



Instructional Adaptation and Institutional Constraints: Foreign Language Teachers' Responses to Linguistic Learning Difficulties

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Abstract

This descriptive mixed-methods case study examined methodological challenges faced by English and French teachers at Universidad Don Bosco when addressing students' linguistic learning difficulties. Twenty teachers participated between May and June 2025, completing a Likert-scale questionnaire and open-ended questions. Results revealed consistently high instructional adaptation: 95% modified teaching strategies, 90% employed multisensory approaches, and 90% provided individualized feedback. However, assessment practices showed greater variability, with only 65% reporting modifications to evaluation procedures. Thematic analysis identified four central dimensions: pedagogical differentiation, progressive scaffolding, collaborative learning tensions, and technological support. Despite these adaptations, findings revealed concrete barriers hindering sustainable inclusion: limited instructional time for differentiated strategies, heterogeneity in learning pace disrupting collaborative dynamics, and inconsistent institutional guidelines leaving teachers individually responsible for inclusive adjustments. These constraints reduce systematic application of inclusive methodologies. Discussion demonstrated alignment with Universal Design for Learning and Vygotskian scaffolding principles, while revealing assessment as a persistent bottleneck and collaborative learning as fraught with social-emotional challenges. The study concludes that fostering equitable language learning requires institutional measures including explicit adaptive assessment policies, protected pedagogical time for differentiated instruction, and sustained professional development. Findings underscore the necessity of coherent institutional frameworks supporting long-term inclusive practices in foreign language education beyond individual teacher initiative.

INTRODUCTION

The increasing linguistic diversity within contemporary educational systems has intensified global discussions on inclusive foreign language pedagogy, particularly within frameworks established by international organizations. UNESCO's recent policy guidance emphasizes that multilingualism is fundamental to achieving quality, inclusive learning environments and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2025). This imperative reflects a broader recognition that language education must transcend traditional models centered on monolithic learner profiles and instead embrace pedagogical approaches that accommodate the full spectrum of cognitive, linguistic, and social variability present in modern classrooms. As educational institutions worldwide strive to operationalize inclusive principles, foreign language teaching has emerged as a particularly complex domain where linguistic complexity, communicative demands, and learner diversity intersect in ways that challenge conventional instructional methodologies.

Internationally, inclusive language education has undergone a substantial paradigmatic shift toward evidence-based frameworks such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which emphasizes differentiated instruction, multimodal input, and equitable assessment practices (Ok et al., 2021). These approaches prioritize flexibility in representation, engagement, and expression, enabling educators to address heterogeneous learning needs without relegating certain students to remedial or segregated pathways. While UDL provides a proactive framework for designing accessible learning experiences from the outset, differentiated instruction complements this through responsive, real-time adjustments to content, process, and product based on students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles (Griful-Freixenet et al., 2020).



Research in neuroeducation and cognitive psychology has further demonstrated that students with linguistic learning difficulties—operationally defined in this study as persistent challenges in phonological processing, vocabulary retrieval, grammatical sequencing, or written expression—benefit significantly from scaffolded, multisensory, and strategically differentiated instruction (Lonigan et al., 2007; Ramus & Szenkovits, 2013). Despite this robust theoretical foundation, the translation of inclusive principles into systematic, measurable, and institutionally supported practices remains inconsistent, particularly in contexts where structural constraints limit teachers' capacity to implement evidence-based methodologies.

In Latin America, the implementation of inclusive pedagogies within foreign language programs remains notably uneven. Although regional studies consistently report positive teacher attitudes toward inclusion and widespread acknowledgment of its importance (Pérez Hernández, 2022), they simultaneously identify critical structural constraints that hinder systematic adoption of differentiated methodologies. A comprehensive review of inclusive education across the region reveals that insufficient teacher training (70.9%), architectural and pedagogical barriers, budgetary constraints, and cultural resistance constitute the most frequent challenges (Benítez et al., 2022). Moreover, teachers often complete their professional training without acquiring the skills necessary to work with diverse student populations, particularly those living in difficult circumstances (Vaillant, 2011). This gap between inclusive discourse and actual implementation is particularly pronounced in foreign language contexts, where the dual demands of linguistic complexity and communicative competence exacerbate the challenges faced by students with persistent learning difficulties. Furthermore, assessment practices in inclusive language education have been identified as a persistent bottleneck, with teachers reporting uncertainty about maintaining academic rigor while accommodating diverse learner needs (Nieminen, 2022). These tensions underscore the need for research that not only documents teachers' adaptive practices but also critically examines the institutional conditions that enable or constrain inclusive pedagogy.

At Universidad Don Bosco (UDB) in El Salvador, recent initiatives have attempted to integrate inclusive approaches into language programs through professional development workshops and curriculum revisions. However, there remains no coherent institutional framework systematically guiding how teachers should plan, scaffold, and assess learners with linguistic difficulties. This absence of formalized guidelines leaves instructors to navigate inclusion through individual initiative, resulting in fragmented practices that vary widely in scope, consistency, and effectiveness. Understanding the methodological challenges experienced by language instructors at UDB is therefore essential both for improving institutional policy and for contributing empirical evidence to the broader regional and international discourse on inclusive language education. Moreover, examining these challenges within a specific institutional context allows for the identification of transferable insights applicable to similar higher education settings facing comparable structural and pedagogical tensions.

Given this context, the present study examines how foreign language teachers at UDB adapt their instructional strategies, manage classroom time, and modify assessment practices when working with students exhibiting persistent linguistic learning difficulties. Specifically, the research addresses the following question: *What methodological challenges do English and French instructors at UDB report when addressing students' linguistic learning difficulties, and how are these challenges reflected in their instructional and assessment practices?* Based on existing theoretical frameworks and regional empirical evidence, the study advances the hypothesis that teachers who report greater use of differentiated and multisensory strategies will also exhibit higher levels of adaptation in classroom pacing and assessment practices. This hypothesis connects individual teacher behaviors with broader institutional needs, aligning the study with international trends emphasizing sustainable, equity-oriented, and evidence-based language education. By documenting both the adaptive strategies employed by teachers and the structural barriers that constrain

their implementation, this research contributes to the knowledge gap regarding how inclusive language pedagogy operates in practice within Latin American higher education contexts, thereby informing policy development and professional learning initiatives aimed at fostering more equitable and effective language learning environments.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive mixed-methods case study design to examine the methodological challenges English and French instructors encounter when addressing students' linguistic learning difficulties at Universidad Don Bosco (UDB). The integration of quantitative and qualitative components enabled both the measurement of instructional adaptation patterns and the interpretive understanding of teachers' lived experiences (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Case study design was selected for its capacity to provide in-depth exploration of bounded phenomena within specific institutional contexts, thereby facilitating transferability of findings to similar higher education settings (Yin, 2018). The study focused on twenty English and French teachers who were purposively selected based on their active engagement in teaching undergraduate language courses during the data collection period between May and June 2025. This sampling approach ensured participants possessed direct and relevant experience with linguistic learning difficulties, thereby enabling them to provide substantive responses to the research inquiry (Mackey & Gass, 2021).

Data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire comprising 18 Likert-scale items rated from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) and two open-ended questions designed to elicit qualitative elaboration on instructional strategies and perceived challenges. The Likert-scale component assessed four theoretically grounded domains: instructional adaptation, feedback practices, classroom time management, and assessment flexibility. Representative items included statements such as "I adapt my teaching strategies for students with linguistic learning difficulties" and "I adjust assessment procedures to accommodate these students." The five-point scale format was selected based on empirical evidence demonstrating its effectiveness in balancing response precision with participant comprehension, particularly in educational contexts where teachers evaluate their own practices (Kusmaryono et al., 2022). Although the instrument was not subjected to formal psychometric validation procedures such as exploratory factor analysis or Cronbach's alpha reliability testing, content validity was strengthened through expert review by two specialists in foreign language pedagogy who independently assessed item clarity, conceptual relevance, and alignment with Universal Design for Learning principles (AERA et al., 2014). This methodological limitation is acknowledged, as formal validation would have enhanced the robustness of claims regarding the instrument's internal consistency and construct validity.

The questionnaire was distributed electronically via institutional email with an embedded Google Forms link, ensuring accessibility and facilitating anonymous participation. The invitation message included a detailed explanation of the study's objectives, ethical considerations, and instructions for completion. No incentives were provided to participants, and responses were collected over a two-week window to maximize participation rates while minimizing recall bias. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, specifically calculating frequencies and percentages for each Likert-scale item to identify dominant response patterns across the sample. This approach was appropriate given the study's exploratory and descriptive aims, as inferential statistics were not required to address the research question. Qualitative data from the two open-ended questions underwent thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework: familiarization with data through repeated reading, generation of initial codes reflecting semantic and latent content, identification of preliminary themes by clustering codes, review and refinement of themes to ensure internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity, definition and naming of final

themes with clear conceptual boundaries, and integration of themes into the research narrative. The coding process employed a hybrid approach combining inductive codes emerging directly from participant responses with deductive codes derived from established frameworks such as Universal Design for Learning and inclusive pedagogy literature (Swanson et al., 2013). Two independent coders conducted the analysis, and intercoder agreement was achieved through iterative discussion until full consensus was reached on all thematic categories. Coding was managed manually without the use of qualitative data analysis software, and thematic saturation was confirmed when no new codes or themes emerged during the final review cycle.

Ethical approval was obtained in accordance with UDB institutional research ethics guidelines. Participation was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was secured electronically through an acknowledgment statement embedded in the questionnaire introduction. Anonymity was maintained throughout data collection and analysis, with no personally identifiable information recorded or stored. All data files were secured in password-protected digital storage systems accessible only to the research team, thereby ensuring confidentiality and compliance with ethical standards for human subjects research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Quantitative findings indicate a strong pattern of instructional adaptation among participating teachers when addressing students with linguistic learning difficulties. The data reveal that 95% of teachers reported adjusting their teaching strategies in response to these learners, with 70% agreeing and 25% strongly agreeing that they routinely modify instructional approaches. Only 5% expressed a neutral stance, and none disagreed with this practice. These results suggest that adaptive pedagogy is not merely an occasional compensatory measure but rather a widespread and systematic component of classroom practice embedded within teachers' regular instructional repertoires. The near-unanimous agreement on this dimension indicates that teachers perceive instructional flexibility as essential when working with linguistically diverse student populations, reflecting a shift away from one-size-fits-all pedagogical models toward more responsive and learner-centered approaches.

The results also demonstrate extensive use of multisensory strategies as a core component of teachers' efforts to scaffold linguistic comprehension and accommodate varied learning modalities. A combined 90% of participants reported employing visual, auditory, or kinesthetic supports to facilitate learning, with 55% agreeing and 35% strongly agreeing with this practice. An additional 10% expressed a neutral position, while none disagreed. This distribution demonstrates that differentiated, multimodal input has become central to instructional practice when addressing linguistic learning difficulties, suggesting that teachers actively draw upon diverse representational modes to enhance accessibility and comprehension. The prevalence of multisensory approaches aligns with contemporary understandings of learner variability and the need to provide multiple entry points into content, particularly for students whose linguistic processing differs from conventional expectations.

Assessment-related practices, however, exhibited considerably greater variability compared to instructional adaptations, revealing a less consolidated dimension of inclusive pedagogy. While 65% of teachers reported modifying their assessment procedures to accommodate students with linguistic learning difficulties—with 45% agreeing and 20% strongly agreeing—20% neither agreed nor disagreed, and a notable 15% expressed disagreement. This distribution suggests that assessment adaptation, unlike instructional modification, has not yet achieved the same level of systematization or consensus within teaching practice. The presence of neutral and negative responses indicates ongoing uncertainty, institutional constraints, or conceptual ambiguity regarding how to maintain academic rigor while

simultaneously providing equitable evaluation opportunities for linguistically diverse learners. This finding underscores assessment as a persistent challenge area where inclusive principles have been less fully operationalized.

Beyond instructional and assessment domains, findings reveal notable social-interaction challenges associated with linguistic learning difficulties, particularly within collaborative learning contexts. A combined 55% of teachers reported that these difficulties interfere with pair or group work, with 40% agreeing and 15% strongly agreeing with this observation. An additional 25% neither agreed nor disagreed, while 20% disagreed. This distribution indicates that collaborative learning structures are frequently disrupted when students struggle to maintain linguistic parity with peers, affecting participation patterns, task distribution, and overall group dynamics. The acknowledgment that more than half of teachers perceive collaborative work as problematic when linguistic difficulties are present highlights a critical tension: while peer interaction is theoretically valuable for language development, it can simultaneously become a source of exclusion and frustration when learners cannot contribute at expected linguistic levels. This finding points toward the need for more structured and intentional approaches to collaborative pedagogy in linguistically heterogeneous classrooms.

Table 1, which summarizes teachers' responses to the 18 Likert-scale items, reveals a consistent pattern of adaptive pedagogical behavior when addressing linguistic learning difficulties. Across the dataset, most items show strong agreement levels, particularly those related to instructional modification (Item 2: 95% agreement), multisensory strategy use (Item 12: 95% agreement), reinforcement of grammatical content (Item 5: 95% agreement), and provision of individualized feedback (Item 11: 90% agreement). These high-agreement items cluster around dimensions of direct instructional intervention, suggesting that teachers feel most confident and effective when employing compensatory teaching strategies aimed at clarifying, reinforcing, and differentiating linguistic input.

Conversely, items related to assessment adaptation (Item 6: 65% agreement), methodological limitation (Item 10: 30% agreement), and collaborative work challenges (Item 7: 55% agreement) display greater dispersion, with higher proportions of neutral or negative responses. These patterns indicate domains where inclusive practices are less consolidated, either due to structural barriers, insufficient institutional guidance, or conceptual uncertainty about implementation. Notably, Item 10—"I feel methodologically limited when students do not progress in language acquisition"—generated only 30% agreement, with 40% disagreeing and 30% neutral, suggesting that while some teachers experience professional frustration, others feel adequately equipped or do not perceive stagnation as a personal limitation. This variability points toward differences in teacher self-efficacy, experience, or access to professional development resources.

Additionally, several items reveal unexpected findings that complicate simplistic narratives about inclusive adaptation. For instance, Item 18—"I have sought additional training to address methodological challenges related to linguistic difficulties"—yielded only 50% agreement, with 35% neutral and 15% disagreeing. This distribution suggests that despite widespread adaptive behavior, fewer than half of teachers have actively pursued formal professional development to enhance their inclusive competencies, indicating either satisfaction with existing practices, lack of accessible training opportunities, or reliance on informal experiential learning rather than structured capacity-building. This finding raises important questions about the pathways through which teachers develop inclusive pedagogical knowledge and whether current professional development systems adequately support ongoing learning in this domain.

Overall, Table 1 illustrates a teaching context characterized by high individual effort but uneven institutional support. Teachers actively adjust instruction and feedback mechanisms, yet encounter structural or procedural barriers that limit their ability to implement inclusive assessment or maintain

equitable group dynamics. The data pattern reinforces the need for coherent institutional frameworks that move beyond relying on teacher initiative alone and instead provide systematic guidance, resources, and policy structures aligned with inclusive language education principles.

Thematic Analysis (Qualitative Findings)

The thematic analysis of open-ended responses revealed two major domains: instructional strategies implemented to address linguistic learning difficulties and the perceived impact of such difficulties on foreign language teaching. Across the first domain, teachers consistently described a strong reliance on differentiated instruction, scaffolding mechanisms, multisensory resources, personalized support structures, and collaborative learning configurations. Table 2 presents a comprehensive coding summary that organizes these findings into distinct thematic categories.

Strategies such as adapting materials to match student readiness levels, offering supplementary practice opportunities, integrating visual and auditory aids to reinforce comprehension, implementing role-plays to contextualize language use, and providing individualized feedback tailored to specific linguistic gaps were frequently cited throughout participant responses. These practices illustrate a pedagogical model grounded in responsive instruction that continuously adjusts to learner needs rather than adhering to fixed curricular progressions. Teachers described their work as requiring constant monitoring of student understanding, iterative adjustment of pacing and complexity, and substantial emotional labor to maintain student motivation and confidence. For example, one participant noted, "I modify activities or contents depending on difficulty" (PA1ED4), while another explained, "I provide personalized feedback to those with more difficulties" (PA1ED3), demonstrating the individualized and labor-intensive nature of inclusive language instruction.

The prominence of multisensory and technological supports emerged as a particularly salient theme, with teachers describing deliberate efforts to diversify representational modes in order to accommodate varied learning profiles. Responses such as "Use of visual and auditory resources to reinforce pronunciation" (PA1ED2) and "Online tools for listening and pronunciation practice" (PA1ED6) indicate that teachers actively leverage digital and analog resources to create multiple access points to linguistic content. This finding aligns with contemporary pedagogical frameworks emphasizing multimodal engagement as essential for inclusive learning environments, yet it also reveals that technology integration remains largely teacher-driven rather than systematically supported by institutional infrastructure.

Collaborative learning structures, despite being widely implemented, were described with notable ambivalence. While teachers recognized the theoretical value of peer interaction for language development—as evidenced by statements like "Students work in pairs to support each other" (PA1ED7)—they simultaneously acknowledged significant practical challenges. These challenges included uneven participation, peer resistance to working with struggling classmates, and difficulties maintaining equitable contribution patterns within groups. This tension between the pedagogical ideal of collaborative language learning and its fraught implementation in linguistically heterogeneous classrooms represents a critical finding that merits deeper examination.

The second thematic domain highlighted how linguistic learning difficulties fundamentally reshape the pacing, structure, and expectations of classroom instruction. Teachers reported that students with such difficulties often require slower instructional progression, extended practice time, and additional reinforcement cycles, which in turn affects the completion of planned activities and necessitates continual curricular adjustments. One teacher noted, "Need to advance more slowly depending on content difficulty" (PA2ED1), while another observed, "Activities require more time than planned" (PA2ED6), illustrating how

linguistic diversity compresses instructional timelines and forces teachers to make real-time decisions about content coverage versus depth of understanding.

Several responses also referenced tensions in group work dynamics that extend beyond simple pacing issues. For instance, one teacher reported, "Some students complain about working with peers who struggle" (PA2ED1), revealing social dimensions of linguistic difficulty that affect classroom climate, peer relationships, and student willingness to engage in collaborative tasks. These comments suggest that linguistic learning difficulties carry not only cognitive but also affective and social consequences that can marginalize students and reinforce exclusionary dynamics if not explicitly addressed through structured intervention and norm-setting.

Additionally, teachers expressed a clear recognition of the need for institutional support to sustain inclusive practices over time. Comments such as "I have sought additional training to face methodological challenges" (PA1ED18) indicate awareness that individual effort alone cannot resolve systemic gaps in teacher preparation, resource allocation, or policy clarity. This acknowledgment reflects a critical consciousness about the structural conditions necessary for inclusive pedagogy to move from ad-hoc compensatory measures to embedded, sustainable program-level practice.

Taken together, these themes illustrate a coherent but concerning pattern: although teachers demonstrate high levels of pedagogical commitment and deploy a diverse array of compensatory strategies, these efforts remain largely dependent on individual initiative rather than systemic scaffolding. Thematic evidence reveals that instructional adaptation is constant yet uneven, emotionally demanding, and time-intensive, with teachers functioning as the primary architects and implementers of inclusive practice in the absence of formalized institutional guidance. This aligns with prior research documenting the gap between inclusive aspirations and the structural realities that enable or constrain their realization. The findings underscore an urgent need to formalize institutional guidelines, expand professional development opportunities, and ensure equitable access to resources so that inclusive linguistic instruction can transition from isolated teacher-led efforts to a sustainable, program-wide framework supported by coherent policy and shared professional standards.

Discussion

The results demonstrate a strong and consistent pattern of instructional adaptation that aligns closely with core principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Vygotskian scaffolding theory. The finding that 95% of teachers reported modifying their instructional strategies indicates that adaptive teaching has become an essential mechanism for addressing linguistic learning difficulties in foreign language classrooms at UDB. These adaptations, ranging from adjusted pacing to differentiated materials and multisensory supports, reflect UDL's foundational emphasis on providing multiple means of representation, engagement, and action/expression (CAST, 2024). By diversifying how content is presented, how students engage with material, and how they demonstrate understanding, teachers operationalize UDL principles even when institutional frameworks do not explicitly mandate such practices. Similarly, the frequent use of scaffolding strategies—such as breaking complex tasks into manageable steps, providing temporary supports that gradually fade, and offering targeted feedback—corresponds directly with Vygotsky's notion of supporting learners within their Zone of Proximal Development (Shabani et al., 2010). When linguistic complexity becomes a barrier to independent performance, teachers intervene to bridge the gap between current abilities and potential development, thereby enabling students to accomplish tasks they could not complete without support. However, while these instructional adjustments demonstrate strong teacher agency and pedagogical responsiveness, they also expose a systemic reliance on individualized effort rather than coordinated institutional frameworks. This suggests that adaptive

pedagogy is functioning more as a compensatory measure necessitated by structural gaps than as part of an integrated, proactively designed inclusive system.

Despite strong evidence of instructional adaptation, assessment practices emerged as a significantly weaker dimension of inclusive pedagogy, revealing a persistent bottleneck in the operationalization of equitable language education. Only 65% of teachers reported modifying their evaluation procedures, indicating that assessment remains the least developed area of inclusive practice. This finding aligns with both regional studies (Chiqui et al., 2019) and international research documenting assessment as a site of ongoing tension in inclusive education (Nieminen, 2022). Teachers' reported barriers, including limited time to redesign tests, uncertainty about maintaining academic rigor while providing accommodations, and the absence of institutional guidelines specifying acceptable modifications, suggest that assessment reform cannot depend solely on individual initiative. The distinction between accommodations (adjustments to how students demonstrate knowledge without changing content expectations) and modifications (alterations to content or standards themselves) remains conceptually unclear for many practitioners, leading to hesitancy and inconsistent application (Joyce & Gitomer, 2018). Furthermore, concerns about validity and fairness often inhibit teachers from implementing differentiated assessment, as they fear undermining the credibility of their evaluations or disadvantaging students who do not receive accommodations. These challenges point to the need for institutional assessment policies that are explicitly aligned with inclusive frameworks, provide clear guidance on appropriate accommodations, and support teachers in developing valid, differentiated, and equitable evaluation mechanisms that maintain rigor while recognizing diverse pathways to demonstrating competence. The discrepancy between instructional flexibility and limited assessment adaptation underscores a systemic disconnect that restricts the full realization of inclusive and sustainable language learning environments.

The findings also highlight the social-emotional dimension as a critical yet often underexamined component of inclusive language teaching. With 55% of teachers reporting that linguistic learning difficulties hinder pair or group work, it becomes evident that these challenges extend beyond individual cognitive processing and fundamentally influence broader classroom dynamics, peer relationships, and collaborative learning effectiveness. Qualitative comments describing students who "withdraw during collaborative tasks" or peers who "express frustration when progress slows" illustrate how linguistic disparities can disrupt equitable participation, create imbalanced contribution patterns, and reduce the communicative richness that peer interaction is theoretically meant to provide. These patterns reinforce sociocultural perspectives emphasizing that language learning is inherently social and that successful peer collaboration requires not only linguistic competence but also affective engagement, mutuality, and shared intersubjective space (Swain, 2006; Kos, 2025). When students with linguistic difficulties cannot maintain conversational parity, they may experience social marginalization, reduced opportunities for meaningful language practice, and diminished self-efficacy. Conversely, more proficient peers may become frustrated by slower pacing or feel burdened by the need to provide excessive support, leading to resistance toward collaborative configurations. This dynamic reveals a critical tension: while peer interaction is pedagogically valuable for scaffolding language development through negotiation of meaning and co-construction of knowledge, it simultaneously risks reinforcing exclusionary hierarchies when students perceive unequal contributions or when collaborative structures lack explicit norms for equitable participation. The implications are significant: inclusive pedagogy must integrate structured collaborative routines, explicit instruction in collaborative skills, socio-emotional supports such as team-building and perspective-taking activities, and clear behavioral expectations that promote equity and mutual respect. Without such measures, collaborative activities risk perpetuating rather than mitigating inequality within the language classroom.

Interpretation of these findings must acknowledge several potential confounding variables and methodological limitations that were not controlled within the study design. Factors such as class size, teachers' years of experience, students' proficiency levels, and the specific linguistic challenges present in individual classrooms may influence the degree and nature of instructional, assessment, and social adaptations that teachers implement. Larger classes, for example, may constrain the feasibility of individualized scaffolding and feedback due to time and attentional resource limitations, while more experienced teachers may possess broader pedagogical repertoires and greater confidence in implementing differentiated strategies. Additionally, because the study relied exclusively on self-report data collected via questionnaires, there is a potential risk of social desirability bias, particularly concerning items related to inclusive practices where teachers may overreport adaptive behaviors in order to present themselves as responsive and equitable practitioners. Observational data triangulating teachers' reported practices with actual classroom behaviors would strengthen confidence in these findings. Furthermore, no inferential statistical analyses were conducted; therefore, the results reflect descriptive tendencies and associational patterns rather than causal relationships or statistically significant differences between groups. This distinction is essential for maintaining analytic rigor and ensuring that conclusions drawn from the data remain firmly within the scope of what the methodology allows. Future research incorporating multivariate analyses, classroom observations, student outcome measures, and institutional context variables would provide a more nuanced understanding of how and under what conditions inclusive language pedagogy operates effectively.

Taken together, the findings provide partial but meaningful support for the study's hypothesis: teachers who report extensive use of differentiated and multisensory strategies also tend to adjust lesson pacing, provide more individualized feedback, and, to a lesser extent, modify assessment practices. The strong alignment between instructional adaptation (95%), multisensory strategy use (90%), individualized feedback (90%), and pacing adjustments (85%) suggests a coherent pattern of responsive pedagogy where multiple inclusive dimensions co-occur. However, the uneven development of these adaptations—particularly the limited adjustments to evaluation (65%) and the persistent social challenges documented in collaborative work (55%)—indicates that inclusive pedagogy cannot be sustained through individual teacher agency alone. Instead, the results point to the necessity of institutional structures that formalize and support inclusive practices, such as assessment guidelines explicitly aligned with UDL principles, coordinated professional development focusing on differentiated evaluation and collaborative pedagogy, dedicated planning time for instructional design, and resource allocation ensuring equitable access to adaptive materials and technologies. Without systemic support, adaptations remain fragmented, inconsistent across classrooms, and dependent on personal commitment rather than embedded pedagogical policy. The hypothesis is thus validated within the constraints of the current institutional environment, highlighting both the considerable strengths of teacher-led inclusive efforts and the urgent need for organizational frameworks that ensure equity, coherence, and sustainability in foreign language education.

This study contributes to the theoretical understanding of inclusive language pedagogy by demonstrating how UDL and Vygotskian principles manifest in practice within Latin American higher education contexts. The findings illustrate that while teachers intuitively operationalize scaffolding and multimodal representation, the absence of explicit theoretical framing limits their ability to systematically plan, evaluate, and refine inclusive practices. Theoretically, the study reinforces the notion that inclusive pedagogy is not simply a set of techniques but rather a complex interplay between individual teacher knowledge, institutional structures, and sociocultural dynamics that shape what is possible within classroom contexts.

For institutions seeking to build equitable and sustainable language programs, these findings underscore the necessity of system-level policies that go beyond aspirational statements to provide concrete operational guidance. Recommendations include: developing explicit assessment policies that delineate acceptable accommodations and modifications while maintaining rigor, allocating protected pedagogical time for differentiated instructional planning, establishing professional learning communities focused on inclusive practice, providing access to adaptive technologies and materials, and implementing program-level review mechanisms that monitor equity in student outcomes. Teacher education programs must also integrate inclusive pedagogy as a core rather than peripheral component, ensuring that pre-service and in-service educators develop robust competencies in differentiation, scaffolding, collaborative facilitation, and culturally responsive assessment.

This study is limited by its single-site design, reliance on self-report data, and lack of triangulation through classroom observations or student performance measures. The sample size (N=20) restricts generalizability, and the instrument's lack of formal psychometric validation limits confidence in its reliability and construct validity. Additionally, the study does not account for potential confounding variables such as class size, teacher experience, or student proficiency levels, which may moderate the relationships observed. These limitations suggest caution in extrapolating findings beyond the specific institutional context studied.

Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable insights into the lived realities of language teachers navigating inclusive pedagogy within resource-constrained institutional environments. By documenting both the adaptive strategies teachers employ and the structural barriers that constrain their implementation, this research illuminates the gap between inclusive ideals and operational practice, thereby contributing to a more nuanced understanding of what is required to achieve educational equity. The findings affirm that fostering truly inclusive language learning environments demands not only capable and committed teachers but also coherent institutional frameworks, sustained professional development, and resource structures that enable teachers to translate inclusive principles into systematic, scalable, and sustainable pedagogical action.

CONCLUSION

This study provides empirical evidence that foreign language teachers at Universidad Don Bosco demonstrate substantial adaptive capacity when supporting students with linguistic learning difficulties, particularly through differentiated instruction (95%), multisensory scaffolding (90%), and individualized feedback (90%). These practices align with Universal Design for Learning principles and sociocultural theories of mediated learning, affirming that teachers intuitively operationalize inclusive pedagogical frameworks even in the absence of explicit institutional mandates. However, the uneven development of assessment adaptation (65%), the fragility of collaborative learning structures (55% report disruptions), and the increased cognitive and temporal demands placed on teachers indicate that individual effort alone cannot sustain inclusive language education. The findings reveal a structural imbalance wherein teacher agency compensates for institutional gaps, resulting in fragmented and inconsistent practice that varies across classrooms rather than being embedded within systematic program-level policy.

The study contributes to the discourse on inclusive language pedagogy in Latin American higher education by documenting both the adaptive strategies teachers employ and the structural barriers constraining their implementation. This dual focus illuminates the gap between inclusive ideals and operational realities, thereby enriching theoretical understanding of how systemic conditions moderate pedagogical possibilities. Institutions seeking to build equitable and sustainable language programs must adopt system-level policies that formalize inclusive assessment practices, ensure protected pedagogical time for differentiated planning, and provide ongoing professional development grounded in evidence-

based frameworks. While the study is limited by its single-site design, reliance on self-report data, and lack of psychometric validation, it offers a foundation for future multi-site, mixed-method research integrating classroom observations, learner performance outcomes, and institutional analyses. Such investigations are essential to advance understanding of how organizational structures, workload configurations, and policy frameworks enable teachers to translate inclusive principles into scalable, sustainable, and equitable pedagogical action across diverse educational systems.

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