

## **Inclusive attention to language delays in the regular setting**

Idelmis de la Cruz Sandó<sup>1\*</sup> <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8488-5585>

Agripina Colás Pons<sup>2</sup> <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6712-0416>

Yanet Simón Benzant<sup>2</sup> <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1909-7151>

<sup>1</sup>Escuela Primaria “23 de Agosto”. Guantánamo. Cuba

<sup>2</sup>Universidad de Guantánamo. Cuba

\*Autor para la correspondencia: [idelacruzando@gmail.com](mailto:idelacruzando@gmail.com)

### **ABSTRACT**

The attention to students with language delay in conditions of educational inclusion in the regular context assumes a quantitative and qualitative pedagogical approach with procedures that contribute to solve this communication problem. The present work is the result of a research focused on the need to propose intentional actions towards preventive, corrective and compensatory work with the participation of the speech therapist and the agents that intervene in an educational context. This article proposes a methodological strategy with actions aimed at the preparation of the primary teacher in the inclusive attention to language delay.

**Keywords:** Language delay; Preparation of the primary teacher; Inclusion; Educational care

## **Introduction**

Today, education faces new challenges that are crucial for the development of society, and schools play a fundamental social role in educating new generations. The constant updating of the knowledge, skills and values of the teaching staff is a priority concern for the Cuban government at all levels of education.

The task of the teacher in the current context of the Third Improvement functions as the essential link between all the elements involved in the educational process; its function is to guide, regulate and improve, on a continuous basis, the mechanisms of communication and social relations both inside and outside the educational institution, to be consistent with the approach referred to: “This inclusive perspective demands the joint action of all educational agents and agencies in the different contexts”. Central Institute of Pedagogical Sciences [ICCP] (2016)

So, in order to achieve this purpose, it is essential to modify their way of thinking about the educational phenomenon, with a view to operate changes in their practice by creatively applying the knowledge and skills acquired, taking into account the specific contextual situation in which their learners develop, taking into account those who present some specific situation, with emphasis, on those who have language delay, which affects their communication and may affect their learning and interrelation with their social environment.

The Ministry of Education currently focuses its work objectives on contributing to the integral development of the student, through the acquisition and consolidation of knowledge and skills; to this end, it is expected that they reflect on higher levels of knowledge in an ascending manner, which should be expressed in communication, behavior, habits, values, feelings, ways of thinking and acting, preparing them to face the demands when they advance to the next educational level that corresponds to them, which requires an adequate use of language.

In the pedagogical field, the development of language becomes a significant challenge, so that its evolutionary development and the stages it goes through must be kept in mind, as stated by (Fernández, Pons, Carreras, 2013, p. 62). Its importance is especially relevant in the educational process by manifesting itself as a social element and interaction between the teacher, the learner and the different educational agents.

The research carried out employed different theoretical, empirical, mathematical-statistical methods, its methodological basis is found in the dialectical-materialist conception and in the general philosophical method of sciences, through which it is possible to reveal the causal, functional and contradictory relationships related to the preparation of the primary teacher to address the language delay in the regular context.

The objective of the research is the proposal of a methodological strategy with the actions directed to the successful preparation that the primary teacher must reach for the successful attention to learners with language delay included in the regular context.

## **Development**

Language is an exclusive creation of human social life, it is what distinguishes us and makes us more advanced than other beings on the planet, it is an innate faculty that allows us to communicate through phonic and graphic signs, which are the result of our social interaction and fulfills various functions, such as being instrumental, regulatory, interactive, personal, heuristic and representative.

However, language does not always develop in the same way, such is the case of learners with language delay who attend primary education, where there is a delay in language acquisition and comprehension is at normal limits, phonological, lexical-semantic and morphosyntactic components are affected, due to different causes (Fernández, Pons, Carreras, 2013); therefore, a well prepared teacher is needed to achieve from the pedagogical process to master this aspect and provide inclusive care to these learners.

However, research and interventions have been carried out in the classroom and throughout the teaching and learning process, but they have been very general, and the attention received by learners with language delay in conditions of inclusion in the pedagogical process is still insufficient.

It is considered that there is a language delay, according to Díaz (2021), when students begin to speak late, it is slower in any of its stages, without having associated hearing or neurological problems, and sometimes they do not get to say a word until they are two years old.

The teacher as mediator of this work must prepare the learner to face the challenges of development and raise their potential to address their limitations in communication. Developing realistic, optimistic and alternative thinking is a good dose to face conflicts, depression and low performance with the consequent sense of failure. (Álvarez, 2011, p. 36)

Therefore, as a trainer and evaluator of development, the teacher is also immersed in a complex training process, so it is crucial to establish a close link between a deep sensitivity to the work he/she performs and the development of a well-organized preparation system that responds to real needs and allows him/her to successfully exercise the task of educating.

For all these reasons, teachers must prepare themselves, since their extraordinary role can leave a mark on their students. Teacher preparation cannot neglect these considerations. “The teacher as a trainer and evaluator of development is at the same time the subject of a complex training process where methodological and practical conceptions are put to the test”. (Castillo, 2004, p. 38)

Authors such as De la Vega (2019); García (2020); Rodríguez (2021), have contributed to the preparation of the teacher for the inclusive care of learners, offering valuable strategies, methodologies, which can be applied in teacher training and in the classroom, being still insufficient the inclusive care to language delay.

For the teacher's preparation to be effective, it is necessary to comply with a series of requirements, among them, the organization of actions that allow the learner to correct or compensate his educational needs, this stimulates his zone of proximal development, as emphasized by Vygotsky (1995):

... In teaching it is necessary to rely not so much on what has already been achieved by the child, as on the processes that are developing and those that are still in formation. In differentiating what is accessible to the child only in collaboration with adults. (p. 300)

And this also implies structuring the pedagogical process to achieve progress in learning and in the understanding of the norms of social coexistence, and in this respect Vygotsky (1995) continues:

... the sources of the development of psychic processes are always social... the idea of the need to correct abnormal development early and to take into consideration the zone of proximal development when diagnosing children was put forward and substantiated... (p. 300)

And this demonstrates, according to Vygotsky (1995):

...in the idea of the expansion of the zone of proximal development and the expansion of the child's potential possibilities... This idea, which demonstrates the dialectical character of the development process... and to the analysis of the effectiveness of the pedagogical process... (p. 300)

In this order, each teacher, in his work and in the strategy he chooses, must remember the importance of connecting his work with the educational influence he exerts on his students, so he can reap the desired fruits from fulfilling the purpose and objectives of the educational level, taking into account his social task.

It is important to consider that the guidelines for the development of communication of the learner go beyond the school environment, the teacher's influence should also extend to the home and the community, therefore, it is relevant to analyze the particularities of the teacher's preparation to serve learners with language delay in conditions of inclusion, therefore it is necessary to mobilize resources, support and assistance to meet the needs and demands of learners, to achieve these purposes.

Therefore, in their work, the orientations for the development of the learner's personality transcend the framework of the educational institution and their influence should be directed to other contexts, fundamentally to the home and the community; consequently, it is convenient to analyze the peculiarities of the teacher's preparation to interact with the learners based on the characteristics they present and the problems that afflict them in their development, such is the case of the learners with language delay.

That is why a substantial aspect of the teacher's preparation is the development opportunities for all learners depending on their potentialities; all this implies a careful work of the teacher to value the high learning capacity and the extraordinary plasticity of the nervous system of the learner in its compensatory function and the possibilities of timely stimulation under the influence of education and teaching, a matter that should be used to exercise all the corrective and educational influence needed, especially when referring to communication problems, with emphasis on language delays.

On the other hand, reference is made to the responsibility of each educational institution to ensure continuous preparation on issues related to inclusion from the theoretical and methodological aspects as pedagogical tools so that teachers can serve all students and achieve a truly inclusive education, including those with communication problems.

In order to fulfill the proposed task, it is necessary to propose well-articulated work strategies; so that in the scientific literature numerous definitions are addressed in the educational field, all of them indistinctly analyze the following elements to take into account at the time of elaborating a strategy:

1. To pursue defined objectives that can be classified according to their magnitude and scope, in general and particular.
2. They are organized and designed in stages.
3. They involve transforming and systemic actions, which provoke changes in the problematic situation that originated them.
4. They are focused on certain areas of human knowledge, in this case, pedagogy.
5. In their conception, they include control and feedback mechanisms that make possible the evaluation of the results to be achieved in the short, medium or long term.

It should be noted that the elements delimited by all of them are important, and we agree with De Armas and Valle (2011), when they refer that a strategy is “the direction of sequential and interrelated actions that, starting from an initial state (given by the diagnosis), allow directing the passage to an ideal state as a result of planning” (p. 26).

These authors also state that the strategy must have as structural components: “mission, objectives, actions, methods and procedures, those responsible for the actions and the time in which they must be carried out; the forms of implementation and the forms of evaluation.” (p. 27).

In these approaches it is evident the need for the strategy to preserve its humanistic, transforming, dynamic and flexible value, oriented to satisfy the objectives for which it was designed and with it, the achievement of an expected result from the actions proposed and the problems presented.

So that in Pedagogy some terms are presented as: educational, teaching, learning, pedagogical, methodological strategies, indistinctly as a system of influences in a general way, with a transforming and developing character, for the case of the research that is developed, it is contextualized to the methodological strategy because it is directed towards the preparation of the primary teacher to acquire knowledge and to be able to exert its influence towards the different environments: school, community, family, the different agencies and agents that interact for the development of an adequate communication of the learners, through the work in network.

According to the Central Institute of Pedagogical Sciences [ICCP] (2016)

Networking makes viable the use of various forms of methodological work, improvement and research, through the formation of human, didactic, organizational, methodological and new technology resource centers, which give attention to the needs and demands of learners, educators, families and the community; for the fulfillment of the goal and objectives set for each educational level. (p. 7)

The methodological strategy aimed at preparing the primary teacher for the inclusive care of learners with language delays, conceives this preparation from a theoretical and practical point of view, the teacher is assumed as the subject and object of assimilation of knowledge and methods for the care of learners, this strategy aims from the preparation of the teacher to understand that the inclusive educational care is not separated from the pedagogical process.

The selected sample is of an intentional nature, integrated by: 23 teachers, a director, two coordinators, a psychopedagogue, eight specialists, and the speech therapist of the “23 de Agosto” Elementary School.

In the research carried out, different theoretical, empirical, mathematical-statistical methods were used, having as methodological basis the dialectical-materialistic conception of the general philosophical method of science. It allows revealing the causal, functional and contradictory relations concerning the preparation of the primary teacher for the inclusive attention to the language delay in the regular primary context.

In the results of classroom observation on the care provided by teachers to learners with language delay in the regular primary context, it is detected:

- Insufficient preparation of the primary teacher to contribute to the inclusive attention to students with language delays.
- The different normative documents do not sufficiently offer guidelines for working with students with language delays in the regular context.
- The use of methods, procedures and support resources that favor the development of the different language components.
- Limited use of differentiating activities from the planning of class systems to provide attention to students with language delays.

The surveys applied to teachers confirmed that there is scarce knowledge about learners with language delays, and that bibliographies are limited to offer adequate attention to learners and contribute to language development.

The interview showed that:

The preparation that teachers have for the attention to learners with language delay in the regular context is insufficient; in turn they show limited knowledge about:

- The ontogenetic development of language.
- The main characteristics that are manifested in learners with language delay.
- The different activities to be carried out from the educational teaching process to contribute with the educational attention to language delay.
- The elements related to inclusion.

The difficulties detected revealed the scarce knowledge of primary teachers about language delay; this implies the proposal of the strategy with the objective of:

Design actions to prepare the teacher and educational agents for inclusive attention to learners with language delays in the regular context.

The following actions are proposed:

#### **Actions for teachers**

- To plan scientific and methodological teacher preparation activities related to the characteristics of language delays.
- To conduct an analysis of the linguistic needs of learners with language delays and involve all agents in this process.
- Workshops and case studies with the main considerations around communication problems with emphasis on language delays with the participation of all agents interacting in the process.
- To control the limitations in the area of communication, carrying out an accurate diagnosis so that the necessary actions to be worked on are included in the institutional educational project with the participation of all agents and educational agencies.



- To project the different contents of the subjects based on the linguistic skills of each student with a dynamic and continuous character.
- To use didactic resources such as games, songs, rhymes, teaching aids that are accessible to the development of the language of the students and that these have continuity from the multifactorial work.
- To coordinate strategies with other specialists to contribute to the development of language, both in teaching and extracurricular activities so that the multifactorial, dynamic and continuous aspect is considered.
- To use communication technologies in the development of activities to increase motivation.
- To use at all times clear, precise and simple instructions that are demonstrated and executed by all those involved in the educational process of the learner.
- To offer more time to clarify the doubts of students with language delays and reinforce the concepts worked on in class by asking questions that contribute to the development of oral expression. This same process should be carried out by those who interact in the correction of the communication problem present in the learner.
- To sensitize the other students about the situation of their classmates, emphasizing the respect towards them and that the necessary help is provided based on the collaborative work that all the factors that interact in this process must demand.

#### **Actions for educational agents**

- To create varied and motivating activities to develop the components of language (phonic, lexical, grammatical), which should be socialized with the other agencies and agents involved in the corrective process.
- To develop the communication of the students, allowing them to speak and finish their words without help, it is necessary to rectify the mistakes made, but in a positive way. This activity from the educational project should be generalized with the other agents.
- To communicate to the family the attention given to students with language delays so that they can contribute at home to overcoming the disorder, this fulfills the dynamic and continuous character that is needed.

- To evaluate systematically the linguistic progress of learners and redesign actions according to new needs, which should be shared with all those involved in this process.

The actions designed in the pedagogical strategy were socialized in the different meetings held as part of the methodological work with teachers, from the methods applied as interviews, surveys, observation, 100% acceptance is reached, in all participants; which served to enhance their preparation and demonstrate how they should be planned so that they overcome the work done in the speech therapy practice with learners with language delay, from involving educational agents and agencies and that all this is part of the work to be developed in the institutional educational project with the diagnosis made.

## **Conclusions**

In the diagnosis of the study carried out and the methods applied, difficulties are evidenced in the preparation of the primary teacher in the link with the other agencies and educational agents for the achievement of an inclusive attention in the learners with language delay in the regular primary context. In order to solve the problems presented in the communication area, actions were designed for teachers and educational agents to provide quality education, equity and equal opportunities, regardless of their characteristics, to promote greater inclusion in social life.