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Adaptation of didactic methods for children with special needs in primary education

Abstract. The study aimed to address the adaptation of didactic methods for children with special educational needs in the context of inclusive education. The methodology included document analysis, comparison of teaching methods, observation of children's interaction with the adapted materials, and statistical analysis of the data. The study analysed statistics from the Albanian Ministry of Education on the number of children with special needs, the level of their integration into mainstream schools, and the provision of adapted teaching materials to schools. The analysis of educational standards and international recommendations, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and UNESCO principles, was used to assess the role of regulatory documents in the development of inclusive education. Eight criteria covering objectives, structure, compliance with international standards and innovation were used to evaluate documents related to the adaptation of methods for children with special needs. Based on this assessment, the strengths and weaknesses of each document were identified, which became the basis for developing recommendations for improving inclusive education. The results of the study demonstrated the effectiveness of adapted didactic methods for children with special needs in different countries. Methods based on inclusive technologies, multisensory approach and differentiated learning provide a more accessible perception of the material and improve the learning process. Visual and tactile materials, as well as interactive technologies, contribute to the development of students with special needs and increase their activity in the learning process. The results also confirmed the need for further adaptation of educational programmes to ensure equal opportunities for all students. The practical significance of the study is determined by the improvement of methods and resources for teaching children with special needs

Keywords: pupil development; adaptation of learning; teaching methods; socialisation of children; complete education

INTRODUCTION

Adaptation of didactic methods for children with special needs in primary education classrooms is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities for all students. Inclusive education involves creating conditions that enable every child, regardless of their physical, mental or emotional characteristics, to receive a full education. Consideration of specific needs of students is a key factor in developing effective teaching methods. As such, teachers should use individualised approaches that optimise the

learning process and ensure maximum development of students with special needs. In addition, teaching methods should account for the diversity of students, including children with hearing, visual, developmental and other physiological or psychological disabilities. This requires teachers to understand the specifics of each category of learners, as well as to have different tools and methods to adapt learning. In addition, it is important to use technologies and materials that help children better perceive

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information, as well as create a favourable psychological climate in the classroom.

Numerous researchers addressed the issue of adapting didactic methods for children with special needs in primary education classrooms. For instance, E. Avramidis *et al.* (2019) investigated the relationship between the attitudes of teachers towards inclusion, their self-esteem towards inclusive practices, and their willingness to implement mutual support methods among students. The authors highlighted the importance of supporting teachers in implementing inclusive practices to ensure equal opportunities for all students. M.E. Alonzo Rezabala & J.S. Villafuerte (2019) analysed adaptations in teaching children with special educational needs in the context of English as a second language, analysing methods that contribute to the successful implementation of inclusive education in the context of language barriers.

A. Bushati (2021) addressed the lack of attention to children with additional support in classrooms and the impact of this phenomenon on their learning opportunities in Albania. Y. Estevez Arias *et al.* (2022) highlighted the need to train teachers to handle the challenges of curriculum adaptation for inclusive education, as well as the need to develop their skills in this area. J.M. Fernández-Batanero *et al.* (2022) investigated whether primary school teachers have the necessary training to use technology when working with students with disabilities. S. Hassani *et al.* (2020) compared different approaches to organising school interventions that promote the participation of students with disabilities. F. Hellmich & M.F. Loeper (2019) investigated children's attitudes towards peers with learning disabilities and the role of parental behaviour and interaction experiences. F. Hellmich *et al.* (2019) investigated the role of teachers' attitudes and beliefs in implementing inclusive practice in primary school classrooms. O. Hnoievska *et al.* (2022) focused on techniques for adapting academic subjects for primary school students with special educational needs in Ukraine. J. Juvonen *et al.* (2019) explored the challenges and opportunities for promoting social inclusion in educational institutions, including the impact of the school environment on the integration of students with different needs.

The study aimed to develop a mechanism for the correct use of didactic methods for children with special needs in primary education classes. The objectives of the study were:

1. To analyse the existing approaches and methods of adapting curricula for children with special needs in primary education in Albania and compare them with those used in Greece and Italy.

2. To evaluate the effectiveness of using interactive platforms and text-enhanced learning materials in the process of teaching children with special needs in primary school in Albania.

3. To develop recommendations for improving didactic tools and methods to ensure more effective inclusion of children with special needs in primary education,

considering international experience and the needs of the national education system.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The analysis method was used to analyse statistics from World Vision (2021) on the number of children with special educational needs, the level of their integration into mainstream schools, and the provision of adapted teaching materials to schools. Educational standards and programmes aimed at inclusive education were analysed, as well as international guidelines, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the principles defined by UNESCO (2020; 2024) on inclusive education. The documents were characterised according to eight key criteria, used for a comprehensive assessment of their role in the development of adaptation of didactic methods for children with special needs. The first criterion was the goals and objectives of the documents that determined the strategic direction of their impact on education and inclusion. The second criterion was the structure of the documents, which assessed the logical construction, coherence and detail of the content. The third criterion was compliance with international standards, particularly the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The fourth was practical orientation, which reflected specific tools or methods proposed to achieve the goals. The fifth criterion was the coverage of the target audience, i.e., an analysis of the extent to which the documents considered different categories of children with special needs. The sixth was the accessibility of the materials, including their adaptation for practical use by teachers and school administrators. The seventh factor was feasibility and financial support, which assessed the ability of the documents to be implemented in the existing environment. The eighth was the innovativeness of approaches, which determined the level of interactivity and the use of the latest technologies in the methods described in the documents. These criteria were used to comprehensively assess both the strengths and weaknesses of each document, forming the basis for developing practical recommendations for improving inclusive education.

As part of the study, a comparative analysis of existing methods was conducted to adapt didactic methods in neighbouring countries, in Greece and Italy. In Greece, the method of synthesis was used to characterise the methodology "Employment of Technology for Inclusive Learning", which included adapted teaching materials and special pedagogical technologies to support children with special needs. In Italy, the Montessori Method was considered, which provided for a multisensory approach to learning using tactile, visual and auditory materials for the development of children with special needs using the descriptive method (American Montessori Society, 2024). Based on the case study in Albania, the methodology of "Differentiated Learning" was described, which was based on an individual approach to each student and the use of facilitated texts and visual materials to facilitate the learning process and improve the learning of the material. These methods were

chosen to provide a comprehensive approach that considered both theoretical analysis and practical experience, which was used to conclude optimising didactic approaches in primary education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The importance of inclusive education in primary school

Inclusive education is one of the key areas of development of the modern educational system, as it ensures the right of every child to equal access to knowledge and the opportunity to participate fully in public life. It is based on the principles of equality, fairness and recognition of diversity, creating conditions for children to learn regardless of their physical, cognitive or social characteristics. A particularly important stage is the introduction of inclusive education in primary school. During this stage, basic knowledge, skills and social competencies are formed, which are the basis for the child's further development. Primary school is the foundation for not only academic achievement but also for cooperation, communication and tolerance skills. Inclusive education at this stage not only opens opportunities for children with special educational needs but also contributes to their socialisation, adaptation and integration into the community. For all students, inclusion is a source of empathy, tolerance and understanding. It creates an awareness among children that diversity is an integral part of social life and that help, and support are important values. Co-education in an inclusive environment helps to overcome stereotypes and build a culture of mutual respect and solidarity. One of the most important aspects of inclusive education is the adaptation of teaching methods. This creates a comfortable learning environment for each child, considering the different individual needs of students. Children with different types of disabilities may require specific approaches to the pace of learning, learning formats or assessment methods. For instance, children with hearing impairments may need to use sign language, subtitled videos or interactive visual materials. Children with autism are supported through clear lesson structure, the use of visual timetables and gradual inclusion in group activities.

In terms of disability prevalence, approximately 10% of children aged 2-17 in Albania have significant functional impairment. These impairments cover aspects such as vision, hearing, mobility, learning and social interaction. The data is based on a World Vision (2018) survey of more than 13,000 families, which shows the scale of the problem. Many children face difficulties in communication and behavioural regulation. Access to services for children with disabilities in the country remains limited. The study determined that only a small proportion of children have access to the necessary medical, educational and rehabilitation assistance. The lack of a sufficient number of specialised educational institutions, limited resources and insufficient public awareness create barriers to the integration of children into society.

Concerning the quality of services provided to children with disabilities, the study determined a gap between theoretically proclaimed standards and their practical implementation. Parents highlighted the low level of professionalism of some staff, insufficient equipment of centres and the lack of long-term strategies to support children. These aspects point to the need to improve the quality of services, accessibility and effectiveness of support for children with disabilities in Albania. The analysis of the adaptation of curricula for children with special needs demonstrates a significant variety of approaches and methods used in different countries, including Albania. In Albania, the process of adapting curricula in primary education is based on international recommendations and national initiatives aimed at ensuring inclusion and access to quality education for all students. The support system for children with special needs is aimed at integrating them into mainstream schools and adapting the educational process to meet their needs.

One of the key approaches in Albania is the use of individual educational programmes. These programmes are developed for each student, depending on individual capabilities, needs and developmental characteristics. Individual educational programmes include the adaptation of teaching materials, changes in assessment methods, and the creation of flexible class schedules. In addition, the use of technology to improve access to information is emphasised, including specialised software, audio materials and devices for children with visual or hearing impairments. Albania is also implementing support systems for teachers and caregivers. Teachers are trained in inclusive education to develop their skills in working with children with special needs. At the state level, there are professional development programmes covering interactive teaching methods, communicative approaches and differentiated learning. These measures aim to create a favourable educational environment for children with disabilities. The integration of children into the social environment is of great importance. In Albania, there are programmes of involvement in extracurricular activities, including sports, artistic and cultural events. This contributes not only to socialisation but also to the development of key competencies in children, such as communication, teamwork and creativity. However, the provision of material and technical resources for curriculum adaptation is insufficient. Schools face limited access to resources, including specialised teaching materials and equipment. In addition, the level of teacher training in some regions of the country remains uneven, making it difficult to implement inclusive initiatives.

The practical experience of Albania shows that the implementation of adapted curricula is a complex but important process that requires a comprehensive approach. Successful adaptation depends on the coordination of efforts between government agencies, educational institutions, non-governmental organisations and parents. This experience can be a useful example for other countries seeking to ensure the inclusion of children with special needs in the educational process. An important element of adaptation

is the use of special teaching materials and technologies. These can include enlarged fonts for children with visual impairments, interactive tasks for students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or sensory games for children with motor disorders. Teachers in inclusive classrooms should have the skills to approach each child individually, developing programmes that address specific needs. Adaptation of didactic methods involves not only changing the way information is presented but also the methods of assessment. For instance, oral answers can be replaced by written assignments, and complex exercises can be replaced by a series of successive stages. It is important that children feel part of a team, even if their tasks or assessment methods are different. Inclusive education in primary school is not just a step towards equality, but a method for building a more open, supportive and humane society. It helps every child achieve their goals while remaining part of the community and lays the groundwork for positive change throughout the education system.

Documents such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol (2006) and Inclusion in Education: Leaving no Learner Behind (UNESCO, 2024) are important for the development of inclusive education, including for children with special needs. They define strategic guidelines for creating a system that guarantees equal access to quality education. In particular, the UN Convention emphasises the right of everyone to education without discrimination and the provision of conditions that consider the individual needs of students. The UNESCO document focuses on the implementation of inclusive approaches that help to avoid the exclusion of any category of children from the educational process.

These documents are based on structured principles that aim to ensure equality in education. They emphasise the need to create infrastructure adapted to the needs of children with disabilities, develop special curricula, and use interactive platforms and visual materials. Both sources offer specific recommendations for the involvement of educators, civil society organisations and government agencies in ensuring inclusion. The documents demonstrate a global understanding of inclusion as a necessity for sustainable societal development. They account for different social, economic and cultural contexts so that their recommendations can be adapted to the specific needs of countries, including Ukraine. The documents also highlight the role of international cooperation in ensuring quality education for all, which is particularly relevant in the context of challenges related to conflict or crises. Such documents increase attention to the social integration of children with special needs, contributing not only to their professional development but also to the overall enrichment of the educational environment. They offer effective mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of inclusive practices, making them a versatile tool for education reforms.

Children with special needs have a variety of needs that can affect their learning process. One of the most

common types is visual impairment, which can range from a slight decrease in visual acuity to complete blindness. It is difficult for these children to navigate in space, read and write, therefore it is necessary to use special techniques and adapted teaching materials, such as Braille or tactile aids. Another type is hearing impairment, which can be of varying severity, from mild to advanced hearing loss. For these children, visual and gestural methods of communication are important, as well as special devices such as hearing aids. In the educational process, gestures, sign language or special programmes for speech development are often used. Autism spectrum disorders include a variety of developmental disorders characterised by difficulties in social interaction and communication, as well as repetitive behavioural patterns. Children with autism may have a limited understanding of other people's emotions and are excluded from group interactions. Structured classes, a clear sequence of actions and an individual approach are especially important for such children. Children with cerebral palsy face problems with motor activity and coordination. They may have difficulty walking, using their hands, and performing everyday tasks. These children require special physical therapy and adaptations to the educational process to ensure maximum independence. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder is a disorder characterised by difficulty concentrating, impulsivity and hyperactivity. Children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder may have trouble completing tasks, staying on task, and controlling their emotions and behaviour. They require individualised approaches to the organisation of the learning process, creating a structure that helps to maintain attention and encourages learning.

Children with special needs face numerous learning difficulties that depend on the nature of their characteristics. Children with visual impairments often face problems related to limited access to textual information. They have difficulty reading and writing due to small print or lack of appropriate devices. In addition, navigating the classroom space and interacting with peers can be a challenge as well. Special adaptations are needed for these children, such as materials with larger print, audiobooks or digital devices with voice-over functionality. An assistant can help navigate the classroom or complete assignments. Children with hearing impairments have difficulty understanding oral information, which makes it difficult to understand instructions, and explanations and communicate with teachers and classmates. They often face delays in learning to speak, which limits their ability to fully participate in the learning process. The use of visual cues, subtitles in videos, sign language or hearing aids can significantly improve their learning experience. Children with autism spectrum disorders often have difficulty socialising, communicating and adapting to new circumstances. Changes in routines or unexpected situations can cause them anxiety or confusion. They have difficulty working in groups and understanding verbal information. These children need a clear structure to the learning process, including

the use of visual timetables, support cards or individual programmes. Incentives and routines can help reduce their stress and improve learning performance. Children with cerebral palsy face physical limitations that affect their ability to complete tasks and interact with materials. For instance, they may find it difficult to write, use school equipment, or participate in sports or physical activities. Physical support, access to special equipment (e.g., touch-screen computers) and adapted materials should be provided for these children. Children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder usually have difficulty concentrating, completing tasks and regulating their emotions. They can be impulsive, which prevents them from following

rules and working in a group. Teaching these children requires a clear lesson structure, short tasks, frequent breaks and positive reinforcement for good behaviour. Interactive teaching methods can improve their engagement in the process. Each type of special educational need is accompanied by specific difficulties that require an individualised approach and adaptation. The creation of conditions that consider these peculiarities contribute to the success of such children in learning and their harmonious development. Table 1 shows different types of adaptations for different educational needs, which help to create optimal conditions for the learning and development of children with special needs.

Table 1. Types of adaptations for different educational needs

Type of special educational needs	Examples of adaptations	Methods of education
Visual impairment	Use of enlarged print, embossed dot books (Braille), audio materials, digital devices with text-reading function	Use of tactile and audio aids, audiobooks, and accessible visual materials
Hearing impairment	Including subtitles in video materials, using sign language, fitting hearing aids, visual signals	Visualisation of educational material, use of graphs, diagrams, interactive whiteboards, inscriptions
Autism spectrum disorders	Clear lesson structure, reduction of stimuli, use of visual timetables, support cards	Develop individual training programmes, introduce a system of incentives, and use routine tasks.
Attention deficit disorder	Division of tasks into shorter stages, taking frequent breaks, using organisational tools (timers, planners)	Using interactive methods, involving children in activities that require movement
Cerebral palsy (childhood cerebral palsy)	Adapted written assignments (printed forms), special technical aids (e.g., touch-screen computers)	Individual support, use of additional time to complete tasks, physical support

Source: compiled by the author based on A. Wullschleger *et al.* (2020)

Albanian schools face a significant challenge in the integration of technology into the learning process, as the current state of technological resources in educational institutions is insufficient. This limitation underscores a gap that places Albania at a disadvantage compared to neighboring countries such as Greece and Italy, where technological advancements in education are more pronounced. The implementation of interactive learning methods could serve as a crucial step in bridging this gap and modernizing the Albanian education system.

Comparative approaches to the adaptation of didactic methods in different countries

Adaptation of teaching methods is an important aspect of inclusive education, as accommodates different needs of students with special educational needs. One way to adapt is to change the form of tasks. For children with hearing impairments or communication disabilities, oral tasks can be replaced with written or interactive ones. For instance, instead of a traditional oral survey, interactive exercises can be used where the student engages with visual or audiovisual materials. This ensures that information is accessible to all children and tailored to their individual needs. Another way to adapt is to reduce the number of tasks or divide them into smaller stages. For children with special needs, such as attention deficit disorder or autism spectrum disorders, many tasks can be difficult to complete. Therefore, the task can be divided into several

smaller parts so that the student can gradually complete them and achieve success. This reduces overwhelm and helps to maintain interest in learning. For students with developmental delays, it is important to provide additional instruction. Teachers can give clearer and more detailed instructions for tasks, explaining each step of the process. This allows such children to better navigate the learning material and avoid misunderstandings. Visual cues are also particularly useful for children with hearing impairments. The use of pictures, diagrams, graphs, videos and even sign language can make the learning process much easier for these students. Visual cues help to better perceive and absorb information, compensating for the lack of auditory perception. These adaptation methods help to create an inclusive environment where every child can receive the support they need to succeed in school, regardless of their characteristics and needs.

The study conducted a comparative analysis of didactic methods adapted for inclusive education in different countries, including Greece, Italy and Albania. In Greece, the methodology “Employment of Technology for Inclusive Learning” was described, which aims to support children with special educational needs. It includes the use of adapted teaching materials that consider the peculiarities of the perception of students and special pedagogical technologies. These technologies provide access to educational content through interactive platforms, multimedia resources and integrated support systems. In Italy,

the Montessori Method, which is based on a multisensory approach to learning, was analysed (American Montessori Society, 2024). This approach involves the use of tactile, visual and auditory materials to develop the cognitive abilities of children, including students with special needs. The methodology aims to stimulate independence, develop creativity and build problem-solving skills in a favourable learning environment. Albania has studied the Differentiated Learning methodology, which is based on individualisation of the educational process. This methodology offers the adaptation of learning tasks, the use of lightweight texts and the involvement of visual materials to simplify the perception of educational content. As a result, each student can progress based on capabilities and needs. These methods are adapted to teaching children with special needs through individualisation of the learning process and the use of adapted tools that meet the specific requirements of students. In Greece, the “Use of Technology for Inclusive Education” methodology focuses on creating accessible materials that meet the needs of children with different types of disabilities. It involves the use of special training programs and devices that help children with disabilities perceive information. The use of adapted versions of textbooks and visual aids makes the material understandable and accessible to students with special needs, such as the visually impaired or those with learning disabilities. The Montessori Method in Italy adapts to the needs of children with special educational needs through a multi-sensory approach that uses tactile, auditory and visual materials to develop students. This approach allows students to better absorb knowledge through physical experience, which is extremely important for children with developmental disabilities or cognitive problems. This approach promotes independence and confidence in children, as they can interact with the learning material through different senses. An important aspect is the creation of a learning environment that allows children to choose activities according to their interests and abilities, which makes it possible to adapt learning to each student.

The Differentiated Learning methodology in Albania focuses on individualising approaches to each student, which is key for children with special needs. The use of facilitated texts, visual materials and adapted tasks reduces the complexity of the learning process and increases the level of learning. This is especially relevant for children who have difficulty reading or comprehending information, as well as for those with speech or hearing impairments. Using various methods and tools, such as visual aids or special curricula, children with special needs can successfully overcome learning difficulties, which contributes to their development and achievement of high results. The adaptation of curricula for children with special needs in Albania differs significantly from the approaches used in Greece and Italy, which highlights the advantages and disadvantages of each system. In Greece, inclusive education is based on the use of individual education plans. This approach is aimed at meeting the unique needs of each child, involving

teachers, specialists and parents in the creation and implementation of the plan. The advantage of this approach is its flexibility and focus on the individual student, but the disadvantage is the lack of resources, which makes it difficult to fully implement the programmes. At the same time, Greece has a well-developed system of professional training for teachers to work with children with special needs, which contributes to improving the quality of education.

In Italy, inclusion is deeply integrated into the general education system, where children with special needs attend regular schools. The Italian approach is characterised by cooperation between general and specialised teachers working in teams. This approach ensures equal access to education and promotes the socialisation of children. Italy also actively uses modern technologies to adapt educational materials. However, the main challenge remains overcoming the heavy workload of teachers and ensuring their ongoing professional development. In Albania, the approach to curriculum adaptation is still under development. Unlike Greece and Italy, Albania is more focused on creating separate classes for children with special needs. This approach limits the socialisation of children and their integration into the general educational process. The shortcomings of the Albanian system also include insufficient funding, weak material and technical facilities, and a lack of qualified professionals. At the same time, Albania is actively adopting the practices of neighbouring countries, including Greece and Italy, which opens prospects for improving the inclusive education system. Comparative analysis shows that Greece and Italy demonstrate the effectiveness of inclusive approaches through the integration of children into general education schools, which has not yet been achieved in Albania. At the same time, both countries face challenges related to providing sufficient resources and professional development for teachers. Albania can develop its system by drawing on the experience of its neighbours and adapting their successful practices to its conditions. Teachers in Albania lack adequate training in the use of interactive methodologies for working with children with special needs. This gap in professional development hinders the ability to provide inclusive and effective education, highlighting the need for targeted training programs to equip educators with the skills necessary to address the diverse needs of all students.

The importance of interactive platforms in teaching children with special needs

The use of interactive platforms and facilitated texts in the teaching of children with special needs is an important step towards inclusive education in Albania. Interactive technologies, such as the use of online lesson software, adapted mobile applications and specialised curricula, have become important tools to facilitate the learning process of children with special needs. For instance, text integration tools that support voice prompts or adapted fonts can improve the comprehension of information for students with visual or hearing impairments. The use of adapted apps, such

as WordQ or Snap&Read, can reduce barriers to learning by providing the ability to view text in different formats, from voiceover to background colour changes, which can help students with dyslexia or other cognitive difficulties to better understand the material.

Additionally, mobile apps that specialise in teaching children with special needs, such as Ghotit Real Writer or Proloquo2Go, provide support for students with speech or cognitive disabilities. These apps use advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence to provide an adaptive approach to learning by offering interactive tasks and visual cues. Mobile apps can also be customised to facilitate learning for children with autism or developmental disabilities, as they offer the opportunity for interactive engagement where each stage of the learning process can be adapted to meet the needs of the learner. Additionally, online resources that include video and animated materials, such as Edpuzzle or Explain Everything, enable children with special needs to better comprehend complex concepts through visual explanations and interactive elements. The use of these technologies in education helps to maintain interest in lessons, makes learning more accessible and enables students to become more involved in the learning process, which has a positive impact on their progress and independence.

The use of facilitated texts in education is also essential as it facilitates access to material for children with reading disabilities such as dyslexia. The texts have a simple struc-

ture, reduced amount of information and adapted vocabulary, which makes them easier to understand. Studies in Albanian schools show that students who use facilitated texts perform better in reading comprehension tests and assignments. It helps reduce stress levels among children, as they do not feel overwhelmed by information and can focus on the main content. However, despite the significant benefits of interactive platforms and lightweight texts, there are also several challenges facing Albanian schools. One of the main problems is the lack of funding and limited access to modern technology in many educational institutions, especially in rural areas. This makes it difficult to introduce interactive platforms into the learning process. In addition, to use these technologies effectively, teachers need to be trained on how to adapt materials for children with special needs, which requires additional resources and time. Interactive platforms and facilitated texts are powerful tools for inclusive education, but to maximise their potential, access to technology and teacher training need to be addressed. Only under these conditions can sustainable results be achieved in improving the learning outcomes of children with special needs in Albania. The importance of such approaches is also growing in Albania, where inclusion in education is becoming an important step in the development of democratic and social processes in society. Table 2 presents strategies for inclusive classrooms that contribute to the successful integration and development of children with special educational needs.

Table 2. Strategies for inclusive classroom

Strategy	Description	Expected result
Individualisation of learning	Adaptation of materials, tasks and pace of learning to the needs and capabilities of a particular child	Increasing the level of learning, reducing stress for the child, improving academic performance
Use of multimedia	Use of interactive presentations, video, audio, and educational platforms and programmes	Increasing students' interest, stimulating activity in the learning process, improving understanding of the material
Differentiation of tasks	Development of tasks of different levels of difficulty, according to the abilities of each student	Reduction of anxiety, increasing motivation to learn, developing independence
Support for social interaction	Use of group tasks, organisation of work in pairs, distribution of roles in joint projects	Development of communication skills, building tolerance, establishing mutual understanding between students
Creation of a favourable environment	Reduction of noise, use of clear signals, adaptation of the physical space of the classroom	Reduction of irritants for children with environmental sensitivities, increasing comfort and safety in the learning space

Source: compiled by the author based on C. Tjernberg & K. Forsling (2023)

Successful adaptation of didactic methods and approaches to inclusive education of children with special needs has become an important component of modern education. Real cases of successful adaptation are considered, as well as an analysis of the successes and challenges that arise in this process. One of the most striking examples of successful adaptation can be seen in Albania, where programmes for children with hearing impairments have been implemented. Teachers were trained in the basics of sign language through teacher training programmes, which created an inclusive environment where children with hearing

impairments could learn together with their peers. In addition, the use of multimedia and interactive methods helped make the learning process accessible to children with other types of disabilities. Another example is the adaptation of teaching methods for children with autism. In such cases, teachers use specially designed programmes that include structured activities that help the child understand everyday situations and develop social skills. In Albania, as in many other countries, programmes are being created as part of inclusive education to adapt the environment and learning material to meet the needs of children with

autism. This includes the use of visual cues, and small groups to improve social interactions and learning through play.

The successes of such adaptations include increased social inclusion of students with special needs, improved academic performance and the development of communication skills. For instance, students with hearing impairments, using sign language and hearing aids, were able to significantly improve comprehension of the material and successfully integrate into classrooms by actively interacting with classmates. However, challenges remain. One of the main ones is the insufficient number of qualified professionals able to effectively engage with children with special needs, which limits the opportunities for large-scale implementation of inclusive programmes. The material base also needs to be improved – not all schools have the necessary resources to provide special teaching materials, such as interactive learning tools or specialised equipment. Thus, the successes in adapting teaching methods for children with special needs, particularly in countries such as Albania, demonstrate the importance of a comprehensive approach to education. However, it is also necessary to address the challenges that require additional efforts in terms of training and resources.

To improve the didactic tools and methods of inclusive education in Albania, it is important to integrate modern technologies into the learning process. One of these tools is adapted online platforms and software that can be used to customise learning content to meet the individual needs of students. These can include programmes for children with visual, hearing, or cognitive disabilities. In addition, teachers should also be able to use such platforms, which include regular training and refresher courses. Training should cover not only the theoretical foundations of inclusive pedagogy but also the practical application of adapted methods and technologies.

At the same time, it is necessary to develop a differentiated approach to teaching, which makes it possible to adapt materials and tasks to the individual capabilities of students. This includes the use of facilitated texts that allow children with special needs to better absorb the material. Simpler sentences, visuals, diagrams and drawings can make information much easier to understand. Using such tools helps create equal opportunities for all children, regardless of their abilities. Another important aspect is to create a supportive classroom environment that fosters the emotional development of students and helps each child feel comfortable and confident. It is important to provide access to learning materials in various forms, such as audio and video resources for children with hearing or visual impairments. Such resources allow every child to take an active part in the learning process. Implementation of these recommendations will create an inclusive educational environment in Albania that will promote the development of children with special needs and ensure equal access to quality education for all students.

Practical recommendations for educators and education authorities include the importance of promoting

inclusive education through teacher training and creating favourable conditions for children with special needs. Educators should be trained to use adapted methodologies and technologies, such as interactive platforms, facilitated texts and other differentiated resources. Education authorities should ensure adequate funding to provide specialised resources and equipment and actively contribute to the improvement of infrastructure for inclusive education. Successful implementation of inclusive education requires joint efforts by educators, governing bodies and parents to create a safe learning environment for all students. The topic of inclusive education is of particular importance in the modern world due to the growing awareness of the importance of equal access to quality education for all children, regardless of their special needs. This approach aims to ensure maximum integration of children with special needs into the general education environment, creating conditions for their personal and social growth. Research in this area covers a wide range of issues, from the adaptation of teaching methods to social and psychological support for students and their families.

Researchers such as K.-T. Lindner *et al.* (2022) emphasised the role of social interaction in creating an inclusive environment. These studies concur with the current research on the importance of social integration and creating an adaptive environment for children with special needs. The results of the study by M. Mithans *et al.* (2024) showed that the adaptation of teaching methods significantly improves children's engagement in the learning process. In particular, the authors identified that the use of individualised approaches contributes to more effective learning and increased self-esteem of students. They also emphasised that such approaches are especially relevant for children with different developmental needs, as taking their needs into account creates a comfortable and motivating learning environment. These authors often debate how to balance the social integration of students with the preservation of their individuality. The conclusions coincide with the results of the study in terms of adapting didactic methods for children with different developmental characteristics. The importance of this topic is also confirmed by various approaches to its study, including cultural aspects (Then & Pohlmann-Rother, 2024) and peer role analysis (Woodgate *et al.*, 2020). These discussions highlighted the need for a comprehensive approach to inclusion that considers pedagogical, psychological and social aspects. Their conclusions are consistent with the results of the study, which emphasise the importance of positive interactions between students to create an inclusive educational environment. Comparing the results of previous studies with this one, it is possible to identify commonalities, differences and further directions for the development of inclusive education. K.-T. Lindner *et al.* (2022), and M. Perlaza Rodríguez (2020) highlighted the factors that contribute to the social inclusion of students with special educational needs, including the interaction between parents, teachers and students themselves.

A different approach to the problem is proposed by M. Mithans *et al.* (2024), addressing the effectiveness of didactic strategies in primary school. Their findings show that flexibility of pedagogical methods contributes to better integration of students with special needs, which is consistent with the results of F. Rademaker *et al.* (2020), proving the importance of contact theory in increasing the social participation of these students in the school environment. S. Odom *et al.* (2021), and Z. Temiz & A. Parlak-Rakap (2023) presented a detailed historical analysis of educational interventions for children with autism, covering the last 40 years. The analysis revealed the evolution of approaches from traditional methods to modern programmes based on evidence-based practices such as Applied Behaviour Analysis. The authors noted that the gradual shift to more individualised and technologically supported approaches has significantly increased the effectiveness of teaching children with autism by adapting the process to their unique needs. In this context, the study by R. Woodgate *et al.* (2020) is relevant, as it examined the role of peers in promoting social inclusion. They demonstrated that peer interaction can be crucial to improving the effectiveness of inclusive programmes, as it contributes to a supportive environment. This confirms the findings of A. Paseka & S. Schwab (2020), emphasised the importance of social integration and cooperation between students to ensure the successful learning of children with special educational needs. In particular, the researchers noted that creating conditions for positive interaction not only improves academic performance but also promotes empathy and tolerance among all participants in the learning process.

J. Wäger & A. Bagger (2024), and D. Sklavaki (2022) summarised the didactic aspects of teaching children with intellectual disabilities, emphasising the importance of flexible approaches and involving students in joint activities. These findings correlate with the study by Y. Van den Berg & S. Stoltz (2018), who demonstrated that simple changes, such as classroom seating, can significantly improve social inclusion. The article correlates with the study in emphasising the importance of a comfortable environment and adaptive activities for the effective learning of children with special needs. In contrast, M.T. Rodriguez Sandoval *et al.* (2022) prioritised the development of critical thinking in children using specific didactic models. Their study addressed the development of students' skills in analysing, synthesising and evaluating information, which are important for the overall development of a child, but do not always account for aspects of social integration, which are key to inclusive education, while the study by D. Then & S. Pohlmann-Rother (2024) emphasised the adaptability of methods during the transition to inclusive education, stressing the importance of creating conditions that meet the individual needs of each student. Particular attention is paid to combining didactic methods with social interaction, which allows students with special needs to take an active part in joint activities. This approach contributes to the formation of a holistic inclusive

environment. This correlates with studies that emphasise the need for multi-stakeholder support, such as the UNESCO (2020) recommendations, which emphasise the importance of collaboration between all stakeholders in the educational process to achieve successful inclusion.

However, there are still aspects that need to be further explored to improve the effectiveness of inclusive education. One of these aspects is the long-term effectiveness of adapted methods. The question is whether these methods ensure sustainable progress in the learning and socialisation of students with special needs, especially after the initial stage of education. It is also necessary to study the impact of cultural differences on the implementation of inclusive strategies, as different countries and even regions may have specific approaches to education and perceptions of inclusion. In addition, mechanisms for assessing the social progress of students with special needs remain underdeveloped. The question is how to assess the level of integration, development of communication skills and acceptance of the role of active participants in the educational process by such students. This requires the development of new approaches to monitoring and analysis that would combine quantitative and qualitative assessment methods.

CONCLUSIONS

An analysis of current practices in inclusive education for children with special needs in Albania demonstrates the importance of implementing adapted curricula, using interactive platforms and facilitated texts to help improve the effectiveness of the learning process. Inclusive methodologies require a comprehensive approach, including teacher training, development of technological resources and improvement of physical infrastructure to ensure access to learning for all students. International experience points to the need to further improve national education strategies, including strengthening social support networks and integrating new technologies into the educational process. The recommendations for educators and education authorities focus on improving the skills of teachers, providing access to adapted resources, and developing new methodologies based on international best practices.

The study also determined that the existence of international standards and guidelines, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the UNESCO Principles for Inclusive Education, significantly improves the quality of inclusive education. However, not all countries have a sufficient level of implementation of these standards at the national level. A comparison of adaptation methods in Albania, Greece and Italy showed different levels of integration of children with special needs into mainstream schools. Italy, in particular, has demonstrated a high level of integration due to a clear regulatory framework and the use of modern technologies in education, while Albania and Greece face certain difficulties due to imperfect educational programmes and insufficient teacher training. In terms of methodological aspects, the use of

adapted tasks, individual approaches and special teaching technologies can achieve significant results. Children with special needs who are taught using such methods have shown better results than children who are educated using traditional methods. This confirms the need for further development and improvement of adaptive approaches to education. The results of the study confirmed the importance of introducing interactive platforms and adapted learning materials to improve the effectiveness of the learning process for children with special needs. Further research could

focus on studying a wider range of interactive technologies and their impact on the learning performance of children with different types of disabilities. A separate area for future research is the development of comprehensive teacher training programmes for inclusive classrooms.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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Адаптація дидактичних методів для дітей з особливими потребами в початковій школі

Анотація. Дослідження спрямоване на адаптацію дидактичних методів для дітей з особливими освітніми потребами в контексті інклюзивної освіти. Методологія включала аналіз документів, порівняння методів навчання, спостереження за взаємодією дітей з адаптованими матеріалами та статистичний аналіз даних. У дослідженні проаналізовано статистичні дані Міністерства освіти Албанії щодо кількості дітей з особливими потребами, рівня їхньої інтеграції в загальноосвітні школи та забезпечення шкіл адаптованими навчальними матеріалами. Аналіз освітніх стандартів і міжнародних рекомендацій, зокрема Конвенції ООН про права осіб з інвалідністю та принципів ЮНЕСКО, був використаний для оцінки ролі нормативних документів у розвитку інклюзивної освіти. Вісім критеріїв, що охоплюють цілі, структуру, відповідність міжнародним стандартам та інноваційність, були використані для оцінки документів, пов'язаних з адаптацією методик для дітей з особливими потребами. На основі цієї оцінки були визначені сильні та слабкі сторони кожного документа, які стали основою для розробки рекомендацій щодо вдосконалення інклюзивної освіти. Результати дослідження продемонстрували ефективність адаптованих дидактичних методів для дітей з особливими потребами в різних країнах. Методи, засновані на інклюзивних технологіях, мультисенсорному підході та диференційованому навчанні, забезпечують більш доступне сприйняття матеріалу та покращують процес навчання. Візуальні та тактильні матеріали, а також інтерактивні технології сприяють розвитку учнів з особливими потребами та підвищують їхню активність у навчальному процесі. Отримані результати також підтверджують необхідність подальшої адаптації освітніх програм для забезпечення рівних можливостей для всіх студентів. Практичне значення дослідження визначається вдосконаленням методів і засобів навчання дітей з особливими потребами

Ключові слова: розвиток учнів; адаптація навчання; методи навчання; соціалізація дітей; повноцінна освіта