



## THE EDUCATION OF BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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### ABSTRACT

*Visual impairment is a term experts use to describe any kind of vision loss, whether it's someone who cannot see at all or someone who has partial vision loss. Some people are completely blind, but many others have what's called legal blindness.*

### INTRODUCTION

Visual impairment is a term experts use to describe any kind of vision loss, whether it's someone who cannot see at all or someone who has partial vision loss. Some people are completely blind, but many others have what's called legal blindness.

Many people have some type of visual problem at some point in their lives. Some can no longer see objects far away. Others have problems reading small print. These types of conditions are often easily treated with eyeglasses or contact lenses.

But when one or more parts of the eye or brain that are needed to process images become diseased or damaged, severe or total loss of vision can occur. In these cases, vision can't be fully restored with medical treatment, surgery, or corrective lenses like glasses or contacts.

The American Foundation for the Blind estimates that 10 million people in the United States are visually impaired. Also, the purpose of this work is identify the principle of visual impaired language learners

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are many researches on teaching English for students with visual impairment that have been carried out by some researchers. A research by Başaran (2012), entitled "Teaching English to Visually Impaired Students in Turkey: A case study", aimed to investigate how blind and visually impaired students are taught English as a foreign language and analyze the techniques and materials that EFL teachers utilize to teach English at schools for the visually impaired. The researcher interviewed three English teachers of



visually impaired students and observed a forty minute class of each teacher. The study used a qualitative research design with analyses 21 of interview data .

Conroy (2005) teaching English to visually impaired students is a technique where the teacher can combine the strategies such as create, modify, and adapt lessons referring to student's needs. The most important in teaching visually impaired students is advanced planning, organization for structuring the learning environment, and the materials used in teaching. According to Basaran (2012), it is clearly indicated that EFL teacher in Turkey almost have the same teaching techniques and material to teach sighted students and the visually impaired students. Furthermore, none of the teacher had any formal training on teaching English to visually impaired students. Eventually, they had several challenges and problems and they did not know how to solve it. In the mean time, the visually impaired students have different social behavior and learning styles. Moreover, there were experienced from three English teachers in Indonesia as stated by Susanto and Nanda (2018) regarding to their strategies in teaching English to visually impaired students. The students described that some of their teachers were unknowledgeable to effectively teach them and they also thought that their teacher was lacking an interest to help them succeed because of the extra effort required to 15 understand and provide for student's needs.

Teaching Foreign or English Language to the Blind

Language acquisition has distinctive features and values for individual language students. In a classroom setting, language teaching encompasses interaction among the students and the teacher. This is of the utmost importance to the blind because the foreign or English language can be characterized as the route to education that fortifies the learner's capability. For many individuals whose native language is not broadly used, learning a foreign language can be the path out of seclusion since it probably serves as the tool that enables them to be part of learning activities as well as any international events (European Commission, n.d.). The English language provides people who are blind access to multiple kinds of media. They can easily navigate a plethora of websites to access semiotic representations. Then, blind people benefit from language study in the same way as normal-sighted students, but there are some crucial differences in the way they learn. Some blind students are given an opportunity to study in the Inclusive Education Program. Thus, there have been vital attempts to strengthen the qualities and to solve the problems of blind related to the technological and pedagogical aspects because each particular group of learners needs different teaching strategies (Lewis and Norwich, 2004). This section aims to purpose the different ways in which the teacher could implement in the classroom as teaching the blind requires specialized pedagogies. The first approach when teaching a foreign language to the blind students in an inclusive environment is the adaptation of an existing method. It means the teachers adapt the already-used method to meet the blind's needs in the classroom.



## Suggestions and Recommendations

According to the research conducted and the findings gathered the following suggestions and recommendations can be drawn concerning the class development: Firstly, the researcher should find the most suitable learning approach that can help the blind to improve their listening skills and speaking skills and provide convenience to the teachers in terms of lesson conformity. The findings could be utilized to establish learning outcomes and seek the possible techniques to close the gaps in the blind learning. Secondly, listening and speaking activities are time-consuming as generally known. Thus, the researchers who are interested in special education should find a helpful approach to solve the problems with time constraints and strengthen the blind's listening ability. Thirdly, regarding instructional materials, the blind should have appropriate and supportive materials to learn. The instructional materials should be intentionally devised to serve their learning styles. Some challenges e.g. biological constraints for learning should be taken into consideration.

## Conclusion

The teachers and the blind seemed to bond over sharing the desire of language

learning skill in classroom. Teachers who teach the blind are expected to link aural and oral skills together. Intending to develop the blind's listening and speaking skills is necessary because they are normally encouraged to learn regarding humanities and social sciences degree programs. This study has gone some ways toward an understanding of the blind educational system. These findings will help other researchers design the approach to close the gap of inappropriate instructional materials and insufficient time to assist and improve the blind's listening skills and speaking skills. Considering that English education for the blind in Thailand does not gain constant and sustained attention that leads to critical changes, it is vital that more research studies should be carried out. It appears that having teachers fathom and heighten awareness might not only have immediate impacts including the blind's learning chances, learning competence, etc. when teachers plan to design a course for the blind, but also long-term effects on their education. It is worth pursuing as a possible way for teachers to assist the blind's language learning. The aforementioned factors could then lead to entirely new avenues to explore and develop in future studies and be an essential resource for program design and evaluation.

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