

FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND VIETNAMESE

**TEACHING ENGLISH TO VISUALLY IMPAIRED
STUDENTS IN NGUYEN DINH CHIEU
SECONDARY SCHOOL, HANOI
NGUYEN DANG NGUYET HUONG***

ABSTRACT: This paper examines the challenges and solutions for teaching English to visually impaired students at Nguyen Dinh Chieu Secondary School in Hanoi, Vietnam. With a focus on inclusive education, the research highlights the difficulties faced by visually impaired students, such as the lack of appropriate learning materials, slower reading and writing speeds, and challenges with classroom participation. Through surveys and interviews with students and teachers, the study reveals the specific struggles in language skills and knowledge areas, particularly vocabulary and listening. The research introduces support programs aimed at enhancing visually impaired students' inclusion in English classes, including changes in student activities, the use of assistive technology, and personalized support from peers. The results demonstrate significant improvements in student participation and confidence, emphasizing the effectiveness of targeted interventions in fostering an inclusive learning environment. The paper concludes by recommending further integration of technology and community engagement to support visually impaired students in inclusive classrooms.

KEY WORDS: visually impaired students; Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school; English teaching.

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1. Background

Currently, all over the world, there are nearly 60 countries that use English as the main language in addition to their mother tongue, and nearly 100 countries use English as a second language. Thanks to English, people around the world know each other, understand each other and are more friendly with each other. The gap between students with disabilities and those without, though, is still quite significant, referring to the fact that many disabled students do not have the opportunity to pursue formal education in Vietnam.

Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school, Hanoi is a school that teaches blind children in an inclusive environment, where all students, including blind children, are supported to have equal opportunities to receive knowledge and skills with necessary support in the classroom. Therefore, the school always focuses on improving teaching methods to provide a learning environment which is suitable for two groups of subjects: students without disabilities and students with visual impairments. This is considered an environment with innovative educational methods but still ensuring the full participation of blind students in class.

It can be noticed from the observation and experience of an English teacher that visually impaired students participate in learning activities during English class very passively, not boldly, awkward, timid, and having difficulty keeping up with activities with non-disabled students in class. This greatly affects the learning quality of visually impaired students. If we focus on teaching activities for non-disabled students with a variety of teaching aids, group activities, projectors, and pictures, the group of visually impaired students will be neglected because they cannot see words on the board, pictures or samples of activities so they cannot do the required activities. If we focus more on the group of visually impaired students, the teacher must explain in detail the tasks of each activity, or

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give each student instructions on how to do homework, which takes a lot of time and does not ensure the learning content for students without disabilities.

To help visually impaired students in our inclusive classroom to develop their English skills, contributing to improving the quality of teaching and learning to meet the requirements of the educational programs, the teachers in the school have joined the research to find out some solutions to support visually impaired students in Nguyen Dinh Chieu middle school to improve their inclusion ability in English lessons among students of 4 grades.

2. Literature review

2.1. Visually impaired students

Students with visual impairments are those who have a significant limitation in their ability to see, which impacts their educational performance and daily activities. Visual impairments can vary widely in terms of severity, type, and the age of onset. American Foundation for the Blind (2005) has defined blindness with two different categories: legal blindness and total blindness. A person is considered legally blind if their visual acuity is 20/200 or worse in the better eye with corrective lenses, or if their field of vision is 20 degrees or less. In the mean time, total blindness is a complete lack of light perception and form perception, which means these individuals cannot see any light or shape. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1990) also mentioned the definition of those with low vision. Students with low vision have some usable vision but still face significant challenges that affect their educational performance. This group typically has visual acuity between 20/70 and 20/200 in the better eye with corrective lenses. These students may use a combination of visual and non-visual strategies to access information, such as magnification devices, large print materials, or audio books. Another definition which is recognized by World Health Organization (2023) refers to visual impairment, a broader category that includes both blindness and low vision. It encompasses all students who have visual conditions that significantly impair their ability to perform in a typical educational setting. There are still some other categories such as functional blindness, congenital vs. acquired visual impairments, progressive vs. stable visual impairments, but almost all of them refer to different levels of visual impairment complexity among students; and in this chapter, the terms “blind students” and “students with visual impairments” are used interchangeably to refer to students with this visual disability in general.

2.2. Key Considerations for Educating Students with Visual Impairments

There have been many studies about the considerations that need to be taken into account to teach students with visual impairments. Vision is one of the key senses, significantly influencing the learning process. It is believed that over 80% of education is conveyed through visual means (Pagliano, 1994). Lowenfield (1983), a pioneering educational writer in the field, indicated that blindness imposes three fundamental limitations on an individual: the range and variety of experiences, mobility, and the ability to control the environment and oneself within it.

Due to the variations in the type and degree of visual impairment among individuals, many developmental areas, including personality, intelligence, language, and cognitive development, can be impacted by visual impairment (Corn et al., 1995). Children's social development is particularly affected negatively because they cannot perceive nonverbal cues or establish eye contact (Avramidis et al., 2000). Vision loss also naturally affects an individual's motor development, as the lack of visual motivation prevents progress towards unseen objects or materials (Tobin et al., 1997). In cognitive development, exploring the environment and objects is crucial, making motion important not only for motor skills but also for concept formation. Additionally, since active interaction with people and the environment is vital for vocabulary acquisition, language development can be adversely affected by visual impairment. When working with students with visual impairments, it is advisable to use some Individualized Education Programs, which are tailored plans that address each student's specific needs, including accommodations, modifications, and support services. Students

with visual disability are known to be taught with multisensory teaching approaches that utilize all senses to facilitate learning, such as tactile materials and auditory resources.

Students with visual impairments can study with other students using many different assistance tools such as Braille instruction, assistive technology and some other orientation and mobility training. First, the Braille instruction helps students with reading and writing skills. This is very essential for students who are blind or have severe low vision, enabling them to feel, read and write effectively (Nolan and Kederis, 1969; Wetzeland Knowlton. 2000). Second, orientation skill refers to the capacity of an individual with visual impairment to understand their surroundings and their relationship to the environment by utilizing their remaining vision, as well as their senses of hearing, smell, and touch (Schreuer, Sachs, & Rosenblum, 2014). Independent movement skill is the ability of the person to employ independent movement techniques, residual vision, and other senses to navigate safely (Tobin et al., 1997). A specialist in orientation and independent movement provides instructions to help individuals with visual impairments develop or relearn the skills and concepts necessary to move safely and independently at home and in the community. Additionally, any device or service that enhances participation, success, or independence for a student with special needs is considered assistive technology. The appropriate devices, tools, and technologies should be selected based on the individual needs of the student (Petrie & Gill, 1993). Assistive technologies should empower students to compete effectively with their peers by providing independence rather than giving an unfair advantage (Gompel, van Bon, & Schreuder, 2004). These technologies enable students with visual impairments to access the general curriculum and improve their academic performance (Smith et al., 2009).

Understanding these definitions and considerations is crucial for educators, parents, and support staff to provide effective education and support for students with visual impairments.

2.3. Teaching English to visually impaired students

Teaching English to blind students presents unique challenges and opportunities, particularly in countries like Vietnam where resources and specialized training may be limited. The recent studies have come up with many challenges, and potential future developments in the field, focusing on the difficulties blind students face when learning English, as well as effective learning and teaching methodologies. Nguyen et al. (2020) mentioned several obstacles faced by blind students in learning English in particular and many other subjects in general. First, blind students often struggle due to the lack of accessible learning materials. While textbooks and resources are plentiful for sighted students, there is a significant shortage of Braille books, audio materials, and other adaptive technologies in Vietnam. Also, many English teachers in Vietnam are not trained to work with visually impaired students. This gap in training can result in ineffective teaching strategies that do not cater to the specific needs of blind learners. Social and psychological barriers are something to bear in mind as well as blind students frequently face social isolation and low self-esteem, which can negatively impact their motivation and ability to learn. The lack of inclusive educational environments further exacerbates these issues. Last but not least, the technological barriers also give blind students quite a few problems. While technology can greatly aid in learning, blind students in Vietnam often lack access to necessary devices and software, such as screen readers and refreshable Braille displays. This digital divide hinders their ability to engage with digital learning materials.

The learning and teaching methodologies for these specific groups of students are also varied. The most prominent way of teaching them is stated to be the Braille literacy. Teaching English to blind students in Vietnam heavily relies on Braille. Braille literacy is crucial as it allows students to read and write in English independently. Recent studies (Wetzel and Knowlton, 2000; Willings, 2019) emphasize the importance of early Braille education and the integration of Braille into the regular curriculum. Another resource that can be used for blind students is with the use of audio books, recorded lessons, and other auditory materials. These resources help compensate for the lack of visual

input and can significantly enhance language acquisition. Likewise, incorporating assistive technology into the classroom can transform the learning experience for blind students (Hersh and Johnson, 2008; Smith et al., 2009). Screen readers, voice recognition software, and specialized educational apps are some of the tools that can facilitate English learning. Tactile learning tools, such as raised maps and tactile graphics, can help blind students understand spatial and graphical information. These tools are particularly useful in teaching vocabulary related to shapes, sizes, and spatial relationships. With the use of all the technologies, adopting inclusive teaching practices is critical. This includes differentiated instruction, where teachers tailor their teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of students, and collaborative learning, where blind students work alongside their sighted peers (Scheiman, Scheiman and Whittaker, 2011; Gray, 2005; Douglas and McLinden, 2005; Dimigen et al., 2001).

2.4. Teaching English to visually impaired students in Vietnam

Teaching English to blind students in Vietnam has evolved over several decades, but specific milestones can be identified in the development of education for visually impaired students.

The Early Beginnings (Pre-1975 Era) were not recorded much with the teaching practice. There is limited documented evidence of formal education for blind students, including English language instruction, during the pre-1975 period in Vietnam. Education for the visually impaired was primarily informal and relied heavily on familial support and religious institutions.

After the Vietnam War came the Post-Vietnam War Era (Late 1970s to 1980s) when the country faced numerous challenges, including rebuilding its educational system. Efforts to include students with disabilities, including those who were blind, began to take shape, though resources were scarce. Some local initiatives, often supported by international NGOs and religious organizations, started providing basic education, including literacy and numeracy skills, to visually impaired children. However, English language instruction was not a primary focus during this period.

As parts of Expansion and Formalization Era, the 1990s saw increased attention to special education in Vietnam, partly due to the country's economic reforms (Đổi Mới) and increased international cooperation. During this time, there was a growing recognition of the need to integrate students with disabilities into mainstream education. Specialized schools and classes for visually impaired students began to appear, often in urban areas. These schools started to incorporate more structured curricula, including the teaching of foreign languages such as English. The early 2000s marked significant progress with more concerted efforts to develop inclusive education policies. The Vietnamese government, along with various NGOs and international organizations, invested in teacher training, curriculum development, and resource provision. English became increasingly important in the national curriculum, and efforts were made to adapt English language instruction for blind students. This included the development of Braille textbooks, audio materials, and the use of assistive technologies.

In recent years (2010s to Present), the Vietnamese government has made significant strides in inclusive education, supported by policies such as the National Action Plan to Support Persons with Disabilities (2012-2020). Organizations like the Vietnam Blind Association and international NGOs have played crucial roles in advancing educational opportunities for blind students, including English language learning. Modern initiatives include the development of digital resources, online learning platforms, and teacher training programs specifically tailored for visually impaired students. These efforts have greatly enhanced the accessibility and quality of English language education for blind students in Vietnam.

The teaching of English to blind students in Vietnam has gradually developed from informal beginnings to more structured and inclusive approaches. Key milestones include the expansion of special education in the 1990s, increased governmental and international support in the 2000s, and the adoption of modern technologies and inclusive policies in recent years. This evolution reflects a

growing commitment to providing equal educational opportunities for all students, regardless of their visual abilities.

3. Teaching English in Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school

This is one of the oldest inclusive schools in the city and the country. Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school is a school for raising blind children in Hanoi city, established in 1982 under the Hanoi Department of Education and Training. From 1988 to present, the school has been located at 21 Lac Trung, Hai Ba Trung District, Hanoi and implemented an inclusive education model for blind children. Since then, many generations of students have been studying in inclusive classes, with the hope to fulfil the dreams of many disadvantaged blind students. Currently, the school is fully equipped with systems and facilities to serve the inclusive teaching and learning of students in the school. The total number of middle school classes in the school year of 2023-2024 is 13 classes, from grades 6 to 9, with 603 students (74 visually impaired students). With a team of teachers and staff with extensive experience in inclusive teaching, over the past many years, the school has achieved many proud achievements and become a trusted address for students and parents in the work of inclusive education at the secondary level of Hai Ba Trung district and the Department of Education and Training in Hanoi.

Table 1. The number of classes and students in Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school (Report to the Department of Education and Training, 2023)

No.	Class	Number of students	Male students	Female students	Visually impaired students	Note
1.	6A1	51	25	26	3	One English teacher for each class
2.	6A2	52	30	22	4	
3.	6A3	37	18	19	6	
4.	6A4	42	22	20	3	
	K6	182	95	87	16	
5.	7A1	50	23	27	8	
6.	7A2	53	25	28	8	
7.	7A3	48	30	18	7	
	K7	151	78	73	23	
8.	8A1	41	18	23	6	
9.	8A2	40	23	17	7	
10.	8A3	45	22	23	6	
	K8	126	63	63	19	
11.	9A1	46	23	23	5	
12.	9A2	48	36	12	5	
13.	9A3	50	20	30	6	
	K9	144	79	65	16	
	Total	603	315	288	74	

The questionnaire and interview were done with all the 74 visually impaired students who are currently studying in the school even though some students were quite reluctant to answer, and 13 English teachers. The questions were mostly about the difficulties of students and teachers in the process of English learning. It can be seen that the number of students with visual impairments is quite limited (74 out of 603 students, about 12.3%) .

Table 2. The ratios of visually impaired students in Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school (Report to the Department of Education and Training, 2023)

No.	Class	Number of students	Sighted students	Visually impaired students	Percentage of visually impaired students	Note
1.	6A1	51	48	3	5.88	
2.	6A2	52	48	4	7.69	
3.	6A3	37	31	6	16.22	
4.	6A4	42	39	3	7.14	
	K6	182	166	16	8.79	
5.	7A1	50	42	8	16.00	
6.	7A2	53	45	8	15.09	
7.	7A3	48	41	7	14.58	
	K7	151	128	23	15.23	
8.	8A1	41	35	6	14.63	
9.	8A2	40	33	7	17.50	
10.	8A3	45	39	6	13.33	
	K8	126	107	19	15.08	
11.	9A1	46	41	5	10.87	
12.	9A2	48	43	5	10.42	
13.	9A3	50	44	6	12.00	
	K9	144	128	16	11.11	
	Total	603	529	74	12.27	

It can be seen that the ratio of students with visual impairments in Grade 6 is quite limited with only 8.79%, whereas that of those in Grade 7 and 8 are nearly double at 15.23% and 15.08% respectively. With 11.11% of those in Grade 9, the total number of blind students in the school year is still quite small in comparison with their sighted peers groups.

The teachers in Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school are also quite professionally trained with 100% are graduates from language universities and have got trainings to work with visually impaired students.

Table 3. The numbers and ratios of English teachers to visually impaired students in Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school (Report to the Department of Education and Training, 2023)

Number of English teachers	Qualifications							
	University		Vocational College		Short-term certificate		Training to work with visually impaired students	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
13	13	100	0	0	0	0	13	100

When being asked about the involvement of visually impaired students, it can be seen that only 25% of the students are actively engaged in activities in English classes. These are students who raise their hands to answer the questions from the teachers, or join the pair and group discussions with their peers. 40% of the students, though, just partially involve in the activities in English classes, just by reading the text again and again.

Most of the time, the students have quite a few problems with all the four language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking and three language knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. The following table shows the most common ideas among those 74 visually impaired students about the level of difficulty ranking from 1 (very easy) to 5 (very difficult) with some popular reasons for their struggle.

Table 4. *The level of difficulty in 4 language skills and 4 language knowledge fields as perceived by visually impaired students in Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school before the support programs*

Knowledge/skills	Level of difficulty ranking from 1 to 5					Reasons
Vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5	Inability to see the words and images of new words on the board
Grammar	1	2	3	4	5	Inability to see the grammar structures on the board when the teachers explain. Being slower than other sighted peers when working in groups or on practice tasks.
Pronunciation	1	2	3	4	5	Inability to differentiate among similar sounds
Listening	1	2	3	4	5	In ability to catch up with the tapes/CDs, to read the content and to take notes due to using Braille
Speaking	1	2	3	4	5	Limited communication skills, inability to detect non-verbal language, being not confident
Reading	1	2	3	4	5	Much slower reading speed with Braille, inability to finish the task on time
Writing	1	2	3	4	5	Being in need of more time due to low speed of Braille writing

It can be seen that all the visually impaired students have difficulty in learning English at some level. Among all the language skills and language knowledge, listening and vocabulary seem to be the most problematic whereas reading, writing and pronunciation are less likely to cause trouble. Most of the reasons stem from their impairments (inability to see the board, low speed due to Braille using in comparison with the average reading and writing speed in the class, or their inconfidence in English communication).

The teachers are also asked for their opinions on making judgment on the inclusive skills of visually impaired students in all activities in English classes, which is shown in the table below.

Table 5. *The judgment on inclusive skills of visually impaired students as perceived by English teachers in Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school before the support programs*

Skills	Satisfactory		Needs more practice		Unsatisfactory	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Participating in games for vocabulary/grammar booster	15	20	39	53.3	20	26.7
Pair work	20	26.7	25	33.3	30	40
Group work (4-6 students)	20	26.7	30	40	25	33.3
Conversational	20	26.7	20	26.7	34	46.6
Reading	39	53.3	20	26.7	15	20

Writing	59	80	10	13.3	4	5.9
Note taking	25	33.3	15	20	34	46.6
Self study	49	66.7	10	13.3	15	20

During English classes, visually impaired students still struggle due to the fact that communication and interaction with peers are more focused, and the reading and writing speed can not make up for other skills. Listening and speaking skills are performed through activities and conversational tasks; and grammatical and Most of the students (39%) are claimed to need more practice when it comes to participating in activities to booster vocabulary and grammar whereas 26.7% perform unsatisfactorily. The same ratios apply to pair work, group work and conversational skills with only about 26.7% perform well each. Even with reading and writing, which visually-impaired students normally perform better (80% satisfactory), most of the blind students can not meet the expectation for note taking (only 33.3% satisfaction) because of their inability to look at the board. Their note-taking is mostly done with the help from their neighbouring friends who read for them because their English vocabulary and listening skills are still limited, which makes them quite inactive in finishing their tasks.

It is quite obvious that even though the number of students with visual impairments is not significant, they still need great assistance in their inclusive class activities. Most of their problems that make them unable to join in all the activities in English classes are triggered by their inability to see the boards and low speed of reading and writing Braille. They, therefore, are lack of confidence and are inactive in pair and group communicative work.

4. Supporting solutions for visually impaired students in Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school.

After talking to students and teachers of English during the survey, we have come up with several options to provide support for students with visual impairments in Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school to help them perform better in their inclusive classroom.

4.1. Supporting programs for visually impaired students

4.1.1. Change the form of student activities

Teachers, in the process of preparing lesson plans for class, in addition to meeting the general requirements of lesson design and application, must be flexible, creative, flexible, not rigid and mechanical. Lesson structure must depend on each type of lesson, content and lesson objectives. At the same time, teachers always need to adhere to the characteristics of teaching methods that approach specific student abilities. Teachers have to wear different hats in playing the role of orientating, supporting, organizing activities and assessment of learners; implementing many active teaching methods to increase interaction and promote students' thinking and creative abilities such as: presentations, group discussions, etc. When sighted students and visually impaired students participate in the same lesson, teachers can build different learning goals based on students' abilities and needs. This contributes to helping students access lessons in class more easily.

The above solution will help teachers orient and provide specific approaches for visually impaired students such as: creating a supportive learning environment that encourages self-discipline, proactive exploration, and research in learning through the process of acquiring new knowledge. This gives students confidence to communicate, share, and debate during the learning process. At the same time, students themselves will participate in self-assessment and self-adjustment of their specialized skills, contributing to improving the quality of teaching and learning.

For example: When designing lessons, teachers can often organize activities for blind students with activities such as: dividing into groups including sighted students and blind students to participate in preparing exercises at home to learn about topics, class presentations, etc.

For visually impaired students, in order to effectively promote teaching innovation towards approaching language competencies for blind students to learn inclusively, learners need to collaborate with teachers. Students themselves must determine their learning goals and tasks. It is necessary to abandon the habit of being passive in learning, the habit of receiving knowledge one-way, and instead, they have to be self-aware, proactive in exploring, researching and being creative in receiving knowledge and solving problems. At the same time, learners themselves need to participate in self-assessment and self-adjustment. The testing and assessment process is to evaluate the learners' learning process and evaluate it in many different forms, focusing on the ability to form capacity and apply it to solve situations. From that awareness, students will be more self-aware and proactive in learning to build their abilities in learning English.

4.1.2. Assign helpers

During the class admission process, teachers discuss with visually impaired students to learn about their interests and needs, then discuss with the homeroom teacher to assign a friend to sit next to them and provide support such as reading lessons on the board and giving instructions on how to do homework. These support students do not necessarily have to be excellent students, but must be students who are good at studying and especially know how to share and be ready to support visually impaired students. In addition, teachers also need to teach these helpers how to help their friends by reading, explaining to them what is written on the board or the task to do, for example, helping them read English words and sentences written on the board, sentence structure for them to write down using symbols in their notebook.

4.1.3. Adjust the way tasks and assignments are assigned

When assigning tasks to visually impaired students, teachers always need to make sure that the tasks and assignments are given properly so that the students can complete them. Because the reading and writing speed in English Braille of visually impaired students are often slower than those of their classmates, appropriate tasks must be assigned based on each student. For example: During a 20-minute test with normal students, the visually impaired students will take 15 minutes. However, if given more time, blind students will not be able to participate in the next activity, so teachers need to reduce the amount of homework, but still ensure the goal of assessing enough skills and knowledge for them to learn.

4.1.4. Use appropriate teaching aids and tools

Teaching aids and tools play an important role in the teaching process. For students with disabilities, it is advisable to have whiteboards, Braille writing sticks, and Braille textbooks for blind students. For students with poor vision, some need to use visual aids such as magnifying glasses, tables, and desk lamps. All of these items are used by children in the inclusive classroom. However, during the teaching process, teachers can make adjustments to make my teaching methods suitable for each individual student.

For example: Grade 7 English Global Success, Unit 5: Listening activities

Students without disabilities use pictures and information in textbooks. Braille textbooks also have this exercise, but students will have difficulty recording their food preferences because they have to touch the drawings and then write in Braille. Due to the slow writing speed of Braille, children cannot keep up with the reading speed of the tape. Therefore, with these students, teachers may adjust the requirements of the lesson to listen and choose the food and drinks they hear. In order for the students to complete this activity, teachers can give the blind students the names of the dishes and friends in Braille. For students with poor vision, they are also given word cards like blind students, but the images are larger and have clearer colors. In addition, teachers can also give the children time before listening to identify the foods on the flashcards.

				
eel soup	cakes	green tea	coffee	toast

4.2. Feedback from the supporting programs for visually impaired students

After implementing the support programs, some positive results have been witnessed in most English classes in Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school. More students are involved in the activities carried out by English teachers and they are more willing to get engaged with their friends. The percentage of students who frequently get involved in English classes has remarkably increased from 20% to 45%, and the number of students who never or seldom join in activities has also dropped to 20%.

There are still some fields that students find difficult to deal with in learning English, however, the perception of difficulty level of visually impaired students has already changed. In grammar, listening, reading and writing, most of them rate the level of difficulty at level 3 (medium). Due to the fact that the vocabulary learning process has been much improved, the writing skills have also become less of a burden to these visually impaired students.

Table 6. The level of difficulty in 4 language skills and 4 language knowledge fields as perceived by visually impaired students in Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school after the support programs

Knowledge/skills	Level of difficulty ranking from 1 to 5				
Vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
Grammar	1	2	3	4	5
Pronunciation	1	2	3	4	5
Listening	1	2	3	4	5
Speaking	1	2	3	4	5
Reading	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5

From the viewpoint of the teachers in the school, the performance of visually impaired students has also positively improved.

Table 7. The judgment on inclusive skills of visually impaired students as perceived by English teachers in Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school after the support programs

Skills	Satisfactory		Needs more practice		Unsatisfactory	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Participating in games for vocabulary/grammar booster	49	66.7	15	20	10	13.30
Pair work	30	40	25	33.3	20	26.7

Group work (4-6 students)	30	40	34	46.6	10	13.3
Conversational	34	46.6	34	46.6	4	5.8
Reading	39	53.3	25	33.3	4	5.8
Writing	59	80	15	20	0	0
Note taking	39	53.3	25	33.3	10	13.3
Self study	49	66.7	15	20	10	13.3

It can be seen from the table that students with visual impairments have much improved in communication and interaction skills in general. The satisfactory percentage in games activities participation has significantly increased from 20% to 66.7%, as well as that in pair work and group work has also almost doubled (from 26.7% to 40%). The visually impaired students also mentioned in interviews that they have become more independent and confident with the help from their personalized companion, so they are more active in all activities in class. For the other skills, the percentage of unsatisfactory performance has decreased remarkably with reading from 20% to 5.8% and writing from 5.9% to 0%. The note-taking skills have also witnessed some positive changes with unsatisfaction falling from 46.6% to 13.3%.

In the process of implementing solutions to support blind students' inclusion in English lessons, practical results have been recorded that impact target groups. As for Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary schools, it is affirmed that an inclusive educational environment is a suitable environment to educate and develop the abilities of blind children. Teachers' thoughts and perspectives on the inclusion ability of blind students in English lessons as well as expectations of a "fully inclusive" environment have also been changed. Students with visual impairments now can also assert their independence during class with their non-disabled peers in class. Thereby, students feel more interested in the subject and English class. Students are more confident and make progress in their studies through active participation in class activities. In addition, they build close friendships with other students through their cooperation and helping their classmates.

5. Conclusion

Currently, the implementation of teaching in the direction of developing students' capacity and quality has been implemented throughout the country according to the orientation of the New High School Program in 2018. With the general orientation of the Ministry of Education and Training, inclusive education is the orientation for educating children with disabilities in general and children with visual impairments in particular. There are still doubts about the ability of blind students to integrate in class with their non-disabled peers among many teachers and in society. The result of this paper has proved that blind students can completely integrate with non-disabled students if teachers adjust their goals, methods and use of teaching aids so that they are suitable, and done at the right time. An inclusive educational environment of good quality is an environment in which not all activities that other students do must be followed by blind students, but an environment in which blind students can participate according to their abilities, under the guidance and adjustment of the teacher so that the students can achieve the lesson goals as closely as possible to the overall goals of the whole class at the highest level. Helping the students achieve their goals with high results in improving their capacity, it is hoped that the proposed solutions will be applied more in other schools and for other students in inclusive classes at Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school in particular and middle schools with inclusive blind students in Hanoi in general.

It can also be seen that technology is not really fully employed in the context of teaching English in Nguyen Dinh Chieu secondary school. Leveraging advancements in technology, such as AI and machine learning, can create more personalized and adaptive learning experiences for blind students. Future research should explore the potential of emerging technologies in special education, even

though with the context of a developing country like Vietnam, this is not very likely to be implemented. However, community and parental involvement should be more comprehensive as engaging the community and parents in the educational process can provide additional support for blind students. Awareness campaigns and workshops can help demystify blindness and promote inclusive attitudes among others. Teaching English to blind students in Vietnam involves addressing numerous challenges, from the lack of accessible materials to insufficient teacher training. However, recent studies and developments indicate that with the right resources, methodologies, and support systems, blind students can achieve significant success in learning English. Future efforts should focus on enhancing resource allocation, improving teacher training, and leveraging technology to create more inclusive and effective learning environments.

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**Giải pháp hỗ trợ học sinh khiếm thị khối 7 nâng cao khả năng hòa nhập
trong giờ học tiếng Anh**

Tóm tắt: Bài báo này nghiên cứu các thách thức và giải pháp cho việc dạy tiếng Anh cho học sinh khiếm thị tại Trường THCS Nguyễn Đình Chiểu, Hà Nội, Việt Nam. Với trọng tâm là giáo dục hòa nhập, nghiên cứu nêu bật những khó khăn mà học sinh khiếm thị gặp phải, như thiếu tài liệu học tập phù hợp, tốc độ đọc và viết chậm hơn, cũng như khó khăn trong việc tham gia các hoạt động trên lớp. Thông qua các khảo sát và phỏng vấn với học sinh và giáo viên, nghiên cứu chỉ ra những khó khăn cụ thể trong các kỹ năng và kiến thức ngôn ngữ, đặc biệt là từ vựng và kỹ năng nghe. Nghiên cứu đưa ra các chương trình hỗ trợ nhằm tăng cường sự hòa nhập của học sinh khiếm thị trong các lớp tiếng Anh, bao gồm thay đổi các hoạt động học tập của học sinh, sử dụng công nghệ hỗ trợ và hỗ trợ cá nhân từ bạn học. Kết quả cho thấy sự cải thiện đáng kể trong sự tham gia và sự tự tin của học sinh, nhấn mạnh tính hiệu quả của các biện pháp can thiệp nhắm đến việc tạo ra một môi trường học tập hòa nhập. Bài báo kết luận bằng việc khuyến nghị tích hợp sâu hơn công nghệ và sự tham gia của cộng đồng để hỗ trợ học sinh khiếm thị trong các lớp học hòa nhập.

Từ khoá: học sinh khiếm thị; Trường Nguyễn Đình Chiểu; giảng dạy tiếng Anh.