

Inclusion and Cognitive Education for Deaf Learners: Perspectives from South Africa and the Usa

CLAUDINE STORBECK¹

DAVID S. MARTIN²

Abstract

The policy and philosophy of inclusion of special-needs learners in educational settings is widespread among developed countries and in some but not all developing countries. The place of cognitive education within such settings is frequently minimal, but should have a significant curricular position; if the place of cognitive education is changed and expanded, a more varied definition of inclusion can be made, both philosophically and practically. However, significant revisions in both administrative practices and teacher education must occur in schools everywhere in both the actual meaning of inclusion and the appropriate place for cognitive education. This article provides a brief overview of the example of deaf learners as a case in point and summarises Deaf Education in South Africa and the USA in terms of the transformation that it has passed through—from an exclusionary, internally disparate system to one that is supposedly inclusive with equality and access for all; the article also raises questions regarding the way in which inclusion is interpreted. In the case of Deaf education, neither the specialised nor inclusive options are sufficiently meeting Deaf learners' needs; the incorporation of a cognitive education programme offers Deaf learners in both contexts the opportunity to truly meet the goal of preparation for the future—in their academic, social, family, and work lives. It is expected that the case of Deaf education may be then extended to other special populations and to their respective need for cognitive education, regardless of their educational placement.

Keywords

Cognitive, education, strategies, metacognition, inclusion, Constitution