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University Students with Intellectual Disabilities: Empowerment through Voice

John Kubiak *, Des Aston, Marie Devitt and Barbara Ringwood

The Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities, School of Education, Trinity College Dublin, D02 PN40 Dublin, Ireland; astond@tcd.ie (D.A.); devittma@tcd.ie (M.D.); bringwoo@tcd.ie (B.R.)
* Correspondence: kubiakj@tcd.ie

Abstract: People with disabilities have been among the most marginalised groups both within society and within post-secondary/higher education. Over the last two decades, an increasing number of inclusive educational programmes have come into existence both nationally and internationally for this group of learners. The Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (TCPID), School of Education, Trinity College Dublin, offers students with intellectual disabilities a two-year programme entitled Arts, Science and Inclusive Applied Practice (ASIAP). This paper presents a selection of voices from ASIAP students which highlights their experiences of becoming both co-researchers and second language learners. These studies present a variety of ways in which power relationships are negotiated between faculty and students through utilising creative and inclusive approaches to the research process.

Keywords: people with intellectual disabilities; higher/postsecondary education; student voice; co-researching; second language learning; inclusive research

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1. Introduction: The Inclusion of People with Intellectual Disabilities in Post-Secondary/Higher Education

In recent years, across Europe, post-secondary and higher education institutions have been engaged in a process of change due to their involvement in the Bologna Process, the aim being to identify the importance of equal access to higher education for all non-traditional and under-represented groups which includes people with disabilities [1]. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) has been one of the main catalysts for the drive in promoting the rights of people with disabilities to express their opinions on matters affecting their lives [2]. Widening societal participation for people from marginalised groups has also become an established feature of policy frameworks internationally; in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Article 26, education was identified as a fundamental human right [3]. The right to education has also been enshrined across various international human rights laws, policies, and declarations—such as the World Declaration on Education for All (1990) [4], and The Salamanca Statement (1994) [5], which called for governments to give preference to policy and the allocation of specific funding to inclusive education with the recommendation to adopt inclusive education policy as a legal basis. The Education for All (EFA) movement (Dakar, 2000) [6]—a global commitment to provide quality basic education for all children, youth and adults—spearheaded a global initiative with the EFA Flagship entitled "The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion" (2004) [7]. This document not only outlines the necessity of basic education for people with disabilities but also commands full participation of persons with disabilities at all levels in the policy and processes.

Within the Republic of Ireland, policies in the area of education have developed rapidly over the past couple of decades and the initial focus on people from socio-economically disadvantaged groups has been extended to include people with disabilities [8]. Irish legislation enshrining an inclusive education policy within schools has been enacted and

support structures have been developed to enable children with difficulties in learning to access the curriculum at primary and secondary levels [9–12]. The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) made a specific reference to inclusion, and that children with special educational needs should, where possible, be educated "in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs" [12] (Section 2.1). One of the main implications of this Act was that the number of children with special educational needs attending mainstream schools increased dramatically and is now estimated to be between 25 and 28 per cent [13].

However, when these students transition out of formal schooling, their outcomes are extremely limited; while Health Service Executive funded disability support services (which include adult day centres or localised vocational training centres) are available, individuals often find themselves enrolled in courses in which they have little or no interest [14]. Recent research by Aston, Banks, and Shevlin [15] has highlighted that this cohort is more likely to be unemployed and dependent on social welfare, have an increased risk of living in poverty, and are significantly underrepresented in the workforce, with just 6 per cent in paid employment in the Republic of Ireland.

As many of this cohort struggle to make a successful transition from compulsory schooling to third-level education, intellectual disability consistently remains the most underrepresented minority group within the higher education sector [16]. While The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) was introduced in Ireland to widen the access of students with disabilities to third-level education, the numbers of students with intellectual disabilities in third-level education remain low with only 84 out of 57,872 people with intellectual disabilities registered in a third-level institution in 2017 [17].

1.1. The Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (TCPID)

Going some way to address the underrepresentation of people with intellectual disabilities within higher education and post-secondary education programmes, the inclusion of students with disabilities is now high on the agenda across the sector, and the success of many institutions and faculties in creating an inclusive environment for students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties has gained traction. Over the last two decades, an increasing number of inclusive educational programmes have come into existence both nationally and internationally for people with intellectual disabilities [18–22]. The benefits of such projects are evident not only in relation to the individual student who is included, but also in the effect on social change as their participation impacts on others, such as lecturers [23], classmates [24], and employers [25,26]. Consequently, the case for inclusion can be made with reference to benefits for all, rather than just for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

There is growing evidence that by undertaking such programmes, students with intellectual disabilities improve their self-esteem and confidence [27], interpersonal relationships, self-determination, social inclusion [28], and employment opportunities [29]. Consequently, from this perspective, there are strong economic and moral considerations [30] for including those who have traditionally been excluded in higher education. For Stodden and Mruzek [31], combating such exclusion is essential to ensure that economies can develop while those at most risk can become part of the knowledge society and through the transformative power of their voice, can make their contribution.

In the Republic of Ireland, the numbers of people with intellectual disabilities accessing and graduating from inclusive tertiary/postsecondary education courses have gradually increased over the last ten years [32]. In The Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (TCPID), School of Education, Trinity College Dublin, students with intellectual disabilities who have completed the two-year programme entitled Arts, Science and Inclusive Applied Practice (ASIAP), reported feeling more accepted, more confident as learners, and having increased social networks [33–35]. The TCPID is built on three pillars—Education, Research, and Pathways; its ethos centres on treating people with intellectual disabilities with dignity and respect within an environment which fosters

and encourages collaboration, inclusiveness, and flexibility. Graduates of the programme progress to employment and/or further education opportunities which are promoted through person-centred planning in collaboration with a team of Occupational Therapists. The ASIAP curriculum is aligned to Level 5 of the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and as such, is unique within the university.

1.2. The Complexity of 'Difference' Regarding Student Voice

It is often not clear what actually is being summoned in the notion of 'student voice'; voice is a nebulous term, sometimes used metaphorically, sometimes literally. It is not simply speech; according to McLeod [36] voice can suggest, "an ideal, a political agenda, and a basis for policy reform and action; it can declare difference and it can homogenise it; it has methodological and pedagogical dimensions and is rarely—if ever—simply a matter of creating opportunities for unfettered expression" (p. 179). Consequently, with such a vast variety of interpretations, the use of the term 'voice' can often generate contradictory responses. For example, Baker [37] regards voice as, "a monolithic, falsely representational, essentialising concept'"(pp. 369–370) that does injustice to the politics of difference and to the complexities of contemporary societies. Young and Jerome [38] indicate that the issues raised in the literature on student voice are not always explicit about the power relations operating; the tension lies in the political effect of eliciting voices, the possession of the power to 'close' voices, as well as the problem of how to represent the complexity of difference and the transformative aspect of voice in an authentic way.

1.3. The Nature of 'Student Voice' in Higher Education—Recognising the Voices of All Students

The transformative aspect of voice—voice-as-right, voice-as-participation—has been noticeable within schools-based participatory research projects [39–41], with the term describing a range of activities, from the importance of problem sharing for students [42], pupils as researchers [43], pupils helping other students with their learning [44], approaches to assessment [45], to informing and supporting teachers' professional development [46]. Voice has been an especially influential concept within schools-based projects which address empowerment and equality [47]. In such ventures, voice is typically seen as a powerful force that has a radical potential for transformative practice with initiatives such as youth global citizen projects [48] placing voice within participatory and sometimes emancipatory discourses.

Within the existing higher education literature, Seale [49] describes the most cited purposes of student voice projects: gathering evaluations from students and gaining feedback on classroom strategies [50]; improvement of student representation through inclusive and participatory research approaches; and developing curriculum projects to improve quality enhancement and assurance and professional development [51]. The assumption is that in being able to express their views and participate in major decisions about their learning, students will 'become more engaged' and, one presumes, their learning will improve.

Young and Jerome [38] however raise concerns with regard to the literature on student voice in higher education; for example: (1) the inability of voice to establish a genuine dialogue between staff and students; (2) the use of practices entirely designed by managers who, "reconfigure students in ways that bind them more securely into the fabric of the status quo", and (3), the nature of what students are included. McLeod [36] notes that enabling student voice often fails to provide full recognition for all students, especially those traditionally marginalised in educational institutions, such as those with intellectual disabilities. Arguably, a justified argument attaches to requests to tap into these silenced and marginalised voices, thus allowing under-represented and neglected groups to have their perspectives heard, valued, and recognised. In doing so, the authority of the seemingly natural ways of looking at and organising the world can potentially be unsettled [52].

What might these arguments mean for the potential of voice for university students with intellectual disabilities within higher education? Going some way to answer this question, within the context of the ASIAP programme, we have explored a variety of ways

to encourage students to express their views and perspectives; these include initiatives such as poetry writing [53], transition into the work environment [25], and policy advice [54]. Other projects currently being piloted within the TCPID include: students volunteering on the student to student (S2S) mentoring programme; co-lecturing on both the Masters in Education and Professional Masters in Education programmes; and evaluating social transitions in a virtual social group. The purpose of these voice-based initiatives is to gain insider knowledge and identify ways to encourage these learners with intellectual disabilities to express their views of their personal, social, and educational experiences of higher education and transition.

The following sections present three evidence-based studies which have privileged students' voices and provide an in-depth insight regarding their experiences of learning in two main areas, namely: the co-researching process, and second language learning. Section 2 (below) which focuses on co-researching include (1) Kubiak's [55,56] inclusive study of students' interviewing their peers, and (2) Fitzgerald, Dunne, Biddulph et al.'s [57] research on how the university library can be made more accessible. Attention is then given in Section 3 to Piazzoli and Kubiak's [58] study which outlines how an effective teaching pedagogy to support the second language learning process (in this case Italian) of ASIAP students was identified.

2. The Co-Researchers' Voice

2.1. Co-Researching the Learning Process

Traditional research has involved unequal power relationships with 'expert' researchers viewing people with disabilities as the subjects of research. For Cameron [59] however, there is a need for researchers to put their experience and skills in the hands of people with disabilities, "identifying them as participants and collaborators". Consequently, the importance of accessibility replaces a responsibility on the researcher to be creative and inventive in research design [60].

With this directive in mind, Kubiak's [55,56] study which utilised a phenomenographic approach [61] explored how a group of students with intellectual disabilities experience learning while undertaking a tertiary education programme. Stage 1 of this study addressed the following question: How can students with intellectual disabilities be meaningfully included in a phenomenographic research project about their peers' experiences of learning? The following section reports on the process of training six co-researchers who volunteered to be part of the research.

2.2. Methods

The challenge of selecting a 'representative' group of participant students has been highlighted as a complicated issue, and ways of recruiting students such as random selection [62] were considered. However, after presenting an outline of the research to students which explained the purposes, aims, and ideals behind the research project, six students were willing to volunteer. For ethical purposes, an information and consent letter were provided to both participants (in accessible format) and to their parents/guardians, explaining the project and offering the opportunity to ask further questions. The option to withdraw consent was made explicit and participants were provided with opportunities to raise questions and voice their concerns. The School of Education ethics committee approved the study and confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed to co-researchers and all participants in reporting results.

A timeline covering a period of eleven weeks of training was outlined and agreed upon by co-researchers with key objectives defined. Co-researchers recorded their thoughts in a reflective journal after each class, expressing what they felt was good, what was difficult and what they'd change about a particular session and its content. The feedback from these responses was used to inform the framework and delivery of subsequent training sessions. In addition, three focus groups were also conducted, at the beginning, the middle, and the end of the training, the aim being to offer a space where co-researchers could

reflect openly and contribute collectively as a group to the process as it was unfolding. By week eleven, the training sessions had covered the following topics: key words used in research; the research question; a brief background of inclusive research; gaining consent; designing a consent form; designing an accessible PowerPoint of the project to present to the participants; and examining the process of questioning and interviewing.

2.3. Findings

As part of their reflections, all co-researchers felt that this particular research was important, with one observing: *" . . . how you learn is important for all people, disabled or not. People all learn in different ways"*. As the research process unfolded, co-researchers identified roles that suited their individual strengths, these included: note-taker, timekeeper, facilitator, and interviewer. Providing information about the research and how to present this was deemed important by one individual: *"putting together a PowerPoint on why are we carrying out this project and information on inclusive research"*. For another co-researcher, the questioning process was a concern: *"what questions we will ask the group?"; "When to use open and closed questions"; "How to start an interview by saying: How are you today?"* and understanding *"the different ways you can listen"*.

Gaining confidence in the practice of interviewing was imperative for these co-researchers for two main reasons: first, among people with intellectual disabilities, there is evidence of low levels of responsiveness during interviews [62]. Second, according to Perry and Felce [63], conducting interviews is one aspect of the research process which is readily amenable to the active involvement of people with an intellectual disability, at least for those people with adequate cognitive and language ability.

Some anxieties arose however before co-researchers commenced the interviews; one co-researcher explained: *"I've never actually done an interview . . . I'll find it hard to look at the person"*. Another individual remarked: *"I'm a little nervous and concerned . . . how am I going to ask the questions? What'll people's responses be? It's nerve-racking"*. Going some way to address these concerns, we utilised a structure of: (1) building rapport—*"How are you today? "I'd like to thank you for coming along today for this interview, and your drawing is brilliant, can you explain what you have in your drawing?"*; (2) using open questions: *"Can you tell me about what this picture is about?"* and closed questions: *"Do you like listening to music?"*; (3) follow-up questions and probing: *"Why did you put those smiley faces in (your journal) and how do they help you learn?"*, and (4) closing an interview: *"Thank you for taking part today"*.

Reflecting on their interviewing skills highlighted informative insights from one co-researcher: *"I should have come to the point sooner, but I don't do that and that's something I need to work on"*. The timekeeper who reflected on this same interview stated: *"I felt that he did very good... He needs to watch the long sentences and don't cut people off with a 'how' or 'why'; let them explain 'till they're finished... he could have waited for her to finish . . . sometimes he answered questions for her"*.

Ultimately, this inclusive project had a profound influence on the development of the co-researchers sense of identity; as one individual observed: *"Reflecting on what you do in research is like learning in a different way . . . I'm a person with a mild (intellectual) disability but at the end of the day I am the only one that can say what's inside my mind, and I can speak up for other people with disabilities"*. While mindful of the need to redress the power imbalance between the "active doer of research" and the students—the so-called "passive subjects of research", the objective of this study's lead researcher was to place his skills and experience at the disposal of students so that they might take their rightful place as co-researchers and have a meaningful, yet realistic role in this process.

2.4. Co-Researching with University Librarians

Not many people with intellectual disabilities are familiar with using a university library; consequently, there is a paucity of research on how students with intellectual disabilities use such a facility. This can be viewed as an issue in relation to the right to

accessibility for this population; Article 9 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities [2] states that there should be guidelines about how to make access better to public services (which includes libraries), for students with disabilities. This poses a challenge for libraries in higher education, as traditionally they provide information in text-based books and journals, which can be difficult to access for many students with intellectual disabilities.

As it was found that the usage of the TCD's library by ASIAP students was low, two librarians invited six ASIAP students to become co-researchers with a view to write an accessible journal article [57] and make a video to encourage future students with intellectual disabilities to use the library. This research provided an opportunity for the project team to showcase to a wider audience the value of inclusive, action research in resolving real-life challenges. After gaining ethical approval from the School of Education Ethics Committee, students were given an information leaflet describing the project and a consent form to sign if they wanted to be involved.

2.5. Methods

Methods included two focus groups that explored students' opinions of barriers to library use. At the first focus group meeting, students also talked about ideas that would be good to include in the video. The students were split into three pairs and using post-it notes and flip charts, they reflected on how Trinity Library is different to other libraries and whether it helped ASIAP students to learn. At the second focus group, students worked together with the librarians on the video story with ideas for the script based on students' answers from the previous meeting. For this session, two groups of students were asked to imagine themselves in a particular situation in the library, for example, asking for help or borrowing a book.

Following this meeting, a timetable for creating the video with suggested roles people could take. A draft of the script was also sent, and students could suggest changes to the script. When students and librarians met for a third time, they agreed on what role each person would have in making the video. On the day of making the video, students rehearsed their roles all morning and filming—undertaken by a professional videographer —took place in the afternoon. The outcomes of this study are both a video—an accessible learning tool for and by students with intellectual disabilities—and a peer-reviewed journal article which offers greater staff insights into the lived experience of this student group. Significantly, students have become powerful advocates for fellow students and have ensured that they are now visible members of the library community.

2.6. Findings

One student who had difficulty using the library on his own remarked: "*I'd be helping future Trinity students to use the library a lot more, because it would be easier for them to understand what's available in the library*". For another individual, prior to this research, asking for help would have been perceived by her as "*a sign of failure*"; consequently, getting to know the library staff enabled her to "*feel confident about asking for help if she needed it . . . (as) no matter where you are in the library, there's always someone there you can ask for help*".

This reassurance is important as library anxiety [64] manifests in many ways. Drawing examples from Fitzgerald et al.'s [57] study, the fear of setting off the security alarms had the effect of making one co-researcher panic if the alarm sounded. Second, trying to find a way around the complicated layout of buildings and signage made another co-researcher feel he *"would pass out"* as he was surrounded by *"claustrophobic tall bookshelves and confusing signs"*. Third, library anxiety was experienced by another co-researcher from impatient and irritated students at the self-service library machines; this individual abandoned borrowing a book from a self-issue machine because he felt students in the queue *"were becoming impatient with him . . . it would have been easier to use Amazon to get a book than working out the library system!"*.

In addition to these challenges, some autistic co-researchers experienced sensory overload due to their extra sensitivity to lighting and noise levels as well as personal space issues. The idea of library social spaces, where students meet and talk freely, did not appeal to one individual who felt it was *"breaking the rules"* of a traditional library and she was not comfortable with other students *"being too close to her"*.

To summarise, the co-researchers of Fitzgerald et al.'s [57] and Kubiak's [55,56] studies had to negotiate the uncertain shift that came from being a student to becoming a co-researcher. Doing the "self-advocacy talk", (or in the words of one co-researcher: *"speaking up for people with disabilities"*) allowed these co-researchers to articulate their own concerns through their use of informed reflection which arguably has the potential to challenge the dominant orders of discourse relating to people with intellectual disability and research.

3. The Language Learners' Voice

There is a paucity of research related to how educators can identify an effective language pedagogy to support the language learning process of students with intellectual disabilities. It has been found that for this group of students, the process of learning a second language can be a demanding and even a humiliating experience [65] and that having an intellectual or learning disability should not preclude a learner the opportunity to learn a second language, should he/she wish to do so [66].

3.1. Methods

Inspired by the research in embodiment studies [67,68], Piazzoli and Kubiak [58] set out to identify an effective teaching pedagogy to support the second language learning process (in this case Italian) of ASIAP students. The qualitative study, which was ethically approved by the School of Education's research committee, asked the following research question: What effects does embodiment have on the language learning process of a group of adult students with an intellectual disability? The participants consisted of a group of six Irish ASIAP students—three male and three female—aged between twenty and thirty-five. The spectrum of disabilities of the participants included Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), dyspraxia, and Down Syndrome as well as learning disabilities like dysgraphia, dyscalculia, and dyslexia. While the students were absolute beginners of Italian (L2), they were familiar with drama and improvisation.

Students' reflections were elicited through three focus groups which were filmed and transcribed for analysis and were undertaken at the beginning, middle, and end of the project. In addition, a reflective practitioner's journal was maintained throughout the project by both authors which spanned 12 weeks for a total of 16 hours contact. The process consisted of creating: (1) a range of language activities, suitable for beginners (i.e., greetings, expressing identity, expressing basic needs, describing shapes and colours, and expressing likes and dislikes) which encouraged embodiment and play, and (2) a series of voice exercises based on ideokinesis, an L2 method developed by Asher [68] which draws on sensory-motor skills to connect speech and action.

3.2. Findings

Mid-way through the study, the students' open attitude towards learning was evident; what we identified as "openness" is described by the following two students as a sense of fun in learning:

> "*I see that it's very interesting in doing all the acting and speaking Italian because it allows you to learn how dramatic the Italian language is. I like doing something rather than sitting in our chairs all day*".

> "*I agree . . . Able to move around. Able to learn Italian through drama . . . It puts fun to learning new things like speaking another language*".

One student, who initially resisted undertaking the embodied approach, shifted his responses throughout the course of the study, going from defensiveness to a gradual

engagement. When asked: "What's it like to study Italian in this way?", he responded: *"Excellent . . . . It's the only learning I'm going to get."*.

While it has long been assumed by educators and policymakers working outside the field of intellectual disabilities that L2 study would be an enormous challenge to students with intellectual disabilities, such unquestioned assumptions have been recognised by Piazzoli and Kubiak as creative opportunities for their pedagogical practice. Building on insights such as: reducing the syllabus to the essential elements; slowing the pace of instruction; reducing the vocabulary demand and providing constant review; and incorporating as much visual/tactile/kinaesthetic stimulation as possible, Piazzoli and Kubiak's study managed to shed light on the connection between embodiment and language learning in the context of students with intellectual disabilities in a higher / post-secondary environment. In one student's words:

> *So now that I know a bit of Italian, I might be able to translate into English for my parents. Because I'm learning Italian so it's interesting to know so when I go to Italy, I can understand what people are saying. Or what's written on something; I can translate it into English for my mum and dad.*

Piazzoli and Kubiak's study has demonstrated that students with intellectual disabilities are willing to take risks with regard to second-language learning if they are offered a supportive and enabling learning environment. Crucially, this research has revealed that the value of a performative pedagogy is achieved when embodying imagery, meaning-making, and playful expressiveness in a meaningful context. It is, however, also acknowledged that further research needs to be taken in this direction to explore other inclusive learning opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities to learn a second language.

4. Discussion

This paper presents a selection of voices from one of the most marginalised groups within higher education—students with intellectual disabilities. As such, a space has been opened for the voices of these students to be heard and to create awareness about their experiences of learning on campus. As attention to voice often signals a concern with representation and empowerment, the challenge for the current authors remains to "facilitate the creation of spaces in which student voice is not merely demonstrated as being present, but in which that presence also has power, authenticity, and validity" [69] (p. 183). Consequently, the transformative aspect of voice—voice-as-right, voice-as-participation—is foregrounded in the TCPID studies presented above and offers a valuable insight into the lived experience and the learning potential of students with intellectual disabilities in relation to co-researching and learning a second language.

However, it has been noted that the claims for the transformative potential of voice politics have been criticised on several grounds, from offering only superficial forms of inclusion, to the problem of power in the selective bestowing of voice [37]. While mindful of these concerns, this paper set out to present the voices of ASIAP students so their perspectives can be read, heard, valued, and recognised. Consequently, the value of privileging these students' voices may begin to challenge and question the authority and perspective of the so-called 'centre', i.e., those whose voices are already well and truly heard and dominate the seemingly natural ways of looking at and organising the world of the higher educational learning environment. This focus is important as the student voice literature in higher education is relatively silent on the issue of power relationships between teachers and students, consequently, little consideration is given to issues such as equality and empowerment [39]. This current paper has also gone some way to address both these observations, as well as McLeod's [36] concerns regarding the relations between learners and teachers, which are central to how we understand the mediation and reception of student voice. By outlining the value of privileging students' voices, the TCPID studies outlined above present a variety of ways in which power relationships are negotiated between faculty and students. Within the context of the TCPID, the term 'student voice' extends beyond what Seale described as 'the management of student voice' [60]. Rather,

the focus within the TCPID centres on the meaningful nature of the dialogue between the TCPID and its students and being mindful of the profound possibilities inherent in establishing a symbiotic interchange between staff and students.

5. Strengths, Limitations, and Conclusions

We are mindful, however, of O'Donnell, Lloyd, and Dreher [70] who outline that there is a risk of constructing voice as a compensatory attribute of the marginalised and the culturally silenced, as a marker of 'difference' that needs to be acknowledged and managed in the foreign environment of a university. Accordingly, to align voice with marginalised or under-represented groups is to further stigmatise such students—they become known and heard by their 'otherness'.

The TCPID studies presented in this paper do not aim to speak for and on behalf of its students. Rather, the participating student volunteers were enthusiastic to learn about the research process and articulate their opinions and related feelings. While they may not necessarily be representative of all students with intellectual disabilities, we remain appropriately cautious about generalising from such work. It has significance beyond its specific context: research undertaken in the TCPID has implications for all higher educational institutions that provide inclusive education for people with intellectual disabilities. By tapping into these students' experiences, we have endeavoured to open some new lines of enquiry and (re)consider the effects and impact of student voice research, both in the classroom and for policy.

Further work with different students, in different contexts, should extend the range of interpretations and could provide one way of unmasking power and the inequality of opportunities. Consequently, these understandings have the potential to create possibilities for the multiple roles and identities people with intellectual disabilities have, or should have, access to. This is particularly true and important within the context of post-secondary and higher education, a setting where cultural identity is constantly being constructed and re-constructed through discourse and social interaction.

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