

UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING (UDL): ENSURING ACCESSIBLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SETTINGS

Fr. Baiju Thomas

Research Scholar Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute,
Faculty of Disability Management and Special Education,

Jimmy Mathew

Ph.D. Scholar Department of Psychology, Bharathiar University,

Vineesh T J

Ph.D. Scholar Department of Physical Education, Bharathiar University,

ABSTRACT

Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which indicates a manifold of principles and methods, which ensures accessible learning environment for students with special educational needs (SwSEs) in inclusive classroom settings. UDL discourses different learning environment and offers multiple styles of situation for SwSEs. UDL always provides multiple ways of learning discourse to its learners; it is significantly supportive for SwSEs engaged in learning process. These principles of learning framework provide appropriate guidelines for educators for integrating UDL into an accessible learning environment for SwSEs in an inclusive classroom setting. Inclusive education setting builds up a platform for SwSEs to learn in an accessible environment with normal children. UDL framework is very often held as inclusive learning process for all students within their classroom settings. The UDL framework more apprehensive about the problems faced by SwSEs in their classrooms and directs the educators to make use of multiple ways through which learns can easily accessible to the learning environment with liable results. This study explores the significance of UDL in creating a platform for better accessible environment for SwSEs in improving their academic outcomes. The UDL framework makes a task to support all the students with all the possible techniques and strategies to create an accessible classroom environment in the inclusive classroom settings. The authors emphasizes the importance of updating and ensuring accessible learning environment for SwSEs to access into inclusive classroom settings.

Key words: UDL, Accessible Learning Environment, SwSEN, Inclusive Classroom.

INTRODUCTION

UDL develops a new innovative learning for all students to access and develop into the general curriculum by decreasing barriers to learning. Learn more about how UDL proposals options for how information is presented, how students rejoin or determine their knowledge and skills, and how students are involved in learning. UDL formerly comprises three essential principles, which includes multiple means of representation, multiple means of action and expression and multiple means of engagement are greater and clarified by the UDL guidelines (Hall, Strangman & Meyer 2003). A UDL framework aims to advance learning and teaching for all people from the early stage of curriculum progress (CAST, 2011). UDL is a curriculum and learning design framework based in neuroscientific study and fixed on how the brain categorizes processes, organizes, evaluates and rejoins to diverse types of information (Meyer, Rose & Gordon 2014). The UDL principles help all the learners to meet on physical access to the classroom; they speak about the importance on access to all features of learning. The educators and learners would effort together to achieve the best equal of features to learning needs.

UDL has been engaged with students with diverse needs in the leading language, reasoning approaches, culture, or history of the usual classroom, face barriers in accessing information when existing in a method that takes a common related about all learners (Rose, Harbour, Johnston, Daley, & Abarbanell, 2006). Essentially, UDL inspires educators to plan an accessible curricula and learning environments for the widest range of students by decreasing the number of barriers to learning at the outcome. Therefore, the focus is the learning environment, rather than any diverse learners (Rose & Meyer, 2002). UDL inspires a new design that distinguishes and modifies teaching and learning more than traditional design frameworks (Hall, Vue, Strangman, & Meyer, 2004). UDL reassures the offer of flexible and helpful programs that are receptive to students' several needs, skills, talents, interests and experiences (Bernacchio & Mullen, 2007) and social skills (Pliner, & Johnson, 2004). UDL spreads this idea to education by involving enhance in the accepting of how the brain procedures information to the design of curricula that accommodate diverse learning needs. UDL helps all the educators to meet the target of providing a new framework for creating accessible programs those meetings the needs of all learners in an inclusive classroom setting.

STRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATING UDL IN THE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

UDL strategies discourses about inclusive classrooms needs of all learners by providing more flexibility and less barriers to learning. Fostering a learning environment for inclusive classrooms that is well achieved with rich learning and procedures is of the vital importance for student success (Wong & Wong, 2014). UDL was advance by the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) as a process of lesson preparation that helps teachers construct lessons that are effective for the comprehensive use of students in their classrooms (CAST, 2010). UDL contains the useful application of instructional design ideas, pedagogical knowledge, and instructional technology to create teaching that is accessible and interesting to learners across the field of skill (King-Sears, 2009). Those three concepts—representation, expression and engagement—are the foundations of UDL, are the keys to planning inspiring, accessible curriculum for the students with special educational needs in an inclusive classrooms (CAST, 2010). The motivated and well-designed demonstration of technology is significant to proposal of UDL in the classroom (Edyburn, 2006). The increasing diversity in classrooms needs a program design framework that permits educators to select the UDL framework as a new approach to deal with learns in the inclusive classrooms. The UDL guidelines allow them to collaboratively direct through a design procedure in which they expect and overcome barriers for their students to ensure an evocative and pleasant learning experience. Developed for all students, the UDL framework is, first, collaborative in environment to work supportive on curriculum placement for all learners to effectively support their progress in an inclusive context (Hitchcock, Rose, Myer, & Jackson, 2002). A vision of UDL classroom setting would be architecturally planned with diverse needs of student in mind, with things such as learning accessibility structures, which helps educators and learners to manage the inclusive classroom technology. UDL proposals a new design which includes different approaches, teaching learning resources, and assessments that work for everyone in an inclusive classroom settings which finds solutions but somewhat flexible methods that can be modified and used for all.

UDL ACCESS EDUCATION FOR ALL

Focusing on flexibility and reducing barriers to learning, UDL acknowledges that students learn differently and suggests that students with sensory disabilities, learning disabilities, and language or cultural differences need learning environments that meet their particular ways of learning. At the same time, neurotypical learners may also comprehend information more quickly or effectively in a visual or auditory format rather than only through textual means; therefore, they would benefit as well from multiple means of representation that encourage making connections between concepts (CAST, 2012). Adult diverse learners, in particular, benefit from UDL design features that “disrupt the traditional dependency on text with the thoughtful addition of visual and auditory interfaces which tend to be more inclusive” (Crichton & Kinash, 2013), yet course designers must also recognize that some features of online technology can be disabling for students, especially those learners who are not neurotypical, and implementation of UDL is necessary to ensure inclusivity. Two important UDL guidelines include “providing the same information through different modalities . . . [and] providing information in a format that will allow for adjustability by the user” (CAST, 2012). Inclusion of both linguistic and non-linguistic materials and scaffolding are both important as well. UDL can be an appropriate tool for instructional experts. CAST highlights the need to express UDL by “building up programmes and classroom activities to meet the educational needs of the highest number of students” (Zeff, 2007). UDL permits teachers to ponder learner differences, preferences, and needs at the onset of planning and instruction rather than after lessons have been developed for normal learners and then adapted to address individual students’ special educational needs (Edyburn, 2010). In this context, UDL offers to fill the gap residing regarding learning environment in respect to the access of mainstream education to students having diverse learning needs by the inclusion of flexibility in learning (Edyburn, 2010; Rätty, Kontu & Pirttimaa, 2016). There are several methods and technologies, for instance, UDL that have been progressive over the time to enhance the development process and bring these children into the mainstream (Gargiulo and Bouck, 2017). In order to meet the special needs of the learners, it is necessary for educational experts to evaluate the level of assistance they required in the classrooms. As a whole, it is suggests that the multiple instructions of UDL assurances that the learning needs of the special educational needs of learners are appropriately met.

UDL CREATES A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR SWSSENS

UDL is an instructive framework that highlights the use of flexible goals, approaches, resources, and assessments in order to offer effective teaching to a diversity of learners. UDL framework envisions to design an environments and educational settings that are reachable to everyone, with and without disabilities, will decrease the need for individual accommodations (Burgstahler, 2003). The original purpose of UDL is to create a learning environment to ensure access for students with special educational needs and find these accessibility features useful in their daily lives (Conn-Powers, Frazier Cross, Krider Traub, & Hutter-Pishgahi, 2006). UDL module is set up an completely designed programs make it potential for students to have full access to course content despite physical limitations, learning difficulties, behavioral problems, or language barriers (Chodock & Dolinger, 2009). The idea of UDL was introduced earlier in architecture, where physical atmospheres were programs to be accessible to all users regardless of their capacities and needs (Mace, 1997; Rao & Tanners, 2011). In order to solve the problem manifold ways of thoughts are required. Students who received lessons using UDL principles made important gains in reading (Coyne et al., 2012). Including SwSENS in the normal

classroom can be dynamic only when students feel that they are indeed part of the classroom. Moreover, when all the students rightly feel that they are part of the classroom and practice socially reliable with their peers (Eades, S. J., & Stanley, F. J., 2013). UDL framework is mostly used for academic practices, it is the teaching and learning that are envisioned to be barrier free environment to students with and without special educational needs (Rao, Edelen-Smith, & Wailehua, 2015). Relating UDL principles in these ways ensures that each learner has equal chances to learn in a barrier free environment to engage in all aspects of the life settings. As an outcome, all learners experiences inclusion and belonging. Inclusive education can benefit typically developing children and students with special educational needs.

UDL CREATES STRATEGIES FOR CURRICULUM ADAPTATION

The ultimate goal of UDL is to support all students to learn and broaden the most they possibly can and that students should not all be required to fit into the frame of a particular, inflexible curriculum. Education should be familiar in order to accommodate all students and must hold student differences. Individual students learn in diverse ways, and that each student needs to be given the opportunities to learn in ways that work best for him/her and are at a suitable level. UDL is an orientation planned to form teaching in order to offer all students with access to the curriculum (Turnbull et al., 2002). “UDL is prepared on the idea that barriers to education occur in the relationship with the curriculum they are not integrated completely in the capacity of the learner. UDL entitles a change in how educators look at learner modifications. It defines the necessity for a curriculum that can adapt to student needs rather than challenging learners to adapt to an inflexible curriculum.” (Meyer and Rose, 2005). UDL is the exercise of placing flexible approaches into curriculum during the preparation process so that all learners can access to a variety of learning outcome (CAST 2011). UDL is a framework for increasing flexible teaching environments that eases barriers to learning in the curriculum and increases rational access to instruction with the goal of rising expert learners (Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2013). UDL is a “safe of principles for curriculum growth that give all persons equal chances to learn” (CAST, 2014). The notion of UDL is envisioned to mainly discourse the inflexible curricula that negatively affects struggling students (CAST, 2015). Accommodating the diverse nature of our students as well as the principles and approaches of UDL will support educators in the attention of barriers that may delay the learning procedure (CAST 2018). UDL is a method to designing curriculum containing instructional goals, approaches, resources, and assessment that are flexible adequate to accommodate learner differences. Curriculum adaptation is an ongoing powerful process that transforms and adapts the approved programmed of studies to meet the learning desires of a student with special needs. UDL is a method to designing curriculum covering instructional goals, approaches, resources, and assessment that are flexible suitable to house learner modifications. The curriculum symbolizes an essential tool for fostering an extended concept of inclusive curriculum. Therefore inclusive curriculum progress should be seen as a continuous practice and closely associated with social inclusion.

UDL PROVIDES CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY

Technology offers both the teacher and means of demonstrating knowledge in manifold ways, and learners indicating their accepting in numerous ways. Discussion exists in the literature completed the significance of technology. Some commentators (Coyne et al. 2010; Spencer 2011) claim that technology is a key feature of UDL, although others (Courey et al. 2013; King-Sears, 2009). Researchers have reported on learning materials and technological presentations that have been planned with UDL principles in mind (Marino, 2009; Okolo et al.,

2011; Proctor, Dalton, & Grisham, 2007). By using technology, multiple modalities of instruction, flexible assessment, and group activities, students are given choice, which provides them with opportunities to empower themselves as learners leading to student excitement and new energy for learning (Spencer 2011; Stanford and Reeves 2009). Implementation of UDL also requires the usage of technology whenever possible to make content more accessible to students (Edyburn, 2010). There is a need to emphasis on technology concept and infrastructure, providing special support, community participation, teachers training and resourceful funding for implementing UDL for addressing learning needs of students with disabilities in a competent manner (Edyburn, 2010). Use of technologies and multiple components of education provides students with chances to empower themselves as learners (Spencer 2011). While UDL is inadequate to technology, it is often link with UDL (CAST, 2014). Technology can make a modification in supportive student learning, though, this cannot happen by simply providing classrooms with the latest equipment. Instructive technology combination will follow through all mark levels and in all content areas when it is maintain by skillful progress and continuous over period to support all learners in an inclusive classroom settings.

CONCLUSION

UDL framework ensures the inclusive influence of improved access, participation, and progress in achieving standards-based results for SwSEs engaged into learning practices. Teachers engaged in advanced technological practices in classroom are subject to the guideline and principles of UDL to facilitate the learning requirements of students in inclusive classroom settings. UDL guides on making modifications in the enrolment processes of the teachers and provides preparation on implementing innovative ways of teaching that can improve the capacity to evoke, distinguish, and make a high quality education for students with special educational needs. UDL does not function in a vacuum but depends on our capacity to identify change and modification in the content and create access to better learning environment in the school. Using UDL approaches can help students with disabilities to enhance and develop their independence in academic and vocational education tasks and their involvement in classroom activities, along with assisting those to competent with their challenging academic tasks in schooling.

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