

Correctional and Pedagogical Work with Children with Hearing and Speech Impairments in Inclusive Education Settings

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Abstract

This study examines a set of theoretical–methodological and practice-oriented foundations of correctional and pedagogical activity within the framework of inclusive education. A central claim is the principled necessity to reconsider and update educational approaches to teaching learners with hearing and speech impairments, taking into account the combined pressure of a systemic humanitarian crisis and the accelerated digital transformation of the educational environment. The aim of the research is to identify, organize, and conceptually systematize the most effective strategies of multidisciplinary support for persons with special educational needs, with an emphasis on reducing the severity of communicative limitations and removing factors that hinder full participation and interaction in the learning process. The methodological framework is built through an integrated design: a systematized review of current academic sources is combined with a comparative analysis of statistical datasets published by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, and supplemented by a case-study approach implemented on the materials of leading rehabilitation institutions in Dnipropetrovsk oblast. The results indicate a meaningful effectiveness of introducing Ukrainian Sign Language and assistive digital solutions into general education practices, which becomes visible in improved academic outcomes and in strengthened mechanisms of social adaptation. The concluding section formulates applied recommendations aimed at deepening the inclusive competence of teaching staff and at institutional expansion of cross-sector collaboration. The substantive findings and analytical generalizations carry high practical value for specialists in special education, speech and language practice, educational management, and for the research community working on inclusive didactics and social rehabilitation.

Keywords: inclusive education, hearing impairments, speech impairments, correctional pedagogy, Ukraine, sign language, multidisciplinary approach, primary school, digital technologies, special educational needs, social rehabilitation.

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Introduction

The contemporary configuration of Ukraine's educational system is marked by an accelerated shift in methodological reference points, a dynamic shaped by the imperative to guarantee the right to quality learning

under the exceptional challenges of 2024–2025. The scholarly and practical relevance of the stated problem is grounded in the fact that more than 1.6 million children, including children with disabilities, remain under persistent constraints in access to educational services

due to the armed conflict, damage to and loss of infrastructure, and large-scale population displacement [1]. By early 2025, approximately 3,600 educational institutions had been reported as damaged and 371 facilities as fully destroyed, a situation that forced a broad expansion of distance and hybrid learning formats for a substantial share of students [1]. For children with hearing and speech impairments, the negative effects of this transformation tend to intensify: direct visual and auditory interaction with the teacher—often a baseline condition for effective corrective and developmental influence—becomes less available, and in many cases structurally limited.

Materials of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine for the 2024/2025 academic year document a steady increase in inclusive practices at the level of general secondary education: the number of learners with special educational needs reached 47,610, which is 18% higher than the previous year's indicator [2]. At the same time, quantitative growth does not eliminate a methodological deficit. Mechanisms for designing and implementing individualized corrective programs under conditions of educational instability and limited access to in-person services from specialized professionals remain only fragmentarily elaborated. Against this background, the need becomes more acute for an in-depth theoretical analysis of ways to operationalize the biopsychosocial model of disability—whose implementation in Ukraine had been envisaged by July 2025—within the structure of the inclusive classroom, so that sensory and cognitive deficits can be compensated through targeted, instructionally meaningful means rather than through formal declarations [3].

The aim of the study is connected with scientific substantiation and practical verification of the effectiveness of a set of correctional and pedagogical measures intended to reduce communicative and academic barriers among primary school learners with hearing and speech impairments in an inclusive educational environment.

Scientific novelty is defined through the development of the concept of “digital corrective support,” interpreted as a coordinated synchronization of the visual and algorithmic structures of Ukrainian Sign Language with interactive assistive tools that maintain the continuity of the rehabilitation space within hybrid learning.

The author's hypothesis proceeds from the

position that systematic integration of Ukrainian Sign Language in the function of a cognitive mediator, combined with multidisciplinary team-based strategies, contributes to reducing the negative consequences of social deprivation and creates prerequisites for achieving age-appropriate norms of speech development and auditory perception even when the physical presence of specialized professionals is limited.

Materials and Methods

The methodological design of the study was constructed with an orientation toward obtaining comprehensive information on correctional and pedagogical practice under conditions of high uncertainty and heterogeneity of educational settings. A systemic approach was selected as the conceptual foundation, within which the inclusive educational environment is interpreted as a dynamically changing configuration of legal and regulatory instruments, technological resources, and psychological-pedagogical determinants that, taken together, define the practical possibilities for implementing the corrective component.

The empirical and analytical strategy relied on several mutually reinforcing procedures. First, a systematic review of specialized literature was conducted: sources indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, as well as materials available through Springer and IEEE collections over recent years, were analyzed. This made it possible to identify key international trends associated with assistive technologies and the development of inclusive didactics [4]. In addition, a comparative statistical analysis of datasets from the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the Ministry of Health was performed, which allowed the dynamics of inclusion-service coverage among children with sensory impairments to be traced and shifts in parameters of institutional support to be assessed [2]. Of substantial importance was the use of practical case analysis aimed at an in-depth reconstruction of organizational and methodological decisions and support practices implemented at the KZO “Multidisciplinary Educational and Rehabilitation Resource-and-Methodological Center for Correctional Work and Inclusive Education” of the Dnipropetrovsk Regional Council (previously, KZO “NRC ‘Zorianyi’” of the DRC), as well as at Educational and Upbringing Complex No. 28 in the city of Dnipro [6]. The selection of these sites was determined by their status as regional support institutions demonstrating

sustainable models of language support and inclusive integration for children with hearing impairments in the eastern part of Ukraine. To ensure analytical completeness, a content analysis of technical and regulatory documentation was additionally carried out, including the Ministry of Education and Science’s methodological recommendations for 2025, updated rules governing the organization of education for persons with special educational needs under martial law, and the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) standards as a framework reference point for designing an accessible educational environment [8].

Results and Discussion

An analysis of current inclusive processes in Ukraine

makes it possible to register a tense interdependence between the quantitative expansion of the network of inclusive classes and the intensification of qualitative difficulties that emerge when ensuring a robust corrective component. The reform launched in 2017 had, by 2025, reached a stage of institutional consolidation; however, the subsequent sustainability and effectiveness of practices proved to be substantially modified by exogenous wartime factors [16]. Data from the last five years confirm the entrenchment of inclusion as the leading format of education for children with special educational needs: from an approximate cohort of about 25,000 learners in 2020, the corresponding indicator had nearly doubled by 2025.

For greater clarity, Table 1 presents indicators reflecting the development of inclusive education in Ukraine.

Table 1. Summary indicators of inclusive education development in Ukraine (compiled by the author based on [2]).

Parameter	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25*
Number of learners with special educational needs (SEN) in inclusive classes	25,078	32,686	33,861	40,354	47,610
Number of inclusive classes	18,681	23,216	24,995	29,321	33,397
Number of teacher assistants	18,450	21,000	23,500	27,020	30,150
Number of Inclusive Resource Centers (IRCs)	635	667	680	694	712

The recorded dynamics point to a strengthening orientation among families raising children with hearing and speech impairments toward obtaining education in territorially accessible general education institutions. This contributes to a gradual shift in priorities away from schooling models embedded in specialized boarding structures and toward place-of-residence education. At the same time, such a transformation is not neutral with

respect to the school’s resource framework: it presupposes a fundamentally higher level of institutional readiness within mainstream education, expressed in the sufficiency of human resources and the availability of technological infrastructure that can support the stable implementation of corrective and developmental tasks and reduce communicative barriers.

Figure 1 presents a graph of growth in the key indicators of Ukraine’s inclusive system.

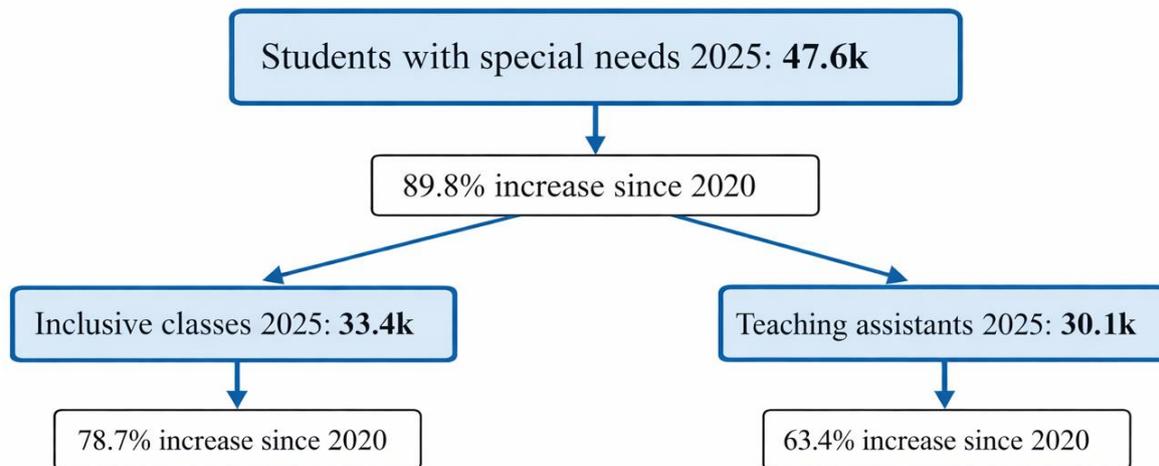


Fig. 1. Graph of growth in the key indicators of Ukraine’s inclusive system (compiled by the author based on [2, 5]).

Organizing correctional and pedagogical work with children who have hearing impairments (deaf and hard of hearing) in an inclusive setting objectively entails a shift in emphasis away from a narrowly medical logic of “fixing a deficit” and toward socio-pedagogical facilitation oriented to accessible communication, participation, and educational attainment. Studies published in 2024–2025 indicate that a decisive condition for success is the use of Ukrainian Sign Language (USL) as the first or anchor language of instruction, providing a stable linguistic base for mastering curricular content and constructing interaction in the classroom [7, 17]. Within this frame, the bilingual model treats USL not as an auxiliary channel for transmitting information, but as a fundamental resource for cognitive development and the formation of learning activity. This position also emerged clearly in professional discussions initiated by the Ukrainian Society of the Deaf (UTOG) in September 2025, where it was emphasized that the absence of guaranteed access to sign language in inclusive practice effectively turns declared inclusion into isolation [9, 18]. The technological support contour aligns with the task of increasing the clarity and stability of speech perception in the typically “noisy” classroom environment: the use of FM systems and Roger solutions, combined with interactive displays, contributes to more reliable access to the teacher’s speech for children using cochlear

implants or hearing aids [19, 23]. A substantial component is the visualization of instructional material and communication, including the use of automatic real-time captions during lessons; empirical evidence suggests that the presence of visual supports reduces cognitive load and allows the pace of learning to remain closer to the class norm without disproportionate losses in comprehension [4].

The practical feasibility of these strategies is, to a significant extent, determined by the quality of staffing and methodological support at the level of specific institutions. In the city of Dnipro, the KZO “Multidisciplinary Educational and Rehabilitation Resource-and-Methodological Center” (“Zoranyi”) has piloted an outreach-support model in which the center’s specialists provide systematic support to teachers in inclusive classes, building their basic competencies in sign-based communication and rehearsing techniques for visualizing the educational process [6]. Such an organizational scheme becomes especially consequential given that, in 2025, only 22% of teachers in inclusive classes demonstrate USL proficiency at a level evaluated as sufficient for full pedagogical interaction [20].

Table 2 below presents the results of a comparative analysis of the effectiveness of communication methods for deaf learners.

Table 2. Comparative analysis of the effectiveness of communication methods for deaf learners (compiled by the author based on [4, 6; 17–21]).

Method	Advantages	Limitations	Effectiveness (10-point scale)
Oral communication (lip-reading)	Maximum integration into a hearing environment.	High fatigue; comprehension typically no more than 30–40% of information.	4/10
Sign language only (within inclusion)	Full access to meaning.	Communication barrier with peers and teachers who do not know USL.	6/10
Bilingual model + technologies	Cognitive development through USL + text supports + auditory access.	Requires high qualification of the entire team.	9/10

Corrective and developmental support for primary school students with severe speech disorders (alalia, aphasia, pronounced forms of dysarthria) in an inclusive educational environment carries a pronounced developmental potential. Regular interaction with typically developing peers produces additional communicative stimuli, expands speech practice, and increases motivational involvement in learning activity. At the same time, in the absence of specialized corrective support, the probability of secondary impairments and complications increases, including the formation of developmental delays and heightened social anxiety as outcomes of persistent communicative failures and limited self-realization within the group.

Empirical findings from 2024 emphasize the importance of purposeful formation of the sound–syllabic structure of words through interactive exercises that provide variable presentation of material and systematic rehearsal of speech units [10]. In inclusive instruction in the city of Dnipro (Educational and Upbringing Complex No. 28), effective solutions are expected to be those aligned with the logic of digital speech therapy, which implies the algorithmization of corrective influence and its transfer into a hybrid format while maintaining diagnostic and training orientation.

A model of corrective influence in a digital environment

is conceptualized as the integration of interrelated procedures aimed at overcoming the leading mechanisms of speech deficit and accompanying learning difficulties. The phonemic component is implemented through the use of mobile applications that provide visualized feedback on articulatory actions, increasing the precision of self-monitoring and the stability of skills for phoneme discrimination and production [24, 25]. A multisensory contour is ensured through tactile–visual schemes that allow sound differentiation with support from additional modalities and reduce the load placed on exclusively auditory–speech mechanisms of information processing. A separate direction concerns compensatory algorithms for manifestations of dyscalculia. Because children with severe speech disorders often display mathematics difficulties mediated by deficits in verbal–logical operations, methodological solutions of psychological and pedagogical support were developed in 2024 that integrate speech correction into the content of mathematics lessons, thereby ensuring coordinated development of language and learning-and-cognitive components [10].

For greater clarity, Figure 2 will present the author’s concept of “Digital Corrective Support” for children with severe speech disorders.

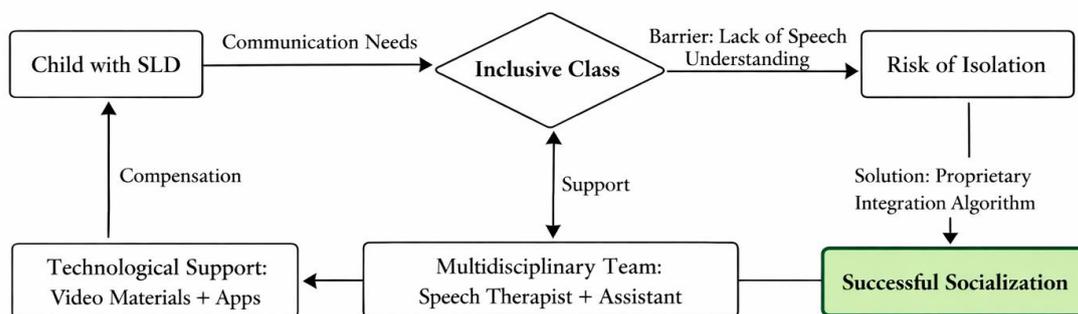


Fig. 2. The author’s concept of “Digital Corrective Support” for children with severe speech disorders (compiled by the author based on [11]).

The updated methodological reference points of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine for 2025 formalize the position that the central organizational and functional mechanism of inclusive schooling is the psycho-pedagogical support team, which ensures coordination between educational instruction and corrective–developmental interventions for learners with special educational needs. The composition of this team includes the teacher, the teacher assistant, a child assistant (when such a need is present), a speech and language therapist, a special education teacher (teacher of the deaf / surdopedagogue), a psychologist, and parents. This reflects both the interprofessional nature of support and an orientation toward continuity of assistance across school and family environments [8].

An empirical reflection on practices accumulated by the author in the Multidisciplinary Center in Dnipro and in

Educational and Upbringing Complex No. 28 makes it possible to state that the effectiveness of correctional and pedagogical measures is to a considerable degree determined by the quality of within-team collaboration and by the alignment of roles. In 2024–2025, against the background of personnel shortages driven by migration processes and the reduced availability of in-person services, a format of tele-inclusion acquires particular weight. This format implies remote consultation of teaching staff by specialists from rehabilitation institutions and resource centers, thereby partially compensating for deficits in specialized expertise and maintaining continuity of support under conditions of limited physical presence of professionals [3].

Table 3 presents a description of the structure of functional interaction among specialists in the inclusive space.

Table 3. Structure of functional interaction among specialists in an inclusive space (compiled by the author based on [8, 11, 12]).

Specialist	Key function in 2024–2025	Tools and instruments
Teacher	Adaptation of the general education curriculum.	Universal Design for Learning (UDL), differentiated assignments.
Teacher assistant	Direct in-class support for the child; adaptation of materials.	Visual schedules, text simplification, assistive devices.
Teacher of the deaf / Speech and language therapist	Corrective–developmental sessions (outside the core lesson).	Probe massage, USL, speech-correction applications.

Child assistant	Social and daily-life support; physical safety in shelters.	Evacuation algorithms, visual alerting tools.
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The analysis makes it possible to distinguish a set of factors that objectively constrain both the pace and the depth of inclusive strategy implementation while simultaneously increasing the vulnerability of the correctional and pedagogical component. One of the most significant is an infrastructure risk associated with the fact that most school shelters lack systems for visual duplication of alarm signals. Under such conditions, learners with hearing impairments can find themselves in a state of informational uncertainty during sudden evacuation, which may provoke panic reactions and behavioral disorganization because critically important information is not accessible in a visual format [12]. Alongside this, an institutional barrier is observed, rooted in the insufficient preparedness of mainstream school teachers to use Ukrainian Sign Language in educational interaction. The formal presence of an assistant does not always produce a compensatory effect, because when professional competence is lacking, the assistant’s role is often reduced to functions of everyday assistance rather than qualified communicative mediation that is needed to sustain the child’s learning activity and participation [20, 22]. An additional layer of constraints is formed by psychological risk: manifestations of “digital fatigue” and stress, reported among 80% of teachers and 14% of learners with disabilities, are associated with reduced efficiency of correctional sessions and an overall decline in the resource capacity of participants in the educational process [1].

In response to these challenges, a model of “Expanded Inclusion” is proposed, implying the organization of “Spilno” zones in schools with UNICEF support, where corrective and developmental work is integrated into play activity and elements of psychological decompression. This arrangement makes it possible to maintain motivational engagement while also reducing emotional strain [13, 14]. The overall results of the study provide grounds to argue that correctional and pedagogical practice within Ukraine’s inclusive system in 2024–2025 has shifted from a predominantly declarative level of support to a stage of technological and methodological adaptation oriented toward the sustainability of solutions in a crisis environment. A substantial conclusion is that inclusion under conditions

of systemic crisis does not reach adequate effectiveness without reliance on developed civil-society mechanisms and international partnership. Initiatives such as UPSHIFT, within which adolescents independently develop sign-language courses for peers, demonstrate an acceleration of social integration through a “bottom-up” logic compared with exclusively directive managerial measures [26, 27].

The significance of resource hubs as institutional “nodes” of resilience within the inclusive system is also confirmed. Institutions such as KZO “NRC Zoriani” accumulate professional expertise in the areas of USL and support for severe speech disorders, functioning as practical points of support for a considerable number of inclusive classes across the oblast [6]. In the context of implementing the biopsychosocial model (July 2025), the functional role of such centers predictably expands: alongside their educational mission, a coordination dimension strengthens, ensuring alignment of the medical, educational, and social-protection domains within a unified logic of child support [3].

Separate consideration is required for language dynamics that influence the content and toolkit of correctional and pedagogical work. The strengthening position of the Ukrainian language in the school environment—visible in an increased share of learners who, in 2024, were 10% more likely to begin using exclusively Ukrainian at home—creates a demand for an operational update of didactic and methodological provision for correctional educators, taking into account language practice and instructional norms [15]. A substantial resource step in this direction is the publication of 535,000 copies of textbooks for learners with special educational needs in 2024, which expands access to adapted materials and increases the potential for targeted pedagogical support [2].

Conclusion

The present study, focused on analyzing correctional and pedagogical support for children with hearing and speech impairments within Ukraine’s inclusive educational system, made it possible to formulate a set of

generalizations that reflect both institutional dynamics and the methodological–technological foundations of effective support.

The functioning of the inclusive model demonstrates pronounced adaptability to external destabilizing influences, as evidenced by the expansion of the network of inclusive classes to 33,397 and the coverage of more than 47,000 learners with special educational needs. The stated research task—connected with ordering and systematizing effective support strategies—was addressed through an analytical description of multidisciplinary formats of specialist interaction that ensure alignment between the instructional contour and the corrective–developmental contour of educational work.

The critical significance of Ukrainian Sign Language in the role of a tool of cognitive compensation has been confirmed, alongside assistive digital technologies as a mechanism that supports the continuity of the corrective process. The developed algorithms of “digital corrective support” conceptualize a practical possibility for reducing risks generated by the distance component of learning and by personnel shortages, through the structuring of visual and interactive support tools and their deliberate coordination with the tasks of corrective and developmental work.

The applied value of the results is defined by the possibility of transferring the proposed models into the activity of Inclusive Resource Centers and general secondary education institutions. Implementing recommendations related to the bilingual approach and to the use of technological visualization instruments (including Speech-to-Text solutions) creates conditions under which the target benchmarks of inclusion become attainable, where inclusion is interpreted as ensured participation of each child in educational and social practices without systemic barriers and without communicative marginalization.

The study materials have high relevance for correctional educators, speech and language therapists, specialists of Inclusive Resource Centers, and the managerial staff of educational institutions responsible for designing and maintaining an accessible environment under the circumstances of the wartime and postwar period.

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