

Review paper

Constructing ‘Weak Students’: Deficit Discourses and Linguistic Marginalisation in Special Education

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ABSTRACT

Deficit-oriented language continues to shape how students with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified, discussed, and taught. This critical narrative review examines how descriptions such as “weak,” “low ability,” and “problematic” construct learner identities and legitimise particular educational responses. It focuses on the operation of deficit discourse across teacher talk, assessment, referral, behavioural policy, and institutional practice, while also examining tensions between diagnostic provision and neurodiversity-affirming critique. An iterative, conceptually guided search of OpenAlex and ERIC covered English-language peer-reviewed literature published from January 2015 to March 2026, supplemented by foundational works in Critical Applied Linguistics, disability studies in education, raciolinguistics, and inclusive education. Sources were selected purposively according to their relevance to the review questions, producing an interpretive corpus of 22 substantive publications; Snyder (2019) was additionally used as a methodological source. The synthesis generated five themes: the individualisation of educational difficulty; labels, expectations, and learner identity; linguistic normativity and intersectional marginalisation; the institutional persistence of medicalised and ableist models; and neurodiversity-informed alternatives. Findings show that deficit discourse can lower expectations, narrow participation, and obscure environmental barriers. However, diagnostic language may also enable recognition and resource access, and neurodiversity perspectives contain unresolved tensions concerning impairment, support needs, and terminology. The review argues for critical language awareness combined with continued access to specialised support, and offers implications for teacher education, assessment, and inclusive school practice.

Keywords: deficit discourse, linguistic marginalisation, special education, inclusive education, neurodiversity, ableism, educational labelling

Language is central to the ways educational systems define difference, allocate support, and construct academic legitimacy. Descriptions such as “weak student,” “low ability learner,” “slow,” “disorganised,” or “problematic” may appear to report observable performance, yet they also position learners in relation to institutional norms. Repeated across teacher talk, assessment reports, referral documents, and policy, such terms can acquire the status of apparently objective truths about who a learner is and what that learner is capable of becoming. Critical Applied Linguistics therefore treats educational language not as neutral representation but as social action embedded in relations of power, ideology, and institutional authority (Pennycook, 2021).

These questions are especially consequential in special and inclusive education. Students identified with specific learning difficulties (SLD), dyslexia, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism, developmental

language disorder, and other neurodevelopmental differences frequently require explicit teaching, accommodations, or specialist provision. At the same time, the language used to justify support may individualise difficulty, reduce complex identities to diagnostic categories, and divert attention from inaccessible curricula or inflexible assessment. Recent experimental evidence indicates that a learning-disability label can lower teachers' performance expectations, with the effect shaped partly by attitudes toward inclusion (Kashikar et al., 2023, 2024). Recent school-based and policy research likewise shows that ableist assumptions can persist within systems formally committed to inclusion (Felder, 2025; Lalvani & Osieja, 2025).

The issue is not whether learning difficulties are real or whether specialised support should be withdrawn (Shakespeare, 2014). It is how educational systems can recognise impairment and allocate resources without converting difference into global incapacity. Diagnostic categories can provide an explanatory vocabulary, legal protection, access to accommodations, and relief from moralised interpretations of difficulty. Yet the same categories may become restrictive when they are treated as exhaustive descriptions of learners or when intervention is organised primarily around normalisation. This tension is frequently flattened in both deficit-oriented practice and some strengths-based advocacy.

Critical Applied Linguistics, disability studies in education, raciolinguistics, and neurodiversity scholarship offer complementary but not identical resources for examining this problem. Critical Applied Linguistics foregrounds the ideological work of apparently ordinary language. Disability studies relocates disability from the individual body alone to the interaction between bodies, institutions, and norms. Raciolinguistic perspectives show that judgements about language are also judgements about speakers and may intersect with racialisation, multilingualism, class, and disability (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Stinson et al., 2025). Neurodiversity scholarship challenges compulsory normalisation and frames neurological variation as part of human diversity, while recent internal critiques caution that affirming language must not erase impairment, heterogeneity, or intensive support needs (Hobson et al., 2024).

Although these traditions have generated substantial scholarship, their implications are often discussed separately. Existing reviews frequently address inclusive education, neurodiversity, language ideology, or disability representation in isolation. The contribution of the present synthesis is to connect these literatures around a single educational mechanism: the discursive construction of the "weak student." It also brings recent empirical work on teacher expectations and institutional ableism into dialogue with foundational critical theory, while explicitly examining counter-perspectives concerning diagnosis and neurodiversity.

The review addresses three questions:

1. How are students with learning difficulties and disabilities constructed through deficit-oriented educational discourse?
2. What consequences does this discourse have for teacher expectations, learner identity, participation, and educational positioning?
3. What conceptual tensions and practical alternatives emerge from inclusive, raciolinguistic, disability-studies, and neurodiversity-informed perspectives?

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Critical applied linguistics: Language as ideological practice

Critical Applied Linguistics examines how language practices are shaped by, and contribute to, unequal social relations (Pennycook, 2021). From this perspective, a phrase such as "low ability" does more than name an educational condition. It selects an individualising explanation, presupposes a norm against which ability is measured, and may authorise lower expectations or segregated provision. Discursive choices matter because institutional language is consequential: it enters records, circulates among professionals, and affects decisions about curriculum, placement, assessment, and participation. This framework does not imply that educators consciously intend to marginalise students. Deficit discourse often becomes normalised through professional routines and apparently benevolent concern. Its power lies partly in appearing technical and commonsensical. Critical analysis asks what is made visible, what is obscured, whose knowledge is treated as authoritative, and which responses become thinkable after a learner has been described in a particular way.

Disability studies in education: From individual deficit to relational barriers

Medicalised models locate disability primarily in individual pathology and typically prioritise diagnosis, remediation, and normalisation (Oliver, 1990). Disability studies in education do not deny embodied or cognitive difficulty; rather, it contests the assumption that disadvantage follows naturally and exclusively from individual impairment (Baglieri, 2022; Goodley, 2024). Disability is also produced relationally through inaccessible curricula, inflexible pacing, narrow assessment, sensory environments, and normative expectations concerning communication and behaviour (Oliver, 1990). Ableism names the organisation of social value around preferred bodies, minds, and performances. In schools, ableism may be visible in assumptions that speed equals intelligence,

compliance equals readiness, speech equals competence, or independence is always preferable to supported participation.

Recent scholarship describes ableism not simply as interpersonal prejudice but as a normative structure shaping educational policy and practice (Felder, 2025). This distinction is important because replacing a few stigmatising terms without changing the structures they support would amount to cosmetic reform.

Raciolinguistic perspectives and intersectional marginalisation

Raciolinguistic theory challenges the belief that judgements about language can be separated from judgements about racialised speakers (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Raciolinguistic scholarship further challenges apparently neutral notions of “academic” or “appropriate” language by showing how such standards are institutionally constructed (Flores, 2020; Flores & Rosa, 2015). The concept of the “listening subject”, which has earlier roots in Inoue’s (2006) work and was subsequently developed within raciolinguistic theory, is particularly important (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

In special education, this insight helps explain why multilingual and minoritised students may encounter overlapping interpretations of linguistic difference, behaviour, and disability (Cioè-Peña, 2021a, 2021b). Recent critical disability raciolinguistic research shows how behavioural policies can reproduce cycles in which emergent bilingual learners labelled as disabled are repeatedly read through deficit assumptions (Stinson et al., 2025). A raciolinguistic perspective therefore extends the analysis beyond terminology. It asks how institutional standards of appropriate language and behaviour are produced, whose repertoires they privilege, and how disability labels interact with race, language, and class.

Neurodiversity and its internal tensions

The neurodiversity paradigm understands neurological variation as an ordinary feature of human diversity and opposes the reduction of neurodivergent people to deficits (Chapman, 2021; Walker, 2021). In education, it redirects attention from making the learner appear typical toward redesigning environments, recognising strengths, respecting communication differences, and supporting agency. Neuroinclusive models accordingly place responsibility on the school as well as the child (Rajotte et al., 2025).

Nevertheless, neurodiversity is not a single uncontested position. Hobson et al. (2024), writing about developmental language disorder, identify unresolved questions concerning which conditions are included, how impairment should be discussed, and whether affirming terminology can coexist with claims for specialist provision. There is also a risk that celebratory accounts privilege comparatively advantaged neurodivergent voices and understate the experiences of people with profound communication, intellectual, sensory, or daily-living support needs. In this review, neurodiversity is therefore used as a critical and ethical orientation, not as a reason to deny disability or withdraw individualised support.

An integrated analytical lens

Taken together, these perspectives support four analytical questions applied throughout the review: (a) How is the learner named and positioned? (b) Which norm of language, cognition, behaviour, or independence is presupposed? (c) Which institutional or environmental conditions disappear from view? and (d) What educational actions become legitimised? This integrated lens allows the review to analyse deficit discourse while retaining the material importance of support, access, and resources.

METHOD

Review design

The study adopted a critical narrative review. This design was selected because the purpose was not to estimate a pooled intervention effect but to integrate theoretically diverse scholarship, examine concepts and tensions, and interpret how educational discourse operates across fields (Snyder, 2019). The review combined a documented search process with purposive conceptual selection. It should therefore be distinguished from both an unsystematic essay and a fully exhaustive systematic review.

Search strategy

An iterative, conceptually guided search was conducted using OpenAlex and ERIC, focusing on English-language peer-reviewed literature published between January 2015 and March 2026. The search combined terms relating to deficit discourse, deficit thinking, special education, disability, neurodiversity, learner identity, raciolinguistics, medical models, inclusive education, educational labelling, and teacher expectations. Example

combinations included “deficit discourse” AND “special education,” “learning disability label” AND “teacher expectations,” “raciolinguistics” AND “disability,” and “neurodiversity” AND “inclusive education.” Foundational works published before 2015 were additionally identified through purposive citation chaining when required to define the theoretical traditions informing the review.

Because the study was designed as a critical narrative review rather than an exhaustive systematic review, no PRISMA-style (Page et al., 2021) screening log was maintained. Sources were selected purposively according to their direct relevance to educational language, power, labelling, learner positioning, disability, neurodiversity, and institutional practice. Publications focused exclusively on clinical treatment, non-educational professional training, technology efficacy without a discursive dimension, or general inclusion without direct relevance to language and learner positioning were not retained. This process produced an interpretive corpus of 22 substantive publications combining recent scholarship with foundational theoretical works; Snyder (2019) was additionally used to inform the review methodology (Table 1).

Table 1

Curated thematic overview of representative literature included in the review

Theme	Representative sources	Main contribution
Individualising educational difficulty	Dudley-Marling and Gurn (2010); Goodley (2024); Slee (2018)	Shows how structural and pedagogical barriers are displaced by explanations centred on learner deficiency.
Labels, expectations, and learner identity	Kashikar et al. (2023, 2024); Liasidou (2015)	Links disability labels with teacher expectations, learner identity, and restricted educational opportunities.
Raciolinguistic and intersectional marginalisation	Flores (2020); Flores and Rosa (2015); Stinson et al. (2025)	Demonstrates how language, race, disability, and behavioural policies intersect in institutional judgements.
Institutional ableism	Felder (2025); Goodall et al. (2024); Lalvani and Osieja (2025)	Identifies ableism as an organisational and institutional pattern rather than solely an individual attitude.
Neurodiversity-informed alternatives	Hobson et al. (2024); Leinfuss and O'Hara (2024); Rajotte et al. (2025); Wagland et al. (2025)	Reorients attention toward environmental change, strengths, agency, and affirming support, while highlighting unresolved conceptual tensions.

Note: The table presents a curated selection of representative sources and does not reproduce the complete review corpus.

Analytical procedure

The selected literature was analysed through reflexive thematic synthesis (Braun & Clarke, 2022). First-cycle coding (Saldaña, 2025) identified references to deficit attribution, labels, expectations, normality, participation, identity, language ideology, assessment, ableism, medicalisation, environmental barriers, strengths, and neurodiversity. Codes were compared across empirical, theoretical, and policy-oriented sources. In the second cycle, related codes were organised into candidate themes and interpreted through the integrated framework described above. Attention was paid not only to convergence but also to counter-evidence and conceptual tension, particularly the enabling functions of diagnosis and critiques within neurodiversity scholarship. The review was guided by three principles of critical interpretive analysis: claims were linked to the social and institutional contexts in which language occurred; apparently neutral categories were examined for their normative assumptions; and interpretations were tested against alternative explanations. Table 1 (above) presents a curated thematic overview of representative sources rather than the complete corpus.

RESULTS

Individualising educational difficulty

The most consistent pattern was the attribution of educational difficulty to an internal and relatively stable learner deficit. Underachievement, slow task completion, inconsistent attention, or non-normative communication were frequently interpreted as evidence of limited capacity rather than as outcomes produced through interaction with pedagogy, curriculum, assessment, or context. Deficit discourse condensed a relational situation into an individual characteristic: a student encountering difficulty became a “weak student.”

This individualisation had two effects. First, it obscured institutional contributions to difficulty, including inaccessible texts, rigid time limits, sensory overload, monolingual expectations, and limited opportunities for alternative demonstration of learning. Second, it made remediation of the learner appear to be the most logical response. The literature did not suggest that individual instruction is inherently oppressive. The problem arose when individual intervention became the only visible solution and institutional adaptation became secondary or optional.

Labels, expectations, and learner identity

Labels were neither uniformly harmful nor neutral. They could enable recognition, communication among professionals, legal protection, accommodations, and access to resources. For some learners and families, diagnosis replaced moral interpretations such as laziness or lack of effort with a more accurate account of difficulty. These benefits explain why a simple rejection of diagnostic language is inadequate. At the same time, recent evidence demonstrates that labels can function as expectation cues. Kashikar et al. (2023) found that the “learning disability” label could reduce teachers’ performance expectations even when other information was held constant. Their subsequent work indicated that this influence was related to teachers’ attitudes toward inclusion (Kashikar et al., 2024).

The significance of these findings lies not only in conscious prejudice but in the possibility that a category intended to secure support can also narrow perceptions of potential. Across the literature, expectation effects were linked to opportunity. Learners positioned as globally less capable could receive less cognitively demanding work, fewer opportunities for autonomy, and more controlling interaction. Over time, these practices may contribute to identities organised around inadequacy. Recent qualitative work illustrates how disability can become a dominant interpretive frame through which students narrate academic survival and belonging (Nieminen et al., 2024). Thus, identity is not produced by language alone, but language participates in repeated institutional encounters that make particular identities more available than others.

Linguistic normativity and intersectional marginalisation

Deficit discourse was also embedded in assumptions about legitimate language and behaviour. Standardised forms of expression, rapid verbal response, sustained eye contact, stillness, and particular interactional styles were often treated as transparent indicators of competence. Critical Applied Linguistics reveals that these standards are socially produced rather than universal. Raciolinguistic theory adds that linguistic judgements may be inseparable from racialised perceptions of speakers (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Stinson et al. (2025) demonstrate this intersection through a critical disability raciolinguistic analysis of behavioural policies concerning emergent bilinguals labelled as disabled. Their findings show how institutional routines can repeatedly interpret behaviour and language through already deficit-oriented categories. This intersectional perspective complicates the category “student with disability”: multilingual, racialised, and economically marginalised learners may be positioned simultaneously through several systems of normativity.

The resulting marginalisation is linguistic in two senses. Learners may be judged against dominant language standards, and institutional language may construct their identities in ways that are difficult to contest. Reports and professional conversations can privilege adult interpretations while minimising learners’ own accounts. A critical response therefore requires both inclusive language and greater epistemic participation by students and families.

INSTITUTIONAL PERSISTENCE OF MEDICALISED AND ABLEIST MODELS

The literature showed that inclusive policy can coexist with medicalised practice. Schools may endorse participation while continuing to organise provision around categories of individual deficiency. Institutional ableism becomes visible when access depends on repeatedly demonstrating incapacity, when families must continually fight for ordinary participation, or when adjustment is treated as an exception granted to an individual rather than a design responsibility. Lalvani and Osieja (2025) describe the “battle fatigue” experienced by parents confronting institutionalised ableism in pursuit of inclusive education. Goodall et al. (2024) similarly identify a cycle in which disability is framed through individual deficit and responsibility, reproducing exclusion even where adjustment mechanisms exist. Felder (2025) conceptualises ableism as educational normativity, highlighting how assumptions about the ideal learner shape what schools recognise as learning. These studies shift the focus from insensitive vocabulary to organisational structure. A school may replace “weak” with “student in need” while retaining low expectations, inaccessible assessment, and segregated participation (Oliver, 2013). Discursive change is meaningful only when it alters the distribution of authority, opportunity, and responsibility.

Neurodiversity-informed and strengths-based alternatives

Recent literature increasingly advocates neuroinclusive models that focus on redesigning schools rather than correcting children. Rajotte et al. (2025) explicitly frame neuroinclusion as a school-level responsibility. Leinfuss and O'Hara (2024) illustrate how strengths-based attention to sensory regulation can support participation without treating regulation differences as behavioural failure. In school-based speech-language therapy, DeThorne and Gerlach-Houck (2023) call for resistance to ableist assumptions and for practices that respect communication diversity. Neurodiversity-affirming approaches emphasise agency, environmental fit, co-design, and recognition of strengths. Wagland et al.'s (2025) scoping review indicates growing cross-sector interest in affirming approaches for autistic children. Yet the literature also cautions against converting neurodiversity into a new orthodoxy. Hobson et al. (2024) identify contradictions concerning developmental language disorder, disability, and the language of difference. Strengths-based discourse can become exclusionary if it permits support only when difference is presented positively or if it obscures distress and substantial impairment.

The synthesis therefore supports a both/and position: educational practice should reject global deficit identities while recognising real difficulties; redesign environments while providing individual support; and affirm difference without romanticising it (cf. Shakespeare, 2014). This position is more demanding than simple terminology replacement because it requires ongoing negotiation among rights, resources, identity, and pedagogical judgement.

DISCUSSION

The review examined how deficit-oriented discourse constructs students with learning difficulties and disabilities, what consequences follow from this positioning, and what alternatives emerge from critical and neurodiversity-informed scholarship. The synthesis indicates that deficit discourse operates through an interconnected sequence: institutional norms define legitimate performance; deviations are attributed primarily to the learner; labels stabilise those interpretations; expectations and opportunities are adjusted; and the resulting educational experiences appear to confirm the original description. This cycle helps explain why seemingly descriptive language can have material consequences.

The findings extend earlier critiques of deficit thinking (e.g., Valencia, 2010) by connecting them with recent evidence on expectation effects. Foundational scholarship argued that schools individualise educational failure and obscure contextual causes (Dudley-Marling & Gurn, 2010). The studies by Kashikar et al. (2023, 2024) add a more specific mechanism: a disability label itself may influence predicted performance. The implication is not that labels must be abandoned but that educators require procedures that prevent diagnostic information from becoming a ceiling on expectation. Assessment reports should therefore distinguish clearly between documented support needs and predictions about future capability.

Critical Applied Linguistics clarifies why terminology cannot be separated from power. When an institution calls a student "weak," it establishes a relationship between the student and an unmarked ideal learner. The term suppresses the conditions under which weakness is observed and makes the judgement portable across contexts. A learner who writes slowly under timed conditions may become globally "low ability," even though the observed difficulty could change with assistive technology, alternative assessment, explicit instruction, or additional time. The critical task is to restore context and contingency to educational description.

The raciolinguistic findings deepen this analysis. Flores and Rosa (2015) argue that linguistic appropriateness is produced through racialised listening practices, while Stinson et al. (2025) show how such judgements intersect with disability and behavioural policy. Deficit discourse is therefore not experienced evenly. Multilingual and racialised students may be disproportionately referred, misunderstood, or positioned through overlapping narratives of linguistic and behavioural inadequacy. This suggests that special education assessment should include culturally and linguistically responsive procedures and should examine the institution's interpretive practices rather than focusing only on learner performance.

The review also surfaces a central tension: diagnosis can both enable and constrain. Resource systems frequently require categorical evidence before support is funded. In this context, diagnostic language performs an important distributive function. Removing categories without changing allocation systems could make access less equitable, particularly for families with fewer resources to secure informal support. Conversely, when eligibility depends on proving severe deficit, systems create incentives to narrate learners through incapacity. The appropriate response is not diagnostic abolition but a shift toward needs-based provision, contextualised reporting, and periodic review of how labels affect expectations.

Neurodiversity perspectives offer an important corrective to normalisation but also require critical care. The movement has made learner agency, sensory experience, communication diversity, and strengths more visible. Neuroinclusive models direct schools to change environments rather than demanding that students mask or approximate typical behaviour (Rajotte et al., 2025). However, the tensions identified by Hobson et al. (2024) show why affirming language must remain compatible with discussion of impairment and intensive need. A discourse

that permits only positive descriptions can silence experiences of pain, fatigue, communication frustration, or dependence. Ethical inclusion requires language capacious enough to recognise both difference and difficulty.

The methodological contribution of this review lies in connecting these tensions rather than organising the literature into a simple deficit-versus-strength binary. A fully critical review must ask not only whether language is negative, but what institutional work it performs. Deficit language may justify exclusion, but diagnostic language may also secure resources. Strengths language may support dignity, but it may also obscure need. Inclusive language may improve representation, but without structural change it may leave unequal participation intact. These tensions establish the warrant for an integrated critical synthesis.

Implications for teacher education and practice

Teacher education should move beyond lists of preferred terminology and develop critical language awareness (Fairclough, 1992) through authentic cases. The following priorities emerge:

- Encourage educators to replace global descriptions such as “weak” or “unmotivated” with contextual and observable accounts that specify the task, conditions, available support, and variability in performance.
- Train educators to distinguish diagnosis and documented support needs from predictions about future potential, while examining whether labelled students receive equal access to cognitively demanding learning opportunities.
- Incorporate disability studies, ableism, raciolinguistics, and neurodiversity as complementary perspectives within both special and general teacher education programmes.
- Ensure that student and family perspectives are incorporated into assessment and educational planning, particularly when professional interpretations concern communication, behaviour, identity, or belonging.
- Organise provision around clearly identified support needs while avoiding unnecessary public labelling or the reduction of students’ identities to diagnostic categories.
- Review referral procedures, behavioural policies, and assessment practices for potential cultural, linguistic, and disability-related bias.
- Establish universal design and flexible assessment (CAST, 2024; Meyer et al., 2014) as ordinary components of educational provision while retaining individual accommodations, explicit teaching, and specialist intervention when required.

At the school level, professional documentation should foreground context, conditions, and responsiveness to support. For example, instead of stating that “the student is unable to organise ideas,” a report might indicate that “during a 30-minute handwritten task without planning prompts, the student produced fewer organised units; performance improved when a graphic organiser and keyboard were provided.” The second formulation documents the difficulty accurately while showing its contextual variability and avoiding the transformation of a specific performance into an essentialised learner identity.

Limitations and future research

This review has several limitations. It was a critical narrative review rather than an exhaustive systematic review, and conceptual relevance informed final source selection. Although the refreshed search was documented, OpenAlex and ERIC do not reproduce the coverage or indexing decisions of Scopus and Web of Science. The English-language focus may underrepresent discursive practices in other linguistic and educational contexts. The interdisciplinary scope also brought together studies using different populations, settings, and meanings of disability, limiting direct comparison. Future research should examine naturally occurring teacher talk, assessment reports, and referral meetings; test whether critical language-awareness training changes expectations and opportunity allocation; and include longitudinal accounts of learner identity. Cross-linguistic research is especially necessary because labels and deficit meanings do not transfer uniformly across languages. Research should also investigate how resource systems can preserve access to specialist support without requiring families and learners to reproduce narratives of global incapacity.

CONCLUSION

Deficit discourse is not merely impolite terminology. It is a mechanism through which educational systems construct competence, distribute opportunity, and assign responsibility for difficulty. Across the reviewed literature, global deficit descriptions individualised educational problems, lowered expectations, narrowed participation, and obscured institutional barriers. These processes were intensified where disability intersected with racialisation, multilingualism, class, and behavioural norms.

At the same time, critical analysis must avoid a false choice between diagnosis and dignity. Diagnostic language can provide recognition, protection, and resources; neurodiversity-affirming language can challenge normalisation;

and individualised intervention can be indispensable. The ethical question is how these practices are organised and what identities they make possible. Educational systems should describe needs precisely, preserve high expectations, redesign environments, and retain specialised support without reducing learners to deficits.

Challenging the construction of the “weak student” therefore requires more than replacing words. It requires changes in assessment, teacher education, institutional policy, and whose knowledge counts in educational decision-making. Language becomes inclusive when it is connected to material participation, learner agency, and equitable access to meaningful learning.

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Ethical Statement

This study did not involve empirical research and therefore is exempt from ethics review procedures.

Competing Interests

The author does not have any competing interests to declare.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, methodology, investigation, literature analysis, writing—original draft, and writing—review and editing: I.V. The author has read and approved the final manuscript.

Data Availability

N/A

AI Disclosure

Generative artificial intelligence tools were used to support language editing and stylistic refinement during the preparation of the manuscript. All AI-assisted outputs were critically reviewed, revised, and verified by the author, who takes full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the final content.

Biographical Sketch

Ilias Vasileiou holds a PhD in Special Education from the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and has completed postdoctoral research on executive functioning in students with neurodevelopmental conditions. He is an Adjunct Lecturer at the University of Lancashire and Neapolis University Pafos. His research interests include learning disabilities, executive functions, written language, inclusive education, educational psychology, and the application of artificial intelligence and digital technologies in education.

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