

BEST PRACTICES GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Specific Language Disorders affect how some students understand and express language, even though they have typical cognitive abilities. The workshops aimed to help peer students understand these difficulties through direct experience, promoting empathy, inclusion, and supportive communication in the classroom.

DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTED STRATEGIES

The workshops combined short theoretical input with interactive group activities.

Students first explored key concepts of neurodiversity and language disorders, understanding common signs such as difficulty speaking, slow responses, or frustration when communicating.

They then participated in two main activities:

- A word-retrieval game, where students experienced difficulties similar to aphasia by trying to recall words using clues.
- A collaborative language-building activity, where students created words and sentences using visual and letter prompts in small groups.

Throughout the workshops, students practiced supportive strategies such as giving time, using gestures, and encouraging peers. Sessions ended with reflection activities to consolidate learning and identify ways to support others

MODULE 5 Language Disorder





The workshops included the development and implementation of specific learning games designed to promote empathy and understanding of language disorders:

- Description: Students worked in small groups to recall words within a time limit, using clues such as semantic hints, first letters, or gestures.
- Learning goal: To build empathy and raise awareness of the difficulties related to word retrieval.
- Implementation: When students could not recall a word, they used support strategies or received help from peers, simulating real communication challenges.
- Learning outcome: Students understood the frustration associated with language difficulties and learned how to support peers through patience and cues.

- Description: Students used letter and image cards to form words and create sentences collaboratively.
- Learning goal: To improve understanding of language structure and promote peer-supported learning.
- Implementation: In small groups, students built words and then constructed simple or extended sentences, increasing complexity progressively.
- Learning outcome: Students developed vocabulary, sentence-building skills, and collaborative problem-solving abilities.

The workshops increased students' awareness of language disorders and improved their ability to support peers.

- Greater empathy and understanding of communication difficulties.
- Improved use of supportive strategies (patience, active listening, non-verbal communication).
- Higher engagement through collaborative and game-based learning.

The activities contributed to a more inclusive classroom environment and strengthened peer relationships.





DiverseMind

Student feedback

- Student feedback was very positive; workshops were described as interesting and entertaining, especially due to the interactive and game-based activities.
- Higher engagement was observed among younger students, while older students showed slightly lower motivation, indicating a need for age adaptation.
- Pre- and post-surveys, along with teacher observations, showed a clear increase in understanding of neurodiversity and language difficulties.
- Students demonstrated learning through simple reflections, identifying practical ways to support classmates.

Significant change

- **Attitudes:** Students showed greater empathy and respect towards peers with communication difficulties.
- **Understanding:** Improved awareness of how language disorders affect participation and interaction.
- **Engagement:** High participation in group activities, especially in collaborative and game-based tasks.

Testimonials

- “Now I understand why some classmates take longer to speak.”
- “We should give them more time and help them.”
- “It was difficult to find words, so I felt what they feel.”

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The implementation of the workshops demonstrated that interactive and game-based activities are highly effective in promoting understanding of language disorders and fostering inclusive attitudes among students.

What worked well:

- Game-based and collaborative activities increased engagement and participation.
- Experiential learning helped students develop empathy and better understand communication difficulties.
- Reflection activities reinforced learning and encouraged students to identify practical support strategies.

Challenges encountered:

- Some activities were perceived as complex by certain students.
- Lower motivation was observed in older students.

How they were addressed:

- Teachers provided additional guidance and simplified instructions when needed.
- Activities were adapted to different age groups and learning levels.

Recommendations:

- Adapt activities to students' age and cognitive level to ensure accessibility.
- Use clear instructions and visual supports to facilitate understanding.
- Incorporate reflection moments to consolidate learning outcomes.
- Promote peer collaboration to strengthen inclusion and social skills.

These workshops confirm that combining experiential learning with structured support strategies contributes to more inclusive and empathetic classroom environments.