

Easy to read standard in special education – opportunities and challenges

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The „Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” [Convention] ensures all people the right to information. Article 21 of this document states that persons with disabilities have the right to receive and disseminate information and views on an equal basis with others. The right to information, however, does not mean ensuring access to it. Therefore, the Convention obliges the countries that have signed it not only to enable persons with disabilities to exercise the right to information, but also the right to access information. Poland ratified this convention in 2012. One way to ensure communication accessibility is easy-to-read text. In materials and documents providing the definition of easy language, we can read that it is a way of presenting information that is friendly to people who have problems with reading and understanding. It is a simpler language than plain language, intended for anyone who can read and understand, but needs a simple message to obtain information faster and easier, without the need to analyze it. Easy Language is intended for people with cognitive difficulties, such as intellectual disabilities, neurological diseases or injuries. The Education Law Act of December 14, 2016 [Ustawa Prawo oświatowe] gives all children in Poland the right to education. It seems that, moving towards inclusive education, we should consider writing school textbooks in line with the assumptions of universal design, i.e. available to all students, including those with special educational needs. In our presentation, we will discuss the issue of communication accessibility in the education of students with disabilities in Poland. The analysis of teaching materials available on the Polish market prepared in the ETR standard will be deepened by research in target groups. The analysis of the research material aims to answer the questions about the threats and opportunities for using this standard in the education of students excluded from communication due to limitations in the use of the Polish language. Research results show that easy-to-educate texts are not always effective. We will show this on the example of materials developed for the subject "Polish language". It is also important to remember that ETR limits learners' exposure to the authentic language spoken by the majority of the population in a given country.

References:

Convention On The Rights Of Persons With Disabilities,
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