students, which may be achieved through group activities. In their research, the authors suggested a reading activity in groups of four, assigning each student a role (reader, writer, communicator and coordinator). The activity was organized in three moments: 1) individual answers to the teachers' questions and discussions in the groups to elaborate a collective answer; 2) presentation of the answers to the whole class and discussion with new answers; and 3) communicate the conclusions and results of each group to the whole class. The researchers chose a text from the Natural Sciences area for the discussion, but it is possible to adapt such activity for other areas too, including the English language field. In addition, Biagini and Gonçalves (2017) carried out an experiment about the importance of water for vegetables, as well as potability and water treatment. In this experiment, they identified the importance of the use of multisensory resources (tactile, olfactory, auditory observations), which help the blind students to comprehend the explanations.

Ferreira and Dickman (2015) brought different notions: through interviews with blind students, they highlighted the most relevant aspects to be taken into consideration in class. In one of the excerpts, the participating student reports the blind student should have the same conditions and the necessary adaptations, in order to achieve the same level of understanding as the others. Furthermore, the student calls attention to the importance of practical activities and dialogues between teacher and student, so that the learning of Physics (or any other discipline) does not seem to be so difficult to the point that the student gives up. As a solution, Ferreira and Dickman (2015) propose some ideas of adaptations given by the participants (teachers and students): when printed, the description of images and graphs is necessary (and recommended); also, the teacher reported the experience with a mockup, which may be interpreted by the blind student through the tactile sense.

Uliana's research (2013) also brings helpful contributions with the proposal of a pedagogical kit. The author mentions some important characteristics to take into consideration when composing adapted materials: they must be cheap (such as magnets, metal plates, EVE, paper, glue and polystyrene), easy to carry (that is, not too heavy nor too big) and also uncomplicated to assemble and disassemble the

pieces in different ways (in order to form various figures and graphical representations). Thus, based on other research, Uliana (2013, p. 598) explains that, when they have access to concrete tactile materials, “blind students are able to abstract much information [...] at the same level as a sighted student does”. In addition, the author reports that it is not necessary to promote drastic changes in the teaching methods, but a few adaptations to encompass the blind students’ needs too.

While Uliana (2013)’s work focuses on tactile resources, Oliveira and Reily (2014) explore audible materials through the teaching of music for blind students. Based on Pring and Ockelford (2005), Oliveira and Reily (2014) explain that “there is a strong relationship between the development of language, cognitive and motor skills of the individual in an environment favorable to musical contact” (OLIVEIRA; REILY, 2014, p. 408), which contribute for the education of both sighted and non-sighted students. As ideas for didactic materials for blind students, the authors mention playful activities that arise the interest of such students in the contents, as well as embossed materials, use of Braille, voice synthesizer, screen reader and other technologies that contribute to this student’s learning. Also, Oliveira and Reily (2014) highlight the importance of the incentive coming from the students’ family, teachers and community to stimulate their education.

Finally, Camargo and Nardi (2006) contribute with alternatives for teaching methods suggested by undergraduate Physics teachers, in order to include the blind students in class. For the adaptation of printed materials, such as written evaluations, the future teachers suggested oral activities and recorded audios; for practical experiments, the idea was to make use of everyday materials, which explore the tactile and audible senses. It was also suggested group activities that encourage sighted and non-sighted students to interact and work together, such as debates, reading and discussion activities (in which there is use of orality and students may assume complementary roles) and even theatrical plays. Furthermore, the authors and the undergraduate students highlight the importance of active, inclusive, dialogic and participative educational approaches, which encourage “students’ attitudes of reflection, analysis, decision-making, and teachers’ attitudes of knowledge of their students’ ideas throughout the educational process” (CAMARGO; NARDI, 2006, p. 56).

Such methodological strategies are examples of how to address the teaching of a blind student in the classroom. They contribute to avoid future issues of non-inclusion, lack of autonomy or teacher unpreparedness, among other obstacles already mentioned that prevent this student from fully learning. Even so, it is always important to communicate with the student to verify which learning method they prefer and comprehend the contents best (ULIANA, 2013; FERREIRA; DICKMAN, 2015). Thereby, it is possible for the teacher and the learner to come up with a good method that works for both.

The papers composing this review brought not only ideas for didactic materials, but also provided contributions of teaching perspectives and ways to overcome obstacles for the blind students’ development. As Uliana (2013, p. 610) explains, “the lack of the sense of sight is not an impassable hurdle to the mathematical development of the student”. The same occurs in other fields, including English language teaching, since it is possible to achieve the teaching goals of such students with accessible materials and inclusive methods.

The lack of research and teacher preparation on the education of blind students, not only in the English language field, may result in adverse consequences for these students’ inclusion and independence. For those reasons, the constant search for interventional methods and adapted materials that include blind students in the classroom is an increasingly necessary action, so as to cease segregation and help in the construction of the student’s autonomy. After presenting the theoretical concepts, we present the practical moment, regarding the choice of the textbook and the unit, as well as the adaptation proposal for selected didactic activities.

## CHOICE OF THE TEXTBOOK AND THE UNIT

After the theoretical framework, we expose the procedures and results regarding the choice of the textbook and the unit, followed by the adaptations suggested for selected didactic activities of such unit.

The textbook was chosen from two principles based on Cargnin, Rossi and Ticks (2018, p. 562): 1) the book should be approved by PNLD in 2021; and 2) it should be the most chosen book in the referred year by English language teachers of sixth grade in public schools from Santa Maria, RS. In order to discover which textbook is the most used in Santa Maria, the SIMAD's website<sup>11</sup> was accessed, and the available form was filled according to the parameters shown in image 1:

IMAGE 1 - Specifications of the form

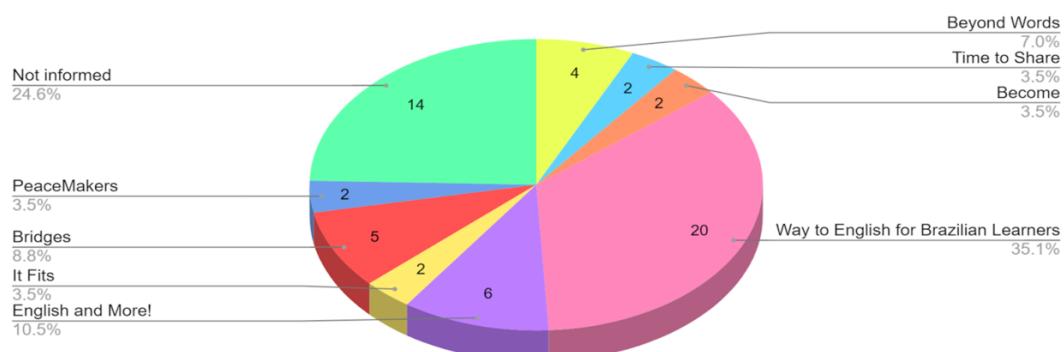
Source: SIMAD.

The parameters chosen were: year 2021, PNLD program, in all types of schools, both urban and rural, of municipal administration domain in Santa Maria.

With those parameters, the website generated 74 results: three CEIs (Child Education Centers), 54 EMEFs (Municipal Elementary Schools) and 17 EMEIs (Municipal Nursery Schools). In order to discover which English language textbook is the most chosen for the sixth grade, solely the EMEF data was computed and analyzed, because the compulsory teaching of English language begins only in elementary schools, from the sixth grade on.

The data generated by the website is summarized in Graph 1, which presents the percentage and the number of times that each textbook was mentioned. The percentage of schools classified as "Not informed" only encompass the initial years of the elementary level (first to fifth grade) and, therefore, did not select an English language textbook.

GRAPH 1 - Times each textbook was mentioned



Source: The authors.

<sup>11</sup>Sistema de Controle de Materiais Didáticos (SIMAD), acronym for Didactic Material Control System, is the system responsible for the registration of didactic and literary materials which integrate the Programs such as the PNLD. Through this system, educational institutions register and ask for the books to be used by teachers and students. Available at: <[https://www.fnde.gov.br/fnde\\_sistemas/simad](https://www.fnde.gov.br/fnde_sistemas/simad)>. Access on: Jul. 17, 2022.

Following the criteria by Cargnin, Rossi and Ticks (2018) and based on the results presented on Graph 1, it is possible to conclude that the most selected English language textbook in public schools of Santa Maria in 2021 is entitled “Way to English for Brazilian Learners - 6”<sup>12</sup>, which will be used in the majority of public schools in the triennium 2021-2023.

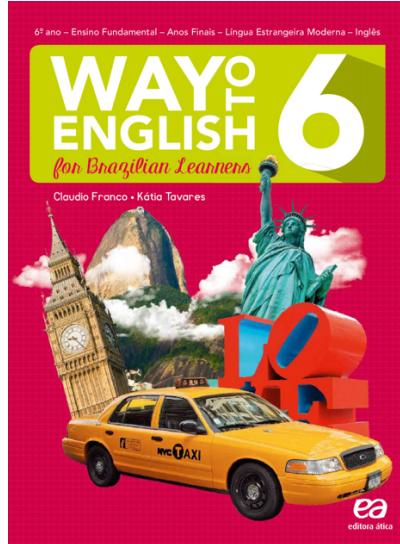
## The Textbook

The collection of English language textbooks entitled “Way to English for Brazilian Learners”, by Claudio Franco and Kátia Tavares, was first published in 2015. It is divided into four different levels (six to nine), which are addressed to sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth grades, respectively.

On the “Way to English/Way to Go!” website<sup>13</sup>, the authors provide some complementary materials available to English language teachers, such as flashcards, worksheets, tests, educational videos and songs, indicating the textbook, the unit and the content with which each of them can be used. Although songs and listening activities could be applied in classes with blind students, we could not find materials referring specifically to that audience on the website.

Considering that this paper proposes an adaptation for activities to be used by sixth grade blind students, only the first level of this collection is presented, which is the textbook “Way to English for Brazilian Learners - 6”.

IMAGE 2 - Cover of the textbook



Source: Franco and Tavares (2015).

It is important to highlight that the textbook to be explored in this paper is the student's volume, available at the “Way to English/Way to Go!” website, as we could not access the teacher's version.

Since the textbook is the first of the “Way to English” collection, it approaches basic aspects of the English language, presenting activities in English and in Portuguese, according to their level of difficulty - that is, the less complex activities are written in English and the more complex ones in Portuguese. The book starts with a brief presentation about how important and ordinary the English language is in our daily lives, as well as a description of the purpose of the four volumes of the collection. Following the presentation, there is a summary of the eight units of the textbook, in terms of sections and contents. The following section, entitled “Tips into Practice”, presents activities of reading and learning strategies, which intend to build students' confidence to complete the exercises throughout the

<sup>12</sup>Available at: <<http://online.anyflip.com/utpc/fotu/mobile/index.html#p=1>>. Access on: Jul. 17, 2022.

<sup>13</sup>Available at: <<http://colecaoway.com.br/>>. Access on: Jul. 17, 2022.

textbook. Then, there are two pages regarding sentences, in English, to be used in class by students and teachers.

Subsequently, the textbook presents its eight units, which encompass the main contents to be learned by sixth grade students through the year. The title, contents and discourse genres worked in each of them are exposed in Chart 3, which was constructed based on the information provided in the textbook at the beginning of the units.

CHART 3 - Title, contents and discourse genres of the eight units

UNIT	CONTENTS – LEXICOGRAMMAR	DISCOURSE GENRES
1 – Hello	Greetings - Subject pronouns, verb to be (affirmative form)	Comic strips, motivational posters
2 - My Life	Hobbies (personal interests), numbers - Possessive adjectives	Short bios, map, book cover, magazine covers
3 - Around the Globe	Occupations, months of the year, countries/nationalities - Verb to be (negative and interrogative forms)	Profiles, magazine cover, headlines, comic strip
4 - Let's Go to School!	Vocabulary related to school, days of the week - Review on verb to be, question words	Timetable (schedule/planner), comic strip, campaign posters
5 - What is a Family?	Vocabulary about family, plurals - Genitive case	Poems, family tree, anagrams, short bio, definitions
6 - Houses Around the World	Parts of the house, furniture - There is/there are, prepositions of place	Description, website, short bio
7 - Save the Animals!	Animals - Imperative form	Campaign posters, word search, fragment of report, signs, comic strips
8 - Exploring Different Art Forms	Vocabulary/verbs about forms of art, colors - Verb can	Comic strips, fragment of report

Source: The authors, based on Franco and Tavares (2015).

After every two units, there are sections containing activities of content review, which include vocabulary and grammar learned in the two previous units. Following that, the textbook presents a section with activities of the main vocabulary learned through the eight units, called “Vocabulary Corner”. The next section of the book is entitled “Language Reference in Context”, which presents activities about the grammar acquired along the studies using authentic texts, including discourse genres such as comic strips, posters and signs. The subsequent pages are dedicated to Glossary, Index and Bibliography sections.

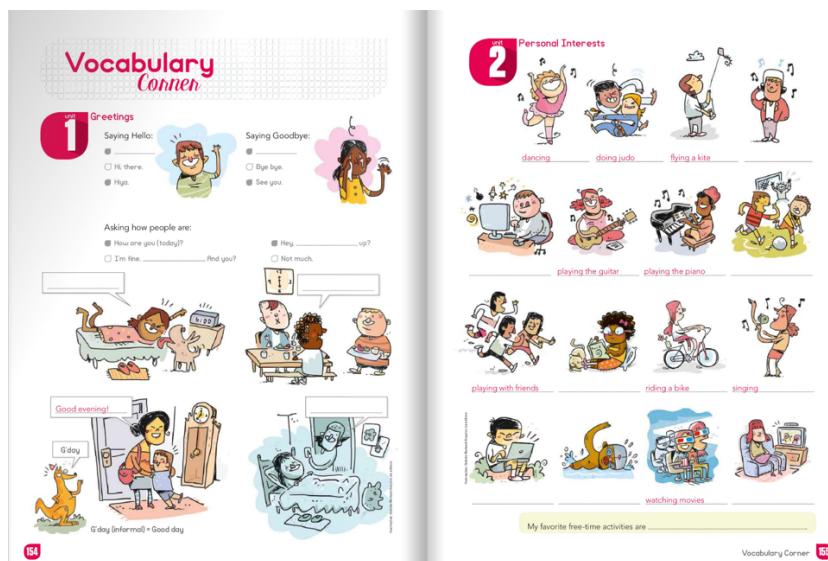
## The Unit

Although the initial purpose was to select one of the eight main units of the “Way to English for Brazilian Learners - 6” book to be presented and adapted in the paper, throughout the analysis of the textbook, we found the section “Vocabulary Corner” to be the most significant one to adapt for blind students.

The “Vocabulary Corner” (pages 154 to 165) encompasses 13 activities about the vocabulary learned in all the eight units of the textbook, so the adapted material suggested in this paper can be used throughout the year and explored in a variety of activities. In addition, it is noticeable that all the activities belonging to this section have visual elements, such as pictures and drawings, without any adaptation proposals for blind students.

Image 3 shows two activities concerning units 1 and 2, respectively, which are examples of activities presented in the Vocabulary Corner.

IMAGE 3 - Activities from the Vocabulary Corner



Source: Franco and Tavares (2015, p. 154-155).

The section starts with activities about the vocabulary content learned on unit 1: Greetings. There are some figures describing the greetings and next to them there are blank spaces, in which the students must infer and write the correct greeting. Following that, the second activity refers to unit 2, which includes vocabulary on Personal Interests. The exercise, as the first one, presents figures of many hobbies, and on the blank spaces below them the student must write the proper words. There is also a sentence for the students to complete with their favorite free-time activities. Still concerning unit 2, the following activity is about Numbers, which requires students to fill in the blanks with the corresponding number on its written form.

Referring to unit 3, there are three activities. The first one suggests a review on vocabulary about Occupations, in which images are presented and the student must write the corresponding word. The second one concerns the Months of the Year, presenting an incomplete calendar for the students to add the correct months. And the third activity, which is about Countries and Nationalities: there are images of flags and students are required to identify the country and the nationality they refer to.

Moving on, the following activities involve the vocabulary learned on unit 4. There is an exercise reviewing School Subjects, which asks students to write the corresponding subjects below the figures, and another one reviewing the Days of the Week, which requests students to write the seven days in order. Following that, there is an activity to complete the family tree with the Members of the Family, content learned on unit 5. In the following exercise, reviewing the vocabulary of unit 6, there are images of Parts of a House and Furniture, below which students must write the referent words.

The subsequent activity is about Animals: there are some images with blank spaces for students to write the name of the animals, content of unit 7. At last, the two final exercises concern vocabulary of unit 8, that is, Colors and Abilities, both of them requiring writing the proper words below the images.

After the analysis and explanation of each activity, it is possible to observe how similar they are and how they use a lot of visual elements. Most of the activities have a recurrent feature, which is to ask students to write the word that relates to the figure. For this reason, it is important to consider the reality of blind students, who probably would be left out of such exercises in class.

In the next section, we suggest adaptations for some of the didactic activities presented, based on the Review of Literature.

## ADAPTATION SUGGESTIONS

Based on previous studies on the issue, the materials presented follow the suggestions presented by the authors of the Review of Literature, and are headed to blind sixth grade students, in

order to address the target public and to encourage them to learn an additional language - in this case, the English language.

Although the adaptations suggested are construed based only in the studies of the Review of Literature, it is necessary to highlight the importance of the interdisciplinary work with the school educational advisor and Special Education professionals. Such a collaboration may give other perspectives, beyond the studies presented in this work, and may help to come up with the best method to deal with the specificities of each student.

As explained in the previous section, it was decided to adapt activities of the Vocabulary Corner, which concerns the vocabulary learned through the whole textbook. In order to make the activities more attractive and accessible to blind students, we opted for the use of ludic approaches, that is, to promote interaction of students in a pleasant and meaningful way, which can instigate not only blind students, but also sighted students. Therefore, the adaptations presented here are not focused on written vocabulary, but the acknowledgement of those words in English language and what they mean in those contexts.

We selected six out of 13 activities of the Vocabulary Corner, which represent examples of the many options available to adapt a visual resource to become a didactic activity for both sighted and non-sighted students. The activities selected are indicated in Chart 4.

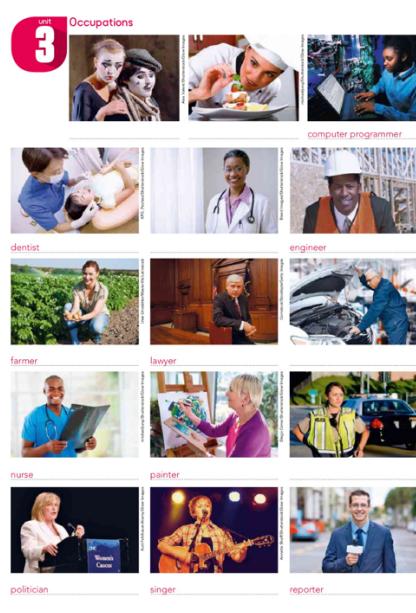
CHART 4 – Activities selected from the Vocabulary Corner

ACTIVITY	CONTENT	UNIT
A	Occupations	1
B	Months of the Year	2
C	Numbers	3
D	Days of the week	4
E	Animals and Pets	5
F	Greetings	6

Source: The authors.

It is important to encourage cooperation and interaction between sighted and non-sighted students, which could be achieved with group activities (CAMARGO; NARDI, 2006; BIAGINI; GONÇALVES, 2017). For instance, activity A (in Image 4), which concerns Occupations vocabulary, could be adapted to a group interactional activity, focused on the speaking and listening skills.

IMAGE 4 – Vocabulary Corner, Activity A



Source: Franco and Tavares (2015, p. 157).

Instead of working with images and filling in the blanks exercises, the EAL teacher could ask students to search on the internet or in books for a career they would like to pursue in the future. This research can be made at home, with the assistance of the students' parents, relatives or friends, to be presented for their classmates in class. In a circle, each student explains briefly the career they chose, and their classmates can guess which occupation is being described. At the end, the student can confirm their answer by completing the sentence "I want to be a...".

Another activity that works as an adapted group activity is letter E, concerning the months of the year (Image 5).

IMAGE 5 – Vocabulary Corner, Activity B



Source: Franco and Tavares (2015, p. 158).

One group or pair at a time, students should answer the question "which month...?", requested by the EAL teacher (examples: Which month starts the summer in Brazil? Which month are we in now? Which month is Halloween celebrated?). The teacher can ask students to take turns among the members of the groups, so as to achieve everyone's participation, as well as to interact within the groups to provide an appropriate answer. Like the first proposal, this adaptation would work with listening and speaking skills, functioning as a playful and ludic activity with the purpose to encourage participation and inclusion.

Besides group exercises, the EAL teacher can also work with tactile resources to design inclusive didactic activities. As Uliana (2013) demonstrates through the production of a pedagogical kit, such concrete materials are very important in the learning process of blind students, since through them those students are able to learn at the same level as sighted students. Numbers (Image 6) are also an interesting topic to be explored.

IMAGE 6 – Vocabulary Corner, Activity C



Source: Franco and Tavares (2015, p. 156).

The numbers could be put into cards in high relief, such as relief glue, popsicle sticks or bead pieces. If the student is familiar with such resources, the numerals and the numbers in full could be presented in Braille as well. In Image 7, there are examples of those cards, in Braille, which were designed in a Special Education course.

IMAGE 7 – Example of Braille Cards



Source: The authors.

The cards can be used by blind students as a support material or even as a game, in which the teacher shuffles the cards and the student arranges them to match the word and the numeral. Therefore, besides working with speaking and listening, the teacher can reinforce the written form of those words as well.

The same resources can also be used to adapt activity D, concerning the days of the week (Image 8).

IMAGE 8 – Vocabulary Corner, Activity D

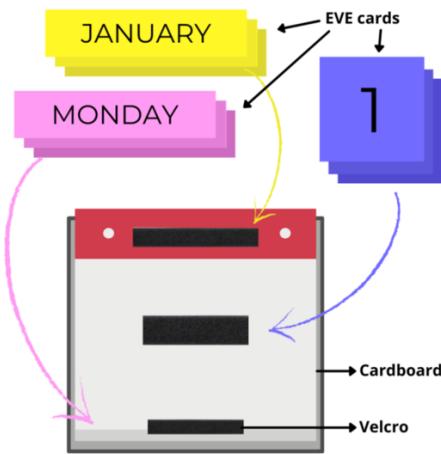


Source: Franco and Tavares (2015, p. 161).

It is possible to create a high-relief calendar using velcro, EVE, cardboard and glue, which the blind student is able to assemble and disassemble each day. Such activity can also be arranged together with activity C and/or activity B, to design a more complete calendar. In this way, there would be three packs of EVE cards (one with seven cards for the days of the week, one with the 31 numbers constituting the months and another one with the 12 months), and also a piece of cardboard in which the day of the week, month and numeral would be glued with velcro. As the former proposal, the words and numbers

can be written in the Braille system or, like in the model below (created digitally), in the alphabetic/numeric system in high-relief (Image 9).

IMAGE 9 – Calendar model



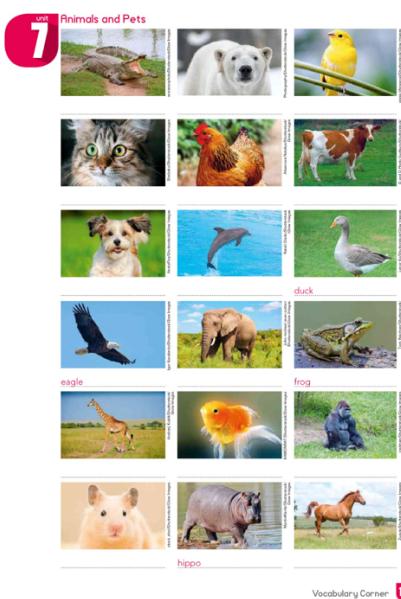
Source: The authors.

Besides acting as concrete examples of activities for blind students to explore and learn a new language, they also follow the characteristics recommended by Uliana (2013) when proposing a tactile adaptation: the materials must be cheap, easy to carry and with pieces that are uncomplicated to assemble and disassemble.

Other than group and tactile activities, the EAL teacher might opt for working with sounds or songs. Such an approach draws attention to the use of orality in class, that is, the practical uses of oral genres in different contexts. In Camargo and Nardi's research (2006), future teachers also made use of orality by suggesting, for example, oral presentations and theatrical plays in class, in order to overcome impasses that might arise from teaching Physics to blind students.

Examples of didactic activities of the Vocabulary Corner that could be adapted to work with sounds and orality are activities E and F (Images 10 and 11).

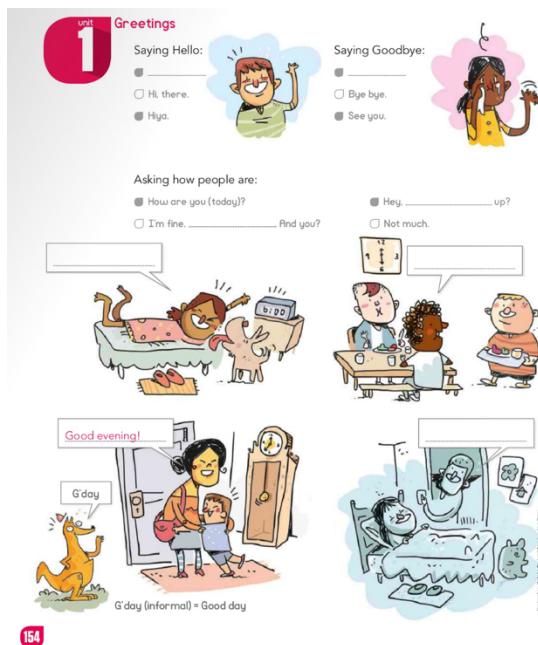
IMAGE 10 – Vocabulary Corner, Activity E



Source: Franco and Tavares (2015, p. 163).

For activity E, it is possible for the EAL teacher to present the sounds those animals make, by using a digital audio from YouTube, for example, and ask students to identify the animal (in English language). This activity can be done in groups, pairs or even with the whole class, developing listening and speaking skills.

IMAGE 11 – Vocabulary Corner, Activity F



Source: Franco and Tavares (2015, p. 154).

For activity F, teachers can use a song about the different forms of greetings. There are many options available on the internet, so the teacher can choose which one(s) they want to play for the class. Yet, searching for options we suggest the video entitled “Hello Song for Kids - Greeting Song for Kids - The Singing Walrus”<sup>14</sup>, available at The Singing Walrus channel on YouTube, because it is more interactive and is related to students’ routines.

In order to internalize the Greetings content, it is possible to ask students to communicate with each other using the vocabulary learned in the song. To do so, the teacher can present a certain situation (for example, as written in the textbook, saying hello, saying goodbye and asking people how they are) and let students interact with one another. In this way, such activity would not only reinforce inclusion and interaction between the blind student and their classmates, but also work as a playful contextualized activity, which would make students aware of the new language as a social practice, not only as a system of rules.

Those adaptation suggestions are only a few examples for approaches to teach a blind student, but there are many other adapted didactic materials that may be valuable to research and implement in their education. For instance, texts in Braille (OLIVEIRA; REILY, 2014), recorded audios (CAMARGO; NARDI, 2006), debates (CAMARGO; NARDI, 2006) and description of images and graphs (FERREIRA; DICKMAN, 2015) may also be helpful and stimulating activities when teaching blind students.

The important aspect is to remember to communicate with students, in order to understand their learning necessities and realize which approach will work best for them. In addition, the adapted activities presented here can be used for teachers not only from the English language field, but for other

<sup>14</sup> Available at: <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggDRJVxFxU&ab\\_channel=TheSingingWalrus-EnglishSongsForKids](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggDRJVxFxU&ab_channel=TheSingingWalrus-EnglishSongsForKids)>. Access on: Jul. 17, 2022.

courses as well, as a way to create a safe and inclusive environment in all classes, where every student can feel comfortable and instigated in learning.

## CONCLUSIONS

The studies and considerations of the present work led us to reflect about the English teaching of blind students and the importance of researching and learning about the theme. The challenges are evident, but so are the rewards gained from the experience of teaching blind students, as there is a joint construction of knowledge among teachers and learners.

It is known that the government should provide what is needed for public education, but there might be schools in which the didactic material necessary for blind students' education is not available. The responsibility then is delegated to the teacher, who might need to think of an adaptation for the material initially designed, especially when such material is a textbook or printed activities. Therefore, it is necessary for us, language teachers, to learn at least some basic forms of adaptation, as well as to communicate with blind students, in order to work with the best method according to their necessities and difficulties.

Some of the options for teachers to adapt didactic activities are the use of tactile resources, sounds and songs, games or group activities, which give emphasis on other senses than vision. As a result of those changes, blind students would not only feel more confident and free to participate in classes – characteristics that are very important when learning an additional language –, but also feel included by their teachers and classmates.

Even though it was based on previous studies on the issue, this research opens doors to future opportunities and refinement in the adapted activities (ULIANA; 2013), such as:

- consulting with schools' educational advisor and Special Education professionals about the effectiveness and implementation of such materials in regular classes;
- testing and improving the adapted material according to blind students' necessities and abilities;
- promoting the use of the adaptation in school, in order to include blind students in regular classes, even when the textbook is used;
- analyzing advantages and disadvantages of the material for sighted students, as well as students with other disabilities, such as Down syndrome and children with motor difficulties; and
- continuing to design adaptations for other activities, textbooks and grades, headed to impaired students who need an adapted material for learning properly.

Hopefully, this work will serve as a sample of the possibilities of adaptations for blind learners and will help other teachers, not only of the English language field, to develop lesson plans and didactic materials headed to accessibility and inclusion of every student, regardless of any impairment.

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## DECLARATION OF AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Fernanda Luisa Brixius: contributed substantially to the construction of the entire work, methodological development, data analysis, writing and final review.

Helena Vitalina Selbach: contributed substantially to the construction of the entire work, methodological development, data analysis, writing and final review.

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The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest with this article.

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