"INCLUDING STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN A COLOMBIAN STATE UNIVERSITY: A DESCRIPTIVE CASE STUDY"

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Licenciatura en lengua inglesa

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RESUMEN

Muchas organizaciones alrededor del mundo, así como el gobierno colombiano, tienen el compromiso de proveer a todos los estudiantes educación de calidad, lo cual implica garantizar una educación inclusiva real. El propósito de este estudio de caso descriptivo cualitativo fue explorar qué se pudo observar en términos de educación inclusiva, en un programa de enseñanza de lengua Inglesa en una universidad pública colombiana, para un estudiante con discapacidad visual, y analizar las percepciones de este estudiante y siete de sus docentes en relación a este proceso de educación inclusiva. Estas percepciones fueron recolectadas a través de entrevistas y recuerdos estimulados para su posterior análisis.

Los hallazgos revelan que la universidad en la cual este estudio fue realizado carece de una arquitectura y una infraestructura adecuadas para facilitar la movilidad de personas con discapacidad visual. Además, los siete docentes entrevistados no tienen una formación formal acerca de educación inclusiva, y no reciben ningún apoyo por parte de dicha universidad para enseñarle a un estudiante con discapacidad visual de una manera adecuada. Por otra parte, la falta de conocimiento de los docentes y los compañeros estudiantes acerca de las necesidades de las personas invidentes, hace el proceso de inclusión de este estudiante aún más laborioso.

En conclusión, es importante incluir en todos los programas de enseñanza de esta universidad una asignatura obligatoria sobre educación inclusiva, así los futuros docentes podrán estar preparados para los retos que vengan cuando tengan estudiantes con necesidades especiales en sus aulas. También es esencial crear conciencia en la comunidad universitaria acerca de las necesidades de estos alumnos.

ABSTRACT

Many organizations around the world, as well as the Colombian Government, have the commitment of providing all students with education of quality, which implies to guarantee a real inclusive education. The purpose of this qualitative descriptive case study was to explore what could be observed in terms of inclusive education, in an English language teaching program in a Colombian state university, for a student with visual impairment, and analyze the perceptions of this student and seven of his professors towards this inclusive education process. These perceptions were gathered through interviews and video stimulated recalls for its further analysis.

The findings reveal that the state university where this research study was conducted does not have the required architecture and infrastructure for facilitating the mobility of people with visual impairment. Besides, the professors interviewed do not have professional training about inclusive education, and they do not receive any support from such university for teaching a visually impaired student in a proper way. Moreover, the lack of awareness by professors and fellow students about the needs of blind people, makes the inclusion process of this student even more challenging.

As conclusions, it is important to include in all the teaching programs of this university a mandatory subject about inclusive education, so future professors can be prepared for the challenges that come when having students with special needs in their classrooms. Furthermore, it is essential to raise awareness on the university community about the needs of these students.

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During the years I have been enrolled in this language teaching program I have met many people that helped me in many ways, making me to reflect in the kind of teacher I want to be and supporting me for finishing this process in a successful way.

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper, we attempt to show readers a case study that involves the perceptions of one visually impaired student enrolled in an English language teaching program of a state university in Pereira, Colombia, and seven of his professors. The purpose for analyzing these perceptions was to determine to what extent it is necessary to include, in all the teaching programs of this university, a mandatory subject related to inclusive education, which could provide professors in development with the adequate knowledge for teaching students with special needs; as well as to discover what was being done in this specific teaching program for including these kinds of students. With this in mind, three questions guided this case study:

- What can be observed in terms of inclusive education in a language teaching program for a student with visual impairment?
- What are the perceptions of the professors from the Language Teaching Program towards the inclusive education of a student with visual impairment?
- What are the perceptions of a student with visual impairment towards the inclusive education in the Language Teaching Program?

The rationale of the project was to raise awareness on the importance of building inclusive education due to the many challenges that impaired students have to face in their daily lives. Through the acknowledgement of the needs of learners with special needs, it is more possible to ensure that they receive education of quality where inclusion is guaranteed.

Significant theoretical definitions such as education; quality education; inclusive education and visual impairment and blindness, were taken into consideration for the

development of this study. In terms of related studies, some relevant projects with a context similar to ours, were compared to our own project.

This research was conducted as a qualitative descriptive case study in a state university in Pereira and the participants included one visually impaired student enrolled in the English language teaching program of this university and seven of his professors.

Through the use of interviews and video stimulated recalls the data were collected and further analyzed by the use of codification, aggrupation and categorization.

The findings and sub findings were presented, described in detail and supported by the evidences collected with the methods mentioned above. Based on such findings, some limitations and suggestions for future research were drawn so the pursuing of inclusive education can continue. Finally, the conclusions reached by us were showed.

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Nowadays, in order to guarantee education of quality, it is necessary to ensure that all students, no matter their physical or cognitive conditions, have full access to it; therefore, when discrimination is lowered, quality education is enhanced (United Nation Children's Fund UNICEF 2000). This belief has led to the development of a very important concept: Inclusive Education, which has its origins in three main international events: first, in The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA or EHA), a US law that was enacted in 1975; second, in the Regular Education Initiative (REI), a movement that emerged in the United States in 1986; and finally, in the School Integration Movement, that was focused on how to increase the participation of students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms (Esteve, Ruiz, Tena, & Úbeda, 2006). Thus, it is primarily important to know about and follow the policies and parameters established internationally, nationally, and locally in order to guarantee the total inclusion of students with special in the educational systems and in the communities.

However, knowing those policies and parameters is just the first step for ensuring inclusive and quality education in our country, being that it is also essential to count on teachers capable of accomplishing such goal, as illustrated by The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD (2012) which claims that institutions that welcome disadvantaged students should receive additional resources for educating students with disabilities, and also hold experienced teachers able to support the special needs of those students. These actions lead to the so claimed education of quality that will enable learners with disabilities to have more opportunities and a better future, and, as the

UNESCO (2005).explains, "better school outcomes (...) are closely related to higher income in later life" (p.19-20).

For all of the mentioned above, the Colombian Ministry of Education MEN (2013) has recently developed a series of strategies in order to guarantee inclusive education in our country, which entail that all educational centers should examine the comprehensiveness of their curriculum and define a flexible curricula that are adapted to the characteristics of the students, to their environment and to the regional contexts, from an interdisciplinary perspective, in order to create innovative didactics in such curricula that take into account the characteristics of the students in their learning processes and in the development their capacities; yet, not only the curriculum should be modified due to the fact that institutions must also establish a support service, which has the adequate institutional recognition and which implements tutoring and/or placement courses (among others) for students who need them. Furthermore, teachers need to be recognized as the main characters of the process, who are defining the attributes of the "inclusive" teacher, this recognition requires the implementation of ways for them to feel sharers of the inclusive education and promoting a mind shift towards their role, as well as the development of permanent teaching processes and postgraduate academic programs about inclusive education, in order to achieve an articulated pedagogical practicum with the diversity of the Colombian context which responds to the needs of students (translation of the researchers).

In the context of the researchers, in the Reglamento Estudiantil (2012) of a state university in Pereira, the official document where all the rights and duties of the community of this university are stipulated, it is not specified what inclusive education involves as only in the article 18 it is stated the following information related to such matter: "en todos los programas de formación que la Universidad ofrezca se reservarán cinco (5) cupos para

asignarlos a las comunidades negras, reinsertados por procesos de paz, desplazados por la violencia, indígenas y deportistas de alto rendimiento" (p. 13), that is to say that the laws and parameters established by the Colombian government and the MEN have not been implemented in this university being that its impaired students are allowed to attend to their classes but are not provided with the tools needed for building a real inclusive environment for them; additionally, experienced teachers in the field of inclusion are not hired and the already hired do not receive any type of training which prepares them to teach students with disabilities in an adequate way. This issue causes that most teachers feel discomfort and doubt about their capacities and about the benefit of inclusion for students with special needs (McCray & McHatton, 2011; Leatherman, 2007; Suriá, 2012).

Thereupon, this research proposal intended to identify and analyze what is needed to include a visually impaired student of the English language teaching program that the state university offers. For such identification and analysis the researchers conducted interviews and video stimulated recalls with both, the student with visual impairment (henceforth SWVI) and seven of his teachers, in order to know what are their perceptions toward inclusion, and how do the teachers feel in terms of their preparation (or lack of it) when teaching a student in such condition. Based on the data collected from these interviews and video stimulated recalls, the researchers determined how necessary is the implementation of specialized training about inclusion for professors and professors in development of the state university, as well as what is being done in the English language teaching program for the inclusion of the SWVI. Such implementation would not only benefit these teachers and their professional development, but also the university itself as it would be providing its professors in development with education of quality where inclusion and education for all will be the goal; as a result, the students with disabilities would be the

main beneficiaries of this project for they would have the possibility of being really included in the programs they decide to enrolled in. In this sense, the three related questions that guided this study are:

- What can be observed in terms of inclusive education in a language teaching program for a student with visual impairment?
- What are the perceptions of the professors from the Language Teaching Program towards the inclusive education of a student with visual impairment?
- What are the perceptions of a student with visual impairment towards the inclusive education in the Language Teaching Program?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the four main concepts that led the development of this study: education, quality education, inclusive education, and visual impairment. Before defining these concepts, it is imperative to mention that although the pursuing for inclusive education began more than two decades ago, there is not a clear definition of what inclusion means even today, and what institutions should do or implement in order to guarantee that all learners, with special needs or not, take advantage of all the experiences and information shared in the classrooms; hence, for the development of this paper and based on the findings and beliefs of other authors, the researchers established their own definition about inclusion. The first objective of this study was to investigate how the SWVI feels in the classroom, the second was to analyze the perceptions of the professors toward inclusion based on their teaching experiences with a SWVI, and the third was to examine how they feel when facing students with visual impairment in their classes without having any specific training. The data collected were interpreted in order to verify the necessity (or not) of including a special training about teaching students with special needs in all of the teaching programs that a state university in Pereira offers.

2.2 Defining Education

During the last few decades, education has been conceived as a right for all and as a necessity for building better societies; in those terms, Benander, Denton, Page, & Skinner (2000) point out that general education has the ability to provide multiple learning experiences that students internalize in order to become responsible and caring human beings. However, there are other important issues within this concept that need to be

addressed as Glynn et al. (2005) explain, general education should enable students to be more capable of understanding (objectively) other cultures, ways of life, and backgrounds.

In national terms, El Congreso de la República de Colombia in its LEY 115 (1994), decrees that education is a process of formation that is permanent, personal, cultural and social, and which is based on an integral conception of the people, their dignity, their rights and their duties (translation of the researches).

2.3 Defining Quality Education

Although education is internationally considered as a right, just as it is mentioned above, this does not mean that all the people who have access to it will receive education of high quality standards. For instance, UNICEF (2000) states that for enhancing quality in education it is of the utmost importance to reduce discrimination; ethnic and language minorities, groups at low socio-economic levels and students with special needs, are some examples of communities that are usually discriminated, either by excluding their members from the schools or when their participation in the classrooms is rejected. Moreover, the parameters that are required in order to provide citizens with the best quality education are stipulated by every country, depending on their own necessities; for example, the UNESCO (2005) presents the following about quality in education:

> "Quality must be seen in light of how societies define the purpose of education. In most, two principal objectives are at stake: the first is to ensure the cognitive development of learners. The second emphasizes the role of education in nurturing the creative and emotional growth of learners and in helping them to acquire values and attitudes for responsible citizenship. Finally, quality must pass the test of equity: an education system characterized by discrimination against any particular group is

not fulfilling its mission" (p. 5).

There are essential characteristics such as equity that all countries should include in their plans for improving their educational systems on the grounds that it contributes to the development of the society itself. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2012) claims that the OECD countries that have incorporated quality and equity in their educational systems are those that exhibit a better performance in education, which is achieved by providing most of the students, in spite of their conditions, with the possibility of reaching high level skills in their education.

Accordingly, in the Colombian context, quality education is seen as an education that contributes to minimize inequity in society and in which opportunities of progress and success are generated for all the citizens and for the country itself (MEN, 2010).

2.4 Defining Inclusive Education

For all the reasons mentioned above, it is primary important to improve the educational systems in order to include in them all the students, regardless their special needs or disabilities (cognitive or physical), and in this way, guarantee inclusive education which, according to Neary & Halvorsen (1995) is the act of including children with disabilities as members of a school site with age-appropriate general education classrooms. Similarly, Stout (2001) presents inclusion as the incorporation of children with special needs into ordinary schools and in the 'least restrictive environments', meaning that these students will be as close as possible to the regular classroom and that their needs must be known. Consequently, having students with disabilities learning in a regular education context is much more than just letting them stay inside the classroom; it implies to build up

curricula which allow students, regardless their individual characteristics, to learn all together, and thus creating a truly inclusive environment. As case in point, Torres (2010) argues that educating in the diversity is not based on the adoption of exceptional actions for people with special educational needs, but on the adoption of a curriculum model that facilitates the learning of every learner in his or her diversity. There are several conceptions around this subject, but probably the most clear and broad definition of inclusive education is the one provided by the UNESCO (2005):

> "The concept of inclusive education is based on the principle of equal opportunities, an idea that all children and young people, despite their differences should have the same learning opportunities regardless of the type of schools and it is for the education system to make every effort to achieve this vision. This requires, for the sake of equity, the definition of coherent educational policies that take into account the specificities of the groups identified as vulnerable and exposed to exclusion, the establishment of an educational approach tailored to learners and development of programs relevant and flexible education that allow groups with different characteristics to learn together." (p.2)

In like manner, the Ministerio de Educación Nacional (2013) claims that the Colombian educational system should be transformed in the pursuing for including all the students in their diversity, fostering the respect for the differences and guaranteeing the participation of the whole community. In the same documents, the MEN state that inclusive education should have the following six characteristics:

Participation (participación) makes reference to the importance of being able to express one's point of view and being accepted for what every person is; diversity (diversidad) implies that all human beings are different, and those differences should be seen as source of enrichment for relationships, avoiding the stereotyping of what is normal or abnormal; interculturality (interculturalidad) refers to the relationship of respect, interaction, dialogue, and learning, among different cultural groups; equity (equidad) or equity education system is a system that is adapted to the students diversity, and gives to each student what he or she needs based on their social, economic, political, cultural, linguistic, physical, or geographic necessities, no matter their capacities, gender, age or culture; relevance (pertinencia) emphasizes the capacity of the universities of responding and enhancing the social, economic, cultural, and political necessities of the context where they work; quality (calidad): is associated to the optimal conditions that allow the constant improvement of education, depending on the context (translation of the researchers).

All in all, the concept of inclusive education is based on the principle that education is a right, and that it is the responsibility of educational systems to adapt and respond to the

diverse needs of learners, since inclusive education aims school for all; moreover, it is the right of students with disabilities to be included and integrated in both, the general education system and the community.

2.5 Defining Visual Impairment and Blindness

Given that this study attempted to identify and analyze what was needed for a visually impaired student to be included in the classrooms of a language teaching program of a state university, the researchers considered that it is of utmost importance to provide an authoritative definition of what visual impairment and blindness mean. In this sense, the World Health Organization (WHO, 2016) states that blindness is "the inability to see"; moreover, there are several types of blindness, as it is explained in the 10th revision on the International Classification of Diseases (ICD, 2006), which is the international standard of the WHO for defining and reporting diseases and health conditions and in which it is stipulated that the visual function is divided in normal vision, moderate visual impairment, severe visual impairment, and blindness. In this standard, the WHO also specifies that *"Moderate visual impairment combined with severe visual impairment are grouped under the term "low vision": low vision taken together with blindness represents all visual impairment."* (Fact Sheet N°282)

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent years the idea of inclusive education has changed from the mere act of allowing students with disabilities to attend regular classrooms, to the necessity of modifying the educational systems in order to guarantee that all students participate and take advantage of the knowledge being imparted. In this section, three research studies concerned with showing to what extent the perceptions of professors about inclusion and their teaching training can influence the education of students with disabilities, are presented in detail.

With the purpose of examining the perceptions of elementary and secondary education majors toward the inclusion of students with disabilities prior to and after taking a course on integrating exceptional students, McCray and McHatton (2007) conducted a survey study in a Southeastern university in United States. The study also aimed to know the perceptions of general education majors about their own professional development, their needs as a result of taking a course on integrating exceptional students, and if there is any difference in perceptions about inclusion between elementary education majors and secondary education majors. The participants of the study were 77 elementary, and 38 secondary teachers (a total of 115 participants) that were enrolled in a course on integrating exceptional students in general education settings, to gain a broad understanding of their role and responsibilities for including students with disabilities.

The findings point out that elementary education majors reported more favorable perceptions of inclusion over all, but both groups' support of inclusion varied by disability category. Students with cognitive impairments, multiple disabilities, and behavior disorders were viewed as less able to be included. Furthermore, secondary education majors were

less sure of the benefit of inclusion for students regardless of ability and doubted their own efficacy to teach students with special needs to a greater degree than their elementary education counterparts.

The general results in McCray and McHatton (2007) are complemented with a narrative study carried by Leatherman (2007) in which she examined teachers' perceptions of their inclusive classrooms. The aim of this study was to analyze the experiences of teachers of inclusive early childhood classrooms. The participants were eight teachers that worked in either a university or community college early childhood program or in a pre-kindergarten classroom of the state's public school system in the southeastern part of the United States. Another required characteristic of the participants was that they should have taught for at least one year in an inclusive classroom and they should not have a formal degree in special education. This study was divided into two phases: in phase one, the participants were interviewed once to gain their insights about the inclusive classroom. In phase two, different participants were included, and the attitudes of pre-service teachers and in-service teachers toward inclusion were compared and contrasted. Phase Two included four participants and the methods included multiple interviews, observations, and field notes.

The findings obtained in Leatherman (2007) from the interview analysis suggest that the inclusive classroom is a great place for children; that the teacher needs additional education, support from administrators and to be included in decisions about the inclusive classroom; and also that positive experiences foster successful inclusive classrooms.

Similar outcomes were found in a research project conducted by Suriá (2012) in different public schools in Alicante (Spain). The participants were 116 teachers with experience in teaching students with disabilities, and the instrument was a questionnaire of

23 items that tested the perception of the teachers. The purpose of the author was to analyze if the students with disabilities can create inquietude in the teachers; the perception of the teachers about their own education in teaching; and to examine if the teachers evidence a positive attitude coming from the rest of the students in regard to the students with special needs. Through this research, Suriá (2012) demonstrated that students with disabilities experience discomfort in the classrooms, depending on the experience, gender and level of education that the teacher has; at the same time, these factors affect the perception that the teachers have of their education in teaching; and finally, that teachers perceived a favorable attitude by general students towards these disabled students. The findings of Suriá suggest the need to pursue this subject in order to promote training programs for teachers, preparing and training them in order to resolve any conflicts that may arise in their work as teachers.

All the findings presented in this chapter, which underpin the importance for teachers to receive some prior training in teaching to students with disabilities, led us to the conclusion that institutions ought to provide teachers with training programs related to this matter and, being this problematic our concern, the research studies mentioned above were relevant and meaningful for the development of this research project.

4. METHODOLOGY

In the previous chapter, three research studies, in which it is showed to what extent the perceptions of teachers about inclusion and their teaching training can influence the education of students with disabilities, were presented in detail in order to build the foundations of the present study. The following section aims to explain how the researchers developed their study, specifically in terms of type of research, type of study, context (setting and participants), the data collection methods, the role researchers, and finally the ethical considerations.

4.1 Type of research

Considering the nature of this study, it can be stated that it is a qualitative research in view of the fact that the researchers sought to understand the perceptions of their participants toward one specific phenomena, in this case, the inclusion of a student with visual impairment in the classroom. Denzin and Lincoln (2005), point out that qualitative researchers aim to comprehend the meaning that people draw upon a particular circumstance that takes place under real-world conditions. Moreover, as the data collected involved thoughts, beliefs and insights from the participants, this implies that such information is shown in form of words and not in numbers, as explained by Fraenkel and Wallen (2009); hence, as this data cannot be quantitatively measured, the researchers analyzed the responses gathered in order to draw conclusions. Furthermore, in order to avoid personal opinions of the researchers, this project was carried out as a qualitative descriptive case study, which definition is explained in the following section.

4.2 Type of study

As mention above, this research project was conducted as a qualitative descriptive case study on the grounds that, as Fraenkel & Wallen (2009) state, in a case study an individual or a small group is selected as a sample from which varied information is collected and analyzed. In this sense, in the present study, one student with visual impairment and seven professors from the English Language Teaching Program of a state university, were selected as sample inasmuch as "the more case studies one has, the less intensively each one is studied" (Gerring 2007, p.21). Furthermore, according to Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007), case studies for specific situations, should be more descriptive than interpretative in order to avoid the judgments of the researchers in the pursuing of a detailed and fair description of the event.

4.3 CONTEXT

This section attempts to provide information related to the place in which the study was developed and also about the participants. It includes aspects such as location, a brief history of the place, and the characteristics and descriptions of both, the place and the participants.

4.3.1 Setting

To begin with, the state university where the present case study was conducted, is located in Risaralda and is the only public university in Pereira; for this reason, according to the Vicerrectoría de Responsabilidad Social y Bienestar Universitario (2015) of this university, the department in charge of ensuring the welfare of all students, the population

of this university is around 20.000 students, 35 (0,175%) of whom are recognized as population with special needs who have cognitive, psychological or physical impairments such as deafness, blindness, schizophrenia, among others. At this university, the English language teaching program is the program in charge of providing its students with training for teaching English as a foreign language, and is the one to which the researchers of this study belong to; for this reason in particular, it was the program selected for developing this study.

4.3.2 Participants

The teaching program mentioned above has a teaching personnel of 33 professors and a student population of 688 students, 3 (0, 4%) of which have special needs. These students are currently coursing their third, fourth, and fifth semester; and present visual, hearing, and cognitive impairment, respectively. From the group of students mentioned above, one student was selected and their teachers were taken into account to conduct the project.

4.3.2.1 Professors

From the 33 professors of the English Language Teaching program, the 7 that have been teaching the SWVI during his first and second semester participated in this descriptive case study (prior authorization), so that the researchers could evidence how do they include (or not) this student in their classrooms. This professors were the ones in charge of conducting the subjects of Basic English, Pre-intermediate English, Spanish phonetics and phonology, Epistemology of Education, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Developmental psychology, and Oral and Written Communication. (See appendix 1)

All of the seven professors have a BA degree, four have a MA degree and three have a PhD; nevertheless, it is important to highlight that none of these professors had a formal training related to inclusive education.

4.3.2.2 Students with disabilities

From the population of 3 students with disabilities, the one that is visually impaired was selected for conducting this research (prior authorization). This 50 year old man, who will be named 'Antonio Acosta' for the development of this study in order to protect his privacy; lost his vision completely in January 2014 (26 months ago) due to an almost fatal accident. He was taking his third semester in the English Language Teaching program, demonstrating that everything is possible and that his dreams and his determination are stronger than his disability. 'Antonio' is always accompanied by his wife, who has never given up on him; this woman provides her husband support with his daily abilities. (See appendix 2)

4.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The data collection methods that were implemented in this research study were video stimulated recalls and interviews. Below, the description of these methods and the way they were used to collect the information related to the perceptions of the participants about the inclusion of a student visually impaired is detailed.

4.4.1 Video stimulated recalls

The first method implemented was the video-stimulated recall on the grounds that, according to Calderhead (1981) cited in Reitano (2006) "video stimulated recall is an

effective technique for identifying and examining the thoughts and decisions of professors, and the reasons for acting as they do. During the teaching process in the classroom, the goals of teachers may remain constant or may vary, and their purposes and intentions towards the lesson may change depending on how they interact with their students, and how students respond to teachers" (p.2.). Furthermore, as pointed out by Theobald (2008), video-stimulated recall is a research method in which participants watch a video-recording of an activity they performed, and then discuss with the researcher their participation in such activity. In this sense, one video stimulated recall per participant (seven in total) were conducted in order to know what actions these professors-participants performed in order to include the visually impaired student that was in such class, and how the SWVI perceived the actions performed by his teachers. In the discussion that took place after the video-stimulated recall, it was examined by each of the professor-participant and the researchers what lead to this professor to perform, or not perform certain actions. (See appendix 3; appendix 4)

4.4.2 Interviews

The second method implemented was the interview inasmuch as it is a tool that allows researchers and the participants to make use not only of words, but also of gestures, to ensure the understanding of the questions and ideas expressed (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). It also allowed the interviewer to have an idea of things that cannot be observed such as feelings, intentions, perceptions, thoughts, or what people have in their minds. Furthermore, when researchers asked relevant questions to selected people, it permitted them to corroborate if the ideas obtained through the observation of the classes are correct or not (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). Given this, seven interviews (one per

participant) were carried out after the video stimulated recall process, with the purpose of knowing what was the perceptions of the SWVI in regards to his professors, his classmates and the classes itself; as well as the opinions of this professors about this teaching process. The questions included in the interviews aimed to seek for the feelings, opinions and experiences of the participants. (See appendix 5; appendix 6)

4.5 ROLE OF THE RESEARCHERS

As it was pointed out in the previous section, the researchers of this study gathered information related to the opinions, perceptions and feelings of the participants through the data collection methods explained above; consequently, the role that enabled them to use such methods properly was that of complete observers which, according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), is that role in which the researchers did not participate in any of the activities that their participants performed on the grounds that the task of the complete observer entails the mere act of observing. Moreover, as qualitative researchers, their intention were beyond asking the participants a set of questions; they also attempted to establish relationships with them. Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) reveal that qualitative researchers are often engrossed with the participants and the context where their research is conducted, without interfering in any way in the responses of such participants.

4.6 DATA ANALYSIS

In order to conduct this project, the researchers performed two methods for collecting the information required: video stimulated recalls and interviews. The researchers analyzed the data obtained in order to classify them into three findings with its corresponding sub findings. The analysis of the data is based on the "Grounded Theory" stated by Glaser & Strauss (1967). In this methodology is embedded a set of procedures that were followed during the development of the analysis, which are named "The Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis", the steps adapted for this project were the following.

Transcription: The information obtained through the video stimulated recalls and interviews was digitally transcribed by the researchers in order to be organized, classified and codified.

Comparing statements applicable to each category: After transcribing the data, the information was codified in order to categorize it according to the similarities evidenced. The codes were created with the initial of the name or the subject from the person whose information was collected, the line in which the data could be found, and the instrument implemented to obtain the information. The assigned codes for the data included information about the subject that the professors-participants taught to the SWVI; similarly, the evidence obtained from the visually impaired student was codified with the initials 'SWVI' initials and the initials of the name of the data collection method used, as well as the line in which the evidence was observed.

The code assigned for the professors relates to their respective subject: PBE stands for Professor Basic English, PFF (Professor Fonética y Fonología), PPIE (Professor Pre-Intermediate English), PCALL (Professor Computer Assisted Language Learning), PCOYE (Professor Comunicación Oral y Escrita), PPD (Professor Psicología del Desarrollo)**,** PEHP (Professor Epistemología e Historia de la Pedagogía). In relation to the data collection method, the "VSR" stands for Video Stimulated Recall and "I" for Interview.

Integrate categories: In this section, the categories were assigned a title which described a general idea of such category, in order to facilitate to the researchers the assignment of the corresponding information to the existing categories, based on the similarities found. During this process it became necessary to adapt the titles in order to make the categories to fit.

Delimiting the theory: Glaser & Strauss (1967) affirm that "As the theory develops, various delimiting features of the constant comparative method begin to curb what could otherwise become an overwhelming task" (p112). In order to solidify the theory, the researchers continue to compare incidents so each time there are fewer changes to make to the theory.

Writing theory: During this stage, the researches started to write their own theory, guided by the research questions and supported by the titles assigned to the categories, their definitions and the analysis of the data.

4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In light of the fact that the present study involved the participation of professors, students and the state university to which they belong to, it was of the utmost importance to take into account the ethical aspects which were needed to be considered during the gathering and the analysis of the data. In the first place, the researchers did not need permission to access to the university being that they studied there. On the other hand, it was necessary to obtain consent from the participants in each stage of the data collection process, where they gave to the researchers their permission for collecting and using the information through the different data collection methods; ergo, in order to conduct the video stimulated recalls and interviews with the participants, it was essential to provide them with a format in which it was explained what the case study was about, what its purpose was, and in what way the participants were to be involved in it; additionally, the participants were asked to sign a consent letter in which they granted the permission required for the researchers to collect and use the information gathered.

Moreover, for the sake of the privacy of the participants, their names were not used in the data gathering nor in the data analysis procedures, as it was imperative to guarantee anonymity; thus, a code was assigned to every participant. Confidentiality was another important aspect that needed to be taken into consideration due to the fact that the researchers were the only people who had access to the data collected.

5. FINDINGS

This qualitative research was conducted with the purpose of identifying the strategies implemented by professors and the institution itself looking for the inclusive education of a student with visual impairment (SWVI) in an English language teaching program. In this section of the document, the findings obtained through the analysis of the information collected from the SWVI and his professors are explained and supported with theory and evidence. The supports for the findings shown in this chapter were taken from video stimulated recall sessions and interviews made with the SWVI and seven professors who taught him different subjects during two semesters.

5.1 University support for a student with visual impairment

The first finding of this project is related to the support provided by the university and the entities in charge of the welfare of students to guarantee their continuity in the university; in addition, it describes the architecture and infrastructure issues that are encountered in the campus and which represent a problem for students with visual impairment. The lack of help given to the professors who conduct classes with the SWVI in terms of training about how to teach a student with visual impairment and monitoring assistance, is presented and thoroughly described as well in this section.

This finding involves the economic, institutional and organizational factors that are related to the inclusion process promoted by the university with base on the requirements established by the Ministerio Nacional de Educación (2013) in which it is stated that the Colombian educational system should search for including all the students in their diversity, fostering the respect for the differences and guaranteeing the participation of the whole community.

5.1.1 Institutional economic supports for a SWVI

It has been stated by the student that the university provides him with social and economic support. Such economic help consist of bonifications for transportation and tuition. These aids are given to students who evidence social, economic, physical or cognitive problems in order to avoid defection of students and prevent that their learning process is affected by external factors.

> *Investigador: Bien, ¿Recibe usted algún tipo de apoyo de parte de la institución donde actualmente se encuentra cursando sus estudios universitarios?*
>
> **SWVI:** *Si, yo tengo apoyo socioeconómico, tengo matrícula académica y apoyo para transporte. (SWVI L.13-16. I).*

The visually impaired student manifests that the type of support given by the university is restricted to the discount of the tuition that must be paid every semester by the students; in addition, the university gives him aids for transportation, which consists of tickets that can be used as payment for the public bus service in Pereira. Tuition is defined, according to the Cambridge dictionary (2015) as: "*the fee or charge that an institution, especially a college or university requires to the learners to study in the institution*"; in that sense, it is necessary that students with special needs have an adequation in the price of such fee in order to guarantee the permanence of the student in the institution during his learning process.

Therefore, the support provided by the institution to the SWVI can be considered important and necessary for him on the grounds that it prevents that he interrupts his learning process due to economic issues that he might face during his stance at the

university. The project in charge of providing this socioeconomic support for tuition and transportation is named Proyecto de Acompañamiento Integral, and through a document published in (2015), the Bienestar Universitario states that it will offer programs for accompaniment in college life, seeking to reduce dropout and improving the successful discharge.

In addition to the economic support, the student with visual impairment points out that the Vicerrectoría de Responsabilidad y Bienestar Universitario provides him with social monitoring, which consist on remunerated services that prevent the student from having economic inconveniences throughout his learning process at the university.

> *Investigador: Ok. ¿Cómo lo ha acogido la institución en términos académicos o de apoyo en cuanto a sus procesos de aprendizaje?*
>
> ***SWVI:*** *Eh, ahí pues hay que mirarlo desde dos puntos de vista, en la parte de bienestar universitario como tal, en la parte social muy bien. Eh… Como le decía también, tengo apoyos económicos y de monitoria social, (SWVI. L.18-21. I)*

The SWVI manifests that the support given by the university is focused on the socioeconomic factors previously mentioned. Moreover, the university provides the learner with social monitoring, which according to Consejo Superior (2012) is a strategy that looks for "promoting activities performed inside the university, which can be remunerated by bonifications in cash".

In that sense, it can be stated that the learner receives bonifications to fulfil his economic necessities. Obtaining social monitoring is significantly relevant given that these bonifications are provided with the purpose of ensuring the welfare of the student and please his economic needs during his stance at the university; nevertheless, the student does

not mention any academic support, such as an academic mentor. For him having a mentor

is crucial due to the fact that there are activities he would find difficult to do by himself

such as reading, moving around the classroom, understanding instructions and explanations

provided by the professor, and solving the tasks given in and out of class. Furthermore, a

student with visual impairment may encounter other problems, such as the architecture

flaws evidenced at the university, as it is explained in the following sub finding.

5.1.2 Institutional architecture and infrastructure as a problem for SWVI

The student with visual impairment and two participant professors assert that it is

difficult for the student to access most of the university buildings as well as to walk around

them because of the lack of ramps and signaling for visually impaired people. The student

explains that for accessing the buildings, blind people require adapted ramps but that, in

this university, only a few buildings have them**.** This sub finding is supported by the

information taken from the interview conducted with the SWVI and two professors.

> *Investigador: Por supuesto. ¿Bueno, Cómo ha sido su adaptación a la infraestructura de la*
> *institución y al ambiente universitario?*
> **SWVI**: *…. La parte física necesita también mucha adecuación, la mayoría de escalas no son*
> *accesibles, los edificios no son accesibles. Obviamente si ha habido unas modificaciones en rampas*
> *en algunos edificios, pero todavía falta mucho al respecto. (SWVI. L.38-44. I)*

The student with visual impairment affirms that, although modifications have been

made in some buildings in terms of the construction of ramps for facilitating the access to

people with special needs, the structures of the buildings in this institution, such as stairs,

require further adequacy for fulfilling the needs of visually impaired people.

In fact, the adjustments that the university has made to the physical structure of the entries of the buildings, show some degree of willingness for seeking the welfare of the students with disabilities; nonetheless, much more should be done inasmuch as the needs of disabled people go far beyond modifying some entrances. In a document developed by the Universidad Nacional de Colombia (2000), that looks for defining the guidelines about the characteristics and conditions for accessibility to the physical environment and the transportation for people with disabilities, it is stated that the difference in level between the area of access to the building and the sidewalks must be solved through fords, ramps or stairs, (as appropriate) and that in buildings already constructed, the corrections for ensuring the elimination of any barrier that represents a danger to its users must be done.

Furthermore, the SWVI expresses that people with visual impairment also need tactile signs for them to be oriented inside the campus. Without the specialized signaling system, the blind student has to rely and constantly depend upon other people that guide him, but such a signaling system has not been implemented yet in this university.

Investigador: Por supuesto. Bueno, ¿Cómo ha sido su adaptación a la infraestructura de la institución y al ambiente universitario?

SWVI:…he tenido muchos problemas en la parte de la infraestructura porque aquí no hay ninguna señalización,... nosotros necesitamos mucho material táctil para podernos orientar, por ejemplo, maquetas de los edificios, señalización, avisos en braille. Aquí no hay nada de eso... (SWVI. L.38-44. I)

The student participant asserts that due to the absence of the appropriate signaling for blind people to be able to orient themselves inside the campus, such as small models of the buildings and signs in braille, he has had to face many difficulties regarding to his mobility through the university campus.

From this piece of evidence it can be inferred that people with visual impairment require tactile material for knowing the exact place in which they are, and for being directed through the path they have to follow for reaching their destination; hence, due to the absence of the required signaling system, this student has to depend on the help of other people. In the same document cited above, the Universidad Nacional de Colombia (ibid) it is also indicated that both, the inside and the outside of buildings should be equipped with a signaling system that indicates routes, identifies areas and warns about obstacles; however, the SWVI and professors explain that in this institution only some buildings have been improved with ramps for facilitating the access to students with special needs, but the need of appropriate signaling that orients blind people still remains, which increases the dependence of the student on other people for walking around the campus or finding his assigned classrooms.

The student with visual impairment also states that it is difficult for him to move across the classrooms when the activities of the class require it, and claims that the help of a person is essential for him in order to develop such activities.

> *Investigador: Claro. Bueno. Cuando estaban haciendo la actividad grupal, el profesor se acercaba a los grupos para verificar cómo se estaba desarrollando el trabajo. Cuando el profesor se acerca a su grupo y empieza a indicar que hacer, ¿comprendió usted las instrucciones?*
> ***SWVI:****-Sí, sí. Yo no tengo problemas, yo sigo las instrucciones, yo las ejecuto. Se me dificulta un poquito tener que movilizarme por el salón, en ese caso mi esposa me ayuda, pero ella no maneja el inglés, entonces dependo de que las instrucciones sean dadas en un nivel de voz bueno. (SWVI. L.40-41. VSR)*

The visually impaired student states that he does not have problems following and carrying out the instructions provided by the professor. He also explains that it is difficult

for him to move around the classroom when a certain activity requires it, but that he can count on his wife for helping him to move when needed, and since she does not speak the language he is learning, he needs for the professor to have very good voice projection so that he can fully understand what he is being asked to do.

It can be seen from this evidence that the need of monitoring support for the SWVI increases as a result of the absence of signaling for blind people within the classrooms, which leads him to a constant dependence on someone that helps him to move inside the classroom, and as he is enrolled in a language teaching program, it implies that the person who supports him must speak the language being learnt as well. The American Foundation for the Blind AFB (2015) claims that one of the aims of education for people with visual impairments is that they attain personal independence, aim that cannot be accomplished without the appropriate signaling system inside the institutions.

To support what was said by the SWVI, a professor affirms that the policies for the process of inclusive education of a student with visual impairment exist in this university, although there is not the adequate infrastructure for achieving such inclusion.

> *Respuesta **PBE**: Yo no sé,.... yo sé que hay una política de inclusión, pero creo que no está la infraestructura y no sé a quién le corresponda (...) (PBE. L 87-95 I)*

This professor considers that even though the guidelines and parameters for inclusive education are already stipulated, they cannot be implemented due to the lack of the required infrastructure for such purpose, and that she does not know to whom the responsibility for providing that infrastructure belongs to.

This piece of evidence shows that the lack of the needed infrastructure for the inclusive education of a student with visual impairment causes that the efforts made by the

professors and by the SWVI himself in the pursuing of inclusive education do not have satisfactory results for them. Correspondingly, another professor interviewed states that the university is not properly prepared to receive learners with visual impairment due to the architecture, which makes it difficult for this student to move across the campus.

> *Investigador: Ok… ¿Usted recibió algún tipo de soporte por parte de la institución en la cual usted labora para cumplir con éxito el proceso de enseñanza de dicho alumno?*
> **PCOYE:** *(...) la universidad no está preparada para recibirlos, en términos físicos, de la planta física. Eso impide un poco la movilidad. (PCOYE. L 102-117 I)*

This professor participant claims that the buildings of this institution do not count with an appropriate architecture for blind people, which affects negatively the mobility of the SWVI through the buildings and classrooms.

As the architecture of the buildings of this institution is not adequate for blind people, it hinders the mobility of the SWVI inside the college grounds, buildings and classrooms, making even more difficult his adaptation process. The National Council for the Blind NCBI (n.d.), an Irish organization in charge of providing support and services across Ireland to people who are blind or have some degree of visual impairment, argues that the lack of appropriate directional guidance and tactile information, together with the presence of obstacles on circulation routes and inappropriately placed street furniture, restrain the mobility of blind people, obligating them to depend on the help of other people to accomplish their activities.

Essentially, the SWVI has mobility problems given that the university where he is studying is not structurally prepared for having visually impaired students, as there are no signs in braille inside the campus and the classrooms, nor ramps or stairs adaptations that

facilitate the access to the buildings. Regrettably, these are not the only difficulties that the student with visual impairment and his professors have to face in the pursuing of inclusive education given that other factors, related to the lack of institutional support for teaching visually impaired students such as the unavailability of specialized training, materials and a student mentor, are also evidenced.

5.1.3 Additional institutional support for conducting classes with SWVI is still required

Two professors who taught to the SWVI in the first semester of the year 2015, which was also the semester in which this student enrolled for the first time in the English language teaching program of a state university in Pereira, agree that they did not receive help from this university in terms of training about how to teach a student with visual impairment or assistantship, which affected negatively the progress of the lessons and obstructed the teaching process.

> *Investigador: ¿Y la universidad le brindó a usted algún tipo de soporte para lo, para que usted pudiera realizar de manera exitosa sus clases con el alumno?*
> ***PBE:*** *No, ni siquiera, por, ahí dijeron que un monitor y ni cada examen ni cada quiz que él presentaba me tocaba pedirle el favor a un estudiante porque el monitor nunca llegó, y pues él tenía a favor la ayuda de su esposa pues que iba a clase pero no, a mi lo único que me dijeron fue como, me pasaron una hoja como con varias observaciones que él había hecho y ya eso fue todo lo que recibí. (PBE. L 86-90 I).*

The first professor interviewed complains about the fact that the mentor did not attend to the lessons in order to help the SWVI in the development of quizzes or exams and due to the absence of this mentor, another student of the same class was asked to help in

these situations. This professor affirms as well that the student with visual impairment had the fortune of counting on his wife, who assisted him continuously, and also that the only support provided by the university was a sheet of paper which contained several observations that the SWVI himself had done, so that the professor could use the information written in there to design her classes.

The presence of a student mentor able to help the SWVI to carry out any type of evaluation or classroom activity is crucial for the learning process of this student and his permanence in the university as good results motivate students to continue studying, and good results are obtained, in the case of a SWVI, when the proper help, such as a well-trained mentor, is provided. Waterfield and West (2005) point out that assisting students with visual impairment is advisable for ensuring their continuity in the educational centers, and explain that the tasks these mentors are expected to undertake do not have to do merely with classroom activities, but also with off-campus and social activities, meaning that a mentor who is assigned for helping a student with visual impairment needs to be qualified for giving to the impaired student all the necessary and most complete assistance.

Moreover, in another piece of evidence taken from the same interview, it can be seen how the professor and the SWVI express their concern about the fact that they did not know who was the person in charge of helping them or offering a training based on teaching students with special needs, if there was one.

Investigador: ¿Usted cree que la universidad debería encargarse de capacitar al personal docente para enseñarle a los estudiantes con discapacidades físicas?

PBE: *Yo no sé, ..., yo sé que hay una política de inclusión, pero creo que no está la infraestructura y no sé a quién le corresponda, hasta el momento, o sea, lo que expresaba el estudiante era: "no hay nadie responsable, yo voy y hablo con el director y el director me manda a usted, y el director me*

manda a la vicerrectora, me mandan a bienestar"... y en todas partes como que se echaban el pin

pon de la pelota, eh, pero, pero yo no sé eso a quién le corresponda, no sé cómo quién sea el

encargado. (PBE. L 93-99 I)

When this professor was asked if she believed that the university should provide

professors with a training related to the way in which students with specials needs must be

taught, she answered that she knows there is an inclusion policy, but that she considers the

correct infrastructure is not found. She also declares that the SWVI told her about his

concern regarding the uncertainty of who is the person or department that should

accomplish such inclusion policy and help him and the professors in his learning process.

The lack of receiving instruction about inclusive education and how to teach a

visually impaired student affected adversely not only the class development and design of

the professor, but also the learning process of the SWVI given that lessons that include all

students equally could not be planned and consequently, not implemented. As it is pointed

out by the American Foundation for the Blind (2015), it is of the utmost importance to

provide the professors who teach students with visual impairments with training systems

that include the academic and non-academic needs of such students because visually

impaired students are not included in the classrooms if they are not taught by well trained

personnel; thus, if the university at issue had given to the professors interviewed the

appropriate and necessary guidance, the negative effects, like the ones highlighted above,

could have been avoided, and a real inclusive education would have been taken place.

Correspondingly, the second professor interviewed declares that he did not receive

any help for teaching the visually impaired student either, and affirms that the Vicerrectoría

de Responsabilidad Social y Bienestar Universitario gave certain kind of importance to this

matter a few weeks after the semester started, not even at the beginning or prior, when it was absolutely necessary and essential.

> *Investigador: Ok… ¿Usted recibió algún tipo de soporte por parte de la institución en la cual usted labora para cumplir con éxito el proceso de enseñanza de dicho alumno?*
>
> *PCOYE: La verdad, eh, cierta, cierto interés llegó pero ya corría la cuarta, quinta semana, la verdad no recuerdo, creo que fue de la vice… una de las vicerrectorías… Vicerrectoría de responsabilidad social, nos invitaron a una reunión, eso fue más de tipo informativo, o sea, quien era Wilmar, porque estaba aquí, cuál era su dificultad, mmm, que se esperaba de pronto de los docentes… yo creería que fue un poco tarde, porque, como le digo ya era la cuarta, quinta semana de clase y tampoco se habló de una intervención ni de un acompañamiento al docente. (PCOYE. L.97-100 I)*

This professor explains that the Vicerrectoría de Responsabilidad Social y Bienestar Universitario of the university programmed a meeting for giving him general insights about the student with visual impairment, which included: who was this student, which type of impairment he had, and also what was expected from the professors to do in this situation; he points out that such meeting took place in the fourth or fifth week of the semester and that, in his opinion, it should have taken place prior or at the beginning of the semester. The professor says as well that he did not have a mentor who could have helped the SWVI in the development of his class, and also that he did not receive further information about the possibility of getting one throughout the semester.

Considering that the only help the university gave to this professor for conducting a class that included a student with visual impairment was an informative meeting about such student, it can be asserted that all the necessary aids such as training programs, specialized materials and a student mentor available for helping the SWVI were not provided, and

given that this university has an inclusion policy, having these components available for professors is mandatory. The AFB (ibid) claims that visually impaired students have the right to receive an education of quality that is led by informed and knowledgeable professors who need constant and special help; therefore, having an inclusive and high quality education implies to do more than just having inclusion policies, it also requires that professors, administrators, parents and students know how to face learners with special needs in order to provide them with the best guidance they have the right to receive.

All in all, students with visual impairments have needs that must be faced by trained professors about inclusive education, having tactile and specialized materials available, and also a student mentor who helps permanently the SWVI inside the classroom and in the off-campus activities. Besides, the AFB explains that when the needs of these students are fully met, they have more possibilities to succeed in their learning processes and in life, which would make it more significant for a visually impaired student to count with an education of such quality.

Based on the evidences that supports this finding and its sub findings, it can be said that it is necessary for the university to make adjustments in terms of infrastructure, such as special signaling for visual impaired people and ramps, as well as providing the professors with permanent support of a student mentor for the SWVI, and training programs for teaching students with disabilities. The American Foundation for the Blind (ibid) suggests that educational centers that have inclusion policies ought to provide students with visual impairments with the proper services, instructions and materials so that they can be competitive individuals, not only inside the classrooms but also in the society they are part of. Thus, it can also be declared that although the visually impaired student receives economic support, which is essential to avoid dropout, it is required for him to count with

materials specially designed for him, with well-prepared professors and with a student

mentor who helps him during his learning process, in order to ensure that he will have a

bright and successful future.

5.2 Factors that improve the SWVI learning experience

The second finding of this research deals with the teaching materials and curricular

adaptations made by the professors in the pursuing of the academic inclusion for the SWVI.

Moreover, this finding describes the attitude evidenced in the student, focusing on his

willingness to learn and his disposition to work with other students, which contributes to

his academic success. Lastly, this finding explains the teaching strategies implemented by

the professors to conduct the lessons with the SWVI, such as the methods and the ways

they used to convey the messages of the class to this student.

5.2.1 Need of teaching material and curricular adaptation for a SWVI.

As it is mentioned in previous chapters, inclusive education is more than just letting

students with disabilities stay inside the classroom; it implies to build up curricula that

facilitate the learning of every learner in his or her own diversity, providing equal

opportunities for all. In this sense, the SWVI and three professors participants affirm that

the adaptation of teaching materials and curricula is of utmost importance for the academic

success of the student with visual impairment; unfortunately, it is something that has not

been completely made. This sub finding is supported by the information gathered from the

interviews and the video stimulated recalls conducted with these participants.

Investigador:… Ok. ¿Cómo lo ha acogido la institución en términos académicos o de apoyo en cuanto a sus procesos de aprendizaje?

SWVI: Como le decía también, tengo apoyos económicos y de monitoria social. En la parte académica si tengo algunas dificultades, porque, a pesar de que, en reiteradas ocasiones he solicitado adecuaciones curriculares que me permitan acceder a la información académica en igualdad de condiciones, eso no ha sido posible, estamos todavía en ese trámite. (SWVI. L.17-25.I)

The SWVI argues that, albeit the institution has offered him financial and social support, he continues to face difficulties on the academic side due to the fact that, although he has requested several times curricular adjustments that allow him to access the academic information on an equal basis, it has not been possible; that process still continues.

From this piece of evidence it can be stated that the lack of curricular adaptation for teaching students with visual impairment causes academic exclusion for this student on the grounds that, as stipulated for the Ministerio de Educación Nacional (2013), one of the fundamental priorities for building inclusive higher education is thoroughly reviewing the curricula for better responding to the diversity of the profiles of the learners, for giving students their own space for learning and development, and for supporting throughout multiple teaching strategies that promote their own goals and projects (translation of the researchers). Correspondingly, a professor participant asserts that although the syllabus of the subject he is in charge of is designed under some specific criteria, he made multiple modifications in order to adapt it to some of the needs of the SWVI; nevertheless, an entire adaptation of the syllabus could not be made.

Investigador: Ok… ¿Tomo usted algunas medidas con respecto a la manera de dar su clase dada la presencia de dicho estudiante?

PCOYE: Claro, ya en el primer diálogo que sostuvimos (con el estudiante) yo le advertí a él de que el programa estaba diseñado bajo unos criterios pero que su presencia iba a modificar ciertos aspectos, digamos que no podía yo entrar a cambiar por completo el programa académico porque (...) ya no podía hacer una modificación al programa académico, esto lleva semanas, cierto, entonces lo que si hice fue adaptar ciertas metodologías y ciertas ayudas didácticas, que es de pronto lo que más afectaría a "Antonio Acosta" en el desarrollo del proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje. (PCOYE. L.44-52 I)

This professor avows that from the very first meeting he had with the SWVI, he told him that his presence in the course would modify some aspects of the syllabus; but that he could not make curricular adaptations inasmuch as it requires a lot of time, weeks to be more specific; what he did do was to adapt some methodologies and teaching aids which he thought could have a bigger impact in the teaching and learning processes of Antonio Acosta.

Throughout this research, the willingness of the professors for adapting their methodologies and teaching materials for the successful inclusion of the SWVI in their classroom was manifested; however, their doubts about what to adapt and what not, were also evidenced.

Investigador: ¿Tomó usted alguna medida con respecto a la manera de dar su clase dada la presencia de dicho estudiante?

PBE: No cien por ciento, es decir, eh, yo traté de cambiar ciertas cosas pero había otras que no, por ejemplo en la de, en la parte de listening de speaking, considero que es muy necesario la ayuda visual entonces hasta cierto punto no consideré como privar al resto del grupo por la presencia de una persona... (PBE. L 34-37. I)

This professor participant states that she tried to change some things but not others; for example, talking about listening and speaking exercises, she considers that visual aids are very important for the students; hence, she could not deprived the entire group from this help just because of one student. From this piece of evidence it can be inferred that the professors are constantly thinking about how to provide all the students with the best possible learning experience. This important appreciation is also evidenced in the following extract taken from the video stimulated recall conducted with another participant.

> **PCALL**: .... *no es solo que haya que adaptar los recursos y buscar que sean accesibles es que también hay que reducirla cantidad de cosas que le pides. (...) Entonces, hay que pensar como os decía al principio, yo ahora me planteo que es lo que quiero lograr, cual es el objetivo en esta clase, y de qué manera él puede lograr ese objetivo así sea por caminos diferentes de los demás, porque no puedo esperar que el haga lo mismo que los demás. Entonces, envés de mandarle veinte tareas como tienen los otros él tiene tres, que son las tres que considero básicas para el objetivo puntual.* (PCALL. L.224 – 229 SR)

In this fragment the professor expresses that adapting the materials is not enough given that it is also important to reduce the amount of homework assigned to the SWVI; therefore, she thinks beforehand about the core purpose of the class, with the purpose of finding the best way in which the visually impaired student can reach the objectives of the class. This appreciation is supported by the Disability Advisors Working Network DAWN (2008), an Irish professional organization for Disability Officers that support students with special needs in higher education which in its Handbook for Teaching Students with Disabilities states that, for example, reading lists should be 'prioritized' for the students with visual impairment, reducing the time these students have to spend changing their readings into an amicable format.

Unfortunately, for the SWVI the willingness and constant reflection of the professors has not been enough for making his academic life easier as he claims in the next excerpt from the interview.

Investigador: ¿Considera usted que las metodologías aplicadas por cada docente le permiten realizar de forma eficiente las actividades planeadas para cada asignatura?

SWVI: *No, no, en forma alguna, o sea, yo tengo muchas limitaciones, muchas de ellas originadas porque el material que me dan bien sea en textos, bien sea archivos, material gráfico, links para hacer paginas sociales para investigaciones, ninguno de esos sistemas es amigable con mi estado, entonces la accesibilidad a ellos es muy limitada. (SWVI L. 74-77. I)*

The SWVI considers that many of his limitations are due to the methodologies implemented by his professors; which are not friendly with his condition on the grounds that most of the materials they used for conducting their classes had limited accessibility for blind people.

To wrap up, though the professors are willing to look for alternatives that guarantee the academic inclusion of the SWVI in their classrooms, he still faces innumerable problems that prevent him from taking advantage of this learning process, which implies that there are still many things to do for reaching a real inclusive education in this university.

5.2.2 Professors highlight the good attitude that the student with visual impairment has toward learning and group work

In terms of their perceptions toward the SWVI, professors agree on the fact that such student is eager to participate in the class and conclude that he has this role because it is the role that he likes to undertake.

> *Investigador: Bueno ahora con respecto al estudiante, ¿Desde su perspectiva, él está dispuesto a realizar actividades en grupo con diferentes compañeros?*
> *PFF: Si, completamente, es una persona que participa, participa mucho, se integra con facilidad y creo que el grupo también ha logrado integrarlo, colaborarle, entonces en ocasiones es como si no tuviera ningún inconveniente.(PFF. L 49-51 I)*
> *PCALL: Si, él está muy dispuesto a participar, y de hecho le gusta participar, (PCALL. L 132 I)*
> *PEHP: Si, completamente, él tiene muy buena disposición. (PEHP. L 69 I)*

When the professors were asked what their perception towards the willingness of the SWVI to work with fellow students were, three of them explained that the SWVI has no problem to work with his classmates and also that his regular interventions during the lessons are very meaningful, not only for the lessons themselves but also for his peers. They also highlight the disposition of the SWVI to participate actively in the lessons and emphasize on the fact that the other students include him in the classroom and collaborate him with the activities proposed, whether if they are group work or individual activities.

Students with visual impairments are expected to act in certain ways inside the classroom to the end of having a more significant learning process and a better experience at school; for instance, Carney et al. (2003) list these actions, including the development of a positive self-esteem, autonomy, self-advocacy and a proper behavior. These authors explain that when visually impaired students have these qualities and professors encourage them to maintain them, it becomes beneficial not only in their learning process but also in

their health. For those reasons, this sub finding is a great outcome in our research given that it is showing us how important it is that a student with visual impairment has a good attitude towards learning as this can impact positively his process and his life.

Given these points, it can be stated that having a good attitude toward learning and group work is tremendously advantageous for a visually impaired student on the grounds that it provides great learning outcomes and better opportunities to build relationships and learn from and with others. With this in mind, the professors involved in this research project point out the different teaching strategies used to carry out lessons in which all students could feel included and where they could have a more enriching learning experience, as it is further explained in the following and last sub finding.

5.2.3 Professors' implementation of teaching strategies to conduct the lessons with the SWVI

It has been evidenced that the professors who taught the SWVI designed and applied a set of different pedagogical and interpersonal strategies in order to conduct lessons that were suitable for the learners and could fulfill the needs of the visually impaired student; those strategies focused on methods that guaranteed that the learner could follow the rhythm of the class by giving him access to the materials and topics in advance. This sub finding also explains how the interaction between the professors and the SWVI could affect his learning process.

> *Investigador: 'Antonio Acosta', al inicio de la clase mientras el profesor estaba dando una explicación, usted estaba mirando algo en una computadora. ¿Qué hacía usted en ese momento en esa computadora?*

SWVI: Normalmente cuando él tiene actividades para la clase, por ejemplo un quiz, cualquier actividad de lectura o algo así entonces el me presta los archivos y yo trato de revisarlos en el equipo si puedo hacerlo y si tengo algún inconveniente, entonces le comunico y si puedo ejecutarlo también le comunico, pero previamente debo revisarlos en mi computador (SWVI L.4-8.VSR).

Investigador: ¿Tomó usted alguna medida con respecto a la manera de dar su clase dada la presencia de dicho estudiante?

PBE: (...) yo trataba de enviarle siempre ocho días antes todo el material que íbamos a ver al estudiante para que él no llegara completamente perdido sino que estuviera como expuesto eh de una manera pues ya en casa… (PEB. L 32-40 I)

PCOYE: (...) con él llegamos a unos acuerdos y era ante todo si mal no recuerdo, era ante todo que…ehh… él iba a estar muy atento e iba a estar dispuesto a hacerme las preguntas en el momento indicado, no cierto, y que yo iba a …ehh… traducir, digamos esa sería la expresión, traducir en palabras lo que yo iba a usar en las diapositivas o lo que estaba presentando en las diapositivas, porque ya no iba a tener tiempo de cambiar el curso como les decía al principio. (PCOYE. P 61-63. I)

Some of the professors agreed to send the documents that would be used in class with anticipation in order to allow the learner to be prepared for the lesson. The visually impaired student affirms that the professors sent him the information in advance so he could upload it to his personal computer and check such information before, during, and after the class. In addition, one of the professors provided the SWVI with the materials of the classes so he could get prepared to the class by exposing himself, in advance, to the topics proposed.

Based on these evidences it can be inferred that one of the strategies implemented by the professors was to prepare the SWVI by sending with anticipation the topics and materials intended for the lesson. It is suggested by Carney. et al (2003) to help the visually

impaired learners with transitions between activities and settings; thus, teachers must "prepare the student in advance for a new situation or setting and the next class so they can anticipate what they will be encountering" (p. 59). By applying this strategy, the SWVI can follow the sequence of the class with the rhythm necessary for not being outdated in comparison to his classmates.

The following evidences expose the different methods in which the professors communicated with the SWVI and how this interaction impacted the learning process of the SWVI.

Investigador: Bueno, aquí se puede apreciar que usted tiene contacto físico con el estudiante, ¿hace esto con algún motivo específico o por alguna razón?

PPD: *Para que el identifique que me estoy refiriendo a él y que le voy a dar la palabra. Por esto, o por, o si no lo nombro, cierto?, como uno ya identifica cual es el nombre del estudiante y como él es muy atento y siempre está como muy atento a participar entonces constantemente yo estoy observando, especialmente lo observo a él…ehhh... y le noto el gesto de que quiere participar entonces o lo nombro y le digo 'Antonio' que opina o pues si estoy cerca entonces... ehh… hago ese contacto físico para que él identifique que ya es su momento de participar. (PPD. L. 8-15. VSR.)*

Investigador: profesora muy buenos días, eh, la primera pregunta que queremos hacerle es, Al principio de la clase usted se acerca al estudiante con discapacidad visual y habla con él. ¿De qué estaban hablando?

PCALL: *pues, normalmente, eh, eso es una, pues, algo que hago en todas las clases, siempre me acerco a 'Antonio', lo saludo, eh, para que sepa que estamos, pues que ya estoy allí, que vamos a estar pendientes de él, le explico en qué va a consistir la clase, cuál va a ser el objetivo, eso siempre lo hago antes de hablar con el resto del grupo de forma que él ya sepa que es lo que vamos a hacer, (PCALL L.6-18. VSR.)*

As it can be seen in these evidences, some of the professors approached to the SWVI during the classes and had physical contact with him by grabbing his shoulder while greeting him or getting closer to him during an oral interaction. These professors affirm that they had this approach for showing the SWVI that they were present, and also to give him an idea about the place where they were located in the classroom.

The fact that the professors are concerned with the keeping of interpersonal contact with the SWVI, is an implication related to the education of visually impaired students. Carney et al (2003) state that teachers must "encourage a positive self-image, well-developed self-care skills, good interpersonal communication, appropriate behaviors, increase independence and produce community living, which is beneficial in the growth of students with visual impairments". Moreover, based on the Krashen's affective filter theory (1982), which states that "learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in second language acquisition", we can understand the importance of communication as it makes the SWVI feel comfortable in a university program focused on second language learning.

To summarize, the professors who taught the SWVI focused their strategies into two main elements: providing the materials in advanced in order to give to the student the opportunity to get prepared for the class and be able to follow the rhythm of the lesson, and approaching to him while interacting so he could be aware of where his professors were, as well as having an interpersonal approximation. By applying these strategies, the professors create a suitable learning environment for the visually impaired student, and allow him to follow the sequence of the class despite his impairment.

Taking into consideration the evidences that supports this finding and its corresponding sub findings, it can be concluded that in order to follow the guidelines

established by the Ministerio de Educación Nacional (2013), the professors in charge of conducting classes with the student with visual impairment need to be notified beforehand of his presence in their classrooms so they can have enough time to make the necessary adjustments to the curricula. Moreover, the positive attitude evidenced in the SWVI prompts opportunities to build social relationships with his peers and his professors and, at the same time, it improves his learning process, not to mention that it is beneficial to his health and his life as well; in relation to this fact, the strategies for communication applied by the professors help to make the student feel in a suitable environment for learning. It is also necessary to mention the fact that the professors provided the SWVI the materials for the class in advance is a meaningful strategy to control the pacing of the lessons.

5.3 Unawareness about the needs of visually impaired students

The third and last finding of this study reveals both, the professors' lack of professional training to develop classes with a visually impaired student, and the lack of awareness of the needs of this student by his classmates and professors. We will describe in detail the evidence that supports our statement on this finding.

5.3.1 Professors' lack of professional training to conduct classes with a student with visual impairment

In the course of this research, it was found that the professors who have taught and currently teach to the SWVI have insufficient formal training to teach students with special needs. The professors and the visually impaired student have recognized the absence of training that provides professors with the necessary strategies to facilitate the learning process of the SWVI, which represents a problem for the development of an inclusive

education as it is stated by the DAWN (2008), "Inclusive teaching means recognizing, accommodating and meeting the learning needs of all students. Increasingly, third level institutions are looking for ways of opening up the curriculum and making education more inclusive for people with disabilities". This means that teachers must be aware of the process for including students with special needs in their classrooms in order to promote inclusion.

The interviewed professors were asked if they had any type of formal training regarding teaching to impaired students and all of them provided a negative response.

Investigador: ¿Tiene usted algún tipo de entrenamiento sobre educación inclusiva para personas con discapacidad visual?

PCALL: No, la realidad es que no. (PCALL L10-12 I)

PPIE: No, entrenamiento formal no. No he recibido ningún entrenamiento. (PPIE L 16 I)

PFF: No, ninguna (PFF L 10 I)

PEHP: Ninguna. (PEHP L 10 I)

PBE: No señor. (PBE L 10 I)

PCOYE: ehhh… digamos que formalmente no lo tengo... (PCOYE L 8 I)

The professors recognized during the interviews their lack of professional training to teach students with special needs. This lack of professional training implies that these professors do not have sufficient preparation for designing lessons that can fulfil the needs of the SWVI. Shiksha (2015) states that "Visually impaired students are expected to cover the same curriculum and syllabus as their sighted peers under inclusive set up; but curriculum in its original form may not be reachable to the visually impaired student. Appropriate adaptations in the curriculum are required so that it is not diluted in terms of content, methods and materials". Considering this fact, it is necessary for the professors to have knowledge about how to design a curriculum adequate for the learner.

In this section, the visually impaired student was asked about his opinion toward his learning process at the university in relation to how the professors included him in the activities designed for the class.

> Investigador: Bueno. ¿Cómo estudiante durante el periodo de tiempo en el cual usted ha sido parte en este proceso educativo como ha sido usted invitado a participar en las actividades de clase por parte del docente?
>
> **SWVI:** mmm Realmente, no hay preparación… el docente no está preparado para estos casos, (...) (SWVI L 48. I)

The SWVI affirms that the professors do not have professional training for teaching students with visual impairment; hence, they are not prepare for the situation of having him in their classrooms. Furthermore, this student was also asked about his classmates and their disposition for interacting or supporting him in the classroom. It was evidenced that the classmates of this SWVI are not prepared to interact with or support blind people.

> **SWVI**: Pues ahí hay que diferenciar, una cosa es uno querer ayudar a alguien, otra muy distinta es estar preparado para hacerlo. En ese orden de ideas, la gente tiene el mejor ánimo cooperativo, pero al igual que docentes y toda la parte académica, no tienen la preparación necesaria para hacerlo. (SWVI L 59-60. I)
>
> **SWVI**: A ver, ahí hay dos cosas a considerar, una es que, la voluntad del docente que en este caso es toda. No tengo ninguna queja al respecto. La otra es la capacitación que tenga para hacerlo. En ese caso sí hay unas fallas. (SWVI L 29-30. VSR)

The SWVI acknowledges the willingness of the professors and his classmates to work with and support him as much as they can; nonetheless, he insists on the necessity of the professors for having training in order to conduct the lessons.

SWVI:...el docente no está preparado para estos casos, y lo peor no está informado de que uno está incluido en su curso, o sea, para él es una sorpresa cuando llega uno por primera vez a la clase, no tiene nada preparado al respecto…. (SWVI L.49-50.I)

The SWVI affirms that the professors are not prepared for teaching impaired students and complains about the fact that the professors are not informed in advance about his presence in the class. To face these problems, the visually impaired student made agreements with the professors throughout the course in order to facilitate his learning process.

This lack of information represents an inconvenience for the SWVI, Carney et al. (2003) state that "it is important to hold regular meetings with the support team, particularly those who will be working directly with the student". Without prior information about the presence of this student, the professors might face challenges to prepare lessons that match the SWVI necessities.

In this section of the interviews, the professors who taught the SWVI were asked if they considered that the university should provide all professors with a training about inclusive education.

Investigador: ¿Considera usted que dicha institución debería encargarse de capacitar al personal docente para enseñarle a estudiantes con discapacidad física?

PCOYE: Claro. Eso es fundamental. Porque en primer lugar eso es digamos entre comillas una realidad, los estudiantes con discapacidad, son una realidad y cada vez es una realidad más latente. (PCOYE L 135-140 I)

PPIE: mmm hay que capacitarlos, hay que brindar espacios más adecuados diferentes herramientas cierto, de pronto hacer inversión sobre…mmm de pronto el aula el laboratorio que tenemos acá de audio para que pueda ser utilizado más fácilmente y se puede recurrir a recursos más auditivos,

cierto. Ehhh pero si eso es muy necesario…y….mmmm con gente que haya tenido la experiencia, cierto, de trabajar con estudiantes con discapacidad visual porque podemos hablar o leer sobre un tema, pero pues no es lo mismo tener a alguien que tenga la experiencia... (PPIE. L 125-130 I)

PFF: Si, creo que sí... cada vez son más los estudiantes en esta situación que llegan a la universidad. (PFF L 43- 46 I)

PEHP: A mí me parece que si es interesante, si sería muy bueno que tuviéramos una capacitación con esa dirección, pero como te digo no solamente con discapacidad visual, me parece que hay que trabajar todas las discapacidades porque estamos hablando de inclusión, no solamente de inclusión de no videntes. (PEHP L 61-66 I)

PCALL: Totalmente, me parece indispensable, me parece que eso debería formar parte del plan de capacitación docente todos los semestres, dar la posibilidad a las personas de que se vayan formando, porque es imposible que en unas licenciaturas que duran diez semestres se pueda cubrir toda la necesidad de información de un futuro licenciado, pero la realidad es que la educación en Colombia es una educación inclusiva, y le guste usted o no le guste a usted, tiene la obligación de afrontar esa educación inclusiva y habrán más estudiantes con discapacidades que llegan a los salones de clase, y nosotros como docentes debemos ser capaces de proveerles la educación que necesitan porque esa es nuestra obligación. Pero ya debe formar parte de la formación docente. (PCALL 114-124 I)

The interviewed professors agreed on the fact that the university should offer them a training for teaching students with special needs. Some of them highlight the necessity for teachers to be trained in special education as the population of impaired students is growing and they must be prepared to provide them with quality education. In addition, one of the professors suggests that the university should bring experienced personnel to train them in strategies for inclusion in order to take advantage of the materials already available.

It is mandatory for the university to have trained personnel for teaching students with special needs since it is established by the Ministerio de Educación Nacional in its Resolution 2565 of 2003.

"The departments and territorial entities certified must assign professional educators in special education, psychology, phonoaudiology, occupational therapy, social work, interpreters of Colombian Sign language, linguistic models, etc., linked to the faculty as teachers or administrators, so they can develop functions of support to the academic integration of the student with special needs". Article 4 (translation of the researchers)

One of the professors recognized that, despite the lack of formal training provided by the university, he attended one informative meeting conducted by the Vicerrectoría de Responsabilidad Social y Bienestar Universitario.

Investigador: Ok… ¿Usted recibió algún tipo de soporte por parte de la institución en la cual usted labora para cumplir con éxito el proceso de enseñanza de dicho alumno?

PCOYE: La verdad, cierto interés llegó pero ya corría la cuarta, quinta semana, la verdad no recuerdo, creo que fue de la vice… una de las vicerrectorías… (PCOYE L94-95 I)

Investigador: Vicerrectoría de responsabilidad social

PCOYE: Vicerrectoría de responsabilidad social, nos invitaron a una reunión, eso fue más de tipo informativo, o sea, quién era Antonio, porque estaba aquí, cuál era su dificultad, mmm, que se esperaba de pronto de los docentes… yo creería que fue un poco tarde, porque, como le digo ya era la cuarta, quinta semana de clase y tampoco se habló de una intervención ni de un acompañamiento al docente. (L.97-100 I) (...). El otro asunto es que el todavía no tenía un acompañante, una persona que le ayudara en el proceso y pues la compañera sentimental era quien, es quien creo que todavía lo acompaña y pues por más que ella tenga voluntad por lo que veo ella no tiene un contacto

permanente con la academia más allá de acompañarlo y en esa medida pues creo que hay una falencia que se debe de suplir lo más rápido posible. (PCOYE. L103-107 I)

The professor says that, during the fourth week of the semester, the Vicerrectoría de Responsabilidad Social y Bienestar Universitario invited the professors who were in charge of teaching the SWVI to an informative meeting, in which it was explained who was he, why was he studying at the university and what were his difficulties, as well as what was expected from the professors in this process. The professor considers that the meeting took place too late and also complains about the fact that the focus of such meeting was merely informative, and not for providing support for them and the student. Another important aspect that the professor highlights is the lack of a trained tutor for helping the SWVI given that the person who supported him all the time was his wife, who does not have knowledge about any of the subjects nor the target language that her husband is learning.

To summarize, it can be stated that, in order to guarantee an efficient learning process for the SWVI, the professors require a formal training to design a curricula that can fulfil the needs of an impaired student and the university should provide such training. In the next section, the lack of awareness of the professors and fellow students about the needs of a visually impaired student is explored.

5.3.2 Lack of awareness about a SWVI needs by teachers and fellow students

During the development of this research project it has been evidenced that students with visual impairments have to deal with many limitations that prevent them from having and experiencing a real inclusive education. Regrettably, most of those limitations are not caused by their physical condition in itself but by the environment that these students live in. The DAWN (ibid) argues that there are many factors in the environment that in fact

'disable' people more than their impairments, factors such as discriminatory deeds, attitudes performed by other people, among others.

In accordance with this, the SWVI explains that only kindness and goodwill are not enough when the purpose of people is to build a truly inclusive environment given that there is much more to be done.

> Investigador: ¿Y por el lado de sus compañeros, de sus colegas estudiantes usted se ha sentido bien acogido?
>
> **SWVI:** (...) Lo que pasa es que ellos tampoco (al igual que profesores) tienen idea de cómo colaborarle a uno con…ehhh…. O sea, de que su ayuda sea útil, realmente para uno en el estado en que está. Hay unas capacitaciones básicas, unos elementos básicos a tener en cuenta que ellos, obviamente, no han sido preparados para el efecto y por la colaboración al respecto es muy limitada, por esa situación, no es porque no deseen hacerlo. (SWVI L.64-69. I)

When the SWVI was asked if he had felt well accepted by his fellow students, he pointed out that neither his classmates nor his professors knew how to help him due to the fact that they had not received elementary training for doing it, and as a consequence, they are not prepared for this situation. He concludes that the reason why their help is ineffective is because of their lack of training and not because they do not desire to do it.

From this piece of evidence it can be stated that more than kindness and goodwill are needed to contribute to the inclusive education of blind students since a specific training about how to support and teach people with disabilities is required. Another disadvantage caused by the lack of knowledge about how to behave towards the student with visual impairment is the fact that it prevents non-disabled learners from interacting with him, as it is affirmed by the following professor.

> **PPIE**:….en algún punto yo he visto que pues algunos estudiantes se abstienen de también de hablar con él de pronto porque no saben qué decir o cómo acercársele o algo así. Pero es por como más el desconocimiento (…). (PPIE. L.194-196 I)

This professor participant asserts that due to the unknowingness about what to say or how to approach to blind people, some students avoid to talk to the SWVI. A factor that can refrain students from interacting with this student is the doubt about the appropriate words or expressions that should be used for talking with him. For instance, the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired TSBVI (n.d.) states that "It's okay to say 'look' and 'see.' Even fully sighted people use their other senses in the context of looking at something. Visually impaired people might look at things in a different way, but 'seeing' is in the perception -rather than the eye- of the beholder." (n. pag.).

The SWVI also claims that a simple factor such as good voice projection in the classroom can affect significantly his performance in the different subjects, and therefore, his inclusion process.

> **SWVI:** Sí, sí. Yo no tengo problemas, yo sigo las instrucciones, yo las ejecuto. Se me dificulta un poquito tener que movilizarme por el salón, en ese caso mi esposa me ayuda, pero ella no maneja el inglés, entonces dependo de que las instrucciones sean dadas en un nivel de voz bueno. (…) Una falla frecuente para mis clases es que la participación de mis compañeros no necesariamente es en adecuado volumen o está muy lejos del origen de la grabación, porque yo grabo toda la clase, entonces se me dificulta después repasar esa clase por esa causa (SWVI. L.36-48.VSR)

Using the video stimulated recall, the SWVI was asked if he had understood the instructions that the professor was giving at some point of the class and his answer was that he not only understands instructions but also executes them very well. The student explains

as well that the problem he faces takes place when he needs to move around the classroom and, although his wife helps him in these cases, she does not speak English, reason why she cannot repeat to him the instructions the professors may give; for this reason, the SWVI needs that the professor gives such instructions with very good voice projection so he can understand them without any problem. Moreover, he explains that he needs a good voice projection not only from the professors but also from his classmates given that he records every lesson and needs the contributions that his classmates make during the class, in order to avoid difficulties at the moment of reviewing the lessons at home.

It can be seen from this excerpt from the video stimulated recall conducted with the SWVI, that even the volume in which the people around him speak can have an effect in his academic success on the grounds that he audio-records all the classes in order to review them later; hence, if classmates and professors do not have good voice projection, he will not be able to review the lessons and study at home, affecting his performance in exams and homework and causing, once more, academic exclusion.

A further inconvenience derived from the lack of awareness about the needs of a student with visual impairment is the isolation caused by a discontinuous conversation, as affirmed by the SWVI in the following fragment taken from the video stimulated recall.

Investigador: ¿Considera usted que para usted el objetivo de la actividad fue logrado exitosamente?
SWVI: De mi parte puntual tengo algunas limitaciones porque no necesariamente las personas que están conmigo tienen alguna idea de manejar la discapacidad mía, entonces es frecuente que estando juntos para los videntes sea obvio que estamos juntos, y para mí no, porque mientras no esté activa la comunicación yo estoy totalmente aislado. Por ejemplo aquí mi esposa hace rato no habla, entonces no sé si sigue aquí o se fue. (SWVI L.82-88. VSR)

The SWVI explains that he has problems to achieve certain goals during the classes given that he needs to maintain a constant communication with the people he is developing activities with, because if there is no communication and people do not talk to him, he would feel isolated; for this reason, he faces several limitations inside the classrooms, especially with group work activities.

From this piece of evidence it can be inferred that for visually impaired people, a successful communication with others depends, all the time, on what the blind person can hear from the people he is talking to; therefore, any person involved in a conversation with the student with visual impairment should avoid gaps of silence during the conversation for preventing the SWVI from isolation.

Another important aspect that affects the interaction between the SWVI and their professors and peers is the unknowingness about how to address blind people; as stated by the student in the following excerpt.

> **SWVI:** Hay otros (compañeros) a los cuales conozco muy poco, además tengo que conocerlos es por su timbre de voz, entonces también se me dificulta un poco, reconocer de entre todas las personas que trato al día quien es quien (…) O sea, una forma por ejemplo para uno que le ayude mucho es que alguien le dijera: "Hola, soy fulano y su compañero en tal clase", pero la gente no está acostumbrada a eso. Un vidente nunca lo haría. (SWVI L.93-100. VSR)

The SWVI states that he is able to recognize someone by the timbre of his or her voice, and explains that sometimes it is difficult for him to know who is talking to him because he has to guess whose voice he is hearing. He also specifies that it would be easier for him if his classmates, for example, told him their names and in which class they are together, so that he can recognize them; but he asserts that he understands that people are

not used to doing these kinds of things, and that a not visually impaired person would never do something similar amongst them.

This way of isolation could be avoided by the simple fact of being a little aware of how to behave towards blind people and to know more about their needs. In this sense, the DAWN (ibid), states that non-disabled people should approach to a blind person by identifying themselves, as if it were the first time they were talking to such blind person.

Furthermore, the TSBVI (n.d.) asserts that professors should call all the students by their names each time they talk to one of them, in order to provide the SWVI with the opportunity to relate the names of his or her classmates with their voices. It states as well that when talking to visually impaired students, professors should call them by their names also, so he or she knows they someone is talking to them.

Alternatively, the SWVI suggest some tips that, from his point of view, professors could take into consideration to teach successfully to a person who is not able to see.

> Investigador: Desde su experiencia personal en un programa de enseñanza de lengua inglesa, ¿qué consideraciones debería tener un docente para enseñar exitosamente a un alumno con discapacidad visual?
>
> **SWVI:** Una de las primeras condiciones que debe tener, es tener la capacidad de ponerse en su lugar, o sea, en mi concepto debería someterse a un sistema de re… pues en su caso no es de rehabilitación (...) por ejemplo hacer, tratar de hacer, o hacer actividades vendado por decir algo, para poder comprender cómo debe llegar la comunicación a ese tipo de personas (SWVI L.88-100. I)

From his personal experience in an English language teaching program, the SWVI reveals that professors should put themselves in the place of a visually impaired person and

try to do things with the eyes bandaged in order to be able to understand how to communicate with people who cannot see.

In like manner, one of the professors interviewed expresses her beliefs in relation to the actions that teachers should bear in mind that would enable them to treat properly a student with visual impairment.

> **PCALL: (…)** yo creo que todos necesitamos un entrenamiento en relación de cómo manejar a personas ciegas, no solamente desde el punto de vista de la enseñanza si no del mismo punto de vista del trato, (…), por ejemplo, no sabemos cómo guiar a una persona ciega en un caso de evacuación del edificio (PCALL L.79-86 I)

This professor claims that all professors need a training related to the ways in which blind people should be treated, not only from a teaching point of view but also from the point of view of the relationship itself because, for instance, if there were a building evacuation, they would not know how to guide a visually impaired person out of the building.

With this in mind, it can be stated that it is essential for professors to know how to handle visually impaired students given that there could be situations in which even their lives could be in danger. The DAWN (ibid) suggests that people who guides a blind person should warn him or her if there are any obstacles or stairs on the way, should walk marginally ahead, should take his or her arm close to the elbow and, most importantly, should adapt their pace in order to match his or hers.

As a final point, both professors and classmates can contribute to the academic and personal growth of a student unable to see, through the undertaking of simple and small acts such as speaking louder and clearer, and taking courses related to the way in which

blind people should be treated. As it has been exemplified by the SWVI, these little actions can lead to a great learning experience and a more inclusive education, which should be the aim of all educational centers around the world.

The evidences presented show the need of providing professors with a training that helps them to identify and understand the needs of a visually impaired student in order to be able to design curricula that fulfills such needs; moreover, as professors were not informed in advance that they were going to have a blind student in their classes, the issues that they faced at the time of designing a suitable curriculum for all students were not only due to the lack of training but also due to the lack of time. Nevertheless, the learning process and experience of a student with visual impairment can be positively improved if classmates and professors look for manners to treat, in a more helpful way, a student with such impairment.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The researchers recognize that this project is not void of limitations. Firstly, it was possible to interview only the SWVI and the seven professors that taught him during two semesters; however, gathering and analyzing the perceptions and opinions of experts in inclusive education, administrators, parents and students without visual impairments, could be useful for obtaining a broader idea on how blind students can be truly included in an educational center. Thus, further research should include the perceptions of more participants such as the ones mentioned above, in order to explore how they understand the concept of inclusive education; by hearing and analyzing these perceptions, a more detailed idea of the appropriate environment for students with visual impairments can be obtained. A second limitation is that the SWVI and his professors were interviewed individually. Future research could consider focus groups as another method for permitting interactions and discussions amongst the participants; through the use of this kind of method, more information about how professors feel when having a student with special needs in their classroom can be gathered, making it easier for the researchers to draw richer conclusions.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The primarily purpose of this qualitative research study was to focus on the perceived elements regarding the inclusive education of a visually impaired student in a Language Teaching Program, as well as to know the perceptions of the professors and this student toward his inclusion process.

Throughout the implementation of this research it was evidenced that the state University in which this project was conducted supports the SWVI through economic aids. However, the lack of preparation from the institution in both, its infrastructure and architectonic design of its physical that allow the inclusion of visually impaired students, was also evidenced.

Moreover, it was demonstrated that the professors of this language teaching program did not have formal training for conducting classes with students with special needs. Therefore, the implementation of specialized training about inclusion for professors and professors in development is highly important as the population of impaired students is constantly growing. By making this training a mandatory subject in all the teaching programs, this university would form more competent professors that know how to include students with special needs in their classrooms, guaranteeing in this way, education of quality for all.

Besides, the adaptation that professors made to the teaching materials for making it more accessible for the visually impaired student was not enough on the grounds that curricula adjustments are also required to include all students equally in the lesson. The professors explained that they were not informed with anticipation that they were going to have a blind student in their classrooms which made it more difficult for them to adjust the

curricula; thus, they should had been told in advance about the presence of this student in their classes, so they could have had more time to make the necessary improvements not only to the materials but also to the curricula.

It was also concluded that one of the factors that affects the inclusion of the SWVI in this language teaching program is the lack of awareness among the professors and fellow students about the needs of blind people. Nevertheless, the positive attitude in terms of collaboration and solidarity that they showed, represents an advantage for a visually impaired student considering the fact that it prompts opportunities for him to build social relationships and facilitates learning. In spite of this, more than willingness is needed for providing the SWVI with useful help as knowledge about his needs and how to support him properly and effectively is of uttermost importance.

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9. APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1 Carta consentimiento: Profesores

Pereira, septiembre de 2015.

Profesor:

Cordial saludo,

En el marco de nuestro proyecto de grado que tiene como objetivo comprender las prácticas relacionadas con educación inclusiva para un estudiante con discapacidad visual, es necesario obtener información acerca de las adaptaciones implementadas por los profesores de la Licenciatura en Lengua Inglesa en sus respectivas asignaturas, en búsqueda de la inclusión de dicho estudiante. La información será recolectada por medio de una corta entrevista y un recuerdo estimulado, para su posterior análisis.

Mediante la presente, le solicitamos cordialmente su participación en el desarrollo de este proyecto, garantizándole que la información recolectada a través de la entrevista y del recuerdo estimulado será de uso exclusivo de los estudiantes investigadores realizando el proyecto de grado, a saber, Carolina Restrepo Muñoz, Ricardo Vargas García y Valeria Vargas Arboleda; y del profesor de Iniciación de Proyecto de Grado, por lo cual la información suministrada por usted permanecerá de forma confidencial. También cabe resaltar que en cualquier momento usted podrá tener acceso a la información plasmada en el proyecto, si así lo desea.

Agradecemos su comprensión y colaboración,

_____
C.C.

APPENDIX 2 Carta consentimiento: Estudiante

Pereira, Septiembre de 2015.

Señor: 'Antonio Acosta'

Cordial saludo,

Se está desarrollando un proyecto de grado que tiene como uno de sus objetivos conocer las percepciones de los profesores de la Licenciatura en Lengua Inglesa y del estudiante con discapacidad visual que actualmente se encuentra estudiando en el programa, en cuanto a su proceso de inclusión educativa.

Para el desarrollo de este proyecto, es necesario obtener información detallada acerca de sus experiencias como estudiante de la Licenciatura en Lengua Inglesa con relación a su proceso de inclusión en las diferentes asignaturas. Dicha información será recolectada por medio de una entrevista y un recuerdo estimulado, el cual consiste en la grabación y posterior análisis en conjunto, de una de las clases a las cuales usted está asistiendo el presente semestre.

Mediante la presente, le solicitamos cordialmente su participación en el desarrollo de este proyecto, garantizándole que la información recolectada a través de la entrevista y del recuerdo estimulado será de uso exclusivo de los estudiantes investigadores realizando el proyecto de grado, a saber, Carolina Restrepo Muñoz, Ricardo Vargas García y Valeria Vargas Arboleda; y del profesor de Iniciación de Proyecto de Grado, por lo cual la información suministrada por usted permanecerá de forma confidencial. También cabe resaltar que en cualquier momento usted podrá tener acceso a la información plasmada en el proyecto, si así lo desea.

Los tiempos serán previamente acordados con el señor 'Antonio Acosta' y este se reserva la potestad de renunciar al proyecto si está en desacuerdo con algún tema o alguna actividad.

Agradecemos su comprensión y colaboración,

_____
C.C.

APPENDIX 3 Formato y protocolo recuerdo estimulado: Profesores

Pereira, septiembre de 2015.

- Qué se va a hacer:

Lo que vamos a realizar en esta sesión se denomina "recuerdo estimulado", el cual es un método de recolección de datos basado en la grabación de un evento, en este caso su clase, con el fin de analizar y reflexionar sobre sus acciones y las decisiones tomadas frente a las situaciones allí presentadas. Dichas reflexiones serán recolectadas a través de una entrevista mientras que el video es visto por usted y por nosotros los investigadores, Carolina Restrepo Muñoz, Ricardo Vargas García y Valeria Vargas Arboleda.

Este recuerdo estimulado se va a dividir en tres momentos:

1) El primero estará enfocado en la grabación de la clase. Con el fin de que dicha clase se desarrolle de la manera más natural posible, solo uno de los investigadores estará presente. Así pues, el investigador se ubicará en un lugar estratégico desde donde pueda apreciar todo lo sucedido, pero sin llamar la atención de los demás estudiantes.

2) En el segundo momento los investigadores verán el video a solas con el fin de rescatar los eventos que más llamen la atención y así poder preparar preguntas puntuales sobre ellos.

3) En el tercer y último momento, los investigadores verán el video con usted en la fecha, hora y lugar acordados de acuerdo a su conveniencia, para luego entrevistarle, y así poder obtener sus apreciaciones con respecto a sus acciones. Dicha entrevista será grabada en formato de audio y luego transcrita. Se le facilitará una copia de dicha transcripción para que verifique su fidelidad con la información suministrada por usted.

Adicionalmente, es de suma importancia resaltar que la información recolectada con este método será de uso exclusivo de los investigadores y que sus acciones o decisiones no serán juzgadas. Solicitamos que si en alguna etapa de este proceso siente que su privacidad está siendo invadida o se siente incómodo de alguna u otra manera, nos lo haga saber de manera inmediata. Esto no tendrá repercusiones de ningún tipo.

APPENDIX 4 Formato y protocolo recuerdo estimulado: estudiante

Pereira, septiembre de 2015.

- Qué se va a hacer:

Lo que vamos a realizar en esta sesión se denomina "recuerdo estimulado", el cual es un método de recolección de datos basado en la grabación de un evento, en este caso su clase, con el fin de analizar y reflexionar sobre sus acciones y las decisiones tomadas frente a las situaciones allí presentadas. Dichas reflexiones serán recolectadas a través de una entrevista mientras que el video es visto por usted y por nosotros los investigadores, Carolina Restrepo Muñoz, Ricardo Vargas García y Valeria Vargas Arboleda.

Este recuerdo estimulado se va a dividir en tres momentos:

1) El primero estará enfocado en la grabación de la clase. Con el fin de que dicha clase se desarrolle de la manera más natural posible, solo uno de los investigadores estará presente. Así pues, el investigador se ubicará en un lugar estratégico desde donde pueda apreciar todo lo sucedido, pero sin llamar la atención de los demás estudiantes.

2) En el segundo momento los investigadores verán el video a solas con el fin de rescatar los eventos que más llamen la atención y así poder preparar preguntas puntuales sobre ellos.

3) En el tercer y último momento, los investigadores verán el video con usted en la fecha, hora y lugar acordados de acuerdo a su conveniencia, para luego entrevistarle, y así poder obtener sus apreciaciones con respecto a sus acciones y las de su profesor. Dicha entrevista será grabada en formato de audio y luego transcrita. Se le facilitará una copia de dicha transcripción para que verifique su fidelidad con la información suministrada por usted.

Adicionalmente, es de suma importancia resaltar que la información recolectada con este método será de uso exclusivo de los investigadores y que sus acciones o decisiones no serán juzgadas. Solicitamos que si en alguna etapa de este proceso siente que su privacidad está siendo invadida o se siente incómodo de alguna u otra manera, nos lo haga saber de manera inmediata. Esto no tendrá repercusiones de ningún tipo.

APPENDIX 5 Formato y protocolo entrevista: Estudiante

Pereira, septiembre de 2015.

Buenas tardes don Antonio, lo que vamos a hacer la tarde de hoy es una entrevista que contiene una serie de preguntas relacionadas con las características de su discapacidad, apoyos institucionales, sus experiencias como estudiante con discapacidad visual en un programa universitario; así como los sentimientos, opiniones y percepciones, que hayan surgido a lo largo de este proceso.

-Habiendo dicho esto, ¿está usted de acuerdo con que audio-grabemos esta entrevista?

-¿Desea usted que le hagamos alguna pregunta en particular?

- Buenas tardes, para comenzar queremos informarle que si en algún momento usted desea interrumpir la grabación de esta entrevista puede decírnoslo sin ningún inconveniente.

- Antes de proceder con la entrevista, ¿tiene usted alguna pregunta?

Perfil de discapacidad:

1. ¿Podría describirnos su discapacidad en términos del grado de discapacidad visual que presenta usted?

2. ¿Cómo adquirió dicha discapacidad y desde hace cuánto tiempo?

3. ¿Cuál es su estado actual de adaptación a dicha condición?

Institución:

4. ¿Recibe usted algún tipo de apoyo de la institución donde actualmente se encuentra cursando sus estudios universitarios?
- si responde sí…. ¿Nos podría decir cuál ayuda?

5. ¿Cómo lo ha acogido la institución en términos académicos o de apoyo en cuanto a su proceso de aprendizaje?

6. ¿Considera usted que la Institución donde usted estudia debería encargarse de capacitar al personal docente para trabajar con estudiantes que posean discapacidades físicas?

7. ¿Cómo ha sido su adaptación a la infraestructura de la institución y al ambiente universitario?

- Si estudió antes en una institución pequeña, o si fue en esta misma universidad…. ¿es muy diferente a su experiencia previa?

Como estudiante:

8. Durante el periodo de tiempo en el cual usted ha sido parte de este proceso educativo. ¿Cómo ha sido usted invitado a participar en las actividades de clase por parte del docente?

9. ¿Durante este proceso se ha sentido alguna vez discriminado o ignorado por sus compañeros?

- Si responde sí,.. ¿Cómo lo han hecho?
- Si fue en el salón de clase... ¿Cómo ha reaccionado el docente ante esta situación?

10. ¿Considera usted que las metodologías aplicadas por cada docente le permiten realizar de forma eficiente las actividades planeadas para cada asignatura?

11. Hablando desde su experiencia, ¿qué es lo que hace que su proceso de inclusión educativa sea o no sea satisfactorio hasta el momento?

12. Desde su experiencia personal en un programa de enseñanza del inglés, ¿Qué consideraciones debería tener un docente para enseñar exitosamente a un alumno con discapacidad visual?

APPENDIX 6 Formato y protocolo entrevista: Profesores

Buenos días profesor(a),

En la sesión de hoy procederemos con la última fase de recolección de información del proyecto de grado sobre inclusión de un alumno con discapacidad visual en el programa de Licenciatura en Lengua Inglesa. Dicha fase consiste en una entrevista que busca confirmar o no algunos apartes que existen en un pre análisis, los cuales surgieron de la información obtenida del Recuerdo Estimulado que previamente se realizó con usted.

-Habiendo dicho esto, ¿está usted de acuerdo con que audio-grabemos esta entrevista?

- Buenos días, para comenzar queremos informarle que si en algún momento usted desea interrumpir la grabación de esta entrevista puede hacerlo sin ningún inconveniente.

- Antes de proceder con la entrevista, ¿tiene usted alguna pregunta?

PREGUNTAS A REALIZAR

Perfil profesional:

1. ¿Cuál es su perfil profesional?

2. ¿Tiene usted algún tipo de entrenamiento sobre educación inclusiva para personas con discapacidad visual? SI __ NO __

- ¿Cuál?

- ¿Dónde la recibió?

Sobre las clases:

3. ¿Fue usted notificado que iba a tener en su aula a un estudiante con discapacidad visual?

- ¿Afecto esto de alguna forma su diseño y desarrollo de clases? ¿Porque?

- ¿Qué tan importante considera usted que se le avise con anticipación que va a tener un estudiante con discapacidad en su aula de clase?

4. ¿Tomó usted algunas medidas con respecto a la manera de dar su clase dada la presencia de dicho estudiante? SI __ NO __

- ¿Cuáles fueron esas medidas?

5. ¿Qué considera usted podría haberle facilitado el desarrollo y la preparación misma de sus clases con dicho alumno?

6. ¿Ha recibido usted algún tipo de soporte de parte de la institución en la cual labora actualmente? SI __ NO __

- ¿Qué tipo de soporte?

7. ¿Considera usted que dicha institución debería encargarse de capacitar al personal docente para enseñar a estudiantes con discapacidad visual?

Sobre el estudiante:

8. ¿Desde su perspectiva, el estudiante con discapacidad visual está dispuesto a realizar actividades en grupo con diferentes compañeros?
- ¿Cómo lo ha evidenciado?
- ¿Cuál es su papel como profesor en esta situación?

9. ¿Cuándo se realizan actividades grupales, los estudiantes aceptan o evitan trabajar con el estudiante con discapacidad visual?

10. ¿Considera necesaria la presencia de un monitor en su asignatura?

- ¿Qué tan importante es que el monitor que asiste al estudiante con discapacidad visual que posea conocimientos relacionados con su asignatura y con manejo del inglés?
- ¿Por qué?

11. ¿Considera usted que dicho estudiante adquirió los conocimientos necesarios para continuar de manera exitosa, a pesar de su situación? SI __ NO __

¿Por qué?