



INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDELINES FOR ENGLISH TEACHING AS

A THIRD LANGUAGE (L3) TO DEAF STUDENTS

**LINEAMIENTOS DIDÁCTICOS PARA LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS
COMO TERCERA LENGUA (L3) EN JÓVENES CON DISCAPACIDAD AUDITIVA**

**LINEE GUIDA DIDATTICHE PER L'INSEGNAMENTO DELL'INGLESE
COME L3 AI GIOVANI STUDENTI SORDI**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to provide instructional guidelines for English teaching as a Third language (L3) to deaf students. Based on clinical and pedagogical characteristics and conceptions of this population, the definition of necessary skills in order to master a language as well as experimented practices in different international and educational

scenarios these guidelines are stated. Hence, theoretical principles of Díaz y Cubillos (2014), Di Bella (2014), Abreus (2010), Ávila (2010), among others were considered. The documentary records of reviewed references and content analysis to describe the most relevant aspects derived from those experiences represent the techniques of investigation applied to reach the goal proposed. Hence, methodology applied is documentary and descriptive. Results obtained after applying this methodology, summarize the instructional guidelines that improve a better inclusion and participation of deaf students into educational life in order to enhance teaching-learning process of English as L3.

Keywords: instructional guidelines, English teaching, hearing impairment

RESUMEN

Este artículo tiene como objetivo generar lineamientos didácticos para la enseñanza del inglés como tercera lengua (L3) en jóvenes con discapacidad auditiva. Sobre la base de las concepciones y características clínico-pedagógicas de esta población, la definición de las destrezas necesarias para el dominio de una lengua y las prácticas experimentadas en diferentes escenarios educativos internacionales se erigen dichos lineamientos. Para ello se consideraron los principios teóricos de autores como Díaz y Cubillos (2014), Di Bella (2014), Abreus (2010), Ávila (2010), entre otros. El registro documental de las referencias consultadas así como el análisis de contenido para describir los aspectos más relevantes derivados de tales experiencias, representan las técnicas de investigación implementadas para el logro del objetivo propuesto. De allí que la metodología adoptada para el desarrollo de este trabajo se caracterice por ser de tipo documental y descriptiva. Los resultados de la aplicación de esta metodología se concretan en lineamientos didácticos que persiguen una mejor inclusión y participación del alumnado con sordera en la vida educativa para la mejora de los procesos de enseñanza – aprendizaje del inglés como L3.

Palabras clave: lineamientos didácticos, enseñanza del inglés, discapacidad auditiva.

RIASSUNTO

Il proposito di questo articolo è la generazione di linee guida didattiche per l'insegnamento dell'inglese come terza lingua (L3) ai giovani studenti sordi. Alla base dei concetti e



caratteristiche clinico-pedagogiche di questa popolazione, la definizione delle abilità necessarie per il dominio di una lingua e le pratiche vissute in differenti scenari educativi internazionali, vengono proposte queste linee guida, per cui i principi teorici di Díaz y Cubillos (2014), Di Bella (2014), Abreus (2010), Ávila (2010), tra altri sono stati considerati. Il registro documentale dei riferimenti consultati, così come l'analisi del contenuto per descrivere gli aspetti più rilevanti derivati di tali esperienze, rappresentano le tecniche di ricerca applicate per il raggiungimento del proposito di questo studio. Quindi, la metodologia adottata per lo sviluppo di questo lavoro è di tipo documentale e descrittivo. I risultati della applicazione di questa metodologia derivano in delle linee guida didattiche che rendono possibile una miglior inclusione e partecipazione di studenti sordi nella vita educativa affinché migliorino i processi di insegnamento-apprendimento dell'inglese come L3.

Parole chiave: linee guida didattiche, insegnamento dell'inglese, sordità.

INTRODUCTION

According to the National Institute for the Deaf (INSOR2006), sign language (SL) is the mother language (L1) of students with a hearing impairment, which enables them to scout, question and ponder about their surrounding environment. Their use of this visual-gestural language not only does it allow their cognitive and linguistic development, but it also represents a key identity and pride element within the culture of this Deaf population.

Despite the benefits of the use of this language for people with a hearing disability, it is found with great concern that some of their members were raised in the absence of a proper linguistically rich and meaningful environment during their first years of life. The reasons for this particular lack may vary in nature and, in most cases; they result from a late diagnosis of their hearing disability, the fact of not using sign language at home or because of a difficult access to an adequate education in a school for the Deaf. (Di Bella, 2014)

This mentioned lack does not only involve a fall behind in linguistic development of their L1 during the first years of school life of this group, but also a greater difficulty when

going through the processes of learning and acquisition of Spanish as a second language (L2) at intermediate levels, as well as for English as a third language (L3) at higher levels of education.

This difficulty is aggravated by the inexistence of curricular guidelines, the scarcity of didactic materials for this group of people, the lack of adaptation of materials and the inexistence of school subjects in the training of teachers as well as difficulties related to linguistic terms. These, in broad terms, make up for some of the vicissitudes that teachers of languages must overcome and adopt a constructive attitude to contribute with the inclusion in education.

Starting off of this problematic situation, we find the imperative need for the implementation of a pedagogical model that values the language and the culture of Deaf Communities, that may also inspire literacy models and visual-learning centered teaching practices (stemming from the visual traits of this community) which can aid students in the learning of a third languages. As a consequence, this research aims to generate an array of instructional guidelines for teaching English as a third language (L3) for youngsters with a hearing disability. These guidelines are conceived in order to respond and satisfy the linguistic, cultural and educational needs of deaf people, taking into consideration their visual learning traits in the pedagogical processes when learning English. The methodology hereby proposed to achieve the objective is described as follows:

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The theoretical background described in the following lines represents the preface to the instructional guidelines derived from this study. It is in essence gilded by clinical-pedagogical conceptions about hearing disabilities that must be known by teachers for a successful application of such instructional guidelines. Likewise, here by are included the skills to be developed in order to acquire and learn English be it as a second (L2) or third (L3) language. Finally, and due to the absence of research on this subject matter in this particular area in our country, some foreign experiences about teaching English as L3 for youngsters with a hearing disability are briefly described.



CLINICAL-PEDAGOGICAL CONCEPTIONS ABOUT PEOPLE WITH HEARING DISABILITIES AND THEIR DISPOSITION TO THE LEARNING OF L2 AND L3

Before falling into the description of the clinical-pedagogical conceptions of this group of people, it is critical to define the terms deafness, hearing disability, and hearing impairment. These terms are often used as synonyms which describe all kinds and degrees of hearing loss, making reference to slight or to profound ones. In recent years, the special terminology related to the description of hearing disabilities has been adjusted in order to highlight that a total hearing loss, called in Spanish *cofosis*, is not very frequent and the existence of some degree of residual hearing is possible.

According to Monfort and Juárez (2001) this point of view has influenced the adoption of the term “hearing loss”, in occasion, used as a form of euphemism preferred over “deaf” or “students with deafness” which are perceived by some people as possessors of negative connotations. Following this audiological perspective, the mentioned authors presented a classification that responds to the audiological residue and its potentiality, employed today in the arena of auditory rehabilitation. Such classification goes as follows:

- **Normal Hearing.** It allows to recognizing and imitating any sound of speech, regardless of its sense.
- **Functional Hearing.** It allows recognizing known words and phrases without any help or any contextual support.
- **Residual Hearing.** It allows achieving a better comprehension of the spoken language by lip-reading and with contextual support.

From another perspective, Silvestre (2003) has outlined the importance of the moment of the person's development in which the condition appears regarding the linguistic competence achieved by the deaf child. According to this author, regarding the moment of appearance of the deafness, this could be *Prelocutive*, if it appears before the acquisition of the spoken language and *Postlocutive*, if it occurs afterwards.

It is evident that in the latter case, the older a person is, the linguistic foundations upon which other spoken languages are to be consolidated shall be greater. Generally, a deafness that happens after the acquisition of the language does not mean any problems of linguistic competence, but it may hinder the learning of lip-reading, self-confidence and personal identity (Silvestre, 2003)

Likewise, Peña and others (1981) provide another classification, regarding the degree of hearing loss, which can be described as subtypes of the work proposed by Monfort and Juárez (2001). For these authors, the degrees of hearing loss can be categorized as:

- **Slight Hearing Loss:** Global speech perception with the exception of some phonemes in some specific positions with an emission of a very low intensity or shadowed.
- **Mild Hearing Loss:** In this type, the so called “conversational area” is endangered.
- **Severe Hearing Loss:** The affected person may perceive the suprasegmental elements of speech, but he or she must complement the elements that he can make out through hearing with lip-reading; all of this being possible with the use of a hearing aid and auditory training.
- **Profound Hearing Loss:** For the perception of language, vibrations and visual stimuli become especially important.

In general lines, the classifications presented in the previous lines only represent a very brief outline of the characteristics that a person with a hearing disability may have within a classroom where the teaching-learning experience of English as a L3 takes place, and the teacher must be aware of in order to conduct specific strategies to achieve any goals. In this regard and with the purpose of further elaboration Marschak (1993) and Paul (1996) affirm that a student with a profound prelocutive deafness starts off his or her Primary Education with a linguistic support of 200 known words. At the same time that he or she is introduced to the process of learning to read, the oral learning of L1 must be continued, which is why the difficulty to access to the different languages (L2-L3), in written and oral form is evident.

Amongst hearing people, oral and written communication alike are taken for granted; that is, it is assumed and is produced in a natural way; it is learned without any major effort because, first of all, the oral language has been acquired via an auditory perception; whereas a deaf person's auditory channel is obstructed, which is why they cannot receive information via hearing.

That is what Pérez (2004) states by saying that a person who cannot hear, cannot perceive information through hearing, but through sight, observing reality from different perspective from that of hearing people. Their mental structure is determined by a kinetic-spatial and visual language. This author states that for non-oral deaf people, the gestural communication adopts a primary value and it assumes the category of a language; whereas those that have followed through oral programs from childhood acquire the oral form of language as their main or mother language and, later on, they will need a sign language to communicate with gestural deaf people.

SKILLS TO BE DEVELOPED FOR LEARNING ENGLISH

The acquisition and mastery of this target language which is English, requires the development of four main skill areas of the language which are divided into two main groups, receptive and productive ones. On the one hand, the receptive ones include oral (what is heard) and written (what is read) comprehension. On the other hand, the productive ones include oral (speech) and written (writing) production.

The main goal of teaching oral comprehension in English is to create the fonematic hearing in students, and to continue developing it in the subsequent courses (Antich, 1986). Fonematic hearing is understood as the recognition of system of sounds of the foreign language and the identification of the meaning carried out by every element of the system which allows the identification of the different sounds enchainned in speech with their corresponding phonemes. Listening constitutes a coordination of components of the skill and not only isolated units. This integration of the perceptive skills as well as the analysis and synthesis is denominated "auditory ability" (Abreus, 2010:43).



According with the description this very skill represents an added difficulty to a student who has a hearing loss, although it is important to grant the possibility to learn any other languages and learn to use them as it is for any other student. Every situation requires an individual assessment that takes into consideration a series of variables such as the degree of hearing perception, the possibilities granted by the environment, his or her level of linguistic competence, amongst others. In this case, the student's intentional disposition for the perception of the language, assessing the levels of attention that the deaf student may maintain; speak at a lower rate, better and more clearly articulated, without exaggeration; give brief and complementary explanations through sign language, represent some of the alternatives that a teacher may adopt so this group of people may at least minimal skills.

The second skill is the ability of learning to write, which is one of the hardest tasks that a student must deal with. Conveying written ideas may be a slow process and in many cases an exhausting one. Madrigal (2008:2) states that this problem "is augmented for those who want to learn to write in a foreign language, because not only must they learn to master the structure and the shape of the language which is non-one's own, but they must also know a set of norms of adequacy, coherence and cohesion".

In the case of the group of subjects of the present research, the evidence brought about by different studies as well as the teaching experience point out that deaf people generally have problems with writing during and after their mandatory school period. Dominguez y Velasco (1999) argue that the writing of students with a deafness is simple and rigid, it presents numerous stereotyped repetitions, scarce syntax variety, use of linguistic units unrelated one from another, use of shorter and simpler sentences, word distribution or order within sentences in a different way and several omissions, substitutions, additions and order in the written composition.

Regarding speech production, Antich (1986, p. 64) states that:

"The eminence of the spoken language lies within objective reality of its nature as a social phenomenon and as a primary means of oral communication. Hence, the necessity of prioritizing the setting of mechanisms of auditory comprehension and speech, which



means that the spoken language is presented first and written language, is taught based on what students have learned orally”.

It is important to highlight that from a psycholinguistic perspective, the acquisition of sign language may favor oral production and the learning of the mainstream language of the environment. Sign language would come to be used as a vehicular language for learning and as a communicative and educational instrument for deaf children.

It is argued here then, that if deaf children acquire communicative, linguistic and cognitive competences in sign language, it would then be easier to build upon that first linguistic competence a second or third one. Aside from this, deaf children would then be provided with a tool that would grant them access to the school curriculum then being able to develop themselves in a similar way to their hearing peers (Valmaseda, 1995).

The fourth skill needed for the acquisition or mastery of a foreign language is constituted by written comprehension or reading skills. In the arena of written comprehension in both the mother and foreign languages, the interactive interpretation (or the processing conducted by the text and the processing acquired by the reader) is the most adequate in both cases for it is about a process of interaction of the reader's previous knowledge of the language and content with the information presented in the text. The difficulty presented in the development of this skill stems from the fact that the reader, and undoubtedly the beginner reader, will not know the meaning of words or groups of words in the foreign language. The reader would go on reading word by word which will overload the potential of assimilation.

In regards to the deaf community some data given by Dominguez and Alonso (2004) from the past thirty years systematic and historically show the difficulties that deaf children present, not just in the mechanic processes involved in reading and writing, but the problems that they have in achieving a competent and functional level. Likewise, the report produced by Gillot (1998, p.35) shows that “80% of deaf people are functionally illiterate, that is, they do not understand the language they read”



To sum up, the description of skills to be developed by people with a hearing disability may be considered as an aggravated difficulty, given by their exposition to more than one spoken language. Nevertheless, the contributions we receive by psycholinguistics show that learning a new language supposes, aside from the learning of a new code, an access to a culture, a particular view of the world, a community. In this regard, the idea is not to set this community aside from the advantages of being taught in both languages, for the access to instruction in both languages will be useful for the improvement of their linguistic competence.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES ON TEACHING ENGLISH AS AN L3

Just as it was mentioned in the previous paragraphs, the literature that covers the experiences of English as an L3 teaching within the context of Venezuela is scarce or rather nonexistent. This statement came about after performing a very thorough documentary research within the mention context, and consequently the research moved on to the data contributed by other institutions, with the aims of analyzing the procedures carried out in other countries to set the basis and promote the instructional guidelines, derived from this research, which will serve as a practical-theoretical guide for English teachers who work with students with a hearing disability.

As a first international experience, mentioning and describing that of Gallaudet University becomes mandatory, for it is renowned for being the only university for the Deaf in the world. It is located in the city of Washington, in The United States of America. It offers different undergraduate and graduate programs, certifications, diplomas, as well as masters and doctorates programs in many areas. It also hosts hearing people but in a minor percentage (5%). It is an officially bilingual institution which combines a spoken language (English) and a sign language (ASL: American Sign Language).

On its website, it is described a “bilingual, diverse, multicultural higher education institution that assures the intellectual and professional development for Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals through ASL and English”. The goals that Gallaudet University aims for revolve around linguistic, communicative and cultural matters. Among them we can find: providing high standards in quality of education, provide an accessible supportive friendly

bilingual educational environment; aim for excellence in research, pedagogy, scholarships and creative activities; preserve the history of deaf people; use the visual means to promote the recognition that deaf people and all sign languages are great resources that contribute significantly in the cognitive, creative and cultural dimensions of human diversity.

The description of this human diversity, extracted from the work by Diaz and Cubillos (2014) makes stand out the fact that the education of deaf people is something possible that requires a particular attention and involves a set of linguistic and cultural considerations that interact with one another. At the same time, this university considers the visual resources or aids and sign languages (L1) as vital elements that strengthen the skills of deaf learners.

The second international experience is the work by Clymer and Berent (2007) of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf Rochester Institute of Technology (Nueva York). This work consisted in the development of a workshop about the use of instructional technologies in English language teaching for deaf and HoH students in countries where English is not spoken: Institutions in Russia, Czech Republic, Japan and the Philippines. The findings reported by the mentioned authors demonstrated major frequent difficulties presented by deaf people in their skills for using the spoken language of the community in which they live (in this case, Czech, Russian, Japanese, amongst others.), due to a restricted linguistic access imposed by the lack of hearing during the process of acquisition of spoken languages.

All that has been previously exposed generates negative effects in the educational and professional performance of these students, because in countries where English is not spoken, the amount of visual exposure to the English language is not the same. The explanation given by the authors regarding these difficulties was centered in the use of technologies and materials, highlighting the needs of instruction for professionals in this particular area. Hence, this proposal is aimed for implementing a workshop on methods, resource materials and technologies in teaching ESL, in which not only would they present



the best practices in the ESL field, but also those for teaching the English language for deaf students.

In general lines, the workshop covered the following topics: the use of a web-based technology in teaching deaf students, preparation of lessons and program standards and teaching of grammar, reading, writing and vocabulary. Other topics were studied as follows: communication during lessons, knowledge about deafness, and an introduction to e-learning and pedagogical considerations to sustain an online course.

Another one of the researches that deserve a mention here, is the experience described by Gerner (1995) with deaf students in Latin countries such as Mexico and Costa Rica, at Gallaudet University which L1 is a sign language, L2 is Spanish and L3 is English. The author states that often times, the needs of deaf students from linguistically diverse families are lefts aside, especially in a country that receives immigrants from all over the world. To this, she adds that the groups of deaf people with a greater demographic growth, is that of deaf and hard of hearing of Hispanic heritage.

At the sight of this situation, Gerner considers that it is necessary to acknowledge a trilingual, multifunctional program which considers their L1, L2 and L3 regarding their performance and development. This would tend to the unsatisfied needs of these students which according to the author, is due to insufficient educational opportunities in some of the students' original countries, the need to train teachers in ESL multicultural and bilingual theories and pedagogy once again, the failure of teacher training programs in preparing these students for the reality of working with multicultural deaf populations, and the lack of sessions for new extensive and intensive retraining under the focus of a new bilingual educational approach, which they must receive.

The researcher concludes with the following affirmation:

“There are very few trained teachers ready to work with immigrant deaf children who are acquiring ASL and English, with the aim of participating in the American education system for the deaf, which, once more, gives way to a critical need of

training teachers and other professionals that are already working in the field” (Gerner, 1995, p. 457).

Among the works cited in the research background of this paper, the work by Ávila (2010) stands out which encompasses investigation-action, surveys, recorded interviewing and students’ production in which the effect of EFL was appointed as a support for a blended-learning course designed for university deaf students. Ávila found out that these students displayed a preference collaborative learning; the vocabulary-centered activities, the visual means and the supported feedback in grammar exercises.

This research was conducted with 11 deaf students of the “Universidad Pedagógica Nacional” (Bogotá), where the 53 registered deaf students of that time, year 2010, did not receive formal instruction in English as part of the curriculum. This provoked a sense of disadvantage amongst the deaf students with regards to their hearing equals, who were put through at least three levels of instruction in a foreign language. Given the interest and their needs, an English course was created for them. Of this situation, the transformation of the conception of English from being an element of exclusion to an inclusive one can be identified.

Finally, we cite the experience acquired by Diaz y Cubillos (2014) who confront the diversity of ideas about learning and teaching English as an L3 to deaf students through their research, setting as a goal the identification of postures on this subject in an educational institution from different points of view: the family bosom, deaf students themselves and the school teachers (L2 teachers and a trainee teacher).

For the data recollection, semi-structured interviews were applied to a deaf student, a mother of a family, a Spanish teacher as L2 for these students and a trainee teacher of the “Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas” (equivalent for Modern Language Bachelor of Arts program) of La Pontificia Universidad Javeriana. Another 19 surveys were conducted to 19 deaf students of 8th, 9th and 11th grades, and the Atlas TI software was employed for coding and data graph making that gave way to later analysis. Findings appointed to four discourses from each the interviewed individuals: approval, uncertainty, skepticism and



constructive critic by the mother, the student and the teachers of L2 and the trainee, respectively.

For this reason, three general positions are evident which set the foundations for the beliefs reported by more than one of the participants, namely: a position on disability, barriers and the half-filled/half empty cup. The authors conclude that the crucial question that every one of the people involved in the topic of teaching and learning of Colombian deaf people should make is “difficulty versus possibility?”; possibility versus difficulty? Everything will depend on the perspective and attitude they may adopt.

As a way to conclude this section, it can be observed that the international experiences cited above show that the teaching and learning of English for deaf students is a pressing matter that concerns teachers of Modern Languages, teachers of Special Education, researchers, educational institutions, families and students themselves. Therefore, each one of the persons involved must take up specific responsibilities and roles.

It is then necessary to make conjoined efforts and articulated work that may involve every agent in the education of this students, so the awareness that is developed in the domain of education, mainly that of superior education, on the importance that the deaf students learn English, on the grounds of the methodological and pedagogical implications and adaptations that this process requires. Regarding these implications and adaptations, a set of instructional guidelines are destined, not to resolve, but rather lessen the situation described above.

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH AS AN L3

The instructional guidelines for teaching English as an L3 that are hereby presented find their foundations in the pedagogical conceptions of people with a hearing disability formulated in the previous sections, the skills defined to be developed for the acquisition and learning of English as a L3, the international experiences on English teaching as L3 for these youngsters. This way, the guidelines are distributed in three following subsections, allowing thus the approach on each of the previously outlined theoretical sections, in terms of pedagogical difficulties perceived in each of them.



GUIDELINES BASED ON THE CLINICAL-PEDAGOGICAL CONCEPTIONS

These guidelines are built upon the classifications presented in this section. They provide an invaluable knowledge and will represent an important pedagogical tool that teachers in charge of students with a hearing impairment must make use of for the implementation of specific strategies in each one of the cited cases. It is important to make clear that the contributions are based on the type of linguistic behavior that youngsters with a hearing disability may or may not perform in accordance with the auditory variables they present.

- **Normal Hearing:** Those with this type of hearing have a sufficient capacity for auditory intelligibility to appreciate all the vowel and consonant sounds of the language.
- **Functional Hearing:** They can perceive vowel and several consonant sounds of the language quite well, yet they do not possess a sufficient auditory discrimination to make them out with enough intelligibility, mainly if words are long or unstressed syllable next to an adjacent consonant sound in word-ending position. They have a hard time telling words with similar phonetic composition apart.
- **Residual Hearing:** They can come to identify sounds and tell words apart by their prosodic elements, such as length or intensity but hardly by their phonetic components.
- **Prelocutive occurrence:** In the case of students with profound prelocutive deafness, all the linguistic learning must be programmed and transmitted intentionally for only in very rare occasions it happens produced spontaneously.
- **Postlocutive occurrence:** The people that constitute this group have undergone a series of communicative and phonological forms of learning which place them in a different and advantageous situation regarding learning speech production in comparison to individuals with a prelocutive deafness. These youngsters know the value of intonation and know that words have meanings.
- **Slight hearing loss:** These can present some form of articulatory upsets such as auditory dyslalia.



- **Mild hearing loss:** only a global perception of speech is possible with a proper adaptation of a hearing aid.
- **Severe Hearing Loss:** They must complement the suprasegmentary elements of speech they make out through hearing with the use lip-reading, making use of hearing aids and auditory training.
- **Profound hearing loss:** the proper use of hearing aids in most cases, allows the mastery of speech sound emission and hence, it constitutes an important contribution to their speech intelligibility. In any case, the new generation of digital hearing aids and cochlear implants are implying an unsuspected prosthetic gain.

As a way for concluding this subsection of instructional guidelines it is necessary to point out that the fact of being deaf or having any of the previously mentioned hearing disabilities does not imply having social maladjustment. The communicational possibilities exist as well as the communicative intention, although they may not be competent enough in the linguistic code of their entourage.

SKILLED BASED GUIDELINES FOR PEOPLE WITH A HEARING DISABILITY

These guidelines, just like the previously mentioned ones are based on the four linguistic skills that a student must develop for learning a foreign language, which in this case is English. Hereafter, the guidelines have been conceived for each one of them, under the clinical considerations that are typical to people with a hearing disability.

- **For learning reading and writing**

The need for visual support is the most representative trait of the role that learning reading and writing plays on of both an L2 and an L3 in the education of deaf students. Writing is durable and it can be read over and over, allowing the reader to have control over how to read, be it faster or more slowly, and what is more, it offers a collection of visual clues that may facilitate comprehension. Furthermore, writing shows us the correct spelling of words.

All of this justifies the importance of learning and mastery of a written form of any language in a learner who has a form of deafness, given that it facilitates: the access to the information from the surroundings, the improvement of the linguistic competence, its incidence in the learning of new vocabulary and the access to a diversity of linguistic models.

Nevertheless, the teacher must take into account that the constraint vocabulary they possess y with which they start learning to read, and the lack of comprehension of vocabulary they have, accounts for the emergence of issues with the mastery of syntactic structures of the spoken language and above all, when faced with figurative forms of speech such as metaphors and idiomatic expressions. These are issues to be avoided by teachers when promoting the development of reading and writing skills.

- **For the acquisition of oral production and comprehension skills**

For the development of these skills, sign language may be used as a vehicular language for learning. It is argued then that if deaf youngsters are given the possibility to acquire linguistic, communicative and cognitive competences through sign language, it would be easy to build upon that initial competence, a second or third linguistic competence.

Besides the previously mention ideas, a students who have deafness will be provided with a tool that would enable them to access the school syllabus, being then able to develop his or herself in a similar way as their hearing peers.

It is also important to pinto out that the difficulties caused by auditory deficiencies when learning any given oral language, are aggravated when learning the rest of the other oral languages of the school curriculum.

Another one of the guidelines to be considered in the acquisition of these skills is when situations of “split attention” arise in which deaf students receive two more meaningful inputs simultaneously and in a broad visual field to which he or she must attend. For example a presentation on the aboard accompanied by the teachers oral explanation and a simultaneous interpretation into sign language by an interpreter produce this kind of

distraction from the targeted oral comprehension. Languages exclude each other; hence, the presence of sign language out rules the targeted oral practice, from which only deaf people with a slight or mild hearing loss may benefit.

GUIDELINES BASED ON INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES

These guidelines arise from the coincidences found in the researchers analyzed in this theoretical subsection. These coincides appoint to actions that must be taken into account within the Venezuelan context because they turn out to be common in our teaching-learning spaces of English as an L3. Such coincidences, viewed as needs of our environment, and that tend to contribute with the inclusion of these youngsters with a disability in our educational scenarios are as follows:

- Consider visual means and sign language (L1) as vital elements that significantly strengthen the skills of deaf students when learning English.
- Implement workshops on ESL methodologies, materials and technologies for professionals in the area, aiming to improve their educational practices that are devised for teaching English to deaf students.
- Acknowledge a trilingual and multicultural program that conceives L1, L2 and L3 of deaf students with regards to their performance and development.
- Promote collaborative learning; vocabulary-centered activities, the visual means, and feedback in English teaching-learning scenarios for deaf students.
- Consider the environment of youngsters with a hearing disability including the family bosom, students themselves and the school teachers.

These guidelines also support the argument by Delgadillo, 2009 as in which he establishes that it is necessary to contemplate aspects such as the study materials, the beneficiaries, the approach or method to be applied, the educational context, and other aspects such as the cultural of the students with the aim of choosing and designing better adjusted materials for the development of linguistic skills.

METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

The methodological aspects of this study correspond to the descriptive type and a documentary research design (Hernández and others, 2010). Both aspects are manifested through the chosen selection techniques in order to achieve the objective of the present research. The first one corresponds to the registry of bibliographic data analyzed which were extracted from documents that account for the international experiences on teaching English as an L3 to people with a hearing disability.

Once the data was collected, the second research technique was applied referred to the analysis of the linguistic content. This technique allowed the description and analysis of the cited experiences, to then incorporate them to the set of instructional guidelines which will help to improve the process of teaching English for specific purposes (ESP) as an L3 to youngsters with a hearing disability.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Through the development of this study, which is not considered as a conclusive one, given the scarce bibliographical background on the grounds of teaching English as a third language (L3) for youngsters with a hearing disability, the following observations stand out on the theoretical fundamentals presented and the proposal of guidelines developed in this paper:

- Regarding the clinical-pedagogical conceptions exposed here, it is essential to keep in mind that a hearing disability diminishes the possibility of acquiring a spoken language in a natural way that is by the spontaneous interaction with other people, as well as the amount and quality of experiences that constitute the individual assuring his or her development. These last two implications along with the integrity of his or her competences make a deaf person vulnerable, because of the difficulty of access to information in a double way: difficulty of access to the experience and difficulty of development of the oral language of the environment. Consequently, is imperative to use a signed communication continuously and accompany language with some gestures and

signs that emphasize and clarify any term in the language taught to these students with a hearing disability.

- Regarding the skills that a learner of English as a L3 that a student must master, it is clear that such a development comes with great effort for people with normal hearing then it is aggravated for youngsters with a hearing disability. Hence, the instructional guidelines hereby exposed, are intended to offer a type of pedagogy that would value the language and the culture of Deaf communities and inspire literacy models and deaf people visual trait-centered teaching practices.

- Realizing that every deaf child is unique and requires specific and flexible statements, due to the differences explained above, groups should be created depending on educational interventions needed, as well as on analysis and proposal of languages curriculum adaptation.

- According to actions that must be considered of the Venezuelan context, it is necessary to prepare and train teachers about sign language learning. So far, this lack represent a barrier that impedes planning and implementation of curriculum projects in order to improve range and quality of teaching and learning processes in deaf people, as well as possibilities of equity, participation and socialization of deaf people comparing to hearing people which lead toward and excluding educational practice.

- So far, this article has succinctly developed the clinical and pedagogical conception of people with hearing impairments, but there is another important perspective that should be taken into consideration in future researches about this community of people: the socio-anthropological conception. This vision observes language community and considers Deaf community as a conglomerate of sign language users in which Deaf people reach a cognitive, social, emotional and educational development. According to this vision, the Deaf person is autonomous that coexists in a linguistic community and assumes an identity as well as a culture: Deaf Culture. This is the reason why using **D** when referring to a Deaf person in order to make a distinction from the clinical conception of deafness.



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