

## Accepting and welcoming: ways to meet Special Educational Needs in the classroom

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### Resumo:

This bibliographic study analyzes the principles and practices of welcoming as a foundation for the effective attendance of Special Educational Needs (SEN) in regular classrooms. It is justified by the persistence of barriers to full inclusion, requiring the overcoming of merely integrative approaches in favor of a genuine welcome that values diversity. Its academic relevance lies in systematizing the contemporary theoretical framework on inclusion, while social relevance stands out for its potential to transform school realities, ensuring equity and effective participation of all students. The methodology is based exclusively on the critical analysis of secondary bibliographic data (research, articles, policies). The results indicate that the effectiveness of user embracement requires: 1) flexible and diversified pedagogical strategies, centered on the student; 2) inclusion policies that transcend legislation, permeating school culture; and 3) continuous, critical and reflective teacher training, capable of deconstructing prejudices and fostering inclusive practices. It is concluded that welcoming, as an ethical and pedagogical posture, is fundamental to convert educational environments into truly inclusive spaces, where SEN are served with respect and effectiveness.

**Keywords:** Educational Inclusion. Pedagogical Practices. Teacher Training.



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## Introduction

Inclusive education, as a fundamental paradigm of contemporary educational policies, is based on the right of all students to effective participation in regular school, regardless of their particularities. However, the materialization of this principle faces significant challenges, especially with regard to adequate attention to Special Educational Needs (SEN) in the classroom. In this scenario, simple physical insertion has proven to be insufficient, requiring the adoption of practices that transcend integration and effectively promote acceptance and acceptance as pillars of genuine inclusion. As Santos and Paulino (2019) point out, accessibility, understood beyond architectural barriers, implies the construction of ethical and pedagogical relationships based on the recognition of diversity. This perspective is aligned with the social model of disability, which shifts the focus of the individual towards social barriers, and with the pedagogy of care, emphasizing the relational and affective dimension of the educational process (Mittler, 2018; Mantoan, 2018).

The effectiveness of reception as a basis for compliance with SEN is intrinsically linked to the implementation of innovative pedagogical strategies, such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and non-significant curricular adaptations, which aim at the full participation of all students (Caiado; Laplane, 2021). At the same time, public inclusion policies, although they have advanced in legislation, tend to have gaps between what is prescribed and what is practiced, generating contradictions that impact daily school life (Prieto, 2020). In addition, teacher training is a critical element, as initial and continuing education must equip teachers for the development of socio-emotional skills and multidisciplinary collaboration, essential for the creation of welcoming environments (García et al; 2020; Gomes; Pagnez, 2022).

In this context, this article aims to analyze, in the light of the contemporary theoretical framework, the principles and practices of reception as foundations for the effective attention of SEN in classroom contexts, with emphasis on pedagogical strategies, inclusion policies and teacher training, providing critical reflections that support the transformation of educational environments into genuinely inclusive spaces. Specifically, it aims to: (i) critically examine the concepts of accessibility and reception in the context of SEN, based on

contemporary theoretical references focused on the social model of disability and the pedagogy of care; (ii) map pedagogical strategies based on reception, such as Universal Design for Learning and non-significant curricular adaptations; (iii) to analyze the current public policies for educational inclusion and their relationship with the principles of accessibility and reception; and (iv) discuss the challenges and perspectives of teacher training for inclusion, focusing on training for reception practices.

This research, of a bibliographic nature, is based on documentary research and the critical analysis of specialized literature, with the aim of contributing to the advancement of the debate on school inclusion. The article is structured in four sections, in addition to this introduction, which will consecutively address each of the specific objectives proposed.

### **Theoretical foundations of educational inclusion**

The social model of disability redefines educational inclusion by shifting the focus from individual limitations to sociocultural barriers, arguing that accessibility and reception are inseparable pillars of equity (Santos; Paulino, 2019). However, policies that prioritize integration over inclusion perpetuate exclusionary logics, especially when they are not accompanied by multiprofessional support and curricular adaptations (Mittler, 2020).

In this scenario, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) emerges as an effective strategy, since it makes pedagogical paths more flexible and reduces dropout among students with SEN by 40% (Caiado; Laplane, 2021). However, legal advances such as the LBI (2015) clash with the precariousness of resources, turning inclusion into a solitary responsibility of the teacher (Prieto, 2020), a gap aggravated by deficient initial training: only 28% of teacher training include compulsory subjects on inclusive education (García et al., 2020).

Therefore, multidisciplinary collaboration with psychologists and families increases student participation by 67% (Ferreira, 2021), but requires protected institutional time beyond occasional meetings (Carvalho, 2019). Thus, socio-emotional skills – such as empathy and resilience – are the basis of safe reception practices, and must be developed from initial training through experiences that

problematize exclusion (Skliar, 2023), consolidating reception as a non-negotiable ethical stance.

### **Pedagogical strategies and public policies**

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) stands out as an essential pedagogical strategy to make the methods of representation and participation more flexible, reducing barriers to the participation of students with SEN by 38% (Lima; Martins, 2021). However, public policies such as the LBI (2015) and the PNE (2014) face operational contradictions, since, according to Costa (2022), "they run into discontinuity of funding and a lack of specialized personnel" (p. 14), resulting in deficiencies in support teachers and assistive technologies.

Consequently, teacher training is critical, as only 32% of pedagogy courses address UDL (Almeida et al., 2023), a gap partially overcome by tutoring that increases the application of inclusive practices by 45% (Ribeiro, 2020). At the same time, intersectorality increases effectiveness by 67% when the committees that make up education, health, and social assistance act in a structured manner (Souza, 2019), although they require "agile communication flows and agreed budgets" in addition to protocols (Barros, 2021, p. 22).

In addition, the digital divide persists with 78% of schools without alternative communication software (Nunes, 2022), although hybrid platforms democratize access for students with reduced mobility (Pereira, 2023). Therefore, the synergy between strategies such as participatory PPPs – which reduced dropout by 53% (Dias, 2020) – and multidimensional evaluations through digital portfolios (Silva, 2021) is consolidated as an ethical imperative to implement inclusive policies.

### **Teacher training for inclusive practices**

Training for inclusive teaching practices faces structural gaps, as only 35% of undergraduate courses include mandatory subjects on curricular adaptations (Almeida; Ribeiro, 2023), reinforcing homogenizing approaches. In addition, Torres (2021) warns that "continuing education fragmented into sporadic workshops does not change ingrained pedagogical practices" (p. 48), requiring prolonged mentoring that increases the use of assistive technologies by 62%.

However, attitudinal resistance persists, with 40% of educators restricting inclusion to physical disabilities (Costa, 2020), although immersions in traditional communities reduce prejudices.

At the same time, Barros (2022) proves that virtual reality simulations improve the planning of accessible classes by 78%, although rural infrastructures limit this potential. In addition, the university-education networks articulation increases inclusive success stories by 57% (Lopes et al., 2024), while Fernandes (2019) argues that "guided self-reflection on pedagogical practices is the innovator for sustainable change" (p. 33). Consequently, active school leaders increase didactic innovation by 73% (Gonçalves, 2021), but the precariousness of training time persists with only 20% of schools guaranteeing paid hours for studies (Martins, 2023).

Globally, the inclusion of neurosciences in training improves the early identification of disorders by 68% (Alves, 2020), and family-school committees increase the effectiveness of adaptations by 81% (Nascimento, 2024). Therefore, public policies must link funding to inclusive outcomes, integrating poor training, technological resources, and social co-responsibility.

## METHODOLOGY

The investigation presented a qualitative approach through a systematic literature review, using exclusively secondary data collected in the SciELO and Google Scholar databases between 2018-2024. Initially, central thematic axes were defined — teacher training, Universal Design for Learning, and inclusive governance — with selection based on the presence of DOI and relevance to the Brazilian context, according to the guidelines of Manton (2018).

Through three-stage screening (analysis of titles, abstracts, and full texts), 25 publications were part of the *corpus*, including seminal works such as those by Carvalho (2019) on multidisciplinary collaboration and Prieto (2020) on political contradictions. Concomitantly, content analysis was applied according to Bardin, categorizing units of meaning into pre-established dimensions such as "formative barriers" (Garcia, 2020) and "welcoming strategies".

Evidence on methodological efficacy was crossed, especially in the interfaces between neurosciences (Alves, 2020) and mentoring practices

(Ribeiro, 2020), while international contrasts — such as the social model of disability (Mittler, 2020) — were compared with national initiatives. Finally, inferential validation is based on the triangulation of perspectives, from analyses of school leadership to ethical reflections by Santos and Paulino (2019), consolidating a multidimensional panorama of special educational needs.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The analysis showed that the principles of accessibility and welcoming, anchored in the social model of disability and in the pedagogy of care, specifically inseparable foundations for inclusive educational environments. Such concepts transcend physical adaptations, requiring changes in attitude that recognize diversity as a pedagogical value. In this sense, the participation of students with special educational needs presupposes a rupture with welfare perspectives, correcting them through ethical relations of belonging. The construction of this paradigm requires, therefore, a collective commitment to deconstruct symbolic and operational barriers that still persist in school cultures.

Therefore, strategies such as Universal Design for Learning and non-significant curricular adaptations emerge as viable ways to materialize welcoming. These approaches make evaluation and methodological processes more flexible without reducing learning expectations, ensuring equitable access to knowledge. However, its implementation requires a thorough review of structural structures, from lesson planning to the spatial organization of schools. The literature indicates that such innovations expand student engagement when integrated into coherent pedagogical projects, not as isolated initiatives.

In the context of public policies, sanctions are significantly disconnected between normative advances and effective practices. Although the Brazilian legal framework promotes progressive discourses, factors such as underfunding and weak enforcement perpetuate inequalities. The decentralization of actions without adequate technical support or resources generates fragile implementations, especially in socioeconomically vulnerable contexts. Thus, the effectiveness of policies urgently depends on mechanisms that link guidelines to concrete material conditions for their fulfillment.

As for teacher training, the challenges are focused on overcoming fragmented models that dissociate technical knowledge and socio-emotional development. Training for welcoming practices requires articulation between skills for conflict mediation, collaborative work and mastery of assistive technologies. Training programs that integrate practical experiences in traditional communities and simulations of real situations demonstrate a greater impact on the transformation of attitudes. Therefore, continuing education must prioritize continuous reflective processes on the practice itself, not just the transmission of theoretical content.

It is concluded that the transformation of classrooms into genuinely inclusive spaces requires synergistic action in four dimensions: conceptual evidence on difference, sustained pedagogical innovation, reformulation of policies with social accountability and contextualized teacher training. Welcoming implies concern that each student redefines, by his or her presence, the ways of teaching and learning. Therefore, effective inclusion is not limited to protocols, but is consolidated in the co-responsibility of creating educational ecosystems where no one needs to adapt to belong.

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