INCLUSION IN SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL FRAMES

INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CASES IN FOUR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

INCLUSION
IN SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL
FRAMES

INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CASES IN FOUR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

LITHUANIAN
UNIVERSITY OF
EDUCATIONAL
SCIENCES

LAPIN YLIOPISTO
UNIVERSITY OF LAPLAND

UNIWERSYTET PEDAGOGICZNY
IM. KOMISJI EDUKACJI NARODOWEJ
UP

PH
Wien

INCLUSION
IN SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL
FRAMES

INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CASES IN FOUR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Edited by Alvyra Galkienė

Lietuvos
edukologijos
universiteto
leidykla

Vilnius, 2017

Collective of Authors
Sabine Albert – University of Teacher Education Vienna, Austria
Tamara Cierpiałowska – Pedagogical University of Cracow, Poland
Alvyra Galkienė – Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Lithuania
Georg Jäggle – University of Teacher Education Vienna, Austria
Agnė Juškevičienė – Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Lithuania
Remigiusz Kijak – Pedagogical University of Cracow, Poland
Outi Kyrö-Ämmälä – University of Lapland, Finland
Joanna Kossewska – Pedagogical University of Cracow, Poland
Suvi Lakkala – University of Lapland, Finland
Ona Monkevičienė – Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Lithuania
Katja Norvapalo – University of Lapland, Finland
Julita Navaitienė – Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Lithuania
Susanne Tomecek – University of Teacher Education Vienna, Austria
Stasė Ustilaitė – Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Lithania

Reviewers:
Prof. Lani Florian – The University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom
Prof. Nareadi Phasha – The University of South Africa, South Africa
Dr. Agnieszka Drzazga – The University of Wroclaw, Poland
Dr. Eva-Kristina Franz – Heidelberg University of Education, Germany

Contributing Experts
Peter Deringer – professor at the University of Teacher Education Vienna, Austria
Martina Englbrecht – teacher at Learning Centre Brigittenau, Austria
Martina Mazal – teacher at Learning Centre Brigittenau, Austria
Hhanna Autti – teacher at Teacher Training School of University of Lapland, Finland
Hannele Kervinen – teacher at Teacher Training School of University of Lapland, Finland
Sinikka Sivula-Chavez – teacher at Teacher Training School of University of Lapland, Finland
Stasė Makštutienė – teacher at Vilnius "Versmės" Catholic School, Lithuania
Danguolė Plankienė – teacher at Vilnius "Versmės" Catholic School, Lithuania
Magdalena Mazur – principal of Integrated Secondary School No. 1 in Cracow, Poland
Anita Tópor – deputy principal of Integrated Secondary School No. 1 in Cracow, Poland

Erasmus+

Content

Chapter V. Case Study of Inclusive Education in Four European Countries

INTRODUCTION

The issue of the human's place in the social reality of his existence is an eternal question of Philosophy, Psychology and Educational Sciences, and efforts have been made to answer it since the beginning of humankind. The existence of every human in society forms a dual interaction, since the human shapes society and society shapes the human. When a person's individuality differs significantly from that of the majority at the social level, this often causes tension between the person and society. This is often the experience of people with disabilities or those classed as geniuses. In these cases, the issue of the harmonisation of relationships naturally becomes relevant (Kelley, 2008). What are the solutions? Looking retrospectively at the history of societal development, we find various options. These include rejection, meaning preventing particularly different people from living (Albrecht, Seelman & Bury, 2001); isolating them from society (Montserrat & Garland, 1996); recognising every human's dignity, which was the goal of Philippe Pinel (Pinel, 1809); and working towards the education of every person, as was done by the first philanthropist educators, including Jean Marc Gaspard Itard (Lieberman, 1982), Charles-Michel de l'Épée (Aicardi, 2009), Valentin Haüy (Oliphant, 2008) and Samuel Gridley Howe (Holbrook & Koenig, 2000). The first successful means of teaching and communication used by people with mental disorders, the blind, the deaf and the deaf-blind surprised society as extraordinary human inventions. Nowadays, the recognition of education as a universal good is no longer questioned. Democratic states, striving for fully fledged societal development, recognise every person's right to learn regardless of their physical or mental development or social situation. International agreements, such as the Salamanca Statement (1994) and the United Nations Declaration Against Discrimination in Education (1960), which specify international and national commitments, open up possibilities for all pupils to learn in the most favourable conditions. However, great differences exist in the realisation of this right in schools across the world. For example, while African schools endeavour to solve issues such as providing teachers, the means of teaching and textbooks (Booth & Ainscow, 1998), European education policy-makers look into the perception, scope and ways of implementing inclusive education (Donnelly, 2011).

The authors of this book support the conclusion of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) that "There is a human rights imperative for people to be able to develop their capacities and participate fully in society", and that

"The long-term social and financial costs of educational failure are high", as "Those without the skills to participate socially and economically generate higher costs for health, income support, child welfare, and security" (Field, Kuczera & Pont, 2007, p. 11). Through the research presented in the book, researchers from four European countries – Finland, Austria, Poland and Lithuania – consider how to prevent failures in learning for any pupil and the factors that enhance the efficiency of inclusive education. The effectiveness of the education system in any country is determined by a number of factors, including political decisions, the social and cultural environment and teacher competences. The countries selected for the research have different historical and cultural backgrounds; however, they all follow European agreements and aim to improve their education systems as grounds for the development of a democratic society. One teacher-training university in each country took part in the research: the University of Lapland (Finland), the University of Teacher Education (Austria), the Pedagogical University of Cracow (Poland) and the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences (Lithuania). In order to reveal both the socio-psychological and educational factors that determine the possibility of successful participation in education for every pupil, the four schools involved all implement inclusive education. Comparing the results obtained in the different schools reveals the main factors that stimulate a successful inclusive education process regardless of the country's cultural background.

The three groups of participants taking part in the research – pupils, pedagogues and pupils' parents – highlight the inclusive education phenomena from three different angles. Thus, the comparative analysis of the factors determining successful inclusive education in the different cultural settings highlighted during the research allows us to design models that will help secure such inclusion. Meanwhile, an interdisciplinary group of researchers with experience in special needs education, psychology and the teaching of different subjects analyses the wider educational phenomena present in classrooms implementing inclusive education.

The book contains five chapters. Chapter I defines the perception of inclusive education, provides a variety of definitions of the phenomenon and describes changes in educational paradigms, thus outlining the complexity of the subject. Inclusivity is analysed in terms of the transformation of special needs education in a historical context; the perception of segregation in education is briefly discussed, and the variety of inclusive education definitions is considered, such as "inclusion as a concern with learners with disabilities and others categorised as having special educational

needs", "inclusion as a response to disciplinary exclusion", "inclusion in relation to all groups seen as being vulnerable to exclusion", "the School for All" and "inclusion as a principled approach to education and society". The analysis continues with the expression of inclusive values in the practice of education.

Chapter I also describes the methods utilised in the ethnographic research. The socio-cultural contexts of the four European countries are defined, the theoretical concept and construct of the research is presented and the means of data collection and analysis are discussed, together with the organisation of the research and the make-up of the respondent groups.

Chapter II looks into the legal regulations relating to inclusive education in the countries involved in the research, and the authors reveal the evolution of the phenomenon in the education system of each country. Education policy development is discussed, with an emphasis on analysing its main breakthrough points, the evolution of official concepts and the practical implementation of political provisions in schools. The education system that responds to the pupils' individual needs represents the development of democratic processes in the countries' societies. The analysis of current legal regulations in each country allows the reader to form an exhaustive view on the implementation of systems and models of inclusive education in four European countries. In the ethnographic research, the thorough analysis of the legal conditions required for the implementation of inclusive education defines the formal context of the phenomenon in question.

Chapter III continues the analysis of the context of the ethnographic research, and reviews the main scientific research carried out in each country that focuses on the issues of inclusive education.

The review of works published by Austrian researchers gives a consistent view of the processes of introducing an inclusive education system in the overall context of education, and its evolution from segregated special needs education for every pupil towards more open and inclusive education. The country's experience is an example of consistent implementation of projects that take central role in the process of education change.

The analysis of Finnish scientific works gives a highly detailed presentation of the way inclusive education evolved in the education community, from identifying and acknowledging a new phenomenon to it becoming a natural component of the educational culture. The decisions taken in the education reform of 1980 are discussed, given that they are seen by researchers as opening up the possibility for the

realisation of equality in the field of education. For example, "local curricula, non-numeric evaluation and not using standardised tests, and intelligent accountability with trust based on professionalism instead of consequential accountability", as well as "the Finnish flexible and wide support of learning, such as special needs education delivery, as promoting factors of educational equity". The processes involved in establishing teachers' attitudes towards inclusion are affected by personal experiences, habits and other factors; therefore, they call for specific ways of acting in encouraging such a change. The issue is also within the field of study for the Finnish researchers.

The review of the main research by Polish researchers reveals the perception of integrated and inclusive education in the country's education system, with the advantages and disadvantages of introducing the new education system also discussed. The research shows that the Polish education system includes classrooms where individual assistance of a therapeutic nature is provided to children, such as additional revalidation (didactic-compensatory) classes. However, it also highlights obstacles that hamper the successful participation in the education process of pupils with different needs, as well as the need to alter teachers' competences in a rapidly changing school and the importance of in-depth scientific research.

The Lithuanian researchers look into the development of inclusive education from the restoration of their national independence onwards. The evolution of the perception and models of the new phenomenon in the education system is analysed, highlighting breakthrough points in the educational reality and changes in the mindsets of pupils and teachers. In addition, the processes involved in transforming perceptions of disability and in establishing equal opportunities in the field of education are considered, and difficulties impeding the transformation of schools are brought to light.

Comparative analysis of the scientific thought in the four European countries summarises the experiences of inclusive education development and establishes the main factors encouraging and hampering the transformation of education systems.

Chapter IV discusses the models of schools implementing inclusive education in the four European countries, schools that boast vast experience and which are well known in their respective countries. The models implemented are rather different but they share a significant similarity: the education systems are based on equitable and equal-valued relationships between community members. However, the schools operate in different cultural contexts, and nurture the traditions and historical experience of their own countries. Differences are also present in the schools' legal status and structure. The Teacher Training School of the University of Lapland is an integral

element in the composition of the university, and carries out the function of educating students, i.e. future teachers, alongside its role of pupil education. The Integrated Learning Centre Brigittenau in Vienna and the Integrated Secondary School No. 1 in Cracow are state schools, while the Vilnius Versmės Catholic Gymnasium is a private school with education based on Christian values. Despite their differences, all of the schools share the idea of building an education environment favourable for the learning success of every pupil.

In Chapter V, the analysis of the socio-psychological aspect of inclusive education highlights the manifestation of pedagogical interaction within school communities. The reference points in an inclusive pedagogical interaction are the following: acknowledgement of every person's equal value, tolerance, nurturing respect and dignity, provision of timely and rational assistance and a culture of co-operation. The interaction is analysed in all groups of classes and entire school communities participating in the research. The analysis encompasses the manifestation of inclusive community characteristics in pupils' interpersonal relationships, and how such interaction is formed in inclusive groups.

The participation of the teacher is a significant factor in the pupils' interpersonal interaction; thus, the chapter looks into the manifestation of such participation in pupil-teacher relationships by analysing ways of involving pupils in decision-making and how they engage with it; the ways in which the teacher supports and strengthens the pupils' individuality; and the ways of creating conditions to accept the different needs of pupils in the community. Also considered are the interpersonal communication aspects most frequently raised by pupils regarding their relationships with the teacher, and how the teacher feels during the interaction. An inclusive education partnership also shapes the close professional links within the community of other teachers and specialists participating in the educational process. The analysis covers the ways teachers share good practices, as well as difficulties, how the ethos is created in the teachers' community and the way in which it contributes to the development of inclusivity. The research results show the nature of, and the clear effect of, the interaction between teachers and pupils' parents in shaping an inclusive community. The results also reveal the factors of pedagogical interaction that encourage co-operation between parents and teachers and the parents' engagement in the school.

Moreover, the research looks into the inclusive education organisation process through a thorough analysis of teachers' diaries, where they reflect on their own actions and reveal how they organise certain activities, the difficulties they encounter,

the ways they solve various problems in specific circumstances and emphasise major daily and longer-term successes. Factors stimulating inclusive education are analysed in the context of education planning and modelling. Such an environment brings out particularly well the highly sensitive and complex need to provide rational assistance to the pupil. The educational experiences on which teachers reflect allow us to identify when and what kind of assistance helps eliminate the particular obstacle from the pupil's learning path and helps him or her engage in joint educational activity. The analysis of teacher reflection diaries also reveals the impact of the educational environment on the efficiency of inclusive education. The teachers reflect on various unexpected atypical situations, and these broaden our knowledge of inclusive education processes and allow us to improve the models designed to improve the situation.

The analysis of the research, through comparison with the fundamentals of inclusive education theory, socio-cultural experience and specific educational models, reveals the essential education factors that enable the development of the environment of successful education for every pupil.

The co-authors of the work would like to express gratitude to the communities of all the schools that participated in the research for their openness in sharing their experiences; and to the communities of the universities for providing excellent working conditions during meetings, remote scientific discussions, and work in other forms, as well as for their help in organising conferences and disseminating the research results in researcher and teacher communities. The research project was funded through the European Commission Erasmus+ Programme. We thank the European Commission and the Lithuanian National Agency for their close co-operation during the implementation of the project. We believe that the results of the research will contribute to the pool of scientific works in Educational Sciences since the results of the research reveal new aspects of inclusive pedagogical interaction, such as empowering support, multifaceted and joint active involvement of all education participants in the organization of education process, and different directions in which the teacher's transforming approach can be realized. The work will enrich the pool of knowledge resources for Master's and Doctoral studies, induce new scientific research in the field of inclusive education, as well as help teachers to ensure better learning for every pupil, which is hugely important given that the success of every pupil at school is a precondition for the formation of a productive society.

Alvyra Galkienė

REFERENCES

Aicardi, C. (2009). The analytic spirit and the Paris Institution for the Deaf-Mutes, 1760–1830. *History of Science, 47*(2), pp. 175-221.

Albrecht, G. L., Seelman, K. D. & Bury, M. (2001). An institutional history of disability. *Handbook of disability studies.* Sage, pp. 11 - 68.

Booth, T. & Ainscow, M. (1998). *From them to us: An international study of inclusion in education.* Psychology Press.

Donnelly, V. (Ed.) (2011). Teacher education for inclusion across Europe: Challenges and opportunities. *European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education*.

Field, S., Kuczera, M. & Pont, B. (2007). *No more failures. Ten steps to equity in education.* Summary and policy recommendations.

Holbrook, M. C. & Koenig, A. J. (2000). *Foundations of education: History and theory of teaching children and youths with visual impairments* (Vol. 1). American Foundation for the Blind.

Kelley, J. E. (2008). Harmony, empathy, loyalty, and patience in Japanese children's literature. *The Social Studies*, *99*(2), pp. 61-70.

Lieberman, L. M. (1982). Itard: The great problem solver. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 15*(9), pp. 566-568.

Montserrat, D. & Garland, R. (1996). The eye of the beholder: Deformity and disability in the Graeco-Roman world.

Oliphant, J. (2008). "Touching the light": The invention of literacy for the blind. *Paedagogica Historica, 44*(1-2), pp. 67-82.

Pinel, P. (1809). *Traité médico-philosophique sur laliénation mentale.* [Medical – philosophical treatise on mental alienation]. J. Ant. Brosson.

UNESCO (1994). The Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education, Paris. Retrieved from http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0009/000984/098427eo.pdf

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (1960). Convention against Discrimination in Education, Paris. Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/DISCRI_E.PDF

Chapter I.

FRAMING THE STUDY OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

1.1.   PARADIGM OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Suvi Lakkala

To understand the school systems' development towards inclusion, a historical review of society is necessary. The treatment of various members of society has varied throughout history. The definitions of pupils' needs for diverse support or special support are always connected to the current time and culture. During different historical periods, the goals and tasks of society and school have varied. Attitudes towards disabilities always reflect the spirit of the time.

Education has always been a part of the global and national social and economic complexities. Thereby, education is linked to the composition of societal differences and inequalities. The history of special education can be seen as a history of tension between assimilation and regulation, between inclusion and segregation alongside with control. The idea of inclusive education goes well beyond special education in its approach to social integration (Armstrong, Armstrong & Spandagou, 2010).

Segregation in education

In Western societies, the education of persons with disabilities was implemented in rather similar patterns: by the end of the 18th century, people with disabilities had their own educational institutes. Individual disorders were diagnosed through medicine and psychology. The usual policy was to diagnose and classify the problem or dysfunction in an individual and then take proper actions to place the individual in the right kind of environment. Moreover, the doctrine of race hygiene, or eugenics, emerged and encouraged the control of people with mental disabilities as well as ethnic minorities by enacting sterilization laws (Moberg & Ikonen, 1980; Kivirauma, 2009; Armstrong et al., 2010).

At the beginning of the 20th century, mass education appeared as a novelty in many countries. It allowed many children to have education for the first time; on the other hand, however, the societies' diverse social classes resulted in a solution were different schools for different types of children were created (Armstrong et al., 2010). Furthermore, medicine presented new ways of explaining exceptionality by defining people's behaviour. The opposite of normal people was no longer a pathological medical state but an abnormality, which was a non-specific definition of exceptionality.

Special education started to develop towards increasingly specialized diagnoses and corresponding education. Medicalization became an authorized process of explaining people's and society's actions through medicine (Vehmas & Mäkelä 2008). Moreover, the interpretation of the limits and contents of definitions differed depending on the environment or culture (Peters, 2007; Parker, 1997). The more serious the problems people had, the more segregated their educational arrangements were. During this period of time, an institutional paradigm of special education dominated (Saloviita, Lehtinen & Pirttimaa 1997); special education was arranged in segregated, expert-oriented teaching procedures, such as special institutions, schools and classes. After the Second World War, the education of people with disabilities continued to expand. Teaching arrangements were based on homogenous groups for students with different kinds of disabilities.

Mainstreaming, normalization and integration

In the 1960s, in developed countries, discussions arose regarding social and economic inequality in education. People started to question the medical aetiology and diagnosis of disabilities. Society began to acknowledge the role of its own actions regarding diversity. The critical discussions led to a new viewpoint in considering disabilities and special education: the origins of deficiencies were not necessarily due to individuals' capabilities but rather to environmental factors or social status, such as poverty, cultural deprivation, and minority status. The new social definition indicated shifts in the ways, in which discussions of special education services and purposes were framed (cf. Kavale, 1979).

The development led to the birth of the *mainstreaming movement*. The families of children with disabilities were active and pointed out flaws in their children's education. Instead of carrying out segregated special education, the aim was to implement special education or support as a solid part of comprehensive education. In its original meaning, mainstreaming emphasized combining special and general education, and not integrating individuals into "normal" education after they have reached a certain level of rehabilitation. Several definitions of mainstreaming have emerged since then, and there are characterizations, which stress the Least Restrictive Environment for special needs individuals. According to this concept, segregated teaching arrangements were to be executed only in unavoidable circumstances and just for limited periods of time (Hewett & Forness, 1977).

The concept of *normalization* was used to describe the principle of making everyday lives of people with disabilities as normal as possible. The initiative came from the families of people with disabilities (Lippman, 1977). The concept of integration was used when discussing the education of children that are different. Söder (1978) identified four forms or levels of integration: physical, functional, social, and societal. Physical integration was considered the most undeveloped form of integration, and social and societal integration were the most developed ones. The degrees of integration were seen as cumulative, in the sense that physical and functional integration were mainly means to achieve the goal of social and societal integration.

Although the goal was to educate children together with "normal" children, the roots of the problem were still mainly seen at an individual level. Environments were considered and planned for different groups with disabilities, and pupils were placed into mainstream or special classes according the severity of their disabilities (Moberg, 1984). An individual learning plan (IEP) was to be designed for every exceptional child. During the 1970s and 1980s, the principles of mainstreaming and integration shaped the forms of special education towards more flexible teaching arrangements. Part-time special education became more common. At the same time, special education services became available to increasingly more accurate and narrow definitions of disorders and disabilities (Kivirauma, 2002; Jahnukainen, 2015). Although the interpretations of the procedures of the best environments and teaching methods varied, the interpretation of the least restrictive environment began to change. The focus in locating the problem started to shift from individuals towards environments (Moberg & Ikonen, 1980; Moberg, 2002).

It is worth noting that the shift from medicalization to acknowledging the social and environmental origins of disabilities as a model of explaining incapacities goes hand in hand with the change of scientific traditions in education in the 1980s, namely, from positivist research traditions towards qualitative approaches.

In a positivistic approach, the research phenomena are divided into measurable variables, and the aim of research is to predict and control educational phenomena. Results presented only in the form of statistical probabilities are insufficient to describe the concerns in learning, teaching, and schools. As a result, a large part of pupils' and teachers' lives were ignored in the positivistic approach. In qualitative approaches, it is possible to consider the rich and complex daily life in classrooms and its' cultural, social, and personal aspects. The ontology of interpretive approaches to research is based on the assumption that individuals vary in their perceptions and experiences of the real

world. Hence, a society and the education it produces are the result of its members' descriptions, interpretations, and understandings (for example, Lauriala, 2013).

In the 1990s, people started to criticize special education itself. They argued that, in spite of its willingness to help, special education maintains inequality in education. General education is not built to react to diversity because it is special education that deals with disabilities. The critics claimed that the gamut of pupils' features was so wide that classifying them was impossible. Many pupils fell to the "grey zone" where support was not available (Evans, 2000; Saloviita, 2006). People also saw that institutions could also enforce inequality in many ways. Classifying disabilities, disadvantages, and difficulties may produce sorting and labelling according to issues, for which they are not intended. Having special educational needs, no matter how small, may, in many cases, define the social environment, in which one studies. Furthermore, discriminative attitudes in institutions may occur as stigmatizing discussions on pupils and their families (cf. Booth & Ainscow, 2005).

Towards inclusion

There was a wish to give up the word *integration* because it still emphasized individuals instead of environments in education. Integration, as well as mainstreaming, refers to the assumption that pupils with disabilities are brought from outside, from the extreme ends of education, to participate in schooling with the "normal" children (Biklen, 2001). One of the criticisms, however, was that integration maintained the dual education system (special and general education). As a result, the concept of *inclusion* was introduced. The central goal of inclusion was to guarantee that all children could attend their neighbourhood schools (Booth & Ainscow, 2005; Armstrong et al., 2010).

Dividing pupils into normal ones and those with special needs is seen as irrelevant in inclusive education. All the children are considered learners, each of them with their own personal features, strengths, and weaknesses. The social model of disabilities describes the ontology of inclusion. In its purest form, the social model of disabilities starts from the assumption that disability is a condition, which is produced socially, and the appearance of which is dependent on how the surrounding society reacts to the disability. Hence, the deficiency is not located in the individuals who are naturally different from each other but rather in society, which does not account for the diversity of its members (Booth & Ainscow, 2005; Peters, 2007). Avoiding labelling and unintentional stigmatization in education is an important strategy in inclusive education.

Along with the idea of inclusion, pupils' social welfare was identified as an important factor for learning (Ainscow, 2007; Peters, 2007). One of the most emphasized views in inclusion is the enhancement of children's participation. Considering participation in learning, schools may produce successful experiences, strengthen pupils' social relationships and social engagement in their own communities, and enhance their future skills (Öhrling, 2006; Cloke & Davies, 1995).

Implementing inclusive education

As previously mentioned, related to the idea of mainstreaming, the principle of inclusion itself is widely agreed upon in numerous international documents and declarations, such as the Declaration of Salamanca of 1991 (UNESCO, 1991) and The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006). These and other statements have improved the acknowledgement of people's equal rights for education and participation in society, and have promoted social justice in various countries. Still, this does not make implementing inclusive education any easier. In many countries, there are dual education systems that separate pupils into different educational streams, such as vocational careers or academic careers. There are many modes of operating inside the education systems and inside institutions, special schools, and classes that may stigmatize and mould the children's self-image. Furthermore, inequalities in the world exist, including 130 million children in the world who do not attend school. Most of them live in poor countries (UNESCO, 2005).

Various definitions of inclusion

Since society's values are historically and culturally determined, and inclusion may be discussed using different terms and emphasizing different issues, it is important to acknowledge that many different views on inclusive education exist. It also is argued that the concept of inclusion is vague, and the goal of inclusive education cannot be achieved because, in practice, it will be impossible to educate all children in mainstream classrooms (Hansen, 2012; Hornby, 2015).

Ainscow, Booth and Dyson (2006) have distinguished two types of definitions of inclusion, namely, narrow and broad ones. The narrow definitions are based on the use of the concept of "inclusion" in practice, and emphasise individuals or groups of people.

The oldest definition for inclusion sees it *as a concern with learners with disabilities and others categorized as "having special educational needs"*. This approach was

historically influenced by various movements for the educational rights of "persons with disabilities". It focuses on increasing the participation of learners with "disability" or "special needs", and does not pay as much attention to the various ways, in which participation for *any* learner may be impeded or enhanced (Ainscow et al., 2006). Anyhow, for example, Hornby (2015) is worried about the ways that inclusive education is implemented in practice. He argues that it is the right of the pupils with special needs and disabilities to receive education appropriate for their needs. This argument is based on the assumption that inclusive education means the children to be educated in the same environment with their peers, and special education means a certain other kind of environment or special educational interventions. Hornby (2015) sees this as a dilemma of priorities, and, as a conclusion, suggests the concept of *inclusive special education.* According to Hornby, the inclusive special education acknowledges the importance of peers when considering different educational placements for children with severe special needs. The children will then, for example, have a possibility to be with peers with similar interests, difficulties, abilities, and disabilities, and have a sense of belonging to a learning community. Although there are problems in implementing inclusive education, some of Hornby's (2015) arguments against it are not sustainable, or instance the argument that it would not be possible to design individual educational plans (IEP) for children in inclusive education because of labelling; the belief that children with special needs cannot be brought into mainstream schools because of their focus on high academic achievement; or the finding that through their education, the mainstream teachers do not have enough competences in teaching children with special needs, or sufficient in-service training.

Another narrow definition of inclusion is *inclusion as a response to disciplinary exclusion.* In this view, inclusion is seen as a contributor to the exclusion of pupils who may act inappropriately or misbehave. Inclusion develops ways of teaching pupils "difficult" in terms of behaviour, and finds solutions not to exclude them (Ainscow et al., 2006). The third perception of inclusion is broader, although it still defines inclusion as focusing on fragmented groups: *inclusion in relation to all groups seen as being vulnerable to exclusion.* This conception sees all the groups that may experience exclusionary pressures from society or school as vulnerable. Elusive or informal ways of personal and institutional exclusion of pupils exist, as people may be discriminated against by their school communities on the basis of gender, class, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, faith, and family background. Such issues as social background, poverty, etc. are factors that can only be detected in large-scope

statistics. The factors may produce a chain of events where people are not able to engage with their society socially and may thus by "thrown out" (Ainscow et al., 2006; Harinen & Halme, 2012).

Additionally, Ainscow et al. (2006) present prescriptive definitions, which relate to wider development issues in our education systems. *School for All* relates to the process of developing common school or comprehensive School for All and valuing diversity in that school. It aims for schools, in which all children with diverse needs can learn, where each learner and staff member is considered equally valuable and differences are seen as resources (Ainscow et al., 2006; Booth & Ainscow, 2002). *Education for All (EFA)* was created through a set of international policies, mainly coordinated by UNESCO. The declarations and agreements set global targets for different groups, such as the participation of people with disabilities in education or girls' rights to attend school. Although significant progress has been achieved by the EFA movement, some critics have argued that exclusion always appears locally and thus should be combated in specific contexts (Ainscow et al., 2006; Peters, 2007).

It is difficult to compare the state of inclusive education in different countries because local interpretations may vary in spite of the same terms used (Jahnukainen, 2015). When comparing the situation in various countries, a historical overview is obligatory in order to understand the cultural development of a particular country. On a theoretical level, it is widely agreed that inclusion is a process that develops along the values of equity, tolerance, and appreciation of diversity. Evidently, no country has reached full inclusion, when measured by the scope of teaching every pupil in regular classrooms. Nowadays, most of pupils with mild and moderate learning difficulties and disabilities can study among their peers; however, those with more severe disabilities still usually stay in separate settings (Graham & Sweller, 2011). Armstrong et al. (2010) argue that choosing a definition of inclusion that one can agree with is insufficient, and instead even in positioning a discussion on inclusion there is a need for critical considerations of certain interconnections.

The concept of full inclusion remains yet to be defined. As an alternative, quite abstract definitions help to vision inclusive education, such as Ainscow's et al. (2006) description of *inclusion as a principled approach to education and society*. To create an inclusive society or inclusive education, one must be able to negotiate the values underlying human actions. These values are perpetually developing. Therefore, inclusion is an ongoing societal reform towards social justice and social sustainability. Within this societal approach, some broad features of inclusion in schools are widely

agreed upon (Ainscow et al., 2006). Below are five characteristics of inclusion, which define it as:

- a process, which aims to increase learners' participation in and reduce exclusion from the curricula, cultures, and communities of neighbourhood schools by restructuring cultures, policies and practices in educational institutions to better respond to the diversity of learners;
- The right of everyone to attend, participate, and reach achievements in education, especially of those vulnerable to exclusion;
- An understanding that schools are not the only places for learning but, rather, the purpose of the school is to support learning in all environments;
- The role of parents, carers, staff, and other community members presents them as significant participants in the learning experience;
- A continuous process, which combats all kinds of discrimination and exclusion (Ainscow et al., 2006; Kesälahti & Väyrynen, 2013).

From inclusive values to practice

In many countries, commitment to inclusion is evident, both at ideological and political levels. What makes comparing and implementing inclusive education in practice problematic is the fact that, at operational and practical levels, the realities are multiple. Even the definitions related to inclusive education and used in educational policy documents differ substantially in various countries (Armstrong, Armstrong & Spandagou, 2011). Nevertheless, in spite of different educational realities, strategies of implementing inclusive education have been created, and they light the paths leading towards a more inclusive education.

The Profile of an Inclusive Teacher was compiled in the international Teacher Education for Inclusion (TE4I) project (Watkins & Donnelly, 2012). Four core values were identified and used as the basis of teacher competences. The competences were further examined through attitudes and knowledge. The four core values linked to the competences are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Four core values underpinning areas of competence for inclusive education
(Watkins & Donnelly, 2012, p. 199)

Core value	Necessary related areas of competence
1. Valuing pupil diversity - pupil differences are considered as a resource and asset to education	- Conceptions of inclusive education - The teacher's view on learner differences
2. Supporting all learners - teachers have high expectations for the achievements of all learners'	- Effective teaching approaches in heterogeneous classes - Promoting academic and social learning of all learners
3. Working with others - collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers	- Working with parents and families - Working with a range of other education professionals
4. Continuing professional development - teaching is a learning activity and teachers must accept responsibility for their own lifelong learning	- Teachers as reflective practitioners - Initial teacher education as a foundation for continuous professional learning and development

These competences are quite similar to the three principles and actions developed by the University of Aberdeen, Scotland (Florian & Spratt, 2013).

The first Aberdeen principle presumes that differences must be accounted for as an essential aspect of human development in any conceptualization of learning. In enacting inclusive pedagogy, it means that a teacher must replace deterministic views of ability with *a concept of transformability*. Every child is to be approached as a developing individual. The second underlying principle claims that teachers must believe (or can be convinced) that they are qualified or capable of teaching all children. In action, the difficulties the pupils experience in learning can be considered as *dilemmas for teaching* rather than problems within the pupils. The third principle assumes that *the profession must continually develop* new and creative ways of working with others. In doing so, instead of providing something different or additional to children who experience difficulties in learning, inclusive pedagogy seeks to extend what is ordinarily available to everybody (Florian & Spratt, 2013).

The influence of inclusive education in teaching and school culture

Aiming towards inclusive education has reformed many elements in teaching and everyday life in schools. In this section, three inclusive trends in education along with the development of inclusive education are determined through research literature. To begin with, the values in inclusive education have influenced learning concepts and have been translated into new ways of teaching, e.g. *pedagogies*. Moreover, *school culture* has changed towards more co-operative ways of working and negotiating than before. Finally, the modification of *teachers' profession* has been inevitable.

At first, the aim of inclusive education changed the starting point of pedagogy, namely, *the concepts of learning.* In the 1980s, cognitive constructivism started to develop (cf. Piaget, 1984). Constructivism sees individuals as active learners who create their own constructions of the knowledge they acquire. Vygotsky (1978) acknowledged that cognition does not develop without social interaction. People are always members of certain cultural society and, thereby, are, in a way, products of their communities and individual experiences. This awakening of diverse ways of constructing one's learning and the impact of one's social position and interaction on learning led to social constructivist learning concepts. Inclusive education stresses pupils' social engagement and social opportunities, such as being active in their lives. Thus, social constructivist learning concept supports the child's holistic development, which is considered important in inclusive education.

The *pedagogies and teaching* have developed to more pupil-oriented and flexibly changing ways. Inclusive teaching embodies numerous changing factors dependent on authentic situations, people and environments (Sikes, Lawson & Parker, 2007). When implementing inclusive pedagogy, teaching cannot be considered as a series of teaching techniques. Rather, transformability and flexibility are core elements in inclusive pedagogies. They require teachers to reflect on their teaching and actions in the light of the needs of their pupils, the demands of local circumstances, and the culture of the time (Lakkala, Uusiautti & Määttä, 2014; Lingard & Mills, 2007). In inclusive pedagogy and teaching, teachers implement the curriculum to provide multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement (Orkwis & McLane, 1998; Tomlinson, 2005). McGuire, Scott and Shaw (2006) have defined the principles of Universal Design for Instruction (UDI). It includes nine principles, which avoid classifying pupils into "normal" children and those with special needs. Instead, UDI expresses the social model of disabilities and highlights the non-placement of special support.

Furthermore, inclusive education has led to changes in *the school culture.* Teachers are more aware of the need for shared expertise rather than solving problems inside the school. Multi-professional work has become a natural way of co-operating and bringing services and support to everyday life in inclusive schools (Lakkala et al., 2014). Also, the contribution of families is ever more appreciated. School personnel have started to recognize the value of parents' experiential knowledge as well as to acknowledge the importance of hearing the voice of the children (Booth & Ainscow, 2002). In inclusive school culture, collaboration includes not only professionals but

also all members of the school community, and may thus be named a multi-agency collaboration (Turunen et al., 2014).

Finally, it can be stated that the *teachers' profession* has changed in many ways through the values of inclusive education. For centuries, teachers have been trained to work alone and to have control over their classes (cf. Alasuutari, 2010). The traditionally obvious presupposition of managing one's pupils on one's own has slowed down the implementation of inclusive education. Gradually, the goal of encountering diverse pupils' needs has revealed the inappropriateness of the demand and has changed teachers' pedagogical views. The tradition of working alone is no longer sufficient, nor is teaching as an expert in certain areas. The newest participative approach involves collaboration and teamwork among teachers and other staff (Mikola, 2011). In changing the contents of teachers' profession, initial teacher education and in-service education take a crucial role (Malinen & Savolainen, 2011; Lakkala & Thuneberg, 2012).

It can be concluded that education is always conducted according to society's values and traditions. Although, in many countries, developing inclusive education is a current guideline, the implications in policies and local practices reflect the culture and regime of each society. Nevertheless, historical analysis of educational changes shows that the general trend, at least in Europe, has moved towards more equal education over time. Additionally, the quality of grassroots-level actions, in the form of responding to pupils' needs for well-being in their school community and of having implications for learning achievements, have been acknowledged by researchers, school authorities, and families more clearly than in the past.

REFERENCES

Ainscow, M. (2007). From special education to effective schools for all: a review of progress so far. In L. Florian (Ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Special Education*. London: Sage, pp. 146-159.

Ainscow, M., Booth, T. & Dyson, D. (2006). *Improving schools, developing inclusion*. London: Routledge.

Armstrong, D., Armstrong, A. C. & Spandagou, I. (2010). Inclusion: By choice or by chance? *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 15*(1), pp. 29–39.

Biklen, D. (2001). Inkluusion sosiaalisia konstruktioita: käytännössä oppimassa [Social constructions of inclusion: learning in practice]. In P. Murto, A. Naukkarinen, & T. Saloviita (Eds.), *Inkluusion haaste koululle. Oikeus yhdessä oppimiseen.* [The Challenge of inclusion to schools. The right to learn together]. Jyväskylä: PS-Kustannus, pp. 55-81.

Booth, T. & Ainscow, M. (2002). *Index for inclusion developing learning and participation in schools*. Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education (CSIE). Retrieved from http://www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/Index%20English.pdf

Cloke, C. & Davies, M. (1995). Introduction. In C. Cloke & M. Davies (Eds.), *Participation and empowerment in child protection.* Trowbridge: Redwood Books, pp. xiii-xxiv.

Evans, P. (2000). Including students with disabilities in mainstreaming schools. In H. Savolainen, H. Kokkala, & H. Alasuutari (Eds.), *Meeting special and diverse educational needs: Making inclusive education a reality*. Helsinki: Hakapaino Oy, pp. 31-39.

Florian, L. & Spratt, J. (2013). Enacting inclusion: a framework for interrogating inclusive practice. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 28*(2), pp. 119-135.

Graham, L. J. & Sweller, N. (2011). The inclusion lottery: Who's in and who's out? Tracking inclusion and exclusion in New South Wales government schools. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 15*(9), pp. 941–953.

Guba, E. & Lincoln, Y. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*. London: Sage, pp. 105-117.

Harinen, P. & Halme, J. (2012). *Hyvä, paha koulu. Kouluhyvinvointia hakemassa.* [Good, bad school. Searching for well-being in school]. UNICEF. Nuorisotutkimusverkosto/ Nuorisotutkimusseura, verkkojulkaisuja 56. Retrieved from http://www.nuorisotutkimusseura.fi/julkaisuja/Hyva_paha_koulu.pdf

Hewett, F. & Forness, S. R. (1977). *Education of exceptional learners. Strategies for studying behavioral change*. Elmsford, NY: Pergamon.

Hornby, G. (2015). Inclusive special education: development of a hew theory for the education of children with special educational needs and disabilities. *British Journal of Special Education.* DOI: 10.1111/1467-8578.12101.

Jahnukainen, M. (2015). Inclusion, integration, or what? A comparative study of the school principals' perceptions of inclusive and special education in Finland and in Canada. *Disability & Society, 30*(5), pp. 59-72. DOI: 10.1080/09687599.2014982788

Kavale, K. (1979). Mainstreaming: the genesis of an idea. *The Exceptional Child, 26*(1), pp. 3-21.

Kesälahti, E. & Väyrynen, S. (2013). *Learning from our neighbours: Inclusive education in the making*. A School for All – Development for inclusive education. Rovaniemi: University of Lapland Printing Centre.

Kivirauma, J. (2002). Erityisopetuksen historialliset kehityslinjat Suomessa. [The historical policy trends of special education in Finland]. In M. Jahnukainen (Ed.), *Lasten erityishuolto ja -opetus Suomessa* [Special care and special education in Finland]. 11th completed ed. Helsinki: PS-kustannus, pp. 23-33.

Kivirauma, J. (2009). Erityisopetuksen historialliset kehityslinjat [The historical policy trends of special education]. In S. Moberg, J. Hautamäki & J. Kivirauma (Eds.), *Erityispedagogiikan perusteet.* [The foundations of special education]. Helsinki: WSOY, pp. 25-46.

Lakkala, S. & Thuneberg, H. (2012). Inkluusioon tähtäävä koulunuudistus opettajien kokemana. Kyselytutkimus Lapin kehittämisverkkohankkeen kunnissa. [Teachers' perceptions of educational reform aiming towards inclusion. A survey in the developmental network project of Finnish Lapland]. In *Hippuja ja oivalluksia. Kohti osallistavaa koulua Lapissa.* Rovaniemi: Rovaniemen kaupunki, pp. 8-39.

Lakkala, S., Uusiautti, S. & Määttä. K. (2014). How to make the neighbourhood school a School for All? *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, online, DOI: 10.1111/1471-3802.12055.

Lauriala, A. (2013). Changes in research paradigms and their impact on teachers and teacher education: a Finnish case. In C. J. Craig, P. C. Meijer & J. Broeckmans (Eds.), *From teacher thinking to teachers and teaching: the evolution of a research community*. Bingley: Emerald, pp. 569-596.

Lingard, B. & Mills, M. (2007). Pedagogies making a difference: Issues of social justice and inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 11*(3), pp. 233–244.

Lippman, L. (1977). "Normalization" and related concepts: words and ambiguities. *Child welfare, LVI*(1), pp. 72-77.

Malinen, O-P. & Savolainen, H. (2011). The directions of Finnish teacher education in the era of revised Act of Basic Education. In C. Forlin. (Ed.), *Future directions for inclusive teacher education. An international perspective*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 52-60.

McGuire, J. M., Scott, S. S. & Shaw, S. F. (2006). Universal Design and its applications in educational environments. *Remedial and Special Education, 27*(3), pp.166–175.

Mikola, M. (2011). Pedagogista rajankäyntiä koulussa. Inkluusioreitit ja yhdessä oppimisen edellytykset. [Defining pedagogical boundaries at school: the routes to inclusion and conditions for collaborative learning]. *University of Jyväskylä. Jyväskylä studies in education, psychology and social research* 412.

Moberg, S. (2002). Integraation ja inklusiivisen kasvatuksen ideologia ja kehittyminen. [The ideology and development of integration and inclusive education]. In M. Jahnukainen (Ed.), *Lasten erityishuolto- ja opetus Suomessa.* [Special care and special education in Finland]. 11th ed., Helsinki: Lastensuojelun keskusliitto, pp. 34-48.

Moberg, S. (1984). *Poikkeavuuden hyväksyminen ja poikkeavien sosiaalinen etäisyys.* [The acceptance of exceptionality and exceptional persons' social distance]. Valtakunnallisen tutkimus- ja kokeiluyksikön julkaisuja 25. Helsinki: Kehitysvammaliitto – Förbundet Utvecklingshämning r.y. [The Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities].

Moberg, S. & Ikonen, O. (1980). *Integraatio kehitysvammahuollossa: käsiteanalyysi ja teoreettinen tausta.* [Integration in the care of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities: Concept analysis and theoretical background]. Valtakunnallisen tutkimus- ja kokeiluyksikön julkaisuja 6. Helsinki: Kehitysvammaliitto – Förbundet Utvecklingshämning r.y. [The Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities].

Naukkarinen, A. (2003). *Inklusiivista koulua rakentamassa. Tutkimus yleisopetuksen ja erityiskoulun yhdistymisen prosessista.* [Constructing inclusive school. A research of the process of combining general education and special education school]. Opetushallitus. Moniste, 9/2003. Helsinki: Edita Prima Oy Ab.

Öhrling, K. (2006). Experiences of classroom research to increase schoolchildren's well-being. In A. Ahonen, K. Kurtakko & E. Sohlman (Eds.), *School, culture and well-being. Arctic Children research and development findings from Northern Finland, Sweden and Norway, and North-West Russia*. Rovaniemi: University of Lapland, pp. 69-83.

Orkwis, R. & McLane, K. (1998). *A curriculum every student can use: Design principles of student access.* Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

Parker, S. (1997). *Reflective teaching in the postmodern world. A manifesto for education in post modernity*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Peters, S. J. (2007). A historical analysis of international inclusive education policy and individuals with disabilities. *Journal of Policy Studies, 18*(2), pp. 98–108.

Powell, J. J. W. (2011). *Barriers to inclusion: Special education in the United States and Germany.* Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publisher.

Saloviita, T. (2006). Erityisopetus ja inkluusio. [Special education and inclusion]. *Kasvatus, 37*(4), pp. 326–342.

Saloviita, T., Lehtinen, U. & Pirttimaa, R. (1997). *Tie auki työelämään. Tuetun työllistämisen käyttäjäkeskeiset työtavat.* [The road is open for working life. User oriented working methods in supported employment]. Jyväskylä: Tie auki! –projekti.

Sikes, P., Lawson, H. & Parker, M. (2007). Voices on: Teachers and teaching assistants talk about inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 11*(3), pp. 355–370.

Söder, M. (1978). *Tränings- och grundsärskolans fysiska och funktionella integrering.* [The physical and functional integration of special schools]. Uppsala: Sociologiska institutionen.

Tomlinson, C. A. (2005). *The differentiated classroom. Responding to the needs of all learners*. Alexandria, VA: Pearson Education.

Turunen, T., Laitinen, M., Lakkala, S., Kangas, H., Pulju, M. & Valanne, E. (2014). Monitoimijuusmalli. [A conceptual model for multi-agency]. In S. Lakkala, H. Kangas & M. Pulju (Eds.), *Yhdessä toimimalla kohti hyvinvoivaa koulua. Koulun toimintakulttuurin kehittäminen monitoimijuuden avulla.* [Towards well-doing school by working together]. Rovaniemi: Lapin yliopisto, pp. 35-47 Retrieved from http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-484-787-2

United Nations (2006). *The convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.* Retrieved from http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=150

UNESCO (1994). *The Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education.* Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/SALAMA_E.PDF

UNESCO (2005). *Guidelines for inclusion. Ensuring access to education for all.* Retrieved from http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001402/140224e.pdf

Vehmas, S. & Mäkelä, P. (2008). A realist account of the ontology of impairment. *Journal of Medical Ethics, 34*(2), pp. 93–95.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: the development of higher psychological processes.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Watkins, A. & Donnelly, V. (2012). Teacher education for inclusion in Europe: Challenges and opportunities. In C. Forlin (Ed.), *Future directions for inclusive teacher education. An international perspective*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 192-202.

1.2. ETHNOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF SUCCESS FACTORS IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Alvyra Galkienė

The idea for the research was born by observing education development processes in the contexts of one's own and other countries. The idea of successful education for children with various needs in ordinary school communities closest to their homes, as a value in itself, no longer raises any doubts. Politicians of different countries have agreed on the following perception of this educational strategy: "Inclusive education is an on-going process aimed at offering quality education for all while respecting diversity and the different needs and abilities, characteristics, and learning expectations of the students and communities, eliminating all forms of discrimination" (UNESCO-IBE, 2008, p. 3). Research shows, however, that experience in the practical implementation of inclusive education varies greatly in different European countries in terms of the interpretation of concepts as well as implementation strategies for inclusive education and their quality (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2011).

Sociocultural environment of participating countries

The research focuses on cases of inclusive education implementation in the schools of four European countries: Austria, Finland, Lithuania, and Poland. The countries participating in the research have different political and social experiences, which affect their educational cultures. Two European countries, Finland and Austria, have enjoyed a long period of development of democratic institutions. The Finnish representative democracy system, encouraging social participation in decision making, has been in place since 1917. The independent Austrian state, restored after World War II, marked the beginning of its democratic development in 1955. Whereas the other two countries, Lithuania and Poland, have gone through drastic social unification processes during the years of Soviet occupation, and have experienced active revolutionary movements while liberating themselves from the regime. Poland was granted the name of the Democratic Republic of Poland, and its plan for democratic economic and political reforms was adopted in 1989. Lithuania escaped the Soviet grip when its society demonstrated exceptional unity and courage during

the so-called "Singing Revolution", and when the Act of the Supreme Council of Lithuania on the re-establishment of the independent state of Lithuania was adopted on the 11th of March, 1990.

Political and social changes in social structures have direct impact on the development of education systems. The varying social development contexts of countries taking part in the research suggest a vast field for scientific interpretations of factors affecting inclusive education.

Research design modelling

The research design was developed during systemic scientific colloquia involving researchers from all the universities in the four European countries participating in the project, as well as expert pedagogues working in participating schools of the project. During the first colloquium, in a scientific discussion, socio-psychological and educational components of inclusive education, relevant to the research, were distinguished, methodological access was discussed, research questions formulated, respondent groups were planned, and data collection methods and tools were agreed on. During the first colloquium, a precise research implementation timetable was designed. The decision was made to collect empirical data in the countries' schools during the same periods of the school year cycle. During the second scientific colloquium, the results of the review of the legal basis regulating inclusive education, and scientific research in the four countries participating in the project were planned. Empirical research tools were revised. During the third scientific colloquium, empirical research results from the countries' schools were analysed and compared. During the fourth colloquium, scientific research conclusions were discussed, and insights presented on issues of the development of inclusive education in the countries. The exchange in interim results of research data analysis as well as insights took place as the researchers from different countries communicated via virtual means.

Methodological approach of the research

The research is organized by applying an interactional ethnography perspective (Green, Dixon & Zaharlick, 2003), which allows for the analysis of information, events, and political impact, i.e. socio-educational interaction in daily situations in the environment of the class, school, or other community selected for the research (Skukauskaitė, 2006). Green and Bloome (1997) defined ethnographic research as a multidimensional research strategy, when various research methods are used in order

to analyse processes taking place in local social, educational, or cultural environments defined in the view of the research agenda. Ethnographic research aims to reveal the ways persons communicate, act, react, or take decisions in situations in question. With no claims to global generalizations, the research results nevertheless highlight their determining factors and set out ways for developing new models.

Constructive education theory, based on the synergy of theoretical provisions in Piaget's cognitive constructivism and Vygotsky's social constructivism theories, serves as a basis for this research. It is acknowledged that the education system based on the recognition of the specificities of a person's individual abilities and information perception, emphasized by Piaget, and on Vygotsky's focus on the social interaction in the context of a specific culture and language, lead to the revelation of every pupil's maximum potential powers and their use in education. The use of didactic tools fostering exploration, social interaction, active learning, and individual learning achievements build an effective environment of social-constructivist learning (Powej, Kalina, 2009).

The basis of the socio-educational culture of inclusive education consists of acknowledging every child's developmental uniqueness and, at the same time, knowing that all children have a lot in common. Anthropological commonness is present in the fact that every child shares a potential to learn. The teacher creates a socio-educational culture that encourages learning together, recognizing that in such interaction, every person's uniqueness enriches the joint experience, and an individual failure leads towards a joint failure. The socio-educational culture of inclusive education is built on the grounds of acknowledging a person's strengths. This is what creates conditions for a pupil's uniqueness to unfold, to work towards the highest personal result, and experience feelings of dignity. The pupil's powers are seen not as a predetermined given but rather as a transformative phenomenon that can change throughout the educational process. In cases of difficulty, learning assistance gains particular importance here; the concept thereof emphasizes the elimination of the obstacle causing the learning difficulties. In the reality of inclusive education, the teacher, while planning activities, adds a subjective dimension to them in the context of common learning. The person, when participating in the learning activity, takes personal responsibility for his or her own success as well as that of the entire learning community, just as the community cares about everyone's personal success (Spratt & Florian, 2015). An inclusive education teacher is able to recognize, accept, and act within the settings of a variety of pupils. In the environment of learning together, the

teacher creates preconditions for every pupil's success. A pupil's failure in learning is treated as a lack of teaching skills rather than the child's personal problem (Hart, Drumond & McIntyre, 2004; Florian & Spratt 2013).

Conceptual framework of research

The research consists of two complementary parts (Fig. 1). The first part of the research aims at analysing the external environment that shapes the form of inclusive education at schools. The analysis covers the following: a) the legal basis of inclusive education in each country, and b) scientific research field in each country. The analysis of the legal regulation of education processes reveals the conditions created in each country and the resources pooled in order to realize education policy in specific educational institutions. The analysis of the scientific research field enables a better understanding of the directions of evidence-based ideas aimed at implementing and improving inclusive education policy, and the identification of actual processes taking place in reality, as well as synergy between science and practice.
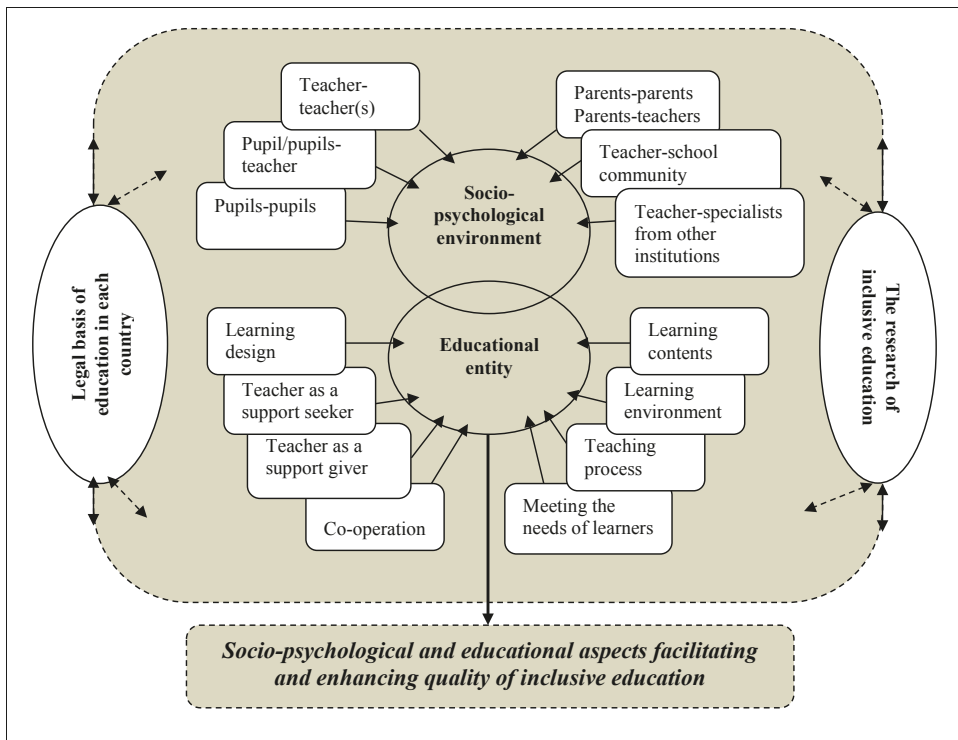
Figure 1. Conceptual framework of research.

The second part of the research looks at the processes of inclusive education reality in specific school and class communities. The empirical part consists of two inclusive education reality dimensions: a) socio-psychological environment research, and b) educational reality research. The socio-psychological environment is defined by multidimensional interaction between various education participants (pupils, teachers, pupils' parents, and representatives of different structures operating in the school). The educational reality is explored in terms of education planning, organization, assistance provided to the pupil and the teacher, recognition of educational and learning needs, and co-operation within and outside the institution. The educational factors identified during the research in both dimensions and interpreted in the socio-cultural context of each participant country of the project allow the revelation of educational factors that stimulate the development of inclusive education.

Research question: *What socio-psychological and educational aspects facilitate and enhance quality of inclusive education in research cases?*

Research sub-questions:

How and what kinds of interpersonal interaction factors at the socio-psychological level of inclusive education prompt the manifestation of respect, dignity, equal rights, assistance, acceptance, co-operation, and willingness to be together?

How and what kinds of factors in an inclusive education environment determine fully-fledged planning of the educational process as well as its implementation, curriculum individualization, assistance organization, and the development of professional partnership networks in research cases?

How does the expression of inclusive education reflect the country's socio-cultural environment in research cases?

Research participants

A group of researchers representing one teacher training university in each of the countries joined together for a research project on the inclusive education experience. Each university selected one school implementing inclusive education in their country (Table 2). The school selection criteria were the following: broad experience in inclusive education and reputation in the pedagogical community.

Table 2. University and school communities in different countries

THE UNIVERSITY	THE SCHOOL
Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences	Vilnius "Versmės" Catholic School
Pedagogical University of Cracow	Integration Secondary School No 1 in Cracow
University of Lapland	Teacher Training School of University of Lapland
University of Teacher Education Vienna	Integrated Learning Center Brigittenau in Vienna

Two class communities in each school participated in the research directly: including teachers, pupils, and their parents (Table 3). However, research results reflect social pedagogical interaction in the entire community of the participating school (including school leaders, special pedagogical assistance providers, etc.) as well as institutions outside of the school community, which provide for the education process.

Table 3. Composition of class communities participating in the research

Participant	Finland	Lithuania	Poland	Austria
Pupils	42	45	40	36
Teachers	2	2	2	2
Parents	30	45	40	15

The research participant group of teachers consists of primary teachers that educate the pupils of the classes participating in the research. Other pedagogues (special needs pedagogues, speech therapists, and teachers of other classes) were not directly involved in the research. The role of the latter has been revealed through the experiences of participating class teachers. Detailed presentation of the experience and educational environment of the participating schools is presented in Chapter IV. Specific profiles of the research participants (teachers and pupils) are presented in sections 5.1., 5.2., 5.3., and 5.4.

Methods of data collection and analysis

The research data are collected in four European countries, synchronizing the research implementation stages and timing, applying the same data collection and analysis methods (see Appendix 1).

The research of the socio-cultural environment of inclusive education implementation applies the following:

Legal and scientific literature review. In the first stage of the research, the participating countries' legal acts regulating inclusive education are analysed, as well

as the main scientific texts of each country (articles, research reports, and scientific studies) related to the development and expression of inclusive education in the country. The review of these texts reveals the environment of inclusive education as a combination of legal regulation, science, and practice. Comparative data analysis allows the identification of the differences in inclusive education development in different socio-cultural contexts.

The following is applied for socio-psychological research of inclusive education environments:

Interviews. The interviewees in every country included the following: two class teachers from every participating school; pupils with different needs (four with and four without special educational needs); a focus group of pupils' parents.

Observation of pedagogical situations. The pupils' interpersonal interaction is observed in research classes for five days. The observation is carried out in different school situations: before the lessons, during the lessons, after the lessons, and during informal activities.

Sociometric measure is applied in order to assess the pupils' interpersonal relations in the research classes.

The following is applied for the evaluation of educational aspects in inclusive education:

Diaries. Teachers participating in the research (two in each of the countries) kept diaries for one week every month from September to December, where they reflected on their experience in implementing inclusive education. They reflect on the experiences of identifying and acknowledging special needs, planning curricula and activities, organizing assistance to pupils and teachers, and developing co-operation networks.

The method of structuring content analysis (Mayring, 2008) is applied for the analysis of qualitative data. The qualitative data of observation, interviews, and diaries is analysed in the following stages: stage 1 – definition of the categories, stage 2 – description of examples in each category, stage 3 – deductive analysis, producing text with references to the categories, moving from theory to the text, and stage 4 – inductive analysis, moving from text to theory, open for new categories. The research results are interpreted in the context of each country; they are then compared between the countries, in order to reveal socio-psychological and educational aspects facilitating and enhancing the quality of inclusive education.

When generalizing data, the data triangulation method was applied, which allows the revelation of the trends of the phenomenon on the grounds of data from at least three sources (Fig. 2).
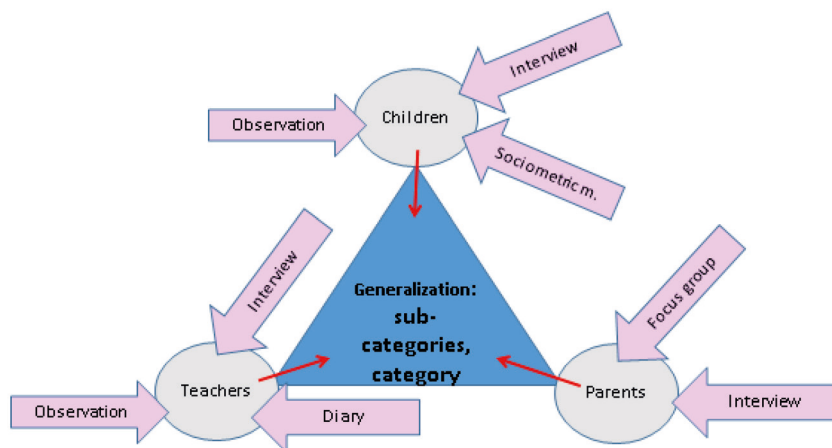
Figure 2. Data analysis by data triangulation method.

Data collected by various means from three respondent groups (children, their parents, and pedagogues) are generalized in order to answer the research questions. Thus, higher precision as well as less subjectivity in data generalization are achieved.

Ethical considerations

The researchers adhered to the generally accepted fundamental principles of scientific research projects (Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012; Žydžiūnaitė & Sabaliauskas, 2017).

The principle of respect for privacy. Considering the aim of the researchers to reveal the good practices of the schools and emphasize factors that encourage the development of inclusive education, upon consent of the communities of the schools participating in the research, authentic names of the schools are used. When analysing and presenting research data, the names of all pupils have been either changed or replaced with particular codes. The names of the teachers are also encoded.

The principle of confidentiality and anonymity. A research agreement was signed with the teachers, pupils, and their parents. For the pupils' interviews, their parents' permission was also obtained. The research data is encoded and stored by the researchers, inaccessible to other persons. During the scientific discussions, either codes

or alternate names for the pupils are used. The names were changed in such a way as to avoid using any name of any other pupil in the classrooms participating in the research.

The principle of sympathetic consideration and disposition not to harm the research subject. Interaction with research participants was organized in a safe environment. Upon request of the children, class teachers or parents were present during the interviews. The research data was collected by means of conversation based on questions needed for research purposes. Researchers encouraged the respondents to be open and critical. Following the termination of the project, the principle of confidentiality remains strictly observed.

The principle of justice. The research participant group was assemble strictly according to the principle of free will. Not a single pupil took part in the research if the pupil or his or her parents objected to it. The researchers aimed at preserving equal relationships with all the participants in the research. Teachers took part in the scientific discussions in the group of researchers; therefore, they received continuous feedback during the entire research project, and had the opportunity to contribute to correct interpretation of the research data.

Validity and reliability

Validity: the target groups of the research serve as a good representation of those involved in inclusive education. Considerations are present regarding broader national legislation and norms that have impact on local environments in schools. The research involves teachers who provide education, and pupils and parents who bring their experiential knowledge to the research. Limitations: the study takes place in four schools. Each of them has special characteristics, and they do not represent the overall situation in each country's school system. As a result of the history of the schools in question in developing inclusive education, they are expected to serve as inclusive examples. Thus, it might be possible to find certain shared features among the schools despite their national differences. Another limitation to be considered is the fact that when interviewing children, a child can be guided by the adult; therefore, there is a risk of subjectivity in data interpretation. With that in mind, the interviewers must be very sensitive not to expect specific kinds of answers but instead give room for the child to think and answer as they feel.

Reliability: diverse methods, and method triangulation in studying the phenomena allows the researchers to achieve objectivity. Moreover, if similarities in each countries' data can be found, they will increase the reliability of the research.

REFERENCES

Aluwihare-Samaranayake, D. (2012). Ethics in Qualitative Research: A View of the Participants' and Researchers' World from a Critical Standpoint. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 11(12).*

European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2011). *Teacher education for inclusion across Europe – challenges and opportunities,* Odense, Denmark: European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education.

Florian, L. & Spratt, J. (2013). Enacting inclusion: a framework for interrogating inclusive practice. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 28*(2), pp. 119-135.

Green, J. L. & Bloome, D. (1997). Ethnography and ethnographers of and in education: A situated perspective. In J. Flood, S. B. Heath & D. Lapp (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teaching literacy through the communicative and visual arts*. New York: International Reading Association & MacMillan, pp. 181-202

Green, J. L., Dixon, C. N. & Zaharlick, A. (2003). Ethnography as logic of inquiry. In J. Flood, D. Lapp, J. R. Squire & J. M. Jensen (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teaching the English Language Arts* (2nd ed., pp. 201-224).

Hart, S., Drumond, M. J. & McIntyre D. (2004). *Learning without limits*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Mayring, Ph. (2008). *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse. Grundlagen und Techniken.* [Qualitative content analysis. Basics and techniques]. Weinheim: Verlagsgruppe Beltz.

Powej, K. C. & Kalina, C, J. (2009). Cognitive and social constructivism: Developing tools for an effective classroom. *Education*, Vol. 130 Issue 2, pp. 241–250.

Skukauskaitė, A. (2006). Developing an analytic system for grounded interpretations: studying the impact of educational changes on teachers in Lithuania. *Doctor degree disertation,* University of California, Santa Barbara.

Spratt J. & Florian, L. (2015). Inclusive pedagogy: From learning to action. Supporting each individual in the context of 'everybody'. *Teaching & Teacher Education*. Vol. 49, pp. 89-96.

UNESCO-IBE (2008) Conclusions and recommendations of the 48th session of the International Conference on Education (ED/BIE/CONFINTED 48/5) Geneva: UNESCO IBE. Retrieved from http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/ice/48th-ice- 2008/conclusions-and-recommendations. html

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: the development of higher psychological processes.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Žydžiūnaitė, V. & Sabaliauskas, S. (2017). *Kokybiniai tyrimai: principai ir metodai.* [Qualitative research: Principles and methods]. Vilnius: Vaga.

Chapter II.

LEGAL CONTEXT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN FOUR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES: AUSTRIA, FINLAND, LITHUANIA, POLAND

2.1. INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS: LEGAL BASIS IN AUSTRIA

Georg Jäggle

In Austria, the National Council and the Federal Council have legislative power at federal level. The federal state parliament has legislative power in the federal states. The legal foundation of the current school system in Austria is constituted by the School Organization Act of 1962 (SchOG). The Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs is responsible for educational issues at national level; and school types and curricula are identical in all of Austria. Major changes to the laws deriving from the School Organization Act can only be adopted by a two-third majority in the National Council. The legal responsibility for framework legislation, e.g. establishing and maintaining schools, school timetables, and the number of pupils in a class in compulsory education, lies within the federal state, while the onus of transposing directives and fulfilling legal requirements is on each of the nine Austrian states. In the states, legislative power lies with the Federal State Parliament.

In Austria, School for All is only implemented at primary education level. After the fourth grade, there is a separation between "academic secondary school lower level" and "new secondary school". Admission to academic secondary school lower level is determined by the pupil's school grades of the fourth year in primary school. If the grades are insufficient, a test can be taken, the results of which are crucial for being admitted to academic lower secondary schools. Children's education continues in separate ways according to their academic ability.

Special needs education and inclusive education open up the possibility for pupils with and without disabilities to have a shared learning experience. Pupils with special educational needs may be taught by way of integrated education at a primary school, secondary school, new secondary school, the lower level of an academic secondary school, pre-vocational school, and one-year domestic science school (BMBF, 2016b).

The legal regulatory framework regulating "Inclusive School for All" is applied only in primary school. Introducing a School for All at compulsory education level has been a recurring issue for a number of years; however, no political consensus has been reached so far.

Schulstufe | grade >													

Sonderpädagogik / Inklusive Bildung
Special needs education / Integrated education

BVJ**

Integrative Berufsausbildung
Integrated vocational training
ISCED 3B

Vorschulstufe | Pre-Primary school

Polytechnische Schule
Pre-vocational school

ISCED 3C

Berufsschule und Lehre (Duale Ausbildung) Part-time vocational school/ apprenticeship
ISCED 3B

1

1

1

Neue Mittelschule*
New secondary school

Berufs-bildende mittlere Schule (BMS)
Secondary technical and vocational school
ISCED 3B

3

3

Kinder-garten

Volksschule
Primary school

ISCED 2

Berufsbildende höhere Schule (BHS)
Colleges for Higher Vocational Education
ISCED 3A | 4A

5

Allgemein bildende höhere Schule (AHS) Unterstufe
Academic secondary school Lower level

Allgemein bildende höhere Schule (AHS) Oberstufe
Academic Secondary school Upper level

4

ISCED 0

ISCED 1

ISCED 2

ISCED 3A

Allgemeine Schulpflicht | compulsory education

Schulstufe | grade >	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Alter | age >	6	7	8	9	10	10	11	12	13	14	14	15	16	17	18	19

Primarstufe
Primary level

Sekundarstufe I
Lower secondary level

Sekundarstufe II
Upper secondary level

Figure 3: Austrian education system (BMBF, 2016a).

Compulsory education / Duration of education

Compulsory education in Austria lasts for nine years, beginning at the age of six. For children and adolescents with an extensive range of disabilities, the maximum duration of schooling in special schools with a focus on vocational training is twelve years. From the tenth grade onwards, parents have to apply for another year of schooling every year. The application can also be rejected by the Regional School Inspection. Integrated schooling of children who fail to fulfil requirements set by the regular syllabus is only provided until the ninth grade. Integrated schooling of children and adolescents with disabilities between the first and the ninth grade is well implemented in all of Austria. In the fifth grade, integrated classrooms are almost exclusively present in new secondary schools; up to date, over fifty percent of all pupils with special educational needs have been taught in integrated classrooms (BMSAK, 2012). The implementation of integrated classrooms at the academic secondary school lower level is less widespread since few schools opt for it voluntarily.

Special educational needs education in Austria

There is a much differentiated special educational needs system in Austria with schools specializing on different disabilities. The system is distinguished by its high quality of special educational needs support schemes; on the other hand, however, this has strong segregative effects. At the beginning of the 80s, parents and special educational needs trainers achieved the goal of common schooling of children with and without special educational needs. The movement resembled a civil rights movement, and what could at the beginning only be realized in a school pilot program (since 1984/85), became part of mainstream primary education by the 15th amendment of the School Organization Act in 1993, and of secondary education by the 17th Amendment in 1996.

The School Reform Package of 1993 stipulated that integration in schools was to be part of primary school's agenda. In 1996, the integration of children with disabilities into secondary stage education was rendered legally binding. The education of children and young people with special educational needs can, according to parents' request, take place either at a special school focusing on a specific kind of disability, or at integrated / inclusive classes in mainstream schools (primary school, new secondary school or the lower level of academic secondary school – AHS). In order to receive their compulsory schooling, pupils with special educational needs currently have the

opportunity to attend a special school for up to twelve years, a pre-vocational school, or a one-year domestic science school (BMASK, 2012).

Therefore, complying with Article 8a (1) dealing with the legislation on schooling obligations, children with special educational needs are allowed to attend regular schools as so-called "integrated pupils". In compliance with Article 8a (1) of the Law on Schooling Obligations, children with special educational needs in compulsory education are entitled to schooling either at a special needs school, a special needs class, or at a suitable primary school that meets the special needs requirements, and, consequently, in new secondary schools or academic secondary lower schools (Article 2) provided that there are suitable schools or classes in these schools available, and the distance to and from the school is reasonable (Köb, 2011).

There is a disproportionately high number of pupils with their first language other than German at special schools. It is, therefore, necessary that the establishment of educational needs should be differentiated more clearly from language support measures, so that pupils could receive the right support. There is a greater need for teachers competent in sign language to teach deaf children and young people. As a result, teacher training colleges and universities offer courses for the purpose (BMSAK, 2012).

The Salamanca Statement and the action for inclusive education in 1994 formed the framework for inclusive education in Austria. However, the translation of the documents into German in Vienna in 1996 demonstrated the absence of appropriate equivalents for the terms "inclusive education" and "inclusion" in the scientific political discourse in the German language. "Inclusive education" was then translated by "integrated education", and "inclusion" by "integration". The terminology was changed in 2010, and the term "inclusive school" is now used to refer to the accepted concept in the German-speaking world. Equal treatment in all spheres of life was incorporated in the Austrian Federal Constitutional Law in 1997. Article 7 of the Federal Constitutional Law stipulates that "nobody is to be discriminated against on the grounds of his or her disability". The Republic of Austria (state, provinces, and communities) undertakes to guarantee equal treatment to all people, both with and without disability, in all aspects of life. In 2001, the curriculum for a "job preparation year" in special educational needs schools was agreed on and educational obligations of special educational needs schools were extended to the ninth grade. Integration in the ninth grade of vocational schools was implemented as a school pilot project by changing the Vocational Training Act in 2003. The first year in vocational school can

be extended to two years for pupils with learning difficulties in vocational schools, in compliance with the Vocational School Act BAG Article 8b (1). According to BAG Article 8b (2), pupils can also accomplish one part of the qualifications. In the second amendment of schooling legislation (2005), namely, of the Law on Schooling Obligation (Article 15 SchPflG), the term "unteachable" was replaced by "unable to attend school". In 2008, the new curriculum for special educational needs schools came into force, the content and structure of which is oriented towards the curricula of primary and lower secondary schools (Specht, 2009).

Along with the ratification of the UN Resolution on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2006, enforced in Austria in 2008, Austria, in compliance with Article 24 of the Resolution, committed itself to a step-by-step implementation of an inclusive educational system (BMASK, 2008) providing equal participation of all children and adolescents in the general educational system, and guaranteed the necessary support (Feyerer, 2015).

National Action Plan (2012 to 2020)

The Council of Ministers agreed on the "National action plan 2012 to 2020", which is the agenda of the Austrian government on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and announced its intentions to establish model regions and draw on the experiences of the model regions to develop detailed concepts of inclusive education, and further extend the concept to all regions (BMASK, 2012).

The intended goal of the action plan is to establish an inclusive society by the year 2020; a society in which all people, with and without disabilities, are its active members. The concept of inclusion corresponds with the principle of the normalization of the lives of persons with disabilities in order to minimize the difference between the lives of the latter ones and those of people without disabilities. More action is needed in order to form a legal framework for inclusion in Austria by 2020.

Measures for the National Action Plan

Several measures are available to reach the targets of the National Action Plan (NAP). Its content items from No. 124 to No. 135 cover **inclusive school** and **teaching programmes**. The competence to realize these measures belongs to the Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs (BMBF), shared in part with provinces, communities, the university, and bodies responsible for teacher training colleges.

The first measure was the **development of Participative strategy** for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, with the purpose to realise an inclusive school system. It was finished in the years 2012 to 2013. The next step foresees the development of **inclusive pilot regions**, aimed at accumulating experience to be subsequently used for drawing up a detailed development concept and the nationwide extension of Inclusive Regions by 2020. The competence hereof lies with the Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs (BMBF), the provinces, and the communities.

The next measure foresees more school projects in upper secondary level and an increase in the number of **integrated classes** in the lower level of academic secondary schools (AHS) throughout Austria. It will be implemented by 2020. The next step is **in-service training programmes** for teachers and school inspectors (district school inspectors) on diagnostic procedures applied in order to determine special educational needs and for the professional counselling of parents and guardians by 2020. Further development of in-service training and further education for teachers (inclusive education, special needs teaching) was realized in the years 2012 to 2013 (e.g. teaching programmes were developed in University College of Teacher Education in Vienna). The inclusive teaching methods should make an integrative component of the future training for teachers at teacher training colleges and for students trained to become teachers at general and vocational secondary schools. Reaching this goal is part of the competence of the Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs (BMBF), universities and bodies responsible for teacher training colleges (e.g. University College of Teacher Education in Vienna), and the goal is to be reached by 2020. The next measure is nation-wide initial and further **training in Austrian sign language** through Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs (BMBF) and universities by 2020. The participation of integrated classes at the Media Literacy Award and awareness raising via "Together We Are Class" project are illustrations of inclusion to be implemented by 2020 initiated by those affected (in the Parliament). Further development of barrier-free continuous education courses was finished through Federal Ministry of Education in 2014. The last measure is further **harmonization of various teacher training curricula** pertaining to inclusive education, which should be finished by 2020 (BMASK, 2012).

Solutions

The most important areas of action as well as measures identified up to now are related to the pedagogical and organisational development of schools and lessons, the

improvement of regional support structures, support based on needs and requirements, and the training and scientific guidance for teachers.

"Inclusive region" constitutes an attempt to realize the agenda and a way to put it into practice. Namely, the Federation, the provinces, and communities will initially test inclusive school and teaching programmes in pilot regions, and then extend them over time.

The quality of the establishment of special educational needs should be further improved (e.g. in order to differentiate it more clearly from establishing the need for language support measures). Improvements are also welcome in the field of counselling for the parents and guardians of children with special needs. There is a need for raising public awareness, especially among parents of children without disabilities. Moreover, there is a need for increased number of in-service training courses in Austrian sign language for teachers, as well as intensified care and support for pupils with hearing impairment. More effort is needed to observe the principle of inclusion in the field of educational media and media education (BMASK, 2012).

Inclusive teaching methods are an integral part of the entire teacher training system. In 2013, the government formulated the legal framework for implementing inclusive teaching methods by changing the Higher Education Act (HG) in 2005, and the University Act in 2002. There shall be no separate educational needs training from 2015 onwards, instead, inclusive and special needs pedagogy will be embedded in the teacher-training for all teachers of primary and lower secondary schools (Feyerer, 2015).

Teacher training courses for primary and secondary education are to be set up in University Colleges for Teacher Training as per Article 38, Section 2 of the Higher Education Act. In compliance with Article 38 of the Higher Education Act, the special educational needs course shall be replaced in the autumn of 2015 by a specialization course in Inclusive Pedagogy (Feyerer, 2015). Thus, according to Article 38 Section 3a of the Higher Education Act, all Bachelor and Master courses (in teacher training) must fulfil to a satisfactory level the requirements set out in Article 24 of the UN Resolution on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and reach the goals of inclusive pedagogy, and, according to Article 38 Section 2a of the Higher Education Act, Inclusive Pedagogy is to be taught in all teacher training courses at the least in the form of a specialization course.

According to Article 42 Section 1a of the Higher Education Act (HG), the curricula of all Bachelor and Master courses in teacher training have to be competence-oriented

considering pupil ability levels in intended institutions. They need to enhance the following competences: professional, general and specialized pedagogical, thematic and methodological, inclusive, and intercultural ones. According to this article, all students, regardless of the teacher training course chosen, must acquire comprehensive competence in inclusive pedagogy without choosing the respective specialization.

Article 42 Section 1b states that the curricula requirements must be modified for students with disabilities, in order to ensure a possibility for persons with disabilities to be admitted to teacher training programmes.

Other legislative provisions (Article 51, Section 2c of the Higher Education Act) ensure that persons with disabilities and those with migrant backgrounds should have access to teacher training programmes, and not be excluded because of their disabilities or their ethno-cultural background (Feyerer, 2015).

A further step towards inclusion was the agreement in the Austrian National Council to rename "Centers for Special Needs" into "Pedagogical Centers for Inclusive and Special Needs Education" on June 12th, 2014. The use of the currently accepted term "Pedagogical Centers for Inclusion and Special Needs Education" (National Council, 2014) constitutes an important step on the path towards more inclusion for children with disabilities and special needs.

According to the National Action Plan, the intended goal is to become an inclusive society by 2020, where people with disabilities as well as otherwise disadvantaged persons could be able to participate in all activities in society. Inclusion should follow the principle of normalization, according to which the lives of people with disabilities should differ as little as possible from those of people without disabilities. Therefore, further measures will have to be implemented by 2020 in order to realize inclusive education based on a corresponding legal framework in Austria.

REFERENCES

BMASK (2012). *Nationaler Aktionsplan Behinderung 2012-2020* [National action plan on disability]. Retrievied from http://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/site/attachments/7/7/8/CH2477/CMS1332494355998/nap_web.pdf; https://europa.eu/youth/sites/eac-eyp/files/NAP_Behinderung_2012-2020_01.pdf

BMASK (2008). *UN-Behindertenrechtskonvention*. [The UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities]. Retrieved from http://www.sozialministerium.at/site/Soziales/Menschen_mit_Behinderungen/UN_Konvention_ueber_die_Rechte_von_Menschen_mit_Behinderungen/

BMBF (2016a). *Bundesministerium für Bildung und Frauen*. [Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs]. Retrieved from https://www.bmbf.gv.at/schulen/bw/ueberblick/bildungswege2015_grafik.pdf?55ph38

BMBF (2016b). *Bundesministerium für Bildung und Frauen*. [Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs]. Retrieved from https://www.bmbf.gv.at/enfr/school/bw_en/bildungswege2015_e.pdf?58sww9

Feyerer, E. (2015). Inklusive Lehrer_innenbildung: Österreich geht neue Wege [Inclusive teacher training: Austria's new paths]. *Zeitschrift für Inklusion: Gemeinsam leben, 21*/1, pp. 3-18.

HG (2016). *Hochschulgesetz*. [Higher Education Act]. Retrieved from https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20004626

Köb, H., Müller K. & Weiss, J. (2011). Sind Sonderschulen mit der UN-Konvention über die Rechte von Menschen mit Behinderungen vereinbar? [Are schools for special needs compatible with the UN-Convention of the rights of persons with disabilities?] *Fachzeitschrift der Heilpädagogischen Gesellschaft Österreich* Heft 1 54.Jahrgang. (S.21)

Nationalrat (2014). [National Council] Retrieved from http://www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/NRSITZ/NRSITZ_00030/SEITE_0285.html

Salamanca Statement (1994). Retrieved from http://www.unesco.at/bildung/basisdokumente/salamanca_erklaerung.pdf

Specht, W. (2009). *Nationaler Bildungsbericht Teil 2 Fokussierte Analysen bildungspolitischer Schwerpunktthemen.* [National report on education. Part 2 Focused analysis on main issues of education-policy]. Retrieved from https://www.bifie.at/system/files/buch/pdf/2009-06-16_NBB-Band2.pdf

2.2 ANALYSIS OF THE LEGAL BASIS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN FINLAND

Outi Kyrö-Ämmälä, Suvi Lakkala, Katja Norvapalo

Legal basis of inclusive education at governmental level

In Finland, the general principles governing education and education policy are determined by the *Parliament*. The government and the *Ministry of Education and Culture*, as part of the Parliament, determine and implement education policy at central governmental level. The education policies are determined by means of a development plan for education and research, which is then adopted by the government. The Development Plan for Education and Research is a strategic document in the educational sector approved by the government every four years, covering all forms of education from early childhood to adult education, as well as research conducted in universities and polytechnic institutes. Inequality and exclusion are two focus points of the Development Plan in the period of 2011– 2016.

The Ministry of Education and Culture is in charge of the administration of education, research, culture, youth issues, and sports, and supervises publicly subsidised education and training, from primary and secondary general education, and vocational training to polytechnic, university, and adult education. In matters related to pre-primary, comprehensive, and upper secondary schools; vocational institutions; and adult education, the ministry is assisted by an expert agency, the *Finnish National Board of Education*. Simply stated, the national education administration is organised at two levels: education policy is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Culture, while the Finnish National Board of Education, as a national agency, is responsible for the implementation of the policy goals (Ministry of Education and Culture, n.d.1; the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education).

The basic right to education is enacted in the Constitution. All people must have an equal opportunity to receive education free of charge in accordance with their abilities and special needs. The *Basic Education Act* (628/1998) sets the principles of basic education, as well as the norms for pre-primary education, education for immigrants, and additional voluntary basic education. Keywords in the Basic Education Act are *educational equality, individuality, lifelong learning*, and *co-operation*, which are also

emphasised in the national core curriculum for basic education (Koivula, Lakkala & Mäkinen, 2010). The Basic Education Act mandates that all education must comply with the national core curriculum. The *national core curriculum for basic education* is the national framework and is used as the basis or guidelines for determining local curricula, which is the responsibility of education providers. *Local education providers* are primarily municipalities that are responsible for providing early childhood education and care, pre-primary education, and basic education to all children who reside in their area (See Ministry of Education and Culture, n.d.1; Finnish National Board of Education, n.d.1).

The Ministry of Education (Opetusministeriö, 2007) report notes that the government has supported several development projects to enhance integration, which have been implemented by education providers. In addition, in-service training has been offered to teachers and other school staff in order to develop special education plans, and implement and evaluate the teaching. The development of basic education has been coordinated and funded by the National Board of Education. The development work has also taken place at grassroots level in schools, and, since 1997, the municipalities have expanded inclusive education through several developmental projects. The local coordinators, together with school teachers in different networks, have developed new practices in schools and arranged comprehensive in-service teacher training in various national projects. As a result of the development work, the Ministry of Education launched a new special education strategy in Finland in 2007.

The special education strategy (Opetusministeriö, 2007) sets goals for the development of inclusive education in all schools that provide basic education. Local authorities and schools are required to draw up a plan to arrange education for pupils in need of special support. Based on the recommendations of the special education strategy, the new Basic Act was enacted in 2010 and the new national core curriculum, providing for a three-tiered support for pupils, was enacted in 2011, and again in 2014.

Inclusion has been the leading philosophy in Finnish basic education since the beginning of the 1990s. The most recent national core curriculum (2014) mandates that basic education is developed according to the principles of inclusion. Accessibility to and a universal design for learning are emphasised. In Finland, basic education is the same for all pupils; there is no streaming. Children are supported individually so they can successfully complete their basic education. The right to individual support is promoted by amendments to the national core curriculum for pre-primary and basic education (2014), including a systematic way of organising support. The focus of the

three-tiered support model is based on the earliest possible support in order to prevent the emergence and increase of problems (Opetusministeriö, 2007).

The Special Education Strategy (2007) for the development of special needs and inclusive education emphasises the importance of a broad basic education network that supports the right of every child to attend the nearest mainstream school. Many international conventions and declarations acknowledge the right of every child to receive education. On the grounds of these conventions and declarations, Finland is committed to develop its education system in order to ensure the education of all children and young people. Although there is one common education system, individual support for learning can be organised flexibly. Even so, not all the pupils are able to attend mainstream schools. There still are some special schools and special classes as a part of Finland's comprehensive basic education, especially in large cities (Opetusministeriö, 2007).

Legal basis of inclusive education at municipal level

In education, it is mostly municipalities as local authorities that serve as education providers. Municipalities have the responsibility for local administration, which means that local authorities make decisions related to educational issues, such as funding allocation, local curricula, and the recruitment of personnel. The municipalities also have the autonomy to delegate decision-making to the schools. Education providers are responsible for practical teaching arrangements, as well as ensuring the effectiveness and the quality of education. There are no regulations governing class size in Finland, which means that the education providers and schools are quite autonomous in determining how to group their pupils. Municipalities and schools set their own curricula on the basis of the national core curriculum for basic education (Ministry of Education and Culture, n.d.2).

Local authorities also determine how much autonomy is delegated to the schools. Schools have the right to provide educational services according to their local administrative arrangement and vision, as long as their basic legal functions are carried out. Moreover, teachers have pedagogical autonomy at the school level. They can independently select their teaching methods, as well as choose the textbooks and materials they use (Ministry of Education and Culture, n.d.2).

When the new special education strategy was presented in 2007, the Ministry of Education and Culture started the Kelpo (Developing Basic Education Quality) development project, which meant fostering general, intensified, and special support

for learners. In the first phase of the project in 2008, 233 municipalities participated in it and more municipalities joined later. The project offered important financial and practical support for municipalities to modify their local definitions and aims of the strategy, and to develop their own practices to correspond with it. Within the framework of the Kelpo development project, education providers had a tool to meet the challenge of involving school staff in development work and broadening the understanding of the new strategy. A survey, conducted after the project was completed, showed that representatives of municipalities felt the project helped them to advance amendments suitable to local circumstances following the new strategy, as well as changes in the legislation. Furthermore, teachers became familiar with the changes they were expected to implement. The project provided a solid basis for constructing the municipalities' own curricula. During 2007 – 2011, the focus of the development work shifted from the municipality level to the school and teacher level (Ahtiainen et al., 2012).

Ahtiainen et al. (2012) concluded that the advancement towards inclusive education, made out within the framework of the Kelpo development project, was a natural continuum to the earlier work carried out in the municipalities. Furthermore, international conventions related to inclusive education had affected national discussions on education policy. According to the Finnish legislation, learners were divided into the categoies of general and special needs education. During the Kelpo project, municipalities created practices and concepts that were important from the point of view of the learners' equality and inclusive schools. Based on the municipal documents (project applications, reports, and plans for organising education), it was learned that municipalities had largely absorbed the main ideas of the new special education strategy (Opetusministeriö, 2007). Analysis of the documents shows that after the years of development work in the municipalities, the most fundamental elements of organising support for learners had changed. Instead of the former focus on developing specialised environments for different kinds of special needs, the emphasis of support had shifted to early intervention and more local solutions. At structural level, the new three-tiered support system started to take shape. As for processes, more value was given to good basic education and pedagogical assessments. This influenced support measures that leaned more towards co-operation and shared expertise among the personnel and parents, and thus created more flexible ways to support learning in schools (Ahtiainen et al., 2012).

In Finland, changes in legislation during the 1990s and 2010s have reorganised and restructured teaching so that the individual needs of each learner are taken

into account, and access to a good learning environment and individual support is ensured. In Finnish comprehensive schools, teaching is organised in various ways in order to utilise flexible support measures that complement one other. Flexible support in learning has emerged as a starting point for teaching. These policies and practices are consistent with UNESCO's definition of inclusion, in which inclusive education requires structures, strategies, contents, and methods to provide every child with an opportunity to learn at a regular school. In Finland, changes in legislation between the 1990s and 2010s have enabled the organisation of teaching in the way that individual needs of each learner can be taken into account, and access to good learning environment and individual support can be ensured (Opetusministeriö, 2007).

Legal basis of inclusive education at school level

According to national legislation (Basic Act 628/1998, Amendments 1136/2010) and the national core curriculum of 2014, every child has the right to attend the nearest local school. Schools do not have the authority to select their pupils. Pupils receive the necessary support so they may learn in the neighbourhood school and in a mainstream class, instead of being placed in special schools and special classes because of their learning needs. This is an issue of equality and human rights. The national core curriculum provides the objectives and core content for different subjects, to be followed by every school in Finland. Local education authorities, as education providers, and the schools themselves, draw up their own curricula within the framework of the national core curriculum (Finnish National Board of Education, n.d.1).

In Finnish schools, educational reforms have moved progressively towards inclusion. Instruction and pedagogies are being increasingly implemented so that all pupils can learn together in their neighbourhood schools. Teachers recognise, for example, that pupils cannot be excluded. This standard must be taken into consideration when planning the curriculum and teaching in the group. In line with this principle, teachers also consider the pupils' own interests and choices when selecting content, textbooks, learning strategies, methods, and assessment tools. This necessitates flexible teaching arrangements, pupil-centred instruction, and teamwork (Koivula, Lakkala & Mäkinen, 2010).

As enacted by law, every pupil must be given an opportunity to succeed in learning according to his or her own abilities. Diverse learners, differences in learning styles and individual starting points for learning, as well as the pupils' cultural backgrounds

must be taken into account in the schoolwork. Special attention must be paid to early identification of learning barriers and difficulties. The school leaders are responsible for decisions related to the provision and implementation of support for pupils and takes these into account of all age levels. The teachers' pedagogical expertise and co-operation play a key role in identifying the needs for support, and in planning and implementing assistance. When necessary, support is planned and implemented as a part of the multi-agency pupil welfare work. Pupils and their parents are provided with information on support measures and they are given an opportunity to express their views. Particular attention is paid to ensuring continuous support during transition phases, when children move from pre-primary to basic education, from basic education to the upper secondary level, or change schools in the course of basic education (Opetushallitus, 2014).

Amendments to the national core curriculum for pre-primary and basic education (2010) included a new systematic way of organising support. The focus was on early prevention and reinforcement in order to prevent the emergence and increase of problems. Support for growth, learning, and school attendance was organised into three categories: general support, intensified support, and special support. Each pupil was provided with support at his or her own school through various flexible arrangements.

A good school day through three-tiered support

A new Basic Education Act, enacted in autumn 2011, further strengthened the pupil's right to early and well-timed support. All these ways of support are meant to reduce the numbers of pupils "transferred" into special needs education classes. The essential goal is to develop and strengthen ordinary basic education instead of the dual system of general and special education.

Support is divided to three tiers and every pupil is entitled to general support, which is implemented as a part of everyday teaching and learning. An individual learning plan can be designed on a voluntary basis. The forms of support emphasised in general support are the following: differentiating, remedial teaching, and guidance counselling.

If general support activities are insufficient, a pedagogical assessment is conducted, and a plan for intensified support is forwarded to the Pupil Welfare Group of the school for decisions. In this phase, the individual learning plan is obligatory in order to ensure the efficacy of the support. Support is typically with the purpose of pupi's welfare, part-time special education, and assistant services.

If a pupil requires additional support, regardless of intensified support activities, repeated and more extensive pedagogical assessments must be performed. Teachers and the Welfare Group of the school provide all the information needed to the education provider, which, based on this information, renders an official decision concerning special support. Intensified and special support are always based on careful assessments and long-term planning together with multi-professional teams, as well as on individual learning plans. Intensified support is adopted as the primary form of support before a decision for special education is made (*See* Opetus-ja kulttuuriministeriö, n.d.1; The Finnish National Board of Education, n.d.2; Opetushallitus, 2010; The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education; Opetusministeriö, 2007). The structure of the support for learning and education is shown in Figure 4.

A GOOD SCHOOL DAY:		
Basic education of a good quality, school culture that supports growth and development, sense of community, home-school collaboration, and safety.		
GENERAL SUPPORT	INTENSIFIED SUPPORT	SPECIAL SUPPORT
STATUTORY PROCESSES:		
Pedagogical assessment	Pedagogical statement	Administrative Procedure Act
PLANNING, TEACHING, AND SUPPORT:		
Learning plan (voluntary)	Learning plan (obligatory)	Individual education plan (obligatory)
SUPPORT MEASURES:		
Differentiation, pupil counselling, support of pupil welfare, remedial instruction, part-time special education, assistive devices, etc., school assistant services, other counselling and support services.	Differentiation, pupil counselling, support of pupil welfare, remedial instruction, part-time special education, assistive devices, etc., school assistant services, other counselling and support services.	Differentiation, pupil counselling, support of pupil welfare, remedial instruction, part-time special education, full-time special education, assistive devices, etc., school assistant services, other counselling and support services.
ORGANISING SUPPORT:		
The support for learning and schooling is organised through flexible teaching arrangements: flexible grouping and group sizes, co-teaching, team teaching, club activities, morning and afternoon activity clubs, etc.		

Figure 4. The support of learning and schooling for basic education in Finland (Finnish National Board of Education).

Summary

In spite of inclusive guidelines in the Basic Education Act and the national core curriculum, a so-called escape clause in the Basic Education Act makes it possible, if no other option exists, to place a pupil to a special class or a special school. In other words, not all children in Finland are able to attend the neighbourhood school. Even so, special needs education is generally provided in conjunction with mainstream education. The number of pupils with special educational needs makes up 7.3% (39,500) of the total number of pupils (540,500) in comprehensive schools. Approximately half of the children with special needs are taught in special groups or schools. The division of pupils with special needs by their placement is introduced in Table 4.

Table 4. Comprehensive school pupils that have received special support

(7.3% of all) by place of provision of teaching, 2013 in Finland (Statistics Finland, 14 06 2014).

Place of provision of teaching of special needs pupils	Total %
Teaching fully in a general education group	18.7
51 – 99% of teaching in a general education group	18.7
21 – 50% of teaching in a general education group	9.0
1 – 20% of teaching in a general education group	11.6
Teaching fully in a special group, other than special school	29.2
Teaching fully in a special group, special school	12.8
Total	100.0

The placement trend during the past decade in Finland shows that the placement of special needs pupils in general education is increasing. The trend is demonstrated in Figure 5.
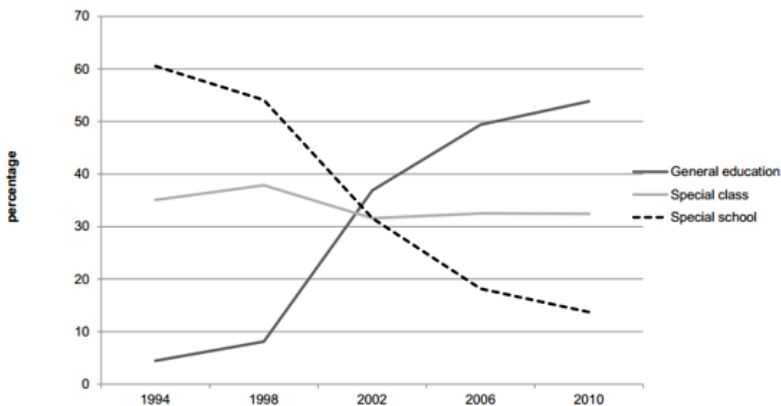
Figure 5. Placement trends of special needs pupils in 1994 – 2010 in Finland (Jahnukainen, 2011).

The current practice in schools has been changed to focus on earlier support and problem prevention. The three-tiered support has been introduced as the primary form of support and this will bolster learning and growth, as well as prevent the escalation of problems related to learning and social interaction.

The aim of the new Basic Education Act was to strengthen the pupils' right to receive early and flexible support for learning, as well as to intensify support measures and multi-professional co-operation. The Ministry of Education and Culture conducted a survey in 2014 to determine how three-tiered support had been conducted in schools and municipalities. According to the survey, municipalities have advanced in compliance with the law but some differences between municipalities still exist. In general, the number of pupils who receive special support has decreased and the number of pupils who receive intensified support has increased in accordance with the aim of the new act. For example, the statistics of autumn, 2012, showed that after the second year of the implementation of the new intensified support principle, the number of pupils receiving intensified support increased by 53% (up to a total of 27,400 pupils subject to intensified support measures) and the number of pupils with special support dropped by 7% (down to a total of 41,000 pupils subject to special support measures) when compared with the situation in autumn of the previous year. Education professionals have welcomed these reforms, curricula have been updated in accordance with the law, and support measures have been renewed to go in proper direction. Pupil welfare services have also developed in a more preventative direction, although some goals of the pupil welfare services and multi-professional co-operation still emphasise reconstructive work at the expense of preventative work. However, it is a positive sign that every school in Finland now has a Pupil Welfare Group to safeguard the pupils' best interests (Opetusministeriö, 2014).

The survey of the Ministry of Education and Culture (Opetusministeriö, 2014) highlighted that, according to the teachers and principals, the most common ways to implement support for pupils are remedial instruction, part-time special education, special education, differentiation, and pupil counselling. The survey also pointed out some deficiencies in the psycho-social services; too many pupils remain partially or completely without the services of a school social worker and/or school psychologist: 39% of pupils in basic education receive school psychologist services occasionally, 21% of pupils occasionally receive school social worker services, 9% of the pupils are totally bereft of school psychologist services, and 10% fail to receive services of school social

worker. Nevertheless, school health care system functions well and most pupils can receive services when needed.

The ministry's research data shows that in terms of support measures in the classroom, differentiation is one of the most commonly used support measures. Teachers co-operate with each other, and team teaching and co-teaching are common ways to ensure the participation of all pupils. School assistants provide important support in the classroom, especially for the pupils. Schools have also started homework clubs in order to support pupil learning. These days, schools offer different ways to organize examinations, which provide an opportunity to demonstrate one's "know-how" on an individual basis instead of using a traditional written examination. In teachers' opinions, although there are more pupils with special needs in the general classes, the size of the groups has not diminished. Teachers have noted that if there is a pupil with special needs in their class, it takes more time to teach and advise that pupil, so the teacher has less time to dedicate to the rest of the group (Opetusministeriö, 2014).

According to the ministry's survey, the teachers and principals are satisfied with the reforms of the Basic Education Act and the three-tiered support principle. Most of the municipalities that participated in the survey feel the three-tiered support functions well and the pupils' right to support has improved due to the focus on early intervention. Co-operation and communication with parents and guardians also works well, and teachers believe that parents provide the most important support for their work. Parents and guardians participate actively in the everyday life of the school community and the municipalities' curricula strongly emphasise the co-operation between school and home. Parents have the right to obtain information on their child's learning and schooling, and they are willing to speak with school staff and participate in discussions and meetings to tackle any problems. Generally speaking, parents are pleased with the teaching and individual support measures and they insist on support for their children if they notice difficulties in learning or in schooling (Opetusministeriö, 2014).

REFERENCES

Ahtiainen, R., Beirad, M., Hautamäki, J., Hilasvuori, T., Lintuvuori, M., Thuneberg, H., Vainikainen, M-P. & Österlund, I. (2012). Tehostettua ja erityistä tukea tarvitsevien oppilaiden opetuksen kehittäminen 2007-2011. Kehittävän arvioinnin loppuraportti. [Developing teaching of pupils with needs of intensified and special support during the years 2007-2011. Final report

of developing evaluation]. *Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriön julkaisuja* 2012:5. Retrieved from http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2012/liitteet/okm05.pdf?lang=fi

Amendments and additions to the national core curriculum for basic education. (2010). Valid from 01 01 2011. Retrieved from http://www.oph.fi/download/132551_amendments_and_additions_ to_national_core_curriculum_basic_ education.pdf

Basic Education Act 628/1998 Amendments 1136/2010. Retrieved from http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/ kaannokset/ 1998/en19980628.pdf

European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education. (n.d.). *Country information Finland Legal system.* Retrieved from https://www.european-agency.org/country-information/ finland/national-overview/legal-system

Finnish National Board of Education. (n.d.1.). *Basic education.* Retrieved from http://www.oph.fi/ english/curricula_and_qualifications/basic_education

Finnish National Board of Education. (n.d.2.). *Support in basic education.* Retrieved from http:// www.oph.fi/english/education_system/support_for_pupils_and_students/support_in_basic_ education

Jahnukainen, M. (2011). Different strategies, different outcomes? The history and trends of the inclusive and special education in Alberta (Canada) and in Finland. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 55*(5), pp. 489–502.

Koivula, P., Lakkala, S. & Mäkinen, M. (2010). *Teacher education for inclusion country report Finland.* Retrieved from https://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/Teacher-Education-for-Inclusion/country-info

Ministry of Education and Culture. (n.d.1.). *Education policy.* Retrieved from http://www.minedu.fi/ OPM/Koulutus/koulutuspolitiikka/?lang=en

Ministry of Education and Culture. (n.d.2.). *Administration in education.* Retrieved fromhttp:// www.minedu.fi/OPM/Koulutus/koulutusjaerjestelmae/koulutuksen_hallinto_ja_ paeaetoeksenteko/?lang=en

Opetushallitus. (2010). *Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteiden muutokset ja täydennykset.* [Finnish National Board of Education: Amendments and additions to the national core curriculum for basic education]. MÄÄRÄYS 29 10 2010. Retrieved from http://www.oph. fi/download/130017_maarays_ 50_011_2010 _perusopetuksen_opsin_muutokset_ja_ taydennykset.pdf

Opetushallitus. (2014). *Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet.* [Finnish National Board of Education: Basis of the curriculum of basic education]. Määräykset ja ohjeet 2014:96. Retrieved from http://www.oph.fi/ download/163777_perusopetuksen_ opetussuunnitelman_perusteet_2014.pdf

Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö. (n.d.1.). *Perusopetus.* [Ministry of Education and Culture: Basic education]. Retrieved from http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Koulutus/perusopetus/?lang=fi

Opetusministeriö. (2007). *Erityisopetuksen strategia.* [Ministry of Education: Special Education Strategy]. Opetusministeriön työryhmämuistioita ja selvityksiä 2007:47. Retrieved from http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2007/liitteet/tr47.pdf?lang=fi

Opetusministeriö. (2014). *Oppimisen ja hyvinvoinnin tuki. Selvitys kolmiportaisen tuen toimeenpanosta.* [Ministry of Education: Support for learning and well-being. Clarification of conducting the three-tiered support]. Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriön julkaisuja 2014:2. Retrieved from http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2014/liitteet/ okm02.pdf?lang=fi

2.3. TRANSFORMATION OF LEGAL BASIS OF THE LITHUANIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Alvyra Galkienė

Breakthrough point in special needs education in Lithuania

The Lithuanian education system has been evolving towards an approach based on democratic justice, equal to all citizens, since a highly important political breakthrough, which took place in 1990 as the country ended its totalitarian regime. During the Soviet occupation, equality and social security, built on egalitarian principles, in reality placed some social groups in isolation and stirred conformist or dissident beliefs in people's minds: either willingness to lead life in comfortable conformity or fight for the state's freedom. Children with disabilities were one of the most isolated social groups. Although funds were allocated to these children and the science of *defectology* (*the term of the time*) was developed, strictly segregated education in closed schools built barriers for the inclusion of people with disabilities into society, and society, deprived of a possibility to get to know those people directly and to act together with them, was inclined to follow the principle of "providing for them" but not "creating together with them." At that time, a perception was embedded rather deeply into society's consciousness that the pupils with special needs were the responsibility of a specialized education system, and professionals trained for that purpose constituted one of the greatest barriers for the general schools to open up for every child until recently.

The Soviet period in Lithuania was marked by the widespread establishment of specialized boarding schools, increasing from seven schools in 1940 to 53 in 1990. According to the law of the time, each child with developmental disorders was sent to be educated at specialized schools on a mandatory basis: auxiliary schools (for children with mental disorders), schools for the blind and visually impaired, the deaf and hard of hearing, speech-therapeutic ones (for children with speech disorders), and boarding schools for children with movement disabilities. The decision regarding placing a child in a boarding school was taken by a medical and pedagogical commission. The child's parents had no say in selecting an education institution

for their child. The commission consisted of an inspector from the Department of Education, a paediatrician, a neuropathologist, a general school teacher, an auxiliary school teacher, and a speech therapist. As a result of a defective method of child selection to auxiliary schools, often among them were children whose poor learning results were the result of an unfavourable social environment, slower psycho-motor development, or other reasons completely unrelated to the child's level of mental development. Although the possibility existed for auxiliary school pupils who had shown progress to repeatedly undergo an examination in medical and pedagogical commissions and to return to general schools, in most cases, it never happened. Schools for pupils with mental disorders often educated those with ordinary mental development as well. It was a relevant problem at the time. The minister of education of the Lithuanian SSR emphasized it in his order of the 15th of April, 1964. Although the auxiliary school network was sufficiently widespread in Soviet Lithuania, not all the pupils could attend the schools. The schools were only open to "children with mental retardation at the level of *debilism (term for mild mental disorder, used at the time – transl.)*" (Order of the Minister of Education of the LSSR No. 78, 15 04 1964). Pupils with moderate or severe mental disorders as well as those in need of particular care and attention, for example those experiencing diurnal attacks of epilepsy, would stay at home or be taken to residential care homes where they would be looked after but not educated. Specialized schools followed standardized state curricula designed for the education of pupils with specific developmental disorders. All the pupils had to follow the special school curriculum. Children with mental disorders of higher degree would be considered ineducable children and kept in care homes. At that time, boarding schools were of a particularly closed type. According to Unified Requirements of Boarding Schools for Pupils, Parents, and Guardians, the pupils could be taken home only on the weekends and during holidays. The educational ideologists of the time, when designing boarding schools, proclaimed a goal that the pupils of the schools should not be isolated from society, but the practical model of education was, to a great extent, different from the theoretical one. Behind the closed doors of boarding schools, there were young people growing up, little known to society, with scarce possibilities to participate in open society. Many of those who did not have any direct contact with people with disabilities assumed the issue was simply non-existent in our society.

Presumptions for inclusive education in the Lithuanian education system

The society of occupied Lithuania always kept hope alive for the preservation of freedom and national identity. Dissident movement groups operated here, people believed in freedom and strived for it. Therefore, as soon as the slightest opportunity occurred, when the Secretary General of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbatchev, announced the upcoming reformation ("perestroika") in 1985, Lithuanian education activists gathered to set directions for the restructurization of the Lithuanian education system. A group of researchers led by Meilė Lukšienė[1] prepared and, in 1989, published the Concept of National School, which was not adopted as an official document, but it is acknowledged and has been used as a basis for democratic reform in education. The National School includes a belief that "the main goal of a general school is to turn back towards a person as an absolute value, . . . to nurture his physical and mental nature, to create conditions for his individuality to unfold." This provision in the education policy of the recovering Lithuania set guidelines for the ideas of inclusive education.

Context of legitimation in the changes to the education system in independent Lithuania

On the 11th of March, 1990, when independence was reinstated in Lithuania, fundamental changes began in the education system. They were particularly significant in the education of people with disabilities. On the 20th of August, 1991, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania, the Reconstituent Seimas, adopted the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania No. I-1489 (1991). It established the fundamental National School idea and emphasized that education in Lithuania would be based on humanistic cultural values of the people and the world, principles of democracy as well as universally acknowledged human rights and freedoms. The Lithuanian society, having undergone the processes of national assimilation and russification, recognized the right of other national minorities to nurture their national identities, convey national cultural experiences to the young generation, and to learn their mother tongue. Although the Lithuanian language was established as the language of instruction in Lithuanian schools, conditions were created for national minorities to "keep state or state-supported pre-school

---

[1] Professor, Dr. Habil. in Educational Sciences, researcher of Lithuanian literature, member of the initiative group of the Lithuanian Reform Movement, co-developer of the Lithuanian education reform, awarded a UNESCO Jan Amos Comenius medal.

education institutions, general schools and lessons in their mother tongue. In cases of sparse national groups or those with scattered places of residence, separate classes or complementary lessons can be introduced in general schools as well as Sunday schools for learning and developing their mother tongue." The Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania (1991), encouraging the establishment of schools with the mother tongue of national minorities as the language of instruction, led to rapid development of such schools, and mixed schools appeared with classes with different languages of instruction, i.e. the same school with classes with Lithuanian as the language of studies, and those with Polish or languages of other national groups as the language of studies.

The process of the establishment of equal rights for children with physical or mental disorders saw a particularly significant breakthrough. The Law on Education stipulated that children with special needs caused by physical or mental disorders could undergo education in various forms: "at home, in general or corrective groups of pre-school education institutions, and specialized schools as close to their parents' place of residence as possible." The right to education in general classrooms together with other pupils was a new and very significant change. Another important change was the right of parents to participate in choosing the form and place of education for their child, established in the Law on Education. It stipulated that ". . . children shall be counselled for corrective or special treatment by commissions of diagnostic specialists, who shall take into consideration the character of the defect, its seriousness, and its complexity." The parents of the educated had a right to agree or disagree with the decision of the commission and challenge it. These provisions of change were supported by another Law on Social Integration of People with Disabilities No. I-2044 (1991), adopted on the 31st of December of the same year, 1991.

In 1992, the ideas of the Concept of National School were established in the General Concept of Education in Lithuania. The following were selected as the main principles of education: humanism, democracy and innovation. The education system was based on European cultural values: value of a person, natural equality of human beings, freedom of consciousness, tolerance, and democratic relationships in society. The legitimation process of inclusive education had begun. The main stages of the process can be seen in the summary of the main education provisions, concepts, and decisions regarding persons with special needs (Table 5).

Table 5. Summary of the main education provisions, concepts, and decisions regarding persons with special needs

	Soviet period 1940-1990	Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania 1991	Law on Special Education of the Republic of Lithuania 1998	Law amending the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania 2011
Concepts	Development defect, anomaly, defective children.	Children with physical and mental shortcomings, development defects.	Persons of special needs.	Persons with special and/or special educational needs.
Assessment of needs	Diagnosing.	Diagnosing.	Assessment of special educational needs.	Assessment of special educational needs.
	Medical and pedagogical commission.	Special commission of diagnostic professionals.	Pedagogical and psychological service.	Pedagogical and psychological service.
	–	–	Commission of special needs education of the educational institution.	Child welfare commission.
	Establishing defect and institutionalizing following the prescription by the commission.	Counselling for correctional or special treatment, taking into consideration the character of the defect, its seriousness, and its complexity, discussing it with parents.	Assessment of special needs and assigning assistance with the parents' consent.	Assessment of special needs and assigning assistance with the parents' consent.
Educational environment	Institutionalization: • specialized schools, • care homes, • home care.	• Institutions of general education; • Correctional classes; • Specialized schools	• General classrooms of institutions of general education; • Specialized classes; • Specialized schools; • Specialized centres for adult education; • Home schooling.	• Institutions of general education; • Classes or educational institutions for children with severe and very specific educational needs; • Home schooling in exceptional cases only.
	–	–	Integration: full, partial.	–
	–	–	Providing special technical and educational tools.	Providing special technical and educational tools.
	–	–	Adjustment of educational environment.	Adjustment of educational environment.
	–	–	Transportation to school and home.	Transportation to school and home.
Assistance	Correction.	Corrective assistance.	Special educational, psychological, and social assistance to the pupil and parents.	Educational assistance to the educated and their family (pedagogical; special pedagogical; psychological; socio-pedagogical; social).
	–	–	Teacher's assistant, reader, companion.	Teacher's assistant, reader, companion.

	Soviet period 1940-1990	Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania 1991	Law on Special Education of the Republic of Lithuania 1998	Law amending the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania 2011
Curriculum individualization individualizavimas	–	–	Curriculum individualization: • modified or adapted curriculum of primary, basic, and secondary education; • specialized curriculum; • individualized curriculum.	Curriculum individualization: • adjusted curriculum of primary, basic, and secondary education; • individualized curriculum of primary and basic education; • social skills development program.
	–	–	• adjustment of learning achievements assessment; • adjustment of examination results assessment.	• adjustment of learning achievements assessment; • adjustment of examination results assessment.
Cultural diversity	• National assimilation; • Russification.	• Emphasis on national identity. • National minority schools and classrooms, complementary lessons, Sunday schools.	–	Assistance to pupils learning in a language other than their mother tongue.
Profession-alism	–	–	Courses on special needs education and special needs psychology are introduced into teacher training studies and qualification development courses.	Courses on special needs education and special needs psychology are introduced into teacher training studies and qualification development courses.

Ensuring equal rights to learn

The breakthrough and rapid movement towards a democratic society that took place during the first years of independence stimulated change in the area of special needs education from practical reorganization of the system towards paradigm change. The concepts of "development defects," "physical and mental shortcomings," "correction," "corrective classes" used during the Soviet period and transferred to the first Law on Education (1991) clearly demonstrate that Lithuania had inherited the clinical and corrective perception of special needs education.

In order to implement the educational goals set out in the Lithuanian reform and in order to respond to international agreements, the educational system for people with special needs was developed in the process of creating legal basis, which was stimulated both in "top-down" and "bottom-up" directions. The supreme primary legislation–

the previously mentioned laws and the Concept of Education in Lithuania–became the main documents that inspired a very active movement of professionals, parents of children with disabilities, and newly established non-governmental organizations. During the years 1991–1993, new types of educational centres were established as well as day activity centres for adults who were previously considered ineducable and kept in care homes or in their family homes. General schools were founded with specialized classes for pupils with special educational needs due to educational, movement, sight, hearing, mental, and other disorders. This example led to the foundation of other schools, called integrated schools at the time.

After the standardized tools for the assessment of special educational needs were developed, following the initiative of non-governmental organizations, intelligence assessments of children educated in auxiliary schools and care homes were carried out. All the children that had been placed in specialized education institutions with no grounds were transferred to general schools. Intensive movement of school-aged children and youngsters from family and care homes to general schools or special education centres began. These processes accelerated the development of corresponding legal basis. The politicians used the processes ongoing in practice, as well as the experience of professionals, educators, and non-governmental organizations. Working groups were drawn up to design legal acts regulating the implementation of the laws. There, both politicians and practitioners worked alongside each other.

The first document that standardized the education of pupils with special educational needs in general schools was the Decision by the College of the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture and Education, published in 1993. Some provisions in ministerial decrees regulating the implementation of inclusive education happened to be ahead of the provisions in the laws, while other decisions had to be taken in schools with no national regulation present. For instance, the previously mentioned decision by the college of the Ministry of Education in 1993 regulated the assistance provided by special needs teachers and speech therapists in schools; it defined the framework for curriculum individualization in general schools; it introduced the concepts of modified and adapted curricula; however, these provisions were legitimized by law only in 1998 with the publication of the Law on Special Education of the Republic of Lithuania No. VIII-969 (1998). This law intended to regulate the organization of education for people with special needs. If we consider the main legal provisions presented in Table 5, we will see that the law established the concept of social disability perception. The "defect" concept was transformed into the concept of "special educational needs"; "disorder

diagnostics" was replaced by "special needs assessment"; the concept of "integration" was introduced in the vocabulary of educational science and its two forms–full and partial–were defined. The following was established:

Full integration as the education of persons with special needs in a general classroom or group of a general education institution;

Partial integration as the combination of the education of persons with special needs in a general and special classes of a general education institution; education in a special class of a general education institution; education by combining the education process in specialized and general education institutions.

The Law on Special Education in Lithuania established a three-level special educational needs assessment system. For level one, special needs education commissions of educational institutions were introduced in general education institutions, and were entrusted with the responsibility of solving issues related to the initial special educational needs assessment of the children in the institution, as well as forwarding them to a special needs assessment institution of the second level, namely, pedagogical and psychological commissions. They spread across the entire state and its different regions. Pedagogical and psychological commissions were obliged to assess a person's special educational needs, assign special education, and provide pedagogical as well as psychological assistance to the children, parents (or the child's guardians), and education and child care institutions. This law legitimized the parents' role as the main decision maker in selecting the form and institution for their child's education.

The Law on Special Education of the Republic of Lithuania established the amended system of educational institutions. Corrective classes were abolished, and flexible possibilities to adjust the educational environment for pupils with special needs were provided, ranging from general classrooms in general schools to specialized schools and education centres for adults and, in individual cases, home schooling. Although special pedagogical and social assistance for the pupil and his or her parents was practically provided in schools, the law legitimized its provision, specifically defined it, and eliminated the previously used concept of corrective assistance. The Law on Special Education of the Republic of Lithuania specified and legitimized by law the position of a teacher's assistant in the Lithuanian education system, which also already existed in practice; it also provided a possibility to provide assistance in other forms, namely, those of a reader and a companion. The law legitimized educational programmes individualizing curricula, which had been present in general classrooms

of the Lithuanian schools since 1993. The Law on Special Education defined their purpose and level:

Modified curriculum – general education curriculum adjusted to the person with special needs, which allows him or her to study according to state standards of education.

Adapted curriculum – general education curriculum that does not meet state standards of education, adjusted to the abilities and realistic level of education of the person with special needs.

The essential difference between the two curricula was that the pupils following the adapted primary, basic, or secondary curriculum could not obtain primary, basic, or secondary education of state standard upon graduating from school, and receive a proving document. They were issued a certificate stating their actual education. Whereas pupils following a modified general curriculum could obtain official proof of education of all levels. However, the value of the adapted curriculum lies in the fact that pupils, in most cases with minor mental disorders, had the opportunity to learn together with their peers in secondary schools, and, as all pupils, at the age of 18, to consider their professional perspectives (Order of the Minister of Education and Science of 03 06 2004, No. 839 "Descriptor of Rules of Learning according to Adapted Secondary Education Curriculum"). The following were used in specialized schools and special education classes:

Special programme – general subject curriculum that does not meet state education standards, designed for a certain group of persons with special needs, or a programme aimed at developing a disturbed function.

Individual programme – a programme aimed at developing individual abilities of a person and meeting his or her special needs.

It is developed individually for each pupil educated in a special class of a general school, taking into consideration their educational needs and possibilities. It does not meet state standards of education either.

In order to increase access to education for all pupils, the Law on Special Education of the Republic of Lithuania provided for a possibility to assess pupils' achievements in the process of education. It stipulated that a pupil's achievement assessment would be based on the requirements of the curriculum the pupil was following. There were also cases foreseen where the forms and criteria of examination results assessment could be adjusted to the pupil's abilities. Access to education for pupils with disabilities was increased also by the provision of special technical means in the process of education and adjustment of the educational environment, both legitimized in the

law. The law covered cases in which pupils could not use public transport or arrive to school and return home on their own. In these cases, the educational institutions (with the exception of institutions of vocational training and higher education) were obliged to organize transportation for pupils to the institution and back home. Thus, preconditions were created for all pupils to study and, for most children with special educational needs, to attend general schools.

Inclusive education trends in Lithuania

Although Lithuania clearly emphasized ensuring equal rights for all its citizens by ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1995, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2010, the Law on Special Education of the Republic of Lithuania, which, on the one hand, standardized the process of inclusive education in the country, on the other hand, created an inevitable legal collision. Education in Lithuania was regulated by two laws: general education was the subject of the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania, and special needs education was that of the Law on Special Education of the Republic of Lithuania. The legal problem was solved when the Lithuanian government decided to merge the two laws, thus ensuring consistent and unified regulation of education for all Lithuanian citizens regardless of their social situation, health, or age. In 2011, a Law Amending the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania No. XI 1281 was adopted, integrating, amending, or broadening the main principles of the education of persons with special needs as well as their implementing provisions set out in the Law on Special Education of the Republic of Lithuania. A long and twisted road has been followed in the process of legitimizing and implementing inclusive education in the Lithuanian education system. Lithuanian society, aiming to respond to the challenges of today and set out directions for further development, jointly designed Lithuania's Progress Strategy 2030. Having reviewed over 1000 suggestions from citizens, a decision was made to build a smart and inclusive society. Lithuania's Progress Strategy 2030 (pp. 10) states that society must recognize the rights of persons facing social exclusion, help them preserve their dignity and be fully-fledged members of society, take active part in social inclusion policy and activity, help combat stereotypes and stigmatization, as well as enhance life quality, social welfare, particularly that of children, and equal opportunities for all.

The Lithuanian education system is fully responsible for realizing every person's right to education

The supreme legal act currently regulating education in Lithuania, the Law Amending the Law on Education (2011), indicates the principle of equal opportunities as the first principle of the Lithuanian education system: "education system is socially just, it ensures the implementation of a person's rights, it guarantees access to education for every person to acquire general education and first qualification, and it creates conditions to improve one's current qualification or acquire a new one." The right of every person to study and prepare for a personal professional career is defined. It clarifies the framework for the education of persons with special needs, removing the concept of "*integrated education*" and the description of its forms. The Lithuanian terminology does not include the term "*inclusive education*" as an approved term either; it is limited to the definition of "*special educational needs*" and "*education assistance,*" which covers special, special pedagogical, psychological, and social assistance. Thus, preconditions are enhanced for developing a coherent and flexible education system, capable of ensuring learning success to every pupil. The Law Amending the Law on Education stipulates that "the education of pupils with special educational needs shall be implemented by all schools providing obligatory and universal education as well as other education providers." The terminology indicated in the Law on Education also eliminates the concept of "specialized school". It was established that in certain cases, children who are unable to attend general classes at general schools due to health reasons or other circumstances, and who have severe or very severe educational needs, can be educated at "schools (classrooms) for pupils with special educational needs." Institutions educating pupils with special educational needs exclusively form a part of the general education system and follow general principles of the Lithuanian education system, with the goal of increasing the social inclusion of these people to the largest possible extent.

Flexible curriculum and implementation methods. The legal acts regulating the implementation of the Lithuanian Law on Education (2011) stipulate that, in general schools, the curriculum is defined by the general curriculum framework. The latter is developed by teams of professionals of the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science. It is approved by the minister of education and science. The curriculum framework serves as a basis for the education of all pupils in Lithuania. Continuing the provisions of the Law on Special Education, it was determined (2011) that the general curriculum can be adapted to a pupil specifically, "taking into consideration

the pupil's established special educational needs, the wishes of the pupil's parents (guardians, carers) and following the conclusions and recommendations of the pedagogical and psychological commission." Following the abolition of the definitions of a modified, adapted, special, and individual curricula, two levels of adjustment for general curricula followed in general classrooms were established:

1. Adjusted program. It is designed to create conditions for a pupil to acquire basic, secondary, or vocational education and/or qualification.
2. Individualized program. It is designed for pupils with mental disorders, by individualizing pre-school, primary, and basic education curricula.

In general classrooms of general schools, it is subject teachers together with the pupils' parents and specialists (special needs teachers) who develop adjusted and individualized programs. Thus, in general classrooms, the goals of a lesson can be implemented at three levels: general level – majority of pupils in the class work towards it; adjusted program level – in most cases, pupils with learning difficulties or disorders work towards it; and the individualized program level, used for pupils with minor mental disorders.

Schools or classrooms for pupils with special educational needs implement the following: general curriculum adjusted for pupils with sight, hearing, etc. disorders, or a social skills development program aimed at pupils with mental disorders. The range of degrees for adjusting the social skills development program to individual needs of pupils is wide. It can vary from academic learning that meets the child's abilities and is linked to the pupil's everyday experiences to forming basic daily life skills. The program is developed by teachers together with special needs teachers, taking into consideration the pupils' needs and their age, and following general recommendations.

The curriculum implementation in Lithuania is mainly regulated by General Education Plans for Basic and Secondary Education. They are developed by specialists in the Ministry of Education and Science, and approved by the minister of education and science. The plans are published for two school years. General education plans set out learning duration, define the principles of curriculum development, present lists of subjects, and determine their learning intensity for each grade. The plans set out the rules for lesson organization and the pupils' progress and achievement assessment. The plan is used in all schools in Lithuania. General education plans can be individualized. It is done within the framework of established general requirements at two levels:

1) School level. The school community adjusts the education plan for its own purposes, taking into consideration the school's goals, the surrounding sociocultural environment, and the needs of the local community.

2) Personal level. The education plan can be adjusted individually for one pupil or a group of pupils. When individualizing the education plan, the pupil's personal goals and abilities he or she wants to develop further, as well as the prospect of a professional career, are taken into consideration, or the person's special educational needs are met. In order to respond to the pupils' special educational needs, the education plan contains a sufficiently flexible mechanism of bringing general requirements and personal needs in line. It is established that when designing an education plan for a pupil with special educational needs, the teachers, in co-operation with the pupil, his or her parents, and specialists, taking into account the results of the child's special educational needs assessment and recommendations, are allowed to adjust the general education plan by up to 20%: to replace some subjects with other ones, more favourable to the pupil's learning abilities and needs. For example, pupils with hearing disability may not learn a second foreign language but instead have two or three extra lessons on their mother tongue; pupils with mental disorders can have the lessons on physics and chemistry replaced with an integrated course in natural sciences; physical education lessons can be replaced with lessons on physiotherapy for pupils with movement disorders. The general education plans provide for lessons to develop special skills or improve disrupted functions for these pupils. The aim is, if possible, to link the content of the special lessons with the content of other subjects that pupils study. For example, the content of speech and hearing training sessions for a cochlear implant user would be aligned with the content of the lessons on his or her mother tongue.

For the pupils educated in classes or schools for pupils with medium or severe mental disorders, the general education plans do not indicate subjects but areas of education that teachers are allowed to elaborate on in the directions and at the level that is the most suitable to the pupil. The areas proposed for the education of pupils with medium or severe mental disorders are the following: *moral education; communication activities or development of language and communication; cognitive activities; orientation activities; information technologies; artistic activities; physical activities.*

The rules for the progress and achievement assessment of pupils with special educational needs are set out in two documents:

1) General education plans. They set out a reference point for measuring the pupil's progress. It is established that the pupil's achievements are measured according to the requirements of the program that the pupil follows. The minimum, average, and high level of achievement of the pupils following general curriculum are set out in the general curriculum. The achievements of the pupils learning according to adjusted programs are assessed according to the requirements indicated in the programs: ". . . assessment criteria are discussed with the pupil, his or her parents (guardians, carers), and professionals providing educational assistance, the aspects of the adjustment of the pupil's achievement assessment are agreed, the forms of tests/self-check are defined, and it is established how they will be brought in line with the levels of achievement provided for in the general curricula." The levels of achievement and methods as well as intervals of their assessment for pupils with mental disorders following individualized programs or social skills development programs are agreed upon in the school, taking into consideration the pupil's abilities and perception of achievement, special educational needs, intended progress, and the parents' wishes. The method of assessment and its formalization are selected by the school.

2) The Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the 13th of February, 2012, specifies the rules for the adjustment of the instructions for the assessment of basic education achievements as well as the form, implementation, and assessment of school-leaving examination tasks to pupils with special educational needs. The rules were previously regulated in the Law on Special Education and transposed to the Law on Education (2011). Pupils who submit certificates of special educational needs due to language and communication, specific learning (learning to read, write, mathematics), sight, hearing, movement, multiple developmental (Asperger syndrome), and other disorders can be subject to adjusted rules for achievement checks and assessment. When determining the rules for achievement checks and assessment, the character of the person's special needs as well as the type of education organization used during the pupil's learning must be taken into consideration. In many cases, the duration of examinations is prolonged by 25% or 50% for the pupils; the tasks are presented in larger font size, in Braille; schemes and drawings that are impossible to present in Braille are replaced by models or verbal descriptions; a text is read out by the examiner to those unable to read the text due to reading disorders; persons with Asperger syndrome take examinations in an environment familiar to them in the presence of a special needs teacher or other educational assistance provider; persons with mathematical learning disorders are allowed to use schemes, tables, diagrams, etc. When assessing the pupils'

achievements, the following are not considered mistakes: mixed-up letter characters and mirror writing by pupils with dysgraphia, speech fluency and stressing errors for pupils with speech disorders, oral language comprehension errors for pupils with hearing disorders. In all cases, the examination assessment commission is presented with a certificate from the pedagogical and psychological commission containing specific indications on how the examination and result assessment is to be adjusted.

Organization of assistance to pupil

The Law on Education (2011) follows on the provision on assistance to pupil provided in the Law on Special Education and expands it, defining it as the concept of educational assistance that covers not only the pupil and his or her family but also the community of educators. The scope of educational assistance providers is broadened. According to the Descriptor of Rules on the Provision of Special Pedagogical Assistance (2011) approved by the minister of education and science of the Republic of Lithuania as well as other legal acts, assistance to pupils with special educational needs is provided in general education institutions by special needs teachers, speech therapists, tiflopedagogues, surdopedagogues, teacher assistants, sign language interpreters, psychologists, and social pedagogues. According to established rules, a special needs teacher with a full-time job in a general school serves 20 to 30 pupils. The specific number of pupils serviced depends on their age. A speech therapist in a general school serves from 40 to 60 pupils, and a tiflopedagogue serves from 18 to 22 pupils. The schools reserve the right, in cases of necessity, when the child's special needs are extensive, to assign a smaller number of pupils to one specialist. General schools also have psychologists working and providing psychological assistance[2] (a full-time position is introduced when a school has from 301 to 600 pupils) and a social pedagogue[3] who provides social pedagogical assistance. In cases when the school does not have a specialist required to provide assistance, the services of specialists can be used from specialized educational centres providing the services in question. The Lithuanian Training and Education Centre for the Blind and Visually Impaired provides tiflopedagogical services, the Lithuanian Centre for Deaf and Hard of

---

[2]   Descriptor of Rules for the Provision of Psychological Assistance. Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of the 5th of July, 2011 No. V-1215. Official Gazette, 15 07 2011, No. 88-4220.

[3]   Descriptor of Rules for the Provision of Social Pedagogical Assistance. Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of the 21stof July, 2011 No. V-1393. Official Gazette, 04 08 2011, No. 99-4675.

Hearing provides surdopedagogical services to children educated at all schools and pre-school education institutions in Lithuania, as well as their teachers and parents. These centres perform the function of assessing the special needs of pupils with the given disabilities as well.

Assistance to the pupil in the school is coordinated by the Child Welfare Commission[4]. It consists of a school leader responsible for the organization of assistance to pupils, the previously mentioned specialists, teacher representatives, and representatives of pupils' parents; local community representatives can also be invited to participate in the commission's work. The Child Welfare Commission evaluates the educational environment in the school, organizes the primary assessment of the child's special needs, coordinates the organization of assistance provision to the pupil in the school, and carries out preventive activity against the pupil's learning failures or unwelcome behaviour.

Involvement of pupils' parents in the pupils' educational activity

The pupil's parents are fully-fledged members of the school community. They take part in the governing structures of the school, together with teachers and school leaders, they participate in taking decisions important for the school. According to the Law Amending the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania, pupils' parents must ensure that their children start to attend school on time, and provide favourable conditions for them to learn. Parents have a right to choose the school for their child, participate in selecting his or her education program, and be involved in designing it.

Teacher training. In Lithuania, teacher training for inclusive education is regulated by two documents: Teacher Training Regulation (2010) and Descriptor of Teacher Qualification Requirements (2014). It is established that "pedagogical studies must ensure that the graduate has accumulated sufficient subject knowledge and skills, developed appropriate value-based views, has good command of subject methodology and is able to apply it, as well as that of pedagogical phenomena and educational activity, knows specificities of psycho-physical level of maturity and special needs of children and pupils of a given age, recognizes pupils' socialization, development and learning difficulties and helps overcome them, is able to provide psychological and pedagogical assistance. . ." Every teacher must have attended a course on Special

---

[4]   Descriptor of Rules for the Compilation of School Child Welfare Commission and Its Work Organization. Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of the 11th of April, 2011, No. V-579. Official Gazette, 13 04 2011, No. 45-2121.

Needs Education and Psychology of at least 60 hours (two credits), based on a specific program approved by the minister of education and science. The future teachers acquire these competencies at universities, and practising teachers acquire them in qualification development courses.

Pupil diversity encouragement

In Lithuanian schools, attempts to encourage pupil diversity take the form of financial measures. The Education Voucher Calculation Methodology (2001) indicates that every pupil with special educational needs educated in a general classroom is subject to an additional 35% of education voucher funds allocated for the education of one pupil, and pupils who are national minorities with special linguistic needs are subject to 10-30% of additional education voucher funds. Teachers educating pupils with special needs in general classrooms are subject to 5% to 20% higher salary[5]. The cultural and linguistic variety of pupils is encouraged in general schools. Special pedagogical assistance is provided to pupils learning in a language other than their mother tongue.

Creation of favourable educational environment for a child

The Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania stipulates the operation of a network of schools of various types in Lithuania (see Table 5). Parents have a right to choose an educational institution that is closest to home and meets the child's needs best, and to change it if need be. Municipalities are obliged to ensure access to education for pupils with special needs: building adjustments, provision of means of technical assistance for education, and organization of special pedagogical, psychological, and social assistance.

Lithuanian inclusive education legitimation model in the context of paradigm change

Inclusive education legitimation, which saw its beginnings in 1991, inherited the clinical and corrective perception of special needs education. However, the changes in the education of children with disabilities, encouraged by professional education

---

[5] Descriptor of Remuneration Rules for Education Institutions Staff and Pedagogical Staff in Other Institutions. Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania 19 12 2013 No. V 12-54.

scientists and public organizations, urged further legitimation as well as change in special needs education paradigms (Fig. 6).
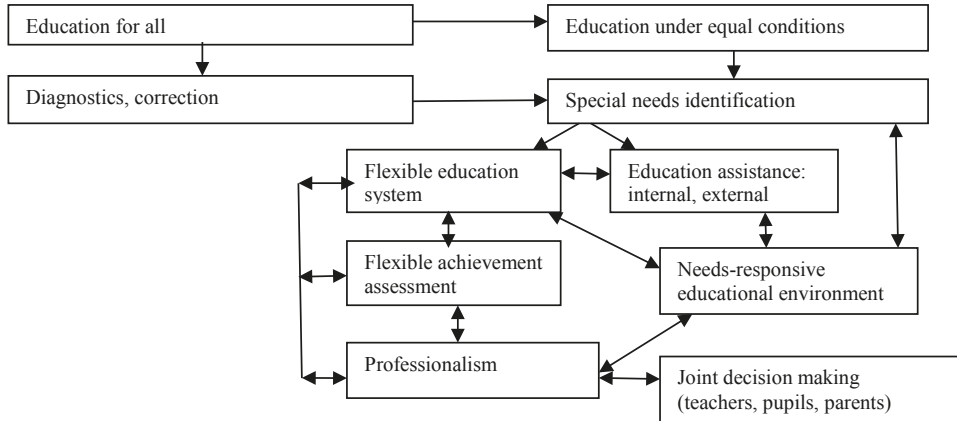
Figure 6. Lithuanian inclusive education legitimation model in the context of paradigm change.

The 1991 Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania established the right for every person to receive education at educational institutions; however, the system of assistance to a pupil was still based on diagnostics and correction. It regularized the activity of special commissions of diagnostic specialists as well as corrective special education and corrective assistance to children with physical and mental shortcomings. In 1998, the Law on Special Education introduced more progressive ideas regarding special needs education. Stigmatizing concepts were eliminated, the provision on education for all pupils under equally favourable conditions was introduced, and the concept of special educational needs identification, rather than presenting a diagnosis, and providing assistance on their grounds was defined. In 2011, when the Law on Special Education was integrated into the Law on Education, even more emphasis was put on the equal value of persons and the provision regarding the unity in education for all pupils was enhanced. The law strengthens the possibilities for participation and joint activity for education participants (pupils, their parents, and professionals), and further develops the assistance system from institutional to the inter-institutional level. The review of the legal basis allows us to state that preconditions for the development of inclusive education have been created in Lithuania with the right of free choice regarding the type of educational institution and ensuring the necessary institutional and inter-institutional education assistance in the pupil's place of learning.

REFERENCES

Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania No. I-1489. Official Gazette, 1991, No. 23-593.

Law on Social Integration of People with Disabilities of the Republic of Lithuania No. I-2044. Official Gazette, 1991, No. 36-969.

Information bulletin of the College of the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture and Education of the 27th of May, 1993, No. 27. May, June, July, 1993.

Law on Special Education of the Republic of Lithuania No. VIII-969. Official Gazette, 31 12 1998, No. 115-3228.

Law on the Ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Lithuania. Official Gazette 21 07 1995, No. 115-3228.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its optional protocol. Official Gazette 19 06 2010, No. 71-19.

Law Amending the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania No. XI 1281. Official Gazette, 2011, No. 38-1804.

Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030". Retrieved from www.Lietuva2030.lt and http://lietuva2030.lt/images/stories/en_lietuva2030.pdf]

Descriptor of rules for the organization of education for pupils with special educational needs. Order No. V-1795 of the Lithuanian Minister of Education and Science of the 30th of September, 2011.

The Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania "On the Approval of the Descriptor of Rules for the Adjustment of Basic Education Achievement Assessment, Language Tests, Form, Organization, and Instructions of Matura Examination Tasks for Pupils, Former Pupils and Externs with Special Educational Needs", 13 February, 2012, No.V-258.

The Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of the 8th of July, 2011, No. V-1228 "On the Approval of the Descriptor of Rules for the Provision of Special Pedagogical Assistance". Official Gazette, 20 07 2011, No. 92-4395.

Teacher Training Regulation. Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania 08 01 2010 No. V-54.

Descriptor of teacher qualification requirements. Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania29 08 2014, No. V-774.

Education voucher calculation and reallocation methodology. Decision of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania 27 06 2001, No. 785.

2.4. LEGAL BASIS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN POLAND

Remigiusz Kijak, Tamara Cierpiałowska, Joanna Kossewska

The legal basis of inclusive education at the governmental level

Nowadays, the common right to free education and the obligation to receive schooling up to the age of 18 is embedded in the Article 70 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, 1997. The mode in which schooling is put into practice is regulated by another legal act. According to the latter, the education of people with disabilities is an integral part of the state school system. The Constitution declares that parents are free to choose the kind and profile of school for their children (state or non-state, including religious schools) (Jarosz-Żukowska, Żukowski, 2014).

The system of integrated education was introduced into pedagogical practice in Poland at the end of World War II (Hulek, 1987). Within the period of the country's reconstruction, the school integration of children with disabilities was determined by war-caused damage, a lack of dedicated institutions and specialized pedagogical personnel rather than a result of an intentionally implemented concept. At the time, integration was put into practice in two forms: first, some children with disabilities were educated in mainstream state schools, in small groups; second, separate children with disabilities were individually placed together with healthy children (Kirejczyk, 1987). The 1970s mark the beginning of planned special needs education in state schools. Still, those initial forms of integrated education were discontinued due to their poor efficiency and the lack of decisively positive outcomes (Kirejczyk, 1970). The latter were measured by looking at results that children with varied degrees of interpersonal skills obtained while following the same curriculum (Wyczesany, 1993).

In the 1970s, integrated education most frequently took the form of special classes in state schools. Such a solution was formalized in 1973 by a directive of the Minister of Education. In the 1970s and 1980s, only a small number of children with disabilities (mostly those with mild physical impairments) attended state schools, as assistance that such children were provided with was unsatisfactory. In most cases, it involved didactic help in the form of compensatory classes, which was in itself a form of segregation. The regulations that were in force at that time did not limit the access of children with disabilities to state schools, yet they also did not facilitate the children's functioning within the system. The system of disability assessment was

rather oriented towards forwarding to various educational institutions for special needs children. Assistance to children with disabilities did not cover their key social needs, nor did it entail dedicated pedagogical activities that were necessary for the objective of inclusion to be attained (Kossewska, 2000).

The regime change in Poland enabled the reorganization of integrated education at the legislative, normative and organizational levels on the grounds of amendments to the Education System Act of the 7th of September, 1991, as well as subsequent regulations that remain currently in force. According to the Act of 1991, each citizen of the Republic of Poland has the right to "education as well as . . ., upbringing and care, adjustment of educational content to their age and achieved development, adjustment of methods and organization of education to psycho-physical capabilities of pupils and students, and also psychological and pedagogical counseling and dedicated teaching" (Art.1, p. 4.). The Act contains regulations that recognize the possibility of children and youth with disabilities, socially maladjusted or those at the risk of social maladjustment to be educated in all types of schools. The education has to be in accordance with individual developmental and educational needs and predispositions and has to ensure the provision of care for those with disabilities by ensuring that the process of education, educational forms and programmes, as well as rehabilitation activities are adjusted to individual needs.

The Education Act of the 20th of February, 2015, which is currently in force[6], has introduced the term "intellectual disability", which is less stigmatizing than the previously used "mental retardation" (Art. 3, p.18b). It has also enumerated fundamental forms of didactic and pedagogical activities dedicated to children with special educational needs: compulsory educational classes, both of general and vocational orientation; rehabilitation classes for pupils with disabilities; classes within the framework of vocational courses for adults; classes of psychological and pedagogical counseling; classes dedicated to developing pupils' interests and talents. While the Directive of the Minister of Education of the 24th of July, 2015[7] specifies conditions under which training, education and care of children and youth with disabilities (socially maladjusted or those at the risk of social maladjustment) should be provided. These pupils and students are subject to assistance. which, according to the regulations of the year 2009, should take place in an establishment at the closest distance to the pupil's

---

[6] The Act of February 20, 2015, amending the Act on the Education System and some other Acts (Dz.U. 2015 poz. 357)

[7] Regulation of the Minister of National Education of July 24, 2015, on the conditions for organizing training, education and care for children and youth with disabilities, socially maladjusted and those at the risk of social maladjustment (Dz. U. 2015 poz. 1113)

place of residence. Currently, the assistance is subject to the Directive of the Minister of Education of the 30th of April, 2013.[8] The directive describes the psychological and pedagogical help in kindergartens, schools and other institutions as well as its recipients. It specifies who provides the assistance and under whose initiative such activities are undertaken. Moreover, it indicates their forms and describes the organization of therapeutic classes. It defines the responsibilities of a pedagogue, psychologist and speech therapist working in kindergartens, schools and other institutions, as well as the tasks of a career counsellor and pedagogical therapist. It contains guidelines for individual educational programmes/plans (IEPs). More detail on the latter is provided in directives on the conditions under which training, education and care of. children and youth with disabilities and socially maladjusted ones should be organized. The Directive mentioned above also defines the tasks of a psycho-pedagogical counselling centre (*poradnia psychopedagogiczna*) and describes – in connection with the changes that are being introduced within the field of psycho-pedagogical assistance – the principles, on which psycho-pedagogical counseling centres, schools and teacher training institutions co-operate.

Pupils and students with disabilities can receive schooling in all types of schools that fall within the education system to fulfill the obligation to attend school and be educated; namely, kindergartens, primary schools, gymnasiums, secondary schools (mainstream ones with integration departments or integrated schools with special units and special schools); youth sociotherapy centres; special schooling and pedagogical establishments, special pedagogical centres for children and young people in need of thorough organization of education and pedagogical as well as teaching methods, and centres for the empowerment of children and adolescents with mental and multiple disabilities (Szumski, 2006). A school or kindergarten is considered an integrated one when the majority of its departments are of integrated nature, that is to say, when all children formally acknowledged by a Commission of Psycho-Pedagogical Counselling Centre as being in need of special education can be educated together with their peers without disabilities. An integrated class or unit should consist of 15 – 20 pupils, including three to five of those with disabilities. It is the lead teacher and the supporting one who are responsible for the educational process and progress of all pupils. Both teachers co-operate while planning the didactic and pedagogical process.

---

[8] Regulation of the Minister of National Education of April 30, 2013, on the principles of providing and organizing psychological and pedagogical assistance in public kindergartens, schools and institutions (Dz.U. 2013 poz. 532)

Integration may take many forms. Taking into consideration the mode in which it develops and the number of people involved in it, the following can be distinguished: individual, group, formal and real integration (Jegier & Kosowska, 2011). **Individual integration** includes cases when a child with disabilities is educated in a mainstream class or integrated class and has the same rights as children without disabilities. **Group integration** is when children with disabilities form a special class in a mainstream school or a special group in kindergarten or other child care institutions. Examples of this approach include the following: special classes for those with mental disabilities, visually/hearing impaired children or therapeutic classes for children with learning disorders caused by a partial developmental delay (Janiszewska-Nieścioruk, 1999). **Formal (organizational) integration** involves situations when children with disabilities are included in the community of other children, yet without initializing any "closer social contacts" (Jegier & Kosowska, 2011, p.7). **Real (functional) integration** takes place when a child with disabilities participates in class life on equal grounds and maintains contacts with his or her peers.

Currently, it is **inclusive education,** the relatively new form of education, which poses "a challenge for Polish school" and Polish children with special needs (Firkowska – Mankiewicz, 2004; Chrzanowska, 2009; Barłóg, 2013). In the light of the directives of the Minister of Education of the 17th of November, 2010[9], the education of children and youth with disabilities is organized alongside that of their healthy peers, both in kindergartens and schools, i.e. at every stage of education and in the schooling institution that is the closest to the place of residence of the pupils or students with disabilities. In other words, every local school should be well-adapted and prepared to accept pupils or students with special educational needs.

The shared education of children with special needs and regularly developing ones in a given locality is to ensure that the latter ones have the opportunity to be educated in familiar surroundings, in the vicinity of their place of residence, and also "to create a special educational needs se of belonging to a community to all pupils regardless of their degree of disability," (Firkowska - Mankiewicz, 2004, p. 19) Inclusive education means not only that individual pupils with special educational needs can be educated in

---

[9]   Regulation of the Minister of National Education of November 17, 2010 (Dz.U. 2010, No 228 item. 1490) on:
– The conditions for organizing training, education and care for children and youth with disabilities and socially maladjusted ones in kindergartens, schools and public offices or their integration,
– The conditions for organizing training, education and care for children and youth with disabilities and socially maladjusted ones in special kindergartens, schools and departments and centres.

mainstream schools, but it also brings along the necessity to introduce some changes in the schools to meet the needs of children with varied capabilities and cognitive resources.

Pupils with disabilities make up a relatively small subgroup (2.4%) of the whole population of pupils in Poland. The highest percentage of pupils with disabilities is prespecial educational needs t in gymnasiums (4.1%) and primary schools (2.8%). In secondary schools and kindergartens, these pupils constitute, respectively, 1.7% and 1.0% of the overall number of pupils[10]. Thus, the issues discussed here regard only a minor percentage of all pupils. The statistical data collected successively during the last 15 years revealed the existing trend in Poland (Figure 7). After a sudden drop in the number of pupils in special schools and special departments in mainstream schools, which took place at the beginning of the 1990s in connection with sociopolitical transformation, the number of pupils in special schools has remained relatively stable. Generally, it can be stated that about 40% of all the pupils with disabilities attend that type of schools.

The period of regime transformation proved conducive to the creation of integrated institutions and the integration of pupils with disabilities in mainstream classes (Kościelska, 1994, 1996). The phenomenon can be observed in the growing number of pupils attending those schools. Since then, there has been no major fluctuation in this respect; the proportion of pupils in those types of schooling institutions is around 60%.
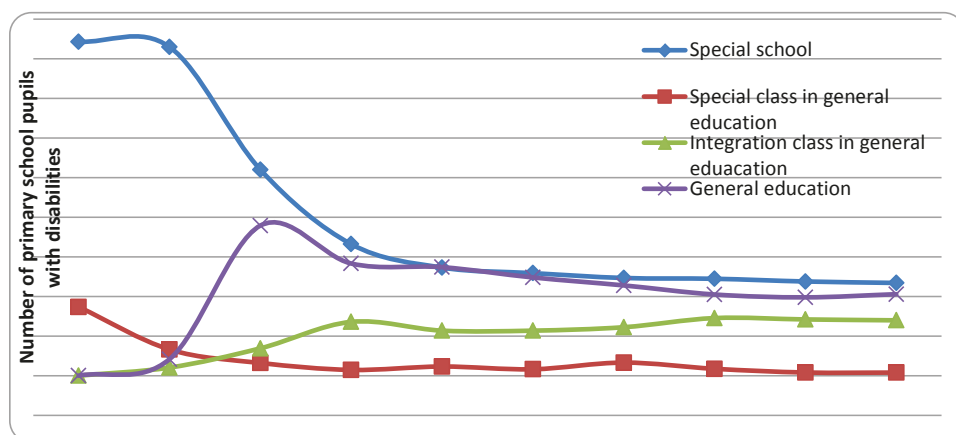
Figure 7. Placement trends of primary school pupils with disabilities in 1990 – 2013 in Poland. Factsheet. of indicators on the basis of GUS (Central Statistical Office of Poland) Yearbook.[11]

---

[10] Dudzińska, A. (2010). Students with disabilities in Poland in 2010 according to data of the Education Information System. http://www.wszystkojasne.waw.pl/sites/default/files/uczniowie_niepelnosprawni_w_polsce_-_dane_sio_za_2010_r.pdf s. 5.

[11] Education in the year 2012/2013. Research Department of Social and Living Conditions Statistical Office in Gdansk, Warsaw, 2013 http://stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/gus/E_oswiata_i_wychowanie_2012-2013.pdf, p.148

The legal basis of inclusive education at the municipal level

Since the school year 1999/2000, a reform of the school system has been successively implemented. Alongside a new administrative division of the country, it has led to decentralization in education management. Currently, almost all state schools and other educational establishments are managed by local government units at the following levels: 1) commune/municipality, 2) district and 3) voivodship (province) in accordance with the Education System Act of the 7th of September, 1991.[12]

It is an exclusive competence of municipalities to establish and manage state kindergartens (special ones included), primary schools and gymnasiums (without primary schools and special gymnasiums). While the district's competence is to establish and manage special primary schools, special gymnasiums and secondary schools (three-year general secondary schools, two and three-year vocational schools, three-year profiled secondary schools, four-year technical secondary schools, two-year supplementary general secondary schools and three-year supplementary technical secondary schools functioning as vocational schools), sports schools and schools for excellence in sport, pedagogical centres for youth, youth sociotherapy centres, special pedagogical and schooling centres, special pedagogical centres, extracurricular activity establishments such as youth centres, cultural centres for youth and other pedagogical and educational institutions.

The choice of the school is the parents' or legal guardians' prerogative. It is by their formal request that the competent unit of local government provides a suitable form of schooling, be it in kindergarten (including special ones), primary school or gymnasium (mainstream or integrated). Whereas education in secondary schools, all types of special schools and centres is allocated by the competent head of the district with respect to the child's place of residence.

If the formal certificate of need for special education recommends a specific form of schooling (special education institution, mainstream or integrated one) at a given stage of the education (kindergarten, primary school, gymnasium or secondary school), the child has the right to be educated in an institution that meets the recommendations and that is suitable with regard to the child's place of residence, provided that the parents submit a respective formal request.

---

[12]   The Education Act of September 7, 1991 (Dz.U. No 256 of 2004, item 2572 as amended).

The legal basis of inclusive education at the school level

The implementation of inclusive education in each mainstream establishment requires a suitable preparation of organizational, substantive and methodological nature: preparing the personnel to host pupils with disabilities, and removing both physical and social barriers in the school environment.

According to regulations[13] in force since the year 2013, the school is obliged to organise and provide psychological and pedagogical assistance to ensure that each pupil has access to complex psycho-pedagogical support in the school environment.

A pupil should be provided with individualized psycho-pedagogical assistance that meets his or her individual developmental and educational needs and other psycho-physical capabilities, as recognized by a teacher or a specialist working with the pupil.

The assistance provided to a pupil in a kindergarten, school or other establishment involves recognizing and, subsequently, meeting his or her individual developmental and educational needs as well as recognizing his or her psycho-physical capabilities, which form the basis for a curriculum to be implemented in line with his or her cognitive abilities.

Psycho-pedagogical assistance is provided in an educational establishment to pupils experiencing difficulties related to the following:

1) disability;

2) social maladjustment;

3) risk of social maladjustment;

4) extraordinary talents;

5) specific learning difficulties;

6) language disorders;

7) chronic illness;

8) crisis or traumatic situations;

9) educational difficulties;

10) negligence resulting from the pupil's economic and family situation as well as the nature of their freetime activities;

11) adaptation difficulties linked to cultural differences or a change of school environment, including previous education abroad.

---

[13]   Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 30 April, 2013. On the principles of providing and organizing psychological and pedagogical assistance in public kindergartens, schools and institutions .(Dz.U. 2013 item 532)

Planning and coordination of psycho-pedagogical assistance provision falls under the responsibility of a group comprised of teachers, tutors and specialists working with the pupil.

The responsibilities of the group include the following:

- deciding on the extent to which a given pupil needs psycho-pedagogical assistance, taken into consideration his or her individual developmental and educational needs as well as psycho-physical capabilities, special talents inclusive;
- indicating the recommended forms, modes, and time span of the assistance to be provided to the pupil (taking into consideration his or her individual developmental needs);
- in cases of a gymnasium or secondary school pupils, planning activities within the scope of education and career counselling and their mode of implementation;
- developing supportive activities plan in cases of pupils without a formal statement of need for special education; the plan is to be devised in reference to the scope of psycho-pedagogical assistance (its forms, modes, time and number of hours) as determined for the pupil by the head of the establishment.

The supportive activities plan consists of the following:

- objectives to be achieved by means of psycho-pedagogical assistance the pupil is in need of;
- activities carried out with the pupil within the framework of particular forms and modes in which the assistance is provided;
- methods of work with the pupil;
- the scope in which mainstream curriculum requirements ought to be adjusted to individual developmental and educational needs as well as psycho-physical capabilities of the pupil, as mentioned in the regulations on assessment, classification and promotion of pupils and on principles according to which tests and examinations are conducted in state schools;
- in case such a need arises, the scope of co-operation may be expanded to cover psycho-pedagogical counselling centres, teacher training centres, non-governmental organisations and other institutions working for the benefit of families, children and youth. The results of the group's work are incorporated into the IETP, which is also compiled by the group. Psycho-pedagogical assistance at the level of gymnasium and secondary schools is orientated, above

all, towards developing independence and professional qualifications, which are indispensable for pursuing a satisfactory career in adult life. To support pupils in their educational and professional choices, lessons are organized on topics of choosing a university programme and profession as well as planning one's education and professional career. During the lessons, proactive methods are applied and the lessons are delivered by teachers, tutors and specialists.

What is more, the responsibilities of a career counselor include the following:

1) systematic monitoring of pupils' needs for information on educational and professional issues, and assistance in planning their education and professional career;

2) collecting and updating information on educational and professional issues (adapted to every level of education) and making it available;

3) conducting lessons aimed at preparing the pupils for conscious planning of their careers and taking up job-related roles;

4) coordinating career counselling and informative activity of the school and other establishments;

5) co-operating with other teachers in starting and continuing career counseling.

In cases where no career counsellor is available at the school or establishment, it is the head of the institution that indicates a teacher to take on the role.

To put into practice systemic assumptions about psycho-pedagogical assistance to pupils with special educational needs, a conscientious, detailed, in-depth analysis is required of the situation each pupil with disabilities is in, their family background, and peer environment, in which the process of joint education takes place (Bąbka, 2001). The process involves creating, implementing and evaluating an IETP for each pupil with special educational needs, in accordance with the principle of "providing everyone with what suits them".

Thus, kindergartens, schools and integrated units have to provide children and youth with disabilities with the following:

- implementation of recommendations contained in the formal statement of need for special education,
- suitable learning conditions, specialized equipment and didactic tools,
- IETP, in which the recommendations of the formal statement of need for special education are taken into account and which is adjusted to the developmental and educational needs as well as psycho-physical capabilities of the pupil,
- specialized lessons held within the framework of psycho-pedagogical assistance, and rehabilitation classes adapted to individual needs,

- preparation of the pupil for an independent adult life.

A plan of supportive actions is devised within the educational establishment for pupils with special educational needs certified by a formal statement from an official assessment body, as well as for pupils whose special educational needs were identified by a tutor or other specialist. In particular, the plan must include objectives to be achieved, activities pursued and methods used while working with the pupil. Such a plan can also be prepared for a group of pupils in cases when they have homogenous developmental and educational needs and psycho-physical capabilities. The assistance is granted to the pupil in co-operation with psycho-pedagogical counselling centres and with the help of the parents.

The implementation of inclusive principles is, however, very difficult within the existing range of possibilities. Many authors indicate there are disturbing signals to be noticed in how the inclusion process of pupils with disabilities into mainstream schools develops (Gajdzica, 2011; Parys, 2007; Legierska, 2013). Mainstream schools are not well prepared for supporting children with special needs. Classrooms are crowded, and pupils rarely participate in extracurricular activities, which would facilitate education and socialization (Grzelak et al., 2014). Teachers do not approach their teaching process with individualisation in mind and see their pupils through the lens of their disabilities, frequently excluding them from both curricular and extracurricular activities. Teachers are not prepared for work with children with disabilities. The knowledge of mainstream school teachers on pupils with special educational needs is insufficient, and they do not feel the need to broaden it. Furthermore, co-operation between mainstream school teachers and special school teachers or specialists from psycho-pedagogical counselling centres lacks efficiency. Teachers find it difficult to adjust educational requirements to the individual needs and capabilities of the pupils with disability. As a result, equipping mainstream schools with funds, didactic tools and devices for pupils with disability does not suffice (Report, 2005)[14]. To promote inclusive education, it is necessary to provide maintream schools with opportunities to employ highly qualified specialists and professionals who would be responsible for rehabilitation and supporting the development of pupils with special needs (Sochańska-Kawiecka et al., 2015)

---

[14] Rights of people with intelectual disability. Access to education and employment. Poland (2005) http://www.psouu.org.pl/sites/default/files/publikacje/Report_ID_PolishVersion.PDF (retrieved on 10 Jan, 2016)

REFERENCES

Barłóg, K. (2013). Edukacja ogólnodostępna szansą zaspokajania specjalnych potrzeb dzieci niepełnosprawnych. [Meanstream education as an opportunity to meet the special needs of children with disabilities] In: K. Denek, A. Kamińska, P. Oleśniewicz. (eds) *Uwarunkowania współczesnej szkoły. (199-210)*. Sosnowiec: Oficyna Wydawnicza Humanitas.

Bąbka, J. (2001). *Edukacja integracyjna dzieci pełnosprawnych i niepełnosprawnych – założenia i rzeczywistość.* [School integration of children with and without disabilities: Assumptions and reality]. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Fundacji Humaniora.

Chrzanowska, I. (2009). *Zaniedbane obszary edukacji - pomiędzy pedagogiką a pedagogiką specjalną.* [Neglected areas of education - between pedagogy and special education] Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls.

Firkowska-Mankiewicz, A. (2004). Edukacja włączająca - wyzwaniem dla polskiej szkoły. [Inclusive education: Challenge for the Polish school]. *Szkoła Specjalna, 1*, pp. 19–26.

Firkowska-Mankiewicz, A. (2010). Co nowego w edukacji włączającej. [What is new in inclusive education]. *Edukacja*, *2*, pp. 16-23.

Gajdzica Z. (2011). Opinie nauczycieli szkół ogólnodostępnych na temat edukacji włączającej uczniów z lekkim upośledzeniem umysłowym w kontekście toczącej się reformy kształcenia specjalnego. [Public school teachers' opinions on the inclusion of pupils with mild mental disability in the context of the ongoing reform of special education]. In: Z. Gajdzica (red.) *Uczeń z niepełnosprawnością w szkole ogólnodostępnej.* [Student with disability in public school]. Sosnowiec: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Humanitas", pp. 56–81.

Grzelak, P., Kubicki, P. & Ormowska, M. (2014). *Realizacja badania ścieżek edukacyjnych niepełnosprawnych dzieci, uczniów i absolwentów – Raport końcowy.* [Implementation of study of education pathways of children, students and graduates with disabilities - Final repor]. Warszawa: Instytut Badan Edukacyjnych.

Hulek, A. (1987). Człowiek niepełnosprawny a system integracyjny (współczesne tendencje). [Persons with disabilities and the integration system (contemporary trends)]. In: A. Hulek (red.), *Integracja społeczna ludzi niepełnosprawnych zadania pedagoga.* [Social integration of people with disabilities: Tasks of the pedagogue]. Wrocław: Ossolineum. pp. 9-27.

Janiszewska-Niescioruk (1999). Uwarunkowania efektów społecznej integracji. [Considerations of social integration effects]. In: A. Maciarz (red). *Z teorii i badań społecznej integracji dzieci niepełnosprawnych.* [From theory and research of social integration of children with disabilities]. Kraków: Impuls pp. 24-36.

Jarosz-Żukowska, S. & Żukowski, Ł (2014). Prawo do nauki i jego gwarancje. [The right to education and its guarantees]. In: M. Jabłoński (red.) *Realizacja i ochrona konstytucyjnych wolności i praw jednostki w polskim porządku prawnym.* [Realization and protection of constitutional freedoms and rights of individuals in Polish legal system]. Wrocław: E-Wydawnictwo. Prawnicza i Ekonomiczna Biblioteka Cyfrowa. Wydział Prawa, Administracji i Ekonomii Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Prace Naukowe Wydziału Prawa, Administracji i Ekonomii Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego) (e-Monografie; nr 45), pp. 631-658.

Jegier, A. & Kosowska, M. (2011). *Relacje dziecka z wadą słuchu w szkole.* [Relationships of a child with hearing loss in school]. Difin.

Kirejczyk, J. (1970). *Nauczanie dzieci głuchych razem ze słyszącymi.* [Teaching deaf and hearing children together]. Warszawa: PWN.

Kirejczyk, J. (1987). *Oligofrenopedagogika.* [Oligophrenopedagogy]. Warszawa: PWN.

Kościelska, M. (1994). Integracja szansą wychowania nowego pokolenia. [Integration is an opportunity to raise the new generation]. In: J. Bogucka, M. Kościelska (red.), *Wychowanie i nauczanie integracyjne.* [Education and inclusive teaching]. (pp.5-8). Warszawa: STO

Kościelska, M. (1996). Integracja-szansa dla wszystkich uczniów czy sposób zaspokajania potrzeb dzieci specjalnej troski. [Integration - a chance for all students and way of satisfying the needs of children with special needs]. In: *Wychowanie i nauczanie integracyjne. Nowe doświadczenia.* [Education and inclusive teaching. New experiences].

Kossewska, J. (2000). *Uwarunkowania postaw - nauczyciele i inne grupy zawodowe wobec integracji szkolnej dzieci niepełnoprawnych.* [Determinants of attitudes - teachers and other professional groups on school integration of children with disabilities]. WN AP, Kraków.

Legierska, L. (2013). Uczeń niepełnosprawny w reformowanej przestrzeni szkoły ogólnodostępnej. O realnych efektach radosnej twórczości legislacyjnej. [Pupils with disabilities in reformed mainstream schools. The real effects of joyful creativity legislative]. In: Z. Gajdzica (red.) *Człowiek z niepełnosprawnością w rezerwacie przestrzeni publicznej.* [Person with disability in the reserved public space]. Kraków: Impuls. pp. 139–154.

Parys, K. (2007). Problemy integracji szkolnej w badaniach empirycznych – przegląd materiałów pokonferencyjnych. [The problems of school integration in empirical research - an overview of conference proceedings]. *In:* Z. Janiszewska-Nieścioruk (red.), *Problemy edukacji integracyjnej dzieci i młodzieży z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną.* [Problems of inclusive education of children and youth with mental disabilities]. Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls.

Sochańska-Kawiecka, M., Makowska-Belta, E. Milczarek, D., Morysińska, A. & Zielińska, D. A. (2015). *Włączający system edukacji i rynku pracy – rekomendacje dla polityki publicznej.* [Inclusive education system and the labor market - recommendations for public policy.] Warszawa: Instytut Badan Edukacyjnych.

Szumski, G. (2006). *Integracyjne kształcenie niepełnosprawnych.* [Integrated teaching of persons with disabilities]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.

Prawa osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną. Dostęp do edukacji i zatrudnienia. Polska (2005) Raport. [The rights of persons with mental disabilities. Access to education and employment. Poland (2005) Report]. Open Society Institute/EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program. Warszawa: Polskie Stowarzyszenie na Rzecz Osób z Upośledzeniem Umysłowym.

Wyczesany J., (1993). *Uczeń o obniżonym poziomie umysłowym w szkole podstawowej.* [Students of lower intellectual cognitive levels in primary school]. WOM, Częstochow.

2.5. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LEGAL BASIS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN FOUR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Alvyra Galkienė

The beginning of inclusive education and the development of this educational system can be linked to different events in each society. The countries participating in the research have experienced different historical events that were significant to societal development. The Eastern bloc countries, Lithuania and Poland, have gone through a tough period of sovietisation, i.e. shaping Soviet identity, which involved processes of unifying nations, equalizing worldviews among members of society, and restricting freedom of decision. Austria and Finland saw a more consistent societal development, without any distinguishable historical breakthroughs. Despite that, a focused legal regulation of inclusive education began almost at the same time in all four countries, namely, at the beginning of the 20th century (Table 6).

Table 6. Highlights of the beginning of inclusive education in Lithuania, Poland, Austria, and Finland

Country	Event/date	Events and/or legal regulation
Lithuania	1991	The country's liberation from the Soviet regime and turn towards democratic development. Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania.
Poland	End of World War II 1970 1991	Individual cases Directive of Ministry of Education Education System Act
Austria	1984 1993 / 1996	Project of Movement for Civil Rights School Organization Act
Finland	1990s 2010	Establishment of inclusive education philosophy in the Core Curriculum The Basic Education Act 628/1998

The beginning of inclusive education in Lithuania and Poland is linked to the change of political regime. Although individual manifestations of inclusive education had also been noted in the countries' education systems earlier, these, however, were solely separate random cases. For instance, in Poland at the end of World War II, there were some cases of pupils with disabilities taught in mainstream schools. During the Soviet regime, in 1970, a possibility for pupils with disabilities to learn in specialized

classes at mainstream schools was legalized in the country; however, the phenomenon took the form of segregated education, as opposed to truly inclusive education, and it was not entrenched in the system.

When the Soviet regime collapsed in Lithuania in January, 1991, half a year later (on the 25th of June, 1991), the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania was passed, which stipulated the right for pupils with disabilities to learn at mainstream schools and obtain necessary assistance. In the same year, an Education System Act was passed in Poland, which also legalized the possibility for every pupil to not only learn at a general school but also to obtain necessary individual assistance.

The beginning of inclusive education in Austria and Finland reflects the consistent development of democratic processes in the countries. In Austria, the beginning of inclusive education is linked to pupils' parents and professionals' movement for civil rights of residents in the years 1984-1985. The movement accelerated the establishment of an inclusive education system on a legal basis, namely, in the system of primary education in 1993 and that of secondary education in 1996 (School Organization Act). In Finland, the fundamental principles of inclusive education, namely, educational equality, individuality, lifelong learning, and co-operation, have been proclaimed as of 1990 and applied in projects initiated by the Finnish National Board of Education. Once the system was designed and evaluated through scientific research, it was established in the Basic Education Act 628/1998 in 2010.

Although it is more or less the same period around the year 1990 that can be considered the beginning of inclusive education in these four countries, the processes of its establishment in the education systems are different (Table 7).

Table 7. Establishment of inclusive education in education system

Country	Actions establishing inclusive education
Lithuania	Creating educational assistance system in regular education institutions throughout the country
Poland	Establishment of unique education system in the country: integrated school and inclusive school
Austria	The school pilot programme of 1984-1985 1993 – introduction of inclusive primary education 1996 – inclusive secondary education
Finland	1997 – national projects Implementation principles of inclusion. A broad basic education network that supports the right of every child to attend the nearest mainstream school

Lithuania and Poland formalized the possibility of inclusive education in their education systems at the moment of political breakthrough, once they had liberated

themselves from the regime that restricted democratic processes. Therefore, one can claim that the regulation of this form of education is, at the same time, the moment of the establishment of restored human rights in these countries. In Austria and Finland, the impulse to work towards the establishment of inclusive education in the education system reflects society's consistent evolution towards further development of democratic processes.

The first documents regulating education in Lithuania and Poland put emphasis on three main components in education: 1) the right for pupils with disabilities to attend mainstream schools; 2) the system of educational institutions; and 3) the organization of assistance for pupils. Whereas in Austria and Finland, the first steps in inclusive education included national projects aiming to promote society's openness towards a wider variety of its members, and to create models of education that could be proposed and, following universal agreement, introduced into the entire education system. Specific legal regulation appeared later. In Lithuania and Poland, the regulation of inclusive education on a legal basis provided preconditions for practical change in educational processes. Wonderful initiatives were launched in individual institutions, which served not only as a good example to practitioners but also as a way of testing the legal provisions. Legal provisions regulating inclusive education in these countries evolved by putting an ever-greater emphasis on the variety of special educational needs as well as on flexibility and liberalism in the organization of education.

Right for pupils with disabilities to attend mainstream schools

In Lithuania and Poland, the first legal provisions in support of inclusive education were particularly focused on establishing equal rights for pupils with disabilities. Although the variety of special educational needs is acknowledged in these countries, and the classification of the needs embraces their reasons ranging from biological and functional disorders to social and cultural differences that result in educational difficulties, in the primary legal basis of inclusive education, however, persons with disabilities prevailed significantly. The situation can be explained by the fact that specialized education institutions for pupils with various disabilities used to be greatly secluded in the unified Soviet education system. In cultural terms, society was rather homogeneous in these countries; therefore, the involvement of people with disabilities into the general educational space created fundamental differences in educational possibilities and needs. Later, as processes of globalization evolved, the scope of inclusive education issues expanded, covering other groups of special needs. Today,

as the processes of globalization develop, the issues related to assistance to pupils, resulting from this phenomenon, emerge ever more clearly.

In Austria and Finland, national pilot projects establishing inclusive education at the beginning and the legal basis at present focus on the variety of needs of all pupils, with less emphasis on the specificity of the needs of those with disabilities. In Austria, the process of inclusive education development is more visible in education cycles rather than separate pupil groups. In the first stage, once the efficiency of a pilot project "School for All" had been evaluated, the legal provision setting out the introduction of inclusive education was established in the primary education cycle (in 1993); in the second stage, it was established in the lower secondary education cycle (in 1996), moving gradually up to the upper secondary education cycle. Here, much attention was drawn to the issue of increasing the inclusion of non-German-speaking pupils into society. In Finland, the generally accepted approach to inclusive education puts emphasis not on the needs of separate groups of children but rather on the well-being and success of all children. National pilot projects, which initiated the development of inclusive education, and the current legal system are targeted at the prevention of learning failure for any pupil. Conditions for helping students successfully learn and become emotionally well-adjusted are created for all, regardless of whether they have special educational needs or not. It is at this level that conditions are provided for educational equality and the expression of a pupil's individuality. This is aimed at ensuring education accessibility both in the educational process and educational environment.

Organizational system of inclusive education and its descriptive concepts

In Lithuania and Poland, a certain system was modelled for the participation of pupils with special educational needs in the general education process, and concepts describing it were introduced into the legal basis. In the first legal acts in Lithuania, a concept "integration" was proposed and its two forms were defined: "full" and "partial". These referred to the place of the pupils' education either in a general or a separate classroom in a mainstream school or kindergarten. Later, the concepts were altered. There were attempts to introduce the English term "inclusion" into the pedagogical vocabulary, which in the Lithuanian interpretation of its meaning has a negative connotation of an "insertion", "insertion of a foreign body". Today, the search for a suitable Lithuanian term for the phenomenon is still ongoing; however, the terms "integration" and "inclusion" (with the meaning of "insertion") are no longer used. The concepts of "education

accessibility", "special assistance," and "special pedagogical assistance" are employed. Two forms of educating pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools remain: education in a general classroom, providing the necessary assistance for the pupil, and education in a special classroom, usually designated for pupils with mental disorders. In the Polish legal and pedagogical vocabulary, the concepts "integrated education" and "inclusive education" are used. They describe two educational systems present in the country. Integrated education refers to an organizational form of education in a classroom or a department, where the pupil community includes both regularly developing pupils as well as those with special educational needs. These classrooms have a reduced number of pupils and targeted assistance is provided by professionals. Inclusive education refers to educating individual pupils with special educational needs in general classrooms by providing the necessary assistance to them on an individual basis. Special classrooms in mainstream schools are common in Poland. These are designated for pupils with special educational needs of a certain nature.

In Austria, respecting equal rights of all pupils, the concepts of "inclusive school" and "integrated classes" are used, which describe the country's education system. Gradually, this system has grown to cover the entire education system from primary to secondary and further on to pre-vocational education vertically, and all the regions in the country horizontally. In Austria, when shifting to the implementation of universal inclusive education, great attention was paid to training teachers to educate heterogeneous groups of learners. Courses on special needs education and inclusive education methodology are obligatory in all teacher training study programs. Separate training for special needs teachers is no longer provided here as of 2015.

The Finnish education system stands out from all the education systems in the countries analysed in this regard. Here, all schools are obliged to educate all the pupils residing in their region. The essential educational element that enables the implementation of all-inclusive education at every school is a well-developed system of ensuring social, psychological, and educational well-being for every child. This is achieved by ensuring preventive assistance to every pupil in all schools. The Finnish legal terminology does not employ the concepts "integrated" or "inclusive" education. They are used in professional pedagogical language.

The education systems of all the countries participating in the research also include specialized schools designated solely for pupils with severe disabilities. In all the countries, the pupils' parents enjoy a right to choose where they wish to educate their children.

Organization of assistance to pupils

In all the countries participating in the research, the assistance provision systems for pupils serve as an essential element of inclusive education. In all the countries, the pupils with special educational needs are entitled to free-of-charge special pedagogical assistance. However, the system of assistance to pupils contains specific features in each of the countries.

Finland has the best developed system of assistance to pupils, which is distinguished by the scope of the pupils' needs it covers. The regulated three-level assistance recipients group includes both the children that do not have any identified special educational needs, as well as those with vast needs. The goal here is to pre-empt every pupil's failure. In Austria, the aim is to provide every teacher with as many competencies of assistance organization to pupils, as possible. The goal is to reduce the volume of assistance provided by separate professionals and, at the same time, improve the application of inclusive didactics in schools and increase the volume of direct assistance from the teacher. In the Polish education system, it is professionals who perform the main role in providing assistance to pupils. The specific feature of the system of assistance to pupils in this country is that it is closely linked to the application of therapeutic assistance. The legislation regulates the activities of pedagogical therapists as well as the preparation of individual educational-therapeutic programmes for pupils as well as their implementation with the participation of psycho-pedagogical counselling centres. In Lithuania, the organization of inclusive education is essentially formalized through the regulation of assistance to pupils. The current legislation stipulates the provision of special pedagogical assistance (provided by special needs teachers), special assistance (provided by teacher assistants), and psychological and social assistance in every educational institution. It is coordinated by Child Welfare Commissions operating in educational institutions, and provided by combining the assistance of professionals and teachers. State-financed special pedagogical or special assistance, which also engages professionals, is provided at Pedagogical Psychological Services, once special educational needs are identified. In addition, direct assistance by teachers, as well as psychological and social assistance, is provided to all children in need of it.

Conclusions

In Lithuania and Poland, during the fundamental restructuring of the national political system, the regulation of inclusive education in the legal basis appeared

suddenly, with the hope for fundamental socio-educational changes in the education system. In practice, individual initiatives of education and culture workers appeared; schools, art groups, and work places open to those with disabilities were established. The pace and depth of the ongoing change surprised many in the society, but it was of a fragmented rather than systematic nature. Whereas in Austria and, in particular, in Finland, the implementation of national pilot projects led not only to the creation of new education systems but also to a change of beliefs within the education community. Therefore, the introduction of inclusive education into education systems in these countries is characterised by a more systematic, all-embracing character.

Chapter III.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SCIENTIFIC INSIGHTS IN THE FOUR COUNTRIES

3.1. THEORETICAL GROUNDS OF AUSTRIAN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Sabine Albert

Implementation of the inclusive education system in Austria

Despite the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008, only small measures have been taken in Austria to further the cause. A worldwide consensus on the inclusion of all children and adolescents with disabilities was presented at the UNESCO world conference *Pedagogy for Special Needs: Accessibility and Quality* in 1994 in the form of the Salamanca Statement. Its main objective is to ensure a change of paradigm demanding a society that welcomes and values diversity. The paper recommends adhering to international guidelines for developing inclusive educational paradigms and suggests specific measures to initiate change at a state and local authority level in education itself; it also outlines the main ideas of future-oriented inclusive education.

Its major principle is that schools are supposed to welcome all children without regard to their physical, social, emotional, linguistic, and other skills. The principle foresees that variability is humane and learning has to be adapted to children's needs. Despite potential differences and difficulties, it is of major importance that all the children should learn together. The various differences must be acknowledged and addressed, thus providing the children with special needs with the support they need in order to be successfully taught (UNESCO, 1994).

The step-by-step plan to inclusive education of "Lebenshilfe Österreich" initiated a public discourse and, consequently, the writing of a draft national action plan in December 2011 (Feyerer, 2013) published by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, and Consumer Protection in 2012, in which strategies for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for the period of 2012 to 2020 were presented. It is necessary to reform the system adapting the educational paradigm to the individual needs and developmental possibilities. According to the action plan, educational concepts shall be developed from the experiences of existing and planned model regions of inclusive education, the concepts shall then be transferred to all regions.

Inclusive pedagogy has to become an integral part of teacher education and teacher training including nationwide teacher training in Austrian sign language – a major requirement in the Salamanca Statement. Integrated classes are supposed to participate in the Media Literacy Award. The project "Together We Are Class" ("Gemeinsam sind wir Klasse") is aimed at raising awareness on inclusive pedagogy and more barrier-free courses that need to be on offer. The national curricula pertaining to inclusive pedagogy must be attuned (Feyerer & Langner, 2014). In higher secondary education, school pilot projects should be conducted, and in lower secondary education, in general education secondary schools, integrated classes must be established, more teacher training courses on inclusive pedagogy need to be organized for teachers, and more suitable teaching materials must be developed. Individual and technical support schemes in compulsory education, as well as a professional support system of personalized assistance must be extended (Ertl, 2014).

The step-by-step plan of the *Lebenshilfe* organization aims at implementing inclusive education in schools by 2020. Since 2012, no new special needs schools, only "Schools for all", have been established. Since 2013, special educational needs centers have been transformed into "Pedagogical Centers for Inclusion and Special Needs Education"; the courses for education and special needs were merged, equipping all teachers with the skills necessary for team teaching and for addressing the different ability levels and diverse needs of the children. In addition, special training courses for dealing with certain impairments are offered. Teachers with disabilities also have a possibility to teach, thus becoming role models for children with disabilities. From 2014 to 2015, special needs experts are being trained to support teachers in class.

Differentiation will be the norm in the new schools for all. By 2020, inclusive education shall be in effect in Austria. Special needs experts will be present in all these schools and all children under the age of eighteen will attend inclusive schools. It goes without saying that higher education and vocational training will be accessible without barriers for adolescents with impairments. In this area in particular, pedagogical, organizational and technical barriers shall be removed to guarantee lifelong learning (Lebenshilfe Österreich, 2010).

From separation to integration and inclusion

The path to inclusive education was, has been, and still is difficult. Due to a strong parental movement, the idea of an inclusive school in Austria tested in various school pilot projects has been transferred to the regular school system.

Separation

Until the mid-1980s, separate schooling of children with special needs in special needs schools was predominant. It was the prime objective of the special needs schools to provide children with disabilities with state-of-the-art expert training, which was an important step in the long history of social exclusion and isolation of people with special needs. In the course of time, the disadvantages of the system, such as stigmatization and inequity, became evident and the success of separate schooling of children with disabilities was questioned (Feyerer, 2009, as cited in Specht, 2009).

In the 1990s, a law was introduced, providing freedom for the parents of children with disabilities to choose between special needs schools, and primary or special needs and lower secondary schools. In compliance with Austrian Federal Constitutional Law, Article 7 Paragraph 1, stipulating that nobody can be discriminated against because of their disability, the 15th Amendment of the School Organization Act of 1993 for primary schools and the 17th Amendment of the School Organization Act of 1996 for lower secondary schools were adopted, which facilitated integrated schooling of children with disabilities, and legally entitled the parents of children with disabilities to inclusive education for their children (Grubich, 2011).

Integration

Integration of children with special needs in general education secondary schools is barely present; integration is mainly in effect in lower secondary or new secondary schools. The New Secondary School developed from a school pilot project of a comprehensive school for all ten-to-fourteen-year-olds, and is in line with the curriculum of general education secondary schools. Certain requirements are to be met in order to be admitted to general education secondary schools. This already puts pressure on nine-year-olds due to the reality of selective entry, and causes fear because of the danger of potentially reduced opportunities in the future.

From the mid-1990s onwards, parents could opt for special needs system or the integrative approach. In different Austrian provinces different levels of integration were present, and significant differences in the quality of integrated schooling existed. The research on the situation in education looked into predominant levels of integration in Austria, thus enabling experts to deduct aspects that hinder and those that support inclusion (Grubich, 2011).

Parents have to apply for special needs support already prior to the school entry. In kindergarten, children are monitored and assessed by special needs experts,

psychologists, and doctors. Then, a committee is summoned, which discusses the development of the children and their support options. Special needs support is granted and committee meetings take place on a regular basis (Lorenz, 2011). Integration in Austria mainly constitutes the integration of children with special needs into the regular school system via integrated classrooms, which contain only a few children with disabilities. They are team-taught by special needs teachers and class teachers according to a syllabus especially tailored to their needs.

Integration was an important driver for the school reform. A still existing parallel system was developed. By preserving the parallel system, it has been possible to maintain various approaches and traditions. This trend might, however, change, in contradiction to the UN Convention (Grubich, 2011). The level of integration of nine year old pupils in Austria was already 52.58% in 2006/2007. The segregation level demonstrated by the percentage of children in compulsory education that are taught separately in special needs schools or special needs classes was 1.57%. It can be claimed that at regional level there were vast differences in the level of integration across Austria, which remains virtually unchanged today (Feyerer, 2009, as cited in Specht, 2009).

Paving the way towards inclusion

Granting special needs support is not only approved of but also criticized. According to Grubich (2011), there is a link between the confirmation of special needs and sex and mother tongue. The confirmation of special needs is 1.6 times higher among children with a mother tongue other than German, and 2.3 times higher among children with Turkish as their mother tongue. Differences exist between Austrian provinces and between regions. The provision of special educational needs support is lower in the states with high levels of integration of pupils with migrant background than in the states with low levels of integration. Boys are more often issued a confirmation of special needs in education. Children with more severe impairments still receive training in schools for those with special educational needs.

In his article, Schönwiese (2008) shows that as early as in 1929 research was conducted in Berlin by Hilde Wulff, one of the first empirical comparative researchers. She arrived at the conclusion that the level of education of children subject to integration was low; yet, it was even lower in schools of special educational needs. Moreover, the manifold research results that followed in the 1960s showed that neither the children with disabilities, nor those without disabilities did not suffer from

educational disadvantages because of integration. Due to methodical difficulties, no sufficient comparative data for anticipated and long-term advantages of inclusion can be produced, so there are only a few topical comparative studies.

Inclusion

The path towards integration has been revolutionary. And, as early as in the 1970s, Forster and Wimmer brought forward some criticism by claiming that pupils in schools of special educational needs showed no advantage in their cognitive development over pupils with learning disabilities in regular schools. Additionally, the transfer rate back into regular schools was minimal. What is more, being officially referred to as someone with disabilities raises the danger of being stigmatized and socially excluded from society, making it difficult to access vocational education, reducing the chances of attaining a school leaving certificate, and being confronted with difficult working conditions and lower wages. Adaptation and conformity are highly emphasized in schools. Consequently, in 2000, the term "inclusion" was adopted, thus embarking on the new path towards an inclusive school (Forster & Wimmer, 1982, as cited in Schönwiese, 2008).

Nevertheless, prevailing teaching concepts are frequently adapted to the pupils' deficiencies instead of developing new examples of best practice in inclusive teaching and learning. The syllabus is a reduced version of the syllabus of regular schools and fails to consider the irregular living conditions of the pupils. Gradually, an attractive individualized and co-operative approach has been adopted. Still, however, a partial loss of the heterogeneity representing societal and contradictory reality has to be accounted for. Homogenous groups and isolation limit the world of opportunities to a great extent (Schönwiese, 2008).

It is easy to argue in favour of integration rather than exclusion. From a constructivist point of view, the child's development can be described as a process of actively (re-)constructing reality through interaction with the child's social environment. According to Maturana & Varela, humans are autonomous systems that constantly recreate themselves, without ignoring the human's ability to become active themselves. The way children develop is hardly predictable. There are many forms of dialogues and chances of dialogue, as well as development opportunities for children. According to Feuser, development depends on the complexity level of the other system, and only then can it be influenced by the individual system. The development primarily depends on what evolves from the fusion of interrelations of options. Schöler describes

that the more severe the children's disabilities, the more impulses they need to receive from the ones without disabilities. A child with disabilities watches the movements of those without disabilities following them with their eyes, listening to the noise they make, perceiving them through their ears and the smells, differentiating them with the help of the nose and physical contact by hand. The concept of integration and inclusion corresponds with state-of-the-art developmental theories and the general research results based on educational and learning theories, which cannot be said about exclusion and homogenization. Following the latest scientific education survey, the concept of integration and inclusion has various advantages and potential over special educational needs schools. It is recommended to follow these international tendencies as they are also, on top of everything else, cost saving. Integration and inclusion offer the opportunity to perceive the unknown within ourselves, thus preventing disabilist and xenophobic sentiment in the future (Maturana & Varela, 1990, Feuser, 1995, Schöler, 1989, as cited in Schönwiese, 2008).

Accompanying educational research

Over the last 30 years, various authors have conducted research on integration and inclusion, e.g. Feuser (1995), Specht (1993), and Wilhelm et al. (2002). Moser (2001), as presented in the following paragraphs, referred to integration, conducted a literature analysis, and tried to provide an insight into the situation of integration in Austrian primary schools.

Most of the empirical research papers deal with the framework for integration, and only a few analyze teaching concepts. Surveys and examples of good practice demonstrate that all pupils have been provided with more open learning situations and project work, accompanied by individualized support for children with special needs, teaching for the gifted, and co-operative and social learning. A number of conflict solving units are present, as well as the use of specialized material, therapeutic support, and digital learning (Moser, 2001). Specht and Mader claim that the main precondition for successful inclusive teaching is the teacher's perspective on mankind. Team teaching plays a major role as well (Specht, 1993, Mader, 1999, as cited in Moser, 2001).

Important aspects include the discussion of cognitive and social processes, time resources and management, regular team meetings, lesson preparation in a team, and a clear division of competences within the team. Wetzel claims that teachers working in a class alone are more likely to feel overburdened and offer a less varied learning

environment. Therefore, teachers might receive support from a second teacher in the class, as well as professional counseling (Wetzel et al., 1999).

Integrated classes

The combination of individual support, addressing the special needs of children with disabilities, fostering the competences of all children, and studying a subject together (Feuser, 1997) is often seen as a hardly atainable goal. Nevertheless, integrated classes are seen as the best of models to reach it. Moreover, it should be noted that children with disabilities are, apparently, easier to integrate than those with behavioral problems.

School pilot projects showed that it is in such system that the children's needs can be addressed the best, and social interaction can be fostered; moreover, teamwork improves the working conditions for teachers (Moser, 2001). Specht (1993) also hints at the fact that opposition arose among parents and teachers because system reforms were necessary, since the differentiated approach as well as free formal teaching structure pose enormous challenges. As a result, the positive attitude of the teachers, when teaching children with disabilities, is obligatory.

Thomann (1995) came to the conclusion that children are easily apt to grow up together and profit from each other without any prejudices. Many years following their school experience, adolescents were still convinced of the positive effect of that form of schooling. Long after the first steps in integration were taken, a great number of problems described at the time maintain their relevance today, and the positive results of their solutions encourage authorities to take the next steps in the integration process.

Therefore, special educational needs centers (SPZ) were established to help schools in the implementation of integration by equipping them with necessary staff and suitable teaching material, and designing appropriate methodological lesson plans that put individualization and differentiation among their top priorities. Individualization and differentiation are concepts, which, according to Kretschmann, constitute the main pillars of integration (Kretschmann, 1991, as cited in Moser, 2001).

Project orientation, individualization, support schemes, studying and working on a subject together (Wocken, 1998), open and self-directed learning settings (Feuser, 1997; Eberwein, 1998) form the strongholds of integration. As demonstrated in the surveys "Classroom Environment Study" (Anderson et al., 1989, as cited in Moser, 2001) and "Scholastik-Studie" (Weinert, 1997), the essential quality parameters of integrated

classes are good classroom and time management, problem-solving approach, clear lesson structure, individual professional support, a variety of approaches, and good atmosphere.

Integrated classes differ from regular ones by a higher level of individualization, less focus on the teacher and academic performance, and the emphasis on the supportive role of the teacher. Teaching methods vary more often. In schools with very strained situations, differentiated teaching methods are hardly applied. Alternative teaching methods might not always be the best solution; nevertheless, it seems that integration is the most successful when new teaching approaches are applied and team teaching is used in an individualized and project-oriented teaching environment that facilitates co-operation (Moser, 2001).

Hutter observed that teachers in integrated classes valued the diversity of every child and passed the same attitude on to the children (Hutter, 1996, as cited in Moser, 2001).

Team teaching is emphasized in all cases, and division of competences is criticised by Rutte (1995), as special needs teachers are in charge of the group of children with disabilities and subject teachers are responsible for the other children, which is an impediment for the integration progress in the class. According to Krawitz et al. (1995), the analysis of the results from school pilot projects in Germany and Switzerland revealed that a clear division of competences is of great importance for the integration process, whereas an unclear division and unsuccessful communication based on traditionally different expectations on what roles teachers are to assume in the classroom are hampering the process. In Austria, the division of competences is not defined by law, teachers can divide responsibilities independently; they can either work together in one classroom or in separate rooms. The choice of paradigm depends on the teacher's attitude to integration and the set of values of the teachers as well the working atmosphere between the teachers within a team (Rutte, 1995).

Dür and Scheidbach (1995, as cited in Moser, 2001) claim that teachers are generally very positive about team teaching, shared responsibilities, and opportunities for reflection. Team teaching is viewed as an asset because various differing viewpoints are seen as enriching, and it creates conditions for a successful and lively co-operation. Although team teaching is seen as time consuming and time resources are frequently extremely scarce; nevertheless, team teaching leads to higher job satisfaction.

According to Bews (1992), the cases when primary school teachers are ordered to teach children with special educational needs, and when special needs teachers

separate the children based on the belief that the children can receive more individual support when separated, have negative effect on the integration process.

Due to the fact that there has been little research on inclusion, focusing mainly on the integration of groups of children with different special educational needs, only group-specific results are available. The main component of the integration of children with disabilities is their social integration, and the special educational needs professional is responsible for individually fostering their cultural skills. Social integration is continuously experienced, while individual support might be limited in time. Nevertheless, sometimes the children might be separated (Moser, 2001).

The integration of children with behavioral issues poses a more difficult problem. Grabbe (1989) maintains that children with extensive destructive behavior problems cost a lot of time and energy, and constitute a great challenge. Despite professional counselling, teachers are brought to their limits almost every day. Schöler (1999) claims that it is difficult to recognize positive developments in the children with behavioral problems. The other children feel disturbed and it is often impossible to stay patient and understanding. Progress is frequently minimal and goes unnoticed. Co-operation with the parents is limited and, what is more, the parents of other children have difficulty understanding the situation.

According to research by Haeberlin, integration parameters are more favourable in Upper Austria as excess strain on teachers occurs less frequently. Social integration yields good results; yet being in a class together with other children with disabilities has negative impact on the development of children with impairments (Haeberlin et al., 1989). Cohn (2016) emphasizes the need to use up available resources, Ledl (1997) stresses the importance of diagnostics, and Tschötschel-Gänger (1997) invites to consider the environment and the teacher's personality. Teachers can address children's needs better when they pool their personal perceptions and experiences to look for new designs of teaching settings. In order for this to be possible, teacher training courses are on demand.

Positive developments could be observed in children with sensory impairments. Necessary vision aids, adequate teaching material, and technical equipment are important for children with vision impairments. However, it is necessary to prevent the isolation of the children in classrooms, which might be caused by the size and area needed for the technical equipment, e.g. reading aids. (Flemmich, 1994, as cited in Moser, 2001).

Heger, Velissaris and Lesigang (1998) focused on children with hearing impairments and observed significant improvements in the children. According to Heger, their ability to articulate improved, the amount of social interaction increased, and the hearing impaired children were encouraged to better language performance by the hearing children. The advantages for the children without hearing deficiencies are also not to be overlooked, e.g. smaller group sizes, learning to use sign language, and getting to know the life of people with impairments (Heger, Velissaris & Lesigang, 1998, as cited in Moser, 2001).

The integration of children with Down syndrome showed a wide range of effects, e.g. invaluable social interaction and enhancement of cognitive and linguistic performance.

A study on the integration of autistic children, carried out in Vienna in 1994, outlined that all children yielded better results in terms of self-directed learning, social interaction, stereotypies, and auto-aggressive tendencies. However, changes in the cognitive area were limited. The implementation of integration is closely linked to the severity of the impairment. A mother of an autistic child claimed that during the first school year her daughter became more willing to communicate and to accept school rules. Her physical condition and the ability to find ways of expressing herself also improved (Moser, 2001).

All of the above mentioned research were conducted in the years of the establishment and development of the educational integration process; therefore, the data is not the most recent. Nevertheless, positive conclusions regarding the effects of integration on all children can be drawn. In all the examples presented, teachers used open learning settings and differentiation as a means to further the children's performances, which gives an outlook on the future of inclusion.

Why inclusion is the future

Children with severe impairments integrated into regular schools bring along a confirmation of special needs. This identifies them as deviating from the norm and thus segregates them. The children are labelled by their otherness and the diagnosis of a deficiency stigmatizes them as children with learning or behavioral problems or with linguistic disorders. In inclusive pedagogy, emphasizing deficiencies, labelling, and categorization should be non-existent, and teaching and suitable learning settings should be available for all needs and performance levels (Feyerer & Langner, 2014). In his research project, Sturm states that teachers focus more on the differing performance

levels set by themselves than on the potential for development of the pupils; this is an intrinsic contradiction, which frustrates teachers when they still prefer groups with homogenous ability levels (Sturm 2011, as cited in Feyerer & Langner, 2014).

In the German-Austrian debate on inclusion, there is a call for destigmatization; however, the real living conditions and necessary support schemes are ignored. Children perceive themselves by differentiating themselves from others, so their labelling and categorization may become a self-fulfilling prophecy (Feyerer & Langner, 2014).

Feuser states that regular schools need to be organized in such a way that children could be comprehensively taught according to their ability levels without social exclusion or categorization and without being labelled as differing from the norm or as having a disability (Feuser, 1996, as cited in Feuerer & Langner, 2014). These principles must be already adhered to in kindergarten and must be taken into account in the reforms of the future teacher training.

By categorizing children, the processes of inclusion and exclusion are brought to light, placing the "normal" against the "different". Instead of making diversity and human variety the center of constructive pedagogy, system-immanent discrimination is generated or perpetuated. Teachers see the pupils less as individuals and more as members of a certain group, making it impossible to spot potential in those who fall out of the stereotypical definition of the group. Consequently, the form of interaction is characterized by group membership, and lay knowledge of the behavior of boys and girls, adolescents with migration background, and children with disabilities is important (Feyerer & Langner, 2014).

The main pillar of inclusion is the perception of every child as possessing specific competencies and needs, which are to be addressed and fostered. Inclusive education needs to take into account the whole range of differences, including those of abilities, sex and gender, background and language, religion, age, and sexuality. Confirmation of special needs often reduce its subjects to people with disabilities, who, however, have the same needs as people without disabilities. Therefore, we need to start a discourse on special needs education in order to develop an adequate support scheme (Feuser, 1995).

Mittler coined the term "Education for All", which can be replaced by the term "School for All". Every child has a right to be treated as a full member, making the question in how far the child can be integrated obsolete (Mittler, 2000, as cited in Feuser, 1995). According to Prengel, the focus should be on the right to diversity rather

than on how deep an integration is possible. Heterogeneity means a wide scope of societal diversity (Prengel, 1994, as cited in Feuser, 1995). Heterogeneity is the norm. The pedagogical focus is on the school class, the resources are allotted to the school rather than the child. Categorizing children according to their deficiencies, individual syllabuses, and special support schemes is redundant, and reflection and planning processes in a team are the norm. The foundation of all teaching is a common curriculum that leaves sufficient room for individualization.

Feuser (1995) defines an integrative pedagogy as a common pedagogy that is child-centered and basic. Therein, all children and pupils play, work, and learn co-operatively on one subject according to their levels of ability and their perception of the world, thus progressing towards the next stage of development.

The house of inclusive learning and living conditions

Bintinger speaks of the term "the house of inclusive learning and living conditions", which equals to "Inclusive School". An inclusive class is a diverse class where every child is special and has special needs. Children develop according to their own developmental schemes, they are the actors in the learning process, and their characters develop in correlation with their self-identification process. This can be summarized in a slogan "Help me to do it myself!" The learning environment consists of structured work stations, learning landscapes, and real world experiences. The children learn autonomously, holistically, and co-operatively. The learning culture is defined by a well-arranged design of individualized learning across group boundaries. Cultivating social learning based on interaction and co-operation, and facilitating learning in the affective, psycho-motoric and cognitive domain combined with methodologically designed strategies on learning are prerequisites for accompanying the children in their learning process. Lessons should be tailored to meet the individual needs of the children (monitoring the child and the learning environment). The support in individualized learning paths through integrated pedagogical and therapeutic support schemes is extremely important (Bintinger, as cited in Tuschel & Felsleitner, 2005).

Discourse on educational foundations, work on common tasks, games and celebration

Essential aspects of the educational development include the following: flexible duration of time spent in school, no retention, no repetition of classes, and learners' groups that are multi-cultural and heterogeneous in terms of age and performance.

While there are core groups that are heterogeneous in age and ability levels as well as special groups for certain subjects and groups of interest, there must be a common curriculum that addresses all the pupils' ability levels. An individual concept of performance is predominant with obligatory maximum realization of the individual potential. Performance reports consist of documentation, portfolios and the learning outcome catalogue. Primary educational goals include developing an inclusive view on humans and the world. It is the teacher's core role to accompany the learning process, to give advice and to interpret. They observe and ensure communication between the child, the world and the team (Bintinger, as cited in Tuschel & Felsleitner, 2005).

Accompanying educational and participatory research

Austria's education policy agenda, which aims at implementing inclusion in all regions, calls for careful consideration as too speedy an implementation process is likely to evoke resistance. Changing the educational system requires time. In May, 2015, half of the parents of children with severe disabilities withdrew their children from schools in protest against the transformation of the school into an inclusive school. The parents feared a deterioration of quality of support for their severely impaired children (Krutzler, 2015). More evidence-based information work is necessary in this area, revealing the need for evidence-based research. The effects of inclusive education on children with and without special needs are to be researched. Detailed analysis of post-school careers could eliminate the gap in the research in the field of inclusion, and provide arguments in its favour. The main research questions to be looked at include the following: the importance of the role and attitude of the teacher; life in relative poverty; learning and developmental processes. Currently, there is little differentiation of the level and kind of impairment, and little research results are available in the fields of special needs education, educational systems, and teaching strategies of children with sensory, linguistic, and behavioural difficulties.

However, some evaluation exists. Nevertheless, it needs to be continued as the potential for scientific research in that field has not yet been exhausted. Research shall contribute to finding successful solutions and hint at sore points to be overcome in order to be successful in the long run. So far, comparative evaluation has been carried out regarding various models and variants of integrated school pilot projects. It is necessary to extend the evaluation to cover the evolving regions of inclusive education. In the future, the focus should be put on the quality of education and continuous teacher training, the accessibility of education, the teaching of core competences, and

support schemes for the talented, the gifted, and the children with special interests. Timely support for individual needs, allotment of resources without stigmatization of the individual, performance orientation, inclusion and compensation as well as transversal aspects, e.g. gender, should be promoted. Important issues are the equity of opportunities, professional coaching and support for teachers, the co-operation of pupils and competence transfer between external and education experts, interdisciplinarity of education, support and fostering of the "class" and "school" learning systems and the pupils, as well as co-operation with parents in the form of real participation. Participatory research and participatory action research is gaining importance; however, a need remains present to conduct research on the parties involved, including the point of view of the pupils (Koenig, Langner & Feyerer, 2014, as cited in Feyerer & Langner, 2014).

According to Koenig, Langer and Feyerer, an exhaustive discourse on inclusion contributes positively to the debate of critical questions and developments in the field of inclusive education, thus preventing unfavorable developments in practice. What is more, the involvement of the main actors in the process helps to improve and implement certain strategies. This presupposes openness and transparency of the researchers involved in collaborative and participatory processes, and demands an extra share of self-reflection (Koenig, Langner & Feyerer, 2014, as cited in Feyerer & Langner, 2014). This supports the inclusion process, and might also lead to a more open and prejudice-free public attitude towards inclusive schools. Major reforms of educational systems are inevitable in order to build conditions of inclusive living and learning.

Necessary reforms

To create a school of equal opportunities, a culture of respect, recognition, and acceptance, major reforms are needed. The needed pedagogical principle is competence orientation instead of subject material orientation; assessing pupils with grades is no longer required, at least in the first six years of schooling, this being replaced by alternative assessment methods; repetition of classes and retention of pupils are replaced by teaching according to curricula beyond the usual framework of the school year and traditional form of schooling. Differing school forms in lower secondary school and groups with differing academic levels need to be abolished. Cross-age groups are to be preferred over homogenous age grouping. A rhythmical structuring of the day shall be the preferred option over the fifty-minute slots. All-

day-schooling, combining teaching and free-time, is also favoured. Special needs schools should be transformed into schools for all, and additional allocation of means should be organized according to an index-based scheme rather than being linked to the children's defficiencies, except for the cases of children with sensory and physical disabilities. Schools must open up, and become a part of community life. Moreover, it is necessary to increase the amount of time and special resources as well as create structures that enable more participation and co-operation between teachers. In addition, more teamwork and interdisciplinary skills are necessary, internal school development processes need to be initiated and external evaluation needs fostered and supported (Feyerer, 2013). It is worthwile mentioning that the index for inclusion has been created (Boban & Hinz, 2003) in order to provide schools with a means to support inclusive school development and develop an inclusive mission statement.

Index for inclusion

In order to foster inclusion in a school, it is necessary to create a culture of inclusion, establish inclusive structures and develop inclusive practice based on the framework of the inclusion index. The culture of inclusion constitutes the heart and soul of school development. Its essence is building trust, developing an encouraging atmosphere and an atmosphere of co-operation in a community, where respect and acceptance form the basis of all interaction and performance. All members of the community and the school board interact co-operatively and collaboratively. Inclusive school culture is based on inclusive values, trust in the developmental power of the main actors as well as the willingness to avoid shaming anyone and taking the responsibility for not doing so.

Inclusive structures are implemented by building a School for All and fostering diversity (Boban & Hinz, 2003). Inclusion is the main driver of school development and is implemented in the structure, guaranteeing sustainability. The third domain - developing inclusive practices - can be explained as organizing learning arrangements and mobilizing resources with an emphasis on inclusive teaching design and the support for all pupils (Werning, 2014). Inclusive practice refers to the diversity of the pupils, their strengths, their knowledge and experiences being considered in the lessons, higher demand in personnel and material needs articulated, and corresponding resources supplied.

For every domain, approximately five to eleven indicators are available in the form of various questions. Schools receive a framework for analysis, on the basis of which a school development plan can be designed. The criteria serve to compare goals

with existing standards, attain a better insight into the situation in the school, bring forward additional ideas for school development, and evaluate progress. At the end of every module of the index, there is space for adding or changing questions, thus every school is able to create its own version of the index (Boban & Hinz, 2003).

This index attempts to gather information on essential aspects of inclusion that further the progress, and aims to use that knowledge to make school development more successful. It is helpful to have state-of-the-art research-based conclusions on positive conditions for inclusive pedagogy, so that professional development schemes for schools could be offered. Adaptation of the index also leads to its improvement.

Ertl points out that in Austria only one project is present where the index of inclusion was applied. It is an inclusion project in Wiener Neudorf that started in 2005 and that was scientifically accompanied by the University College of Higher Education in Baden; and the results of the project have been published. Ertl conducted a study and arrived at a conclusion that much work is needed in order to increase the necessary skills, reflect on sequence in teaching, take over responsibilities, co-operate, and communicate successfully. Teachers with a positive attitude towards the heterogeneity in their surroundings are a prerequisite for raising inclusion standards in schools. School development towards inclusion should also be viewed as positive development in terms of school quality. Information on the initiative "School Quality in General Education" as well as on the index for inclusion would be helpful. Support by the school management, advisors and coaches trained in school development processes are of utmost importance for a successful inclusion process.

In practice, teachers identify with their roles in the classroom and their subject, but not with school development. Work in teams is often experienced as limiting, and co-operation with parents viewed with resentment. New trends are received sceptically. SQA (School Quality for General Education) is perceived as a means of control and extra work load, and the index of inclusion is little-known. People who are familiar with the index find it too extensive and difficult to comprehend. The attitude towards heterogeneity strongly depends on personal attitudes. Additionally, there is a lack of support through clearly formulated legal requirements by the school board, as well as apt school development tools.

Many hindering factors can be found in the school development itself, affecting the key players in the school system. Co-operation with pupils' parents and the consultants' guidance in the process are helpful factors. The Austrian school that is working with the index sees it as an asset for all parties involved; unfortunately, it has

not led to any positive consequences for the school. Therefore, a good-quality updated design of the index or a similar tool would be helpful. A team of experts supported by the Viennese School Authority designed a tool in 2013 that is similar but easier to use. However, there is no evaluation of that tool, yet.

To conclude, it can be said that in order to apply the index of inclusion successfully, optimization of the legal and organizational framework, a change in the attitude of key players, and clear information on the index of inclusion are mandatory (Ertl, 2014).

Conditions for inclusion in schools

Due to the parents' engagement in the integration movement in Austria in recent years, conditions for inclusion are now possible to be named and listed. Research results in this area reveal the need for important resources, which can be decisive findings in the school development process, and serve as the basis for important new laws. So far, no legal requirements have been present pertaining to inclusive education, while the liability of legal requirements is of great importance. Societal attitude towards disabilities should be fundamentally changed. Index-based allocation of resources would guarantee a just distribution of the resources, as integrated classes would be staffed with expert personnel without the formal diagnostic procedures. This would be in accordance with the UN Convention, as the children would no longer be seen as different and schools would still be entitled to receive further funds for individualization, differentiation, and prevention of difficulties.

There should only be one common curriculum for all, which would be less detailed and provide more freedom for teaching; it would also be externally evaluated. The classroom itself is the third pedagogue in the class and it is of major importance as a barrier-free access is a precondition for inclusion because different methodological approaches need to be applied easily. The classroom itself creates an atmosphere that encourages learning.

Inclusion is a school development process that needs to be supported. Division of classes is obsolete, the preferred option being the Jenaplan model. As shown by the scarcity of all-day-schools, the inclusion process in Austria is still at its early stage, although a better division of learning time and free-time is under consideration (Feyerer & Langner, 2014).

Pedagogical skills and attitudes constitute the most important conditions for inclusion in schools. Classroom management, embedded in self-directed learning settings, defines the teacher's role as a coach in charge of classroom design, management

of the class, time management, and teaching design. Teaching has to be differentiated according to the amount of tasks that are to be accomplished. Differentiation can also be realized by means of digital media and achieved more effectively with the help of support schemes. The simplest option is differentiation according to reformed pedagogical concepts, such as weekly work plans or project work. Basic knowledge of development psychology is necessary in order to reliably assess the learner's level of knowledge, and to apply the appropriate teaching method.

Assessment should go beyond simple grading. Information should be collected regarding the child's level of academic achievement and their development process. Emphasis should be put on the child's strengths, thus the information collected would constitute an assessment covering the development and learning process in their entirety. The developmental parameters must be assessed for every child individually in order to define the necessary pedagogical support as there is no one-size-fits-all solution (Feyerer & Langner, 2014).

Feuser (2006) states the necessity of advisory and communicative skills for teachers. These skills are indispensable in inclusive education focusing on co-operation and collaboration with the parents and external experts. The teacher takes an advisory role, and must also be competent in counselling as well as have the competence for reflection, which also serves for furthering teamwork among the teachers, as a team of minimum two teachers, supporting each other and reflecting on the processes together, will be working alongside in the new system. Despite inclusion, strong inclination to separation still exists; evaluation needs to be implemented as a tool to tackle this. In order to implement a pedagogy focusing on diversity and support for teachers, sufficient staff resources are obligatory to provide advisory personnel and assistant teachers.

Teachers' attitude has already been the object of several research as the teacher's attitude is essential for successful inclusive education; hereby, the constructive approach is especially helpful (Feyerer & Langner, 2014). The implementation of an inclusive school is based on individualization and differentiation. Manifold competences are necessary for all the pedagogues in order to meet the demands of a diverse pedagogy. The curricula of teacher training courses must include the necessary competences, and teacher training in continuous education should teach the indispensable competences (Feyerer, 2012). Teacher education has now been extended by one year; there is a common curriculum designed for all teachers. There is no specific course for special educational needs teachers available any longer, all students

in teacher education programs must acquire comprehensive knowledge in the field of inclusive pedagogy. Inclusion and differentiation form the basic principles of all subject and methodological studies. Additional competences in co-operation skills, teamwork, inclusive school development, and knowledge of state-of-the-art learning theories and learning barriers shall be acquired; and competence in diagnostics, counselling, developing support schemes, and designing school development plans shall be built (Feuser & Maschke, 2013). Wocken divides the most important competences of teacher education into the following areas: personal competence and professional competence – mainly in the areas of education and teaching methods, diagnostic skills, and counselling and advisory skills (Wocken, 2011, as cited in Feuser & Maschke, 2013).

Bintinger and Wilhelm emphasize that teachers in inclusive pedagogy must have theory-based scientific background on inclusive education, an understanding of methodological models, concepts, and outlines of inclusive pedagogy, and they must acquire the necessary skills to be able to plan, apply and reflect on inclusive teaching methods. The two researchers outline the importance of the acquisition of necessary professional knowledge, skills and competences, as well as the skills necessary for reflection (Bintinger & Wilhelm, 2001).

Inclusive pedagogy is fundamental as it embraces all developmental levels and cognitive skills. Inclusive pedagogy is child-centered by acknowledging individuality and heterogeneity. It is also valid for all as nobody is excluded. Inclusive pedagogy adheres to scientific findings (the subject), the stage of development of the pupil (intrapersonal action structure), and the possible learning development of the child (action structures) including accompanying measures. It also calls for individualization of the general syllabuses as well as studying a subject together as a community endeavor (Wilhelm, Bintinger & Eichelberger, 2001).

Conclusion

The reform of the new teacher education is soon to be implemented. The new curricula for primary education have already been implemented in the University Colleges for Teacher Training. Training concepts of the lower secondary teachers in co-operation with the universities have been developed. The new teacher training courses for vocational teacher trainers were launched in September, 2016. Teachers in higher education are offered a four-semester course on individual, social, and system competences. The course was launched on the 8th of July, 2015.

More research on inclusion is necessary to further the school development and to tackle resistance in society through factual discourse. The transition period towards an inclusive pedagogy in Austria is likely to take at least ten years, to slowly and patiently familiarize the public with the new concepts and provide them with sufficient information on the topic. Courses in continuous teacher training need to be offered by teacher training institutions in order to acquire additional professional qualifications such as teaching sign language in bilingual education or teaching mentally impaired children in integrated classes. The orientation towards an inclusive pedagogy has already been realized in the new curriculum. A need still remains, however, for a comprehensive discussion, in the form of consulting all the parties involved, on the necessary changes in legal regulations, in order to make the guidelines of inclusive pedagogy binding. The discussion has to take into account the already existing research results and strengthen the role of accompanying educational research in the future. Legal regulations and research results combined can enhance the cause. Implementation of inclusion at pre-school and post-secondary school levels must not be overlooked either. The existing resentment calls for thorough consideration, and solutions to current problems must be offered. Support schemes must be provided and the discourse on inclusion must be closely linked to the general debate on education (Feyerer, 2012).

In an interview in the "Standard" on the 5th of November, 2014, Marianne Schulze, head of the independent monitoring committee for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, invites a radical educational reform towards barrier-free inclusive education. She claims that inclusion must be implemented in the system through its entirety (Mayr & Riss, 2014).

However, Altrichter and Feyerer warn against abolishing special educational needs schools and starting the restructurization of the educational system in Austria overly hastily. Yet, the government must declare inclusion as its clearly stated goal, and leave no space for arbitrariness. Therefore, it is necessary to agree on a certain time period for implementation to guarantee a gradual dismantling of barriers, thus increasing educational equity (Altrichter & Feyerer, 2011).

The state of Vorarlberg has agreed on an exhaustive implementation of a universal School for All for pupils aged ten to fourteen within the next eight to ten years. The results of a two-year research project authorized by the federal government in 2013 served as the impetus for this initiative. The research results clearly demonstrated that early separation into parallel school systems reduces the children's chances on

a school career that meets the children's interests and abilities. Educational expert Johann Engleitner claims that early separation of children into parallel school systems is not the state-of-the-art option anymore. Assessment in the form of grades in primary school is not a sufficient assessment tool to decide whether a child is fit for general education secondary schools. Research showed that children who were not admitted to general education secondary schools delivered approximately the same results in Mathematics as their weaker counterparts in general education secondary schools. As Michael Schwartz of the University of Innsbruck puts it, the study outlines that the current educational system has shortcomings in the areas of excellence and education equity. The future School for All must promote the educational goals of personalized learning and must address every child's individual needs. The teacher's re-orientation towards teamwork is required. The State of Vorarlberg's decision serves as an opportunity for it to become a role model for all of Austria. The Swiss educational expert, Erwin Beck, strongly calls for fostering all educational potential of the children, but also states that school reforms take time.

The reform is initiated by the Department of Education in the federal government. A committee has been established to measure where prioritization is necessary. Moreover, the education of all the children together at lower secondary level is already in progress. Now, a legal framework must be developed by the state government to abolish parallel educational system in lower secondary schools and to lift admission requirements for general education secondary schools as described in the School Organisation Act and the School Education Act. The regional school inspector of Vorarlberg, Bernadette Mennel, does not see Vorarlberg as the only Austrian province working towards inclusion. Initiatives have also been launched in Burgenland as well as Tyrol, which has also embarked on the path to inclusion (Berger, 2015). Most federal states of Austria are in the process of developing and implementing model regions for inclusion.

Austrian society is on its way towards more tolerance and respect of individuality, especially in the school system. Educational institutions can well promote diversity as a valuable resource. Bennett calls for an understanding of mankind as consisting of individuals that are the same in their complexity as human beings, yet different. Our experiences might differ but the extent of complexity in how we perceive the world is similar. The main goal is to view our complexity as a shared feature. By understanding that we are, after all, different, respect for each other develops (Bennett, 2014).

Therefore, the question should not be whether Austria steers towards inclusion but rather how it works towards it (Feyerer, 2012).

REFERENCES

Altrichter, H. & Feyerer, E. (2011). Auf dem Weg zu einem inklusiven Schulsystem? Die Umsetzung der UN-Konvention in Österreich aus der Sicht der Governance-Perspektive. [On the road to an inclusive school system? The transposition of the UN Convention in Austria from the viewpoint of governance perspective]. *Zeitschrift für Inklusion.* 4/2011. Retrieved from http://www.inklusion-online.net/index.php/inklusion-online/article/view/73/73.

Bennett, M. J. (2014). Die Grundeinstellung jeder Gesellschaft ist Ablehnung. [The attitude of each society is refusal]. *Das Magazin für Wissen und Weiterbildung der Donau-Universität Krems.* 4/2014, pp. 26-27.

Berger, J. (2015). Vorarlberg für gemeinsame Schule bis zum Jahr 2023. [Vorarlberg towards School for All by 2023]. *Online-Standard.* 22 May, 2015.

Bews, S. (1992). *Integrativer Unterricht in der Praxis. Erfahrungen, Probleme, Analysen.* [Integrative education in practice. Experiences, problems, analysis]. Innsbruck: Studienverlag.

Bintinger, G. & Wilhelm, M. (2001). Inklusiven Unterricht gestalten. [Creating inclusive education]. *Behinderte in Familie, Schule und Gesellschaft 2*/2001.
Retrieved from http://bidok.uibk.ac.at/library/beh2-01-bintinger-inklusiv.html.

Boban, I. & Hinz, A. (2003). Index für Inklusion. Lernen und Teilhabe in der Schule der Vielfalt entwickeln. [Index for inclusion. Development of learning and participation in a school of diversity]. Entwickelt von Tony Booth & Mel Ainscow, übersetzt, für deutschsprachige Verhältnisse bearbeitet und herausgegeben von Ines Boban & Andreas Hinz. Halle-Wittenberg: Martin-Luther-Universität.
Retrieved from http//www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/Index German.pdf.

Cohn, R. C. (2016). *Von der Psychoanalyse zur themenzentrierten Interaktion. Von der Behandlung einzelner zu einer Pädagogik für alle.* [From psychoanalysis to TZI. From single treatment to a pedagogy for all]. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta.

Eberwein, H. (1998). Integrationspädagogik als Element einer allgemeinen Pädagogik und Lehrerausbildung. [Inclusive education as an element of general pedagogy and teacher training]. In Hildeschmidt, A. & Schnell, I. (Hrsg.). *Integrationspädagogik – Auf dem Weg zu einer Schule für alle.* [Integration pedagogy – towards the School for All]. Weinheim: Juventa, pp. 345-362.

Ertl, E. (2014). *Schulen auf inklusiven Wegen?! Hilfreiche und hemmende Bedingungen für die Anwendung des Index für Inklusion als Instrument eines Schulentwicklungsprozesses im Rahmen von SQA.* [Schools on the way to inclusion?! Helpful and inhibiting conditions for the application of the index of inclusion as an instrument of a school development process in the context of SQA]. Donau-Universität Krems. Master Thesis. Retrieved from www.bzib.at/fileadmin/Daten_PHOOE/Inklusive_Paedagogik_neu/Newsletter/Zusammenfassung_für BMUKK.pdf.

Feuser, G. & Maschke, T. (Hrsg.) (2013). *Lehrerbildung auf dem Prüfstand. Welche Qualifikationen braucht die inklusive Schule?* [Teacher training at test. What are the necessary qualifications in an inclusive school?] Gießen: Psychosozial-Verlag, pp. 194-210.

Feuser, G. (1995). *Behinderte Kinder und Jugendliche zwischen Integration und Aussonderung.* [Children and teenagers with disabilities between integration and separation]. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, pp.173-174.

Feuser, G. (1997). Aspekte einer integrativen Didaktik unter Berücksichtigung tätigkeitstheoretischer und entwicklungspsychologischer Erkenntnisse. [Aspects of an integrative didactics in consideration of theoretical work and developmental psychological insights]. In Eberwein, H. (Hrsg.). *Handbuch Integrationspädagogik. Kinder mit und ohne Behinderung lernen gemeinsam.* [Manual of integrated education. Children with and without disabilities learning together]. Weinheim: Beltz, pp. 215-226.

Feyerer, E. (2009). Qualität in der Sonderpädagogik: Rahmenbedingungen für eine verbesserte Erziehung, Bildung und Unterrichtung von Schüler/inne/n mit sonderpädagogischem Förderbedarf. [Quality in special needs education: Framework conditions for better education and teaching of pupils with special educational needs], as cited in Specht, W. (Hrsg.) (2009). *Nationaler Bildungsbericht Österreich 2009.* Band 2: Fokkussierte Analysen bildungspolitischer Schwerpunktthemen. Graz: Leykam, pp. 73-97.

Feyerer, E. (2012). Der Umgang mit besonderen Bedürfnissen im Bildungswesen. [Dealing with special needs in education]. *Zeitschrift für Inklusion. 4*/2012. Retrieved from www.inklusion-online.net/index.php/inklusion-online/article/view/33/33.

Feyerer, E. (2013). Inklusive Regionen in Österreich. Bildungspolitische Rahmenbedingungen zur Umsetzung der UN-Konvention. [Model regions for inclusion in Austria. Framework conditions of educational policy]. *Behinderte Menschen*, 2/2013, pp. 34-45. Retrieved from http//bidok.uibk.ac.at/library/feyerer-regionen.html#idp1879760.

Feyerer, E. (Hrsg.) & Langner A. (2014). Umgang mit Vielfalt. [Handling diversity.] *Lehrbuch für Inklusive Bildung. Schriftenreihe der Pädagogischen Hochschule OÖ.* Linz: Trauner Verlag + Buchservice GmbH.

Grabbe, B. (1998). Unterricht mit verhaltensauffälligen Kindern. [Teaching children with behavioural problems]. *Grundschule* 1998/11.

Grubich, R. (2011). Zur schulischen Situation von Kindern und Jugendlichen mit sonderpädagogischem Förderbedarf (SPF) in Österreich. Analyse im Lichte der UN-Konvention über die Rechte von Menschen mit Behinderung. [School situation of children and teenagers with special educational needs in Austria. Analysis focused on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities]. *Zeitschrift für Inklusion*, 2/2011.

Haeberlin, U., Bless, G., Moser, U. & Klaghofer, R. (1989). Entwicklung und erste Validierung einer Kurzversion des "Fragebogens zur Erfassung von Dimensionen der Integration von Schülern (FDI 4-6)" [Development and first validation of the short version of the "Questionnaire for Capturing the Dimensions of Pupils' Integration"]. *Empirische Sonderpädagogik, 2*/2014, pp. 99-113.

Krawitz, R., Theis-Scholz, M. & Thümmel, I. (1995). Kooperation von Grund- und Sonderschullehrern in integrativem Unterricht. [Co-operation of primary teachers and special needs teachers in integrated education]. In *Sonderpädagogik, 2*/1995, pp. 102-107.

Krutzler, D. (2015). Protest: Hälfte der Schüler verlassen Wiener Caritas-Sonderschule. [Protest: half of pupils are leaving the Caritas Vienna School for Special Needs]. *Online-Standard*. 21 May, 2015.

Ledl, V. (1997). Diagnostik bei Verhaltensstörungen. [Diagnosing behavioural problems]. *Integration in der Praxis* 1997/1.

Lorenz, A. (2011). *Erfolgreiche Inklusion in Wiener Volksschulen? Theorie und Wirklichkeit.* [Successful inclusion in primary schools of Vienna? Theory and Reality]. Wien: Pädagogische Hochschule, nicht veröffentlichte Bachelorarbeit.

Mayr, P. & Riss, K. (2014). Ein bisschen Inklusion ist wie ein bisschen schwanger. [A little bit of inclusion is like "slightly pregnant"]. *Der Standard* 15 November, 2014. Retrieved from http://derstandard.at/2000008166849/Ein-bisschen-Inklusion-ist-wie-ein-bisschen-schwanger.

Moser, I. (2001). "Classroom Practice" – Literaturanalyse 2000 Österreich. Retrieved from http://bidok.uibk.ac.at/library/moser-literaturanalyse.html.

Österreich, L. (2010). *Gemeinsam lernen – Ein Schritt für alle! Schritt für Schritt zur neuen Schule für alle: Stufenplan zur inklusiven Schule.* [Learning together – a step for all! Step towards the new School for All: Step-by-step plan to an inclusive school]. Dialogpapier der Lebenshilfe Österreich.

Rutte, V. (1995). Schulische Integration in Österreich. Ein Situationsbericht anlässlich des 11. Österreichischen Integrationssymposiums in Innsbruck. [School integration in Austria]. *Betrifft Integration, 3*/1996, pp. 136-139.

Schöler, J. (1999) *Integrative Schule – Integrativer Unterricht. Ratgeber für Eltern und Lehrer.* [Integrated school – integrated education. Advisor for parents and teachers]. Berlin: Luchterhand 1999.

Schönwiese, V. (2008). Warum auf schulische Integration/Inklusion nicht verzichtet werden kann. [Why integration/inclusion in school is essential]. In Resinger, Paul/Schratz, Michael (Hrsg.): *Schule im Umbruch.* Innsbruck University Press, pp. 51-63.

Specht, W. (1993). *Evaluation der Schulversuche zum gemeinsamen Unterricht behinderter und nichtbehinderter Kinder. Ergebnisse einer bundesweiten Befragung von Lehrerinnen und Lehrern im Schulversuch.* [Evaluation of school pilot projects concerning the common education of children with and without disabilities]. Graz: BMUK.

Thomann, H. (1995). Acht Jahre Schulversuch „Integration von behinderten und lernschwachen Kindern" an der Volksschule Kalsdorf. Resümee nach der Überleitung ins Regelschulwesen mit der 15. SCHOG Novelle. [Eight-year school pilot project "Integration of Children with Disabilities and Children with Learning Deficiencies" at "Kalsdorf" primary school]. *Erziehung und Unterricht, 1*/1995, pp. 31-33.

Tschötschel-Gänger, Ch. (1997). Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Integration verhaltensauffälliger Kinder – ein Modell für Diagnose und Intervention. [Possibilities and limits of the integration of children with behavioural problems – a model for diagnosis and intervention]. *Integration in der Praxis, 1*/1997, pp. 17-24.

Tuschel, G. & Felsleitner, R. (2005). *Miteinander. Integrative Modelle im Wiener Schulwesen.* [Together. Integrated models in Vienna school system]. Vienna: echomedia verlag ges.m.b.H. pp. 32-33.

UNESCO 1994. *The Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education. World conference on special needs education: Access and Quality.* Salamanca, Spain, 7-10 June, 1994. Printed in UNESCO 1994, ED-94/WS/18.

Weinert, F. E. & Helmke, A. (Hrsg.) (1997). *Entwicklung im Grundschulalter.* [Development of children of primary-school age]. Weinheim: Beltz/PVU.

Werning, R. (2014). Stichwort: Schulische Inklusion. [Keyword: inclusion in school]. *Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft*, 17, pp. 601-623. DOI: 10.1007/s11618-014-0581-7.

Wetzel, G., Moser, M., Brejcha, H., Riedler, H. & Weiss, S. (1999). Kinder mit Auffälligkeiten – Studie zu Rahmenbedingungen und Praxis des Unterrichts in Volksschulklassen. [Children with difficulties – studies concerning framework conditions and teaching practice in primary classes]. *Erziehung und Unterricht, 10*/1999, pp. 672-685.

Wilhelm, M., Bintinger, G. & Eichelberger, H. u. a. (2002*). Eine Schule für dich und mich! Inklusiven Unterricht, Inklusive Schule gestalten. Ein Handbuch zur integrativen Lehrer/innenaus- und -weiterbildung.* [A school for you and me! Creating inclusive education, inclusive school. A handbook for integrated teacher training]. Innsbruck: Studien Verlag Ges.m.b.H.

Wocken, H. (1998). Gemeinsame Lernsituationen. Eine Skizze der Theorie des gemeinsamen Unterrichts. [Common learning situations]. In Hildeschmidt, A. & Schnell, I. (Hrsg.). *Integrationspädagogik – auf dem Weg zu einer Schule für alle.* Weinheim: Juventa, pp. 37-53.

3.2. OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE FIELD OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN FINLAND

Suvi Lakkala, Outi Kyrö-Ammälä

The research on inclusive education and the development of inclusive schools has increased since the late 20th century, both internationally and in Finland. Booth and Ainscow (2002) have created indexes of inclusion, originally to be used when designing inclusive schools. The framework consists of three dimensions. Dimension A, creating *inclusive cultures*, relates to building a secure and accepting community where everyone is valued. Dimension B, producing *inclusive policies*, discusses all policies that involve the participation of children and practitioners and enhances their development. Dimension C, evolving *inclusive practices*, concerns mobilising material and human resources so that participative and supportive learning environments are developed.

The main purpose of this overview is to examine Finnish research concerning inclusive education. The studies are placed at three levels: culture, policies, and practices, according to Booth and Ainscow's (2002) indexes of inclusion, described earlier.

Research concerning inclusive culture in education

Timo Saloviita, a Finnish professor of special education, has conducted several critical studies concerning inclusive and special education. In his research articles, he has analysed scenarios of a Finnish school for inclusion and accessibility. In Finland, special education is traditionally seen as a rational system that functions for the benefit of the pupils with special educational needs. According to Saloviita (2006; 2009), the empirical research conducted during the past few decades has questioned this notion: increased professional authority of teachers, decreased role of policy makers (often they merely render professional decisions legitimate) or the decreased amount of traditional pupil selection practices (e.g., dual school system and streaming) may have had a contradictory influence on the equity of pupils because of the increased volume of special needs education. Maybe special education has survived because it has been successfully advocated as a means to serve the weakest pupils, Saloviita argues.

Saloviita presents critical evaluation of the Finnish education system and particularly the Finnish special needs education system. He suggests that "the legitimation of special education is rhetorically based on the medicalisation of school failure with unclear and logically circular concepts, such as *special needs*". He also mentions that the Finnish school authorities' commitment to the principles of inclusion has increased the respect for special needs education. Based on his analysis, Saloviita found that the vision of the school as inclusive and accessible seems to be rather rare in Finland.

In her ethnographic research, Tarja Seppälä-Pänkäläinen (2009) explored how the development of inclusive education was either prevented or promoted by the elements of organisational culture in the Finnish school system. She focused on the school community's adult members and their subculture, experiences, and actions in the process of developing inclusive structures and practices.

The research data consisted of participant observations (forty-two observation days during two semesters), interviews, official documents, and the researcher's notes.

The school days seemed to be full of haste, struggling, and conflicting. The teachers and other adult members of the school community had contradictory conceptions of education, learning, leadership, and development. There were differences between classrooms and teachers' orientations, mental models of instruction, classroom management, and epistemological belief systems. It seemed that developing school culture in a more inclusive manner gave rise to tension and contradiction among the adult members of the school community.

Seppälä-Pänkäläinen created four paradigms for a neighbourhood school as a result of these contradictions:

1. The ideology of integration paradigm in education and support,
2. The ideology of inclusion paradigm in education and support,
3. Role-based leadership paradigm of improvement and leadership, and
4. The community-based leadership paradigm in improvement and leadership.

According to Seppälä-Pänkäläinen (2009), one true model of an inclusive school does not exist but every school community has to build a unique context in its own way to contribute to justice, equality, and participation. In the school development process, it is important to listen to all staff members, to reflect with one another, and to co-operate. In this way, the members of the school community are able to grow and learn together as a professional learning community.

Hannu Savolainen (2009) also studied the Finnish inclusive education culture. He analysed the relationship between equity and quality in the light of recent

Finnish and international research findings. It is quite a big challenge to secure both educational equity and quality when striving towards an internationally accepted goal of inclusive education. According to Savolainen's analysis, the improving quality does not contradict the increasing equity. For example, after the Finnish comprehensive school reform of the 1980s, equity in education has increased, performance gaps have decreased, and overall accomplishment level has improved. Savolainen listed some educational policies that have not followed international mainstream trends: local curricula, non-numeric evaluation and not using standardised tests, and intelligent accountability with trust based on professionalism instead of consequential accountability. He also saw the flexible and wide support of learning in Finland, such as provision of special needs education, as promoting factors of educational equity. In addition, Savolainen stated that good teachers and the commitment of the school system to take responsibility for all children's learning are the prerequisites of good education.

Vuokko Pöyhtäri and Minna Pinola's studies are related to the Finnish inclusive education system. Pöyhtäri (2010) examined the relationship between difference or dissimilarity and education from several angles in her historical-hermeneutical licentiate research. The study approach was philosophical and its aim was to highlight new questions and to open ambiguous conceptions for readers to interpret. The starting point of the study questioned common and self-evident conceptions and practices.

Pöyhtäri (2010) analysed philosophical stereotypical conceptions of pupils in special needs education: dissimilarity, segregation, integration, and inclusion. According to the results, the Finnish school operational culture is still steered by the medical paradigm of the 21st century. The schools have traditionally had difficulty in meeting the diversity of needs, this being the reason why the numbers of pupils with special needs and pupils' transfers from mainstream classes to special classes have continually increased. Pupils with the stigma of being "too different" or "too strange" are diagnosed as pupils with special educational needs and are also at risk of exclusion. Current procedures differ from inclusive education processes, in which disability is not located in pupils but in the environment. In inclusive education, the traditional behaviouristic conceptions are changed to socio-constructivist ones, and pupils with special educational needs are reconstructed as pupils with diverse needs and gifts.

According to Pöyhtäri, the unification of special needs education and mainstream education demands communal thinking and co-teaching. She encourages schools,

principals, teachers, and politicians to commit themselves to the change of school culture, so that the flexible organisation can support learning and socialisation of all pupils. In this way, misbehaviour, bullying, and exclusion could decrease. Every pupil has the right to experience joyful learning with his or her peers.

Pinola (2008) studied the Finnish class teachers' attitudes towards integration and inclusion in her phenomenographic research. The research raised interest because the number of pupils in special needs education had increased in Finland. Of all the pupils in comprehensive schools in 2006, 8% were pupils in special needs education and the amount had increased by more than 4% since 2005. About 49% were mainly or partly integrated into mainstream classes, 33% studied in special needs education groups, and 18% studied in special schools.

Pinola stated that Finland is committed to international conventions, which promote inclusion and the school-for-all approach. Teachers' positive attitudes are a prerequisite when striving towards inclusive school. Avramidis and Norwich (2002) have used meta-analysis to state that teachers relate positively to integration and inclusion in theory but complete acceptance of inclusion is still missing among teachers. Teachers' attitudes depend mostly on the factors concerning pupils and the environment, and not on the teachers themselves. Pinola interviewed 18 classroom teachers and focused on the teachers' understanding of inclusion at first. Attitudes may often be negative because the concepts are not clear enough and that is why it is important to start with the definition of inclusion. Pinola classified the teachers' answers and attitudes into three categories:

1. Positive attitude towards inclusion (positive previous experiences, willingness to work together with other experts, understanding pupils' need for supportive activities),
2. Negative attitude towards inclusion (negative previous experiences, clear segregation between "normal pupils" and "pupils with special educational needs"), and
3. Neutral attitude towards inclusion (no previous experiences, attitude is learned, it is not a personal statement).

Pinola found a clear link between the qualified attitude and the inaccurate conception of inclusion. The teachers themselves brought up their need for more knowledge and in-service training on these issues. This result is in line with previous studies.

In his study, Markku Jahnukainen (2015) compared the school principals' perceptions of inclusive and special education in Finland and in Canada by

interviewing principals in six Finnish and six Canadian schools. The results were analysed through qualitative content analysis. In Finland, the term "inclusion" does not exist in the school law, yet it is commonly used on the field. Most of the principals in both countries used terms that refer to "integration" rather than to "inclusion". This might be due to historical barriers; in both countries, the tradition of special schools and special classes has been strong. Although the distance between pupils with and without disabilities has decreased in Finland, educational options have mainly been based on physical integration in cases of non-academic subjects and other activities, such as assemblies. On the whole, inclusive classrooms, which would offer full-time placement for pupils with disabilities, were few in the schools that participated in the research. Jahnukainen also found that the "education for all" approach is becoming more challenging according to the principals. Learning difficulties do not constitute the most problematic issue in organising teaching. Even more challenging are the wide range of pupils from different backgrounds and a wide spectrum of new kinds of special needs, such as problems in concentration, attention deficit, and mental health issues.

Sai Väyrynen (2005; 2006) carried out a comparative study of Finnish and South African school cultures, and her ethnographic research examined a number of challenges in developing inclusive schools. She focused on the inclusive practices of the schools and spent two months at both schools, gathering and documenting data by observing, videotaping, photographing, and interviewing. By examining the pupils' experiences and by observing during the school days, she tried to determine how the official statements and inclusive operational principles that were written in the curriculum were reflected in the pupils' views concerning different learners and diversity of the learning styles.

The research environments were different: in South Africa, the physical and socio-economic environment was the most determining factor, whereas in Finland, the main issue was the distinction between special needs education and mainstream education, the distinction between "us" and "them". The inclusion was normatively expected to manifest through certain kinds of behaviour or learning at both schools. In Finland, the challenges in basic education were tackled by means of separate special needs education arrangements, while in South Africa the pupils learned to manage with the help of their friends (Väyrynen, 2005; 2006).

The pupils' stories revealed that several cases of exclusionary pressure were present in both schools, although teachers and other members of staff were unaware of them.

Sometimes they were not apparent, and teachers took them for granted, seeing them as structural arrangements for a segregated "special needs education" rather than as a factor contributing to exclusion. Both schools were working towards inclusion by means of developmental projects, but in reality they were generating exclusion at the same time. According to Väyrynen, change in school culture requires adequate understanding of the school, as well as knowledge about what is actually happening and what the teachers think about the school. The starting point for a study should emphasise *what actually happens at the school every day* and not *what should happen at the school*. Manipulating the surface of the school culture (e.g., making some technical interventions) is not sufficient. The process of change needs to be rooted in the deeper structure of the organisation, reflecting values, beliefs, and attitudes of the members of the school society.

Markku Jahnukainen (2011) analysed the fundamental features of the Finnish education system concerning the historical development of special and inclusive education. He compared the strategies and delivery of education for pupils with special educational needs between two regions: the Republic of Finland and the province of Alberta, Canada. Through this comparison, he discovered that part-time special education economizes the cost of education significantly, making it available in almost every school in Finland. Thus, many pupils with special educational needs can be offered special support in regular schools instead of costly specialised services. Because of the strong emphasis on preventive work and part-time special education in Finland, a pupil can receive special education services without official diagnosis. Support is provided based on the observed needs of the pupil. Jahnukainen stated that although the implementation of the inclusion of pupils with disabilities has been rather slow in Finland, a strong focus on the ideas of equality and equity have been stressed when developing the education system towards inclusion. With education for all, the emphasis is on mild problems. Finland, like other Nordic countries, has not adopted any large-scale accountability approaches or basic education testing. One explanation might be the strong role of Finnish teachers, who are quite autonomous and considered to be professionals in their work.

Research of inclusive policies in education

Raimo Rajala (2008) states that learning, emotions, and well-being are interconnected. Although individual information processing, learning strategies, and constructing the contents of learning tasks are important elements in school, they are not enough.

Learning is not merely transferring information. Participation has to be included in learning research. When considering participation as a crucial element of learning, the learning environment is filled with learning activities, which involve situatedness, contextuality, and social mediation. Learning takes place through participating in or pertaining to certain communities, not merely through passive listening to teachers conveying knowledge.

According to the Agreement of Children's Rights, the Basic Education Act, and the core curriculum, every individual has the right to attend comprehensive school in Finland. However, special needs pupils are often in an unequal position regarding social participation at school. Sari Manninen (2015) studied educators' perceptions about these challenges by means of phenomenography. She interviewed four educators (the mother of a pupil with special needs, his grandmother, his father, and his special education teacher) as a group. The research question was the following: What understanding do the educators of special needs education pupils have about the challenges of children's social participation at school?

The research results brought out the following barriers of participation: (1) bullying and belittling, (2) inadequate staff resources, (3) common values that are not realised in practice, (4) lack of information in the school and between the school and home environment, and (5) minor possibilities for special needs education pupils to communicate and interact with other pupils. The results challenge the educators to work together to construct an equal and democratic set of values and school culture, in which every child's right to social participation, secure learning environment, and welfare would be implemented (Manninen, 2015).

In her school ethnography, Marjatta Mikola (2011) studied the way in which pupils' diversity is encountered in pedagogical activities in a Finnish primary school. The main focus was on teachers' work in a neighbourhood school. She also tried to discover the prevention and promotion factors of collaborative learning on the learning environment. She described, analysed, and interpreted the shaping of the school's pedagogical process and the significance of pedagogical solutions on all pupils' opportunities to learn and participate. The research data consisted of participatory observation data (thirty-eight observation days during two semesters); interviews with teachers, the principal and special needs assistants; as well as documents, photos, and a video.

The research proved that typical school days of both teachers and pupils are fragmented and busy. The fractured organisation of teaching and the manner of support may prevent all pupils from being included in the group of their class.

The pupils who need the most structured and secure school days have to meet the highest number of adults and pupil groups during the school day due to their special needs education and support services if they are not included as a part of pupils' own classroom activities. It is often forgotten that the active classroom society can support pupils in a functional way (Mikola, 2011).

According to Mikola's research, it is important to understand that school pedagogy must be adapted to teaching in heterogeneous groups when developing an inclusive school. The school should also reconsider time organisation by increasing flexibility in its time frames. The culture of haste at school does not encourage good learning results, nor does it develop pupils' social skills. Inclusion requires that teachers co-operate, give up their individualistic working culture, and review the school system critically, asking: Does the system support opportunities for every pupil to learn and participate together with his or her peer group?

Health and well-being have mostly been separated from other aspects of school life. Anne Konu and Matti Rimpelä's School Well-Being Model (2002) is based on Allardt's sociological theory of welfare (1996). The model considers well-being as it manifests in the school context. Well-being is connected with teaching and education and with learning and achievements. Indicators of well-being are divided into four categories: school conditions (having), social relationships (loving), ways of self-fulfilment (being), and health status. Ways of self-fulfilment encompass studying possibilities, the pupils' resources, and capabilities. Health status is understood through the pupils' symptoms, diseases, and illnesses. Each category of well-being contains numerous aspects of the pupils' life in school. The model embraces the important influence of home and the surrounding community. The School Well-Being Model facilitates the development of theoretically grounded subjective and objective well-being indicators in schools (Konu & Rimpelä, 2002).

Päivi Harinen and Juha Halme (2012) conducted the first comprehensive analysis of the school well-being of Finnish elementary school pupils as considered in the framework of the general principles of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child: the right to equality, the primacy of the best interests of the child, the right to develop, and the right to be heard. The existing Finnish research, as well as policy steering instruments related to well-being of youth and children at school, were analysed and compared to international studies.

In this analysis, schools were seen as significant everyday environment for peer relationships. Enabling friendships is a valuable right of the child and an important

element of well-being. In schools, this often develops into an educational problem because the pupils' communities appear to be intertwined with a culture of negative attitudes towards school. The low ranking of Finnish elementary school pupils in terms of enjoying school seems to be particularly characteristic of Finnish schools when compared internationally. Finnish elementary schools also have problems regarding the pupils' rights to participate when, for example, selecting education subjects or methods at schools. However, children's voices and opinions have been taken into account in shaping the most recent National Core Curricula (2016). The aim of education to promote the well-being of pupils through the means of self-fulfilment has been overlooked as compared to the attention given to internationally recognised results in terms of Finnish children's knowledge and skills. Consequently, Finnish schoolchildren's well-being is often ensured outside teaching-learning situations (Harinen & Halme, 2012).

Via qualitative research, Kirsi-Marja Janhunen (2013) obtained insight into the opinions of young pupils by analysing the essays they wrote in the secondary school. The pupils felt that the school forms a community in which pupils' mutual relationships and the relationships between pupils and teachers are in a welcome position. According to the pupils, peers and friends are important, especially when it comes to belonging to and engaging in a group and enjoying school. Teachers were expected to maintain discipline in the class but still nurture warmth and empathy as their personal characteristics. Pupils regarded parents as significant contributors to succeeding and enjoying one's studies at school.

In Finland, 8.9% of youth do not pursue education after comprehensive school. Although the majority continue their studies later, it is worth considering why some of them feel that school is not their place. Matti Kuorelahti and Kristiina Lappalainen (2012) examined pupils' views about their socio-emotional competence and self-concept. Over 400 pupils of the fifth and sixth grades filled out a questionnaire. The questionnaire looked into their self-concept (seventy-six statements), socio-emotional competence (multifaceted evaluation, self-evaluation, and teacher evaluation), and gathered information about success in school and possible participation in special education. Regardless of whether they participated in special education or not, pupils evaluated their self-concept and socio-emotional competence in the same way. Pupils with special needs evaluated their feeling of competence as lower than that of general education pupils, perhaps because of different and slower learning styles. Support (special education) seems to help these pupils; therefore, despite their special

educational needs, poor self-concept or lower socio-emotional competence was not conveyed. Teachers evaluated the pupils receiving extensive special education as less empathetic and more impulsive and disruptive than other pupils. Researchers considered this interesting because pupils with special needs saw themselves as worse in terms of their levels of skill, yet did not see any difference in their self-concept and socio-emotional competence when compared to those not receiving special education support. Researchers concluded that socio-emotional competence and experiences of success are essential for school adhesion and learning.

Tanja Kirjavainen, Jonna Pulkkinen, and Markku Jahnukainen (2014) examined how special education has changed (especially in terms of participation in special education and changes in teaching arrangements) in Finland from 2001 to 2010. They reviewed the differences in accessibility of special education among different age groups and analysed school-specific statistical data gathered by Statistic Finland. They concluded that part-time special education is emphasised during the early years of basic education, and the number of pupils who enter or who are transferred to special education is the highest during the last few years of basic education. Studying in a general class is common for the younger age groups and increases during primary school but it decreases notably when moving to secondary school. When observing the situation in the years 2001 – 2010, it seems that the proportion of pupils in part-time special education had been slightly increasing annually. Apparently, the support of part-time special education seems to meet the needs of special education in pupils of different ages. During the period observed, the number of pupils in full-time special education increased from thirty thousand pupils to almost forty-seven thousand pupils. Researchers concluded that there were several factors behind this growth, such as the accumulation of different learning problems, new diagnoses, changes in administration (pre-school education and new basic education law), and developed resources. In 2001, almost 70% of pupils with special educational needs studied in special groups but the number of those pupils had decreased to below 50% by 2010. Respectively, the number of pupils with special educational needs who studied full-time in general classes climbed from 15% to 30% during the period in question. The number of pupils learning in special schools decreased from eleven thousand pupils to six thousand seven hundred pupils between 2001 and 2010. All in all, despite the increased total number of pupils with special needs, the trend seems to be the inclination towards more flexible teaching arrangements with heterogeneous groups in general classes.

The goal of Suvi Lakkala and Helena Thuneberg's (2012) study was to examine teachers' understanding of the implementation of educational reforms that encouraged comprehensive schools in Finland to be more inclusive, as a part of national developmental projects coordinated by the Finnish National Board of Education. In this empirical study, a questionnaire was distributed to all basic education teachers in two towns and one municipality in Lapland, with a response rate of three hundred and twenty-seven teachers, 42% of all teachers in comprehensive schools. Analysis procedures were statistical: explorative factor analysis, GLM, MANOVA, cross-tabulation, and chi-square tests. The first factor was named *positive attitudes towards teaching in an inclusive class.* It showed that if a teacher had participated in developing individual learning plans or individualised education programs (IEPs), it enhanced his or her positive attitudes. In-service training demonstrated a beneficial effect, too. Concerning the second factor, *attitudes towards mainstreaming the school,* women, principals, and special education teachers had the most positive attitudes. Again, participation in creating IEPs had a positive impact. Those who held negative attitudes towards mainstreaming the school were men, subject teachers, and those who did not participate in in-service training or the planning of IEPs. In teacher evaluation, the ten supportive factors for teaching quality were, in order of priority: class sizes, support of special education teachers, in-service training, divided classes for some lessons, support of school assistants, support of principals, support of colleagues, co-teaching, school welfare groups, and individual tutoring lessons.

Research on inclusive practices in education

In his qualitative, case-study research, Aimo Naukkarinen (2005) studied the unification of the basic education school (grades one to six) and the special needs education school (grades one to nine) in a certain Finnish municipality, applying action-research method. The researcher acted as a critical friend; he was both a researcher and an external consultant. The process started in August, 1999, and ended in June, 2002. The reason for the coalescence process was inclusive thinking accompanied by the consideration of financial resources. The research in the two schools focused on the staff (two principals, approximately twenty teachers, ten school assistants, and two school nurses), three hundred and sixty pupils, and their parents. The role of administration in the research was minor.

The background, activities, and scenario of the process were described in the research report. From the beginning of the process, attention was paid to

the development of the communication structure of the school community. A coordinating group was established to develop teamwork, meeting structures, and a common timetable. The common planning time (once a month) became an essential part of the whole school community. Collegial reflection, evaluation, and sense of community were also emphasised. Pupils, their both parents, and school staff answered questionnaires dealing with integration and the possibilities of participation in school. The development process extended beyond these two schools; the basic education plan was developed according to the principles of inclusion applied in the entire municipality.

Naukkarinen selected ten principles for the unification process:

1. Communication among different actors (teachers, assistants, administrative staff and elected officials, parents, and pupils) is essential.
2. When developing the school, it is very important to develop the overall school system of the municipality.
3. It is important to formulate a dynamic basic education plan based on the core curriculum in collaboration with different actors.
4. Disadvantages can be identified via resource analysis. After the analysis, the development of the school system can begin.
5. The development of an inclusive school system also calls for political discussions on pupils' individuality.
6. Teacher education must be developed based on inclusive principles. Every teacher should be ready to teach all pupils. Special needs education teachers should teach pupils separately.
7. The legal system and the national core curriculum must be developed according to the principles of inclusion.
8. A multi-level evaluation and feedback system applied to education support enhances educational democracy.
9. Public information and critical discussions about the educational system ensure democracy in education.
10. Acting on behalf of inclusive education is difficult because the informal belief system favours the dual system of general education and special education.

On the basis of Naukkarinen's research results (2005), it was discovered that the large-scale application of the principles of inclusive education still poses an immense challenge to the school community. Changes in grouping and in the school culture at the municipal and national levels are needed. During the process of change, the

schools and municipalities have the opportunity to absorb inclusive strategies in order to arrive at real learning and teaching processes.

In their study, Suvi Lakkala, Satu Uusiautti, and Kaarina Määttä (2014) analysed teachers' perceptions of good inclusive teaching arrangements and compared them with the theories of inclusive education. In 2010, basic education teachers (N = 327) in Lapland, Finland, were asked to describe their experiences and perceptions of inclusive teaching arrangements. In this study, a framework for inclusive schools was constructed through implementing the indexes of inclusion created by Booth and Ainscow (2002).

At the beginning, teachers considered the co-operative and appreciative attitudes among the education personnel and other school staff and parents as crucial. Teachers drew attention to the fact that the starting point would always have to be the pupils' needs. They emphasized local, school-specific solutions. Local schools are the neighbourhood schools that produce flexible solutions in multi-professional collaboration. Teamwork was described as consisting of consultation, teacher co-operation, support given by assistants or paraprofessionals, planning, and co-teaching. The teachers in this study stated that teamwork leads to good consequences; pupils flourish in their studies and collaboration offers teachers the experience of gaining support and accomplishment (Lakkala et al., 2014).

In teachers' opinions, inclusion will require more new definitions of the teachers' roles, such as consulting, informing, and communicating, and more time to perform all these tasks. Teachers acknowledge the importance of creating procedures that increase flexibility in possibilities to modify support during the school year. These include support from different municipal and civic centres. Teachers emphasised the need for effective reporting and discussion among various actors as the number of different experts and family participation in child's school day activities increases. Teachers' answers highlighted the necessity of established methods of communication (Lakkala et al., 2014).

Teachers named flexible and diversified practices, and support for individuality and dissimilarity as inclusive practices. The inclusive school naturally requires a new architecture for teaching; classrooms should be easily adjustable for various purposes and for working with groups of different sizes. Furthermore, inclusive teaching makes it necessary to provide varied teaching equipment and materials because of children's natural diversity (Lakkala et al., 2014).

Sai Väyrynen and Rauna Rahko-Ravantti (2014) examined teachers' work in remote areas of Northern Finland in the framework of inclusive education. Due to

small units and long distances, local education providers must make decisions where cultural diversity is largely felt at schools, as in multi-age classes and different native languages. Moreover, welfare and other supportive services are not available in sparsely populated districts.

Three fundamental aspects were discovered. Firstly, teaching children with diverse needs in remote areas demands the skills of collaborative work and the ability to adjust solutions flexibly depending on the contextuality and situatedness of every environment. Secondly, teachers in the northern areas stress a holistic approach in responding to the needs of their pupils. Teachers combine versatile teaching skills and create flexible learning environments, and emphasize good interaction with pupils. Finally, teaching can be seen as a continuous learning process. This being so, teachers must have competencies to reflect and analyse their own actions as professionals (Väyrynen & Rahko-Ravantti, 2014).

Suvi Lakkala and Kaarina Määttä (2011) describe an instructional strategy that takes into consideration different learning phases of the pupils and aims for their participation. The strategy was constructed during a co-operative action research. The Universal Design for Instruction (UDI) and Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZPD) was used as a theoretical framework. A researcher and a teacher collected data during the lessons of Mathematics and native language in an inclusive elementary class taught by two teachers: the special education teacher (the researcher) and the class teacher. Co-operative teaching was a crucial and underlying support for the strategy and the whole inclusive approach. The findings were explicated and presented through examples of teaching and learning situations that occured during the research.

The intensity of the teacher's instruction varied during the learning process. Every time pupils constructed something new they were at the zone of proximal development and needed intensive instruction. When they are consolidating what they have already learned, their need for instruction is lower. At that stage, they have reached their actual level of development and do not need much instruction. After learning new skills, they can try to put their new knowledge into practice. They then take a step forward in their learning process and may in part be in the zone of proximal development level. At that point, they will need slight additional instruction or, if their meta-cognitive skills are sufficient, they will be able to work co-operatively with peer support (Lakkala & Määttä, 2011).

The pupils with lower levels of preparedness would need continuous intensive instruction if their goals were as demanding as those of the more advanced pupils. To

avoid exposing the children to stress, those with lower preparedness would need time to practice their skills in order to attain the needed basic level. The advanced pupils will also need tasks to challenge their learning (Lakkala & Määttä, 2011).

A theoretical sketch of the strategy of instructions based on the learning process was developed in the action research. As previously explained, the teachers' intensity of instruction varies during the learning process. Also, the teaching method varies during the learning phases. The strategy must be considered in the framework of young pupils' learning since it was developed in the elementary school. In higher education, the pupils' high-level meta-cognitive skills would change the construction and the role of the teacher (Lakkala & Määttä, 2011).

The pupils are in the phase of practicing the topics they have already absorbed. As a result, they do not need much instruction and can recapitulate quite independently. However, the level of cognitive skills must be observed as some children may have to use concrete materials to support their thinking. If they are allowed to do so, they are capable of recapitulating independently and experiencing success. The next, higher, stage of learning challenges can be implemented through co-operative learning. If the teacher does not provide much instruction, the children must have rather good meta-cognitive skills in order to succeed. Learning is co-operative by nature if the participants have a shared goal and they consider and negotiate reciprocally. This also encourages teachers to use heterogeneous groups if the distribution of tasks is well planned. When pupils are learning in the zone of proximal development, mediative reciprocal teaching for large groups is used (Lakkala & Määttä, 2011).

For even more challenging learning, scaffolding (cf. Bruner, 1985) is used and requires a small group. The instructor continuously considers which crucial specific elements of the problem or skill must be learned for the particular group of children. The instruction, material, goals, and feedback are adapted to the children (cf. Bruner, 1985).

The last and the most intensive manner of instruction takes place when a pupil needs rehabilitative instruction. If pupils have different kinds of learning disorders, they will receive instruction that demands special expertise. In these cases they are studying at the topmost limit of the proximal zone of development. Usually, the occupational and speech therapists are responsible for rehabilitation but special education teachers may also give rehabilitative instruction in reading, writing, or mathematics. Finally, if the instruction exceeds the pupils' zone of proximal development level, instruction will become fruitless (Lakkala & Määttä, 2011).

When combining these different stages of learning with a strategy of instructing pupils at various levels of intensity, teachers can teach heterogeneous groups by implementing station work and using co-operative teaching (Lakkala & Määttä, 2011).

Virpi Louhela's (2012) narrative action research discusses the pedagogical development work of two co-teachers from the viewpoint of listening to pupils and how pupils are heard. The data consists mainly of the teachers' professional biographies, video materials, and a shared pedagogical diary. The data was gathered in the course of a single school year as part of inclusive physical education. In this context, inclusion refers to the inclusion of two groups, special education and general education. The study is theoretically based on the pedagogical love ethics. At the core of the pedagogy of being heard lie the relationships of caring and the interaction between all the group members, both in teacher-pupil relationships and in peer relationships between pupils, as well as in relationships between the adults in the group. Central to the pedagogy of being heard is every individual's right to be respected and accepted as him- or herself. Teachers employing the pedagogy of being heard need to constantly redirect their teaching with the help of active listening.

Anna Rytivaara (2012) observed and interviewed a pair of primary school teachers who combined a general class and a special education class and co-taught the mixed group. The aim of her study was to examine how teachers manage the classroom in co-taught lessons. By using ethnographic content analysis, Rytivaara formed three models to describe co-teaching and collaborative practices: 1) one teacher is responsible for classroom management when the other teacher carries out the teaching; 2) teachers share the responsibility for classroom management but not teaching; and 3) responsibility for both classroom management and teaching is shared and teachers switch roles flexibly during the lesson. Three additional premises of collaborative classroom management were found: careful planning, open communication, and teachers' common understanding of managing the class. Collaboration on classroom management provides emotional support for a colleague and co-teaching helps teachers to share their workload, which supports their well-being. Compared with earlier literature on co-teaching, this study showed that teachers often combine management and teaching in the classroom.

Anna Rytivaara and Ruth Kershner's (2012) study is also based on observing and interviewing a pair of primary school teachers who combined a general class and a special education class and co-taught the mixed group. The aim of this study was to examine the two teachers' professional learning and joint knowledge construction in

the context of co-teaching. The analysis of this study was a narrative investigation into the framework of the teachers' career paths. In this case study, the main findings that described the teachers' learning processes and learning experiences were the following: 1) the nature of combining the classes; 2) the nature of learning styles; 3) the nature of co-operative learning pedagogy; and 4) the retrospective reflection of the professional development process. Researchers found that their study offered a new focus for examining co-teaching. The main findings showed that narratives about learning and professional development form a picture of teachers who became more of "us". Teachers even felt they had a shared motivation for their work. When working in a collaborative context, the teachers had better opportunities to share their knowledge and apply it in practice. Co-teaching also provided a safe and productive environment for experimenting and finding their own solutions to different situations. Simply said, collaboration encouraged turning ideas into practice but it required the will to learn, and an encouraging working environment. Researchers concluded that joint knowledge construction is essential in the learning process. Co-teaching may support teachers in meeting their professional responsibilities.

Seven pilot schools in Helsinki developed pedagogical solutions in compliance with the Special Education Strategy (2007) during the period of 2008 – 2010. Ahtiainen et al. (2011) examined how the pilot schools understood the concept of co-teaching and how co-teaching was planned, implemented, and developed in the pilot schools. The data of the study was qualitative: discussions with teachers, interviews of principals, lesson observations, and reports that pilot schools submitted to the Education Department of the City of Helsinki. The study concluded that co-teaching has a significant role in developement work and teaching, as well as supporting the pupils' well-being. The pilot schools saw co-teaching as a pedagogical opportunity, a way to make adjustments, and a way to adopt a better direction. Principals and teachers mentioned working together, planning, implementing, and evaluating as important tools of co-teaching. According to their experiences, co-teaching increases the pupils' safety and the possibility to receive individual support. Co-teaching enables teachers to observe pupils better and to notice possible needs of support earlier. Co-teaching also increases the sense of community at schools and pupils with special educational needs are not excluded. From the teachers' point of view, co-teaching provides peer support, a positive variety in everyday work, and a chance for teachers to learn from one another and utilise each other's strengths. By working together, teachers can intercede in disturbing situations faster and more easily. The importance of joint time

planning was emphasised and it was seen as a prerequisite of collaboration and co-teaching. Pilot schools implemented multiform ways of co-teaching that made use of different methods and offered practical solutions. The pilot schools also created models of co-teaching for other schools in the municipality.

REFERENCES

Ahtiainen, R., Beirad, M., Hautamäki, J., Hilasvuori, T. & Thuneberg, H. 2011. *Samanaikaisopetus on mahdollisuus. Tutkimus Helsingin pilottikoulujen uudistuvasta opetuksesta.* [Co-teaching is an opportunity. A study of renewing teaching of pilot schools of Helsinki]. Helsingin kaupungin opetusviraston julkaisusarja A1:2011.

Booth, T. & Ainscow, M. (2002). *Index for inclusion developing learning and participation in schools.* Centre for studies in inclusive education (CSIE). Retrieved from http://www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/Index%20 English.pdf

Harinen, P. & Halme, J. (2012). *Hyvä, paha koulu.* [Good, bad school]. UNICEF of Finland. Nuorisotutkimusverkosto/Nuorisotutkimusseura, [The Network of Youth Research] verkkojulkaisuja 56. Unigrafia Oy: Helsinki.

Jahnukainen, M. (2011). Different strategies, different outcomes? The history and trends of the inclusive and special education in Alberta (Canada) and in Finland. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 55* (5), pp. 489–502.

Jahnukainen, M. (2015). Inclusion, integration, or what? A comparative study of the school principals' perceptions of inclusive and special education in Finland and in Canada. *Disability & Society, 30* (5), pp. 59–72, DOI: 10.1080/09687599.2014982788

Janhunen, M. (2013). Kouluhyvinvointi nuorten tulkitsemana. [School well-being construed by young people]. *Publications of the University of Eastern Finland. Dissertations in Social Sciences and Business Studies No. 52.*

Kirjavainen, T., Pulkkinen, J. & Jahnukainen, M. (2014). Perusopetuksen erityisopetusjärjestelyt eri ikäryhmissä vuosina 2001–2010. [Special educational arrangements of different age groups in basic education during the years 2001–2010]. In: *Kasvatus 2/2014. Suomen kasvatustieteellinen aikakauskirja [The Finnish Journal of Education],* pp. 152–166.

Konu, A. & Rimpelä, M. (2002). Well-being in schools: a conceptual model. *Health Promotion International, 17*(1), pp. 79–87.

Kuorelahti, M., & Lappalainen, K. (2012). Koulun varjossa? [In the shade of a school?] In Silvennoinen H. & Pihlaja, P. Rajankäyntejä. *Tutkimuksia normaaliuden, erilaisuuden ja poikkeavuuden tulkinnoista ja määrittelyistä.* Turun yliopiston kasvatustieteiden tiedekunnan julkaisuja A:214. 399–412.

Lakkala, S. & Määttä, K. (2011). Toward a theoretical model of inclusive teaching strategies – an action research in an inclusive elementary class. *Global Journal of Human Social Science*, *11* (8), Version 1.0, pp. 30–40.

Lakkala, S. & Thuneberg, H. (2012). Inkluusioon tähtäävä koulunuudistus opettajien kokemana. Kyselytutkimus Lapin kehittämisverkkohankkeen kunnissa. [Teachers' perceptions of educational reform aiming towards inclusion. A survey in the developmental network project of Finnish Lapland]. In: *Hippuja ja oivalluksia. Kohti osallistavaa koulua Lapissa*, Rovaniemen kaupunki: Rovaniemi, pp. 8–39.

Lakkala, S., Uusiautti, S. & Määttä, K. (2014). How to make the neighbourhood school a School for All. Finnish teachers' perceptions of educational reform aiming towards inclusion. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*. DOI: 10.1111/1471-3802.12055

Louhela, V. (2012). Kuulluksi tulemisen pedagogiikka kaikille yhteisessä koululiikunnassa. [The pedagogy of being heard in inclusive physical education]. *Acta Universitatis Ouluensis E Scientiae Rerum Socialium 130.* Tampere: Juvenes Print.

Manninen, S. (2015). Erityistä tukea tarvitsevien lasten osallisuuden haasteet koulussa - kasvattajien käsityksiä. [The challenges of participation of children with special educational needs – educators' perceptions]. *Oppimisen ja oppimisvaikeuksien erityislehti.* [Journal of Learning and Learning Difficulties]. NMI-Bulletin. 2015, 25(1), Jyväskylä: Niilo Mäki -säätiö [Niilo Mäki -foundation].

Mikola, M. (2011). *Pedagogista rajankäyntiä koulussa – Inkluusioreitit ja yhdessä oppimisen edellytykset.* [Defining pedagogical boundaries at school – routes to inclusion and conditions for collaborative learning]. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä Studies in Education, Psychology and Social Research.

Naukkarinen, A. (2005). *Osallistavaa koulua rakentamassa. Tutkimus yleisopetuksen koulun ja erityiskoulun yhdistymisen prosessista.* [Building a participating school. A research of a unification process of a general education school and a special education school]. Opetushallitus: Moniste [National Board of Education: Handout] 5/2005.

Pinola, M. (2008). Integraatio ja inkluusio peruskoulussa – Luokanopettajien asennoituminen kaikille yhteiseen kouluun. [Integration and inclusion in comprehensive education – The class teachers' attitudes toward the School for All]. *The Finnish Journal of Education Kasvatus, 39* (1), pp. 39–49.

Pöyhtäri, V. (2010). *Inkluusio - Erityisoppilaan uusi mahdollisuus ja haaste koululle. Historiallis-hermeneuttinen analyysi erityisoppilaan (vammaisen ja poikkeavan) koulutettavuuskäsityksistä perinteisten ja nykyisten tiedekäsityksien valossa inkluusioon peilaten.* [Inclusion - new possibility for pupils in special needs education and a challenge for the school. Historic-hermeneutic analysis of the educability conceptions of pupils in special needs education (handicapped and deviant) in the light of traditional and present science assumptions reflected in inclusion]. Kasvatustieteen lisensiaattitutkinto [Licentiate of education]. Jyväskylän yliopisto, Kokkolan yliopistokeskus Chydenius. [University of Jyväskylä, University Centre Chydenius, Kokkola].

Rajala R. (2008). Oppiminen, tunteet ja hyvinvointi. [Learning, emotions and well-being]. In: A. Ahonen, E. Alerby, J. O. Martin, R. Rajala, I. Ryzhkova, E. Sohlman & H. Villanen. *Psykososiaalisen hyvinvoinnin edistäminen opetustyössä.* [Promoting psycho-social well-being in teaching]. Lapin yliopistokustannus: Rovaniemi, pp. 145–150

Rytivaara, A. (2012). Collaborative classroom management in a co-taught primary school classroom. *International Journal of Educational Research, 53* (2012), pp. 182-191.

Rytivaara, A. & Kershner, R. (2012). Co-teaching as a context for teachers' professional learning and joint knowledge construction. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 28* (2012), pp. 999–1008.

Saloviita, T. (2006) Erityisopetus ja inkluusio. [Special education and inclusion]. *The Finnish Journal of Education Kasvatus, 37*(4), pp. 326–342.

Saloviita, T. (2009). Inclusive education in Finland: a thwarted development. *Zeitschrift für Inklusion.* Nr.1 (electronic publication: http://www.inklusion-online.net/index.php/inklusion/article/view/18/29)

Savolainen, H. (2009). Erilaisuuden huomioimisesta hyviin oppimistuloksiin. [From accounting for dissimilarity to good learning results]. *The Finnish Journal of Education Kasvatus*, *40*(2), pp. 121–130.

Seppälä-Pänkäläinen, T. (2009). *Oppijoiden moninaisuuden kohtaaminen suomalaisessa lähikoulussa – etnografia kouluyhteisön aikuisten yhdessä oppimisen haasteista ja mahdollisuuksista.* [Confronting the diversity of learners in a Finnish neighbourhood school. An ethnographic study of the challenges and opportunities of adults learning together in a school community]. Jyväskylä Studies in Education, Psychology and Social Research.

Väyrynen, S. (2005). *Schools of thought. Understanding inclusion and exclusion in education in Finland and South Africa.* PhD dissertation. University of Kent, Canterbury.

Väyrynen, S. (2006). Kuka kuuluu mukaan ja mitä arvostetaan? Esimerkki osallistavien ja ei-osallistavien käytänteiden suhteesta suomalaisessa ja eteläafrikkalaisessa koulussa. [Who is included and what is seen as valuable? An example of the relationship of inclusive and non-inclusive school practices in Finland and in South Africa]. *The Finnish Journal of Education Kasvatus, 37*(4), pp. 371–385.

Väyrynen, S. & Rahko-Ravantti, R. (2014). Opettajan taidot syrjässä. [Teachers' skills in remote areas]. In: S. Mahlamäki-Kultanen, A. Lauriala, A. Karjalainen, A. Rautiainen, M. Räkköläinen, E. Helin, P. Pohjonen & K. Nyyssölä (eds.) *Opettajankoulutuksen tilannekatsaus. Opetushallitus.* [National Board of Education: Status quo of teacher education], Muistiot 2014:4, pp. 74–82.

3.3. THEORETICAL MODELLING OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN RESEARCH BY LITHUANIAN RESEARCHERS

Ona Monkevičienė, Stasė Ustilaitė, Julita Navaitienė, Agnė Juškevičienė

The studies revealing the path of the formation of the model of inclusive education in Lithuania

In 1991, the Law on Education created the possibility for pupils with different developmental disorders to learn at general schools which were located closest to their place of residence, and in 1998 the Law on Special Education provided the legal basis for the model of integrated education. The Lithuanian education system has undergone a number of transformations, making the transition from an education system which was strictly segregated to one which is equally open to all pupils. In Lithuania, this was a bottom-up process, creating an open educational system for children with special educational needs in practice first, and only later substantiating it by scientific research and legal regulations. In Lithuania, individual preschool institutions and schools open to all children were established, which became the model for the entire education system and turned out to be the field of research. For example, the model of an inclusive school was developed in "Versmė" school, which was founded in 1993 in Vilnius. This model was tested and further developed by examining the school activity, on the basis of which a doctoral thesis was defended and a scientific monograph, which analyses pedagogical interaction under the conditions of integrated education, was published (Galkienė, 2003). On the other hand, at a time when individual schools were already successfully realising the ideas of inclusive education, the majority of schools were still dominated by a segregationist approach. It took considerable efforts of parents, active pedagogues, education strategists, and scientists for the model of inclusive education to be realised in the majority of educational institutions.

As regards the problematic field of scientific research and the goals of researchers oriented towards change in the education practice of children with special needs, two periods can be distinguished: *1991-2008, when the focus was on transition from*

segregation to integrated education; post-2008 period, when the focus was on the scientific issues related to inclusive education.

The first scientific works on the subject of integrated education discuss the concept of this phenomenon and the possibilities of its implementation in the Lithuanian educational space (Gudonis, 1990; Juodraitis, 1994; Gailienė, 1998; Ruškus, 1998; Ambrukaitis, 1999; Galkienė, 2000; Unčiurys, 2000; Ruškus, 2002).

Since 2003, two parallel concepts of education for persons with special educational needs can be identified: integrated education and inclusive education. The concept of integrated education (integration: full integration and partial integration, as opposed to segregation: education in special institutions) was actively developed from 1998 to 2008. During this period, the ideas of inclusive education appeared in the scientific works on a fragmented basis, most often while quoting foreign authors and stating that inclusion is a comprehensive inclusion of children with special educational needs (Gevorgianienė, Trečiokaitė & Zaikauskas, 2004; Galkienė, 2006; Miltenienė, 2006 et al.).

During the period of 2003-2008, scientific studies aimed at substantiating an integrated education model and highlighting new didactic currents. The idea was raised and discussed that integrated education is the fusion of general education and special education into a common educational space, in which education quality is guaranteed to heterogeneous groups. The content of general education is differentiated and adapted to the needs of individual children, and educational assistance specialists join the general flow of education. Heterogeneous community is interpreted as co-operating (pedagogues, heads of institutions, specialists, parents) within the institution and outside of it; co-operation is based on positive interactions, and co-operation networks are created (Galkienė, 2006). A new didactic current was highlighted, namely, the didactics of heterogeneous groups, which is based on the recognition of pupils' individual differences as a resource. The effectiveness of assistance to a pupil in the didactic framework of heterogeneous groups is determined by coordinative-communicative function realised in the activity of every head of an institution and every specialist (Galkienė & Dudzinskienė, 2004). The model of the alignment of interests between the participants of educational process (children, pedagogues) and parents was created, which encompassed the alignment of both needs and expectations, as well as obligations of decision-making, the implementation of specific activities, and the evaluation of the process and results accompanied by reflection (Ruškus & Gerulaitis, 2007). On the basis of the studies, a family self-isolation reduction model was also created, which was oriented towards assisting a pupil with special needs to learn how

to live among others and with others, and assisting in overcoming the barriers of an unadapted physical environment, unfavourable attitudes of surrounding people, and problems between the child and parents (Gedvilienė & Baužienė, 2007).

The period from 2008 to 2010 can be interpreted as a turning point, and, since 2010, the prevalence of the concept of inclusive education began in scientific works. While developing the concept of inclusive education, scientists highlighted the opposing concepts of a disability as pathology and that of a disability recognized as a value in terms of social experience. In the first case, disability is interpreted as a social problem by defining it through the person's relationship with his or her environment (physical environment not adapted to people with disabilities, negative attitudes of the surrounding people, control by professionals, etc.). In the second case, it is interpreted as an especially valuable human experience relevant to the entire social community, which assists in understanding how a difficult situation is experienced and what powers stimulate spiritual growth of those who experience it (Ruškus, 2002; Galkienė, 2014). A long-standing disability culture can be treated as the recognition of the value of the social experience of disability, which maintains the equality of people with disabilities to other community members, promoting the recognition of their powers (Vaičekauskaitė, 2009). During the period of 2008-2014, while developing ideas of socially constructed dignity in the works of education scientists (Galkienė, 2009; Mažeikienė & Ruškė, 2011), educational models, forms, and strategies were sought that would assist in implementing the ideas of inclusive education.

During the period of transition from segregation to inclusive education, *scientists recorded a number of areas of tension fields.* One of the strongest areas of tension is failure to identify and recognise the powers and learning styles of pupils with special educational needs, *which results in pedagogical pessimism,* and confronts faith in the power of these children, *which determines pedagogical optimism.* The study by Miltenienė (2004) revealed that some teachers did not believe in the powers of pupils with special educational needs while maintaining that the pupils quickly became tired, were disappointed, passive, and sluggish. Only one-third of teachers evaluated the pupils as active, joyful, and communicative. *The phenomenon of "one homogeneous flow",* which creates tension to pedagogues, was highlighted. Normally developing pupils and those with special educational needs are perceived by teachers as two distinct groups. Teachers feel that they are ready to work with the first group only, i.e. with a single flow. Work with pupils with special educational needs is understood as stepping out of one's "comfort zone", which is linked to negative feelings–fear, distrust

in one's own strength, tension, etc. (Unianu, 2012). Without recognising the powers of a pupil, participative education and interactive pupil-teacher interoperability in the educational process are impossible.

During that period, in order to overcome pedagogical pessimism, the studies, which demonstrate the powers of pupils with special educational needs, were carried out. It was established that, under the conditions of inclusive education, the mathematical and linguistic achievements of educated pupils with marginal mental impairment were similar to the achievements of the children educated at special schools; however, their social skills were significantly better (Gevorgianienė, Trečiokaitė & Zaikauskas, 2004); under the conditions of inclusive education, pupils with movement disabilities developed the same social competence as others (Gedvilienė & Baužienė, 2008).

There was a need for at least a five-year period in order for pedagogues and specialists to recognise the form of inclusive education as the most appropriate for pupils with marginal special educational needs, to accept and begin to assess the powers of these pupils positively. Teachers and specialists assented that while learning in daily natural environments, which tolerate differences, pupils with special educational needs acquire social skills (average value being 3.09 out of possible four). On the other hand, some teachers are still convinced that the most appropriate environment for certain groups of pupils with special educational needs is separate special schools. They enumerate the advantages of the latter, yet "fail to see" their limitations (Ališauskas, Gerulaitis & Miltenienė, 2011). These attitudes also demonstrate that, so far, the concept of integration and not that of inclusion is more acceptable to pedagogues and specialists.

Another significant area of tension is *the manifestations of segregation regarding children educated under the conditions of inclusion.* The studies of a two-way pupil-to-pedagogue interaction (Kaffemanienė, 2005) enabled researchers to conclude that pupils with special educational needs are participants of these interactions in very rare cases (teachers work with more active children); in addition, these pupils are rarely participants of pupil-to-pupil interactions related and those not related to the subjects taught. Consequently, they are only physically present in the classroom, yet virtually fall out of the educational process. Geležinienė, Ruškus, and Blinstrubas (2008) distinguished the situations of clinical disability in the teacher's interaction with pupils with emotional and behavioural problems when a pupil is disassociated during the education process, which stimulates the pupil to disassociate himself or herself as well. Such situations were recorded in about half of the observed cases. Consequently, the segregation of the pupils, who were educated in a general flow, was rather stark.

A few years later, the scientists recorded changes in the situation, which demonstrate that the education of pupils with special educational needs is more inclusive: "Teachers feel responsible for every pupil irrespective of their differences and individual needs" (average value was 3.17 out of possible four), "Teachers individualise education by taking into account every pupil's needs" (average value was 3.08 out of possible four) (Ališauskas, Gerulaitis & Miltenienė, 2011).

One more significant area of tension is *conflicting practices of general education and the provision of special assistance.* During the period of transition towards inclusive education, teachers educated pupils with special needs identically to others, expecting specialists to provide the assistance needed to the pupils in their cabinets. A lengthy educational process with teachers and specialists has led to gradual changes in the situation: it is now generally accepted that general and special education should be part of a unified process. A certain turning point occurred in teacher activities; namely, teachers were already applying general education methods together with the methods of special pedagogical assistance, although there was still a lack of purposefulness in the application of the latter. A special pedagogue and a speech therapist became actively involved in the process of general education. Pedagogues and specialists began to work as one team. On the other hand, latent features of separating between general and special education were revealed: a special pedagogue is interpreted as a team leader who is the best at assessing a pupil's special needs and suggests his or her educational methods to other teachers; a joint activity of a special pedagogue and the teachers is most often limited to consulting the pedagogues rather than co-operation while teaching; a pupil is not regarded as a participant in team interaction. The manifestations of segregation regarding pupils with special educational needs were promoted by insufficiently developed models of child education (Ambrukaitis & Zelbienė, 2008; Ambrukaitis & Borisevičienė, 2007; Ivoškuvienė & Makauskienė, 2009; Miltenienė & Venclovaitė, 2011).

Personalised educational programmes, flexible plans, strategies, and methods meeting the needs of different pupils

Since 1993, when educating children with special needs, it has been recommended to differentiate the content of (self-)education, i.e. to prepare special, individual, adapted, and modified programmes. Pedagogues encountered a new challenge of adapting the content of education to pupils with special educational needs. Since 2003, when the development of the system of inclusive education began, it has been

recommended to personalise the content of (self-)education, i.e. to adapt it to specific children and their needs. When personalising programmes, it was recommended to aim towards the outcomes of education by choosing appropriate educational methods, content, and tools.

Scientific studies on the adaptation of the content of (self-)education to children with special educational needs are scarce in Lithuania. On the other hand, the data from the studies performed demonstrate that pedagogues had understood the adaptation of the content of education more as an input and not as an outcome; therefore, they described in a lengthy manner what they would do with a pupil. Such adaptations of the content of education, as teachers understand it, "cost a lot of time" and "overburdened the teacher with additional work"; therefore, this reduced their motivation to personalise education (Kaffemanienė & Lusver, 2004; Ambrukaitis, 2004; Miltenienė, 2006).

The planning of education for the pupils with special education needs lacked constant orientation towards their needs, powers, and achievements. It was established that while planning education, teachers wished to invoke the conclusions of experts (Pedagogical Psychological Service, specialists et al.); in particular, they wanted to learn the causes of the disorders, and waited for medical intervention, the assignment of special education, recommendations, "recipes" for how to work, and only a few of them relied on the knowledge of the pupil and reflection on his or her achievements (Geležinienė, Ruškus & Blinstrubas, 2008).

Pupil assessment became an area of discussion and tension. It was discussed whether pupils with special educational needs had to be subject to the same standards as others, and whether it was more relevant to ensure that they had a fully-fledged social interaction. Some scientists suggested focusing on what a child can do, and on what was provided in a modified or adapted programme; others maintained that assessment had to be oriented towards general standards. Studies have shown that only 4.2% of the pedagogues assessed pupil achievements according to the level indicated in the programme modified for them; only 13% of teachers carried out assessments according to the level of an adapted programme. Others assessed the achievements according to the general level of achievement of a given grade, or made certain concessions (Kaffemanienė & Lusver, 2004). Consequently, the studies revealed the fears of the education community to move away from a uniform standard of achievements. In addition, there was the fear of segregation, namely, that pupils with special educational needs once again would be treated as different.

Segregationist attitudes of teachers and heads of institutions could still be observed, including the teachers' focus on pupil learning gaps, rather than strengths, and the desire of the heads of institutions to rate pupils according to disabilities and knowledge (Miltenienė, 2006). On the other hand, in individual schools, which were actively creating the model of inclusive education, the issue of pupil assessment caused no problems due to the fact that the focus was put on pupils' progress as compared to their individual powers.

Having harmonised the orientation towards education results, quality, and social inclusion, and having shifted emphasis in this direction, pupils with special needs naturally and effectively merge into school communities, while the communities adapt to their needs.

Studies on the development of education strategies oriented towards integrated and inclusive education

In order to scientifically substantiate education strategies for pupils with special needs, the researchers have attempted to draw attention to the feelings and activity levels of pupils as main participants in the educational process, the specificities of special assistance, and the reception of other kinds of support. It was also ascertained how these pupils learn and what educational methods the pedagogues should apply in order for the methods to correspond to the pupils' learning powers and style.

When determining the pupils' feelings on the system of inclusive education, it was established that primary school pupils with special educational needs construct their positive image, ascribe positive characteristics to themselves, experience success, and believe in their own possibilities. Inclusive education creates possibilities for successful learning and personal development to them. However, not all senior pupils experience success: negative attitude towards oneself is characteristic of some of them, resulting in distrust in their own capabilities, poor physical and emotional state, and frequent experiences of failure. Some pupils see special assistance as effective in their case, yet, from the point of view of other pupils, it is a form of exclusion from peers. The researchers conclude that a pupil's negative self-image and passivity are the result of low-quality inclusive education (Miltenienė, 2008). In the opinion of the majority of pupils, successful inclusive education, as an opportunity for normally developing peers and those with disabilities to function together, creates favourable conditions for the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities, including personal dignity, the formation of relationships of assistance and support, the understanding

and recognition of another person's situation, and the self-expression of every child (Galkienė, 2009; Gudonis, Ališauskas & Rusteika, 2011).

Numerous studies that contribute to ascertaining the methods of learning among pupils with special educational needs have been carried out. Some of the studies focused on the understanding of pupils with different disorders, and the elucidation of their skills. It was researched how these pupils understand texts, and what self-assessment and self-control skills of visually impaired adolescents were (Raudeliūnaitė, 2009); other studies of the same nature were also carried out. These studies became the scientific basis in constructing educational strategies for pupils with special needs.

Scientific articles presented the models of constructivist, multi-directional pedagogical interaction enabling a pupil, and studies which demonstrate how these models were realised. Some pedagogues were oriented towards a constructivist, interpretative paradigm; they attempted to reveal the personality of a pupil, to develop social skills, etc. Another group of pedagogues were still oriented towards normative, impact pedagogy; they emphasised the knowledge of a child, the norms of behaviour, and disciplinary measures (Geležinienė, 2006). In many cases, interactions which aim at behaviour change of a pupil by applying methods of cognitive behaviourism that promote segregation prevailed. However, the pedagogues who had believed in the models of inclusive education increasingly developed social participation and interactions promoting pupil empowerment (Geležinienė, Ruškus & Blinstrubas, 2008).

Particular attention was paid to pedagogical strategies. During the period of transition from segregation to inclusive education, the researchers distinguished the following strategies in the education of pupils with special educational needs employed in the activities of a pedagogue: *the activity of a teacher empowering a pupil* that includes *assistance to a person in knowing themselves* while learning behaviour, which helps change oneself as well as the surrounding environment; *the activity constructing interaction and positive behaviour,* when the individuality of a pupil and his or her skills are recognised; *the teacher's corrective activity* based on disciplining, control, and the application of behaviourist techniques; *the activity constructing social exclusion,* when a pupil is underestimated, accused, and suggested to be removed from the class; *the teacher's activity based on cognitive reductionism* focussing solely on academic interaction; *the eclectic teacher's activity,* which is a controversial one; and *the formal teacher's activity.* It is observed that teachers have not mastered effective pedagogical strategies (Geležinienė, Ruškus & Balčiūnas, 2008). In a lesson, informative methods

prevailed (presentation, reproduction): the teacher asked for a precise reproduction of knowledge, little attention was paid to problem solution, critical and creative thinking, or activating methods of learning together (Kaffemanienė, 2005).

Educational techniques for pupils with special needs were modelled that were oriented towards increasing autonomy and the quality of education. The data of various studies demonstrate that targeted trainings aimed at developing everyday life, social, and other skills needed for one's autonomy assist in reducing the number of rejected and isolated pupils in the class; they also strengthen the identity of pupils with special educational needs in the context of communal relationships (Bružienė & Geležinienė, 2007; Melienė, 2008).

Later on, the studies highlighting the specificities of inclusive education strategies and assessing their efficiency were published. Models and strategies promoting new inclusive education were developed. A study-based pedagogy model of *child* empowerment was proposed; the model is based on the dialogue and co-operation between the child and the persons educating him or her, the child's inclusion into the process of decision-making, and the creation of an opportunity for choice (Miltenienė, 2008). Empirically tested pupil empowerment strategies were also drawn up, which were based on building environments and interactions promoting the strengthening of a person's individual potential, and the inclusion of all the participants of the educational process, which encourages both individual and group transformation (Geležinienė, 2011).

The strategy of evidence-based education of pupils with special needs was modelled by emphasising the individuality of every pupil, the personalisation of educational methods, and the collection of evidence on their effectiveness. A teacher becomes the researcher of his or her own activity, and engages in continuous learning in order to adapt to the needs and powers of all the pupils in the class, and improve everyday education. While changing him- or herself, he or she adapts to the pupils and changes the whole school (Geležinienė, 2010; Galkienė, 2014). A scientifically grounded *strategy of reliance on the strengths of a child with special educational needs* is based on the possibilities of identifying the strengths of a child, and modelling the subsequent educational process as well as monitoring its effectiveness (Kaffemanienė & Jurevičienė, 2012).

The previously mentioned studies highlight key strategies of inclusive education, yet they do not sufficiently reveal specific methods, nor school functioning models when implementing inclusive education.

The studies on the competence of pedagogues and other specialists to educate pupils with special educational needs

In order to assess the processes of change, it is appropriate to analyse the changes in the teachers' competencies with regard to the following essential teacher competence areas mentioned in the Profile of Inclusive Education Teacher (2012): respect for pupil diversity; assistance to all pupils; working together with others; personal and professional development.

One of the most important competencies of a pedagogue, which determines successful development of inclusive education, is the pedagogue's respect for pupil diversity and their personal relationship with the pupil with special educational needs. The data analysis of scientific studies performed in Lithuania demonstrates pedagogues' controversial attitudes towards pupils with special educational needs. Both segregationist and inclusive attitudes can be identified among teachers.

During the transitional period, in the context of scientific studies, a pessimistic image of a pupil with special (self-)educational needs emerges in general education schools, which is oriented towards the child's weaknesses, his or her disorders, any confidence in his possibilities is absent, and, when talking of personal interaction, in most cases the aim is to disassociate and support the ideas of segregation (Miltenienė, 2004, 2008; Geležinienė, Ruškus & Balčiūnas, 2008; Nasvytienė & Balčaitytė, 2009). Subsequent studies demonstrate the transformation of the attitude. Over time, a more positive attitude among educators emerges, including faith in the possibilities of every pupil to learn, the assumption of personal responsibility for educational achievements of every child, and the recognition of the need for co-operation with the family (Miltenienė, Melienė & Kairienė, 2013; Miltenienė & Daniutė, 2014; Urnėžienė & Budrytė, 2014). The pedagogues implementing inclusive education attach great importance to the development of personal relationships with the pupils. It is highly important for them to perceive the uniqueness of every pupil, and to recognise their personal differences. Teachers place great emphasis on the value of love to a pupil, which leads him or her towards professional satisfaction. Teachers admit that the environment of inclusive education is saturated with pupils' personal differences, and it calls for the teacher's creativity, versatility, and ability to make decisions, having understood the reasons for the pupil's success or failure as well as his behavioural motives (Galkienė, 2014).

A pedagogue's ability to provide assistance to all the pupils serves as a basis of effective heterogeneous didactics. It is recognised that an individualised educational

process creates conditions for pupils to become equal participants in it, and to develop social and communicative skills, which are especially important in terms of the prevention of social exclusion (Kaffemanienė & Lusver, 2004; Tomaševska, 2007). Studies show that the most favourable education conditions for pupils with special educational needs are established when designing natural interactions, communicating, and emulating their normally developing peers (Gudonis,Ališauskas & Rusteika, 2011; Galkienė & Jokubauskienė, 2012).

Researchers examine the possibilities for the application of various teaching (learning) methods of pupils with special educational needs (including mental, behavioural and emotional, learning, attention, speech, movement, activeness, and autistic disorders) in different subject contexts (Subotkevičienė, 2014; Žygaitienė & Norkuvienė, 2013; Bružienė & Geležinienė, 2007; Galkienė & Cijūnaitienė, 2007; Tomaševska, 2007; Ambrukaitis & Zelbienė, 2008). The studies on the development of communication competencies of autistic children demonstrate that pedagogues successfully use the strategies of music therapy (lullaby intonations, ethnic songs, improvisation on musical instruments) in order to promote the social interaction of a child with autistic disorder; and music games to promote self-regulation of pupils with an activity disorder and improve peer-to-peer communication skills (Aleksienė & Tamulevičiūtė 2007; Vilkelienė, 2011). Cognitive behavioural exercises and fairy tale methods, effectively employed by pedagogues, improve pupils' attention and their performance in spatial thinking tasks, and assist in achieving targeted changes in the cognitive area as well as positive changes in the psychosocial area when educating primary school pupils with activity disorders (Piščalkienė, Merkys & Bražienė, 2007).

On the other hand, the data from a number of studies demonstrate that, in the context of the shift of educational paradigms, pedagogues lack competence in applying educational content in such a way that it would conform with the pupils' skills, selecting teaching methods and techniques that meet the pupils' learning styles, as well as the criteria of achievement assessment, to individualise and to differentiate teaching when creating conditions for pupils to become equal participants in the (self-) education process (Sinkevičienė, 2012; Kiušaitė & Jaroš, 2012). When organising the education of children with special educational needs, a lack of competence emerges in creating pedagogical interaction with the children; therefore, some are convinced that special schools would be the most appropriate institution for the education of these children, and thus they "would not hinder" other children from working during lessons (Nasvytienė & Balčaitytė, 2009;Ališauskas & Šimkienė, 2013; Giedrienė,

2014). The main reason for such an approach is that some teachers are not able to assume pedagogical responsibility for learning, behavioural, and communication difficulties arising in a pupil with special educational needs, and transfer the responsibility onto the pupil, his or her parents, or specialists (Ališauskas & Šimkienė, 2013). The counterpoint to these teachers' views can be seen in the results of the study by Geležinienė (2011), which proves that the creation of an equal partnership with a pupil by shifting from pupil disciplining, control, or the emphasis on special care to the maintenance, promotion, and strengthening of positive behaviour activates pupil participation and initiates an increase in the manifestations of positive behaviour and emotions in a teacher-pupil and pupil-classmates interaction as well as that between the pupil and his or her family members.

The studies on the readiness of speech therapists and special pedagogues to provide special pedagogical assistance demonstrate that specialists assess their own competence of the knowledge of a child and his individuality well and demonstrate values oriented towards the recognition of the individuality of every student; they underline the knowledge of different assessment methods and the ability to identify specific learning disorders (Miltenienė, Melienė & Kairienė, 2013), and enjoy positive evaluation of their own skills of organising the educational process, including knowledge of teaching and assessment methods, the ability to apply and to differentiate them, and to use the latest information technologies (Miltenienė, 2014).

The review of these studies supports the conclusion that it is important for pedagogues to know every child, his or her needs, skills, and possibilities, that the determining role is not played by the pupil's disorder or the applied methods, but by the teacher's ability to choose methods that are adequate to the teaching (learning) goal and the pupil's learning style, and that would empower every child to learn.

When creating the models of inclusive education and implementing them in schools, applying the educational content and process to pupils, and at the same time developing positive interactions, the main problem continues to be that of teacher training. In teacher training, it is necessary to focus particular attention on the competencies of existing and future teachers. Lithuanian school teachers identify this need themselves. Although Lithuanian pedagogues participate in the training courses of qualification improvement in their cities or districts, they underline their own competencies that need improvement and that are necessary in order to ensure quality education for children with special educational needs, namely, setting lesson goals and tasks, teaching methods, classroom management, and the assessment

of pupils as well as self-assessment. The teachers also emphasise the necessity of lifelong learning by highlighting specific areas of interest (such as drafting individual assistance plans in consideration of the manner of a disorder, the knowledge of a child based on psychological theories, the creation of an environment promoting tolerance, communication in a foreign language, computer literacy and the use of information technologies, co-operation with colleagues and other specialists when creating prerequisites for education, and assessing learning achievements) (Čiužas, Navickaitė & Ušeckienė, 2009; Ivoškuvienė & Makauskienė, 2009; Miltenienė, Melienė & Kairienė, 2013; Jankevičienė, 2013). An ongoing development paradigm, which emphasises the desire for lifelong personal, professional, and societal development, is underlined (Miltenienė, Melienė & Kairienė, 2013; Urnėžienė & Budrytė, 2014). The development of teacher-researcher competence gains prominence, which means that while educating pupils with special education needs, the teacher would continuously ponder and reflect on his or her daily practical activity (Geležinienė, 2006).

The studies on the formation of an inclusive school community

The recognition of diversity as a value is revealed in the approach that sees being different as normal, that differences are, at the same time, challenges to all society as well as new opportunities, that everyone must have equal opportunities to be heard and seen, and receive quality education. Each member of the community needs knowledge on pupil diversity, awareness of the fact that diversity is not static, and the essential competence to learn from those differences.

In heterogeneous societies, the otherness of a person is recognised as a value. Galkienė (2014), who examined the concept of the phenomenon of otherness, came to a conclusion that it is revealed at three levels: in the expression of bodily powers, in the search of human identity, and in the sociocultural context. In recognizing diversity as a value, the aspect of the dignity of persons with disabilities is relevant. Having examined different concepts of the dignity of persons with disabilities, it has been recognised that categorising people with disabilities into groups on the grounds of alleged commonality according to the nature of their disability is a violation of their dignity. Pupil categorisation has a negative effect on their learning and interpersonal relationships (Mažeikienė & Ruškė, 2011). The studies performed show that the pupils who learn together with persons with disabilities are able to develop an attitude of respect and to protect the dignity of persons with disabilities. Consequently, otherness can perform an educational role and promote tolerance and

respect for the diversity of persons (Galkienė, 2009). Diversity should be perceived as a natural life phenomenon that enriches societal experiences. Despite the fact that there are individual schools implementing the model of inclusive education, self-evident positive experience and studies that substantiate it scientifically, interpreting diversity as a part of the formation of heterogeneous communities and the prerequisite for successful education of pupils, some teachers had difficulty changing their attitudes. Nasvytienė and Balčaitytė (2009) carried out a quantitative study involving teachers who educate pupils with emotional and behavioural problems. The teachers' opinion that such children should not learn at regular schools was revealed, since at a special school they would receive more appropriate care and they would not hinder others. Pupil diversity was recognised as a value more often by younger teachers, who valued work with children with special needs as a natural process. It is, therefore, necessary to form a positive approach towards otherness both among teachers and in society. It was suggested that all students should be given a broader and deeper course in Special Education Pedagogy, which should not be purely theoretical, but rather develop practical skills; it was also recommended that the achievements of persons with disabilities in areas of life should be publicized more (Grincevičienė, 2010; Giedrienė, 2014). The link between a high level of empathy and a positive approach towards children with special needs has been established (Bukantaitė & Ališauskas, 2011).

It is necessary to pay attention to the fact that, until now, attitudes towards pupil diversity have been rather ambivalent. The ambivalence of attitudes was noticed while examining the attitudes of pedagogues, parents, and pupils towards their mutual relationships. On the other hand, it is already possible to discern the dominance of favourable attitudes towards pupil diversity. The majority of teachers argue in favour of the necessity to educate pupils with special educational needs at general education schools (Gudonis et al., 2011). However, some teachers are more focused on children's problems rather than on their relationships and interactions with other participants in education (Ališauskas & Šimkienė, 2013).

Study data also show that two-thirds of primary school pupils of normal development claim to be on friendly terms with pupils with a disability: they help, explain, accompany, comfort, teach, play online games, watch animated films, take care of, and protect them. On the other hand, some adolescents in general education schools still maintain that they would not like to learn together with peers with disabilities (Giedrienė, 2014).

The involvement of communities and pupils' parents

The co-operation of the participants in the educational process, information exchange, and the provision of assistance are prerequisites for successful inclusive (self-)education, whereas the empowerment model that is family-oriented requires parental involvement in the education of children with special needs. A considerable number of studies on parental participation in the educational process of children with disabilities have been carried out in Lithuania (Miltenienė, 2005, 2005; Barkauskienė, 2005; Gerulaitis, 2007; Ruškus & Mažeikis, 2007; Miliušienė & Zuzevičiūtė, 2013), stating that it is one of the weakest links in inclusive education. The first studies showed that the communication between parents and pedagogues is often one-way, i.e., the communication was dominated by transmitting information to parents, although the parents would not always understand the vocabulary of the teachers (Miltenienė, 2004). The parents of children with special needs felt disengaged and unempowered in the education system, although the legal context was favourable to them. In most cases, parents were purely passive observers or listeners. Only the parents who were bringing up children with severe special needs rallied into more active communities seeking support (Jusienė, 2004). Parental involvement and co-operation were not sufficiently efficient. Consequently, they needed to be strengthened (Ališauskienė et al., 2007).

The situation began to change over the last five years. Miltenienė and Mauricienė (2010) examined the peculiarities of the work of the team that meets the pupils' special needs and established that this team is oriented towards joint decision-making and recognises parents as equal partners. Partnership between the school community and parents assists in changing not only the quality of life of the children but also that of their parents; therefore, in the process of socialisation of children with special needs, teamwork, which promotes mutual learning and unites efforts so as to achieve a common goal, is developed (Čiužas & Vaicekauskienė, 2013). Pedagogues are convinced of the parents' concern about the problems of their children with special needs and of their willingness to participate in the education of such children (Gudonis et al., 2011). However, among pedagogues themselves, there are still those who avoid direct dialogue with parents or engage in communication only at the parents' request (Kuginytė-Arlauskienė & Jakaitienė, 2010). The key factor in ensuring a safe school environment is the sharing of duties and responsibility by the entire school community. Study data show that direct parental participation in the processes of strengthening children's safety at school has not become a tradition yet (Barkauskaitė

& Mikalauskienė, 2011; Leliūgienė & Kaušylienė, 2012), whereas researchers promote the involvement not only of parents but also of members of extended family in the education of children with special needs (Raudeliūnaitė & Rympo, 2012).

Another factor contributing to successful inclusive education when meeting the pupils' special needs is the co-operation between pedagogues and special pedagogues. The most common form of communication is consultations, which assist the members of the school community in information exchange; however, the orientation towards more active co-operation is weak (Miltenienė & Venclovaitė, 2012), although school principals maintain that they support teamwork, and see school communities as ready for such activity (Čiužas & Monkevičius, 2014). In highly rare cases, pupils become fully-fledged members of a team, actively co-operating when decisions are made regarding the satisfaction of their own needs. The role of children, when satisfying their special educational needs, is passive (Miltenienė, 2008; Miltenienė & Mauricienė, 2010). Study results show that pupils with special educational needs, their parents, and pedagogues have different understanding and treatment of the satisfaction of needs, and assign different content to it (Ališauskas & Jomantaitė, 2008). Teachers see the activity of speech therapists and special pedagogues as corresponding to the children's special needs (Ališauskienė et al., 2007), whereas the parents of the children with special needs evaluate the contribution of the activity of special pedagogues to the satisfaction of special educational needs of their children as marginal (Ambrukaitis & Borisevičienė, 2007). A change in the situation has been recently initiated by documents regarding education and the governance of the forms of team assistance provision to pupils with special needs.

Creation of a (self-)education environment favourable to a child and responding to his or her needs

Pupils with special needs learn and communicate in the educational environment; therefore, it must be in compliance with the child's individual needs and establish conditions for his or her full participation in the educational process. The attitude of persons with disabilities towards the quality of their lives depends on the sense of the extent to which persons with disabilities are accepted in society, and on the opportunity to socially participate in the life of a local community and school. The creation of a favourable psychosocial and emotional educational environment assists the pupils in feeling good, because each is given an opportunity for various self-expressive activities (Kreivinienė & Vaičiulienė, 2012). Studies show that, in a well-

organized environment of inclusive education, when pupils participate in the activities of heterogeneous groups and observe the situation of their peers in the community under natural conditions, not only do communication skills develop but also the understanding of the situation of another person arises, and empathetic feelings are born, i.e. the foundation is laid for respecting the dignity of others (Galkienė, 2009). At the same time, pupils with disabilities, while educated together with their peers without disabilities, reflect on the sense of existence and gain awareness of the fact that the phenomenon of otherness does not change the human essence but becomes a certain interpretation of a "norm", that is, the expression of personal individuality. When pupils consciously recognise their identity in real life, their perception of otherness is hardly affected by stereotypical interpretations of disability (Galkienė, 2014).

The physical environment of a school is no less important to the emotional well-being of a pupil, when the environment is not restricting but helpful in unlocking the autonomy of a pupil. Study results show that the physical environment of general education schools meets the needs of children with disabilities only in part, e.g. lifts and spacious premises are lacking (Ustilaitė et al., 2011). Children with movement disorders encounter mobility problems due to insufficient adaptation of the environment, which results in them feeling insecure and less confident in their own powers (Gedvilienė & Baužienė, 2007). Studies show that this problem is not given enough attention by school principals. Only approximately 10% of school head teachers indicate that they have a plan in place for how to adapt their school environment for children with disabilities (Balčiūnas & Kardelis, 2012). Looking from the perspective of pupils with disabilities, adapting the physical learning environment may improve their psychosocial interaction with others.

On the other hand, a study carried out by a group of researchers in 2010 showed that teachers, specialists, the parents of pupils, and administrative personnel are more focused on the physical learning environment than on psychosocial and socio-educational ones. They consider material and other external resources of inclusive education (e.g. methodological material, compensatory equipment, information technologies, etc.), in order to satisfy special educational needs of the pupils (Gudonis et al., 2010; Ustilaitė et al., 2011). It was also established that teachers do not focus on gifted pupils more than on other pupils. Such teacher behaviour might entail conflicts of needs of gifted pupils (Čiuladienė, 2012). This might possibly be the reason why the data of the National Agency for School Evaluation (2013) show that the quality of the

lesson component called "assistance to a pupil" has been assessed to be sufficiently low (at the second level out of possible four) in Lithuanian schools for a number of years; however, data from recent years give room for optimism, since rapid improvement in the quality of this component has been observed.

Although national school development strategies foresee the main directions towards satisfying the pupils' special educational needs, in the reality of education, the physical and psycho-social environments are only in partial compliance with these strategic directions. Recently, in the country, more attention has been paid to the development of the educational environment and a larger variety of ways to create the environment favourable for education. While improving the educational environment, teachers and other participants in the (self-)education process take the needs of these children into consideration in a more targeted manner.

Conclusions

The review of the scientific studies carried out in Lithuania shows that in schools, the development of inclusive education, which is oriented towards the success of each pupil, is going down the path of pedagogical searches, discoveries, and errors. Although the legal framework of this educational system is sufficient, the results of scientific studies reveal ambivalent attitudes and approaches, tension fields, and uneven relationships at the socio-psychological level. In some cases, the realisation of inclusive education is successful and outstanding achievements have occurred, while in other cases, the success of this pedagogical phenomenon remains to be seen. Such situations might be caused by the lack of assistance from researchers to pedagogues. The majority of scientific studies analyse and assess the phenomena existing in practice; however, there is a lack of fundamental and applied research that would be able to provide evidence-based recommendations for practitioners.

REFERENCES

Aleksienė, A. & Tamulevičiūtė, D. (2007). Muzikiniai žaidimai hiperaktyvių vaikų pozityviam elgesio modeliavimui. [Positive modelling of hyperactive children's behavior through musical games]. *Socialinis ugdymas* [Social Education]*, 4*(15), pp. 107-119.

Ališauskas, A., Ališauskienė, S. & Kairienė, D. (2011). Mokinių specialiųjų poreikių tenkinimas inkliuzinio ugdymo kontekste: Jungtinės Karalystės patirtis. [Meeting pupils' special needs in the context of inclusive education: UK experience]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(24), pp. 75–90.

Ališauskas, A., Ališauskienė, S., Kaffemanienė, I. & Miltenienė, L. (2012). Leidinių, skirtų asmenims, turintiems negalių, turinio metodologinis kryptingumas. [Methodological purposefulness of the content of publications for people with disabilities]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *2*(27), pp. 54–69.

Ališauskas, A., Ališauskienė, S., Gerulaitis, D., Kaffemanienė, I., Melienė, R. & Miltenienė, L. (2011). *Specialiųjų ugdymo(si) poreikių tenkinimas: Lietuvos patirtis užsienio šalių kontekste.* [The satisfaction of special educational needs: Lithuanian experience in the context of foreign countries]. *Mokslo studija.* [Scientific Study]. Šiauliai: Šiaulių universiteto leidykla.

Ališauskas, A., Gerulaitis, D. & Miltenienė, L. (2011). Ugdymo modelių, tenkinant mokinių specialiuosius poreikius, realizavimas Lietuvoje. [The realization of education models in Lithuania, meeting pupils' special needs]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(24), pp. 105–116.

Ališauskas, A. & Jomantaitė, R. (2008). Bendrojo lavinimo mokyklų mokinių specialiųjų ugdymosi poreikių tenkinimo analizė. [Analysis of meeting special educational needs of pupils' in general schools]. *Jaunųjų mokslininkų darbai* [Journal of Young Scientists], *4*(20), pp. 71-78.

Ališauskas, A. & Šimkienė, G. (2013). Mokytojų patirtys, ugdant mokiniu, turinčius elgesio ir (ar) emocijų problem. [Teachers' experiences in educating pupils with behavioural and/or emotional problems]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(28), pp. 51-61.

Ališauskienė, S., Ališauskas, A., Šapelytė, O., Melienė, R., Miltenienė, L. & Gerulaitis, D. (2007). *Psichologinės, specialiosios pedagoginės ir specialiosios pagalbos bendrojo lavinimo mokyklų mokiniams lygis.* [The level of psychological assistance, special educational assistance, and special assistance provided to pupils at general education schools]. Tyrimo ataskaita [Research report]. Šiaulių universitetas, Švietimo ir mokslo ministerija.

Ambrukaitis, J. (1999). Pedagogų požiūris į specialiųjų poreikių vaikų integraciją. [Diversity of pedagogical attitudes towards the integration of SEN children]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], 2, pp. 24-37.

Ambrukaitis, J. (2004). Pedagogų nuomonė apie savo pasirengimą ugdyti vaikus, turinčius specialiųjų poreikių [Teachers' reflection on their preparedness to educate SEN children]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *2*(11), pp. 114-123.

Ambrukaitis, J. & Borisevičienė, T. (2007). Bendrojo lavinimo mokyklos mokytojų ir tėvų požiūris į specialiojo pedagogo darbo efektyvumą. [Mainstream school teachers' and parents' attitudes towards the efficiency of the special pedagogue's work]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(16), pp. 116-127.

Ambrukaitis, J. & Zelbienė, K. (2008). Kalbinio ugdymo ir specialiosios pedagoginės pagalbos metodų taikymas heterogeninėje klasėje. [Application of methods of linguistic education and special educational support in a heterogeneous classroom]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(18), pp. 137-147.

Balčiūnas, D. & Kardelis, K. (2005). Bendrojo lavinimo mokyklų vadovų ir pedagogų nuostatos dėl specialiųjų poreikių mokinių ugdymo. [Attitude of general education school headmasters and teachers towards the upbringing of pupils with special needs]. *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy], 79, pp. 123-129.

Barkauskaitė, M. & Mikalauskienė, J. (2011). Saugios aplinkos kūrimas bendrojo ugdymo mokykloje. [Creating a safe environment in the general education school]. *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy], 103, pp. 30-37.

Barkauskaitė, M. & Sinkevičienė, R. (2012). Mokinių mokymosi motyvacijos skatinimas kaip vadybinė problema. [Raising pupils' learning motivation as a management problem]. *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy], 106, pp. 49-59.

Barkauskienė, R. (2005). Stresinių šeimos gyvenimo įvykių sąsajos su mokymosi negalių turinčių vaikų psichologiniu pažeidžiamumu. [The links between stressful family life events and psychological vulnerability in children with learning disabilities]. *Socialinis darbas* [Social Work], *4*(1), pp. 24-33.

Bendrojo ugdymo mokyklų veiklos kokybė. [The quality of general education schools activity]. (2013). Nacionalinės mokyklų vertinimo agentūros metinis pranešimas. 4. Nacionalinė mokyklų vertinimo agentūra.

Bružienė, V. & Geležinienė, R. (2007). Muzikinės raiškos poreikio ugdymas heterogeninėje klasėje. [The development of the need for musical expression in a heterogeneous group]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(16), pp. 128-139.

Bukantaitė, A. & Ališauskas, A. (2011). Mokinių tarpusavio santykių vertinimas: mokinių, tėvų ir pedagogų požiūris. [Relationship among pupils and its evaluation: position of pupils, parents, and pedagogues]. *Jaunųjų mokslininkų darbai [Journal of Young Scientists], 2*(31), pp. 24-30.

Čiuladienė, G. (2012a). Gabių vaikų situacija mokykloje: konfliktinė sąveika su bendraklasiais ir mokytojais ir jos korekcija. [Gifted learners' education at comprehensive school: Conflicting interaction with peers and teachers, and its management]. *Acta Paedagogica Vilnensia*, 28, pp. 134-147.

Čiužas, R. & Monkevičius, J. (2014). Socialinių pedagogų požiūris į komandinę veiklą mokykloje. [Social pedagogues'attitude to team activities in school]. *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy], 114, pp. 74-84.

Čiužas, R., Navickaitė, J. & Ušeckienė, L. (2009). Pedagogų ir būsimų pedagogų kompetencija ugdyti įvairių poreikių turinčius mokinius inkliuzinio švietimo kontekste. [Teachers' and prospective teachers' competence to educate pupils with different needs in the context of inclusive education]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(30), pp. 9- 46.

Čiužas, R. & Vaicekauskienė, V. (2013). Socialinės partnerystės strategijos specialiųjų poreikių turinčių asmenų socializacijos procese. [Strategies for social partnership in socialisation process of persons with special needs]. *Socialinis ugdymas* [Social Education], *1*(33), pp. 98-109.

Dėl bendrojo lavinimo ugdymo turinio formavimo, vertinimo atnaujinimo ir diegimo strategijos ir jos įgyvendinimo priemonių plano patvirtinimo. [Concerning formation of general education curriculum, evaluation update, approval of implementation strategy and a plan of implementation measures of the strategy]. *Valstybės žinios* [Official Gazette]. 2007, No. 63-2440.

Gailienė, I. (1998). Negalios priėmimas – asmenybės integruotumo ir socialinės integracijos sąlyga. [Acceptance of disability as a condition for personality integration and social integration]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], 1, pp. 5-9.

Galkienė, A. (2003). *Pedagoginė sąveika integruoto ugdymo sąlygomis.* [Pedagogical interaction under the conditions of integrated education]. Šiauliai: Šiaulių universiteto leidykla.

Galkienė, A. & Dudzinskienė, R. (2004). Veiklos koordinavimo reikšmė specialiosios pedagoginės pagalbos efektyvumui, ugdant heterogenines moksleivių grupes. [The importance of coordinating activities for the effectiveness of pedagogical assistance in educating heterogenous groups of pupils]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education]. 2004, *1*(10), pp. 39-48.

Galkienė, A. (2006). Mokinių, turinčių specialiųjų poreikių, iššūkiai integruoto ugdymo paradigmai Lietuvoje. [Challenges to the paradigm of the integrated education of children with special needs in Lithuania]. *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy], 84, pp. 146-152.

Galkienė, A. (2009). Asmens lygiavertiškumo puoselėjimas – orios asmenybės ugdymo prielaida. [Nurturing a person's equal value as a precondition for dignified personality education]. *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy], 95, pp. 45-52.

Galkienė, A. (2014). Phenomenon of otherness in the experience of pupils with disabilities learning under the conditions of inclusion**. *Chosen Topics of Supporting Persons with a Disability, 2*,** pp. 24-40.

Galkienė, A. & Cijūnaitienė, A. (2007). Mokymo metodų taikymo veiksmingumas ir populiarumas. [The effectiveness and popularity of the application of teaching methods]. *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy], 87, pp. 77-85.

Galkienė, A. & Jokubauskienė, R. (2012). Mokytojų kauzalinės atribucijos stiliaus reikšmė paauglių, turinčių specialiųjų poreikių, ugdymo(si) veiklai. [Importance of teachers' causal attribution for the educational activity of teenagers with special needs]. *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy], 108, pp. 86-95.

Galkienė, A. (2014). Professional identity characteristics of a teacher implementing inclusive education: Pupil and teacher experience. *Bildungswissenschaften und akademisches Selbstverständnis in einer globalisierten Welt - Education and academic self-concept in the globalized world.* Gerd-Bodo von Carlsburg, Thomas Vogel (Hrsg./eds.), pp. 371-390.

Gedvilienė, G. & Baužienė, Z. (2007). Vaikų, turinčių judėjimo sutrikimų, ugdymo bendrojo lavinimo mokykloje kliūtys ir galimybės. [Educational opportunities and obstacles for children with motor disabilities in mainstream school]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *2*(17), pp. 120-131.

Gedvilienė, G. & Baužienė, Z. (2008). Vaikų, turinčių judėjimo sutrikimų, socialinių gebėjimų ugdymas. [Education of social skills in children with motor impairment]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(18), pp. 158-168.

Geležinienė, R. (2011). Elgesio ir emocijų sutrikimų turinčio mokinio įgalinimas skatinant dalyvavimą ugdymo procese. [Empowerment of pupils with behavioural and emotional disorders: Encouraging participation in the educational process]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(24), pp. 128–138.

Geležinienė, R. (2006). Mokytojas kaip tyrėjas: koncepto operacionalizacija ir veiklos perspektyva ugdant emocijų ir elgesio problemų turinčius vaikus. [Teacher as a researcher: Operationalisation of the concept and prospects in educating children with emotional and behavioural difficulties]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *2*(15), pp. 27-36.

Geležinienė, R. (2010). Mokytojo veiklos konstravimas remiantis įrodymais grįsta praktika. [Construction of the teacher's activities on the basis of evidence-based practice]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(22), pp. 59–71.

Geležinienė, R., Ruškus, J. & Blinstrubas, A. (2008). Mokytojų veiklos ir patirčių analizė sprendžiant emocijų ir elgesio sutrikimų turinčio mokinio problemas. [Analysis of teacher activities and experiences in solving problems of a pupil with emotional and behaviour difficulties]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(18), pp. 34-45.

Geležinienė, R., Ruškus, J. & Balčiūnas, S. (2008). Mokytojų veiklų, ugdant emocijų ir elgesio sutrikimų turinčius vaikus, tipologizavimas. [Typology of teachers' activities in educating children with emotional and behavioural difficulties]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *2*(19), pp. 45-58.

Gerulaitis, D. (2007). Tėvų įsitraukimo į vaiko ugdymo(si) procesą plėtotė specialiojoje mokykloje. [Development of parents' involvement in the child's educational process in a special school]. *Daktaro disertacija* [Doctoral dissertation]. Šiauliai: Šiaulių universitetas.

Gevorgianienė, V., Trečiokaitė, G. & Zaikauskas, V. (2004). Skirtingai ugdomų nežymiai sutrikusio intelekto moksleivių akademinių ir socialinių gebėjimų lyginamoji analizė. [Comparative analysis of cognitive and social abilities in differently educated children with mild mental disabilities]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(10), pp. 98-108.

Giedrienė, R. (2014). Požiūris į kitokį vaiką: pradinės mokyklos atvejis. [Attitude towards a different child: Primary school case]. *Socialinis ugdymas* [Social Education], *2*(38), pp. 56-67.

Grincevičienė, V. (2010). *Mokyklos kaitos erdvės ir linkmės: pedagoginis-sociologinis aspektas.* [Spaces and trends of school alternation: Social and pedagogical aspect]. Vilnius: Vilniaus pedagoginio universiteto leidykla.

Gudonis, V. (1990). *Aklųjų reabilitacija ir integracija.* [Rehabilitation and integration of visually impaired people]. Šiauliai.

Gudonis, V., Ališauskas, A. & Rusteika, M. (2011). Specialiosios pedagoginės pagalbos teikimas bendrojo lavinimo mokyklose: mokinių ir mokytojų požiūris. [Rendering special pedagogical assistance in comprehensive schools: Attitude of pupils and teachers]. *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy], 101, pp. 91-97.

Europos specialiojo ugdymo plėtros agentūra (2012). *Inkliuzinio švietimo mokytojo profilis.* [Teacher profile in inclusive education]. Odense, Danija: Europos specialiojo ugdymo plėtros agentūra.

Ivoškuvienė, R. & Radavičienė, S. (2007). Mikčiojimo ir mokyklinio nerimo ryšys. [Relation between stuttering intensity and school anxiety]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(16), pp. 68-77.

Ivoškuvienė, R. & Makauskienė, V. (2009). Pedagogų, ugdančių mikčiojančius mokinius, patirtis. [Experiences of teachers working with stammering children]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(20), pp. 85-92.

Jankevičienė, L. (2013). Specialiųjų ugdymosi poreikių turinčių vaikų integracija į bendrojo lavinimo mokyklą: būsimųjų pedagogų požiūris. [Future teachers' attitude to integration of children with special educational needs in comprehensive schools]. *Jaunųjų mokslininkų darbai* [Journal of Young Scientists], *1*(39), pp. 32-37.

Juodraitis, A. (1994). Kai kurių specialiųjų poreikių vaikų integracijos problemų sprendimo aspektai užsienio šalyse. [The aspects of solving certain problems related to integration of children with special needs abroad]. In: *Specialiųjų poreikių vaikų integruotas ugdymas: patirtis ir perspektyvos: mokslinio-metodinio seminaro medžiaga* [Integrated education of children with special needs: Experience and perspectives: Material of scientific-methodological seminar]. Šiauliai, pp. 79-84.

Jusienė, R. (2004). Socialinės paramos ryšys su neįgalius vaikus auginančių tėvų psichologiniu prisitaikymu. [The relationship between social support and psychological adjustment of parents who have children with disability]. *Socialinis darbas* [Social Work], *3*(1), pp. 105-115.

Kaffemanienė, I. & Jurevičienė M. (2012). Individo stiprybėmis grindžiamo socialinių įgūdžių ugdymo modeliavimo galimybės. [Opportunities for modelling social skills education based on the individual's strengths]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *2*(27), pp. 164–174.

Kaffemanienė, I. (2005). Pedagoginės sąveikos struktūra ugdant mokymosi negalių turinčius moksleivius bendrojo lavinimo klasėje. [The structure of pedagogical interaction teaching SEN children in general education classroom]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(12), pp. 85-101.

Kaffemanienė, I. & Lusver, I. (2004). Moksleivių, turinčių mokymosi negalių, bendrojo lavinimo turinio individualizavimas. [The individualization of educational content for children with learning disabilities]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *2*(11), pp. 133-150.

Kiušaitė, J. & Jaroš, I. (2012). Sutrikusios klausos jaunuolių socialinės integracijos ypatumai. [Social integration peculiarities of adolescents with hearing impairment]. *Socialinis ugdymas* [Social Education], *19*(30), pp. 53-63.

Kreivinienė, B. & Vaičiulienė, J. (2012). Asmenų, turinčių negalią, gyvenimo kokybė: subjektyvus požiūris. [Quality of life of people with disabilities: Subjective approach]. *Tiltai* [Bridges], *59* (2), pp. 133-142.

Kuginytė-Arlauskienė, I. & Jakaitienė, R. (2010). Specialiųjų poreikių turinčių vaikų santykiai su mokyklos bendruomenės nariais. [Relations of special needs children with school community members]. *Socialinis darbas* [Social Work], *9*(1), pp. 122-131.

Leliūgienė, I. & Kaušylienė, A. (2012). Tėvų vaidmuo, kuriant saugią socialinę mokyklos bendruomenės aplinką. [Parents' role in creating safe social environment for school community]. *Socialinis ugdymas* [Social Education], *20*(31), pp. 18-33.

Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo įstatymas. [The Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania]. (1991). Retrieved from http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=441204

Lietuvos Respublikos specialiojo ugdymo įstatymas. [The Law on Special Education of the Republic of Lithuania]. (1998). Retrieved from http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=69873

Mažeikienė, N. & Ruškė, J. (2011). Neįgaliųjų orumo samprata ir ugdymas iš skirtingų teorinių perspektyvų: nuo egzistencializmo iki socialinio konstruktyvizmo. [The concept and development of dignity for people with disabilities from different theoretical perspectives: From essentialism to social constructivism]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(24), pp. 8-19.

Melienė, R. (2008). Teksto supratimo gebėjimų ugdymas taikant metakognityvines strategijas. [The development of reading comprehension skills by applying metacognitive strategies]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *2*(19), pp. 102-113.

Miliušienė, M. & Zuzevičiūtė, V. (2013). Mokykla kaip socialinės įterpties bendruomenė: įtraukiamosios strategijos. [School as a community for social inclusion: Strategies for inclusion]. *Socialinis ugdymas* [Social Education], *1*(33), pp. 9-17.

Miltenienė, L. & Melienė, R. (2010). Specialiojo ugdymo formos inkliuzinio ugdymo kontekste: Olandijos patirtis. [Forms of special education in the context of inclusive education: Dutch experience]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(22), pp. 133–140.

Miltenienė, L., Melienė, R. & Kairienė, D. (2013). Specialistų kompetencija dirbti su mokiniais, turinčiais specifinių mokymosi sutrikimų. [Specialists' competence to work with pupils with specific learning disorders]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(28), pp. 73–84.

Miltenienė, L. & Venclovaitė, I. (2012). Pedagogų bendradarbiavimas inkliuzinio ugdymo kontekste. [Teacher collaboration in the context of inclusive education]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *2*(27), pp. 99–110.

Miltenienė, L. (2004a). Pedagogų nuostatos į specialųjį ugdymą ir ugdymo dalyvių bendradarbiavimą: struktūros ir raiškos ypatumai. [Teachers' attitude to special education and to co-operation of participants of education: Peculiarities of structure and expression]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *2*(11), pp. 151-165.

Miltenienė, L. (2004b). Socialinių tinklų kūrimas edukacinėje aplinkoje: tėvų vaidmuo tenkinant specialiuosius ugdymosi poreikius. [Creating social networks in educational environment: Parents' role in meeting special educational needs]. *Socialinis darbas* [Social Work], *3*(2), pp. 106-113.

Miltenienė, L. (2005a). Bendradarbiavimo modelio konstravimas tenkinant specialiuosius ugdymosi poreikius. [Construction of a collaboration model in meeting special educational needs]. *Daktaro disertacija* [Doctoral Dissertation]. Šiauliai: Šiaulių universiteto leidykla.

Miltenienė, L. (2005b). Bendradarbiavimo realybė tenkinant vaiko specialiuosius ugdymosi poreikius bendrojo lavinimo mokykloje. [Collaboration reality in meeting special educational needs in a mainstream school]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *2*(13), pp. 34-44.

Miltenienė, L. (2006). Mokyklos vadovų nuostatos į specialiųjų ugdymosi poreikių mokinių integruotą ugdymą. [Head teachers' attitudes towards integration of students with special educational needs]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *2*(15), pp. 19-26.

Miltenienė, L. (2008). Vaiko dalyvavimas, tenkinant specialiuosius poreikius bendrojo lavinimo mokykloje. [Child's participation in meeting special needs in general education school]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(18), pp. 179-190.

Miltenienė, L. & Daniutė, S. (2014). Pedagogų ir būsimųjų pedagogų kompetencija ugdyti įvairių poreikių turinčius mokinius inkliuzinio švietimo kontekste. [Teachers' and prospective teachers' competence to educate students with different needs in the context of inclusive education]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(30), pp. 9 -26.

Miltenienė, L. & Mauricienė, D. (2010). Komandinio darbo struktūra ir kryptingumas, tenkinant specialiuosius ugdymo(si) poreikius mokykloje. [The structure and purposefulness of

teamwork in meeting special educational needs at school]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *2*(23), pp. 116-126.

Nasvytienė, D. & Balčaitytė, I. (2009). Mokytojų, ugdančių elgesio ir emocinių problemų turinčius vaikus, patyrimo analizė. [Analysis of experience of teachers educating children with behaviour and emotional problems]. *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy], 96, pp. 22-27.

Palanki aplinka vaikams ir jaunimui: iššūkiai ir galimybės. [A friendly environment for children and young people: Challenges and opportunities]. (2013). Galutinė tyrimo ataskaita [Final Research Report]. VšĮ „Europos socialiniai, teisiniai ir ekonominiai projektai".

Piščalkienė, V., Merkys, G. & Bražienė, N. (2007). Socioedukacinio darbo su vaikais, turinčiais aktyvumo ir dėmesio sutrikimą, ypatumai: diagnostinės eksperimentinės studijos rezultatai. [Peculiarities of socio-educational work with ADHD children: Results of diagnostic-experimental study]. *Socialinis darbas* [Social Work], *6*(1), pp. 113-125.

Raudeliūnaitė, R. (2009). Sutrikusio regėjimo paauglių socialinių įgūdžių tyrimas: intrapersonalinis aspektas. [Research into social skills of teenagers with visual impairments: Intrapersonal aspect]. *Socialinis ugdymas* [Social Education], *1*(20), pp. 64-73.

Raudeliūnaitė R. & Rympo, Ž. (2012). Šeimų, auginančių vaikus su negalia, psichosocialinė situacija. [Psychosocial situation of families with children with disabilities]. *Societal Innovations for Global Growth*, *1*(1), pp. 849-864.

Ruškus, J. & Gerulaitis, D. (2007). Interesų derinimo modelis Lietuvos specialiojoje mokykloje. [Model of interest arrangement in special schools in Lithuania]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *1*(16), pp. 78-92.

Ruškus, J. (1998). Pedagoginiai santykiai su neįgaliuoju socialinėje ir psichologinėje perspektyvoje: nuo atmetimo link kooperacijos. [Pedagogical relations with a child with disability in sociological and psychological perspective: From exclusion towards co-operation]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], Šiauliai, 1, pp. 50-55.

Ruškus, J. (2002). *Negalės fenomenas.* [Disability as a phenomenon]. Šiauliai: Šiaulių universitetas.

Ruškus, J. & Mažeikis, G. (2007). *Neįgalumas ir socialinis dalyvavimas: kritinė patirties ir galimybių Lietuvoje refleksija.* [Disability and social involvement: Critical reflection of experience and opportunities in Lithuania]. Šiauliai: Šiaulių universiteto leidykla.

Subotkevičienė, R. (2014). Nežymiai sutrikusio intelekto mokiniai geografijos pamokose: edukaciniai ypatumai. [Students with mild mental retardation in geography lessons: Educative peculiarities]. *Tiltai* [Bridges], *67*(2), pp. 169-189.

Tomaševska, K. (2007). Etikos mokytojų taikomų mokymo(si) metodų, siekiant mažinti socialinę atskirtį mokykloje, veiksmingumas. [The efficiency of teaching and learning methods in reducing social isolation in lessons of ethics]. *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy], 87, pp. 86-92.

Unčiurys, J. (2000). Specialiųjų poreikių vaikų integruotas ugdymas. [Integrated education of children with special needs]. *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy], 40, pp. 107-120.

Unianu, E. M. (2012). Teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences,* 33, pp. 900 – 904.

Urnėžienė, E., Budrytė, K. (2014). Specialiojo pedagogo kompetencijos ir jų tobulinimo galimybės, pedagogų požiūriu. [Competences of special pedagogue and their improvement opportunities from pedagogues' point of view]. *Pedagogika* [Pedagogy]*,* 115, pp. 135-146.

Ustilaitė, S., Kuginytė-Arlauskienė, I. & Cvetkova, L. (2011). Šeimų, auginančių neįgalius vaikus, vidinio ir socialinio gyvenimo pokyčiai. [Changes of inner and social life of families with children with disabilities]. *Socialinis darbas* [Social Work], *10*(1), pp. 20-26.

Vaičekauskaitė, R. (2009). Negalės diskurso tarpkultūrinės sąveikos globalizacijos kontekste. [Intercultural interactions of disability discourse in the context of globalization]. *Specialusis ugdymas* [Special Education], *2*(21), pp. 8–20.

Viliušienė, V. & Vyšniauskytė-Rimkienė, J. (2012). Negalios poveikis šeimai: subjektyvios brolių ir (ar) seserų patirties analizė. [The impact of disability on families: Analysis of subjective

experience of siblings]. *Socialinis darbas. Patirtis ir metodai* [Social Work. Experience and Methods], *10*(2), pp. 27-40.

Vilkelienė, A. (2011). Etninė muzika ir žaidimas kaip komunikacijos su autistišku vaiku priemonė. [Ethnic music and games as a communication tool with an autistic child]. *Socialinis ugdymas* [Social Education], *18*(29), pp. 25-34.

Žygaitienė, B. & Norkuvienė, E. (2013). IX-X klasių delinkventinio elgesio mokinių mokymosi motyvacijos skatinimas. [Strengthening learning motivation of students with delinquent behaviour in 9th-10th grades]. *Socialinis ugdymas* [Social Education], *1*(33), pp. 30-43.

3.4. THEORETICAL GROUNDS OF INTEGRATED AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN POLAND

Remigiusz Kijak, Tamara Cierpiałowska, Joanna Kossewska

At the outset of this literature and research review, it should be noted that the vast majority of publications analyzed here refer to the education of pupils with special needs within the integration system. Integration as a form of education, described in detail in a subsection below (*see* Legal basis of inclusive education in Poland), appeared in Poland in the 1990s (Bogucka, 1996), gradually supplementing or even replacing previously dominant special education. From today's perspective, it needs to be acknowledged that inclusive education, as one of the proposals for a non-segregated system, seems very friendly, both to pupils (especially those with special needs) and to their teachers. The rationale behind that view may be found in the rules of inclusive class organization, which result from legal regulations in our country; that is to say, the reduced number of pupils (up to a maximum of 20, including 3-5 of those with different types of disabilities) and a constant prespecial educational needs ce of two teachers during educational activities: the lead teacher who teaches the subject content and the supporting teacher (a special education teacher), whose role is to co-operate with the lead teacher in the process of the planning, implementation and evaluation of activities as well as to support pupils, particularly those with special needs. Naturally, institutions providing inclusive education to pupils with disabilities are characterized by a full architectural accessibility. It needs to be noted that within the framework of inclusive education, the concept of pupils with special needs is primarily understood as referring to pupils with disabilities (mostly physical or special educational needs sory ones, rarely intellectual ones and, in such cases, of mild degree) or suffering from chronic diseases.

The other form of non-segregated education in Poland is inclusive education (of broad inclusive nature), a new and, currently, as it needs to be emphasized, a highly controversial idea of education. As Firkowska-Mankiewicz notes (2010) that its revolutionary character lies in the fact that, contrary to the concept of segregation. Inclusive education involves a fundamental reform of the existing education system. It involves allowing pupils with disabilities to learn along with their proficient peers

in regular public schools, in the environment of appreciation and support for all pupils (not only those with disabilities but also the so-called difficult or pathological children, those from ethnic minorities, etc.) and adapting schools for pupils with diverse needs, not vice versa. The above definition in itself leads to the conclusion that although inclusive education (inclusion) is grounded on the just ideas of equality and standardization, it proves to be a risky solution in many dimensions, and, as it now seems, is far less friendly to pupils with disabilities, as well as their able-bodied peers and teachers. Neither a reduction in class size (in Poland, standard class size is very high, namely, over 30 people, sometimes reaching almost 40 pupils), nor the continued prespecial educational needs ce of the supporting teacher is taken into account here. Even the architectural adjustment of school facilities is of no concern. Drawing attention to the fact that special needs may result from various conditions, namely, not only linked to the pupils with disabilities themselves but -also the outcome of many other factors, is theoretically well-founded; nevertheless, it runs the risk of blurring the precision of needs identification and, therefore, it can easily lead to dilution of optimal forms of assistance and support for the development of pupils with disabilities.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that despite the "friendliness" of education in the inclusion system, it often leaves a lot to be desired in terms of its effects. That is perhaps because children with special needs in inclusive institutions often do not feel that they genuinely belong to the school community. It needs to be remembered that placing a child in an inclusive institution should not be called integration, as it only ensures the *formal level*. Yet *the inner psychological dimension of integration* must be achieved (Krause, 2000). Perhaps, indeed, this level is difficult to reach when pupils with disabilities are easily identified by other pupils (in some cases they are seated separately and it is them that the special educator focuses on). This may result in the division in children's minds of "us" (the able-bodied ones) vs. "them" (those with disabilities, therefore, different ones). Such categorization is certainly not conducive to the emergence of a real community. According to Paul Wdówik (2009, p. 14) "inclusive education was a very important element in the process of integrating people with disabilities into the open education system but it should be perceived as a stage only on the road to normality."

Will it, however, be easier to avoid such categorization, as proposed by the proponents of inclusion (Firkowska-Mankiewicz, 2004, 2010; Wdówik, 2009), when children with disabilities penetrate regular classes in schools located close to their

places of residence? Will pupils without physical, special educational needs sory or intellectual disabilities naturally accept their classmates with difficulties resulting from such limitations? How can teachers manage to work on their own with increasingly difficult children and youth, including a number of those with a variety of special needs? Thus, will the implementation of the inclusion system take place at the expense of pupils with disabilities? There are countless questions of this nature to be asked, and, therefore, doubts persist.

The idea of inclusive education is based on the social model of disability, according to which a child does not change and adapt to the school system, but on the contrary, the school and the education system must change to meet the individual needs of all children, both with and without disabilities. Inclusion, then, does not equal assimilation, i.e. fitting all the children into the same pattern. Its basic principle is flexibility, i.e. recognizing that children can learn at a different pace, and teachers should be able to support their learning in a way that is adapted to their diverse needs, abilities and pace of development (Firkowska-Mankiewicz, 2004).

Inclusive education is growing in interest worldwide. In many European countries, the number of special schools has been steadily decreasing, while the number of elementary (public, inclusion) schools, in which children with special educational needs learn together with their peers without disabilities, has been increasing. *Supporters* of that form of education list its benefits, and among them they name the following: a change in attitudes of pupils in contact with their peers with disabilities on daily basis, greater independence and an easier start in life for children with disabilities, and, finally, a reduction in public spending.

In this respect, Poland, as a part of the European community, cannot remain backwater. Let us hope that our concerns and doubts will be dispelled. Certainly, thorough research that would provide the basis on which to formulate guidelines for public school teachers on how to cope and constructively support the development of pupils with special educational needs in the inclusive system can contribute to this. Examples of well-tried research strategies as well as techniques for the joint teaching of children with and without disabilities seem to be the most necessary and useful. The research carried out in this project aims to serve this purpose.

Research review

Most academic article on inclusive education, which have been published in Poland since the late 1990s (or since the introduction of school integration), can be classified

into two broad thematic groups. The first focuses on the effectiveness of inclusive education, and the second explores the conditions and course of effective integration.

As far as the effectiveness of inclusive education is concerned, mainly the following issues have been explored:

- socio-emotional relationships in inclusive groups (Kijak 2014, 2016; Bąbka, 2003; Ćwirynkało, 2003; Lipińska-Lokś, 2003; Majewicz, 2003; Sakowicz-Boboryko, 2003; Kornaś, 2004; Maciarz, 2005; Mikrut, 2004; Wiącek, 2005; Zamkowska, 2005),
- satisfaction level in respect to meeting special needs of pupils with disabilities under the conditions of inclusive education (Lipińska, 2000; Gołubiew-Konieczna, 2002),
- learning effects of pupils with special needs whilst their learning takes place under these conditions (Dziuba, 2000; Zaorska, 2001; Sekułowicz, 2002; Chrzanowska, 2002, 2004, 2006; Skrzetuska, 2003; Gajdzica, 2004; Jachimczak, 2006; Parys, 2006; Masierak-Baran, 2009; Marek-Ruka, 2010; Grzyb, 2013),
- inclusion in college (Podgórska-Jachnik, 2002; Zaorska, 2002; Ochonczenko, 2006; Cierpiałowska, 2009).

As for the theme of integration determinants, the following issues have been discussed:

- attitudes of various social groups towards integration or inclusive education (Kossewska, 2000; Łaś, 2002; Błaszczyk, 2003; Klaczak, 2004; Rutkowski, 2005),
- teacher preparation for work with supporting educators and their mode of operation (Dyduch, Klaczak & Kociuba, 2000; Baranowicz, 2002; Bartnikowska & Wójcik, 2004; Minczakiewicz, 2004; Garlej-Drzewiecka, 2004; Baraniewicz, 2006; Baraniewicz & Cierpiałowska, 2008; Bartuś, 2009; Zacharuk, 2011; Bombińska-Domżał, 2014),
- the mode of placing pupils in inclusive institutions (Baraniewicz, 2003; Parys & Olszewski, 2003),
- support for students in inclusive educational system (Gajdzica, 2001, 2003; Gołubiew-Konieczna, 2002; Kazanowska, Sadowska & Kazanowski, 2003; Lipińska & Rogoża, 2003; Oszustowicz, 2004),
- co-operation between the parents of a child with special educational and developmental needs and the educational institution (a kindergarten or a school) (Parys & Olszewski, 2003; Kondracka & Wyrzykowska, 2004).

However, due to the need for cross-cultural comparisons, the Polish results of this study will be organized according to the following UNESCO model.
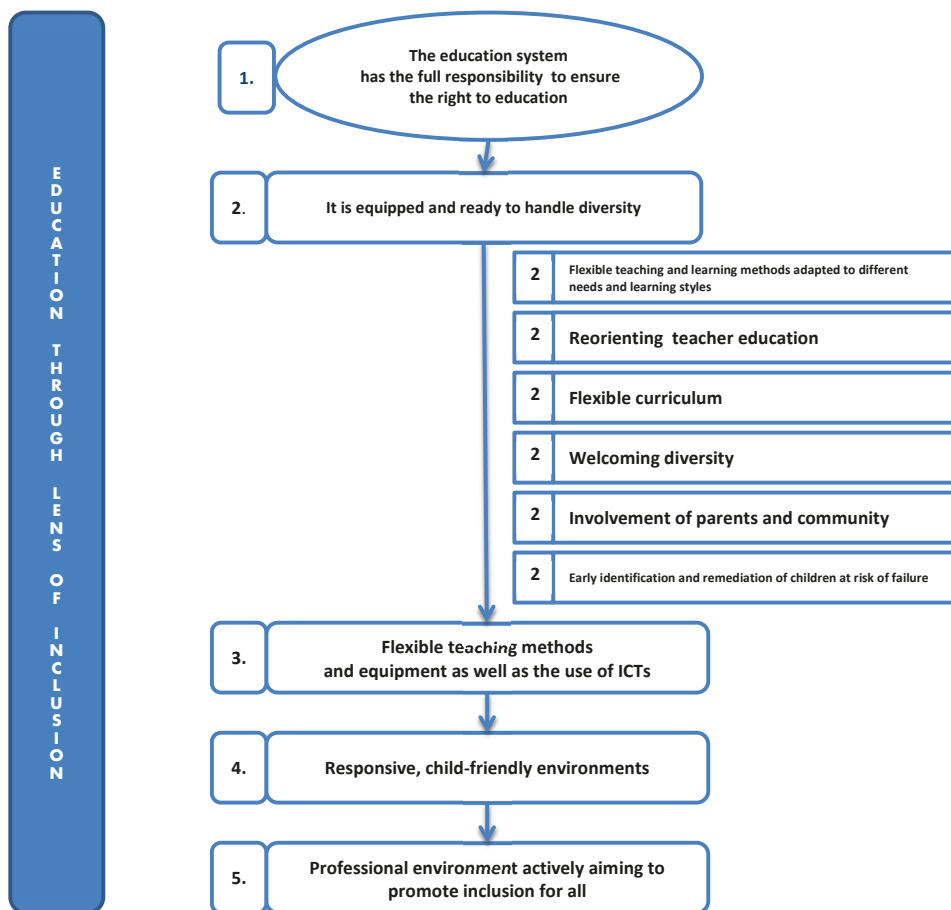
Figure 8. Flexible teaching and learning methods adapted to different needs and learning styles (Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education, 2009).

To adapt to different needs and learning styles, the possibilities and special needs of a particular pupil must first be identified. It should be done by the following:

- the examination of documents, i.e. decisions and opinions regarding the pupil,
- multidimensional diagnosis of the pupil's level of functioning,
- definition of his/her specific needs,
- selection of the appropriate and adequate diagnostic methods,
- preparation of an IEP or CARD of the pupil's individual needs and a plan of support activities.

The proper execution of these tasks is possible once the necessary conditions are met, among them:

- knowledge and know-how skills,
- simple structure and less time-consuming preparation of these documents.

Research (Zacharuk, 2011; Bartuś, 2009) shows that teachers voice a number of concerns about their own substantive preparation that would enable them to diagnose pupils with special needs and develop individual plans and programmes for them. Sometimes teachers question their competence for working with pupils with disabilities, even to the point of deeming it insufficient (Garlej-Drzewiecka, 2004).

Still, on more than one occasion, teachers working (or planning to work) with pupils with special needs signal a willingness to receive professional training and to improve skills or acquire new ones in the field of work with pupils with special needs, including identifying their needs and developing customized programmes. That is particularly applicable to teachers with many years of experience as well as those working in secondary schools (Zacharuk, 2011).

Re-orienting teacher education

Regardless of their specialization, all students preparing for work as educational or pedagogical teachers should have a compulsory education module on working with pupils. It should be of substantial length, e.g. a full semester (Zacharuk, 2011).

The training of future teachers should promote such traits as openness, creativity and flexibility. It is also important to stimulate future teachers' personal competence to protect them against burnout. The selection of people for the teaching profession is of great importance because their temperament and personality traits (such as empathy and self-esteem) affect their attitude towards joint education of all children, including the able-bodied ones and those with disabilities (Kossewska, 2000).

Students should be aware that a teacher must be able to constantly reflect on his or her work and be ready to extend his or her knowledge and acquire new skills continuously (Zacharuk, 2011).

Studies show (Zacharuk, 2011; Bartus, 2009) that current undergraduate study programmes should be expanded, especially to include content related to diagnosing special needs and formulating individual programmes for pupils.

Flexible curriculum responsive to diverse needs and not overloaded with academic content

Since the school year 2009/2010, vital changes have been introduced into the Polish education system. The new curriculum introduced at the time, especially in its part concerning pre-school and early primary school education, stipulated that pupils with different possibilities (including those with disabilities) should be included, to a larger extent than before, into regular classes. "Realization of a curriculum concentrated on the child, their individual pace of development and possibilities of learning" (Ordinance, 2008, Annex 2, p. 4) was set as a task for schools. The curriculum provides a basis that is applicable to all pupils (except the ones with mental retardation, either mild or severe) and specifies the main set of pedagogical effects to be achieved. Yet it does not deal with specified curriculum components, as it serves primarily to provide guidelines for school curricula. A school can design curricula for given pupils on its own or choose them from the ready-made proposals approved for use by the Ministry.

The abovementioned regulations allow for taking into account developmental differences between individual pupils in the didactic-educational system and subsequent customization of content, methods and organization of pedagogical activities. A possibility was also introduced to ensure maximum development opportunities for pupils with different abilities, which is the esspecial educational needs ce and goal of individualization (Skrzetuska, 2010).

An IEP or a CARD of individual needs and a plan of supporting actions are designed for individual pupils. They include the following types of classes necessary for the pupil's security to be ensured and needs to be met:

- compulsory educational classes in an adjusted form,
- additional revalidation classes (of didactic-compensatory nature),
- additional specialization classes in the following forms: corrective - compensatory classes, speech therapy, sociotherapy and other classes of therapeutic character,
- classes connected with the choice of educational course and vocation as well as those aimed at planning education and a career,
- skill development classes.

The necessity to perform the above tasks arises from the new legal regulations. While implementing those tasks, one needs to bear in mind the following: "Inclusive education concerns teaching that is more concentrated on the child than on the curriculum. . . . Flexibility is the vital factor" (Zacharuk, 2011, p. 4).

However, curriculum flexibility and individualization have their limits because of class sizes. In the varied classes, at times pupils with disabilities cannot follow the course of the lesson. They display weariness and experience frustration coming from the inability to absorb knowledge or understand the teacher's orders. As a consequence, they develop learned helplessness, which entails the spiral of school failures and general activity reduction, which then leads to the limitation of cognitive abilities and social contacts (Marek-Ruka, 2010).

The image of many institutions that have decided to engage in educating pupils with disabilities, as revealed by empirical research, has proved to be negative. One of the most frequently mentioned problems was that teachers were not prepared to work with pupils with special educational needs (Dyduch, Klaczak & Maciuba, 2000, Gajdzica, 2001; Kondracka & Wyrzykowska, 2004). As a result, pedagogues failed to observe the rules, which were indispensable to ensure effective didactic process and its positive results in the work with pupils with disabilities (Gajdzica, 2001, 2003).

However, teachers in integrated classes demonstrated a number of positive traits: they turned out to be empathetic, caring and more creative than teachers from public schools (Kossewska, 2000; Baranowicz, 2002). Those traits are conducive to adjusting curricula and teaching methods to individual pupils' needs.

Research has shown that co-operation between the lead teacher and other specialists co-organizing flexible curriculums may be a contentious issue. Those problems are very often caused by an insufficiently defined range of supporting teacher's duties as well as nature of co-operation with the lead pedagogue, or by the level of professional preparation and qualifications to work with pupils with various difficulties resulting from different types and levels of disability (Minczakiewicz, 2004; Bartnikowska & Wójcik, 2004; Marek-Ruka, 2010; Bombińska-Domżał, 2014).

The model of integrated education, and even more so in the case of inclusive education, has proved to be a challenge for teachers who, under that framework, are required to constantly develop their competencies. Teachers working in integrated institutions recognize the need to improve their skills and seek new forms of co-operation. It needs to be remembered that being a competent teacher in our dynamically changing reality is a process; that is to say, one cannot assume to be ultimately completely developed as an educator but instead one should invariably pursue excellence (Baraniewicz & Cierpiałowska, 2008).

Welcoming diversity

It needs to be kept in mind that within the framework of inclusive education it is assumed that special development and educational needs may be caused by various factors.

Inclusive education is to contribute to the development of each pupil. In the light of research, it is possible to state that one of the factors that facilitate the emergence and consolidation of positive attitudes towards the idea and practice of joint teaching of people with special educational needs and those who are able-bodied is the direct experience of individuals concerned. The positive impact of this factor was especially seen among teachers: those who had had an experience in integrated teaching of pupils with disabilities developed a positive attitude towards integration (Łaś, 2002).

Moreover, research has shown that many teachers assess their creative competence as low, which further translates into indifferent attitudes towards school integration (Bartuś, 2009).

The research results lead to the conclusion that differences in teachers' views on the joint teaching of able-bodied children and youth and those with disabilities were determined by the level of theoretical preparation for their professional work. The teachers who studied special education adopted a much more positive attitude with regard to integrated education than the special pedagogues who had not received any theoretical preparation (Pilecki, Kościółek & Gruntkowski, 1994).

Although integrated institutions, and even more so the inclusive ones, are expected to be open to diversity and show acceptance thereof, research has revealed that pupils did not find their way to integrated classes by chance. Baraniewicz (2003) stated that integrated school takes concrete actions of a selective nature to recruit pupils to integrated classes. It sets, for example, some barriers for children from low-income families.

The problem arises clearly when it comes to pupils with mental retardation. Research (Parys & Olszewski, 2003) has shown that there are distinct differences regarding social background in the group of pupils with mental retardation who attend integrated and special needs schools. The differences provoke reflection on factors determining whether pupils can qualify for integrated education.

Involvement of parents and community

The educational environment is mainly shaped by teachers, but also other participating subjects, i.e.:

- pupils (able-bodied ones and those with special educational needs),
- pupils' parents,
- various specialists.

It is mutual co-operation between parents, teachers and specialists that is particularly important for educational success and inclusion. Research indicates (Kondracka & Wyrzykowska, 2004) that parents whose children are educated in the integration system see co-operation with teachers as being of better quality than those whose children attend special schools. It is worth noting that the co-operation of pedagogues with the parents of mentally retarded children develops better in the framework of an integrated school than of a special one (Parys & Olszewski, 2003).

Moreover, noteworthy is the fact that within integration institutions, various actions were taken to improve support for pupils; still, many of them were only of an experimental character. Pupils, parents and teachers were informed about the legitimacy of integration and the specificity of how pupils with disabilities function (Gołubiew-Konieczna, 2002; Kazanowska, Sadowska & Kazanowski, 2003; Lipińska & Rogoża, 2003; Oszustowicz, 2004); teachers were provided with specialist advice (Lipiński & Rogoża 2003), and a well-suited selection of classes was conducted, which led to improvement in social relations between the able-bodied pupils and those with disabilities (Lipińska & Rogoża, 2003; Oszustowicz, 2004). Unfortunately, the majority of the activities undertaken have not grow into a part of a systemic solution.

Parents' attitudes towards integrated education vary; yet, generally speaking, they are positive (Błaszczyk, 2003; Klaczak, 2004). Still, some parents have had negative experiences and maintain ambivalent or negative attitudes in this respect (Bobeł, 2003; Minaczkiewicz, 2003; Rutkowski, 2005). Research reveals that most parents of children with disabilities (70%) are convinced that their choice of educational institution has been accurate. Both, parents of children learning in integrated classes and parents of children learning in special institutions are of the opinion that the choSEN institution is the best form of education for their children.

It must be added, however, that in both types of environments there are parents who are skeptical about each of the forms' compliance with school obligations (30%) (Marek-Ruka, 2010). Particularly critical towards integrated education are the parents of children with broad developmental difficulties who, after a series of educational failures, have been subjected to a requalification process that re-assigned them to a special school (Grzyb, 2013).

Early identification and remediation of children at risk of failure

Regular evaluation of the effect or achievements of a pupil must be ensured, and, depending on the results, the following should be modified:

- assessment of the pupil's level of functioning,
- special educational needs,
- their IEP or CARD of individual needs, and plan of supporting actions,
- structure of curricular and extracurricural activities.

Generally, on the basis of the analysis of research conducted so far, it can be stated that educational results of pupils with disabilities in the inclusive system can be either positive or negative, when compared to performance of pupils with disabilities in special schools.

As far as the positive effects are concerned, it has been noted that the pupils included in the framework of inclusive system were able to obtain higher levels of knowledge and academic skills (Marek-Ruka, 2010), establish contacts with peers with ease, and display a higher level of communication skills (Dziuba, 2000); added to that, positive qualities were fostered among the pupils with disabilities, such as courage or forbearance (Zaorska, 2001).

Research has shown that positive effects of inclusive education are to be observed not only among pupils with disabilities, but also among other participants of the integration process (pupils without disabilities, parents and teachers). The effects included, for example, a higher level of tolerance or empathy, and also knowledge on people wth disabilities (Zaorska, 2001; Sekułowicz, 2002; Parys, 2006).

Yet, much of the research indicates that the effect of educating pupils with disabilities in the inclusive system are far below expectations. The pupils had lower levels of skills related to self-control, socialization and self-reliance, as well as low self-esteem. They exhibited anti-social behaviour more often (Wisiecka-Tymkiewicz & Gębala, 2000), as well as a lower level of adaptation to school situations (Chrzanowska, 2002), and low self-reliance in fulfilling tasks (Skrzetuska, 2003). They were characterized by a low level of aspiration (Gajdzica, 2004) and achieved lower scores in terms of skills and adaptation (Chrzanowska, 2006). They also showed lower self-esteem in comparison to pupils from special schools and public schools (Jachimczak, 2006).

The satisfaction level in meeting the developmental needs of pupils with disabilities in inclusive classes turned out to be varied (Lipińska 2000). However, with regard to pupils with intellectual disability, the need for safety was best fulfilled, while the need

for appreciation and self-realization proved to be left unsatisfied (Gołubiew-Konieczna, 2002).

The results of research on pupils with intellectual disability in a non-segregated education system raise concerns. It has been shown that for this group of pupils, being educated in special schools is more beneficial (Chrzanowska, 2006; Masierak-Baran, 2009), and a number of these pupils, following early experiences in inclusive schools, have to be assigned to special ones, which always creates additional stress (Grzyb, 2013).

Flexible teaching methods with innovative approaches to teaching aids and equipment, as well as the use of ICT

In the system of inclusion, cutting edge technologies may be used in different ways, for example:

- as options of modern therapy methods, (e.g. EEG-biofeedback, hearing training by Tomatis or Johanspecial educational needs),
- as technologies that support information reception for children with special educational needs sory impairment (e.g. hearing aids, cochlear implants, induction loops, optical enlargers and refreshable Braille displays),
- as a way to convey and disseminate knowledge (e.g. e-learning, "educational cloud"),
- as a communication tool between different subjects in the education process (contact between teachers, specialists and parents),
- as a medium of promoting a positive image of people with disabilities (Bieganowska, 2012).

Responsive, child-friendly environment

In the light of research conducted in Poland, one can observe a tendency to reject and isolate pupils with disabilities by the able-bodied pupils both in inclusive (Brasławska – Haque, 2002; Bąbka, 2003; Ćwirynkało, 2003; Lipińska-Lokś, 2003; Wiącek, 2006) and general schools (Ćwirynkało, 2004; Grządziel, 2003), or in what is referred to as special classes in general schools (Jurgielewicz-Wojtaszek, Karczewska & 2005). The situation of pupils with intellectual disabilities in general schools turned out be particularly difficult (Janiszewska-Nieścioruk, 2009). Apparently, they were not only isolated but also faced aggression and violence from their peers (Mikrut, 2004).

Pupils with disabilities usually obtained lower sociometric positions, regardless of their stage of education (kindergarten, primary school, or high school) and kind of disability (Jurgielewicz-Wojtaszek & Karczewska, 2005; Zamkowska, 2005; Baraniewicz, 2009). In addition, the visibility of external stigmas as well as the level of disability is of vital importance here. The deeper and more visible the disability, the less accepted the pupil living with it is (Nowicka, 2000; Kornaś, 2004; Maciarz, 2005).

At the same time, it was stated that disability does not necessarily determine an unfavorable social and emotional situation of the pupil among their peers. (Sakowicz-Boboryko, 2003; Kornaś, 2004).

To transform the school into a friendly environment for children, diverse actions need to be taken, aimed at creating an authentic community. Research shows that a good way of achieving it is, for example, organizing classes for able-bodied pupils with the aim of creating multimedia material on people with disabilities (Pielecki 2012), or running educational programmes (Kirenko & Gindrich, 2007), as indifferent or negative attitudes are often caused by a lack of impartial knowledge.

What is more, research shows that children who have had contact with peers with disabilities in kindergarten are open-minded when it comes to the idea of joint education and show more prosocial traits (Al-Khamisy, 2006, 2013). Interestingly, research indicates that relations between pupils in class have a positive influence on the lead teacher (conscientiousness) and supporting teacher (amicability) (Wiącek, 2003).

Professional environment deliberately and actively aiming to promote inclusion for all

Inclusion is an idea with numerous advantages:

- it shows that everybody has a right to education and development,
- it recognizes and respects the diversity of people in terms of performance status, gender, age, origin, language, individual experience, etc.,
- it leads to clichés and stereotypes being dispelled,
- it evokes openness and flexibility and triggers activity and creativity,
- it is a dynamic process that causes development (Zacharuk, 2011).

Therefore, inclusion should be implemented at every level of education (from kindergarten to university). However, inclusion at a higher level of education requires respecting certain rules, such as the principle of subjectivity, dialogue, support, full participation, as well as an individual and flexible approach (Cierpiałowska, 2009).

REFERENCES

Al-Khamisy, D. (2006). *Edukacja przedszkolna a integracja społeczna.* [Preschool education and social integration]. Warszawa: Żak.

Al-Khamisy, D. (2013). *Edukacja włączająca edukacja dialogu. W poszukiwaniu modelu edukacji dla ucznia ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi.* [Inclusive education as education of dialogue. Towards the model of education for the pupil with special educational needs]. Warszawa: APS.

Baraniewicz, D. (2006). Uczeń w klasie integracyjnej wybór czy przypadek? [The pupil in the integrated class - a choise or a chance]. In: C. Kosakowski, A. Krause (ed.), *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 4. Normalizacja środowisk życia osób niepełnosprawnych.* [Special education discourses 4. Normalization of living environment of people with disabilities]. Olsztyn: UWM.

Baraniewicz, D. & Cierpiałowska, T. (2008). Integrated class teachers, their competences and co-operation. In: T. Żółkowska, M. Wlazło (ed.), *Special pedagogy within theoretical and practical dimension.* University of Szczecin: House ZAPOL.

Baranowicz, K. (2002). Z badań nad osobowością nauczycieli wspierających rozwój dzieci ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi. [Research on the personality of teachers supporting the development of children with special educational needs]. In: W. Dykcik, Cz. Kosakowski, J. Kuczyńska - Kwapisz (ed.), *Pedagogika specjalna szansą na realizację potrzeb osób niepełnosprawnych.* [Special education as an opportunity for meeting the needs of people with disabilities]. Olsztyn – Poznań, Warszawa: PTP Oddział w Poznaniu.

Bartnikowska, U. & Wójcik, M. (2004). Zaniedbania w aspekcie triady: szkoła – rodzice – dziecko w kształceniu integracyjnym i masowym dzieci z wadą słuchu. [Neglect in terms of the triad: school - parents - child in integration and mainsteaming education of hearing impaired children]. In: Z. Gajdzica i A. Klinik (ed.), *Wątki zaniedbane, zaniechane, nieobecne w procesie edukacji i wsparcia społecznego osób niepełnosprawnych.* [Neglected, abandoned, and abspecial educational needs t threads of the education process and social support of people with disabilities]. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.

Bartuś, E. (2009). *Kompetencje diagnostyczne i kreatywne nauczycieli szkół publicznych a ich postawy wobec integracji szkolnej.* [Diagnostic and creative competences of public school teachers and their attitudes towards school integration]. Nieopublikowana praca doktorska, Uniwersytet Pedagogiczny, Kraków.

Bąbka, J. (2003). Psychospołeczne aspekty efektywności edukacji dzieci w systemie integracyjnym. [Psychosocial aspects of school effectiveness of children in integration]. In: Z. Kazanowski, D. Osik – Chudowolska (ed.), *Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i interakcjach społecznych.* [Integration of persons with disabilities in education and social interactions]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Bieganowska, A.M. (2012). *Przekaz medialny w modyfikowaniu postaw studentów wobec niepełnosprawności.* [The media effects in modifying students' attitudes towards disability]. Nieopublikowana praca doktorska.

Błaszczyk, K. (2003). Poglądy rodziców dotyczące integracji społecznej dzieci niepełnosprawnych w przedszkolu [Parents' views of social integration of children with disabilities in kindergarten]. In: Z. Kazanowski, D. Osik – Chudowolska (ed.), *Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i interakcjach społecznych.* [Integration of persons with disabilities in education and social interactions]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Bobeł, B. (2003). Postawy rodziców wobec możliwości integracji szkolnej dzieci o specjalnych potrzebach edukacyjnych. [Parents' attitudes towards the possibility of school integration for children with special educational needs]. In: Z. Kazanowski, D. Osik – Chudowolska,

Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i interakcjach społecznych. [Integration of persons with disabilities in education and social interactions]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Bogucka, J. (1996). Nauczanie integracyjne w Polsce. [Integrated teaching in Poland]. In: J. Bogucka, M. Kościelska (red.), *Wychowanie i nauczanie integracyjne. Nowe doświadczenia.* [Education and integrated teaching. New experiences]. Warszawa: Centrum Metodyczne Pomocy Psychologiczno-Pedagogicznej MEN.

Bombińska-Domżał, A. (2014). Współpraca pedagoga specjalnego i nauczyciela przedmiotu w procesie terapii i edukacji uczniów zaburzeniami ze spektrum autyzmu w kształceniu integracyjnym. [Special teacher and subject teacher co-operation during the process of therapy and education of students with autism spectrum disorders in integrated settings]. In: J. Kossewska (red). *Osoba ze stanami ze spektrum autyzmu. Możliwości aktywnego życia.* [The person with autism spektrum conditions. The possibilities of active living]. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Jak.

Brasławska – Haque, M. (2002). Stosunek do niepełnosprawności dzieci pełnosprawnych uczęszczających do przedszkola integracyjnego. [Attitudes of children of integrated kindergarten towards the disability]. In: A. Pielecki (ed.), *Problemy pedagogiki specjalnej w okresie przemian społecznych.* [The issues of special education in social transition]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Chrzanowska I. (2002). Uczeń z upośledzeniem umysłowym w szkole ogólnodostępnej. [A student with mental retardation in mainstream school]. In: W. Dykcik, Cz. Kosakowski, J. Kuczyńska – Kwapisz (ed.), *Pedagogika specjalna szansą na realizację potrzeb osób niepełnosprawnych.* [Special education as an opportunity for meeting needs of people with disabilities]. Olsztyn – Poznań, Warszawa: PTP Oddział w Poznaniu.

Chrzanowska, I. (2004). Szanse powodzenia kształcenia uczniów upośledzonych umysłowo w stopniu lekkim w podstawowej szkole ogólnodostępnej. [The chances of education success of students with mild mental retardation in primary mainstream school]. In: G. Dryżałowska, H. Żuraw (ed.), *Integracja społeczna osób niepełnosprawnych.* [Social integration of persons with disabilities]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie „Żak".

Chrzanowska, I. (2006). Z badań nad efektami włączającego kształcenia uczniów niepełnosprawnych intelektualnie . [Research on the effects of inclusive education on students with intellectual disabilities]. In: C. Kosakowski, A. Krause, S. Przybyliński: *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 5. Pomiędzy teorią a praktyką.* [Special education discourses 5. Between theory and practice]. Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego.

Cierpiałowska, T. (2009). *Studenci z niepełnosprawnością. Problemy funkcjonowania edukacyjnego i psychospołecznego.* [Students with a disability. Educational and psychosocial functioning problems]. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UP.

Ćwirynkało, K. (2003). Pozycja socjometryczna uczniów niepełnosprawnych a postawa nauczycieli wobec integracji. [Sociometric position of students with disabilities and teachers' attitude towards integration]. In: Z. Kazanowski, D. Osik – Chudowolska*, Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i interakcjach społecznych.* [Integration of persons with disabilities in education and social interactions]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Ćwirynkało, K. (2004). Przyszłość edukacji specjalnej w ocenie nauczycieli szkół specjalnych i masowych. [The future of special education in teachers' perception in special and mainstream settings]. In: Cz. Kosakowski, A. Krause (ed.). *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 3. Rehabilitacja, opieka i edukacja specjalna w perspektywie zmian.* [Special education discourses 3. Rehabilitation, care, and special education in the context of transition]. Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego.

Dyduch, E., Klaczak, M. & Maciuba, D. (2000). Formy pomocy specjalnej uczniom z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w szkole masowej i specjalnej. [Special assistance forms for students with intellectual disabilities in mainstream and special schools]. In: A.

Rakowska i J. Baran (ed.). *Dylematy pedagogiki Specjalnej.* [Special education dilemas]. Kraków: UP.

Dziuba, D. (2000). Efektywność integracyjnych i segregacyjnych form kształcenia uczniów z umiarkowanym upośledzeniem umysłowym. [The effectiveness of integrated and segregated education for students with moderate mental retardation]. In: A. Rakowska i J. Baran (ed.). *Dylematy pedagogiki Specjalnej.* [Special education dilemas]. Kraków: UP.

Firkowska-Mankiewicz, A. (2004). Edukacja włączająca wyzwaniem dla polskiej szkoły. [Inclusive education - the challenge for Polish school]. *Szkoła Specjalna*, 1, pp. 19–26.

Firkowska-Mankiewicz, A. (2010). Co nowego w edukacji włączającej. [What is new in inclusive education]. *Edukacja*, No. 2, pp. 16–23.

Gajdzica, Z. (2001). Nauczyciel edukacji wczesnoszkolnej w zreformowanej szkole powszechnej jako organizator procesu kształcenia dziecka upośledzonego umysłowo w stopniu lekkim. [The teacher of early school education in the reformed primary school as an organizer of the learning process of the child with mild mental retardation]. In: Z. Palak (ed.), *Pedagogika specjalna w reformowanym ustroju edukacyjnym.* [Special education in the reformed educational system]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Gajdzica, Z. (2003). Wybrane uwarunkowania procesu kształcenia ucznia z lekkim upośledzeniem umysłowym w niższych klasach szkoły podstawowej ogólnodostępnej. [Conditions of education process of the student with mild mental retardation in initial classes of primary mainstream school]. In: Z. Kazanowski, D. Osik – Chudowolska (ed*.), Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i interakcjach społecznych*. [Integration of persons with disabilities in education and social interactions]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Gajdzica, Z. (2004). Forma kształcenia specjalnego a bezradność i zaradność uczniów z lekkim upośledzeniem umysłowym. [Special education forms and the helplessness and self-efficacy of students with mild mental retardation]. In: C. Kosakowski, A. Krause (ed.), *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 3. Rehabilitacja, opieka i edukacja specjalna w perspektywie zmian.* [Special education discourses 3. Rehabilitation, care, and special education in the context of transition]. Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego.

Garlej – Drzewicka, E. (2004). Pedeutologiczny kontekst myślenia o nauczycielu wiodącym i wspierającym. [Thinking about teacher as a leading and supporting person in the context of pedeutology]. In: C. Kosakowski, A. Krause (ed.), *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 3. Rehabilitacja, opieka i edukacja specjalna w perspektywie zmian.* [Special education discourses 3. Rehabilitation, care, and special education in the context of transition]. Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego.

Gołubiew – Konieczna, M. (2002). Różnorodność potrzeb ucznia niepełnosprawnego intelektualnie – możliwości ich zaspokojenia w klasie integracyjnej. [Diversity of needs of student with intellectually disability - possibility of meeting the needs in integrated classroom]. In: E. Górniewicz i A. Krause (ed.), *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej. Od tradycjonalizmu do ponowoczesności*. [Special education discourses. From traditionalism towards postmodernity]. Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego.

Grządziel, G. (2003). Dziecko autystyczne na tle środowiska szkoły ogólnodostępnej bez klas integracyjnych. [Autistic child in the context of mainstream school environment without integrated classes]. In: Z. Janiszewska – Nieścioruk (ed.), *Człowiek z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną, Tom I, Wybrane problemy osobowości, rodzin i edukacji osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną.* [A person with intellectual disability, Volume I, Selected issues of personality, families, and education of people with intellectual disabilities]. Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls.

Grzyb, K. (2013*). Uwarunkowania związane z przenoszeniem uczniów niepełnosprawnych ze szkół integracyjnych do specjalnych.* [Conditions associated with transferring students with disabilities from integrated schools to special ones]. Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls.

Jachimczak, B. (2006). Funkcjonowanie szkolne uczniów ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi w wybranych formach kształcenia na pierwszym etapie edukacji . [The functioning of pupils with special educational needs at school in selected educational forms at the first stage of education]. In: C. Kosakowski, A. Krause, S. Przybyliński: *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 5. Pomiędzy teorią a praktyką*. [Special education discourses 5. Between theory and practice]. Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego.

Janiszewska-Nieścioruk, Z. (ed.).(2009*). Problemy edukacji integracyjnej dzieci i młodzieży z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*. [The issues of inclusive education of children and youth with intellectual disability]. Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls.

Jurgielewicz – Wojtaszek, M. & Karczewska, M. (2005). Integracja uczniów z dysfunkcją słuchu z młodzieżą słyszącą w szkole średniej. [Integration of pupils with hearing impairments with the youth without impairments at high school]. In: W. Pilecka, A. Ozga, P. Kurtek (ed.), *Dziecko ze specjalnymi potrzebami w ekosystemie*. [The child with special needs in the ecosystem]. Kielce: Wydawnictwo Akademii Świętokrzyskiej.

Kazanowska, B., Sadowska, A. & Kazanowski, Z. (2003). Kontakty integracyjne a wiedza dzieci 8-letnich na temat funkcjonowania osób niewidomych. [Interactions and knowledge on the functioning of 8-year-old blind children]. In: Z. Kazanowski, D. Osik – Chudowolska (ed*.), Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i interakcjach społecznych*. [Integration of persons with disabilities in education and social interactions]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Kijak, R. (2014). *Seksualność człowieka z niepełnopsrawnością inteelktualną a rodzina*. [Sexuality of the human with intelectual disability and the family]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Lekarskie PZWL.

Kijak, R. (2016). *Dorośli z głębszą niepełnosprawnością intelektualną jako partnerzy, małżonkowie i rodzice* [Adults with intelectual disability as partners, couples and parents]. Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls.

Kirenko, J. & Gindrich, A. (2007). *Odkrywanie niepełnosprawności wzrokowej w nauczaniu włączającym.* [Discovering visual disability in inclusive teaching]. Lublin: Wyższa Szkoła Społeczno-Przyrodnicza.

Klaczak, M. (2004). Szanse rozwojowe dla uczniów z wadą słuchu w młodszym wieku szkolnym w klasie integracyjnej. [Developmental opportunities for students with hearing impairment of young school-age in an integrated class]. In: D. Czubala, J. Lach – Rosocha (ed.), *Niepełnosprawni wśród nas. O dostęp do edukacji i prawo do rozwoju.* [people with disabilities among us. The access to education and the right to development]. Bielsko – Biała: ATH.

Kondracka, M. M. & Wyrzykowska, D. (2004). Sytuacja edukacyjna uczniów z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w placówkach kształcenia specjalnego i integracyjnego w województwie podlaskim. [Educational situation of students with intellectual disabilities in special education and integration institutions in Podlaskie voivodship]. In: C. Kosakowski, A. Krause (ed.), *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 3. Rehabilitacja, opieka i edukacja specjalna w perspektywie zmian.* [Special education discourses 3. Rehabilitation, care, and special education in the context of transition]. Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego.

Kornaś, D. (2004). Relacje między dziećmi pełno- i niepełnosprawnymi w klasie integracyjnej w wieku wczesnoszkolnym. [Relationships between children with and without disabilities in an early school-age integrated class]. In: G. Dryżałowska, H. Żuraw (ed*.), Integracja społeczna osób niepełnosprawnych*. [Social integration of people with disabilities]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie „Żak".

Kossewska, J. (2000). *Uwarunkowania postaw. Nauczyciele i inne grupy zawodowe wobec integracji szkolnej dzieci niepełnosprawnych.* [Determinants of attitudes. Teachers and other professional groups towards school integration of children with disabilities]. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej.

Krause, A. (2000). *Integracyjne złudzenia ponowoczesności (sytuacja ludzi niepełnosprawnych).* [Integrative illusions of postmodernity (the situation of people with disabilities)]. Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls.

Lipińska – Lokś, J. (2003). Psychospołeczna sytuacja dzieci z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w klasach integracyjnych. [Psychosocial situation of children with intellectual disabilities in integrated classes]. In: Z. Janiszewska – Nieścioruk (ed.) *Człowiek z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną, Tom I, Wybrane problemy osobowości, rodzin i edukacji osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną.* [A person with intellectual disability, Volume I, Selected issues of personality, families, and education of people with intellectual disabilities]. Kraków: Impuls.

Lipińska, J. (2000). Zaspokojenie potrzeb psychicznych dzieci niepełnosprawnych w klasach integracyjnych. [Satisfying psychological needs of children with disabilities in integrated classes]. In: A. Rakowska, J. Baran (ed.), *Dylematy pedagogiki Specjalnej.* [Special education dilemas]. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogicznej.

Lipińska, J. & Rogoża, A. (2003). Stosunek i zachowanie dzieci pełnosprawnych wobec dzieci niepełnosprawnych w klasach integracyjnych. [Attitudes and behaviours of children without disabilities towards children with disabilities in integrated classes]. In: Z. Kazanowski, D. Osik – Chudowolska*, Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i interakcjach społecznych.* [Integration of persons with disabilities in education and social interactions]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Łaś, H. (2002). Uwarunkowania edukacji integracyjnej w opiniach nauczycieli. [Determinants of integrated education in teachers' opinions]. In: E. Górniewicz, A. Krause (ed.), *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej. Od tradycjonalizmu do ponowoczesności.* [Special education discourses. From traditionalism towards postmodernity].Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego.

Maciarz, A. (2005). Integracja edukacyjna w świetle doświadczeń i oczekiwań dzieci niepełnosprawnych. [School integration in the light of experience and expectations of children with disabilities]. In: W. Pilecka, A. Ozga, P. Kurtek (ed.), *Dziecko ze specjalnymi potrzebami w ekosystemie.* [The child with special needs in the ecosystem]. Kielce: Wydawnictwo Akademii Świętokrzyskiej.

Majewicz, P. (2003). Osobowościowe uwarunkowania społecznej integracji młodzieży niepełnosprawnej ruchowo. [Personality determinants of social integration of physically youth with disabilities]. In: Z. Kazanowski, D. Osik – Chudowolska*, Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i interakcjach społecznych.* [Integration of persons with disabilities in education and social interactions]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Marek-Ruka, M. (2010). Przemiany teorii i praktyki w edukacji osób niepełnosprawnych. [Theory and practice transformation in the education of persons with disabilities]. *Niepełnosprawność*, 3, pp. 17–31.

Masierak-Baran, A. (2009). *Formy kształcenia jako uwarunkowania obrazu siebie i obrazu szkoły u uczniów z upośledzeniem umysłowym.* [Education forms as determinants of self-image and the school-image of pupils with mental retardation]. Nieopublikowana praca doktorska, Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski, Lublin.

Mikrut, A. (2004). Uczniowie z upośledzeniem umysłowym jako ofiary międzyrówieśniczej przemocy i agresji w szkole ogólnodostępnej – wstępne rozeznanie problemu. [Students with mental retardation as victims of peer violence and aggression in the mainstream school – preliminary issue indication]. In: Z. Gajdzica i A. Klinik (ed.), *Wątki zaniedbane, zaniechane, nieobecne w procesie edukacji i wsparcia społecznego osób niepełnosprawnych.* [Neglected, abandoned, and abspecial educational needs t threads of the education process and social support of people with disabilities]. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.

Minczakiewicz, E. M. (2003). Młodzież niepełnosprawna i jej rodzice wobec integracji edukacyjnej. [Youth with disabilities and their parents towards the educational integration]. In: Z.

Kazanowski, D. Osik – Chudowolska, *Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i interakcjach społecznych*. [Integration of persons with disabilities in education and social interactions]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Minczakiewicz, E. M. (2004). Nauczyciel i jego rola w integracyjnym systemie kształcenia. [The teacher and his or her role in integrated education]. In: G. Dryżałowska, H. Żuraw (ed.), *Integracja społeczna osób niepełnosprawnych*. [Social integration of people with disabilities]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie „Żak".

Nowicka, A. (2000). Stopień psychospołecznej integracji dzieci przewlekle chorych w klasach szkoły ogólnodostępnej. [The level of psychosocial integration of chronically ill children in mainstream schools]. In: A. Rakowska, J. Baran (ed.), *Dylematy pedagogiki Specjalnej*. [Special education dilemas]. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogicznej.

Ochonczenko, H. (2006). Niepełnosprawni w kształceniu na poziomie wyższym – doświadczenia Uniwersytetu Zielonogórskiego. [People with disabilities in tertiaty education]. In: C. Kosakowski, A. Krause, S. Przybyliński: *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 5. Pomiędzy teorią a praktyką*. [Special education discourses 5. Between theory and practice].Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego.

Oszustowicz, B. (2004). Obraz osoby niepełnosprawnej w świadomości dzieci sześcioletnich z przedszkolnej grupy integracyjnej. [The image of people with disabilities in six-year-old children of a preschool integrated group]. In: G. Dryżałowska, H. Żuraw (ed.), *Integracja społeczna osób niepełnosprawnych*. [Social integration of people with disabilities]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie „Żak".

Parys, K. (2006). Gotowość młodzieży gimnazjalnej do integracji pozaszkolnej z niepełnosprawnymi rówieśnikami. [Junior high school pupils' readiness for extracurricular integration with peers with disabilities]. In: J. Sempruch (ed.), *Edukacja wobec wyzwań i zadań współczesności i przyszłości.* [Education in the face of challenges and tasks of the prespecial educational needs t and the future]. Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo UR.

Parys, K. & Olszewski, S. (2003). Dla kogo integracja? [Who is intergartion for?] In: E. Górniewicz i A. Krause (ed.), *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej. Konteksty teoretyczne*. [Special education discourses. Theoretical contexts]. Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego.

Parys, K. & Pilecki, J. (2005). Sytuacja społeczna uczniów niepełnosprawnych w klasach integracyjnych – idee, postulaty, realia. [The social situation of students with disabilities in integrated classes - ideas, postulates, and realities]. In: C. Kosakowski, A.Krause (red.), *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 4. Normalizacja środowisk życia osób niepełnosprawnych*. [Special education discourses 4. Normalization of living environment of people with disabilities]. Olsztyn: UMW.

Pielecki, A. (2012). *Zmiany postaw młodzieży wobec osób niepełnosprawnych.* [Changes in youth attitudes towards people with disabilities]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Pilecki, J., Kościółek, M. & Gruntkowski, Z. (1994). Postawy nauczycieli i studentów wobec integracji szkolnej dzieci o nietypowym rozwoju. [The teachers' and students' attitudes towards school integration of children with atypical development]. In: J. Fenczyn i J. Wyczesany *(ed.), Edukacja i integracja osób niepełnosprawnych. Materiały Pierwszego Europejskiego Kongresu „Niepełnosprawni bliżej Europy"*, Tom III, Kraków.

Podgórska-Jachnik, D. (2002). Uniwersytet Łódzki wobec problemów studentów niepełnosprawnych. [University of Lodz towards the problems of students with disabilities]. In: B. Harań (ed.) *Wielowymiarowość integracji w teorii i praktyce kształcenia w uczelni wyższej.* [Multidimensionality of integration in the education theory and practice at university level]. Siedlce: Wydawnictwo Akademii Podlaskiej.

Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 23 grudnia 2008 r. w sprawie podstawy programowej wychowania przedszkolnego oraz kształcenia ogólnego w poszczególnych typach szkół. [Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 December, 2008 . On the basis

of curriculum for preschool education and general education in particular types of schools]. Dz.U. 2009 nr 4 poz. 17

Rutkowski, M. (2005). Opinie uczniów, rodziców i nauczycieli na temat integracji edukacyjnej. [Opinions of students, parents and teachers about the educational integration]. In: W. Pilecka, A. Ozga, P. Kurtek (ed.), *Dziecko ze specjalnymi potrzebami w ekosystemie*. [The child with special needs in the ecosystem]. Kielce: Wydawnictwo Akademii Świętokrzyskiej.

Sakowicz – Boboryko, A. (2003). Uczeń z wadą słuchu w środowisku słyszących rówieśników szkolnych. [The pupil with hearing impairment in school environment of hearing peers]. In: Z. Kazanowski, D. Osik – Chudowolska, *Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i interakcjach społecznych*. [Integration of persons with disabilities in education and social interactions]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Sekułowicz, M. (2002). Integracja przedszkolna dzieci a postawy rodziców wobec osób niepełnosprawnych.[Preschool integration and parental attitudes towards people with disabilities]. In: W. Dykcik, C. Kosakowski, J. Kuczyńska - Kwapisz (ed.), *Pedagogika specjalna szansą na realizację potrzeb osób niepełnosprawnych*, [Special education as an opportunity for meeting the needs of people with disabilities]. Olsztyn – Poznań, Warszawa: PTP Oddział w Poznaniu.

Skrzetuska, E. (2003). Umiejętności szkolne dzieci niepełnosprawnych uczących się w integracji. [Academic skills of children with disabilities studying in integrated settings]. In: Z. Kazanowski, D. Osik – Chudowolska, *Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i interakcjach społecznych*. [Integration of persons with disabilities in education and social interactions]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Skrzetuska, E. (2010). Granice integracji w warunkach reformy szkolnej i zjawisk społecznych w szkole. [The limits of integration under the conditions of school reform and social phenomena in school]. *Niepełnosprawność*,3, pp. 9–16.

Wdówik, P. (2009). *Dostępna edukacja*. [Accesible education]. Kraków: Fundacja Instytut Rozwoju Regionalnego.

Wiącek, G. (2005). Pomiar efektywności kształcenia integracyjnego dzieci ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi. [Measuring the effectiveness of integrated education of children with special educational needs]. In: C. Kosakowski, A. Krause (ed.), *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 4. Normalizacja środowisk życia osób niepełnosprawnych*. [Special education discourses 4. Normalization of living environment of people with disabilities]. Olsztyn: UWM.

Wiącek, G. (2006). Wybrane uwarunkowania relacji rówieśników w klasach integracyjnych. [Selected determinants of peer relationship in integrated classes]. In: C. Kosakowski, A. Krause, S. Przybyliński: *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 5. Pomiędzy teorią a praktyką*. [Special education discourses 5. Between theory and practice].Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego.

Wisiecka – Tymkiewicz, A. & Jakubczak – Gębala, M. (2000). Funkcjonowanie społeczne dzieci przewlekle chorych i kalekich w wybranych formach kształcenia integracyjnego – założenia a rzeczywistość. [Social functioning of chronically ill children and those with disabilities in selected forms of integrated education - assumptions and reality]. In: A. Rakowska, J. Baran (ed.), *Dylematy pedagogiki Specjalnej*. [Special education dilemas]. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogicznej.

Zacharuk, T. (2011). Edukacja włączająca szansą dla wszystkich uczniów. [Inclusive education - the chance for all pupils]. *Meritum*, 1(20), pp. 2–7.

Zamkowska, A. (2005). Normalizacja w kształtowaniu środowiska klasy integracyjnej. [Standardization of inetgrated class environment]. In: C. Kosakowski, A. Krause (ed.), *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 4. Normalizacja środowisk życia osób niepełnosprawnych*.

[Special education discourses 4. Normalization of living environment of people with disabilities]. Olsztyn: UWM.

Zaorska, M. (2001). Integracja a uczenie „bycia człowiekiem". [Integration and teaching "to be a human being"]. In: D. Osik, A. Wojnarska (ed.), *Wspomaganie rozwoju uczniów ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi.* [Supporting the development of pupils with special educational needs]. Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Zaorska, M. (2002). Sytuacja niepełnosprawnych studentów Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego. [The situation of students with disabilities at the University of Warmia and Mazury]. In: B. Harań (ed.) *Wielowymiarowość integracji w teorii i praktyce kształcenia w uczelni wyższej.* [Multidimensionality of integration in the education theory and practice at university level]. Siedlce: Wydawnictwo Akademii Podlaskiej.

Zaorska, M. (2005). Szanse i ograniczenia w systemie edukacji i rehabilitacji osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną. [Opportunities and constraints in the education and rehabilitation of people with intellectual disabilities]. In: Z. Janiszewska-Nieścioruk (red.), *Sfery życia osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną.* [Life spheres of persons with intelectual disability]. Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls.

3.5. CONCEPTUAL INTERPRETATIONS AND STRATEGIES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN AUSTRIA, FINLAND, LITHUANIA, AND POLAND

Ona Monkevičienė

The comparative analysis of the research on inclusive education in Austria, Finland, Lithuania, and Poland is aimed at the following: 1) revealing scientific interpretations of inclusive education perception in the countries in the overall context of research on inclusive education; 2) summarizing critical evaluation of special needs education, barriers in transition towards inclusive education, and consequences of improperly implemented inclusive education; 3) highlighting socio-psychological factors determining the quality of inclusive education implemented; 4) systemizing assumptions, strategies, and environments of inclusive pedagogy development.

In order to compare the interpretation of inclusive education in the works of Austrian, Finnish, Lithuanian, and Polish researchers, it is important to take into consideration that the meaning of inclusive education is contextual (Florian, 2014; Waitoller & Artiles, 2013) and ever-changing; i.e. it is a never-ending process of increasing each pupil's participation and decreasing exclusion in all forms; it is a process of the implementation of inclusive values, which encourages change in all areas of school activity and its community (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2006; Waitoller & Artiles, 2013); it is dialogue-driven; i.e. an inclusive education index is perceived as a call for dialogue rather than as a set of prescribed recipes for inclusive education (Booth, 2011).

Moreover, many different interpretations exist of the perception of inclusive education as well as debates on how the perception of inclusive education is to be implemented in practice, which impedes clear conceptualization of the notion of inclusive education (Florian, 2015; Tiwari, Das & Sharma, 2015). Having analysed the researchers' theoretical stances in recent years, several perceptions of inclusive education can be distinguished according to the ratio of general and special needs education in them.

A) *Inclusive education is interpreted as a new future paradigm in the education of all pupils, alternative to special needs education*, where the pupils' differences are

acknowledged as naturally characteristic of a human being, at the same time being dynamic (changing), complex (the same individual contains differences of gender, nationality, social status, abilities, etc.), and representing the social fabric of society (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012; Spratt & Florian, 2015). Inclusive pedagogy follows an attitude that all pupils share a lot in common despite each of them being unique and different. In the education process, the goal is to adapt to the differences rather than deny them. The educational environment, measures, structure, and programs are designed to ensure personalized education in the social context, i.e. they should correspond to the learning possibilities and interests of everyone (rather than those of "most" or "a few"), increase the participation of all, and help overcome learning barriers. The aim is to render the classroom an inclusive learning community. The teachers apply whole class-oriented pedagogical strategies adapted to every pupil's learning. In cases where one pupil encounters learning difficulties, inclusive pedagogy looks for common responses beneficial for all pupils (rather than providing additional support to the one pupil). Teachers work together with others (specialists, parents) or by their own means as partners in order to know the pupils better and to jointly look for new and efficient ways to overcome the children's learning difficulties (Spratt & Florian, 2015; Florian & Graham, 2014).

B) Another approach interprets *inclusive education as a reconstruction of pupils' education by merging general and special needs education together*. As in the first interpretation of inclusive education, it is acknowledged that all pupils are different but share much in common, whole class-oriented teaching and learning strategies are applied, the school structure and learning processes are transformed to meet the learning needs of every pupil, help overcome learning barriers, and increase the participation of all. However, the support enabling a child experiencing difficulties to learn and participate in class or school life is provided in parallel: more effort is put in identifying the reasons for every pupil's learning difficulties; according to the pupils' needs, additional individual or team support is provided to the pupils by the teacher and/or the specialists in the classroom and/or beyond (Mulholland & O'Connor, 2016). This perception of inclusive education does not see special needs education as a separate component in inclusive education (this approach, referred to as "special and inclusive education", is criticised by Booth (2011). Rather, it is a new-quality learning, including all the pupils in mainstream learning, when, according to their needs, everyone receives high-quality support, increasing their abilities to learn and participate.

C) The third approach sees *inclusive education purely as educating pupils with special educational needs in general schools,* i.e. mainstream education (critical approach by M. Ainscow, T. Booth & D. Dyson, 2006). This approach follows purely the principle of access, based on the rights of pupils with special needs (Opertti, Walker & Zhang, 2014; Roberts & Simpson, 2016).

The comparative analysis of the research of Austrian, Finnish, Lithuanian, and Polish researchers shows that different approaches to inclusive education emerge in these countries.

The perception of inclusive education among Austrian researchers corresponds to the first theoretical approach (A), *inclusive education is interpreted as a new future paradigm in the education of all pupils, alternative to special needs education.* The researchers emphasize following the values of inclusive education, stating that heterogeneity is the norm in schools and classrooms, and everyone has a right to be different. They underline the reorganization of the entire school system towards educating each and every pupil. They assert that all the regular schools must be organized in such a way that the pupils would be educated according to their competencies and ability levels without social exclusion and being categorized as failing to meet the norm or as having a disability. The foundation of the teaching is a common curriculum with sufficient room for individualization. The pedagogical focus is on the school class; the resources and tools are allocated to the entire school rather than to a single child. The learning environment is designed as structured learning stations, learning environments, and spaces for real-life exploration. A pupil's day is rhythmical, with individualized learning interchanging with whole-group learning in class environments. Conditions are provided for authentic, holistic, interaction-based learning. Team reflection on education and planning processes are the norm. General schemes of pedagogical and therapeutic assistance are developed. The approach emphasizes the rejection of "individual syllabuses and special support schemes"; therefore, the entire structure is oriented towards a common support system, rather than individual support for an individual pupil, in order for the common support system to provide possibilities of personalized and differentiated education.

The work of the Finnish researchers shows signs of the second theoretical approach (B): *inclusive education is interpreted as a reconstruction of pupils' education by merging general and special needs education together.* The researchers highlight the values of inclusive education, on which the Finnish inclusive schools should be based, namely, social justice equality and participation. The pupils with special educational

needs are seen as having different competencies, talents, and needs, equally to all the other pupils, rather than being distinguished from the others as "too different" or "too strange", the pupils are not categorized as having disorders; the reasons for learning difficulties are looked for in the environment. Ensuring the pupils' equal value regardless of their differences creates conditions for knowing the differences yet avoiding categorization and exclusion. Moreover, much focus is put on ensuring the pupils' well-being, embracing four categories: school conditions (having), social relationships (loving), ways of self-fulfilment (being), and health status, as well as on ensuring quality of education. In Finland, emphasis is put on the commitment of the entire school as well as of every teacher to take responsibility for the education of every pupil, placing the pupil's needs in the centre of attention. The reorganization of the entire school system is underlined: developing collective reasoning based on hearing all the staff, joint reflections, and co-operation; systemic support for teachers, the teachers' focus on a professional learning community, peer support, co-teaching, team activities; collaboration-friendly community communication structure and procedures (e.g. time together for planning and reflecting); application of inclusive pedagogy oriented towards the education of each and every pupil, etc. Problems and difficulties serve as a useful source for analysis, resulting in school improvement. The pupil's learning is also transformed into active participation, learning together with the others, and "hearing pupils' voices". The support provided to the pupils is aimed at both the whole class, following the teacher's observation of the child's learning and identification of the need for support, and it is provided individually to a specific child or several children. In this case, special experts determine the need for support, while learning goals, material, pupil instruction strategies, and feedback are adapted specifically to the pupil. The support is provided to the pupil by a team made up of the teacher and special experts. Thus, high-level support is ensured to every pupil according to their needs, enabling social participation and successful learning according to one's possibilities.

The work of the Lithuanian researchers also demonstrates features of the second theoretical approach (B): *inclusive education is interpreted as a reconstruction of pupils' education by merging general and special needs education together*. The researchers recognize individual differences of the pupils as a value and a resource. Disability and "otherness" are interpreted not as a social problem but as human experience of particular value, relevant to the entire social community, helping to understand how a challenging situation is experienced and what powers prompt the spiritual growth

of the one experiencing it. In the researchers' opinion, education in a heterogeneous environment helps everyone, including those with and without a disability, to understand that the phenomenon of otherness does not change the essence of a human being but rather becomes a natural expression of personal individuality. In Lithuania, emphasis is also put on the transformation of the entire school system with the purpose of implementing inclusive education: positive interaction-based collaboration of community members is underlined; coordinating and communicating the functions of every leader and specialist is highlighted; a coordination model for the interests of all education process participants (children, pedagogues, and specialists) is designed; a model for family self-isolation reduction is prepared, which helps overcome various barriers in learning and participating. Emphasis is put on the personalization of general curriculum for every child according to their abilities and needs, a constructive, multidirectional, dialogue-driven interaction between the pedagogues and the pupils, positive evaluation of every pupil's powers, pupils' participative education, and the involvement of educational assistance professionals in the general mainstream education. What is more, researchers pay particular attention to modelling a pupil-empowering pedagogy and efficient strategies. Some of these strategies are aimed at the joint activity of the whole class and all education process participants, while others are oriented towards individual support for a specific pupil in the class or beyond, for example, the strategy of referring to the pupil's strengths based on the identification of the child's strong points, further education process modelling, and its efficiency monitoring. The research confirms the efficiency of team support to the pupil when the pupil himself or herself is a member of the team. By comparing the approaches towards inclusive education of the Lithuanian and Finnish researchers, we see fundamentally different attitudes towards "different" pupils; however, in both cases, they are aligned with the values of inclusive education; moreover, Finland has a better developed aspect of school community communication, team activity, and teacher support, while in Lithuania, the aspect of pedagogy empowering the pupil to participate and learn is more visible.

In Poland, debates between two approaches are still ongoing. One approach is referred to as *integrated education (or inclusive education in the narrow sense)*. To a large extent, it corresponds to the second theoretical approach (B), where *inclusive education is interpreted as a reconstruction of pupils' education by merging general and special needs education together*. However, such schools do not accept all the pupils but focus on those with specific disabilities. In the researchers' view, the

entire school system is adapted to satisfying the needs of different pupils, and it is characterised by "full architectural accessibility": several pupils are integrated into a general classroom, at the same time reducing the overall number of pupils in the classroom; two pedagogues work in a classroom: the lead teacher, who teaches the subject material, and the supporting teacher (a special needs education teacher), whose role is to co-operate with the lead teacher in the process of planning, implementation, and evaluation of activities, as well as to support pupils, particularly those with special needs; collaboration of parents, pedagogues, and specialists is developed. This approach differs from that of the approach of the Finnish and Lithuanian researchers as particular focus is put on the assessment of a pupil's level of functioning and special educational needs, as well as designing and realizing individual curricula and education plans. Whereas in Finland and Lithuania, more emphasis is put on clarifying the pupil's strengths and reasons for learning difficulties, as well as the application of whole class-oriented pedagogical strategies.

The other approach that exists in Poland is referred to as *inclusive education (in its broad sense)*, theoretically interpreted by researchers as *a new paradigm in the education of all pupils alternative to special education* (theoretical approach A), although it is practically implemented purely as ensuring access according to the rights of pupils with special educational needs, in the form of *education of pupils with special educational needs in general schools as part of mainstream education* (theoretical approach C), without transforming the entire school system and without providing support according to every pupil's needs. According to the Polish researchers, inclusive education (in its broad sense) should induce a fundamental reform of the existing education system by adapting schools for pupils with diverse needs as well as by providing support not only to pupils with disabilities but also to all pupils encountering difficulties. The basic principle of the school activity should be flexibility, when it is acknowledged that pupils learn in different manners and teachers must support their learning by adapting to their individual needs. Without ensuring the previously mentioned conditions but focusing solely on a right to learn in the mainstream education flow, the risk arises that only the idea of equality is realized, which leads to standardization: without ensuring proper identification of pupils' needs, the provision of support for the pupils is not optimal. As the Polish researchers put it, fundamental steps are being taken in the country to create preconditions for the proper implementation of inclusive education (in its broad sense): general curricula have been reorganized, adapting them to the education of pupils with different needs

in mainstream education flows, and the attitude of regular school communities towards pupils with different needs is increasingly positive.

The implementation of inclusive education is *process-like* and *dialogue-driven*. According to Florian (2014), **the research of the researchers of all countries contain periods of criticism towards special needs education as segregating and increasing pupils' exclusion, attempting to provide scientific justification for education alternatives.** The research of Austrian, Finnish, Lithuanian, and Polish researchers demonstrates the following trends:

• The researchers carried out research that reveals a segregating and exclusion-raising effect of special education on pupils (Austria, Finland, Lithuania, Poland); it has been established that special schools and classrooms in different regions have a different percentage of pupils with special educational needs, which demonstrates a varying level of segregation (Austria); that the communication skills and certain academic skills of the pupils with special educational needs in special schools are lower than those in mainstream education (Austria, Lithuania, Poland); and that support for pupils learning in special educational institutions is not sufficiently varied (Poland). A link has been established between the identification of special educational needs and the pupils' gender and mother tongue, which reveals a greater segregation with regard to certain social groups (Austria).

• The researchers recorded fields of tension emerging as a result of the following basic discrepancies between inclusive education ideas and the existing dual practice of general and special needs education: the phenomenon of pedagogical optimism vs. pedagogical pessimism, namely, belief and disbelief in the powers of a pupil with special educational needs and their transformability (Lithuania); the phenomenon of a single homogeneous education flow, namely, the teachers' readiness to work with pupils with similar rather than different needs (Lithuania, Austria); conflicting paradigms of approach to education, learning, leadership, and school development (Finland).

• The following barriers in developing inclusive education were revealed: community values unfavourable for inclusive education (Finland), bullying (Poland, Finland, Lithuania), negative effect on the self-esteem of some of the pupils in higher classes (Poland, Lithuania), limited possibilities of pupils with special educational needs to communicate with others (Finland), complicated nature of the integration of children with behavioural issues (Austria), teachers' focus on autonomously established different levels of pupils' achievements rather than on their development potential

(Austria), orientation of educators towards lacunae in pupils' education rather than towards their strengths (Lithuania), lack of staff, specialists, and necessary means of education (Poland, Lithuania, Finland), unidirectional leadership of special education professionals in the activities of educational teams of a pupil and co-teaching process (Lithuania), overcrowded classrooms (Poland), lack of professional preparedness of pedagogues to educate all pupils with different needs (Austria, Lithuania, Poland), overly diverging practices of individual teachers and educational institutions as well as stiff and formal school system and structures (Austria, Finland).

• The following consequences of improperly implemented inclusive education were looked into, encouraging the search for other, more optimal education practices: cases of manifestation of segregation and exclusion of pupils educated under the conditions of inclusion were identified (Lithuania, Finland, and Poland), the pupil's isolation due to the equipment and location in the classroom necessary for his or her learning (Austria), pupil categorization (Poland, Lithuania), unequal rights in cases when children with significant special educational needs from financially less well-off families cannot enter inclusive education classrooms (Poland), fragmented day timetable of pupils with special educational needs (Finland), and deterioration of learning results among pupils with special educational needs (Poland). The analysis of the critical approach towards inclusive education helps avoid undesirable practices, and to carry out deeper analysis into them.

• With the help of theoretical modelling, the way of realizing ideas via projects, and result evaluation, the aim was to develop inclusive education models, pedagogical strategies and practices, and to justify inclusive education implementation processes (Austria, Finland, Lithuania, and Poland).

Thus, research was carried out that helped initiate change in state and municipal policies, as well as provided fundamental future-oriented ideas of inclusive education development. The implementation of inclusive education presented new challenges to researchers.

Many researchers focus their research on socio-psychological factors associated with the quality of the inclusive education implemented. In Booth's views (2011), a principle of equality of one's value takes central position in inclusive education. The principle means that the education system and the school is improved and prepares to accept differences in such ways that all children, their families, and adults who work with them were valued equally. The research reveals the nature of interpersonal relationships between pupils, as well as pupils and teachers, their impact on the pupils'

self-esteem and learning (Rose, Barahona & Muro, 2016; Sewell, St George & Cullen, 2013), as well as factors relevant for the development of these relationships (Main, Chambers & Sarah, 2016). According to researchers, pupil equality and education quality is ensured through the pedagogues' attitudes towards the pupils' differences and inclusive education, as well as through collaboration between families, educators, and professionals (Deppeler, et al, 2015); through the creation of a safe, accepting, collaborating intercultural community encouraging successful interpersonal relationship, and hearing the voices of pupils, parents, and experts (Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2016); supportive school climate including developed collaborative structures and necessary resources, which increases the teachers' personal efficiency (Hosford & O'Sullivan, 2016), and other factors. On the other hand, researchers claim that further research is necessary, which would reveal specific practices of the creation of positive interpersonal relationships between pupils and teachers under the conditions of inclusive education, as well as aspects of the development of efficient collaboration between families, educators, and professionals (experts) (Deppeler, et al, 2015; Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2016; Rose, Barahona & Muro, 2016).

The research of the Austrian, Finnish, Lithuanian, and Polish researchers also looked into socio-psychological factors as taking a fundamental role in building an inclusive school. The researchers of all the four countries analysed the pedagogues' attitudes that are favourable and unfavourable towards the implementation of the principles of inclusive education, as well as the change of the principles as a basic precondition for building an inclusive school. It was revealed that an ever-larger percentage of teachers are positively inclined towards the pupils' differences and inclusive education; however, some of them support the values of inclusive education only in theory, while failing to apply them in practice (Finland), and some teachers foster controversial views (Lithuania). The following factors determining positive approach among pedagogues were identified: accepting personal responsibility for every pupil (Finland, Lithuania), the value of love for a pupil (Finland, Lithuania), establishing a warm personal connection with pupils (Lithuania), empathy on behalf of the teacher (Lithuania), having inclusive education practice (Finland, Poland), special theoretical training of the teacher (Poland), and clear child welfare model, the pedagogy of listening to and hearing the voices of the pupils (Finland). The following factors causing negative views were distinguished: insufficient clarity in the definition of inclusive education (Finland), and lack of creativity and flexibility among teachers (Poland).

In Austria, Finland, Lithuania, and Poland, the attitudes of the pupils of the class towards their fellow pupils with special educational needs were analysed. The research shows that children adapt to being together easily and without prejudice, and benefit from one another (Austria); according to pupils, their interpersonal relationships are mature; they are in the centre of attention at school (Finland). It has been established that the children who were educated together with those with disabilities in pre-school education institution later have a more positive attitude towards pupils with disabilities learning in the same classroom (Poland); as well as the pupils who have attended an inclusive school or classroom for a year, have positive opinions on inclusive education (Austria). The development of positive relationships is facilitated by involving the pupils in activities that help to get to know their peers with special educational needs better (Poland), and maintaining natural communication in daily situations (Lithuania).

In Austria, Finland, Lithuania, and Poland, the structures, procedures, and practices of school community communication were created, which involve not only teachers and professionals but also pupils and their parents. The benefit of collective reasoning and joint effort was justified (Finland, Austria).

Summarizing the research carried out, it can be stated that the main focus is put on the *expression* of interpersonal relationships as well as the participation and collaboration culture in inclusive schools. *Creative factors and specific practices* of positive relationship as well as participation and collaboration culture have not been sufficiently analysed.

Another research aspect linked to inclusive education implementation quality is **the revelation of principles, forms, strategies, and other good practices of inclusive pedagogy, as well as the presentation of evidence of such practice** (Florian, 2014). In the researchers' opinion, inclusive pedagogy follows the conception of transformation, which emphasizes every pupil's ability to learn and change, and the development of their potential powers when the pedagogues adapt the education process to the pupils' learning needs and eliminate the barriers obstructing the learning process. Inclusive pedagogy is based on collective, dialogue-driven, and multimodal teaching and learning, which is a process that engages all the pupils, is active, dynamic, and open-minded. The pupils' learning achievements are perceived as the result of the entire school environment, community relations, and activity (Florian & Spratt, 2013). When planning pupils' education, the class teacher considers the learning specificities and needs of every pupil, ensuring that every pupil participates in a joint education process according to their maximum powers, and has a choice of activity. Specialist support is

ensured for the teacher, as well as co-teaching and team-teaching possibilities (Florian, 2015; Pancsofar & Petroff, 2016). Scientific research shows that the preparedness of the school to educate different pupils is a factor predicting better academic results of the pupils (Min & Goff, 2016). On the other hand, the authors raise a question of how inclusive pedagogy should be implemented in the classroom (Florian, 2015); they emphasize that numerous studies reveal different education practices but rarely highlight meaningful and efficient ones (Main, Chambers & Sarah, 2016).

In Austria, Finland, Lithuania, and Poland, inclusive pedagogy practices also enjoy particular attention. *The complexity of the attitude towards a pupil and his education* has been developed, which creates preconditions for flexible education of pupils according to their diverging abilities and needs without categorization or labelling (Austria, Finland). *Effort was put into strengthening the beliefs of the transformability of pupils' powers,* perceiving each pupil as having individual competencies that must be recognized and developed (Austria, Finland). The following *constructive, multidirectional, pupil empowering strategies of pedagogical interaction* were designed, implemented, and evaluated: teacher's activity constructing pupils' interaction and positive behaviour (Lithuania, Finland); the strategy of enabling the pupil to know himself or herself, to change themselves, and to change their immediate environment (Lithuania); the pedagogical strategy of increasing the pupils' active participation, autonomy, and self-regulatory learning (Austria, Finland, Lithuania); the strategy of referring to the strengths of the child with special educational needs (Lithuania, Finland, Austria); the strategy of evidence-based education of pupils with special needs (Lithuania); the strategy of social mediation and learning in social background (Finland). In Lithuania, a *child-empowering pedagogical model* was designed, based on dialogue and collaboration between the child and his or her educators, involvement of the child in the decision-making process, and providing a possibility to choose. In Finland, a *pupil instruction strategy* was developed, which models pupils' instruction of different intensity considering their need for support.

Research highlighted practices of encouraging teacher openness and creativity (Poland), teamwork including responsibility distribution, co-teaching, expert support provision for teachers, individual tutoring (Austria, Finland, Lithuania, Poland), parent involvement in education process (Poland, Finland), as well as a variety of access ensuring education flexibility (Austria), practices, environments, and day rhythm encouraging open and dialogue-driven learning (Austria), as well as innovative means of education (Poland).

On the other hand, many studies merely state the situation of inclusive education implementation; moreover, the research projects were carried out in randomly selected schools where inclusive education ideas are not necessarily implemented properly; therefore, negative practices were highlighted alongside positive ones. Since an inclusive school functions as a unified system, partial implementation of inclusive education prevents genuinely efficient education practices from emerging. Moreover, most research fails to reveal how the school creates the practices ensuring inclusive education quality. Therefore, more thorough and systematic research on correctly implemented inclusive education is necessary.

REFERENCES

Ainscow, M., Booth, T. & Dyson, D. (2006). *Improving schools, developing inclusion*. London: Routledge.

Booth, T. & Ainscow, M. (2002). *The index for inclusion: Developing learning and participation in schools*. Bristol: CSIE, revised edition.

Booth, T. (2011). The name of the rose: Inclusive values into action in teacher education. *Prospects*, *41*(3), pp. 303-318.

Deppeler, J., Forlin, C., Chambers, D., Loreman, T. & Sharma, U. (2015). Egalité et qualité en éducation inclusive en Australie: Le cas des élèves en situation de handicap. [Equality and quality in inclusive education in Australia: The case of students with disabilities]. *Recherches & Éducations*, *14*(2), pp. 49-64.

Florian, L. & Spratt, J. (2013). Enacting inclusion: A framework for interrogating inclusive practice. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 28*(2), pp. 119-135.

Florian, L. & Graham, A. (2014). Can an expanded interpretation of phronesis support teacher professional development for inclusion? *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *44*(4), pp. 465-478.

Florian, L. (2014). What counts as evidence of inclusive education? *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 29*(3), pp. 286-294.

Florian, L. (2015). Inclusive pedagogy: A transformative approach to individual differences but can it help reduce educational inequalities? *Scottish Educational Review, 47*(1), pp. 5-14.

Hajisoteriou, C. & Angelides, P. (2016). Collaborative art making for reducing marginalisation and promoting intercultural education and inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education,* pp. 1-16, DOI:10.1080/13603116.2016.1197321.

Hosford, S. & O'Sullivan, S. (2016). A climate for self-efficacy: the relationship between school climate and teacher efficacy for inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 20*(6), pp. 604-621, DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2015.1102339

Kalantzis, M. & Cope, B. (2012). *New learning. Elements of a science of education.* New York: University Press.

Main, S., Chambers, D. J. & Sarah, P. (2016). Supporting the transition to inclusive education: teachers' attitudes to inclusion in the Seychelles. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, pp. 1-16, DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2016.1168873

Min, S. & Goff, P. T. (2016). The relations of a school's capacity for institutional diversity to student achievement in socio-economically, ethnically, and linguistically diverse schools. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, pp. 1-16, DOI:10.1080/13603116.2016.1168876

Mulholland, M. & O'Connor, U. (2016). Collaborative classroom practice for inclusion: Perspectives of classroom teachers and learning support/resource teachers. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 20*(10), pp. 1070–1083.

Opertti, R., Walker, Z. & Zhang, Y. (2014). Inclusive education: From targeting groups and schools to achieving quality education as the core of EFA. In L. Florian (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of special education,* Vol. 1, London, England: SAGE, pp. 149-169.

Pancsofar, N. & Petroff, J. G. (2016). Teachers' experiences with co-teaching as a model for inclusive education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 20*(10), pp. 1043-1053, DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2016.1145264

Roberts, J. & Simpson, K. (2016). A review of research into stakeholder perspectives on inclusion of students with autism in mainstream schools. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 20*(10), pp. 1084-1096, DOI:10.1080/13603116.2016.1145267

Rose, K. K., Barahona, D. & Muro, J. (2016). Peer perceptions of students receiving pull-out services in elementary school: A multi-age study. *International Journal of Inclusive Education.* DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2016.1197323

Sewell, A., St George, A. & Cullen, J. (2013). The distinctive features of joint participation in a community of learners. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 31* (2013), pp. 46-55.

Spratt, J. & Florian, L. (2015). Inclusive pedagogy: From learning to action. Supporting each individual in the context of 'Everybody'. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *49* (2015), pp. 89-96.

Tiwari, A., Das, A. & Sharma, M. (2015). Inclusive education a "rhetoric" or "reality"? Teachers' perspectives and beliefs. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 52* (2015), pp. 128-136.

Waitoller, F. R. & Artiles, A. J. (2013). A decade of professional development research for inclusive education: A critical review and notes for a research program. *Review of Educational Research, 83*(3), pp. 319–356.

Chapter IV.

REALIZATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MODELS IN THE FOUR SCHOOLS IN EUROPE

4.1. INTEGRATED LEARNING CENTRE BRIGITTENAU IN VIENNA

Susanne Tomecek

An inclusive education perspective on school history

The "**I**ntegrated **L**earning Center **B**rigittenau" (shortened as "**ILB**") was opened in 1998 with seven classes as core groups. All classes were integrated classes, each class containing four pupils with special educational needs. A special educational needs expert was present in every team in compliance with the Viennese model of integration. From the beginning, all classes were mixed-age classrooms, in which the children from all four grades were taught together. The ILB was called an "Open School", school lunches were organized, as well as study periods and free-time activities in the afternoons. Upon parents' wish, their children could stay in school all day from one to five days a week.

The popularity of the school grew despite of the parents' awareness that there was no similar type of school open at lower secondary level for their children following from first four years of primary education. Eventually, in 2009/10, the first transition groups were introduced, in which about six pupils with special needs were also taught in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade.

Due to this expansion of its system, the school was provided with more space and rooms from the neighboring primary school. The adjacent primary school was moved to another location. On comprehensive school level, structures were developed that encouraged the participation and co-operation of all those concerned. Up to the present, pupils of each grade elect representatives, and they regularly meet in the School Parliament. This is the place for them to introduce and promote new ideas.

Moreover, teachers can actively participate in improving school structures by discussing and working on school development plans in various working groups. The "Quality Committee" is especially relevant as headmasters, teachers, parents, and leisure-time educationalists are represented in the committee. The committee discusses school development plans and is entitled to make decisions.

The "Learning under the Stars" project was initiated by joint effort of school authorities and parents. Inclusive, individualized, and practice-oriented learning

in real-life settings was fostered. A place outdoors was arranged for pupils, where projects involving manual work could be carried out. The focus was on the joint effort.

The younger pupils had the opportunity to enjoy direct contact with nature and to engage in daily life chores, e.g. cooking, doing the dishes, and laying the table.

The older pupils, particularly those from the seventh grade, were supposed to engage in gardening and do outdoor projects of craftsmanship and creativity.

It goes without saying that the older pupils had to organize the catering while also doing their project work. The organization of practical everyday tasks is a core parameter in inclusive multi-age learning. Everyone can contribute with their individual skills, and everyone is important for the community. Projects for elder pupils include, for example: building a raft, gardening, making a movie, renovating buildings.

In some years, the ILB was turned into an all-day-school. The pupils stay in school from 9 AM to 4 PM.

School community

In 2014/15, three hundred and seventy pupils aged six to fifteen attended the ILB, eighty-seven of them with special educational needs. The pupils are taught in six core groups of approximately twenty pupils in the first three to four years, called the "entry stage". The groups co-operate to various degrees. There are approximately a hundred and forty pupils in the "transition stage". Here, learning is organized in two different ways: pupils learn together in core groups similar to the entry stage, and they also learn in subject groups.

At the "exit stage", around one hundred pupils of the seventh and eighth grades study in subject groups. In the transition and exit stages, one third of the pupils have special educational needs. There are always at least two, sometimes three or even four, teachers in the classroom and various forms of team teaching methods have to be applied.

Below, a practical example of work in the core groups is presented:

Each core group contains about twenty pupils. Entry, transition and exit stage pupils are taught together. Within the classes, the pupils are taught according to respective syllabuses. Three quarters are taught in compliance with the standard curriculum. Often, lessons of two to three core groups are planned for certain projects.

The presence of tutors guarantees that all pupils, including those from disadvantaged family background, with special educational needs receive sufficient individual academic and social support, complying with the school's mission statement.

Description of a school day

Lessons start at 8:30. Pupils are allowed entry into their classrooms at 8:15. The first learning unit lasts for a hundren minutes followed by a thirty-minute break. Self-directed learning phases, such as independent work on individual projects, are discussed and structured together with the teachers. There are ordinary lessons in German, Mathematics, and English, where new units are introduced by subject teachers and then structured in work plans. This structure is only interrupted when the groups work on larger projects in certain subjects such as Geography, Biology, History, and Physics, which are not restricted by the time limits of weeks.

The second learning unit takes place after lunch, lasts for another one hundred to a hundred and fifty minutes, and follows similar structure to that of the morning one. Weekly fixtures are Handicraft and Sports lessons, set by those in charge of arranging the school time table. Music and Art lessons are frequently taught in the afternoons, the times are fixed individually by class teachers. For pupils of all grades, one hundred and five minutes a week are intended only for art or sports activities. Pupils can choose from a variety of options: radio, theatre, football, or cooking. The courses last six weeks, then new courses must be chosen.

Once a week, the class council meets; thus problem-solving and participatory skills are trained. Also, there are weekly meetings of the pupils' representatives in the School Parliament, where the same skills are practiced.

There are various rooms available equipped with suitable subject-related material, for example a room for Mathematics, one for languages, creativity or science etc. In the morning, the pupils meet with their tutors in groups of thirteen; there are two tutors for each group. These meetings help the tutors to understand the stage of the learning progress of the adolescents, and they discuss further steps together. Then, the pupils study certain topics independently in one of the subject rooms. New topics are presented by subject teachers in the subject rooms and the pupils work further on them in small groups or individually. The pupils are familiar with the learning outcomes they are expected to fulfill in given areas. Most frequently, the pupils study in self-directed ways. In Music, the lessons are more teacher-centered; in Sciences, new topics are also presented by the tutors. Furthermore, the pupils can work on the topics individually, according to their abilities. The pupils have the chance to choose the courses they are interested in or especially good at despite their special educational needs, e.g. a debating club, special courses for the gifted, intensified creativity option, and training courses for better body awareness. There

are five tutoring lessons a week where subject material learned can be revised and memorized.

In Figure 9, the organizational structure of the classes is presented.
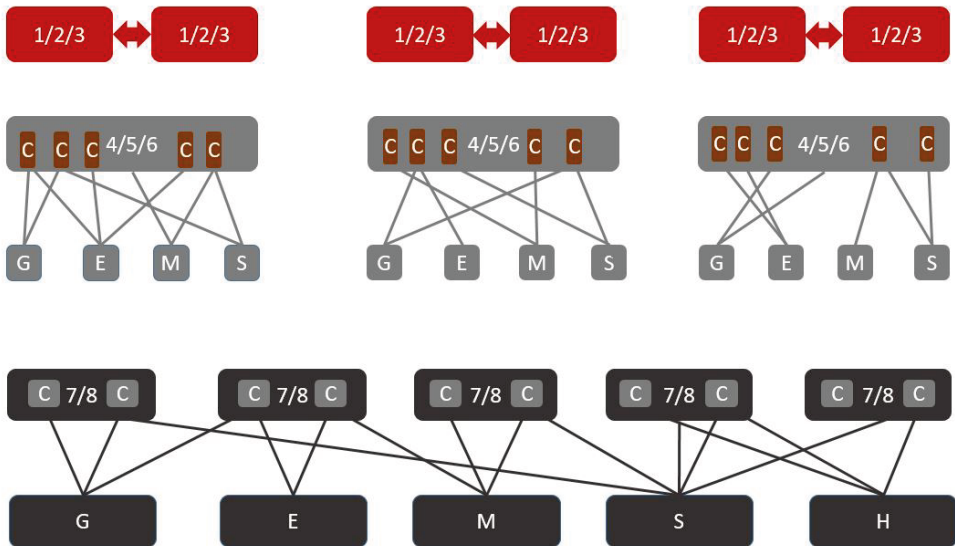
Figure 9. Organizational structure of the classes (by Mazal Martina, 2015).
C = Core groups, G = German language room, M = Mathematics room, E = English room, S = Science room,
H = History room

Teacher training

In all classes there are teachers trained in reform-pedagogy. Some are specialized in Freinet pedagogy, while others in Montessori. Generally it can be said that teaching is project-oriented and illustrated by vivid examples, for example Montessori teaching materials.

At the entry stage, primary and special needs teachers of the core groups co-operate intensively with the tutors working in the afternoons and the free-time educationalists. At transition and exit stages, primary teachers, secondary teachers, and experts in special needs team-teach the children.

Altogether there are sisteen free-time educationalists and ninety teachers with varying degrees of specialization, there are primary and secondary school teachers as well as special needs experts in the school.

Lessons in the mixed-age groups need to be based on the framework of reform-pedagogy, as in Montessori, Freinet, or Jenaplan pedagogy. A majority of the tutors

working at the school have respective training. Additionally, special experts, for instance, advisory teachers and speech trainers, come to the school for at least several hours a week.

Team meetings

Team meetings take place twice a week with different sets of participants. It was also determined in the school year 2014/15 that all tutors are obliged to be available for team meetings once a week for two hours after school lessons. These fixed meetings in the school provide time for meetings with the tutors of the coaching and core groups to plan lessons, answer organizational questions and exchange pedagogical information on certain pupils. Speech training experts and advisory teachers are not required to be available for such meetings. Meetings with these trainers are organized individually and often take place between other activities. Occassionally, subject-related conferences for the subject teachers are organized.

Every four weeks, a conference is organized for all the teachers and tutors of the school. It is the time to present information from the management board, discuss certain topics, and for the participants to bring forward their concerns.

Co-operation with parents

There are two to three parents' evenings per year, one for organizational matters and, additionally, one or two parents' evenings dedicated to dealing with pedagogic issues. There is one parent consultation day every semester.

Co-operation with the parents is very important when focusing on holistic interaction with the pupils. To reach the parents who face difficulties participating in school life due to language problems, the "Parents' Café" was introduced in September, 2014. It takes place once a week and provides a chance for the parents to receive and share information on school life in a rather informal setting and in languages other than German. The meetings are organized by an external association and led by a multilingual organization.

4.2. TEACHER TRAINING SCHOOL OF UNIVERSITY OF LAPLAND IN FINLAND

Outi Kyrö-Ämmälä, Suvi Lakkala

The school culture. History in terms of inclusive education

In 1997, the Finnish National Board of Education started to systematically develop special education for a start, and later continued to an inclusive basic education in schools through several national projects, in co-operation with universities and municipalities. The aim was to produce different models to help municipalities to improve the educational environment in their schools.

Teachers across Finland participated in different projects, while municipalities (local authorities), which are the providers of education in Finland, took part by developing new practices in schools and by arranging comprehensive in-service teacher training in various national projects. As one result of this development work, a new special education strategy was launched in Finland by the Ministry of Education in 2007. The new Basic Education Act was enacted in 2010, and the new national core curriculum offering three-tiered support for pupils was introduced in 2011.

Today in Finland, in recognition of the principles of equality and human rights and according to national legislation (Basic Act 628/1998 Amendments 1136/2010) and the Finnish core curriculum (2014), every child has the right to attend his or her local neighbourhood school and receive support necessary for learning there, in a mainstream class, rather than being placed in a special school or separate class. Only the largest cities have a few special schools. Equality is highly valued, but municipalities implement inclusive education in different ways. Therefore, administration plays a very important role in supporting the implementation of inclusive education, and requires changes to the whole educational organisation.

The national three-tiered support system is used in all Finnish schools, but the practice can differ from school to school. The support system is described in Chapter II.

The aspiration for fully inclusive education has changed the teaching profession. A traditional teacher has become a team worker, able to share his or her expertise in multi-agency teams. Also, the concept of learning has gradually changed from constructivism to social constructivism. Learning is always developed through the

individual's cognitive constructions, which emerge in social interaction. In Finland, it is widely agreed that inclusive teaching is the result of a number of changing factors that depend on authentic situations, people, and environments.

School policies and principles in the Teacher Training School

Thirty teachers, including the principal, the vice-principal, special educational needs teachers, co-teacher, and subject teachers, work in the Teacher Training School of the University of Lapland. The number of children on roll is about three hundred and seventy. There are six grades, with three classes in each, altogether summing up to eighteen groups. There are also about two hundred trainee teachers practicing in the school every year, and the accredited teachers are responsible for supervising the trainees.

In the Teacher Training School, teachers and other teaching professionals have a weekly one-hour planning and reporting meeting. Moreover, teachers regularly meet other multi-professional stakeholders such as therapists, school social workers and family counsellors, and parents' evenings take place several times a year. Teachers also offer family meetings when necessary but at least once a year, usually for an hour at the end of the school day or in the evening. Practice varies according to the teacher and the needs of the children. As well as parents and teaching staff, pupils may also attend, depending on the issue to be discussed. During the academic year 2013/14, the Teacher Training School ran a project called "Multi-Agency at School", which aimed at finding innovative methods for reinforcing welfare at school by enhancing the sense of community and active participation of the members of the school community. Special emphasis was given to creating mechanisms for interaction between families and the school, as well as enhanced multi-agency collaboration in pupil welfare services, e.g. collaboration between teachers and school social workers.

In Finland, communal and individual pupil welfare services are available to all pupils. The services promote and maintain good learning, psychological and physical health, as well as the social well-being of the children, and aim also at creating a learning environment that supports well-being and reinforces activities promoting well-being in the school community. Pupil welfare is implemented primarily by means of preventative work done for and through the whole school community. In addition, children have the legal right to individual pupil welfare. Multidisciplinary co-operation is essential in pupil welfare. Parents are always informed about the services at the beginning of the school year.

Communal pupil welfare means that everyone working in the school has the responsibility to promote the learning and well-being of the children and young

people. Communal pupil welfare services are provided by multi-agency work. Figure 10 shows the actors in communal pupil welfare.
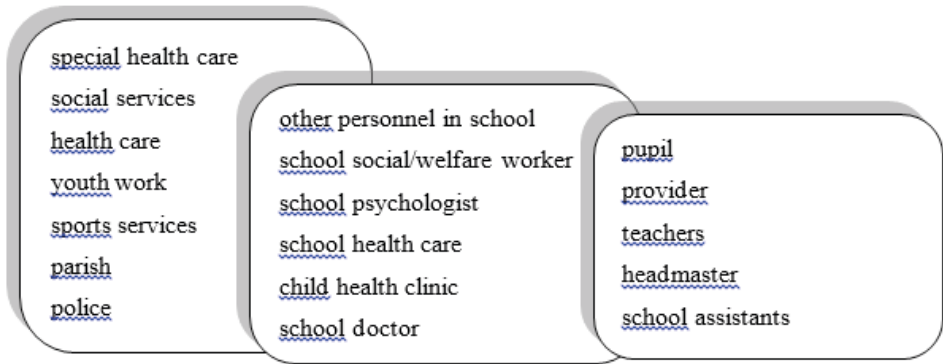
Figure 10. Multi-agency co-operation in communal pupil welfare (from the Pupil Welfare Plan of the Teacher Training School of the University of Lapland).

Table 8 presents the methods, by which different actors promote communal pupil welfare.

Table 8. Communal pupil welfare services in basic education (taken from the Pupil Welfare Plan of the Teacher Training School of the University of Lapland)

Pupils	Parents and groups involved	School
Listening to pupils	Communications/information reaching everyone; Wilma (electronic system), a notebook, newsletters, etc.	Taking care of the overall well-being of the school
Prevention of bullying (for example KivaKoulu program)	Reciprocal information flow	Multidisciplinary community activities
Strengthening social skills by grouping operations	Pupil-specific parental meetings	Preparing pupil welfare plan for the school
Group rehabilitation methods (Maltti, Valtti, Art); for example, the group called Maltti, includes a special programme for pupils experiencing difficulties in concentrating and in controlling their own feelings and behaviour.	Participation of parents or guardians in school developement (curriculum work, pupil welfare plan, research and development activities, etc.)	Assessment and improvement of the health and safety of the learning environment
Pupil-led extracurricular activities	Home–school events	Housekeeping, arts and handicrafts
Clubs	Parents' committee	Communal multi-agency pupil welfare activities

Pupils	Parents and groups involved	School
Pupil association activities	Open doors	Well-being plan for the class
Pupil association	Club activities organised by parents	Health checks by school nurse
"School buddy" activities	Dialogues between pupils	Welfare questionnaires
Visits to schools etc.	Parents' evenings etc.	School transitions

Individual pupil welfare services include school health care, the services of the school psychologist and social worker, as well as family counselling. Individual pupil welfare is implemented in co-operation with pupils and their parents or guardians and, where relevant, other professionals and services. These include the family counselling center and the health center of the City of Rovaniemi (offering support on issues related to parenting, education and family interactions), special group activities (for example support for pupils with difficulties in concentrating) and mental health services for young people. A child neurology outpatient clinic and psychiatric outpatient clinic for children and young people are also available, as well as teaching in hospital, which co-operates with a special health care center and with child welfare authorities where relevant. A named police officer attached to the school provides preventative support and legal advice and guidance.

The school also carries out remedial work with pupils in groups. A group called "Maltti" is one of such programs. Taught by special education teachers, it supports children who have difficulties in concentrating on learning and controlling their own feelings and behaviour. Another remedial programme is the so-called ART group (Aggression Replacement Training), run by the school social worker for antisocial and aggressive children.

In Finland, education providers and schools set up their own curricula on the basis of the national core curriculum. The Teacher Training School of the University of Lapland is an education provider but works in co-operation with local school authorities in the City of Rovaniemi.

Inclusive practices of the Teacher Training School

In the Teacher Training School, the first pupils with cerebral palsy were admitted to mainstream classes during the school years 2003-2005. Since the academic year 2014/15, the school has abandoned its policy of providing a separate class for special needs pupils, and instead placed all pupils with special needs in their "home classes", with a special needs teacher coming into the home classes as a co-teacher. Every special needs pupil

also has the opportunity of learning part-time in a flexible small group. Class teachers and special needs teachers, in co-operation with the parents, plan special support for every pupil individually. At the school, there are three special needs teachers, one of whom is in charge of those special needs children who would benefit from individual teaching and learning in a flexible small group. Similarly, there are three trained teaching assistants able to help in various classes, moving between them according to the need.

There are two classes, namely, the second and the fourth grades, participating in the research, consisting of a total of forty-four pupils (twenty-three girls and twenty-one boys) and two teachers. The classes are very diverse and dynamic groups with a wide range of learners. According to national practice, some of the pupils receive intensified support and a few receive special support, alongside with the support and teaching that the rest of the pupils receive.

As pupils' ability to learn (academic, cognitive, socio-emotional, and motor skills) varies significantly, all Finnish pupils receive the support matching their needs. The Basic Education Act (Section 30 Amendment 642/2010) specifies that every pupil on the school roll shall be entitled to teaching according to the curriculum, guidance, counselling, and "sufficient support" for learning in the course of the ordinary school day, "directly as the need arises". Children may need extra support because of their learning difficulties or disabilities, socio-emotional problems, or difficulties in concentrating and focusing on school activities. Some pupils have been diagnosed with Neurodevelopmental Autism Spectrum Disorder or mental retardation. Some pupils need extra challenges to support their special talents. Pupils who have Finnish as their second language are supported with language learning and coping with in-class teaching given in Finnish. Most of the pupils belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church and receive religious education; those who choose not to take part therein, study ethics instead.

Some pupils, along with their families, receive regular support from therapists (physiotherapy, speech therapy, functional therapy, riding therapy), the school social worker and the family counselling, and rehabilitation and children's psychiatric clinics.

In a diverse group, it is very important to devise methods for promoting social engagement for all pupils, including activities to encourage team spirit. The pupils need to be given opportunities to have their say about the class environment, which has an impact on the quality of learning. In this way, they can also practice their social and emotional skills. Pupils have to learn to respect one another and understand that they can learn from one another. Each person is important and has personal strengths and areas open for improvement.

Spending enough time in lesson planning is necessary in order to support different kinds of learners' needs in the classroom. The teachers use various methods to help pupils to concentrate, focus on learning, participate, and learn in their own ways and at their own levels. Special attention is given to learning styles, various teaching methods, group arrangements, anticipating and preparing pupils for future situations, and task differentiation.

To support the school work in the classes, teachers also use daily routines, structuring, and modelling. Importance is also given to visualizing, concretizing, chopping the assignments, little breaks during lessons, exercising during the lesson and throughout the school day, and awarding systems. Teaching is based on flexible grouping and utilization of space, personal guidance, co-teaching and part-time special education and, in many cases, on multiagency work.

Close co-operation with colleagues and other professionals is important, as is keeping in touch with the parents. Communication happens by phone, via the Wilma application or e-mail. Once or twice a year, teachers, parents, and pupils plan, evaluate and set new goals together.

The school year begins in August. The weekly schedule is agreed on at the beginning of the school year but the class teacher is free to adapt it as he or she sees fit. The class is divided into two groups several times a week. Pupils study twenty to twenty-four hours a week, depending on their individual schedules. The school day usually begins at 8 or 9 o´clock (schedules vary) and is divided into lessons. Between lessons, pupils have a ten or fifteen minute break, during which they can go outside and play. There is an active pupil association, which organizes activities for the breaks. Lunch, which is free, consists of a typical Finnish hot meal in the school restaurant. Pupils with special dietary needs for health or religious reasons are catered for.

In Teacher Training School, there is an afternoon club available for the first and second graders, for which a fee is charged. Children may attend the homework club, which takes place in the school library every day after school. There are also other optional clubs (dance, ball games, art and handicrafts), all of which are free of charge. Therapy sessions are offered to certain pupils after the school day.

Inclusion means that pupils learn to work with one another, and respect their diversity and different abilities. They learn how to consider and encourage one another, how to get over disappointments, how to solve problems constructively, how to be fair, and how to have fun together.

4.3. VILNIUS "VERSMĖS" CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Alvyra Galkienė

School history

In 1993, a group of educators, parents, and Catholic Church authorities, with the approval and support of Vilnius municipality, established the first inclusive educational institution: Vilnius "Versmės" kindergarten-school. Children with disabilities were taught together with children with no disabilities in one school. This was a challenge for a Lithuanian society used to a system where children with disabilities were educated in specialized institutions. It was also a challenge for parents who were striving for security and quality of education for their children, as well as for teachers who did not have any pedagogical experience working with children of normal development in the same classroom with children with disabilities. Therefore, a great number of questions had to be answered during the education process. The answers to these questions had to be found in the few foreign specialized books available at the time and in meetings with teachers and school leaders from abroad, including Minnesota (USA) and Toulouse (France), and researchers from Binghamton (USA) as well as Vilnius universities. Through numerous research projects and observation, the educational structure was gradually formed through daily life, team-work flourished, the educational curriculum and pupil assessment system were established, and the features of school leadership were developed. Thus, a space was created where children with special needs could communicate, co-operate, and learn according to their abilities and opportunities. The school was led by Alvyra Galkienė, Doctor of Social Sciences, who, being well aware of children and parents' expectations, purposefully created and shaped the team of teachers and specialists. In the first years of the school's existence, there were five mainstream classes, for children in grades from the first to the fifth, a special education class for children with moderate mental disabilities, and two kindergarten groups. In total, there were 117 children. The composition of the mainstream classes was 70% typically developing children and 30% children with disabilities. The assistance to the children with disabilities was provided by a team of specialists consisting of the special pedagogue, speech therapist, psychologist, and therapeutic physical education teacher. Teachers' assistants worked alongside the teacher in the classroom. Intensified English language learning was introduced and

great attention was paid to pupils' spiritual development. The governors of the school who helped to form the school's educational system based on eternal values were the Cardinal, H. E. Audrys Juozas Bačkis, the then archbishop of Vilnius, and the nuns of Christ the King congregation. A school of this type aroused great interest in Lithuania, and attracted mass media attention. "It is difficult to find the words to describe the importance of this school in the education system of Lithuania. It is an essentially new school of humanistic nature, the main purpose of which is to treat children with love", a newspaper wrote (Europos lietuvis [European Lithuanian], 10 12 1994 No. 50).

The school grew and went from strength to strength. In 1997, Vilnius "Versmės" kindergarten-school was reorganized into Vilnius "Versmės" Secondary School. In the same year, a craft training centre was opened in the school, where children had woodwork, ceramics, sewing, wickerwork, and cookery classes. Italian language classes were introduced into the school's syllabus. Children with disabilities were given the possibility to choose craft training classes instead of some academic subjects, which enabled them to cover the curriculum of secondary education.

In 1998, the school joined an international "Let Us Live Together" project that aimed at encouraging children with different abilities to participate in various activities together, organize leisure time, and co-operate while learning. Information about the school's experience was widely disseminated throughout Lithuania. Teachers from all over Lithuania visited the school to draw on and learn from its experience of inclusive education. Later on, the school continued organizing conferences and seminars related to the education of children with special needs in regular schools. For example, during the school years 1999–2000, two national seminars were organized. More than 200 teachers from Lithuanian schools attended lectures and discussions. The teachers of this school published a collection of articles on working methods and practices, called "Some aspects of integrated education" (ed. A. Galkiene) designed as a methodological tool for the teachers of Lithuania. Later, a number of methodological books and articles were published, looking into the inclusive education experience of the school. In 2001, A. Galkienė defended her doctoral thesis, where the efficiency of the educational model of the school was evaluated via empirical research.

In 2010, under the initiative of the school community, the former Vilnius municipal school was reorganized to become a private gymnasium "Vilnius "Versmės" Catholic School". Vilnius municipality conveyed its rights as a founder to the Archdiocese of Vilnius and the Religious Sisters of the Assumption women's monastery.

The community of Vilnius "Versmės" Catholic High School

For 20 years, the community of Vilnius "Versmės" Catholic School has been offering the opportunity for pupils with and without disabilities to study together in an integrated learning environment. The schools' philosophy is the following: "*There is no such thing as a child who cannot learn*".

In terms of educational goals, working together with parents or guardians, taking care of the spiritual development of each pupil, and following the educational traditions of the Catholic Church and of St. Marie-Eugenie, the school provides a holistic education to enable each pupil to live his or her Christian freedom responsibly, and to live under the constantly changing social and economic conditions of today, acknowledging social and cultural differences.

Following the educational traditions of St. Marie- Eugénie, the school works to help raise young people with deeply rooted values and a Christian humanistic worldview, as well as with academic skills and a desire to do their best, the ability to work with others, and to build and respect peace, society, and the creation; to implement the integrated education of pupils with disabilities by providing educational, psychological, social, and other kinds of assistance, and to provide each pupil with the opportunity to achieve their highest possible academic level; to help pupils develop an attitude of lifelong learning, the ability to make decisions and choose their path for further studies and work, and to develop personal and socio-cultural maturity in the pupils, as well as to instil social and cultural competencies, and an awareness of citizenship.

Primary and secondary education programs are implemented in the school. There is a section of primary education (pupils aged six to ten), and secondary education (pupils aged ten to eighteen). Also, there are two separate special educational needs classes. One of them is for pupils with mild intellectual disabilities, while the other is for pupils with more significant intellectual disabilities. In total, there are 26 classes, and pupils with physical or educational needs are integrated into each class. All in all, there are 579 pupils, 80 teachers and specialists (psychologists, special needs teachers, social workers, physiotherapists, and speech and language therapists), and 20 teacher assistants. Each mainstream class includes four to six children with special needs such as language impairments, visual impairments, physical, mental disabilities, or other developmental disorders.

Education organization model

Education at the school is organized according to the individual needs and abilities of every pupil. The school has gifted pupils of normal development as well as 114 pupils with special needs (physical and mental disabilities, sight and hearing disabilities). Teacher assistants help primary and secondary school teachers in the classrooms (Figure 11).
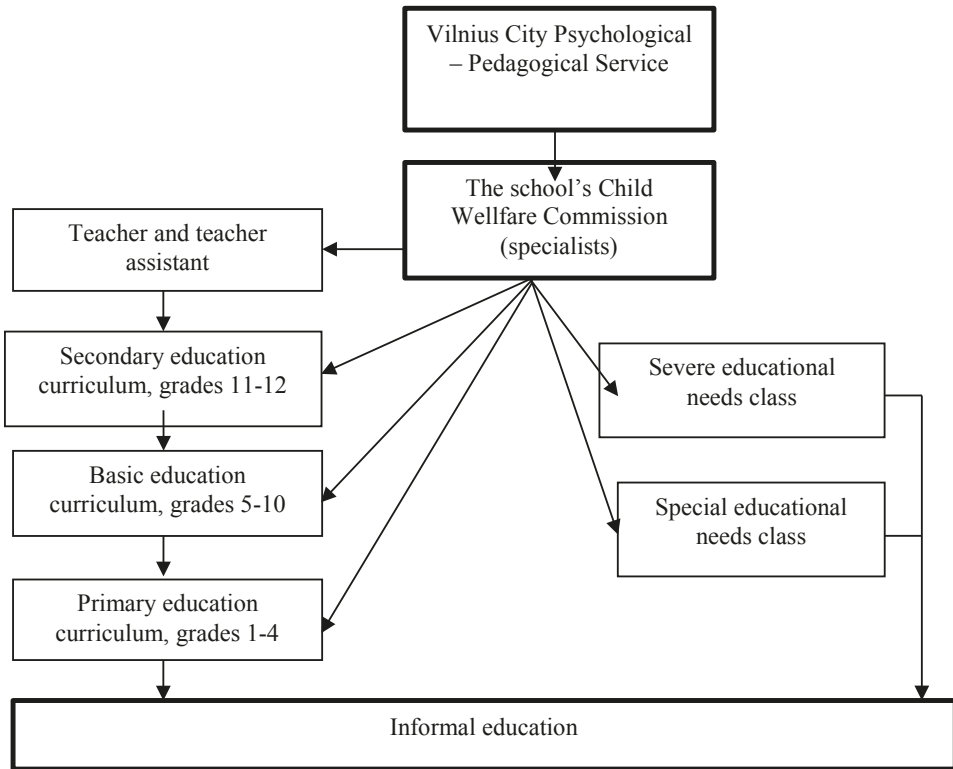
Figure 11. Education organization model.

The Child Welfare Commission attempts to ensure that children with special needs receive an education that meets their needs and develops their abilities. They evaluate pupils' special needs, co-operate with school teachers and pupils' parents, and provide direct assistance to them. Thus, the specialists contribute to improving education efficiency. The commission coordinates the activity of all those who provide assistance to pupils in the school, and takes care of educational effectiveness for pupils with special needs across the whole school, including primary, basic, and secondary classes

as well as classes for children with special needs. The Child Welfare Commission co-operates with the Vilnius City Pedagogical – Psychological Service, which coordinates assistance for pupils residing in Vilnius.

In order to ensure high-quality education, assistants consult and advise each other, prepare learning equipment, carry out case studies, evaluate open lessons, have meetings to discuss working methods and practices, and co-operate with other institutions. The school learning environment is specially adapted to meet the needs of all children.

Individual learning plans are also drawn up to meet the pupils' individual needs. When drawing up an individual learning plan for a pupil, the following subjects may be suggested to replace other academic subjects: technology, ceramics, social skills, economics, business and careers, information technology, therapeutic physical education, or special learning support. When necessary, the teachers adapt the mainstream curriculum to individual needs. Two types of specialized learning programs are available: 1) the adapted learning program for children with special educational needs, and 2) the individual program for children with severe educational needs.

Career planning and advice at the high school is coordinated by the Career Coordination Group. The group engages in the following activities:

- providing assistance in planning individual career steps (planning further studies),
- giving individual consultations to pupils in the process of designing their individual or adapted learning programs to ensure the programs correspond to the pupils' future study plans,
- collecting the most up-to-date information regarding the entry conditions and requirements at other educational institutions, in cases when a pupil leaves or graduates from "Versmės" High School.

The school also provides extra-curricular education programs. Eighteen clubs are available helping to develop creativity and responsibility, as well as artistic, technical, and physical skills. A Pupils' Parliament also operates at the school, called "Our High School – Our Responsibility", which has a say in all pupil-related matters. Moreover, art and music therapy activities are available at the school. Extra-curricular activities are open to individual pupils with special educational needs if necessary, according to their individual or adapted educational programs.

The classes participating in this research

The pupils from the Classes 2b and 3b participated in this research. Class 2b contains 22 pupils, including two pupils with special needs: one of them in need of assistance from kinesiotherapy practitioners, while the other one needs help from a special pedagogue and a speech and language therapist. Six other pupils also receive assistance from the speech therapist. In this class, a special program called the "Second Step Program" is implemented (the program strengthens social and emotional skills). Special courses are also organized for parents and consultations for teachers given by the psychologist and social pedagogue so as to build and strengthen the classroom community and environment. Every day, the pupils have five lessons. They learn Lithuanian (mother tongue), Mathematics, Nature Studies, Art, Physical Education, English, Music, Dancing, and Religious Education. Their teacher works without the help of an assistant.

Class 3b contains 22 pupils, two of them with special needs. Both of the latter need help from a special pedagogue and a speech and language therapist. Another six pupils also receive assistance from the speech and language therapist. Every day, the pupils have five lessons. The subjects studied include Lithuanian (mother tongue), Mathematics, Nature Studies, Art, Physical Education, English, Music, Dancing, and Religious Education. Their teacher also works without the help of an assistant.

Once per term, a methodological group organizes a meeting of teachers, specialists, and management, where they discuss pupils' achievements and problems. They also look into future strategies that would improve the quality of education. Moreover, consultation hours are organized once a term for parents to come and discuss their children's achievements with teachers and specialists.

4.4. INTEGRATED SECONDARY SCHOOL NO. 1 IN CRACOW

Remigiusz Kijak

Polish experience in building inclusive school space is relatively recent. In the post war years, and until the fall of the communist regime in 1989, the concept of inclusion was not prespecial educational needs t in the Polish scholastic reality. A conviction prevailed that children with special educational needs should be separated. Therefore, it must be mentioned that special needs pedagogues of the time, above all, Maria Grzegorzewska, Janina Doroszewska or Aleksander Hulek, played a substantial role in contributing to the ideas on integration. In the 1970s, Hulek pointed out the importance of overcoming mental barriers towards otherness. He promoted the idea that breaking through barriers in contact with people with disabilities seems to be the beginning of a long process, in which stereotypes and cultural prejudices are to be challenged. In the 1990s, the concept was further elaborated on by a number of scholars, including Janina Wyczesany, Władysław Dykcik, Jan Pańczyk, and others.

The research conducted since the 1970s in different areas of social sciences was paralleled by educational institutions participating in the UNESCO world-wide programme that popularized the inclusive education philosophy (Education for All). As a result, following the year in 1989, the Polish education system started to evolve towards the Western approach based on the School for All principles. The developments took different dynamics. The school reality was changing at a slow pace, which allowed for the emergence of an idiosyncratic system rather than merely copying ideas that exist in other countries. The Polish educational system consists of three parts: special schools, integrated schools and inclusive ones, i.e. public schools.

Pupils with special educational needs are entitled to being educated together with other pupils not only for humanistic reasons but also because of Polish binding legislation. What is more, the current prevailing trends within the Special Needs Pedagogy indicate a preference for education strategies that refer to life normalization of people with disabilities in all areas of their social and individual activity.

An example of an inclusive school is a school from Cracow, which was one of the first schools to implement the principles of inclusion. As early as in 1957, Szkoła Ćwiczeń

(The Practice School) No. 12 was established by Liceum Pedagogiczne (Secondary School) No. 2 in Cracow. The title "Szkoła ćwiczeń" (The Practice School) was given to schools where students of Pedagogics could undergo practical training. A year later, the school was administratively incorporated into the Studium Nauczycielskie (Teacher College), located at 48, Krupnicza St. The Szkoła ćwiczeń (The Practice School) No. 12 was the only experimental school in Cracow to implemented the principles of inclusion to a certain extent. In 1999, the school was officially named Zespół Szkół Ogólnokształcących Integracyjnych (Union of Integrated Schools) No. 1 in Cracow. Currently, the school consists of Szkoła Podstawowa z Oddziałami Integracyjnymi No. 12 im. Janusza Korczaka (Janusz Korczak Primary School No. 12 with Integrated Sections), and Gimnazjum z Oddziałami Integracyjnymi No. 15 im. Janusza Korczaka (Janusz Korczak Gymnasium No. 15 with Integrated Sections). More than 610 pupils attend the school, including 100 with special educational needs.

The school employs a number of specialists, including a social rehabilitation therapist, speech therapist and psychologist. There are 22 classrooms, two gyms (a small and a big one), one of which is used for choreotherapy. There is also a biofeedback laboratory, a large modern pitch and a playground, as well as green area of almost 1 ha. The school is fully adjusted to work with pupils with special educational needs, not only due to its universal premise arrangement elliminating all physical barriers, be it architectural or spatial ones, or those of connection with the surrounding area, but also because of its organization that is conducive to inclusion, namely, numerous contacts with the local community, modified curricula and individualised teaching plans, which aim at helping each pupil to achieve success. Pupils' success is defined in terms of their individual intellectual and psycho-physical predispositions. The whole school community is united in creating a pupil-friendly environment. In its activities, the school follows universal ethical principles that respect Christian code of values, with wisdom, love and justice as the most important of them.

The school is an open and dynamically developing institution oriented towards changing expectations of its pupils, parents and teachers. The school ensures a versatile and harmonious development of a child, taking it as the main aim of the school, i.e. all activities undertaken must be directed towards achieving the goal.

Co-operation between all teachers, tutors as well as people and institutions supporting the school is mutual and effective. Diverse activities and mutual co-operation serve to create a school environment which, supporting the parents in upbringing their children, prepares the pupils for further study and life in the society of the 21st century.

The school ensures psycho-pedagogical assistance to all pupils. Those with special educational needs can attend social rehabilitation, corrective and compensatory classes. In accordance with their needs, individual teaching and individual social rehabilitation is available. Work with the pupils without disabilities follows an individual teaching programme as well. Specialists conduct classes using the biofeedback method. integrated, therapeutic, and prophylactic workshops as well as medical care are constantly available. There is a wide range of extracurricular activities to choose from, including Young European Club, English and German Clubs, integrated workshops, journalism, rhetoric and theatrical workshops, music activities (choir, vocal-instrumental group), sports classes (fitness, table tennis, team sports, a climbing wall, swimming pool), chess classes, Film Academy, ecotrips, tourist trips, visits to theatre, concert halls and opera.

In the classrooms, the SEN pupils are subject to care by a teacher and a special needs pedagogue (who also acts as the second teacher). Each child is provided with individual care and assistance; the teacher adjusts the working methods to pupils' needs and capacities. Moreover, pupils have access to pedagogical and/or psychological assistance according to their needs, all year-long or in the case of an emergency.

The school is to be seen as the premises and the context for the implementation of the concept of inclusion. Its long-term goal is to bring about a qualitative change in the social perception of otherness. The school mission needs to be reformulated to meet its personalistic philosophy. Developments in the social structure, changing political economy and the state restructuration allow for the role of diversity at school to be redefined. As a result, activities undertaken at the school favour children's integration. Children with special educational needs are provided with assistance of a special needs pedagogue and two-hour-a-week of individual rehabilitation. What is more, there are therapeutic classes conducted by a special needs pedagogue that are aimed at integrating the whole class: children with disabilities and their healthy peers. In addition, the school employs an assistant for pupils with Asperger syndrome. Co-operation with parents is based on mutual respect and trust. Parents participate in the creation of individualized education programmes (IEPs) and their evaluation. A considerable success of the school has been the creation of an environment that is conducive to the work and development of each pupil, while maintaining high standards of teaching.

The school in its organisational, structural and conceptual dimensions contributes to the concept of inclusive education and has the potential to promote values, attitudes

and opinions that favour living in the integrated, though diverse, world. Children not only find out what culture is but conceptualise and interpret their knowledge of the outside world in accordance with it. They also shape their own behavioural patterns accordingly. The long-standing experience of the school as well as the monitoring of integration and inclusion processes have resulted in widening the scope of inclusive education. The implementation of equality in access to rights and resources (including the symbolic ones), inclusion and participation have been promoted.

What we can finally add is that the gist of inclusion pedagogy as a means of thinking about the integrated world is to go beyond educational institutions focused on the inclusion of children and youth. Instead, what should be promoted is the creation of opportunities to participate fully and in a life-long fashion in social life and institutions. In reference to the experiences of Zespół Szkół Ogólnokształcących Integracyjnych (Union of Integrated Schools), it can be further added that in the Polish context, the focus is not on access to education but on the quality of the education itself. The quality depends to a large extent on individual competences of the teacher, pedagogue, caregiver, instructor or tutor, their own worldview and attitude towards respecting human rights.

Chapter V.

CASE STUDY OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN FOUR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

5.1. INTEGRATED LEARNING CENTRE BRIGITTENAU IN AUSTRIA

Sabine Albert, Georg Jäggle, Susanne Tomecek

Description of research environment and reference codes

The research was carried out in the "Integrative Lernwerkstatt Brigittenau" school ("Inclusive Learning Centre Brigittenau"). The following results are presented according to the research questions. The original Austrian text in the data extracts was translated into English.

Description of the monitored classes. During the research, two classes were observed, referred to as Class A and Class B. The data obtained were taken from the observations in these classes, also called transition groups, as there are pupils from primary and lower secondary education together in the same class. There were eighteen pupils in Class A, twelve boys and six girls. Including five boys with special needs as well as four boys and three girls with migration background. There was one boy with both special needs and migration background. The research Class B contained nineteen pupils, eleven boys and eight girls. There were five pupils with special needs, four of them were girls.

Pupils' anonymity. In the citations, taken from different sets of data, the pupils' real names have been replaced by numbers, for example, Pupil 1 (ST1), Pupil 2 (ST2), etc. The same letters were used randomly several times to refer to different children to guarantee the anonymity of the pupils.

Pupils' with special educational needs. Each class contains five pupils with special needs, two pupils in each class have serious mental retardation, and others have learning disabilities.

Pedagogical diaries. The two teachers both took notes of their teaching experiences in their pedagogical diaries for four weeks. The teachers produced a total of forty pages of typed text. The teachers in each country were given the ready-made diary structure to help them compose their diaries.

Observation. The researchers observed two classes for ten days during lessons, breaks, and at lunch time. The researchers' notes make up seventy-two pages of written text. There were no exact criteria set for the observation. In the citations, a distinction

is made between the observations in the two research classes, and the observations are marked as "Observation, Class A" and "Observation, Class B".

Teachers' interviews. The two special needs teachers were interviewed separately. The main themes of the interviews were, firstly, the relationships between the pupils in the class; secondly, the relationship between the teachers and the pupils in the class, and, thirdly, the co-operation and communication between professionals within the school and in professional networks.

Pupils' interviews. Nine pupils (five in Class A and four in Class B) were interviewed for the purpose of the research. In Class A, three girls and two boys, including two pupils with migration background and one pupil with special needs, participated. In Class B, three girls and one boy, including one pupil with special needs, took part. The interviews lasted approximately ten to thirty minutes, and have been transcribed.

Parents' interview. Parents from the monitored classes were interviewed as a whole group on 19 May, 2015 (Class A and Class B, sixty-seven minutes). Both researchers were present. One researcher asked the questions, and the other wrote down any additional information. Furthermore, the conversation was recorded. Eight parents were present during the interview, and the interview has been transcribed.

Socio-metric measuring. The social structure of the monitored classes was mapped by socio-metric measuring. The pupils of both classes were asked various questions about their relationships with each other. The following questions were asked: "How many friends do you have in the class?", "With whom would you like to learn?", "With whom would you like to play?", "With whom would you like to share a secret?" etc.

Table 9. Data codes (Austrian case)

TYPE OF DATA	REFERENCE CODE
Teachers' interviews	Interview, T1 Interview, T2
Pupils' interviews in Class A and Class B	Interview, ST1-5 Interview, ST6-9
Parents' group interview	Interview, P
Observations in Class A and Class B	Observation, Class A Observation, Class B
Teachers' diaries	Diary A Diary B
Socio-metric measurement in Class B	Sociogram B

5.1.1. INTERPERSONAL INTERACTION BETWEEN PUPILS IN THE INTEGRATED LEARNING CENTRE BRIGITTENAU

Georg Jäggle

In this chapter, the results of the data analysis are presented in dimensions and categories. Moser (2001) wrote that the integration of children with disabilities is mainly about their social integration in the community, individual support, and social climate. The term "pupils with special needs" stands for children with various disabilities.

The following figure shows an overview of the dimensions and categories of the interpersonal interaction between pupils.
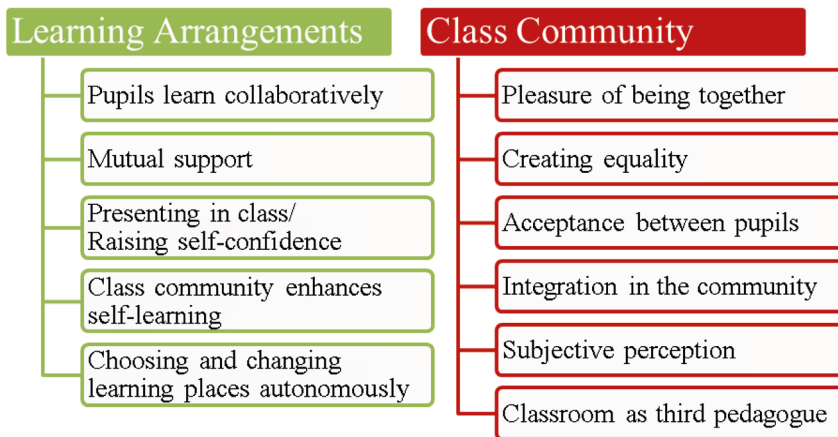
Figure 12. Interpersonal interaction between pupils.

Learning arrangements

The results of the present study demonstrate that learning arrangements are an essential dimension for inclusive education. The following categories facilitate understanding, which is needed to support the relationships between pupils and, therefore, the learning arrangements as well. Learning may be defined in many ways, but in order for it to evolve into the learning process, a pedagogical framework is necessary, which may be deduced from these categories.

Pupils learn collaboratively. There are some cases that demonstrate or support collaborative learning. Teacher 2 observes that the friends of a fifth-grader sat down together to do their English tasks (Diary 2). One pupil recounts that he supports those who need help (Interview, ST1). A pupil with special needs says he knows a little Polish, because a friend in his class has taught him (Interview, ST2). The classroom contains tables of different size. Round and square tables are available. Some tables can accommodate two pupils, while other tables can fit up to six pupils. The pupils learn in pairs on the computer. The design of the room supports collaborative learning (Observation, Class B).

Mutual support is based on the social climate. The data show that pupils help each other regularly. A pupil was asked in an interview if he would help others. He replied that he had recently helped another pupil in the history lesson (Interview, ST1). Several pupils state that they help others with their learning (Interview, ST2 and ST5). A teacher confirms that pupils help each other with their learning (Diary B). The pupils also put away the sports mats together after sports class (Diary A). One pupil says that he does not really like a certain special needs child but that he certainly helps him with his learning, anyway (Interview, ST5). Teacher 3 indicates there are children who are affectionate and devoted when helping the special needs children (Interview, T3). The children help each other eagerly and mutual support seems to be the norm (Observation, Class A).

Presenting in class / Raising self-confidence. There are many opportunities to read something important aloud or to act out a little play in the classroom. There is also an opportunity for pupils with special needs to present themselves, which is evaluated and appreciated by the other pupils with applause (Diary A). The school needs the space and a pedagogical framework for presenting in the class to raise pupils' self-confidence.

Class communities enhance self-learning. A teacher in the class recognizes that pupils with and without special needs learn on their own. Teacher 2 observes a girl with special needs who begins to work on her own (Diary B). Also, Teacher 1 monitors a girl who works on her presentation autonomously (Diary A). A pupil with special needs is so engaged in her work that she asks to continue practicing writing in her workbook (Diary A). Pupils demonstrate self-directed learning and other pupils recognize them as role models. The pupil to pupil role model effect is more sustainable than that of the teacher to pupil one. What is more, every pupil has his or her own workbook and learning equipment to support self-directed learning. They take it

upon themselves and find their own learning place (Observation, Class B). Parents indicate that the special learning equipment in the class supports the pupils' learning (Interview, Parents). A pupil says they have to accomplish certain tasks in English by the end of the week. They can choose how and when to do the tasks (Interview, ST4). Moreover, some pupils can choose a different room for learning and can organize their learning partners on their own. *"I was looking for a free room. I left the classroom and looked into another room. In this room, a pupil was sitting at a table with a book. I asked the pupil what she was doing there. She said that she was learning and waiting for another pupil to come and learn English together"* (Observation, Class B). According to one pupil, it is nice to get the chance to study more individually and autonomously (Interview, ST4). The pupils work on their own and autonomously (Observation, Class B). The school provides the rooms, possibilities, and support for the self-directed learning for every pupil.

Choosing and changing learning places autonomously. All pupils with or without special education needs stay together at the beginning of the lesson. The teacher explains to all pupils what their tasks are. Afterwards, the pupils can select the places where they want to learn and the groups they want to form. There are round tables for five to six pupils, workstations with PCs for up to four pupils and two tables for up to two pupils. Individual pupils also sit on the floor. At the beginning, various groups are formed: boys' groups, girls' groups, mixed gender groups, pupils with special needs by themselves and pupils with special needs mixed with pupils without special needs. During the lesson, the pupils change their learning places in a polite and respectful way. The phrases begin with "please" and end with "thank you". They can express themselves and communicate verbally or non-verbally to contact their fellow pupils. When the pupils approach fellow pupils actively, they wait for the reaction of the latter. The pupils pay a great deal of attention to non-verbal signals and try to establish a relational contact before acting (Observation, Class B).

Classroom community

Pleasure to be together. The data present a few cases of taking pleasure in being together. There are different rooms, buildings, and pedagogical frameworks to support the pleasure of being together. The pupils have the opportunity to eat together: *"Everybody loves to have breakfast together"* (Interview, T2). Teachers hold reading nights for the pupils. A pupil said, *"I'm looking forward to the reading night"*

(Interview, ST2). The pupils often indicated in their interviews: *"I like being here; I feel great in school"* (Interview, ST2). The school has a house in a forest near Vienna and one pupil referred to a project in the alluvial forest, "*that is super cool . . . because there is a big house, and together we cook, clean and do the dishes"* (Interview, ST7).

Creating equality. In the Morning Circle and at the beginning of every lesson, every child constitutes an equal member of the class. At the beginning of every lesson, the pupils remain seated and listen to the instructions from the teachers, even though the children with special needs cannot always follow the instructions of the teachers precisely. If this is the case, the special needs teachers help the children (Diary A). All the pupils come into the class for the Morning Circle, and all the children are subject to the same rules, such as putting away the learning materials before sitting down in the Morning Circle. All the children need to comply with the communication rules in the class council. The special needs children are impossible to identify as they do the same tasks as all the children, maybe just slightly slowlier. In the class council, pupils with special needs also take the lead. The ones who cannot write by themselves are supported by the team (Interview, T2). Despite close observation of the whole class, it was impossible to identify the children with special needs (Observation, Class B).

Acceptance between the pupils. It is accepted that in the sports class, pupils with special needs receive support when doing their exercises (Diary B). Also, all the children listen when a pupil with special needs reads a story to the class. In addition, the presentations of the pupils with special needs are welcomed with applause (Diary A). One pupil with special needs was even elected class speaker by the majority of the children. The class also takes the children with special needs in when playing football. They pass the football to them and do not immediately kick the ball away (Interview, ST2).

Integration in the community. The sociogram shows the position of the pupils in the classroom community. The chart in Figure 13 presents the number of pupils who want to be friends with a certain person in the class. Thus, the popularity of certain pupils can be estimated. The most popular children are arranged to the left of point zero on the x-axis. The name codes of the pupils with special needs are put in brackets to make them easily recognizable. A pupil with special needs ranks second in the popularity chart of this class (Sociogram B).
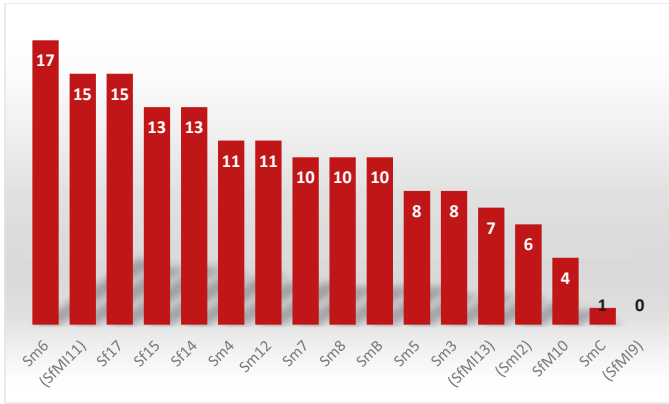
Figure 13. Popularity of pupils.

Subjective perception. An experiment can be conducted to show the difference between imagined and actual popularity by comparing the imagined friendship with real popularity. Figure 14 shows the difference between imagined and actual popularity. The diagram has two axes; the x-axis shows the pupils, and the y-axis shows the imagined relationship in red and the actual popularity in grey. The initial "S" is an abbreviation for pupil, "m" stands for male, "f" stands for female, "M" stands for Migration, and "I" refers to special needs. Also, pupils with special needs are indicated in brackets. For the purpose of anonymization, every pupil is assigned with a number. The question put forward in order to evaluate imagined relationship was "Who are your friends?" The answer to this question reveals the pupil's opinion regarding their friendships. For example, pupil Sm6 said he had eight friends. In reality, seventeen pupils indicated willingness to be friends with him.
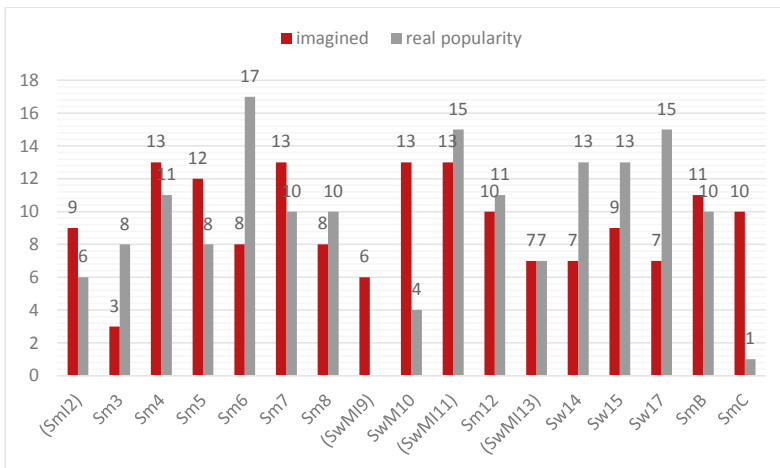
Figure 14. Difference between imagined and actual popularity.

The chart shows the level of precision to which pupils are able to estimate their relationships. The red bar shows the number of friends the pupils have according to their own estimates. The grey bar shows the number of pupils willing to be friends with them. The difference between their statements regarding themselves and those given by their fellow pupils reveals their self-assessment. The smaller the difference, the more precise the self-assessment. The chart demonstrates moderate self-assessment among pupils with special needs (Sociogram B).

Classroom as third pedagogue. The design of the classroom is relevant to the relationships in the class and collaborative learning. Figures 15 and 16 show the arrangement of tables (in red) and areas on the floor (in grey). The circles with letters are the pupils. The pink ones are the pupils with special needs, letter "m" standing for "male", and letter "f" meaning "female". Figure 15 shows homogenous gender groups at the tables, a pupil with special needs alone on the floor, and two special needs pupils together at a table. The pupils choose their places by themselves.
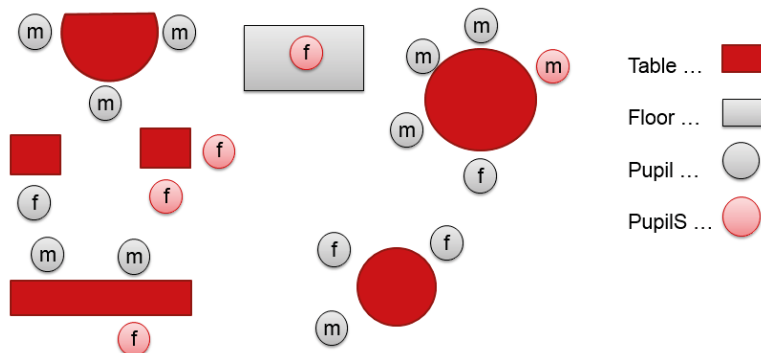
Figure 15. Relationships in the class: Situation A.

Figure 16 demonstrates the absence of gender balance; although the pupils choose their learning places themselves, the genders are not mixed. From Figure 15 to Figure 16, the situation becomes less gender-mixed.
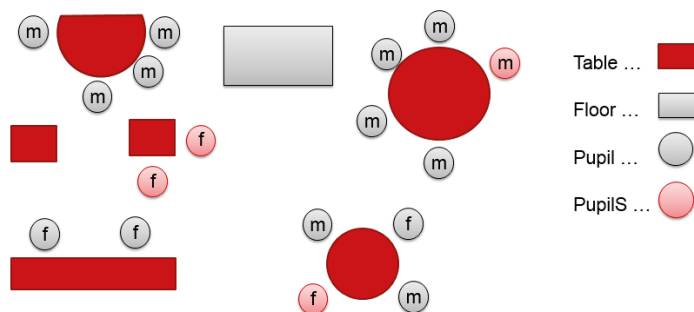
Figure 16. Relationships in the class: Situation B.

During the observations, it was not easy to distinguish between the pupils with special needs and those without special needs. All the pupils are aware that they have equal rights and responsibilities, and they present themselves as a group. The pupils see themselves as a community. Therefore, it is notable that the pupils with special needs do not feel excluded or marginalized but see themselves as part of the community. There is a difference between the way pupils with special needs and those without special needs experience the situation. The pupils without special needs feel that the pupils with special needs are teased more, because they cannot express themselves very well and are unable to defend themselves very well. This shows different perceptions of the same situations within the community.

The sociogram shows the number of friends as seen from the perspective of the pupils themselves (self-assessment) and in other pupils' views (external assessment). Figure 13 shows that a pupil with special needs takes second position. The other three pupils with special needs, however, are among the last five in the popularity ranking. The reasons for this cannot be clearly defined based on the study. The self-assessment of the pupils with special needs are relatively accurate; there was little difference between suspected and actual friendships (see Figure 14). The self-assessment of pupils with special needs is moderate.

The communication between pupils is respectful; they communicate well both verbally and non-verbally. Pupils speak softly and in an appreciative manner to each other, most sentences beginning with "please" and ending with "thank you". As a result of the good quality of communication, group changes happen smoothly and are not disturbing.

The notion of an inclusive school is facilitated by strengthening bonds and enjoying being and learning together. The diversities are seen as part of normal life and are addressed through a special learning design, empowerment, mutual support, and acceptance among the pupils, thus creating equal conditions for all.

The classroom design enhances collaborative learning through the use of round tables and the freedom to choose one's learning place. The observations show that pupils with special needs do not always sit at the same table with other pupils and sometimes they sit alone.

Pupils like helping other pupils and are positively inclined towards collaboration. Opportunities for presentation are helpful, as well as receiving recognition from the classroom community is a valuable experience for pupils with special needs. Pupils learn from their peers and from the class as a community.

5.1.2. INTERPERSONAL INTERACTION BETWEEN PUPILS AND TEACHERS IN THE INTEGRATED LEARNING CENTRE BRIGITTENAU

Georg Jäggle

In inclusive classes, **learning and relationship** are tightly interconnected. Also, good interaction between teachers and pupils is the basis for successful inclusive learning.
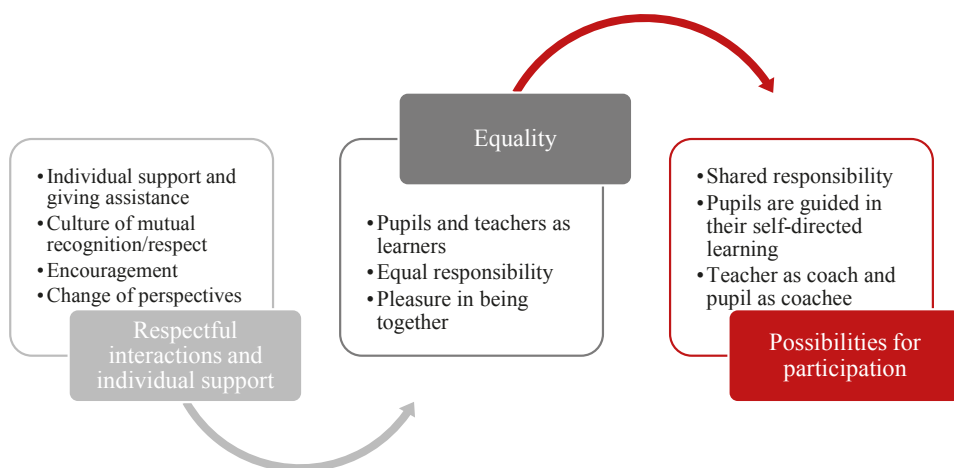
Figure 17. Interpersonal interaction between pupils and teachers.

Respectful interactions and support

Individual support and giving assistance. Because of the open learning setting in inclusive classes, the pupils can work individually, and it is much easier to find out the actual needs of the pupils with special needs (Interview, T1). As a result, individual needs can be addressed. Numerous occasions occur where teachers help pupils with special needs on their individual cognitive level.

"I go from pupil to pupil to help" (Diary B).

The teacher gives the specific amount of assistance that is needed by the pupils to solve the problems. The teacher provides assistance in the form of brief questions that lead the pupil to the answers. The pupil with special needs is able to solve the problem independently through this kind of assistance (Observation, Class A). The teachers help the pupils to work independently and arrive at solutions themselves.

Culture of mutual recognition or respect. The teachers try to serve as role models for a culture of co-operation and mutual respect, which has an impact on the pupils' behaviour. Two pupils, who are obliged to do reading and memorizing tasks (reading exercises) every week, invite the other children to play together and ask, *"Can you do that with me? Do you have time?"* (Interview, T1).

The teacher and the pupils are in an equal relationship. The teacher tries to do what he or she asks from the pupils, themselves. Problems are not solved via power relations between pupils and teacher but are rather discussed using the class council.

Teachers ensure they speak at eye level with the pupils: they either sit or kneel down next to the pupils when the latter are sitting (Observation, Class B). It is normal that everything cannot be known by everyone. The pupils are respected as individuals and are not judged on their personal performance. Similarly, the pupils respect the teachers and their instructions. The pupils clean up together and follow the instructions of the teacher (Observation, Class A).

Teachers often show curiosity and interest in the pupils and in their activities. The teachers take the pupils very seriously and respect them (Observation, Class A).

Encouragement. The praise of the teacher encourages the pupils in their presentations and eliminates their fear of public speaking. The teachers do not criticize the mistakes so as not to spoil the joy of making a presentation but rather point out that not knowing everything is normal.

"Teachers praise, showing enthusiasm and give no criticism" (Observation, Class A).

The special needs children are supported and motivated to present their work in school, visible to all, and this is especially encouraging for them (Diary A).

Change of perspectives. A change of perspectives is conducive to communication in order to get the picture of oneself or be able to empathize with others. One such example is a teacher repeatedly asking a pupil to clean up the room from the perspective of the pupil. The teacher says: *"I have to clean up the room"* (Observation, Class B).

The teacher does not order the pupil what to do but rather acts as if he were the pupil. After repeating it several times, the pupil understands and cleans up. The teacher tries to encourage the pupils to achieve a higher self-perception and to interpret and to draw their own conclusions regarding their actions.

Equality

Pupils and teachers as learners. Because of the large heterogeneity and the various disabilities of the pupils, the teachers have to also constantly adjust the teaching

methods. In inclusive classes, it is not possible to use one fixed method; rather, the teachers have to adapt their teaching according to the pupils' special needs. It is purely the pupils' learning process that reveals if the method is the appropriate one, so the teachers have to be very flexible and open minded.

"The teacher wants to know what Falben (horse breed) are and asks the pupil, because he does not know it. The pupil explains it to him" (Observation, Class A).

The teacher takes the role of a learner, who does not know everything and shows that he or she is willing to learn from the pupils. A joint exploring and learning from each other takes place.

Equal responsibility. The different competences of the mainstream teachers and the special education teachers can cause a certain "group-splitting". The special education teachers have more knowledge on the needs of pupils with disabilities; as a result, the pupils with special needs have a stronger relationship with these teachers and accept them more. The mainstream pupils are mainly taught and organized by the mainstream teachers; therefore, they accept the latter more. The teachers are not regarded as equal, which might cause difficulties.

"For the English lessons, I planned a short sequence with all pupils (lower secondary school class). But I did not consider that, for the mainstream pupils, I am the teacher in charge of the pupils with special educational needs – and only for those. They don't accept me as an equal teacher, and so it is difficult for me to maintain discipline. I don't hold the position of a teacher for the mainstream pupils" (Diary A).

Pleasure in being together. The teachers and pupils appreciate being together and use the breaks for conversation (Diary B). They are likewise content with the relationship they have with each other.

"The atmosphere is pleasant and relaxed; we have a lot of fun, too!" (Diary A).

"Building good rapport with the pupils plays an essential part in my teaching. I also believe that they . . . that a lot of the things that work well, work well because we have a good relationship. . ." (Interview, T1).

If pupils talk to each other, the teacher does not interrupt but rather waits until they are finished talking. Everybody tries to speak at a moderate volume so as not to disturb other pupils (Diary A). The teacher offers support by his presence and via eye contact and politely asks the pupils to be quiet. In many cases, a light tap on the shoulder suffices (Observation, Class B). The teachers give explanations on everything patiently and quietly and show a real interest in the children and in what they are

doing; the teachers treat the pupils as equals. The atmosphere is appreciative, and nobody ever shouts (Observation, Class B).

Possibilities for Participation

Shared responsibility. The teachers are not the only ones to feel responsible for the classroom community and the learning process.

"Pupils form a cinema series of projectors with chairs. One pupil with special needs sits down on a pillow on the floor. One pupil with special needs brings water to drink. One pupil closes the curtain following the teacher's request, and one pupil turns off the light. The presentations are about to be demonstrated" (Observation, Class A).

For this process, the class council is very important. In the council, the pupils write their requests individually on pieces of paper, such as taking trips together, having breakfast together, bringing pets to school or changing the seating arrangements (Interview, T1). In the class council, the pupils try to reach joint decisions.

The pupils have planned work phases, in which they follow their time frame independently to solve their tasks. Therefore, pupils have a possibility to manage their time themselves (Interview, T1). The classroom allows children to move according to their needs. They can decide on their own if they want to sit still, move about, or eat (Observation, Class A). The pupils are given the task of preparing the room, and they learn to share responsibility. They also are obliged to answer the questions of other pupils. Therefore, responsibility is shared among the pupils, and they become a form of assistant teachers.

Pupils are guided in their self-directed learning. Pupils are guided by the teacher to develop their own learning. Pupils receive help, support, or are immediately shown their errors by the teacher in order to reach their targets (Observation, Class B).

"We ask the pupils to look the words they do not understand up in the dictionary!" (Diary A). One teacher helps a pupil with special needs to work and find answers autonomously (Observation, Class B).

Teacher as coach and pupil as coachee. The teachers call themselves "learning companions" (Diaries 1 and 2), *". . . my colleague explains everything individually or talks to small groups of pupils"* (Diary 1).

Teachers see their roles as mentors and supporters to the pupils. Through their questions, the pupils determine the priorities in the teaching content, and define their personal goals.

Pupils see teachers as supporters and companions, and use the support offered. Teachers recognize when pupils need support and encourage them to work independently. Here, a clear, respectful, determined, and calm form of language is essential.

Teachers recognize and understand the needs of pupils and demonstrate a professional form of empathy toward the pupils. The pupils recognize this sensitive attitude and learn from the teacher as the role model. The section "Interpersonal interaction between pupils in the Integrated Learning Centre Brigittenau" shows that the pupils acquire this sensitive attitude by imitating their teacher. Through this sensitive attitude, the relationship between the pupils and the teacher is supported, to result in a more inclusive school. Everybody enjoys the sense of welcome.

Mutual recognition of teachers and pupils, individual support, encouragement, shared responsibility, and confidence in each other are the pillars of the good relationship. Also, sharing routines with the pupils, such as having lunch together, decorating the classroom, celebrating birthdays, and taking excursions, facilitates the inclusive approach in the schools.

The teachers shift from a didactic instructor to a mentor for the pupils. They support the individual learning situation of the pupils as learning companions. The teachers handle the pupils in an appreciative manner, which gives the pupils a possibility to ask questions for their individual learning.

5.1.3. PROFESSIONAL INTERACTION NETWORK OF THE TEACHER: AUSTRIAN CASE

Sabine Albert

A constructive, professional interaction network of teachers is an important basis for successful inclusive education. The following figure gives an overview of the dimensions and categories that support good working collaboration.

Professional attitude	•Recognition of professionalism •Good professional relationships •Respecting opposing opinions •Same perception of respectful interaction
Cooperation between teachers	•Mutual support •Sharing experiences •Regular meetings and rules
School community and other institutions	•Headmaster – "open door policy" •Administrative staff – appreciative atmosphere •Professional coaching •Teacher training activities •External organizations

Figure 18. Professional interaction network of teachers.

Professional Attitude

Recognition of professionalism. The teachers differentiate between private and professional relationships. They prefer their relationships with their colleagues to remain on a professional level rather than developing friendship with them (Interviews T1/2). Teacher 2 says, "*. . . my colleagues are not my friends, I have a professional relationship with them*" (Interview, T2); and further on, "*outside of the school, we would probably have only a little in common*" (Interview, T2). Teacher 1 says, "*Working together or spending free time together are two totally different things. . . I meet some of my colleagues outside of work, but only when we have already become friends*" (Interview, T1). Some teachers in Group 1 and most of the

teachers in Group 2 spend no free time together with their colleagues (Interview, T1/2).

Good professional relationships are possible when teachers have a similar perception of teaching and schooling, and agree on how to build relationships with the pupils. If these notions differ vastly, teamwork is seen as very difficult, and teachers retreat to their own individual activities, avoiding consulting their colleagues. The organizational framework serves as the backbone that holds everything together, yet working conditions are perceived as cumbersome (Interview, T1). Meetings for school life organization are rare, and the teachers try to co-operate as effectively as possible. However, in some cases it brings results, yet in others it fails. (Interview, T1).

"*From a professional perspective, one could say that each person's skills and competence are included in the teaching process, which can be quite fruitful for the team*" (Interview, T1). "*I believe, it's a constant, an almost daily struggle to find similarities, to distance yourself from certain things, to give in, and to have your way as well. Well, people try various things to get their way, right. . . *" (Interview, T1).

Respecting opposing opinions. Respecting opposing opinions, manner of acting, and perceptions of situations is of great importance as compromises agreed by everybody need to be found. Nevertheless, even common class rules are executed differently by different teachers, "*but pupils deal with that just fine*" (Interview, T2).

Teacher 1 says that sometimes communication between teachers fails and conflicts arise despite everybody's attempts (Interview, T1). They know that it is very important to treat each other respectfully although sometimes it is of great difficulty, especially in highly stressful situations.

Same perception of respectful interaction. Observing an Arts and Crafts lesson illustrated the circumstances, under which team-teaching is possible. Two teachers are present in the arts and crafts room with all the pupils including those with and without disabilities, children with migration background, girls, and boys. One teacher helps a boy with disability, and the second teacher is in charge of the other children. An appreciative attitude can be felt. The children move around freely and receive explanations from extremely patient and friendly teachers. Both teachers support the pupils in finding individual solutions to their problems. The pupils enjoy the confidence their teachers have in them, and the teachers show willingness to take on the role of learners. Teachers and pupils seem to be pleased to be together, and all are treated equally. The teachers seem to share the same perception of what a respectful relationship is, and, therefore, co-operation is successful. The teachers serve

as role models of treating everybody respectfully and equally, and the pupils copy the behaviour. In this situation, the interaction between the two teachers in a respectful way was successful (Observation, Class A).

Co-operation between teachers

There are different types of teachers in every class: a special needs teacher, a class teacher, and the teacher of a special subject such as English or Mathematics. In cases when the number of teachers present in one class is sufficient, mutual support becomes possible. The special needs teacher can work intensively with the children with disabilities (Diaries A/B).

Teacher 2 says that one group of pupils learns English with an English teacher, another group has Mathematics with the teacher of Mathematics, yet another group does exercises with another teacher, while she herself helps a pupil with disability to read (Diary B). This strategy guarantees intensive support for all pupils. On the other side, the pupils are separated, and often they are actually taught in separate rooms. Teachers 1 and 2 say it is easier to teach children in separate groups. Teaching all children in the same classroom is hardly practicable, due to the extent to which the different types of groups and the extent of support they need vary (Diaries A/B).

According to Teacher 1, all the teachers with their skills and competences should be equal team members. They have different responsibilities but their roles are of equal importance. However, she describes a situation where several teachers were present in an English lesson, including herself, the special needs teacher and a second classroom teacher (Interview, T1). As the teacher recalls, *"I thought it would be nice if there was a short sequence in the English lesson with all the children being together. What I hadn't considered is the fact that the pupils without impairments believed I was only responsible for the pupils with certain forms of impairments. They didn't accept me as a full member of the teaching staff, and this showed in their behaviour"* (Diary A).

Mutual support. Teacher 2 says that mutual support can have positive effects. The teacher is never alone in the classroom, which facilitates discussing problems regularly. Therefore, intensive individual support to pupils with special needs can be provided. For example, it can be easily arranged if more time with one pupil is needed, meanwhile, your colleagues teach the other pupils (Interview, T2).

Teacher 2 indicates that more teachers in the class also means more options for the pupils to build relationships, as there are more teachers present in the class that they can easily relate to. In addition, it is more likely that pupils who face problems will be

identified (Interview, T2). Teacher 2 describes a situation where a colleague spoke with a pupil about his problems in a separate room while she continued working with the rest of the children in the classroom (Diary B).

Teacher 1 thinks that precise and joint planning and common concepts are the backbone of successful teaching, as well as a clear description and allocation of responsibilities and roles. A sufficient number of teachers should be present in the classroom (Interview, T1), and establishing a framework of rules is indispensable for successful teaching and learning (Diary A).

She describes a poorly planned lesson where the teachers work without prior consultation with other team members. In this case, responsibilities are not clear, so the pupils start chatting loudly and engage in deliberate behaviour. The teacher does not feel support from her colleagues, which is an extremely frustrating experience for her (Diary A).

Regular meetings and rules. Teacher 1 remembers a successful lesson where all pupils were engaged and really enjoyed the lesson and what they achieved. The children had to memorize brief dialogues, and present them. These performances were greeted with applause. Teacher 1 says, "*I enjoyed this. Everybody was having fun, they tried their best and could act out their dialogues. Also, the discussion that followed was very engaging; there are too few opportunities to do things like that*" (Diary A).

In another lesson, the pupils had to find out how many pets, TV sets, and siblings every child in the class had, take notes, and present their findings of this little "study". The pupils interviewed each other and truly enjoyed the activity. Even a boy who normally failed to interact with other children liked the activity to a great extent. Teacher 1 is satisfied with the lesson but she believes that with the help of precise planning and better co-operation between the teachers, more could have been achieved (Diary A).

Apparently, teachers need time for meetings and planning. An obligatory two-hour team meeting is organized every week. Nevertheless, most of the time is dedicated to discussing organizational matters, and no time is left to discuss pedagogical issues (Interview, T1). Therefore, the teachers voice a desire to have more time for pedagogical exchange.

Sharing experiences. Occassionally, the teachers share their experiences. Teacher 1 talks about a long-lasting productive co-operation with a colleague. They give each other feedback and reflect on their teaching, thus learning from each other; and also learn purely by watching. Simply the fact that you are not alone in the classroom

enhances the quality of teaching, and she feels empowered by the positive feedback from her colleagues. Teacher 1 likes working together with a group of people. She would love to have more exchange with colleagues, but this is very difficult to organize, as many teachers have too little time for regular meetings (Interview, T1).

Teacher 2 refers to some pupils with whom she has problems. She considers it very helpful to learn how her colleagues deal with these pupils so that she can readjust her teaching methods and take the overall personality of the pupils into account. Finally, this exchange also helps the teachers to decide on the next steps in the teaching process (Interview, T2).

Teachers and school community

Teacher 1 highlights regular conferences of an informative nature, organized with the headmaster. The headmaster is always willing to discuss pedagogical issues. He promotes an **"open door policy"** for the staff teachers and supports them in all matters, as does the administrative staff. The headmaster is very interested in what the teachers need so they can work well, and takes their suggestions into consideration. Teacher requests are answered immediately, and intense consultations follow. As Teacher 1 puts it, "*It is amazing that we can really talk to him any time. You can address the headmaster with any problem. No problem is trivial. I have never experienced anything like this in any other school*" (Interview, T1). She recalls a situation when the headmaster supported her, when she wanted to transfer from another school to her current one, and is very grateful for his help (Interview, T1).

Teacher 2 speaks about the good atmosphere during discussions with the headmaster. He either has time for the teachers immediately, or a meeting with him is arranged as soon as possible. Also, the **administrative staff** supports the teachers at all times. The headmaster and the administrative staff even help to manage problematic situations with parents or pupils She says, "*The director and his team are very supportive, for instance, if you need signatures from parents or you have to conduct talks, they also help, if a more official touch is needed*" (Interview, T2). The teachers can work autonomously to a great extent and confidence is placed in them, which is appreciated and valued by the teachers. The teachers on the team plan their duty schedules, which are then submitted and approved (Interview, T1). Also, new ideas are welcomed "*In principle you can talk with the director quite well and he also allows a lot and if you have an idea and want to do something, as long as this is in line with the curriculum and the basic rules, you have some freedoms and he has an open ear*

for new things" (Interview, T2). Teacher 1 remembers previous version of forms for parents to fill in that there were very complicated, and the parents would often fail to understand what they had to do, especially those with a mother-tongue other than German. Consequently, the teachers suggested that the forms should be rewritten in a simpler, easy-to-understand language, which was accepted by the administration and the suggestion was realized (Interview, T1).

For Teacher 1, **pedagogical centres for inclusion** and special needs education form part of the school administration. She is a special needs teacher, and her responsible principal is now the headmaster of this centre. Two conferences a year are organized, where she always receives the support and information needed (Interview, T1).

Teacher 1 remembers the **regional school inspector** writing a brief appreciative note via e-mail to solve a difficult situation with parents, which resulted in success. That e-mail was of great help, and she felt well supported and appreciated (Interview, T1).

Teachers and other institutions

Both teachers agree that group coaching is necessary. If they need **professional consulting and coaching**, coaches come to the school, and the teachers can discuss problems and conflicts in a professional setting (Interview, T1/2). In one school year, Teacher 1 and her team arranged six consulting sessions (Interview, T1).

Teacher training activities are also organized. A difference exists between internal and external teacher training as participation is compulsory for in-house trainings and optional for external trainings. Teacher 1 does not believe these trainings are either informative or helpful, because "*there are certainly continuing educations and trainings in which inclusion plays a role, but they are not obligatory, unless it is a SCHILF (in-house training), that all have to visit, but it is very individual whether one is concerned with the topic or not*" (Interview, T1). She learned most about inclusion and the inclusive approach in courses on that topic she took under her own initiative. She also refers to projects she participated in through **university**, the **teacher training college,** and **other institutions,** indicating a refugee project as her favourite, as it was both enjoyable and informative (Interview, T1).

Teacher 2 shares experience of successful co-operation with the **National Autistic Society**. Furthermore, she has co-operated with the **Youth Welfare Office**, and with parent trustees. As the most successful, she indicates co-operation with **"WUK Domino"**, which is an organization that provides career counselling and guidance for young people with special needs (Interview, T2).

Teacher 2 expresses a wish to have better training and more competence and confidence when dealing with critical situations that call for quick action. A supervisory authority is important; however, in some situations the strict compliance required by official channels can have an inhibitory effect. She would prefer a faster and more effective support from these authorities (Interview, T2).

Professional interaction. The teachers support a professional relationship with their colleagues; while spending free time with their colleagues and making friends with them are of less importance. Co-operation is more productive when teachers have a similar perception of teaching, schooling, and forming relationships with pupils. Moreover, teachers see a valuable resource in the different competences and skills of the team members.

Respect for opposing opinions, needs, and perspectives is very important when co-operating. Application of the rules agreed on by the team is desirable, yet slight deviation from the rules is normal and acceptable.

Teachers are aware of the fact that they need to maintain an appreciative atmosphere when dealing with people in school, although it is sometimes not practically possible in very stressful situations. Quite frequently, teachers experience disrespectful behaviour, even amongst each other. In any event, it is easier for the teachers to maintain an appreciative atmosphere with colleagues and pupils when they share a similar notion of teaching and schooling with their colleagues; in such cases, harmonious co-operation is more likely.

Teachers take on different roles in the classroom. For instance, special needs teachers can provide intensive support to pupils with special needs. A sufficient number of teachers in the class guarantees mutual support and individualized teaching and learning. Furthermore, due to the diverse needs of the pupils, they are frequently taught in separate groups.

The diverse skills and knowledge of the teachers are a valuable asset for the team. Teachers have different roles, and a clear description and distribution of responsibilities is of particular importance. It must be taken into account that every person with his or her skills is of equal importance for the classroom community, which must be reflected in the way the teachers interact with each other.

Although team-teaching is the standard, little time is left for regular exchange, consultations, and mutual support, as helping pupils in the classroom is time consuming. More teachers present in the classroom also means more options for the pupils to build relationships, as there are more teachers present that they can easily relate to.

Teaching is successful when the teaching design includes all pupils. Regular exchange on pedagogical issues is seen as extremely valuable and helpful, as are detailed planning and coordination. Teachers express wish for detailed joint lesson planning adapted to the needs of the pupils. They also prefer regular exchange on pedagogical issues to discuss pupils' individual problems and their learning progress, and they would like to have a possibility to discuss ways to approach appreciative communication and interaction, and to support each other with positive feedback and ideas.

The school administration promotes an "open door policy", and teachers have access to support at any time if needed. Special needs teachers are also supported by the staff of the special needs centres. The headmaster gives appreciative feedback, which is welcomed by the teachers. Teachers are also entitled to get professional coaching provided by external institutions.

Teachers work autonomously and participate in decision-making processes, while the headmaster shows confidence in them. Teachers demand more useful in-house teacher training, they would also like to gain more insight into important pedagogical topics and on ways to apply theoretical approaches. Co-operation with specialized external institutions is efficient, and often co-operation with respect to certain topics develops.

Teachers express desire for more flexible and needs-oriented handling of certain situations by the school authorities. Inflexible and rigid structures often render acting quickly and effectively impossible.

5.1.4. EDUCATIONAL INTERACTION OF PUPILS' PARENTS: AUSTRIAN CASE

Sabine Albert

Parents have a major role in school life as key partners. The following figure shows important aspects for successful co-operation with parents.
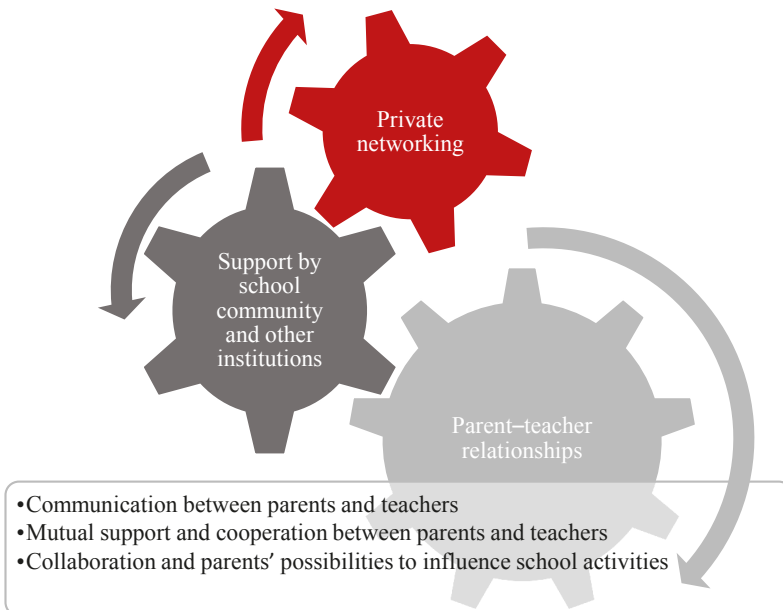
Figure 19. Educational interaction of pupils' parents.

The relationships between parents. Some parents have private networks, established under their own initiative. Mostly, they prefer to maintain contacts with other parents they appreciate, or with the parents of their children's friends. One mother says, "… *and because of the children you meet very often, again and again and sometimes you meet accidently, sometimes deliberately. You have people with whom you get along very well, with whom you have more to do than with others*" (Interview, P).

The parents discuss various topics in regular informal meetings at school. They like to participate in many class or school projects and festivals, and are fond of being together with other parents, teachers, and pupils. They are very open to and interested

in the way other families lead their lives, enjoying the diversity of the cultures of the families. A mother says, "*With children, you have the chance to meet a lot of nice people, who come from different worksituations and environments and it is always very inspiring, I find that somehow great, also the human contac* " (Interview, P).

Communication between parents and teachers. The parents say that they have a possibility talk to the teachers on various occasions. The parents find meeting with the teachers very easy.

First, there is the parent-teacher book for communicating. Telephone conversations and text messages are always welcome, as well. Communication via e-mail is possible but rare since the parents prefer to meet with the teachers in person. They can meet the teachers before or after school (Interview, P).

Talking on the teachers, a father says, "*. . . there is great willingness on behalf of the teachers to come before lessons or to stay on; we do not take this for granted*" (Interview, P).

In cases when time to talk is not available, the parents can make appointments (Interview, P). It is empirically verified that parents are welcome in the class at any time; their phonecalls are always welcome, and it is possible to arrange appointments when a need to contact teachers arises (Observation, Class A).

Mutual support and co-operation between parents and teachers. The parents are provided with all the important information, and they have a possibility to receive more information if desired. According to the parents, there are two parent consultation days a year. Furthermore, there is one organizational parents' evening a year, and one or two parents' evenings a year dedicated to dealing with pedagogic issues (Interview, P).

At the end of each semester, so-called "KDLs" are organized, where, instead of being given a school report containing their marks, the pupils present their achievements in school to an audience of teachers and parents (Interview, P).

As mentioned previously, various opportunities are available for parents to receive support from the teachers. However, the teachers look for support from the parents as well. One teacher indicates that the parents know their children best, and they can also support their children in school matters (Interview, T1). Another teacher believes that the parents can exercise positive influence on their children (Interview, T2).

Teacher 1 says, "*. . . If I speak with parents about their children, I must never forget that I speak about the most important person in these people' lives*" (Interview, T1).

At the beginning of the school year, the teacher tries to encourage a good learning atmosphere in the class. During the parents' evenings, the teacher creates an

atmosphere that is playful, and she also tries to find what they all have in common, hoping to successfully build appreciative relationships (Interview, T1).

However, the teachers must be careful to keep their relationships with the parents at a professional level (Interview, T2) as clearly defined responsibilities and roles are crucial (Interview, T1).

Co-operation and parents' possibilities to influence school activities. In school, many possibilities exist for participation and co-operation with teachers. One important opportunity for parents to participate is the Class Parliament (School Education Act/SchuG § 63a). Class teachers and parents are members of the Class Parliament. Moreover, there is the School Parliament, with the class teachers, parent representatives from all classes, and the headmaster as its members (SchuG § 63a). The members of the School Parliament are to represent the interests of their peer groups rather than the interests of the school (Interview, P).

A strong parents' association (SchuG § 63) co-operates with the headmaster, the staff, and the management board in order to build effective co-operation and partnerships between the pupils' home and school lives. In various work groups, parents, teachers, and pupils effectively deal with specific issues (Interview, P).

A mother expresses the following opinion on the working groups: *"The headmaster here, in the house, loves setting up working groups, and everybody who has a request can immediately start a working group, and try to solve the problem (everyone smiles). You want to complain? Start a working group (everybody laughs)."* (Interview, P).

The parents stress a specific feature of this school, which is, namely, if they wish to get involved, many possibilities are present for it (Interview, P), and the headmaster of the school appreciates parental engagement (Interview, P). The parents describe a situation where twenty parents went to the district school inspector to support an idea the school had, and it was very useful. The parents have already achieved much for and with the headmaster (Interview, P).

Parents and school community. The parents receive immediate support from the headmaster as well as from the school staff, and the school community. They like the appreciative atmosphere in the school and its straightforward organization. The parents praise the staff, which is always friendly and helpful (Interview, P).

A mother tells a story about the support she received from a leisure-time educationalist. Her son had invited children to his birthday party, yet some of these children could not come to the party without being accompanied, and so they were accompanied to the birthday party by the leisure-time educationalist (Interview, P).

"*What's more*" the mother says, "*. . . he is also one of the hearts and souls of this school*" (Interview, P).

Parents and other institutions. Once a week, parents meet in the "Parents' Café". It serves as an opportunity to receive information on school life in a rather informal setting and in languages other than German. These meetings are organized by an external association and are led by a multilingual organization (Interview, P).

The relationships among the parents interviewed seem to be excellent and a relaxed atmosphere is noticeable. Parents with migration backgrounds and Austrian nationals, parents of children with special needs, those of girls, and those of boys get along well. They share positive comments regarding the teachers and they trust them, appreciating pedagogical exchange. The parents feel accepted and valued, and enjoy immediate support when needed. Private networks are established, and friendships are built (Interview, P).

What is more, the teachers treat the parents appreciatively and expect parental support. Transparency is vital, as it is an indispensable precondition for good communication between school partners. Furthermore, clear responsibilities and roles are crucial. Parents are taken seriously and respected as experts with regard to their children. In general, respectful interactions and meetings as equal partners are essential. However, the relationships between teachers and parents ought to remain on a professional level and not to become too close (Interview, T1).

The parents refer to the teachers in a very positive light. They are convinced of the teachers' commitment to their job, and trust their skills and knowledge. The parents are deeply impressed by the teachers' readiness to work overtime. Yet, they criticize the teachers' commitment not being honoured by the school authorities, and the lack of support provided on behalf of the government (Interview, P).

5.1.5. LEARNING – TEACHING APPROACH: AUSTRIAN CASE

Susanne Tomecek

The data generated in the Learning Centre Brigittenau (Vienna) were used to determine the most advantageous strategies for inclusive teaching. Six dimensions were identified for analysis: learning attitude, learning design, learning strategies, teaching methods, support for teachers, and the teaching process.

Learning attitude

The data generated in the diaries show that the pupils are highly motivated and happy to learn, which is furthered by the possibility for self-directed learning with respect to content and time.

" . . . *It's quite pleasant; there isn't so much time pressure. We are able to learn independently, so to speak . . .*" (Interview, ST).

"*The method of learning, I mean, we aren't told what we have to learn, we get a weekly study plan with set tasks. In English, for example, we get a work schedule, and we have to complete the tasks within a week; we are not told when and where we have to do the tasks, right! If, for instance, we don't finish all the tasks, we have to tackle it, we might sometimes have to take the work plan home and finish everything at home, it's up to us. We don't have to do it, but we do it anyway*" (Interview, ST).

"Open Handicraft" is listed as an example, when various workpieces are shown as ideas to choose from and pupils decide what they would like to do (Diary B).

Self-directed learning has the effect of strengthening self-confidence and providing the experience of self-efficacy, which are major criteria when planning teaching. Therefore, the teachers foster a corporate culture that tolerates failures and treats them as opportunities for learning development. In Class A, an observation was made that the teachers allow the pupils to make their own experiences. They work only with instructions and questioning techniques, and the teachers do not interfere (Observation, Class A).

Learning and the rapport are tightly interconnected. A good and respectful relationship between the teacher and the pupil is the basis for successful learning. "*. . . building good rapport with the pupils plays an essential part in my teaching. I also believe that they . . . that a lot of the things that work well, work well because we have a good relationship . . .*" (Interview, T1).

Meeting the needs of the learners is also important. Due to the great amount of planned working time, the pupils can prioritize the tasks themselves. Therefore, they can work according to their individual rhythm and make their own schedules.

Learning design

Teaching in both classes is based on progressive education. Team-teaching is a necessity in this setting. During morning sessions, on average two to three teachers are present in the classroom. When co-operation between teachers runs smoothly, collaboration amongst the pupils is also successful, and the heterogeneity in the classroom can be addressed satisfactorily. In Class A, co-operation between the teachers has rough moments, which has a negative effect on the pupils' social as well as learning behaviour. Moreover, the level of job satisfaction of the teachers is low (Diary A). Therefore, well-structured teaching is also essential. Clear rules, consistent timing, and the introduction of routines are needed.

In Class B, a fixed structure of the day is followed: the song "Für Elise" is played to the pupils when they have to take their seats; the daily work plan is put on the board; the daily work plan is discussed in the morning circle; the first study unit lasts one hundred minutes, it is then followed by a break, and the second study unit lasts from one hundred to a hundred and fifty minutes (Diary B). There is no common beginning or fixed routines in Class A at the start of the day as documented in Diary A, which is perceived as a disadvantage for the group and the learning process.

Learning strategies

The pupils can contribute with special topical knowledge and by communicating their individual goals during circle meetings. Once a week, a class council takes place, during which requests and difficulties can be discussed. Each class council is managed by two pupils (Diary B).

The varied and inspiring learning material motivates the pupils to study "eagerly" (Diary A). During the individualized instruction, the pupils work on weekly study plans divided into daily work plans (Observation, Classes A and B, Interviews T1 and T2, Interview ST).

Presentations and brief "performances" (e.g. dialogues in English) are part of the lessons and are undertaken by various pupils (Diary A). *"It was fun, everyone had a go, they had the possibility to present themselves"* (Diary A). The pupils realize that their

contribution (their special knowledge on a specific topic, helping other pupils out) is important for the whole class.

Teaching methods

Teacher-centred lessons in small homogeneous groups are mainly held when introducing new topics or in language teaching. The pupils work autonomously during the lessons, and teachers assist the pupils' learning process (Diaries A/B).

Differentiation pertains to learning outcomes, time available, material, techniques, difficulty level of the tasks, extent of support, and setting (individual activity, partner activity, group activity, group size). The teachers have enough time to cater to the individual needs of the pupils during planned working time. There is also room for teachers and pupils to talk in a one-to-one setting or in small groups.

Teachers guarantee playful, creative, and inquiry-based learning approaches (e.g. measuring lengths of items in the classroom, free choice of topics for presentations). Computers with various learning programmes are used individually or in a partner activity (Diary B).

Individual-oriented content is employed. Pupils are taught according to their individual syllabi with respect to grade and type of school (new middle schools, lower secondary schools of general education, special needs school, and those for severely impaired children (Diary A/B). Current topics are discussed and taught (e.g. democracy, at the occasion of local elections) (Diary B). Career planning is a major topic from the fifth grade onwards (Diary A).

As regards learning environment, each class is provided with two to three rooms and sufficient material for progressive learning. Various games (board games, building blocks, Legos, puzzles, etc.) are available. There is a carpet, a couch, and at least two computers in every classroom.

Support for teachers

The issue of teachers as support seekers is linked to challenges they meet and the way those are solved. Both teachers claim that dealing with children who are socially and emotionally disadvantaged poses the biggest challenge. The most difficult is to include children who lack self-organizational skills and are unable to acquire them due to their personal and academic history during schooling (Interview, T2). Also, the open setting, which requires a certain degree of self-discipline, is perceived as an overload by the teachers (Observation, Class A).

In cases where two teachers are present in the class, some pupils are taken out of the class and taught separately for a while (Diary B). This is just a short-term solution. Generally speaking, teachers need a high level of self- and team-competence as well as professional expertise, and diagnostic capability. Co-operation between teachers in Class A is failing, and the teachers participating in the research are highly dissatisfied with the situation. Moreover, the performance of the teachers and the pupils suffers from the poor working atmosphere (Diary A).

"And it's not even clear to me in individualized instructions who is in charge of what. There seems to be a totally differing perception of what a learning companion has to do" (Diary A).

Teacher 1 wants to solve the problem by changing the team the following year. The extent of individual work is seen as a further challenge. The more individualized the working routines there are, the more individual support needs to be given. Providing sufficient material for learning where pupils get immediate feedback on the quality of their input, peer support, and enough learning companions in the class reduce the workload for the teachers. If that is not possible, less individualized tasks are more efficient, as otherwise there will be waiting time and a lot of commotion in the classroom (Diary A).

Peer learning is very important and involves collaborating in heterogeneous groups, in which pupils help each other and support those with learning impairments. The pupils are accustomed to supporting each other and do not simply ask the teacher for help; this has a positive effect both on the pupils and on the teachers (Observation, Classes A and B).

Teachers as support givers. In understanding the **individual learning environment** of the pupil and their strengths and weaknesses (diagnostic capability), the teachers can design individual support schemes for individualized instruction.

"I sit down with the pupil with mental disability to practice reading" (Diary B). Differentiated training programmes are designed, accompanied and adapted by the teachers (Diaries A/B). The teachers call themselves "learning companions" (Diary A/B). *"I sit down with the pupils and help them, one after the other"* (Diary B). *". . . my colleague explains everything individually or talks to small groups of pupils"* (Diary A).

Teaching process

Perception, reflection, evaluation. The regular monitoring of the pupils and documentation of these observations are the pillars for planning further steps in

teaching. Monitoring is important for taking further steps (Diary B). Pupils are tested regularly to obtain feedback on their level of performance (Diary B). There is sufficient learning material for practising with immediate feedback on their performance. Two hours of team meetings are obligatory for all the teachers to check on the progress pupils make, and to plan further teaching together. Moreover, team coaching is available free of charge for the teachers of this school (Interview, T1). During coaching, the teachers have the chance to provide each other feedback on their work with the pupils and on their co-operation. However, coaching is only used occasionally.

Access to education organization in the Learning Centre Brigittenau is visually presented in Figure 20.

Teaching that focuses on self-directed learning empowers pupils to set their own deadlines for completing tasks and to work at their own pace. Pupils also have a say on the content to be chosen for free instruction hours, which is working time integrated into their time tables. A clearly structured day, rules, and daily routines give the pupils and the teachers a safe framework for reference. Active participation and self-directedness make learning possible. Pupils participate in the planning and designing of teaching and learning.

Consequently, pupils can be individually supported and taught in one class. Self-directed and autonomous learning is also furthered by the learning environment (equipment). A sufficient number of well-equipped rooms is crucial. A high level of self-directed learning entices motivation and promotes readiness to learn. It is imperative and of equal significance for the teachers to strengthen the self- and the social competence of every child.

Teachers see their roles shifting from the paradigm of didactic instructors to the one of mentors, advisors and supporters of the pupils. Good co-operation in the team, clear allocation of responsibilities and tasks, a definition of what a "learning companion" should do, and a consensus on how to conduct inclusive education is essential. The biggest threats to inclusive education are teams that do not function well and the inclusion of pupils with many social and emotional disorders. Therefore, coaching and mentoring are important forms of support for the teachers facing such challenges in school situations resulting from inclusive education.

Learning–Teaching Approach

Beneficial aspects for high motivation and great joy to teach

Beneficial aspects for high motivation and great joy to learn

Learning design
- progressive educational approaches
- team-teaching and co-operation
- well-structured teaching
- clear rules
- consistent timing
- introduction of routines
- fixed structures

Support for teachers
- self- and team-competence
- professional expertise
- diagnostic capability
- respectful cooperation
- frequent collegial sharing
- culture of feedback
- peer learning and support
- coaching
- mentoring

Learning attitude
- self-directed learning
- respect for content and time
- strengthening self-confidence
- experiencing self-efficacy
- pupils as experts
- meeting learners' needs
- individual rhythm
- individual support
- respectful relationships between pupils and teachers
- tolerance towards failure
- learning and rapport interconnection

Teaching methods
- alternate teacher-centred and autonomous work of pupils
- differentiation
- individual support
- alternate setting
- difficulty level of tasks
- different learning outcomes
- independent learning
- peer learning
- individual-oriented content
- teaching on current topics
- playful, creative and inquiry-based learning approaches
- individual learning environment

Teaching process
- perception
- reflection
- evaluation

Learning strategies
- weekly study plan
- daily work plans
- individualized instruction
- varied and inspiring learning material
- presentations and little performances
- circle meetings
- class council

Figure 20. Learning–teaching approach.

5.1.6. SUMMING UP AND DISCUSSION: AUSTRIAN CASE

Susanne Tomecek

It is important to draw attention to the interactions between pupils as well as between teachers and pupils. In a school community where co-operation and equality play an essential role, inclusive values can be established successfully and facilitate an inclusive school life. The framework, in which to develop an inclusive school and to analyse this development, is based on the three dimensions of the index for inclusion by Booth and Ainscow. The results of the case study in Austria showed some categories similar to the dimensions of the index for inclusion.

In the research, the following dimensions and categories were identified: learning arrangements (collaborative learning among pupils, mutual support between the pupils, presenting in class / raising self-confidence, self-learning enhancement in the classroom community via possibilities to choose and change the learning place autonomously) and classroom community (pleasure of being together, creating equality, acceptance among the pupils, integration in the community, subjective perception, and classroom as the third pedagogue). These dimensions and categories coincide with certain dimensions of the index for inclusion. The learning arrangements are comparable to the dimension C1, called orchestrating learning. In the case of the school, the following indicators were discovered: indicator C1.4, where pupils are actively involved in their own learning, and C1.5, where pupils learn collaboratively. In the dimension A1, referred to as building community, the indicators A1.1, where everyone is made to feel welcome, and A1.2, where pupils help each other, were discovered (Booth & Ainscow, 2002).

The "classroom as the third pedagogue" category brings new questions. For example, which criteria should the pupils apply in choosing their seating? Is this a challenge for inclusive education, or do we have to respect the individual ways of the pupils? One solution could be to use only round tables; therefore, no pupil would be sitting alone, and perhaps they would choose their place in a mixed group. The analyses point the way to an inclusive school culture in consideration of the index for inclusion.

Dealing with the heterogeneity in inclusive classes is extremely challenging for all the persons involved. The teachers' attitudes and knowledge of pupil-centred teaching methods are key aspects for successful inclusive learning. Therefore, the National

Action Plan supports the implementation of inclusive education in teacher training and teacher training colleges. In teacher training, teachers learn to design suitable learning arrangements to support collaborative learning and, thus, to develop a school culture, in which everybody enjoys the feeling of being welcome (BMASK, 2012).

The teachers participating in the study emphasize the importance of having the same visions with regard to respectful interactions and an attitude of tolerance towards the diversity of the children. Also, Specht and Mader claim that the main presupposition for successful inclusive teaching is the teacher's view of the mankind. The teacher's attitude is essential for successful inclusive education, hereby the constructive approach is especially helpful (Feyerer & Langner, 2014).

Team-teaching plays an important role (Specht, 1993; Mader, 1999, as cited in Moser, 2001). Therefore, regular team meetings and lesson preparation but mainly a clear division of competences in the team are important aspects (Wetzel et al., 1999).

Teamwork is essential; teachers have to plan lessons and teach in class together, and they also engage in joint reflection on the process (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Feyerer & Langner, 2014). It is very important to work in teams to co-operate professionally, and to discuss difficult situations with colleagues.

The teachers of the school in question share this opinion with regard to the importance of clear roles and responsibilities. In the school analysed, the teachers have different roles and competences, and the pupils are often taught in separate groups.

Also, Dür and Scheidbach (1995) highlight the positive effect of team-teaching and shared responsibilities. According to Bews (1992), the integration process is affected negatively when teachers separate the children based on the belief that the children can be supported more intensively when separated. Rutte (1995) criticizes the division of competences, as special needs teachers are in charge of the group of the children with disabilities and subject teachers are responsible for other children. In Austria, the choice of teaching in separate classrooms or together in one classroom depends on the teachers' attitudes toward integration and their set of values. The teachers participating in the study often chose teaching the pupils in separate groups.

According to Krawitz (1995), a clear division of competences is of great importance for the integration process, as an unclear division and unsuccessful communication resulting from traditionally different expectations in terms of what roles teachers have to assume in the classroom hampers the process. Teacher 1 in the study shares her negative experiences with regard to unclear roles, responsibilities, and rules.

Teacher 2 mentions the positive effects of a team of teachers working in the same class. There are possibilities for exchanging experiences and mutual support at any time. She finds the differing competences enriching. Dür and Scheidbach (1995) observed that teachers are generally positive about team-teaching and the chance for reflection. It is viewed as an asset, because various different viewpoints are seen as enriching and because of good and lively co-operation. This teacher co-operation leads to higher job satisfaction.

In the study, Teacher 1 highlights the great challenge of team-teaching. She talks about her experiences of disrespectful interactions between the teachers in difficult situations stemming from inadequate agreements. Specht (1993) confirms that the differentiated approach as well as open learning settings pose enormous challenges. Thus, a positive attitude, when teaching children with disabilities, is obligatory.

Practice has shown that among teachers, working alone without consulting with other teachers is still common. Professional communication with colleagues is perceived as additional work, as it takes extra time.

However, regular participation in team meetings can alleviate tension within the teams, and facilitate discussion on the next steps in the process of education for pupils who are severely challenged emotionally, socially, or physically.

The first step would encompass team meetings included in the schedule. Currenty, there is no law that obliges the teachers to participate in team meetings.

In the school participating in the study, the door of the headmaster' room is always open and he always keeps his ears open for the school staff. Therefore, teachers receive support from the headmaster and the administration. Moreover, the teachers enjoy great autonomy and the confidence placed in them by the headmaster, which strengthens the teachers' well-being and enhances the positive group feeling.

Special educational needs centres help schools in the implementation of integration by providing the schools with the necessary staff and suitable teaching material as well as by designing appropriate methodological lesson plans that put individualization and differentiation at the top of their priorities (Kretschmann, 1991, as cited in Moser, 2001). The special needs teachers in the study are part of the staff of the special educational needs centre. To implement a pedagogy focusing on diversity and support for teachers, sufficient staff resources are obligatory to provide advisory personnel and assistant teachers. Wetzel claims that teachers can be supported by their colleagues in the class as well as during professional counselling (Wetzel et al., 1999).

The teachers in the study are subject to regular supervision. Co-operation and working in a team are significant approaches for teachers. Teachers should have the competence to involve parents and families, and to communicate with parents of different cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and social backgrounds (Greuel, 2016). In the school in question, the interactions between the teachers and the parents are very respectful, and the parents enjoy the feeling of acceptance. Moreover, they always have access to support as well as meetings with the teachers.

The teachers of the school very often co-operate with other institutions and external experts. Co-operation with external experts is an important condition for inclusive education (Greuel, 2016).

Regarding the necessary co-operation with colleagues, parents, the school administration, and external experts, communication, consultation, and reflection are critical competences for teachers. Feuser underscores the necessity of advisory and communicative skills in teachers. These skills are indispensable for inclusive education focusing on co-operation and collaboration with parents and external experts (Feuser, 2006, as cited in Feyerer & Langner, 2014). The teacher in an advisory role also needs to be competent in counselling and must have the competence for reflection.

From a lifelong learning perspective, teachers are obliged to continuously develop professionally. The teacher as a reflective practitioner knows how to develop personal critical reflection in the classroom. He or she has the methods and strategies for evaluating his or her own work and performance. The teacher has command of the methods of "action research" and "self-study", and is aware of their relevance for one's professionalism (Greuel, 2016).

In the school in question, a culture of respect and equality generally prevails, and an inclusive attitude is evident. The teachers and the parents have many opportunities for co-operation and participation. Therefore, the teachers have to develop self-competence, social competence, and systems competence. For their professionalization this means that they must stay in contact and maintain a relationship with themselves, with their particular peer group, and with their particular institution, organization, society, and cultural community. Interpersonal relationships are essential for sustainable learning and personal development (Unterweger, 2014). To provide optimal support, a specific teacher training should be offered. Biographical orientation must be emphasized, because teachers should deal with their patterns acquired during their lifetime and images of their own actions (Seydel, 2008).

Teachers should participate in teacher training with a focus on beliefs and attitudes such as communication and interaction. Regular exchange on these topics during teacher trainings and also between the teams of the school is indispensable.

Furthermore, teachers should be supported in working collaboratively. Teachers are generally very positive about team-teaching; however, it is seen as time consuming, and time resources are frequently extremely scarce (Dür & Scheidbach, 1995).

An important key could be education in digital competence. Apart from training programs, the teachers should have the possibility to contact experts at any point in time. Technical possibilities to hold online meetings and to share files, for example Skype calls and different platforms, are beneficial for regular meetings and exchange.

Furthermore, only in a trusting atmosphere, trusting co-operation, and trusting relationships, where persons have the feeling that they are in good hands, will they engage in the learning process aimed at development of self, social, and systemic competence.

Inclusive education is underpinned by child-centred learning. Learning must thus be adapted to the needs of the child and not the other way round (UNESCO, 1994).

In inclusive classes, flexible arrangements for a pupil's educational program, the application of a variety of teaching methods and an appreciative atmosphere are indispensable. It is imperative to plan teaching considering the capacities of all the pupils so that all pupils can participate and engage actively in their own learning process, and learn collaboratively (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Mc Guire, Scott & Shaw, 2006). Teachers can address children's needs better when they pool their personal perceptions and experiences to try new designs of teaching settings (Cohn, 2016; Ledl, 1997; Tschötschel-Gänger, 1997).

The main requirements for teaching in an inclusive class are individualization and differentiation as well as enhancing the pupils' awareness of self-efficacy, and strengthening their capacity for self-directed learning. Peer learning and co-operation between learners must, therefore, be encouraged (Feyerer & Langner, 2014).

The implementation of an inclusive school is founded on individualization and differentiation. All pedagogues need these manifold competences in order to meet the demands of a diverse pedagogy (Feyerer, 2012). For this reason, lesson preparation is highly time consuming, and teaching in such a heterogeneous group with open learning framework requires a high degree of attention and active participation. This can fray the teacher's nerves and sap a lot of energy (both physical and psychological). As a result, teachers have to ensure a good work–life balance.

Dealing with children with disruptive behaviour problems takes time and energy, too (Grabbe, 1989). It is hard for those pupils to find orientation in a progressive self-directed learning context, which is detrimental to their own learning progress as well as the learning progress of the other pupils. They need the teacher's personal attention to be motivated to study; however, his or her attention is also necessary to the other pupils. Apparently, these pupils might consume the energy of the teacher to the extent that the other children might not get enough attention. Too many pupils with behaviour problems will tip the balance of the system.

Summing up, one can say that the variety of teaching methods, an appreciative approach in teaching, team-teaching, a pleasant and state-of-the-art classroom design, and suitable and appealing learning materials have a major impact on pupils (Feyerer & Langner, 2014; Mc Guire, Scott & Shaw, 2006; Spratt & Florian, 2015). It goes without saying that rooms and materials should be accessible to persons with physical and sensory impairements. Room size, light conditions in the classrooms, and a colourful environment are extremely significant for learning. Therefore, pupils should be given an opportunity to take an active part in designing their environment.

Learning in an inclusive setting requires a lot of internal and external resources. This is a very complex process, in which all the persons involved and the system referred to as "the school" are necessary. The quality of implementation must take priority over legal requirements and ideological beliefs. Otherwise, danger arises that pupils with special needs will come off badly. Successful development into a school for all requires patience.

REFERENCES

Bews, S. (1992). *Integrativer Unterricht in der Praxis. Erfahrungen, Probleme, Analysen*. [Integrative education in practice. Experiences, problems, analysis]. Innsbruck: Studienverlag.

BMASK (2012). Nationaler Aktionsplan Behinderung. [National action plan on disability]. Retrieved from http://www.sozialministerium.at/cms/site/attachments/7/7/8/CH2477/CMS1332494355998/nap_web.pdf; https://europa.eu/youth/sites/eac-eyp/files/NAP_Behinderung_2012-2020_01.pdf

Booth, T. & Ainscow, M. (2002). *Index for inclusion developing learning and participation in schools*. Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education (CSIE). Retrieved from http://www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/Index%20English.pdf

Cohn, R. C. (2016). *Von der Psychoanalyse zur themenzentrierten Interaktion. Von der Behandlung einzelner zu einer Pädagogik für alle.* [From psychoanalysis to TZI. From single treatment to a pedagogy for all]. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta.

Dür, A. & Scheidbach B. (1995). *Ohne „Wenn und Aber". Schulische Integration in Vorarlberg.* ["No ifs or buts." School integration in Vorarlberg]. Unveröffentlichte Diplomarbeit an der Universität Innsbruck.

Feyerer, E. (2012). Der Umgang mit besonderen Bedürfnissen im Bildungswesen. [Dealing with special needs in the education system]. *Zeitschrift für Inklusion, 4*(2012). Retrieved from www.inklusion-online.net/index.php/inklusion-online/article/view/33/33

Feyerer, E. & Langner, A. Hrsg. (2014). *Umgang mit Vielfalt. Lehrbuch für Inklusive Bildung.* [Dealing with diversity]. Linz: Trauner-Verlag.

Grabbe, B. (1998). Unterricht mit verhaltensauffälligen Kindern. [Teaching children with behavioural problems]. *Grundschule,* 1998(11).

Greuel, N. (2016). *Kommunikation für Lehrkräfte. Beratung – Konflikte – Teamarbeit – Moderation.* [Communication for teachers. Consultation – conflicts – teamwork – moderation]. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer GmbH. 310–321.

Krawitz, R., Theis-Scholz, M. & Thümmel, I. (1995). Kooperation von Grund- und Sonderschullehrern in integrativem Unterricht. [Co-operation of primary teachers and special needs teachers in an integrative education]. *Sonderpädagogik,* 1995(2), pp. 102–107.

Ledl, V. (1997). Diagnostik bei Verhaltensstörungen. [Diagnostics of behavioural problems]. *Integration in der Praxis*, 1997(1).

McGuire J. M., Scott, S. S. & Shaw, S. F. (2006). Universal design and its applications in educational environments. *Remedial and Special Education*, *27*(3), pp. 166–175.

Moser, I. (2001). "Classroom Practice" – Literaturanalyse 2000 Österreich. ["Classroom Practice" – Literature analysis 2000 Austria]. Retrieved from http://bidok.uibk.ac.at/library/moser-literaturanalyse.html.

Rutte, V. (1995). Schulische Integration in Österreich. Ein Situationsbericht anlässlich des 11. Österreichischen Integrationssymposiums in Innsbruck. [School integration in Austria]. *Betrifft Integration,* 1996(3), pp. 136–139.

Seydel, F. (2008). Biografische Verwirrungen. Ästhetische Verfahren in der Arbeit zum beruflichen Selbstbild von Lehrkräften. [Biographical confusions. Aesthetic methods working for a professional self-image of teachers]. In Dörr, M. u. a.: *Erinnerung – Reflexion – Geschichte. Erinnerung aus psychoanalytischer und biographietheoretischer Perspektive.* VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden 2008, pp. 165–178.

Specht, W. (1993). *Evaluation der Schulversuche zum gemeinsamen Unterricht behinderter und nichtbehinderter Kinder. Ergebnisse einer bundesweiten Befragung von Lehrerinnen und Lehrern im Schulversuch.* [Evaluation of the school pilot projects concerning the common education of children with and without disabilities]. Graz: BMUK.

Spratt, J. & Florian, L. (2015). Inclusive pedagogy: From learning to action. Supporting each individual in the context of "everybody". *Teaching and Teacher Education, 49*, pp. 89–96.

Tschötschel-Gänger, Ch. (1997). Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Integration verhaltensauffälliger Kinder – ein Modell für Diagnose und Intervention. [Possibilities and limits of the integration of children with behavioural problems – a model for diagnosis and intervention]. *Integration in der Praxis,* 1997(1), pp. 17–24.

UNESCO. (1994). The Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education. Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/SALAMA_E.PDF

Unterweger, E. (2014). *Personbezogene überfachliche Kompetenzen von Pädagoginnen und Pädagogen. Selbst-, Sozial- und Systemkompetenzen.* [Personal interdisciplinary competences of teachers. Self, social, and systemic competences]. Vienna: ÖZEPS.

Wetzel, G., Moser, M., Brejcha, H., Riedler, H. & Weiss, S. (1999). Kinder mit Auffälligkeiten – Studie zu Rahmenbedingungen und Praxis des Unterrichts in Volksschulklassen. [Children with difficulties – studies concerning the framework conditions and teaching practice in primary classes]. *Erziehung und Unterricht,* 1999(10), pp. 672–685.

5.2. THE FINNISH SCHOOL CASE

Suvi Lakkala, Outi Kyrö-Ämmälä

The following results are presented according to previously indicated research questions. The original Finnish text in the data extracts was translated into English by the authors.

Description of research environment and reference codes

The descriptions of the research classes. In the research, the data were gathered from two research classes: Class A is the second grade class and Class B is the fourth grade class. There are twenty pupils in research Class A, ten boys and ten girls (aged seven to eight). Five of them receive general support, two pupils are subject to intensified support and one pupil gets special support, for learning and behaviour difficulties. In research Class B, there are twenty-four pupils, eleven boys and thirteen girls (aged nine to ten). Ten pupils receive general support, two pupils receive intensified support and one pupil is subject to special support, for learning and behaviour difficulties. In data descriptions, the classes are separated as Class A and Class B.

Pupils' anonymity. In citations, coming from different types of data, the pupils' real names are replaced with random letters, for example, Pupil A, Pupil X, etc. The same letters have been used randomly several times to refer to different children, in order to increase the anonymity of the pupils.

Diaries. The two teachers kept a diary for four weeks during the autumn of 2015, writing notes after the school day for one week in a month. Thus, the teachers produced sixty-nine pages of typed text. Teachers in each country were given a ready-made framework structure for the diary to help in creating the text. *Research design.* All complements introduced by the researchers have been put in square brackets and ellipsis has been used to indicate incomplete citations or gaps in the text (. . .).

Observations. The researchers observed two research classes for three days. The observations took place during lessons, breaks, and lunch time. The researchers' notes encompass sixty-six pages of written text. There were no exact instructions for the researchers for observation. In citations, the two research classes are separated as Classes A and B.

Teachers' interviews. The two class teachers were interviewed separately three times. The main topics of the interviews were the following: 1) the relationships between the pupils in the class, 2) the relationships between the teachers and the pupils in the class and 3) the co-operation and communication between professionals in the school and the professional network. The two teachers were numbered, and in citations they are referred to as T1 and T2. The interviews were later transcribed. All complements done by the researchers have been put in square brackets and ellipsis has been used to indicate incomplete citations or gaps in the text (…).

Pupils' interviews. A total of sixteen pupils (eight pupils in both Class A and in Class B) were interviewed for the research. Eight pupils (four in both Class A and in Class B) were subject to general, intensified or special support. The interviews lasted approximately ten to twenty minutes. All complements done by the researchers have been put in square brackets and ellipsis has been used to indicate incomplete citations or gaps in the text (. . .).

Parents' interviews. Parents from the research classes were interviewed as a group (Class A: thirty-four minutes and Class B: twenty-nine minutes). Both of the researchers were present. One researcher asked the questions, and the other gave each parent a numbered tag and kept a record of the speakers. In Class A, there were twenty-six parents present, and nineteen of them participated in the conversation during the interview. In Class B, there were sixteen parents present, and ten of them participated in the conversation during the interview. The citations referring to this data were arranged by assigning parents with a number and a letter referring to the interview in Class A or B, for example, Parent 4A. The interviews were transcribed. All complements on behalf of the researchers have been put in square brackets and ellipsis has been used to indicate incomplete citations or gaps in the text (. . .).

Sociometric measurements. Sociometric measurements were employed to map the research classes' social structures. The pupils in Class A and Class B were asked various questions about their relationships with each other. For the second graders, the researchers used a frame story, and for the first graders they used both a frame story and questions such as "With whom would you like to play during the breaks?", "Name two of your best friends", "Who wouldn't you take as a member to your group?", etc. The data were arranged in various frequency tables and sociograms were drawn.

Table 10. Data codes (Finnish case)

TYPE OF DATA	REFERENCE CODE
Teachers' interviews	Interview, T1 Interview, T2 (T = Teacher)
Pupils' interviews in Class A and Class B	Interview, Pupils 1–16
Parents' interviews in Class A and Class B	Interview, Parents 1A–19A Interview, Parents 1B–10B
Observation in Class A and Class B	Observation, Class A Observation, Class B
Teachers' diaries	Diary, T1 Diary, T2 (T = Teacher)
Sociometric measurements in Class A and Class B	Sociometric measurement/sociogram

5.2.1. SCHOOL AS A SOCIAL COMMUNITY OF PUPILS

Suvi Lakkala, Outi Kyrö-Ämmälä

The research Class A contains twenty pupils, ten boys and ten girls (aged seven to eight). Five of the pupils receive general support, two pupils receive intensified support, and one pupil receives special support. In research Class B, there are twenty-four pupils, eleven boys and thirteen girls (aged nine to ten years). Ten pupils are subject to general support, two pupils receive intensified support and one pupil gets special support. Altogether, support is given to tackle difficulties in the subjects of Mathematics, English, Finnish (for native speakers), Finnish as a second language, and Biology. Support is also provided in cases of difficulties in attention, social skills, and any other factors that affect the child's well-being.

For the research, sixteen pupils were interviewed, eight pupils from each research class. Half of these (eight) receive general, intensified or special support. The interviewed pupils are coded with numbers 1–16, and in the citations from the teachers' diaries or the researchers' observations, the pupils are referred to by random letters of the alphabet.

Of the pupils interviewed, twelve pupils mentioned schoolmates and friends as the nicest element at school. Three pupils indicated learning and studying. One pupil said the school was not a nice place at all. It is interesting to note that most of the children see school primarily as a social community where you can play together, meet your friends, and have fun. Five of the pupils interviewed have experienced bullying at school. In many answers, the pupils with problems in social interaction were mentioned as bullies. The same phenomenon can also be seen in the classes' sociograms.

Peer networks of friends. In research classes, only seven pupils are not indicated as a choice, for instance, as someone's friend, by their classmates in the sociometric measurement. Five of them are those who receive support due to social or self-regulation skills problems. In Class A, among the young pupils, seventeen pupils out of twenty maintain reciprocal relationships. Of the remaining three pupils with no reciprocal relationships, two receive general support for their attention deficit disorders and self-regulation skills problems.

In both research classes, pupils with learning difficulties belong to the social network of friends in the class. They are popular among schoolmates, and they may

also be chosen as "a desired leader in collaborative small group" or as "a leader in an emergency situation". In turn, the pupils with social skills impairments connected to autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and attention deficit disorder (ADD), as well as other difficulties in social interaction, seem to be excluded from friendship relationships. Those children are not chosen as "one of my best friends", "a desired leader in a collaborative small group", or "a leader in an emergency situation". Some of them appear to be abandoned at school. On the other hand, according to our observations of the pupils, some of them may be willing to be left in peace, and they seem rather content about it. What is more, some of them may not have indicated anyone as "one of my best friends" or "a friend with whom I would like to spend time together during the breaks" (Sociometric Measurement).

Conflict situations. When pupils with social skills impairments wish to have contact with their schoolmates, conflict situations might appear. Their ways of interaction might be bizarre, or the pupil might quarrel or irritate the others. For example, Pupil 4 is a very social person who thinks that the best thing at school is the other children. She realizes that she often quarrels with her friends, and many times falling out is inevitable (Interview, Pupil 4). Pupil 4's schoolmate describes her relationships as the following: *"Well, for example, if I was her "best friend" and I would talk with another schoolmate for two minutes, she would immediately shout at me. She is so selfish"* (Interview, Pupil 6). In other words, a child may be a social person but might lack social skills, which causes problems.

Many incidents happen during the breaks, and the quarrels are solved at the beginning of the lessons or after school, sometimes with parents and the headmaster present (Diary, T1 and T2, 2015). Some pupils might create conflicts more or less intentionally by irritating a person with social difficulties.

> Pupil: Well, if some stupid person tries to do something to me, I just get irritated. Once a person came . . . my hands started to shake, I was just going after him, when he escaped. So I didn't follow him (Interview, Pupil 16).

The older pupils in Class B seem to have become aware of the problems they have, and it makes them sad or discontent with themselves. One of them feels that the most terrible thing at school is falling out with "friends" (Interview, Pupil 4). Another one thinks that *"nobody wants to be with me because I always burst out all my thoughts . . . I'm odd"* (Interview, Pupil 6), and the third one finds it difficult at school because *"all the time I have to control myself . . . Well, on the other hand I have never had an outburst of rage . . . like at home . . ."* (Interview, Pupil 2).

Sometimes the classmates just ignore the capriciousness and continue their studies. They seem to have tolerance towards the diversity of their peers.

> *Sports lesson on the play field: Pupil X sulks, but she joins the game when the school assistant picks her up. Then, after all, she doesn't participate in "the ball catch". Nobody pays attention to her leaving the field. The school assistant goes and asks what the matter with her is. "Aching foot," she answers. No one pays attention to her going away and coming back (Observation, Class B).*

> *Pupils coming from the break: Pupil Z, whining to Pupil Y: You harp on Pupil S being your best friend all the time. It irritates me! Pupil Y: No I'm not, no I'm not! After twenty minutes, Pupil Z and Pupil Y are doing exercises and chatting together in peace (Observation, Class B).*

Peer support of and respect for schoolmates. During lessons, when the pupils are studying, quarrels are very rare. The children are able to work together, and many pupils voluntarily help others (Diary, T2, 2015; Observation, Class A). The pupils seem to approve of the diversity among their classmates. They show affection and concern towards each other.

> *Pupil E [a girl who has difficulties in social interaction] and Pupil F [a boy] are a well matched couple who like challenging exercises. It was interesting to observe when Pupil E occassionally smoothed Pupil F's crew haircut. He seemed to enjoy her touch and attention. Pupil F is the only child in his family, and I have noticed that he misses physical contact (Diary, T2, 2015).*

> *Pupil G [a girl] helped Pupil H [a boy with social skills impairment] to make a greeting booklet for Father's Day. They worked together well. Still, Pupil G was bothered because Pupil H wanted to draw and write about smoking and drinking in his booklet. When Pupil G told about this, Pupil H independently added something happy to his booklet. Later, his mother told me that her son has been stuck on those topics lately, and he also would have wanted to buy a present of the kind for his father. Pupil H's booklet was interesting, so I thought the father would surely understand his son's texts and drawings (Diary, T2, 2015).*

The pupils' co-operation in the lessons depends on the organization of the pupils' seating places. In both research classes, the pupils are mainly seated either in pairs or in groups, rather than on their own. However, in cases when someone wants to work

alone, he or she is allowed to do so. Six pupils out of the sixteen pupils interviewed preferred studying alone.

> *Pupil: It is fun to work with friends. As if you don't remember something, you can ask for help. Another one helps you. Yes, I have helped someone, too. In the first grade a little. Sometimes. When someone needs help, I always help (Interview, Pupil 12).*

> *Pupil: Usually I prefer studying alone but it is nice to study with a peer now and then. If it is difficult, the friend can help (Interview, Pupil 15).*

In the research classes, mostly positive and cohesive atmosphere prevails. The pupils respect each other in everyday life; however, naturally, occasionally "bad days" occur.

> *Interviewer: What do you think about equality or inequality in your classroom?*

> *Teacher: I've thought, equality shows in this group. Everybody is treated equally, although, of course, there are also exceptions and "bad days".*

> *Interviewer: Do the pupils also treat each other equally?*

> *Teacher: Yes.*

> *Interviewer: How about respect?*

> *Teacher: Yes, the pupils respect each other. Sometimes when arguing, somebody might insult the other either intentionally, or unconsciously, but I think mainly they respect each other (Interview, T1).*

However, the sociometric measurement shows that there are both negative and positive interactions between pupils. In research Class A, four pupils gathered more negative markings, such as "creates disturbance" and "teases", than other pupils. These four pupils are subject to either general, or special support for their attention deficit disorders and problems with their social, socio-emotional, or self-regulation skills. According to the main features of the sociometric measurement, the pupils who are restless and cause disturbance in lessons are not as popular as those whose behaviour is peaceful. On the other hand, those with good socio-emotional skills are popular among the other pupils. The pupils with the best socio-emotional skills are those who take care of the passive pupils during the lessons. They may praise them for their good achievements, for example during craft lessons (Sociometric Measurement; Observation, Class A).

5.2.2. SCHOOL AS A SOCIAL COMMUNITY BETWEEN PUPILS AND TEACHERS

Outi Kyrö-Ämmälä, Suvi Lakkala

The good inclusive practices concerning the relationships between pupils and teachers were studied by analysing three different types of research data: interviews of teachers, classroom observations, and teacher diaries. The researchers tried to identify the issues that make it possible for every pupil to take part in his or her own learning environment and experience togetherness, and to determine how the teachers support their pupils' well-being at school. The findings were divided in two parts: solutions that support each pupil's individuality, and solutions that support the classroom communality. For the purpose of anonymity, the pupils are referred to by random letters of the alphabet in the citations.

Individuality

Encouragement. The teachers interact with and talk to the pupils in an encouraging way. The teachers' interaction with the pupils is positive and supportive. They praise the children on various occasions and can do this in different ways: by means of speech, facial expression, or physical touch.

> *Interviewer: What kinds of opportunities do you have in supporting, talking to, motivating, and encouraging the pupils individually?*
>
> *Teacher: . . . I engage in conversations with them during the breaks because they need it so much. Some pupils come to tell me something every day, and with them you develop a personal relationship. . . . You being interested in the child's life, that's the starting point, I think. I must talk with the child and ask . . . One way of doing is to have lunch at the school canteen together with the pupils (Interview, T2).*
>
> *Interviewer: How do you create a positive relationship with pupils?*
>
> *Teacher: As I mentioned earlier, the creation of positive atmosphere, smiling, and contacting, dedicating time, listening, and being present. I think a good relationship can be built by these actions (Interview, T1).*

The encouragement is also linked to positive feedback. The teachers carry out continuous assessment during the lessons, so they can encourage the pupils in their process of studying.

> *I'm pleased that every pupil has learned (they were able to do the basic tasks), and I could give personal feedback to every pupil, as I've asked the pupils to show their exercises to me when they finish. All the pupils were also given homework at their own level (Diary, T1, 2015).*
> *The teacher praises the pupil: "Great way of thinking, you have got a good tactic. . . . You have worked just fine, you can do it!" (Observation, Class A)*

The teacher can also use competition in a positive and encouraging way. Competing motivates some pupils to work at their optimal level.

> *Teacher encourages a boys' group: "Boys, you have the opportunity of a lifetime to be the first ones ready." (Observation, Class A)*

Sometimes, however, it is not very clear when the pupils need encouragement. The teachers have to know the pupils well and be very sensitive. That way, they can also see what lies behind the pupils' negative behaviour, and then encourage the pupils appropriately.

> *CHALLENGES OF THE DAY / awkward situations and solutions:*
> *A furious reaction because a pupil had to keep his hand raised for so long (maybe the real reason was the upcoming blood sampling). I gave him attention, listened to him, comforted and encouraged him (Diary, T1, 2015).*

When discussing inclusive education, the focus is often put on the pupils with learning difficulties or behavioural problems. Nevertheless, it is equally important for the teachers to see and understand the talented pupils. They have to ensure that the most capable pupils are also presented with appropriate challenges.

> *The assistants are a great support. I can differentiate the lesson well and also support the pupils. I also differentiate with more challenging tasks, especially when we have another adult in the class, and then I use station work. And at the station, where the teacher is [instructing], the pupils work in their zone of proximal development (Diary, T1, 2015).*

By encouraging and praising the pupils who are working well, for example, quietly and independently, the teachers present it as a model for the other pupils to also work in the same way, without saying it aloud (Observation, Class A). By paying attention to the positive, the teacher reinforces the positive outcomes and ignores the negative behaviour.

Social engagement. The teachers put effort to make the pupils feel they are an essential part of the classroom, and to ensure that the pupils experience the feeling they are appreciated by the teachers and by other pupils. Thus, in spite of conflicts, the pupils feel the teachers care for them. The teachers are loyal and show affection even on the pupils' "bad days". The pupils feel they are listened to and noticed in the classroom, and that they can influence what happens in the classroom.

> *Pupils wait so that they are allowed to tell their personal news. . . . I'm always happy when I see some silent pupil raising a hand to share news meaningful to him or her (Diary, T2, 2015).*
>
> *Teacher: . . . although, for example, Pupil X is challenging, I know that we understand each other. Then again, with Pupil Y, he is mad at me sometimes, but he has had his reasons. He has been angry because I have been defending Pupil Z. . . . I [have said] that . . . I must look at it from Pupil Z's angle, too. In spite of that, I know he understands that I'm trying to do what is right. Basically, I have a feeling that they understand my principles of justice (Interview, T2).*

Sensitive approach. The teachers are sensitive in noticing pupils' behaviour. The pupils might be experiencing some difficulties or conflicts with their friends, or at home, and the teachers may notice that without the pupils saying it, and may then treat the pupils in different ways. The teachers see equality as context-related: individual pupils may need various ways of obtaining teachers' attention or support at different times.

> *Teacher: I try to treat them equally, whoever the pupil is. Whatever the circumstances are. Surely, you'll have to give a little more sympathy, or to support more if someone is going through a demanding situation. But anyway, the rules are the same for everyone. It doesn't matter if you are an immigrant or if you have some diagnosis, except then you'll have to do some adaptation. It is not so simple. You'll have to consider it on a personal level. For some, you need to accept something, and for some you don't (Interview, T2).*
>
> *Pupil W has been very sensitive lately. His grandmother has passed away, so that may be the reason for it. Pupil W feels bad about trivial things. For example, someone overtook him in the queue, and he said, "I'm not eating today." I let him stay at the class and told him that I'll pick him up when I come back from the school canteen, and then we'll have lunch together. That's what we did then (Diary, T2, 2015).*

Teachers' sensitivity is also connected to the teachers knowing of the pupils: the better the teachers know the pupils, the better they can organize the learning environments and processes.

> With the boy group, I will focus on motivating, doing things in a playful
> way, and on small games and functionality, in order to enhance learning. .
> . . I also wonder whether the duration (approx. ten minutes) of one station
> is appropriate . . . An autonomous station can be easy, so that the pupils
> are able to work effectively. At an autonomous station, I also prefer to use
> peer learning (NOT SUITABLE FOR functional group!) (Diary, T1, 2015).

When training a new skill in the research Class A, the teacher's primary support is often given to pupils with attention deficits. A pupil with learning difficulties may work in a pair with a more capable pupil who "teaches" or repeats the teacher's instructions and, thereby, strengthens the weaker learner's learning. The emotional significance of this is also relevant to the pupil acting as the "teacher". The self-image of the latter pupil as a learner is enhanced by noticing that he or she can help others, and this boosts self-esteem, empathy, and other positive personal traits. After the teacher has introduced the new item of learning, the pupils can train their newly acquired skill with the help of autonomous exercises. Usually, at this point, the teacher has time for individual instruction and may give personal feedback to the pupils (Diary, T1, 2015).

One crucial point where the teachers' sensitivity is needed is composing suitable and functional groups, for example, for station work. It is of great importance that the groups' members can work together and provide peer support to each other at the same time.

> Two adults in the same lesson render teaching functional, and the learning
> processes run smoothly. At the station where the teacher is, the pupils
> learn something new. Then [at the peer station] they practice what they
> have already learned in pairs (often in the form of a game or activity task,
> e.g., gym). At the assistant's station, the pupils seek for more information
> (from the Internet, literature, etc.), and at the autonomous station the
> pupils usually write or draw individually. . . . Pupils who need support,
> receive peer support at the stations where there are no adults. They are
> "pushed forward" by the social pressure. In many cases, pupils want to try
> hard because of a friend, and pupils often want to help the classmates. . . .
> Today, I [had to be sensitive and] gave extra time to one pupil, in order to
> prevent a conflict. He didn't want to end his workbook tasks, so I let him

finish them. After that, he came to the teacher's station and joined his own
group. Experiences of success! (Diary, T1, 2015).

Approachable teachers. The pupils can talk and approach the teacher easily, and with no fear. Even the shyest of pupils dare to share personal, meaningful things with the teacher. The teachers listen to the pupils carefully as well.

> *Teacher: . . . about life at home, spare time, what has happened to them, or if they have got something nice. They want to tell about it. Family events. Very seldom they talk about school events, or what happened at school, yes, but these are things that have happened in informal situations. . . . [The pupils] dare to come to me, and sometimes even hug me, and the fact that we have warm relationships makes me really happy. . . . [And if somebody is sad] I try to find the source of where it comes from . . . I take time to solve the problem, I don't think the problem will be automatically solved with the passage of time. . . . If it is something that happened at home, we discuss privately, we ponder on how to get over it. But if something has happened with the classmates, I may discuss it with the whole class (Interview, T1).*

Communality

Organizing social activities. The teachers create situations where the pupils spend time together, study together, and take care of each other. Teachers organize occasions to go out of the classroom regularly; for example, they go on trips to the playground, have picnics, and just organize study sessions outdoors. They celebrate birthdays at school, and every morning they discuss urgent matters together and share personal news. Sometimes, the teachers simply have lunch with the pupils, and they chat.

> *Teacher: I also have lunch with the children.*
> *Interviewer: So, it's free chatting?*
> *Teacher: That is the most important thing.*
> *Interviewer: It doesn't always concern learning situations?*
> *Teacher: No, on the contrary. Many times I sit with them, and they also ask me to join them. . . . It is one of the important situations, we don't have many of those. . . .*
> *Every week we do something special. We have been to the Angry Birds Park, which was an amazing trip, we were together and we had fun. We*

have been fishing with the whole class. Pupil X had the support of a school assistant. . . . It was great (Interview, T2).

Enhancing social skills. The teachers teach social skills, as well as cognitive skills, to the pupils. They organize various learning environments and structures to facilitate positive relationships among the pupils, and to enhance friendship for pupils who need help. They use different groupings with the pupils so that they could accustom themselves to studying with diverse people. The teachers know every pupil's social strengths and weaknesses, so they are able to combine suitable groups or pairs for studying.

> *Teacher: In daily situations, there are many playful actions, which aim to socialize and raise the community spirit. Then, there are pupils with whom there is a lot of work to be done, but this is just the beginning . . . Every morning we, for example, look at the calendar and practice speaking and listening to others. In other words, we learn to respect others by listening to them. . . . When we get together, I always say [to my pupils], "Now, again, everyone must go and sit beside the classmate they haven't been with before". . . . I try to teach them that someday in the future, they would think, "This time I won't go to my favourite fellow pupil", and "What would it feel like to get to know this pupil better?" (Interview, T1).*
>
> *Teacher: . . . There are also that kind of persons, who have to practice their self-regulative skills more than the others. They often find themselves in conflicts, and especially on bad days they are "very explosive". . . . The ones who are the most difficult and challenging pupils, need very much support with their self-control. Teachers must create situations where adults provide behavioural models of how to work together, even though one wouldn't like the other fellow pupil. Also, the kinds of teaching sessions where two adults co-operate are suitable. I have many school assistants, and the pupils see all the time that the teacher co-operates with someone, too. . . . And then I emphasize the situations where I need help (Interview, T1).*

One of the social skills is the ability to feel empathy. Naturally, young children are rather egocentric in their thinking; however, generally, as time passes, they learn to shift their perspective in thinking, too. Empathy is related to emotional intelligence, and it also has to be taught to the pupils.

> *Pupil Q tried to "strangle himself", and threw his eraser during the lesson. I turn off the histrionics by ignoring him.*

Afterwards, we discussed it together and I appealed to his empathy and to pity towards me. IT WORKS!

"Do you want to make the teacher sad? Do you want your teacher's eyes to go blind?" (Diary, T1, 2015).

The teachers also use "school buddies" to create multi-aged groups and foster the pupils' social skills. In these lessons, younger and older pupils study together. The co-operating classes are coupled for a two-year period. The younger ones receive instructions from the older ones, so the older ones have responsibilities at school. The young pupils are very dedicated to their older "school buddies", which renders the school to appear to be a safer place for them. In research Class A, the pupils have sixth graders as their "school buddies". The sixth graders work with the second graders every other week for one or two lessons. In addition, the second and sixth graders go on joint trips and attend various events together. The "school buddy" activities are directed towards interactivity, and they broaden the children's perspectives as well as their insights into each other. The older "school buddies" also support the younger ones in learning and help them in everyday situations.

Today, I was also pleased that the [older] school buddies brought true joy of learning and pleasure of working together to our class. . . . They motivate my pupils, and they can also teach the young ones. Both the second the sixth graders are doing just fine together. I think they both want harmonious behaviour (Diary, T1, 2015).

Interactive ethical discussions. Sometimes, the teachers may use conflicts as learning situations. In research classes, the teachers "teach" empathy and the sense of responsibility by using interactive ethical discussions. Teachers and pupils discuss together, analysing various conflict situations.

Interviewer: And what about when pupils are arguing, or about quick-tempered pupils?

Teacher: Then a pupil may speak to another in an unfriendly way . . . like "you are a slow runner", but then we talk it through and they apologize, and the things will go on well.

Interviewer: Do you tend to discuss about this with the whole class?

Teacher: Sometimes yes, but, quite often, I ask "Please help us solve this situation" in the way that every pupil could hear it. And then the bickering two receive support, and the others get a solution model for the future.

Interviewer: You can learn from the mistakes too.

> *Teacher: Yes. [This way] the mistakes don't hurt or depress them (Interview T1).*

> *Teacher: . . . we've immersed ourselves in the virtue of friendliness. We have been discussing about virtues since the third grade. The pupils know that virtues are appreciated all over the world. We pondered on what friendliness means. This ignited an enthusiastic conversation . . . at the end of the lesson, "a secret friend" was drawn out of the hat for every pupil. The pupils are going to do nice things for their "secret friends" during the week. Next Monday, we'll discuss if the pupils noticed who had been friendly to them (Diary, T2, 2015).*

The teachers employ various methods in discussions. After the discussion, they may come up with an optional solution that the pupils agree to apply in the future, and then consider if it worked.

> *A conflict in the queue (quarrel between two pupils) was solved by interactive ethical discussion with the teacher. We named the problem, considered the solution together and decided to try it. Later, we will evaluate if it has worked. Every pupil learned about the situation because of the joint discussion (Diary, T1, 2015).*

Sometimes the discussions between the teacher and the pupil are carried out privately.

> *Pupil H almost always finishes his tasks quickly but sometimes he also gives up or even destroys the work intentionally. Today, the following happened: he threw his painting into a litter basket. I talked to him and told him that every pupil has to complete their school tasks. It is the obligation of all pupils. His anger subsided, and mutual understanding was reached. He accomplished his work later during the break, so he missed the break but he also learned that it's no use to ruin the work intentionally. We have also discussed the tactic with his parents, and they agree it is an effective procedure (Diary, T1, 2015).*

Appreciating diversity. The teachers think that diversity is natural. They do not expect the same kind of behaviour, intelligence or skills from the pupils, but they appreciate all the pupils with their individual characteristics, skills, strengths, and weaknesses. The teachers see the good in every pupil, and they prefer multiple types of intelligence instead of emphasizing some certain one, for example, verbal,

mathematical or logical intelligence. They make the diversity visible by discussing the pupils' differences and by making agreements on personal goals, differentiating learning, etc.

> *Teacher: We play together, and through games we can see individual characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses, and in that way, pupils can discover the diversity within themselves too, and, despite of that, they can still work together.*
> *Interviewer: So you think you can discuss about diversity even with the first graders?*
> *Teacher: Yes, and I think that teachers should do it. It is not an issue that can't be discussed with [young] pupils. Diversity is just natural. . . . Maybe at first they asked why he or she was allowed to do something [differently] but now they understand . . . there are various agreements between people, we can also make agreements and we follow up on them at school, too. Then, I may answer to some questions because I now have an agreement with this pupil: it is between us, and it doesn't concern you (Interview, T1).*

> *Teacher: Yes, the pupils respect each other. Sometimes when arguing, somebody may hurt another either intentionally, or unconsciously but I think they mainly respect each other.*
> *Interviewer: How can it be seen?*
> *Teacher: For example, when doing different tasks, nobody cares about it, and when studying in different places, it is natural, not like "Haha, he is going there. You have easier tasks than me, and I got this and that". They [pupils] just concentrate on their own matters and let the others do their own (Interview, T1).*

> *Teacher: While there is a whole spectrum of pupils here, it is this that the richness comes from. Although there are so many kinds of needs in this class that I cannot respond to everything, I don't think about anyone that I don't want him or her in my class. No, I don't think that way at all (Interview, T2).*

The pupils seem to have learned to accept their classmates' diverse skills, since they don't pay attention if, for example, someone has a different kind of exercise book in

Mathematics, or if someone wants to do exercises alone and goes out to the corridor (Observation, Class B).

> *It's wonderful to see how nobody pays attention to what's the number of tasks a classmate does, but their attention is focused on their own tasks. The assistant helps in this situation. . . . The music in the background soothes and helps to focus and persevere with their tasks. The pupils are allowed to walk around and go and have some water during the lesson if needed (Diary, T1, 2015).*

Empowering children. Teachers engage the pupils in the classroom and the school community. The teachers give the pupils opportunities to make decisions regarding certain issues in the class, their own studies, and other matters. When the pupils are given power, their sense of responsibility increases.

> *Teacher: . . . that if we have something to decide together. Like, this year, we started by making common class rules. We did a project where they came up with six rules for the class. Then, they worked in pairs and picked up the best of them all (Interview, T2).*

In both research classes, the teachers use responsibility tasks in order to teach the pupils to attend to common matters, such as wiping the blackboard, organizing the rack and straightening the shoes, marking the homework, cleaning the tables, and carrying out some other duties in order to help the teacher or do something for the common good.

> *Teacher: I try to teach responsibility through different tasks. I assign responsibilities to them to attend to certain things, and then I also thank them for doing it. . . . Some of them think they are very important, and they also look forward to the tasks. However, there are some who haven't yet realized what an essential a matter it is, but anyway, they also feel sorry if they forget to do their own task, and the teacher mentions it. Next time, they try to remember it better (Interview, T1).*

It is often emphasized that the teacher is the boss in the classroom; however, sometimes, it is worth providing the pupils with an opportunity for decision-making, too.

> *The best parts of the day were . . . consultations with the pupils.*
> *When the pupils confidently dared to tell what they thought, it led to good educational discussions and teaching of companionship. In this way, we created solution models for the future together. They also experienced joy*

and gladness of moving during PE lesson. The pupils could choose their pairs by themselves, and it motivated them to rehearse. They trained physical skills but, in addition, the exercises carried out with a companion developed social skills and clearly created friendships (Diary, T1, 2015). Challenges and conflicts emerge at the boys' locker room. We've introduced a new rule: The teacher stays behind the door in the corridor. The pupil who is the closest to the door opens it when the problems occur. In this case, the teacher "gives orders". I hope that the existence of the new rule only will already calm and control the pupils' behaviour (Diary, T1, 2015).

As a whole, the relationships between the pupils and the teachers are enhanced consciously on both the individual and communal levels. The teachers interact with the children with sensitivity, they are easy to approach, and they encourage their pupils. By empowering and appreciating all children, the teachers try to reach the highest level of social engagement for their pupils. The teachers organize various social activities to enhance the pupils' social skills. They aspire to teach the children appreciation of diversity, and they expend significant effort to generate interactive ethical discussions individually and with the whole class.

5.2.3. PROFESSIONAL INTERACTION NETWORK OF THE TEACHER

Outi Kyrö-Ämmälä, Suvi Lakkala

According to the Finnish Basic Education Act (628/1998) and the Finnish core curriculum (2014), the fundamental principle of the teachers' professional network is to provide equal opportunities for learning and growth to every pupil. All professionals endeavour to create pedagogical, physical or attitudinal support and welfare, and to remove barriers in learning. The curriculum also requires co-operation with families.

The teachers' co-operation with other adults and professionals was studied through analysing teachers' interviews and pedagogical journals. In the research classes, during many lessons, the teachers still teach without help, but the teachers' work cannot be seen as an occupation where you work alone. The teachers in the research classes consider the parents as their primary partners in education (see more in section 5.2.5 "Educational Interaction of Pupils' Parents: Finnish case") but their professional network also includes other important professionals.

> *Teacher: . . . Of course, the co-operation between home and school is worth its weight in gold, parents will rise beyond all recognition, and it provides a lot of good information (Interview, T1).*
>
> *I co-operate with a wide and meaningful network: parents, colleagues (especially those who teach in the same grade and special education teachers), school counsellors, trainees, speech therapists, occupational therapists, and physiotherapists . . . school nurses, and school social workers. Within the network, we share news, know-how, and we consider possible forms of support for the school's everyday life (Diary, T1, 2015).*

In the research school, the **special education teachers,** who are teachers without their own specific class or pupils, are essential as colleagues to the regular class teachers. The special education teachers either co-teach in the same lessons with the class teachers, or they teach the pupils who need support in another learning environment part-time. In both cases, the collaboration demands co-design and co-operation. Also, **the resource teachers** *often* collaborate with the class teachers. They may not have their own classes, but they support the class teachers' work and the pupils in various classes.

> *On Mondays, the special education teacher comes to our class to support, especially the pupils with dyslexia and learning difficulties. However, she can teach and support other pupils too, thanks to flexible learning environment solutions and flexible grouping (Diary, T1, 2015).*
>
> *In the afternoon (1 – 2 PM), he and I [special education teacher] had time for joint planning. . . . We also set up an individual learning plan for Pupil A. (Diary, T2, 2015).*
>
> *We had a meeting with [Pupil A], her mother, and [a special education teacher]. We discussed [Pupil A's] learning challenges, and how they can be supported via differentiation and co-teaching, and also with the support of the resource teacher (Diary, T2, 2015).*
>
> *This year, we [the class teacher, the special education teacher, and the resource teacher] have often divided the group flexibly so that one group stayed in our classroom, and the other group worked next door, at least for some part of the lesson. There are several pupils in our class to whom mindfulness and concentration are challenging, so the co-teaching methods are not effective for them because they increase the amount of stimuli in the classroom. We have considered it wiser to divide one big group in two smaller groups, for the concentration and participation to be easier in both groups (Diary, T2, 2015).*

School assistants. *These staff members* work as tutors at the research school. They work in close collaboration with the teachers during lessons. Usually, they assist certain pupils who need intensified or special support but, at the same time, they can support other pupils. The assistants may be qualified for the job, in which case they work permanently at the schools, but they can also be trainees and be employed, for example, for one school year only.

> *Physical exercise is cheerful, the learning environment is just perfect. The school assistant supports a pupil with special needs in situations where co-operation does not go well with a classmate, and also in transitional situations. The assistant also repeats the instructions [with Pupil A] after my common instructions (Diary, T1, 2015).*
>
> *The school assistants [Assistant A and Trainee B] saved the lesson by helping the most pupils, while I taught the pupils with special needs and those whose fine motor skills are still developing (Diary, T1, 2015).*

This autumn, Assistant A has helped a lot in our PE lessons. It is important that the assistant does not change. Within a month, I have noticed how he has got a better understanding of the group dynamics and the class practices, in which case the intervention in pupils' situations or encouraging them goes naturally. He can work in a variety of stations [of sport exercises], or support an individual pupil. Also, the pupils occasionally come into various collisions, for example have crashes, and he can help in emergency situations, etc. . . . We have found a new and convenient way of co-operation with him, and I am very happy (Diary, T2, 2015).

Moreover, class teachers collaborate with their colleagues, fellow class teachers. They can share ideas, instructions and good practices, and also support each other if needed. This "sharing culture" naturally reflects the overall culture and the atmosphere of the school.

Teacher: I try to build the atmosphere in such a way that I ask for help and advice, and ideas. I do not want to act like an individualist, and only do my own work. Instead, I want to show my colleagues that I am interested in the tips received from others. And, I also want to thank them for all that I receive from them. I ask for collaboration and work together with others (Interview, T1).

Teacher: For example, responsibility tasks: I've got the basic idea from my colleague, who has experience as a true pioneer in entrepreneurship education. I have learnt a lot by taking her tips, and I have also managed to create an operating system for my own class. . . . I have also received thematic and teaching tips from [the teacher of Class A], who teaches in the same grade as I do. We have a lot of discussions with her. She's highlighted some good points on the way she's carried out some lessons, (Interview, T1).

Both research classes have their own "school buddy" classes. Naturally, the class teachers collaborate a lot with each other in this way by designing and implementing joint lessons and the pupils' collaboration. The pupils in the "buddy classes" work together regularly during joint lessons; in addition, the pupils go on trips and attend various events together.

The research Class A also has ***"godgrandfathers" and "godgrandmothers"***, who visit the classroom during school days. They are elderly people and voluntary workers

who come to help and support the pupils for one school day, every other week. Thus, the pupils have an opportunity to meet people of other generations. Godgrandmothers or godgrandfathers work together with the class teacher, in a sincere, person-to-person fashion, both for the benefit of the children and the adults as they help to implement leisurely lessons. They dedicate their time, and help just by being present. They listen to pupils and tell them their life stories. They stand alongside, help, support, advice, and encourage the pupils in a variety of school situations. Collaborating with teachers, they also provide a co-operation model for pupils (Diary, T1, 2015).

In addition to the teachers, there might be several professionals present that enhance the pupils' learning processes: ***speech therapists, occupational therapists, and physiotherapists*** are the most common professionals to work with class teachers. They also come to meet the children in the course of their school day, and the school has an allocated space where they can meet.

> *I had a short meeting with the speech therapist. We deliberated about the reason for [Pupil A's] restlessness and regression. However, it was nice to hear that the therapy session had gone well this time (Diary, T1, 2015).*
> *We had a PE lesson in the gym. The physiotherapist worked with Pupil A. . . . A great day! Wonderful pupils! (Diary, T1, 2015).*
> *Pupil A came to report to me joyfully after her Maths lesson with the occupational therapist that she had begun to make progress in no time. I hugged her. It's great that she may continue to work with the therapist. They meet once a week during the Maths lessons (Diary, T2, 2015).*

In cases of pupils' or their families' social or socio-psychological problems, ***the school welfare officers*** are essential collaborators for the class teachers. The school welfare officers work both with the individual pupils, and they support the well-being of the whole school community. They work in partnership with the pupils, their families, and the school staff, and they support them through discussions, giving advice, crisis services, etc.

> *Pupil A and his parents have been in need of a lot of support regarding education issues. . . . He used to not do his homework, which was also a problem. Last spring, the pupil participated systematically in the homework club. We agreed that we will continue this activity. I am also very pleased to co-operate with the school welfare officer. The meeting [with the parents] took place in a constructive atmosphere (Diary, T2, 2015).*

. . . Pupil B . . . It is difficult for him to control his emotions and handle disappointments. Last year, he would start throwing books and pencils on the floor in a similar situation. I told him quietly that I understood that he was annoyed, that he had already done many tasks correctly, and . . . I have proposed the help of the school welfare officer and family counselling's services to the family; and the mother was interested in it (Diary, T2, 2015).

On Monday, Pupil C had lots of conflicts with others. I have to think of how to prevent these kind of situations, and also how to support the development of his socio-emotional skills. I hope we will also get him the school welfare officer's support (Diary, T1, 2015).

What is more, class teachers collaborate with **the professionals of organizations in the neighbourhood**, e.g., museums, science centres, libraries, and churches. They organize excursions and visits to these learning environments outside the school with the pupils during different lessons.

We had the topic on birds. . . . It was a kind of a multi-disciplinary topic. We also visited a guided workshop [at the science centre], which was very interesting, motivating, refreshing, and versatile in educational terms (cognitively, socio-emotionally, and psychomotorically). Very educative for the pupils. An absolute gem of the day. My contribution was to give educational instruction and keep pupils focused (Diary, T1, 2015).

The culture at the research school seems rather collaborative. The teachers avoid working alone but rather form a multi-agency network, which involves pupils, parents, and other professionals.

5.2.4. EDUCATIONAL INTERACTION OF PUPILS' PARENTS: FINNISH CASE

Outi Kyrö-Ämmälä, Suvi Lakkala

Ways of communication between teachers and parents. According to parents' and teachers' interviews (Classes A and B), their communication mainly takes place via text messages, phone calls, and the electronic communication application called *Wilma*. Wilma is widely used in Finnish schools. Parents and older pupils receive information on various matters, including absence from school, forgotten homework, and grades. Recently, positive feedback entries have also been enabled via Wilma. In addition to ready-made templates, parents and teachers can compose and send individualized messages via Wilma.

> *Parent: Well, we communicate in many ways, mostly via Wilma. We call, we send text messages. And we also meet face-to-face (Interview, Parent 7B).*

A common way of communicating is face-to-face encounters that take place once or twice a year; however, more meetings are arranged if need arises to discuss constructive support for the pupil's studies, etc. Moreover, parents meet teachers and other parents twice a year at parents' evenings. The parents fail to meet the teachers frequently as they seldom pick their children up from school in person.

> *Teacher: I arrange "reading celebrations" [for the first graders] and a Christmas party with pupils and parents. . . . They raise the community spirit (Interview, T1).*

In the course of the school year, several joint happenings might be organized, allowing the parents to meet other parents as well as the school staff.

> *Teacher: We have a Christmas gathering of our class at the end of the autumn term. There, we have a kind of a workshop, where we [parents, pupils, and the teacher] work together. There, the parents can also establish relationships with each other. The parents have also organized a bazaar, flea markets, in the school yard a few times but not very often. We have also had the school parents' committee, but now it is no longer functioning (Interview, T1).*

Issues of communication between teachers and parents. Communication between parents and teachers mostly serves for basic information purposes, such as reporting on the pupils' absences or coming to school late. The parents feel that it is important to inform teachers if their children have had a poor night's sleep or are facing other problems. The parents and teachers discuss the pupils' learning, the best ways of studying, and the overall state of well-being at school. What is more, the teachers in research classes might seek advice from the parents in cases of problems with the pupils' school-related matters. Conflicts and relationships with classmates are issues the parents and teachers co-operate on. Apparently, the teachers consider these issues to be the main ones calling for co-operation (Interviews, T1 and T2).

> Parent: We have had requests for co-operation, for example, "Can we think of a solution to this problem together?" Or, she has given us a tip on how to solve a certain problem [concerning the child]. Then, I answered and explained to her what we had done (Interview, Parent 16A).
>
> Parent: Well, simply, things such as how everything is going at school, how the child is doing in different subjects, how it is going with the class mates (Interview, Parent 7B).
>
> Parent: Same here. Especially if we have some special needs and wishes, she has taken them so well into account (Interview, Parent 4B).

Teachers' attitude and ways of working with parents. The teachers' attitude seems to play a crucial role in co-operation with the parents. The parents emphasize the teachers' attitudes towards teaching, the pupils, and them. The teachers use positive pedagogy and, particularly, promote positive feedback, which results in the pupils' attitudes towards school and learning developing in an optimistic way.

The parents stated, based on their previous experiences, that the teachers' typical feedback via Wilma is negative; for example, teachers may mainly report that a pupil has forgotten to do homework or arrived to the lesson late. However, the two teachers who participated in this research are sensitive; therefore, they concentrate on the positive issues and are willing to share them with the parents. To the parents, the meaning of positive feedback in the learning process goes without saying: the more compliments their children receive, the better are the learning outcomes. While negative feedback renders learning uninspiring both for the parents and the pupils.

> Parent: From the teacher, we receive specifically positive feedback, which we can also share with the child. And that helps to increase [individual]

> *self-respect and brings the feeling of success, but it also improves the community spirit in the classroom (Interview, Parent 13A).*
>
> *Parent: I think she listens very carefully and takes the parents' wishes into account (Interview, Parent 7B).*
>
> *Last Thursday, we had a meeting with Pupil X's mother. . . . We started documenting X's successes this week (Diary, T2, 2015).*

Parents bring out the teacher's attitude towards the parents as educators; the teacher's and the parents' educational partnership, to be precise. The teachers in this study tend to ask for advice or make requests for co-operation, propose solutions or meetings, listen to the parents and respond to the parents' suggestions or requests. The teachers respect the parents as experts of their own children, and have confidence in their parenting: *"And then the parent is the expert of their domestic affairs. I'm the expert of the school affairs. . . . That way, the parents dare to say everything as it is"* (Interview, T2). The teachers and the parents raise and educate the child together.

> *Parent: And if there has been something [a conflict], the teacher asks us to discuss the matter at home too. So, the same kind of conversation takes place at school, and also at home. The impact of the discussion is stronger, with conversations happening in both settings (Interview, Parent 2A).*
>
> *Parent: Our child's problem is that he does not remember his homework. It is a challenge, and as a matter of fact, I suggested that we should introduce "a homework booklet", to register his homework. At first, it was the teacher to mark what was assigned for homework, but now the child marks it himself (Interview, Parent 3A).*
>
> *I met Pupil Y's parents. . . . The parents participated in the conversation by encouraging their child. . . . They gave him good examples of situations where listening competences are needed (Diary, T2, 2015).*

The teachers try to avoid stigmatizing the pupils who have social problems. They listen carefully to the pupils' stories in order to be able to act fair to everyone, especially if parents contact them. Sometimes, parents might display strong reactions, for example, in cases of friendship-related conflicts.

> *Teacher: Really, I had to ask the headmaster if the parents were allowed to prohibit the pupils' being together even outside the lessons (Interview, T2).*

The teachers can also ask parents to evaluate their child. Thus, the teachers demonstrate respect for the parents, and appreciation of them as co-educators.

> *I sent parents a "fluent reader" booklet and asked them to comment and evaluate their child as a reader on Wilma (Diary, T1, 2015).*

The teachers are flexible in co-operation with the parents. They listen to the parents, negotiate with them, and may change their instructions according to the children's or parents' requests or suggestions.

> *Parent [of the child to whom a lot of pages of homework have been assigned]: Even I started worrying that we would have to do the homework all night long but my smart boy asked the teacher if the instruction was correct, and the teacher changed the number of pages. So, we reached a compromise (Interview, Parent 14A).*

The parents also mentioned the teacher's response time as significant. The teacher contacting the parents quickly is appreciated, for example, following a conflict situation. It is also important that the teacher responds rapidly to any request sent by the parents. However, the parents should not expect the teachers to work round the clock.

> *Parent: One more thing about our teacher: she reacts really fast to the messages sent via Wilma, and also to the children's or their families' wishes and needs. She answers quickly and also takes action on the matter. I think the teacher should go to sleep earlier (laughing) (Interview, Parent 5A).*

Usually, the parents are willing to participate in the school activities and meetings they are invited to; however, should the information regarding the events reach the parents late, they might be prevented from coming due to time restrictions.

> *Parent: I wish the school informed us about common events earlier, not only one week in advance. In these situations [being informed too late], I cannot participate, though I would like to, because of other plans (Interview, Parent 2A).*

Sometimes, obstacles emerge in the co-operation between home and school. Co-operation requires commitment from both sides: the teacher and the parents. However, in certain cases, the parents lack interest in their child's schooling, or have negative attitude towards the school. In these cases, the teacher must work alone.

> *Sometimes, helping the child is very hard and demanding, especially when there is no support coming from home (Diary, T1, 2015).*

Co-operation among other staff members and the parents. The parents enjoy help from other members of the school staff, too. Among them, the parents mentioned

special education teachers, the resource teacher (working as a co-teacher in the classes), sports teachers, English teachers, school assistants, the school nurse, and the headmaster. The parents express desire to be able to meet the other staff members more often, for example, at the parents' evenings. The communication with subject teachers is informative, and the parents also have opportunities to co-operate with special education and resource teachers. Leastways, they are well aware of the staff's roles as their child's supporters at school.

> *Parent: They [special education teachers and resource teacher] have helped with the child's studies. It is obvious that, when there are a lot of pupils, they can study in smaller groups [there are two teachers in one class] (Interview, Parent 3B).*
>
> *Parent: Well, if there was a possibility to meet the other staff at parents' evenings according to who is working with your child . . . You never meet them [the other teachers] (Interview, Parent 2A).*
>
> *We had a meeting with Pupil A's mother, special education teacher, the psychologist, and the social worker from the family counselling office (Diary, T2, 2015).*
>
> *Last year . . . we used to often have meetings with the parents and the school social worker. I had also joined the meetings with the child protection social worker. . . . This year he [the pupil] enjoys coming to school. The parents are happy that the studies go smoothly at last, after all those behaviour-related difficulties (Diary, T2, 2015).*

The communication between the parents and the teachers primarily concerns basic school and instructional information. However, when it comes to difficulties with a child's learning or going to school, the teachers negotiate with the parents, and they make common decisions.

5.2.5. THE CENTRAL ELEMENTS IN THE LEARNING-TEACHING APPROACH AIMING TOWARD INCLUSION

Suvi Lakkala, Outi Kyrö-Ämmälä

Pedagogical observation and continuous assessment. The teachers create and change the learning environments in a flexible manner, according to the pupils' behaviours or needs. This process can be referred to as pedagogical observation with continuous assessment. The teachers observe the pupils during the lessons, and make decisions regarding the learning processes on the basis of their own perceptions. They also use the observations by other adults, e.g., special education teachers, school assistants, and other professionals (see more in Chapter 5.2.3.), and they negotiate with the pupils and their parents (see more in Chapter 5.2.5.).

> *I assess how the school day (learning) progresses during lessons, and I come to spontaneous, flexible solutions (based on my own assessment and pedagogical views, as well as on what I have learned about the pupil) in accordance with what the situation requires, without planning. I also evaluate, think more, and develop the process further, peacefully, after the school day. I make notes on Wilma, on the calendar, on post-it notes, and in the design booklet. I think you have to know your pupils well and also observe the pupils for the assessment and the development work. The (pedagogical) observation takes a very big role in teachers' work (Diary, T1, 2015).*
>
> *After the lesson, we had a feedback discussion [with the student teacher]. We agreed that working in pairs would have been a better method (Diary, T2, 2015).*

Differentiation and individualization. The teachers treat all pupils with deep respect and observe their learning and behaviour. The teachers differentiate the learning circumstances on the basis of pupils' needs. Differentiation embraces the pupil as a person in his or her entirety. The teachers create the learning environments by considering the cognitive, social, and emotional elements of individual pupils as well as the classroom community. Social and emotional elements are discussed in Chapters 5.2.2 and 5.2.3 respectively.

The teachers employ the concept of the proximal zone of development while they plan the tasks. The pupils' studies are always planned at the level of their cognitive skills as the pupils have various cognitive skills, in spite of their similar chronological age. The pupils' cognitive skills determine, in part, their ability to gather and take in information, process it, and produce new knowledge in the learning situations. These processes form a complex whole, the crucial components of which include attention to detail, reasoning, and planning one's own behaviour and studies. The pupils' previous skills and the development of their cognitive skills form the basis for further learning. The teachers use flexible groupings and vary the intensity of their instruction. In some cases, peers can help each other, and sometimes the pupils need a supervising mentor.

> *Station work with three stations contributed to reading comprehension. At two stations, there were teachers (the class teacher and special education teacher), the pupils trained their skills at the zone of proximal development, and autonomous training and easy tasks were given at the remaining station. Groups are split on the basis of skill level (the reading groups). At the beginning of the academic year, I built the groups on the basis of learning style. This division resulted in more work to me because of material preparation. . . . After the station work, the pupils quiet down to continue the next lesson (Biology) at their own desks. The pupils are able to listen carefully after the functional station work. I also use lots of pictures to stimulate and maintain their motivation, especially for visual learners (Diary, T1, 2015).*
>
> *The pupils can use different specific tools and instruments [during Maths lesson]. Most of the pupils get "a hundred board" and work with it. Some pupils do not need specific tools anymore; they can do Maths exercises without them (Observation, Class A).*

The teachers vary their teaching methods, exercises, materials, tasks, homework, and the time used for studying. The pupils' exercises vary in their degree of difficulty. They may be executed by using concrete material, by writing, drawing, explaining, etc. The outputs may differ greatly since they are based on the pupils' existing competences. The pupils may demonstrate their skills and knowledge in various ways; for example, they may do their tests verbally.

> *The teacher has produced "magic things" for some pupils: she prepared the tasks so that everyone had a suitable exercise. . . . The teacher gave each*

pupil personalized homework, after which the pupils could have a break (Observation, Class A).

Some of the pupils did the basic exercises easily, and they moved on to problem-solving exercises independently. With a few slowly progressing pupils, we divided the Maths exercises into parts and didn't rush. For some pupils, the verbal Maths exercises are scary. Chopping the exercise into parts, highlighting the key words, changing the names to familiar ones, and visualizing make the understanding a little easier (Diary, T2, 2015).

The booklets were made for fathers, grandfathers, uncles, mothers, or grandmothers depending on each pupil's family composition. When Pupil A was ready, some of the pupils were still working on their first page (Diary, T2, 2015).

The lively and talkative pupils come to me now and then and ask for some advice, instead of raising their hands. I think that by doing this, they stimulate their concentration (Diary, T2, 2015).

With one pupil, we have agreed that she would do her English word tests orally because of her dyslexia. It is incredible what high marks she started to get after that. Her motivation has risen remarkably (Diary, T2, 2015).

Pupil B [a very talented pupil] has brought three Rubik's cubes to school. He can solve them when he has spare time [during lessons]. . . . The others do not envy them, and Pupil B has allowed others to try them, too. The cubes have inspired him to work on other school tasks better (Diary, T2, 2015).

Enhancing pupils' metacognitive skills. The teachers need to have an understanding of the pupils' metacognitive skills and teach them alongside cognitive skills since metacognitive skills are important in the learning processes. Metacognition refers to "thinking about thinking", or knowledge about when and how to use particular strategies for learning. The teachers teach in the way that the pupils' problem-solving processes are made visible. Thus, the pupils become aware of the importance of reasoning, not only guessing the right answers.

We started the Maths lesson with a problem-solving exercise, where the pupils had to choose the right option in a sequence. . . . After some pupils had solved the problem and discovered the pattern, the exercise opened up for the others, too (Diary, T2, 2015).

> *Teacher: They often ask [the teacher] "Let me choose…", "Can I work with… ", but then again, we always discuss about when it is good to involve the best friend and when it might be easier to work without the best friend being in the [same] group (Interview, T1).*

Metacognitive skills develop when the pupils, for example, assess themselves as learners. The pupils may set personal learning goals during the school year, or in tripartite meetings involving the pupil, the parents, and the teachers.

> *The school day begins in the same way every morning: the structure of the day helps the pupils to organize their working. At the same time, the pupils learn the meaning of structure as a metacognitive skill: they learn to plan their actions (Observation, Class A).*
>
> *After working together, the teacher asks the pupils to do self-assessment: How did the group work go? What was your own contribution to the joint task? Was it easy to work together? Why is it important to follow the instructions? (Observation, Class A).*
>
> *Today, we celebrated the Day of Learning Skill. We also talked about learning skills: What kind of learners are we? . . . We made personal goals and also thought about "What am I good at?" and "What should I practice more?" (Diary, T1, 2015).*
>
> *Teacher: [With the pupils] we have managed to observe and analyse what goes well, and why [in some learning situations] (Interview, T1).*

Organizational arrangements. There are many elements that enhance the individualization of pupils' studies. The essential characteristics of the arrangements are flexibility and their tempory nature. The adults negotiate together and find flexible and agile solutions to support the pupils in their everyday school life. The arrangements may be determined by the number of adults in the class, or the composition of the group. Moreover, the teachers can use multi-age grouping, or they can teach several of the pupils in heterogeneous or ability-based groups a couple of hours per week. Sometimes, the teachers negotiate with the co-teachers during the lesson, and some pupils may change groups for a while if they need a more peaceful atmosphere or more support for their studies. Occasionally, some pupils may need a rehabilitative period of learning, and they can study in a smaller group for a certain number of lessons. At school, there is also a homework club for instructed homework-doing. In addition, there are various clubs, such as sports, art and handicraft clubs, to support the pupils' leisure time.

On Mondays, there are two teachers present in the Finnish lesson. It's great because this way we can differentiate the teaching both for the lower and higher levels. Two adults can organize appropriate support more easily than one adult could (Diary, T1, 2015).

In the English lesson with the co-teacher, we usually use the flexible grouping method. This time, the co-teacher taught the ones who needed repetition (Diary, T2, 2015).

Differentiation is implemented efficiently when I teach only half of the group (ten pupils). I have deliberately formed the groups so that the pupils with special needs were in one group, and the talented ones were in the other group, just for the purpose of efficient and effective (fruitful) teaching (Diary, T1, 2015).

The pupil asked permission to work in another room. I gave her the permission (Diary, T2, 2015).

In the sports lesson, we were together with the sixth grade. We built the gymnastics track together with the pupils and the other teacher. After the lesson, we discussed with the other teacher that both the classes benefit from the co-operation. The older ones had to pay attention to the younger ones, and they served as role models for the younger ones. The younger ones admired the skills of the older pupils, and they tried to behave (Diary, T2, 2015).

In the negotiations with Pupil V's parents, the headmaster, and the special education teacher, we agreed that part of the time during the school week, Pupil V would study in the flexible, small group. The situation calmed down remarkably. Pupil V has time to study in peace. He gets personal support immediately in the small group. In the class with the classmates, things are going much better now (Diary, T2, 2015).

Finnish lesson: Pupil A and Pupil B study with Teacher 2 (special education teacher). They sit around the table in the back of the classroom. Pupil C leaves the classroom for the flexible, small group with Teacher 3 (special education teacher). Teacher 1 (class teacher) teaches the rest of the group (Observation, Class A).

The differentiation is smoother if the teachers work with each other or, for example, with the school assistants. When working alone, the teachers might experience the sense of inadequacy: *When Pupil A [a pupil who needs special support] is in my lesson,*

and I work alone, I find myself inadequate. For example, I can't use station work or other autonomous working methods because Pupil A would need control and guidance at all stations, and I could only teach at one station (Diary, T1, 2015).

Participation and engagement. The pupils' commitment to decision-making enhances the engagement with learning community and that of their class. When the pupils can influence their own matters, their sense of responsibility increases, and they may approve of their obligations more easily than when told what to do by someone else. The pupils may choose between different ways of studying, diverse exercises and homework, and they can influence where and how long they study certain topics.

> *The teacher marks homework for the pupils. Pupil A complains about the homework. The teacher lets him decide between two optional tasks. He selects one of them and marks it, puts the book to his school bag, and leaves for the break (Observation, Class A).*
>
> *I met Pupil X and his parents. . . . He set the goals of improving in the Finnish language and self-containment in conflict situations. The meeting was good. Pupil X talked a lot, and together we tried to figure out solutions to his problems with schoolmates (Diary, T2, 2015).*

The instructions are not absolute; they can be adapted. The teachers instruct the pupils to amend the tasks by themselves, if needed. Sometimes, they prioritize participation, instead of curricular goals, in order to support the pupils' positive self-image.

> *Pairs are working intensively; some pupils differentiate independently, and cover the page that has the answers. In that way, they make the task more difficult, and also more appropriate for themselves (Observation, Class A).*
>
> *The pupils whose main strength is creativity differ [in their outputs] the most from the instructions. The instructions purely help to awaken their imagination, and they enjoy finding their own solutions. All the pupils made their own kinds of greeting cards, appropriate for their father or their family only (Diary, T2, 2015).*
>
> *During the handicraft lesson: The teacher asks Pupil Y to arrange and group buttons instead of doing his handicraft. Later, she asks Pupil X and Pupil Z to help him. Pupils are enthusiastic about the task. However, Pupil Y's handicraft does not progress during the whole lesson but maybe it is not the most important thing? (Observation, Class A).*

The teachers' positive ways of treating the pupils increase the pupils' engagement in their learning processes and the classroom community. The teachers' manner of talking to the pupils, respect for their subjectivity, giving feedback, and building on the pupils' strengths, as well as the teachers' way of seeking solutions in conflict situations, all serve to promote the pupils' engagement.

> *Pupil A is reluctant to finish the exercise at the autonomous station, although he should move on with the others. He is stuck at the desk. The teacher says, "It's great that you are so enthusiastic about this exercise. Guess what? We will continue this later today. But still, now you have to move to the next station". And, the pupil moves on . . . (Observation, Class A).*

> *Because Pupils M and N see and hear everything that happens, I asked them to observe and report on the positive things they perceive around them (Diary, T2, 2015).*

The teachers can use positive reinforcement when they do not want to deny or blame the pupils whose behaviour is not so desirable directly. In these cases, the teachers may praise the pupils who behave well instead.

> *Some pupils are talking quite loudly. The teacher ignores them, and says to the other pupil, "It's wonderful how quietly, independently, and creatively you can work" (Observation, Class A).*

First of all, the learning-teaching approach constitutes organizational elements that emerge smoothly in daily discussions and collaboration with different actors. The arrangements and solutions are based on the teachers' and other professionals' pedagogical observations; furthermore, parents and children are engaged as well. The pedagogy is built on each child's individual level of cognitive skills, leading to learning differentiation and metacognitive skills development. However, the teachers would like to have more resources for their work; mainly, they wish to have more partners to share the teaching responsibilities with.

5.2.6. EXPLORING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION OF THE FINNISH SCHOOL CASE: SUMMING UP AND CONCLUSIONS

Suvi Lakkala, Outi Kyrö-Ämmälä

The ontological basis of inclusive education lies in the social model of disabilities, which highlights the characteristics of the environment, school community, or the whole society as determinants of the individuals' possibilities to participate and lead a full-bodied life in society (Peters, 2007). Booth and Ainscow (2002) have determined the indexes of inclusion at school. The researchers argue that inclusive education consists of three levels: inclusive culture, policies, and practices. Also, our research results show that inclusive education cannot be reached by a single teacher, but it demands collaboration among adults, both professionals and parents, and, above all, collaboration with and appreciation of the pupils. According to our research findings, inclusive education is a complex combination, containing elements that cover the pupils' whole personality, rather than just the cognitive goals traditionally seen as the main task of schools (cf. Skidmore, 2004).

Concerning the social and socio-psychological elements, it has been shown by many researchers that teachers' warmth and supportiveness have positive influence on the school climate, learning processes, academic outcomes, and non-conflictual relationships in the classroom (Buyse et al., 2008; Hattie, 2009; La Russo et al., 2008; Mc Donald et al., 2005). Recently, the importance of positive relationships in the classroom has been identified, for example, by Kiuru, Aunola and Lerkkanen (2015) who suggest, based on their findings, that a warm and supportive teacher can increase a pupil's peer acceptance, which, in turn, is positively linked to their learning outcomes. In the two classes in our research, the teachers and pupils appeared to see the pupils' group as an important social community. The teachers made a substantial effort to strengthen the classroom community by organizing social activities, enhancing social skills, having interactive ethical discussions, and composing socially workable teams in the classroom. Their goals included empowering the pupils and teaching them appreciation of diversity. They also paid attention to pupils as individuals. The teachers talked to and approached the pupils in an encouraging way. They showed affection toward the pupils, especially when the pupils misbehaved and needed support. The teachers made the pupils feel important and appreciated. They were very sensitive

when listening to the pupils' worries and negotiating with them. Through this, the teachers engaged the pupils in learning situations and the classroom community. Furthermore, Cooper and McIntyre's (1996) research revealed that supportive social context helped the pupils feel emotional security and engage in their academic studies better.

In schools, inclusive education is implemented through a curriculum adaptation for diverse learners (Lakkala & Määttä, 2011; Rose & Meyer, 2002). Based on the paradigm of inclusive pedagogies, Universal Design for Instruction (UDI) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) have been designed by McGuire, Scott, and Shaw (2006). They are based on inclusive classroom instruction and highlight the non-placement of education. The three principles of UDL are as follows: 1) multiple teaching methods that give learners a variety of ways to gain information and construct knowledge; 2) multiple means of pupil action and expression that provide learners with alternatives for representing what they have learned; and 3) multiple modes of pupil engagement that comply with the learners' interests, challenge them, and motivate them to learn. (McGuire, Scott & Shaw, 2006).

In the research classes, the basis of the educational element (learning-teaching approach) was created by the teachers' continuous observation and assessment (e.g., Tomlinson & Moon, 2013). In addition to cognitive skills, their assessments covered social and socio-psychological elements as well. The teachers applied the social-constructivist learning conception (cf. Kugelmass, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978), and constructed flexible learning environments referring to their pedagogical analysis.

The teachers' role is to support the learning process via mediated teaching (Hadzi, 2000; Haywood & Burns, 1990). The teachers in the research classes varied their teaching methods from scaffolding and co-operative learning to instructing the whole class. Lakkala and Määttä (2011) noted that by varying the teachers' intensity of instruction and the pupils' autonomy, different kinds of teaching methods can be arranged. This way, the pupils' studies are planned according to the level of their cognitive skills, as was the case in the research classes. To enable the differentiation of the pupils' studies, while planning the tasks, the teachers employed the concept of the proximal zone of development (cf. Tomlinson & Moon, 2013; Vygotsky, 1978). The exercises, as well as the outputs, were differentiated according to the pupils' current cognitive levels (e.g., Florian & Linklater, 2010; Tomlinson, 2005). In the research classes, the teaching of metacognitive skills was the major focus. According to Kyrö-Ämmälä and Määttä's (2011) research, by teaching in the way where the pupils'

problem-solving processes are made visible, for example, by verbalizing, the pupils gain awareness of their thinking processes, and learning skills are enhanced (see also Gillies & Boyle, 2008).

Finally, the goals of inclusive teaching include removing the obstacles of learning, strengthening the pupils' participation, and engaging the pupils in their own learning community in the manner that provides them with opportunities to contribute to decision-making and to develop competences for constructing their own lives (e.g., Forlin, 2010; Spratt & Florian, 2015). The elements of inclusive education in this research are summarized in Figure 21.
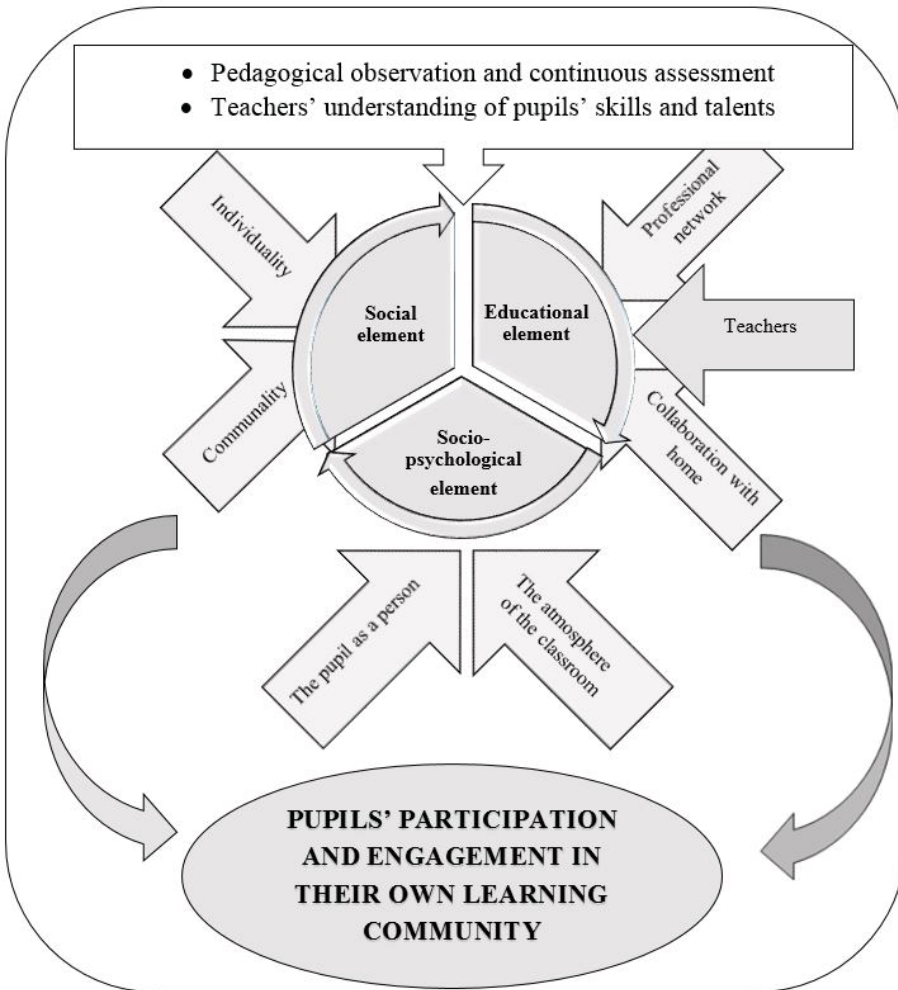
Figure 21. Core elements of inclusive teaching in the Finnish research classes.

However, earlier research have highlighted problems related to the concept of inclusive education. It is argued that the vision of full inclusion is unachievable and vague because, in practice, not *all* children can be educated in mainstream classrooms (Evans & Lunt, 2002; Hansen, 2012). The implementation of inclusive education was not trouble-free in the research classes either. One cannot argue that "full inclusion" had been achieved in the research classes. That would not be possible even within the Finnish education system, where special education classes and schools still exist, although they have been reduced in number (Jahnukainen, 2015; Kivirauma & Ruoho, 2007). In the research classes, the pupils experienced disputes and disagreements. Some of the pupils' social difficulties caused upsetting situations both to themselves and their peers. Still, most of the pupils were willing to help everyone with their studies even if they did not refer to the socially unskillful peers as their friends. This finding lead to the conclusion that the teachers had managed to mould circumstances that enriched the pupils' attitudes to the point of being more tolerant and appreciative toward diverse people. Nevertheless, negative situations of the pupils with social difficulties could not be avoided; on the other hand, however, their peers' feedback on their behaviour was realistic. The pupils grew up in a social community where the social relationships were brought to light and shown as skills to be acquired. Besides the cognitive goals, the relationships were brought to a conversational platform that developed the pupils' conversational and social skills. Similar to our results, Jordan and Stanovich (2001) have reported that teachers' caring and appreciative attitudes increased their pupils' positive self-image and the atmosphere in the class.

For some pupils, education in the research classes was not executed entirely in one group. The adults, parents, and pupils had to negotiate and come up with arrangements that allowed studies partly in the pupil's own home class and partly in the flexible small group. These practices varied from single temporary lessons and two lessons per week to half of the lessons per week. In the home classes, the teachers used various flexible grouping arrangements during the day, depending on the subject or the number of adults available. Also, some pupils' speech and occupational therapists visited them in the course of the school day. No stigmatizing or exclusionary attitudes could be detected concerning children with learning difficulties in the classes. As a conclusion, we suggest that, although the concept of "full inclusion" has not yet been defined for schools, in the meanwhile, educating the pupils to value diversity enhances equality and socially sustainable education for the future. The solutions were produced by collaborative negotiations at school, and in co-operation with pupils and

their parents. Apparently, collaboration skills are a prerequisite of an inclusive teacher, and, in previous research, co-operative skills and willingness to collaborate have been identified as characteristic features of an inclusive teacher (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2010; Florian & Spratt, 2013; Malinen & Savolainen, 2012).

In Lakkala et al.'s (2014) research, the Finnish teachers highlighted that the requirements of successful inclusive arrangements are the teachers' appreciation for people with diverse needs, and access to easily adaptable ways of supporting the pupils' changing needs during the school year. The analysis of the inclusive elements in the teaching implemented in the two research classes, brought forward the following four characteristics: 1) attention is paid to generating *positive and tolerant attitudes towards diversity,* i.e. inclusive values; 2) the teaching is highly *pupil-oriented*; 3) the teachers produce *flexible and agile solutions* for distinct learning environments; and, finally, 4) all this is achieved through *collaboration* among teachers, pupils, parents, and other professionals. The analysis of the characteristics of the inclusive education implemented in the research classes is presented in Figure 22, with the main contents described under each topic.
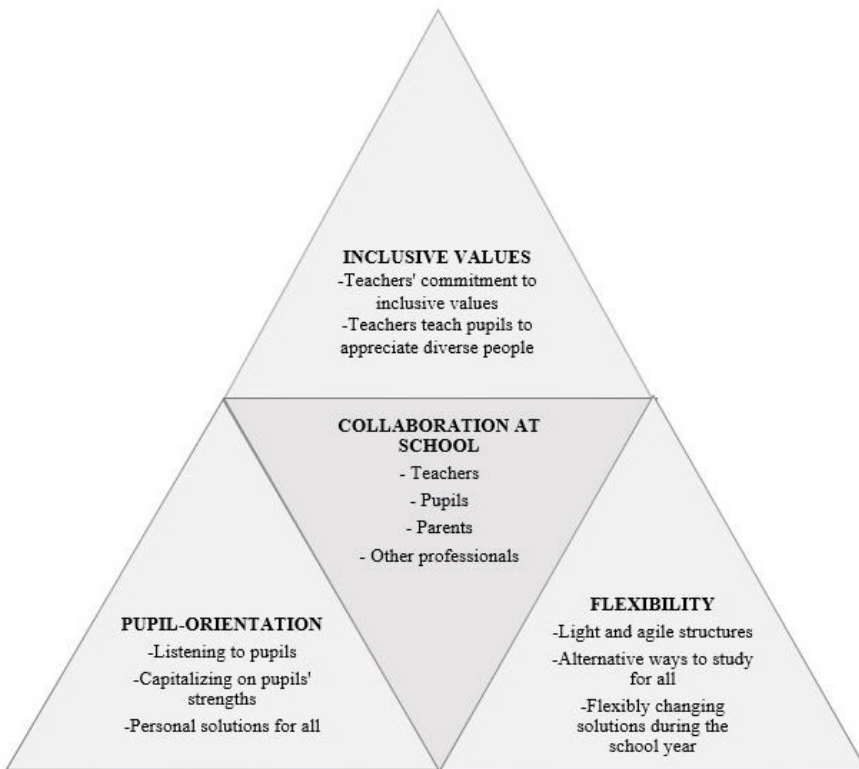
Figure 22. The analysis of the characteristics of inclusive education in Finnish research classes.

As shown in Figure 22, the heart of inclusive education is collaboration. The two teachers in this research acted as reflective practitioners (e.g., Jay & Johnson, 2002). They showed ability to analyse their work and change their goals by assessing and negotiating. Otherwise, inclusive conditions cannot be achieved. Moreover, if the school system is based on segregated services and settings, and the teachers have to work alone, they have to resort to much stricter structures, where the children are the ones sent to different environments. Through collaboration, a system of flexible support can be built, and the social communities of children can be sustained.

For further research, it would be interesting to explore inclusive teachers' professional identity formation, attitudes, and values, since they seem to reflect the way the teachers implement their teaching in practice (cf. Levin & He, 2008). The student teachers' formation based on practical theory is highlighted in Finnish teacher training programs, and the support of student teachers' reflective skills during teacher training is found to have a progressive impact on their professional development (Körkkö, Kyrö-Ämmälä & Turunen, 2016).

The goal of full inclusion remains to be achieved, but the characteristics that drive our society toward more equal and tolerant communities can be detected. According to Slee (2014), the aim of inclusive education research is to identify and analyse segregating and stigmatizing structures and practices, since schools are formed through various institutional practices. In a way, this could be considered as the goal of an inclusive teacher, too. That would demand educating teachers to be reflective practitioners able to analyse and improve their own work guided by inclusive values.

REFERENCES

Buyse, E., Verschueren, K., Doumen, S., Van Damme, J. & Maes, F. (2008). Classroom problem behavior and teacher-child relationships in kindergarten: The moderating role of classroom climate. *Journal of School Psychology, 46*(4), pp. 367-391.

Cooper, P. & McIntyre, D. (1996). *Effective teaching and learning: Teachers' and students' perspectives.* Open University Press: Milton Keynes.

Evans, J. & Lunt, I. (2002). Inclusive education: Are there limits? *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 17, (1), pp. 1-14.

Feuerstein, R. & Feuerstein, S. (1991). Mediated learning experience. In: R. Feuerstein, P. S. Klein & A. J. Tannenbaum (Eds.) *Mediated learning experience. Theoretical, psychological, and learning implications,* London: Freund Publishing House Ltd., pp. 3–51.

Florian, L. & Black-Hawkins, K. (2010). Exploring inclusive pedagogy. *British Educational Research Journal, 37*(5), pp. 813-828.

Florian, L. & Linklater, H. (2010). Preparing teachers for inclusive education: Using inclusive pedagogy to enhance teaching and learning for all. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 40*(4), pp. 369-386.

Florian, L. & Spratt, J. (2013). Enacting inclusion: a framework for interrogating inclusive practice. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 28*(2), pp. 119-135.

Forlin, C. (2010). Teacher education for inclusion. In R. Rose (Ed.) *Confronting obstacles to inclusion. International responses to developing inclusive education,* Abingdon, UK: Routledge, pp. 155-170.

Gillies, R. M. & Boyle, M. (2008). Teachers' discourse during co-operative learning and their perceptions of this pedagogical practice. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 24*(5), pp. 1333-1348.

Hadji, C. (2000). Science, pedagogy and ethics in Feuerstein's theory and applications. In: A. Kozulin & Y. Rand (Eds.) *Experience of Mediated Learning. An Impact of Feuerstein's Theory in Education and Psychology,* Amsterdam: Earli Pergamon, pp. 21-33.

Hansen, J. H. (2012). Limits to inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 36*(4), pp. 186-205.

Hattie, J. (2009). Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses related to achievement. London, UK: Routledge.

Haywood, H. C. & Brown, A. L. (1990). Dynamic approaches to psycho educational assessment. *School Psychology Review*, *19*(4), pp. 1–12.

Jahnukainen, M. (2015). Inclusion, integration, or what? A comparative study of the school principals' perceptions of inclusive and special education in Finland and in Canada. *Disability & Society, 30*(5), pp. 59–72.

Jay, J. K. & Johnson, K. L. (2002). Capturing complexity: a typology of reflective practice for teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *18*(1), pp. 73-85.

Jordan, A. & Stanovich, P. (2001). Pattern of teacher-student interaction in inclusive elementary classrooms and correlates with student self-concept. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, *48*(1), pp. 33–52.

Kivirauma, J. & Ruoho, K. (2007). Excellence through special education? Lessons from the Finnish school reform, *International Review of Education, 53*(3), pp. 283-302.

Kugelmass, J., W. (2007). Constructivist views of learning: implications for inclusive education. In: L. Florian (Ed.) *The SAGE Handbook of Special Education,* London: Sage, pp. 272–279.

Kyrö-Ämmälä, O. & Määttä, K. (2011). Towards a practical framework of the remediation of cognitive skills at primary level. *World Journal of Education, 1*(1), pp. 28–39.

Körkkö, M., Kyrö-Ämmälä, O. & Turunen, T. (2016). Professional development through reflection in teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 55*, pp. 198-206.

Lakkala, S. & Määttä, K. (2011). Toward a theoretical model of inclusive teaching strategies – an action research in an inclusive elementary class. *Global Journal of Human Social Science*, *11*(8), Version 1.0, pp. 30–40.

Lakkala, S., Uusiautti, S. & Määttä, K. (2014). How to make the neighbourhood school a school for all. Finnish teachers' perceptions of educational reform aiming towards inclusion. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*. DOI: 10.1111/1471-3802.12055

La Russo, M. D., Romer, D. & Selman, R. L. (2008). Teachers as builders of respectful school climates: Implications for adolescent drug use norms and depressive symptoms in high school. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 37*(4), pp. 386-398.

Levin, B. & He, Y. (2008). Investigating the content and sources of teacher candidates' personal practical theories (ppts). *Journal of Teacher Education*, *59*(1), pp. 55-68.

Malinen, O. P. & Savolainen, H. (2012). The directions of Finnish teacher education in the era of the revised Act on Basic Education. In C. Forlin (Ed.), *Future directions for inclusive teacher education. An international perspective* Abingdon, UK: Routledge, pp. 52-60.

McDonald Connor, C., Son, S., Hindman, A. H. & Morrison, F. J. (2005). Teacher qualifications, classroom practices, family characteristics, and preschool experience: Complex effects on first graders' vocabulary and early reading outcomes. *Journal of School Psychology, 43*(4), pp. 343-375.

McGuire, J. M., Scott, S. S. & Shaw, S. F. (2006). Universal Design and its applications in educational environments. *Remedial and Special Education, 27*(3), pp. 166–175.

Rose, H. D. & Meyer, A. (2002). *Teaching every student in the digital age: Universal design for learning.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD Member Book.

Skidmore, D. (2004.) *Inclusion: The dynamics of school development.* Cornwall, UK: Open University Press.

Slee, R. (2014). Inclusive schooling as an apprenticeship in democracy? In L. Florian (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of special education* London, UK: Sage, pp. 217–229.

Spratt, J. & Florian, L. (2015). Inclusive pedagogy: From learning to action. Supporting each individual in the context of "everybody". *Teaching and Teacher Education, 49*, pp. 89-96.

Tomlinson, C. A. & Moon, T. A. (2013). Assessment and student success in a differentiated classroom. Alexandria, VA: ASCD Member Book.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in society.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

5.3. EXPRESSION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: LITHUANIAN SCHOOL CASE

Alvyra Galkienė

Description of research environment and reference codes

Educational environment during the period of the empirical research. Vilnius "Versmės" Catholic Gymnasium, participating in the research, has been implementing inclusive education for over two decades. During the period of the research (2014–2016), regular educational activity was organized in the entire school as well as the classrooms participating in the research. Education here is based on the orientation of the school community towards creating conditions for successful learning and self-realization of every pupil. Pupils with special educational needs received assistance from a special needs teacher, speech therapist, and psychologist. The pupils of the classes participating in the research attended special sessions with a special needs teacher, speech therapist, and art therapy sessions with the psychologist. The psychologist and social pedagogue organized a "Positive Parenthood" course for parents, and provided private consultations for parents and teachers regarding cases of education of specific children. Various informal after-school education activities (groups) are available in the school, which the pupils choose according to their interests and hobbies. The pupils with special educational needs from the classrooms participating in the research attended after-school groups of singing and ceramics. During these activities, the pupils can easily find friends and like-minded pupils. The school maintains a tradition of organizing presentations of various groups or ensuring their involvement in whole-school activities outside the lessons in various other forms, such as Family Feast, St. Casimir's Fair, etc., which provides conditions for the pupils to demonstrate the works they have created, and thus experience the feeling of self-realization and the acknowledgement of the results of their work by the community.

Classroom communities. Two primary education classroom communities participated in the research.

One classroom contains 22 pupils aged nine to ten (11 girls and 11 boys). The classroom includes four pupils with special educational needs resulting from the following: hearing disorder, movement disorder, emotional and behavioural

disorders, and learning disorder. The latter child follows an adapted curriculum. Seven children have no learning difficulties and are bright and creative; however, they have behavioural issues, are prone to conflicts, or have difficulties integrating into the classroom community. The remaining 11 are pupils who learn and build harmonious interpersonal relationships successfully.

The other classroom contains 23 pupils aged ten to eleven (eight girls and 15 boys). The class has one girl of exceptional abilities, who, after graduating from the second grade, was transferred to the fourth grade directly, skipping the third one. The girl studies at a top level. Five children are characterized by particularly high abilities. Some of them have exceptional abilities in specific fields, e. g. Mathematics or the Lithuanian language, or demonstrate high abilities in all areas. Seven pupils in the classroom have learning difficulties of various types. Of those, one pupil has been diagnosed with Pervasive Developmental Disorder, another one has a suspected Asperger syndrome, although it has not yet been diagnosed; yet another pupil has been diagnosed with special educational needs resulting from complex disorder (moderate speech underdevelopment, mathematical learning disorder, and behavioural disorder). In the group of these pupils, six pupils have major behavioural issues. The remaining 10 pupils of the classroom are ordinary pupils with regular abilities, studying successfully.

Teachers. Two female primary education teachers educating the above-mentioned classes took part in the research. Both teachers have vast experience in this school. One of them has been working here since the first year of the establishment of the school. She is an active participant in designing the educational model of the school. The other teacher joined the school activities slightly later, and contributed to the improvement of the educational model with her experience and pedagogical quests.

Pupils' parents. Parents of a total of eight pupils from both classes participated in the research. The parents' group was represented exclusively by mothers. Two families that participated in the research educate children with special educational needs, and six families educate children without special educational needs.

The research data was collected with the help of a unified research tool that was applied in all the participating institutions of the research.

Interviews with teachers provided data on interpersonal relationships among pupils, between pupils and teachers, among teachers working with the pupils, and between teachers and pupils' families, as well as on pedagogical links with the entire school community and institutions outside the school. The teachers of both

classrooms answered the interview questions. During the interviews with pupils, data was collected regarding the pupils' interpersonal relationships. The interview data was collected from teachers and pupils by means of individual conversation. During the interviews with pupils, particular focus was put on creating a cosy and safe environment for the child. The interviews took place in the school, a very familiar environment for the children. Upon request of one girl (the girl is characterised by particular sensitivity), the teacher participated together with her during the interview. The interviews of teachers and pupils were recorded on a voice-recording device. The pupils' parents participated in a group interview, which took place in a specialized room in the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences. Two researchers carried out the interview. An audio recording of the interview was produced. The entire interview material was transcribed and analysed.

Observation was carried out in every classroom, five days in each. The education process was observed before and during the lessons, during the breaks, and after the lessons in the pupils' classroom, corridors, dining room, and the gym. The purpose of the observation was to reveal the characteristics of interpersonal interaction between the pupils as well as pupils and teachers. The observation was performed by psychologists. A protocol agreed upon within the group of researchers was used during the observation. The observation was oriented towards the question "How do the pupils communicate and act meeting the diversity of possibilities and needs in the classroom?" The pupils' behaviour, actions, decisions, moods, and other reactions as well as the teachers' behaviour in specific educational situations were observed.

Sociometric research was carried out in both classrooms participating in the research, with the aim to evaluate the characteristics of the pupils' interpersonal interaction and achieve higher reliability level of research data.

Diaries were kept by the teachers of both classes, during the period of September–December, 2015, meticulously describing the education process, reflecting on and analysing the experience and feelings of their own and those of the pupils, foreseeing and planning educational steps. The diary was kept for one week every month (a total of four weeks). The diaries followed a structure agreed upon within the group of researchers.

Analysing the pupils' interpersonal relationships ensuring inclusive education quality, the principle of triangulation was applied: interviews with pupils and interviews with teachers were analysed, as well as observation and sociometric research data received from different groups of informants.

Ensuring research participants' confidentiality. When interpreting the research data, the respondents are codified. The codes are presented in Table 11.

Table 11. Reference codes: Lithuanian case

TYPE OF DATA	REFERENCE CODE
Teachers' interviews	Interview, T1 Interview, T2 (T = Teacher)
Pupils' interviews in Class A and Class B	Interview, ST 1 (1– 14) ST = Pupil (student)
Parents' interviews	Interview, P (P = Parent)
Observation in Class A and Class B	Observation, Class A Observation, Class B
Teachers' diaries	Diary A Diary B
Sociometric measurements in Class A and Class B	Sociogram A Sociogram B (A = Class A, B = Class B)
Pupil with special needs	ST 1, Sn (Sn – special needs)

All the pupils' names used in the text have been changed and do not correspond to any name of any pupil in any of the classes that participated in the research.

5.3.1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATURAL ACCEPTANCE OF OTHERNESS AND INCLUSION–STIMULATING INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PUPILS

Ona Monkevičienė

Positive interpersonal relationships between pupils carry a dual meaning: they are both a vital aspect of high-quality inclusive education and, at the same time, the result of a successful inclusive education. They cover not only the specific area of social inclusion but also the fundamental processes of the establishment and functioning of an inclusive pupil community learning together. When analysing the socio-psychological aspects facilitating inclusive education and increasing its quality, the expression of pupils' positive interpersonal relationships as well as the creation and self-evolution practices of the latter are treated as a single dynamic process.

The research on the pupils' interpersonal relationships focused on the question "How do the pupils communicate and act meeting the diversity of possibilities and needs in the classroom?" The data analysis allowed the researchers to distinguish several aspects of the development of pupils' interpersonal relationships that encourage inclusiveness, which are given priority in the Lithuanian school that participated in the research.

First aspect: natural acceptance of otherness, oriented towards transformability of the capacity to communicate and learn. The analysis of the rhetoric and meanings observed in pupils' interviews on interpersonal relationships showed that the pupils naturally accept their own otherness and that of others in the classroom.

Pupils with special educational needs speak of their otherness in a natural manner, noticing a positive dynamic evolution of their own possibilities. The rhetoric they employ reveals aspects of the change in one's own abilities to communicate and learn as seen by the pupils. Change of emotional state: from strong anxiety to reduced anxiety. For example, a pupil, when discussing situations when she wished to approach and talk to her friends, says: *"In the second grade I used to be very nervous. . . . How do I address another child? How do I approach them? . . . Because I am rather sensitive. . . . Now I am not that much (nervous)"* (Interview, ST 1, Sn). The girl feels the change in her sense of anxiety; she perceives that her anxiety when communicating with friends has decreased.

Change in interpersonal relationships: from absence of friends to the ability to make friends. The pupil says: *"Earlier, in the first grade, I couldn't make any (friends). . . . I am simply very sensitive. So I couldn't (make friends)."* Teacher: *"She used to feel afraid to approach children"* (Interview, T1). The girl: *"I think I'm already used to it. . . . To my friends. (And) to my classmates."* (Interview, ST 1, Sn). The girl realizes that upon starting school she could not make friends, whereas now she has several friends and is able to communicate with other pupils of the class.

Change in subject learning success: from lack of success to present success. A pupil notes that a subject he had difficulties in is now going more smoothly: *"The worst I am doing in is the Lithuanian language. . . . Well, step by step I'm already getting going"* (Interview, ST 2, Sn).

Change in the results of learning process: from making mistakes to correcting mistakes. A pupil notes the change in the results of her learning process: *"I didn't do well in the Lithuanian language because essays were very difficult. . . . Well, I make mistakes. . . . The teacher spots them and corrects them. . . . Then she explains even more clearly. And then I correct the mistakes myself"* (Interview, ST 6, Sn).

The transformability of one's own abilities observed by the pupils provides them with strong optimism, increases self-respect, and helps to accept one's own otherness with dignity.

Other pupils of the class notice the development of the possibilities of pupils with special educational needs. A female pupil (Interview, ST 6) notes that the behaviour of a boy, which often used to be improper, has improved significantly (change in behaviour: from frequently improper to rarely improper); a male pupil (Interview, ST 4) remembers that a new child in the class had no friends at the beginning and felt uncomfortable, whereas now he has friends and feels comfortable (change in interpersonal relationships: from absence of friends to ability to make friends; change in emotional state: from sense of discomfort to sense of comfort). Seeing the transformability of the possibilities of pupils with special educational needs, other pupils of the class respect them and accept their otherness naturally.

Inclusive pedagogy is based on ***the teacher's belief that the elimination of barriers will result in positive transformation of the abilities of pupils with special educational needs to communicate and learn together with others.*** The teachers of the school where the research took place (Interview, T1, T2) believe that the new ways and means of education they employ will determine the change in the abilities of children with special educational needs. The teachers constantly reflect on communication, behavioural,

and learning situations of pupils with special educational needs, thus looking for the most appropriate solutions that could reduce communicative and learning barriers for these pupils. For example, a teacher believes in the improvement of the abilities of a girl with communication difficulties to learn together with others, and observes a continuous progress: *"Lina did not attend Physical Education lessons for a long time in the first form because of the noise. That lesson scared her in general. Slowly, she got used to it, we agreed that she could only exercise but skip the games. And now she does not only exercise but also runs around and plays"* (Interview, T1). Responding sensitively to the girl's fear to be in a noisy and very dynamic environment, the teacher chose the strategy of gradually acclimating her to a frightening environment, and succeeded in slowly eliminating the barrier that prevented the girl from learning together with other children of the class. Another teacher applied the strategy of encouragement and public complimenting, and achieved positive change in the child's communication and learning: *"We have a child called Benas . . . He keeps repeating: I can't, I don't know . . . I started to compliment him. Once he does something, I compliment him on it. He's also not that strong . . . in Mathematics. But once he was the only one to do something I had told them to do . . . Then I asked the class what their opinion was on who had done it best. They all started naming the one who gets the best marks. And I said no. It was Benas who did it best. I am constantly looking for similar cases to be able to compliment him. And now everything is great with him . . . He's joined the classroom community. He started to communicate with everyone, he's opened up."* (Interview, T2). The strategy applied by the teacher has been also recorded during the observations (Observation, Class B). The teacher's rhetoric showed to the entire class that the pupil deserves respect, that she believes in his ability to communicate and learn, and that she notices the change in his abilities. The belief in the transformability of the pupils' abilities motivates the pupils with special educational needs to exert effort, accept help from others, and view the future optimistically; it increases their inclusion into the classroom community. The teachers accept the pupils' communication, behavioural, and learning difficulties as a professional challenge to look for new ways of education directed towards the classroom as a learning community.

The research revealed that *the developed sensitivity and tolerance towards otherness (mutual differences) increases interpersonal communication-based social inclusion of the pupils.* The pupils' rhetoric reveals ways to develop sensitivity and tolerance towards otherness, which are efficient when pupils with differences live, play,

and learn all together. Sensitivity and tolerance towards otherness grow by means of social similarity and social contrast.

Social similarity: he likes it – I like it. The sense of social similarity arises when regularly developing pupils realize that those with special educational needs enjoy the same things. At school, the children play basketball with a pupil with special educational needs because they know he likes basketball and he *"dreams of being a basketball player"*, and they also like basketball (Interview, ST 4, ST 2, Sn). Thus, the feeling of social similarity arises. A girl clearly reflects on the factor of social similarity: *"(I am friends) with the girls . . . They are similar to me, while the boys keep talking about basketball and that's all"* (Interview, ST 16).

Opposing social similarity: he does not like it – I do not like it. The sense of social similarity arises when regularly developing pupils realize that those with special educational needs dislike the same things. A girl (Interview, ST 6), similarly to a pupil with special educational needs, dislikes noise; as a result, she feels close to her: *"I must say Lina is . . . the most sensitive one in class. She doesn't like noise, just like me."*

Engaging social contrast: greatly different interests that enrich. The sense of commonness arises when a pupil with special educational needs is in some aspect interesting to a regularly developing child. A pupil called Martynas has different interests from those of Vytautas who has difficulties in communicating with children of his age, but Martynas enjoys listening to Vytautas' stories. They enrich his interests and encourage him to engage in communication. *"(I like) playing football with others. With all the boys except Vytautas and Domas . . . Because they do not play . . . and Vytautas usually stays with a book. He tells us lots of things about our bodies, about dinosaurs, I learned everything there."* (Interview, ST 8)

Emphatically experienced social contrast: ability to play without bothering others vs. interfering with games of others. The sense of commonness arises when regularly developing children understand the reasons for the behaviour of a pupil with special educational needs and tolerate slight inconveniences. A girl claims that Ieva sometimes hinders the games of others because of her coordination disorders; however, she approaches the issues of the pupil with special educational needs with empathy, feels close to her, and accepts her in their games: *"There's one called Ieva. When we're playing a game, she interferes and interrupts the game. Sometimes she has no friends. But we accept her (to our game)"* (Interview, ST 12).

The social similarity they experience helps children to feel the sense of community of the entire class as everyone feels close to us, everyone is one of us, and the sense

of oneness emerges. Increased sensitivity towards otherness helps to know another person better, to understand their point of view, the specificities of their personal interactions, behaviour, and activity, while tolerance helps adapt to them. Thus, the children perceive the pupil community as multi-perspective or multi-voiced, i.e. one where everyone has a different perspective on and perception of the world, everyone's voice is of equal importance to those of the others, yet the classroom is a unified learning community.

Teachers' interviews showed that **teachers encourage situations where all children communicate with each other**. *". . . I stress that we come to school to communicate and collaborate. Which means we must learn to talk to everyone. Because children think: "Well, I have my friend . . . and I don't see anyone else around me" . . . I allow the children to choose on their own (whom to stand or sit next to). I tell them: "Children, now stand in the way that every day you would stand next to a different (child)"* (Interview, T1). Repetitive communication rituals are created in the classroom: a day-opening circle and a day-closing circle. Effort is put in order for everyone to speak and be heard: *"We sit in a little circle on the carpet and talk every morning . . . We try to listen to everyone with respect because speaking their mind is important to everyone . . . The day-closing circle takes the form in which everyone is able to speak too. Just like in the family . . . They thank someone . . . rejoice over something . . . or sometimes they wish to figuratively throw a little stone at somebody"* (Interview, T1). Communication rituals helping to see and hear everyone, facilitate the feeling of social similarity, experiencing the sense of community, and understanding that everyone is appreciated and important.

Pupils are also encouraged to take joint decisions independently, for example, to decide on how they would celebrate festivals: *". . . Teachers' Day. (The pupils) got together. How will we greet the teachers? They all discussed and took action. And all the teachers of their class were greeted. They did everything on their own . . ."* (Interview, T2). Joint decision taking enhances the sense of responsibility, participation, and inclusion of every pupil. In the school and in classrooms, focused effort is put in creating an environment favourable for children's interaction, thinking thoroughly through what activities and where the pupils will do them, how they will be spread across different spaces, the so-called "centres", in order to ensure physical safety, to make it interesting and joyful for the pupils, so that they could have fun with their friends: *"We have a corner called "Today I choose". Since the corridors are narrow and . . . it's not safe for everyone to be there together, we have the so-called centres. The child arrives in the morning and writes down where he or she will be willing to spend the day.*

. . . We have board games and other options. And I would only let around six of them out to the corridor. I have hung a basketball hoop there" (Interview, T1). The observation of the pupils' interaction and activity during the breaks confirms that different spaces on the school premises are adapted to the children's interaction and games, e.g. during the break, several boys kick a small plastic ball in the corridor, a group of pupils play "Catch me if you can", and a few girls chat in the classroom (Observation, Class A). Joint play spaces help the pupils to act together, to know and understand each other better.

The summarized model of the development of acceptance of each other's otherness in children is presented in Figure 23.
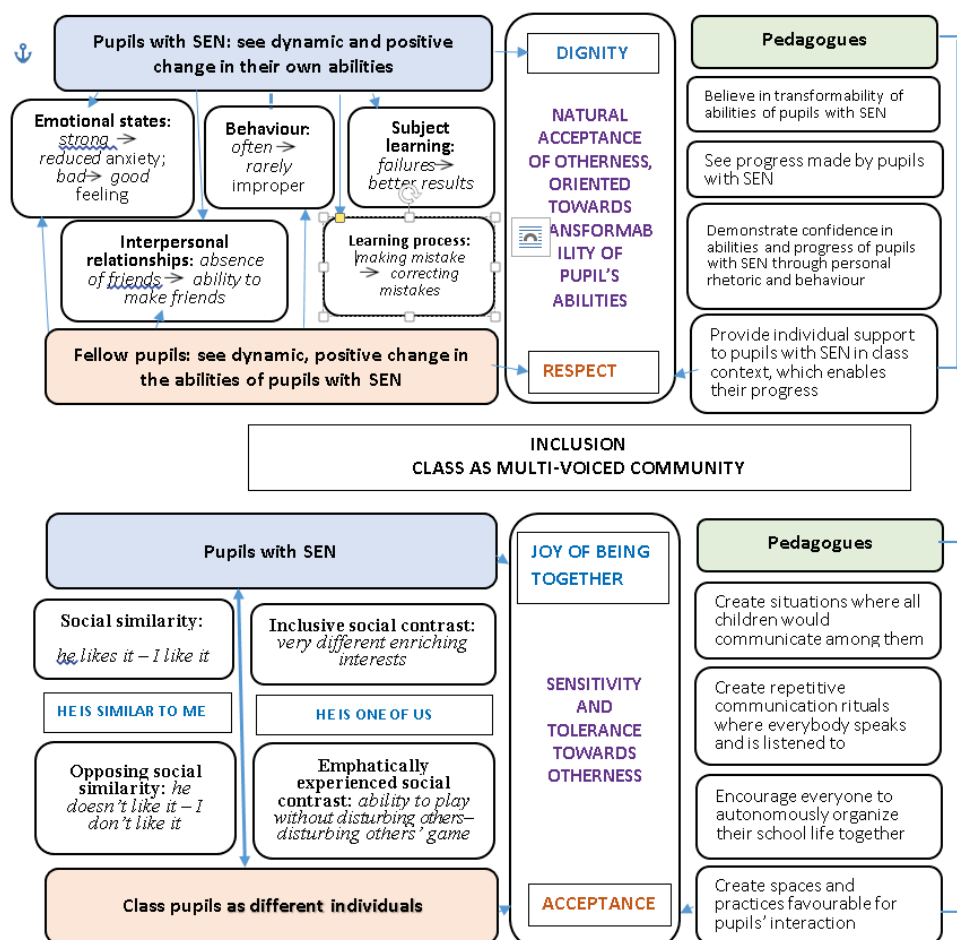
Figure 23. Model of the development of acceptance of each other's otherness in pupils at Vilnius "Versmės" Catholic School.

Figure 23 reveals the main aspects of the development of an inclusive class of pupils as a multi-voiced community. When, because of teachers and fellow pupils, those with special educational needs feel positive change in their abilities, their self-respect and dignity increase. Pupils of the class, when seeing the efforts of those with special educational needs and their positive results, such as a change in their communication and behaviour, respect them. Due to the pupils of the class being together, sensitivity and tolerance towards otherness develops, a sense of *"He is similar to me"* (social similarity) or *"He is one of us"* (engagement or emphatically experienced social contrast) arises that encourages the acceptance of the "other", and the joy of being all together. The "other" pupil becomes an equal member of the pupil community.

Second aspect: the culture of a learning community, which increases a joint and supportive participation. In the analysed inclusive education school, primary focus is put on creating the culture of a learning community based on joint participation. Children's education in sociocultural context is an aspect of vital importance that is more easily realized with the help of the creation and self-evolvement of situations involving pupils' joint participation, which encourage pupils to know and understand differences, transform their point of view and interpersonal relationships, as well as ways of communicating and co-operating, to establish and develop reciprocal connections: emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual ones. The development of these connections increases inclusion, quality of participation, and supportive communication. Pupils' joint participation in learning groups also highlights certain disconnections as well as barriers for the establishment of connections, and helps discover ways to reduce the barriers.

The pupils' interviews revealed practices of pupils' joint participation in learning groups.

Joint participation in developing bonds of friendship. The girls' rhetoric highlighted the following characteristics of pupils' joint participation: the area of developing bonds of friendship embraces joint participation of all girls, including those with special educational needs, and, partially, the boys; one girl takes initiative to increase the participation of children with special educational needs; the girls share the following reciprocal connections: emotional ones (closeness, belief in the benevolence of others), and social ones (friendship, acceptance, care of children with special educational needs). A disconnection in the area of social relationships emerged (disconnection with the boys, conditional friendship, overcoming the disconnection: several girls keep friendly relationships with boys).

A girl called Smiltė narrates: *"(I am friends) with girls. There's a girl called Ingrida. There's a girl called Aušrinė. Dovilė, Elzė, Viltė . . . They are very friendly . . . All the girls are friends with each other. For example, some (children) are different. But Aistė is friends with all the girls."* (Interview, ST 19). To the researcher's question whether all the girls she would want to be friends with would be friends with her, she replies: *"I think so."* When asked whether she is on friendly terms with the boys, she responds: *"Sometimes, if they are friendly."* A girl called Lina claims: *"If my class wasn't there, I, for example, would not have many friends."* (Interview, ST 1, Sn)

As data shows, joint participation in developing bonds of friendship deepens emotional and social relationships among all girls. Smiltė and other girls confide in the benevolence of others; they believe that all the girls they would like to be friends with would indeed be friends with them. Children with special educational needs are also involved in friendly relationships. A girl called Lina sees the classroom as a social environment that allows her to build close relationships and have friends. The sociogram of the relationships between the pupils of the class confirms Smiltė's story that Aistė maintains friendly relationships with the children with special educational needs: she keeps a reciprocal connection with two children with special educational needs (Lina and Ieva); all the girls are joined together into one group by their mutual choice; in practice, each girl keeps one reciprocal connection (Sociogram A). A social relationship disconnection emerged in the girls' relationships with the boys: the girls claim to be on friendly terms with the boys on the condition that the latter are friendly. The lack of joint participation might obstruct the strengthening of social relationships; however, sociometric measurement revealed that several girls (Smiltė, Dovilė, and Aistė) keep connection with the boys, thus involving them in situations of joint participation (Sociogram A).

The boys' rhetoric highlighted similar characteristics of participation in the process of developing bonds of friendship: it embraces the joint participation of all the boys, including those with special educational needs, as well as, partially, the girls; bonds of different levels of closeness are observed, yet they involve all the children; boys share the following reciprocal connections: emotional ones (the joy of being together), social ones (friendship, co-operation, joint activity, communication, acceptance), and intellectual ones (collective wisdom in the form of taking joint decisions). The following disconnections in developing bonds emerged: social ones (different

interests as a disconnection; learning to coordinate interests as a way to eliminate the disconnection); and emotional ones (cases of falling out as a disconnection; learning to control one's anger as a way to eliminate the disconnection).

> A boy says he is mainly friends *"with my male classmates: Vilius, Rytis, and Edgaras. And many other children. We are best friends with Vilius. We do mathematical tasks together. And with the others, we play together. . . . It's much fun (for me at school). . . . Because we can play. . . . There're many board games. . . . Sometimes we fall out."* (Interview, ST 4) Asked by a researcher what they do when they fall out, the child explains: *"Well, nothing. We have lessons in "Social skills". If we, the boys, fall out, it's not a big deal. We fight a little, then we find agreement, and we make up"* (Interview, ST 4). When asked if there are any children nobody is friends with, he says: *"There aren't any."* Another boy deliberates on the reasons for falling out: *"Sometimes, when I'm the goalkeeper and I fail to block the shot, then Dainius. . . starts scolding me"* (Interview, ST 8).

Joint participation in developing bonds of friendship, as the research data shows, enhances emotional, social, and intellectual links between all boys, including the ones with special educational needs. The sociometric research of the relationships of the pupils of the class confirms that the pupil with special educational needs is included in the boys' network of bonds of friendship: he maintains two reciprocal choices (Sociogram A). Several social and emotional disconnections emerged in the boys' interactions; for example, the boys fall out when playing football: the ones who play better and desperately want to win unleash their anger on those who fail at something, as their interest in winning the game suffers. The elimination of interpersonal relationship barriers is assisted by the children's participation in the social and emotional skills development program "Second Step" (Frey, Hirschstein, & Guzzo, 2000).

Joint participation in conflict situation management. In the pupils' rhetoric, the following characteristics of joint participation in the management of conflict situations emerged: joint participation of pupils sharing communicational bonds is embraced; reciprocal connections are developed: emotional (compassion, anger control), social (friendship, support, conflict management), intellectual (constructive dialogue, joint decisions), and spiritual ones (openness to the needs of the other, effort towards the well-being of the other). The following disconnections were highlighted: social (conflict of interests and needs, name-calling as a disconnection; and coordinating

interests and needs via constructive dialogue and agreements as a way to eliminate the disconnection); and emotional ones (anger as a disconnection; and learning to control anger, and receiving help from friends as a way to eliminate the disconnection).

> A girl narrates: "*. . . sometimes we fall out with my friends when we disagree on something, then it's not very nice. Usually we fall out one day and then the next day we come and make up. . . . (The teacher) often notices. She always tries to reconcile us. . . . She does not interfere too much but she says: Well, why are you arguing? You should rather talk, make up, and everything would be fine*" (Interview, ST 12). Another girl explains: "*But sometimes things happen that hurt me. They call me names. Or push me around. . . . My friends comfort me. They help me when I'm in trouble*" (Interview, ST 6) A girl with special educational needs narrates: "*. . . some tell me that I'm doing something wrong, and how I should be doing it instead*" (Interview, ST 1, Sn).

Inclusive education classes and school, similarly to other pupil communities, sometimes experience disagreements between pupils, arising from diverging interests and vivid expression of emotions. However, the analysis of pupil interviews shows that in the classes of the inclusive education school, joint participation in managing conflict situations is practised: the pupils solve conflicts together, they comfort, help, teach each other ways to behave. The teachers encourage the pupils to engage in joint participation situations and look for solutions independently rather than solving the arising conflict situations themselves. Such pupil community culture helps the pupils to see barriers for building positive connections, which provoke conflict situations, and independently find ways that facilitate the elimination of the barriers or minimization of their effect.

Joint participation in informal class activities. The pupils' rhetoric highlighted the following characteristics of joint participation in informal class activities: joint participation of all pupils in new social environments is covered; reciprocal connections are developed: emotional ones (jointly experienced emotion of satisfaction, sense of community), social ones (new roles), intellectual ones (ideas, solutions, and their realization, collectively proposed by the pupils), and spiritual ones (efforts oriented towards the well-being of the class).

> "*. . . our teacher takes us on outings very often. We went to . . . my mum's work. We went to a café "Artistai" and baked pizzas . . . Everyone was happy*" (Interview, ST 19).

Joint participation in new social environments allows pupils to experience similar emotions as well as the resulting sense of community and reciprocal connection; the pupils test themselves in new social roles, thus revealing themselves better to one another, and generate and realize ideas jointly as a single learning community. The voice intonation of the pupil who told about the outings showed she was proud because her mother had done it for the well-being of the entire class. Thus, informal activities are a way to strengthen links between pupils.

Joint participation in whole-school events. The interviews with pupils revealed the following characteristics of joint participation in school community events: in school, possibilities are created for the pupils to join in to whole-school events, volunteers are involved, reciprocal connections are developed including emotional ones (trust in oneself and others), social ones (communication, encouragement, equal possibilities of participation), intellectual ones (dialogue with the spectators of the event), and spiritual ones (self-revelation, self-expression, efforts oriented towards a friend's well-being). Disconnections encountered are emotional (stage fright as a disconnection, and supportive communication as a way to eliminate the disconnection that strengthens inclusion).

> *"In our school, we have events called "Versmė's Talents". I and my friend want to take part in them. We haven't done it yet. We have only watched them."* When asked by the researcher whether anyone could take part in the event, she responds: *"I think so but I don't think everyone wants to. Because, probably, they have stage fright."* When asked by the researcher how one could overcome the stage fright barrier, she explains: *"Well, I think if people talk, they immediately feel better. For example, that's definitely the case with me . . . I become braver. I can also make the viewers laugh."* The girl's voice intonation is confident and determined. To the researcher's question of whether the spectators support the ones on stage, whether they communicate with the latter ones, she responds: *"They certainly do"* (Interview, ST 19).

Joint participation in whole-school events enhances inclusion into the whole school community; the pupils experience the sense of equality, community (viewers') support, and they have a possibility to reveal themselves to others. The girls watch the event together and intend to participate in it, supporting each other. The emotional barrier, namely, stage fright, vanishes when one feels warm support from the school community.

Joint participation in activities of social significance. The pupils' rhetoric highlights the following characteristics of joint participation in activities of social significance they find relevant: all the school pupils are involved; they are all united by a clear and well-perceived goal of helping others; reciprocal connections are developed including emotional ones (dignity, sense of self-value), social ones (goals of social importance, equal possibilities of participation), intellectual ones (understanding the needs of others), and spiritual ones (sincere and noble support for others).

> *"The pupils organize all sorts of initiatives. They collected toothbrushes and took them I don't remember where, maybe to the Philippines, where people are poor. The whole school collects toothbrushes here. We had to collect two or five hundred of them"* (Interview, ST 12).

Joint participation in activities of social significance helps everyone, especially children with special educational needs, to feel their value as they can also help others, the pupils are brought together and the inclusion is strengthened by equal possibilities of participation as well as shared goals that are socially significant. The participation is particularly significant for the development of spiritual connections.

The analysis of children's rhetoric allows the researchers to draw a conclusion that the pupils develop the following reciprocal connections in situations of joint participation: *emotional ones* (dignity, respect, trust, closeness, joy of being together, sense of community and equality, responsibility, confidence in the benevolence of others, compassion, and anger control), *social ones* (acceptance, communication, co-operation, new roles, joint activities, coordination of interests and needs, conflict management, care, support, and friendship), *intellectual ones* (understanding the needs of others, new ideas, constructive dialogue, joint decisions, joint realization, group reflection, and group wisdom), and *spiritual ones* (self-revelation, self-expression, openness to the needs of others, confidence in the abilities of the other, efforts oriented towards the well-being of others: another pupil, a group of friends, one's own class, or school community).

The pupils' interviews highlighted practices of **supportive and inclusive behaviour of the pupils in heterogeneous groups.** These practices develop naturally as children interact with pupils with special educational needs.

Accepting pupils with special educational needs into games. A pupil with special educational needs is accepted into games, even if they cause slight disturbance to the game, because the ability to adapt is acquired and slight inconveniences are tolerated: *"There's one girl called Ieva. She sometimes has no friends. But we accept her . . . Although*

sometimes we are so much into the game and we don't want her to disturb us . . . because when she interferes, she disturbs us. Nevertheless, you have to accept the person . . . Even though you don't really want it because you're already into the game" (Interview, ST 12).

Mediation for pupils with special educational needs. The pupils understand what difficulties their fellow pupils with special educational needs are faced with and learn to mediate for them: *"I also help make friends with others. If, for example, Lina wants to make friends with some girl but she is afraid to, I always help her"* (Interview, ST 6).

Looking after pupils with special educational needs. The sociogram of the class pupils' choices of play mates shows that as many as eight pupils in the class choose fellow pupils with special educational needs (Sociogram B). It demonstrates the relationships of care towards a pupil with special educational needs that have evolved and that increase the inclusion of the pupil into the classroom community.

The pupils' interviews demonstrate that practices of support towards children with special educational needs eventually turn out to be beneficial not only for the children with special educational needs but also for all the pupils of the class as children develop a habit of helping every community member and become more empathetic towards each other. The pupils focus on noticing when others are in need, approaching them, and helping to solve problems. A girl explains: *"I always help them because I see and I say: "Why are you crying today? What happened?" I ask about what had happened and then try to solve it. Because I want to help very much . . . You have to notice everyone who is in trouble"* (Interview, ST 6). The girl's words are confirmed by the sociometric research showing that as many as six pupils would like to share a secret with her because they feel her support and trust her (Sociogram A). The pupils attempt to physically stay nearby in cases when others are in need of it: *"Once during the PE lesson I hurt myself, I don't remember if it was my leg or my arm. And one of my friends accompanied me to the nurse"* (Interview, ST 19).

The teachers' interviews revealed that ***pedagogues apply whole class-oriented strategies to encourage joint participation of pupils, pupils and teachers, as well as teachers and parents.*** This is namely the reason why pupils are provided with numerous different joint participation experiences that their interviews revealed.

The situations the teachers design, in which pupils have the possibility to solve problems independently, enhance the pupils' joint participation. The teacher allows the children to independently play football during Physical Education lessons, and solve arising problems themselves: *"They want to play football a lot. So I let them do it during PE lessons . . . I leave them to it and don't interfere at all. They find agreements*

themselves perfectly well . . . If something happens, the boys (say): "*We think about it and solve it.*" *. . . And then they somehow talk it through and find a solution . . . and play again*" (Interview, T1). Situations that arise spontaneously are also exploited for the purpose of developing the pupils' independence. A boy narrates: "*Sometimes, when there's no lesson, when the teacher falls ill, then we have a lesson in which we play*" (Interview, ST 4). An opportunity to play creates conditions to develop interpersonal relationships, initiate joint activities, and solve issues with joint agreement. Participating in games with others who have more experience, children with special educational needs naturally learn communication and behaviour from the former ones. Other children learn to recognize the possibilities of those with special educational needs and adapt to them. Teachers provide opportunities for children to interact in pairs or small groups during lessons. The teachers realize that activities in pairs or small groups encourage the development of the pupils' communicational and support skills: "*For example, during the lessons in painting they love to say:* "*Can we paint in twos?*" "*Well, of course you can if you get on well together.*" *. . . There are many tasks when they compose a fairy-tale or do some other creative work in twos,*" "*And in general, during lessons they help each other, explain to each other*" (Interview, T1). Joint outings encourage joint participation of all pupils: "*For the benefit of the children's relationships we go out, travel, drive to places a lot, as then (their relationships) evolve. We've been to the Parliament, and to Anykščiai Treetop Path*" (Interview, T2).

Joint participation of pupils and teachers is also ensured by the Morning Circle and the Goodbye Circle. The teachers aim at making it sincere and personal, at keeping eye contact when greeting "*Hi Viltė, it's nice to see you*" and parting "*Goodbye Viltė, God bless*" (Interview, T1). It is important, however, to prevent such repetitive morning rituals from becoming routine and children's naughty behaviour from distracting their true meaning. Upon spotting signs of insincerity, the teacher discusses the feeling during the circle together with the children in order for everyone to regain their motivation for sincere behaviour: "*We sat in a small circle with the children again. I told them:* "*Children, what can we say about our circle, how does everyone feel?*" *. . . A girl raised her hand and said:* "*I don't like it when in the circle they say good bye to me and address me not by my name but by all sorts of blah-blah*" *. . . Someone probably had joked that way, intending simply to be naughty. So, we talked with the children . . . Once again, we emphasize that it feels pleasant when we look each other in the eye, when we finish our sentences, and say goodbye. I know there will still be cases when the children will feel like behaving naughty; then we revisit all these things*

again and again" (Interview, T1). In Circles of Goodbye, the children are allowed to figuratively "throw a little stone", i.e. name the behaviour of the others towards him or her that they did not like, aloud. In cases when the issue is sensitive, the teacher stays with the children and mediates in solving the problem: *"Then everyone says goodbye and . . . then we talk with the children who need to solve the problem"* (Interview, T1). Observation (Class A) confirmed that the children express their opinions freely in the Goodbye Circle: *"Lina thanked Domas, Agnė "threw a stone" at Kipras. The teacher asked if she told Kipras what she disliked."* Thus, the teacher encourages the children to solve minor disagreements on their own via constructive dialogue. Since the pupils are motivated to behave properly by the experience of success, the teacher helps the children to recognize success (not a single child "threw a stone", which means that the interpersonal relationships are in order. This is a "divine day") and to celebrate it (to share sweets left from someone's birthday): *"What are we hearing? There's not a single stone. Everything was fine, nobody threw any stones, and so I say: "What do you think, children, is today a "divine day"?" They all say: "It's divine, hurray." Then we take out the sweets and share them…"* (Interview, T1).

Pupil's inclusion-enhancing support, oriented towards joint class activity. In order to help reveal everyone's value and help them integrate into the classroom community, not only do teachers provide individual assistance but also look for pedagogical strategies oriented towards the entire class. The application of such strategies helps to meet the needs of the pupils with special educational needs and those of the entire class at the same time. A teacher said that, with the intention of helping a boy receive attention from his fellow pupils, she allowed him to deliver a lesson: *"I have a boy called Vytautas. He is used to interacting with older people, and it's hard for him to be among his peers. He's very much interested in various reptiles, snakes, and bugs . . . He's a walking encyclopaedia. But the children never listen to him. He tries (to tell them) but they don't listen . . . And so he delivered the lesson. You should have seen him. . . He walked between desks like a professor. He's very good at telling and formulating thoughts. And the children asked a myriad of questions. And he answered every question saying: "Well, you see, it's this or that" . . . All the children stood up and gave him a round of applause. The child received such an encouragement . . . Then his mother called . . . and said: "He came home and said: "Mum, it turns out the children love me, they applauded me."* (Interview, T1). Individual support oriented towards the entire class activity is highly efficient as it enhances the involvement and participation of everyone. In the latter case, Vytautas' needs to let others see his

interests and to receive their attention and support were met, while the other pupils of the class found out numerous interesting facts from their fellow pupil, and realized sharing knowledge was useful.

Coordinating opinions increases joint participation of pupils and teachers. Teachers provide conditions for the children to decide on their own what outings to go on, what events to organize and how to do it, etc. However, the teachers participate in joint discussions, moderate them in order for the best decisions to be taken: *"Once they said: we'll organize a School of Horror for the parents. Of horror . . . Then I said: "But children, the parents will be afraid to come, they'll feel uncomfortable, and they'll say: "Well, the celebration wasn't fun. It has to be fun." And so, we discussed a lot. And reached agreement."* (Interview, T1). By joining in on discussions with the teacher, the pupils learn the way of coordinating the differences in their opinions themselves.

Joint participation of the pupils, teachers, and parents helps overcome complex interpersonal relationship barriers. The teacher encouraged the parents to create conditions for the interaction between the disagreeing children in the family environment in order for warm emotional relationships to develop: *"The parents were involved too . . . It's a tough work with the parents too. We tell them: "Dear parents, we can either scold the children, tell them you're misbehaving, don't be friends with that child; or we can invite the child over and let them play together." And the parents established mutual contacts. Now I see the boys strategize by themselves: you'll come over to me; and you can come over to me. The parents have also found a connection . . . It worked. The boys are now very much united."* (Interview, T1). The application of strategies encouraging joint participation of pupils, teachers, and parents increases the involvement of both pupils and parents.

The summary of the effect of joint participation of pupils on the development of their reciprocal connections is presented in Figure 24.
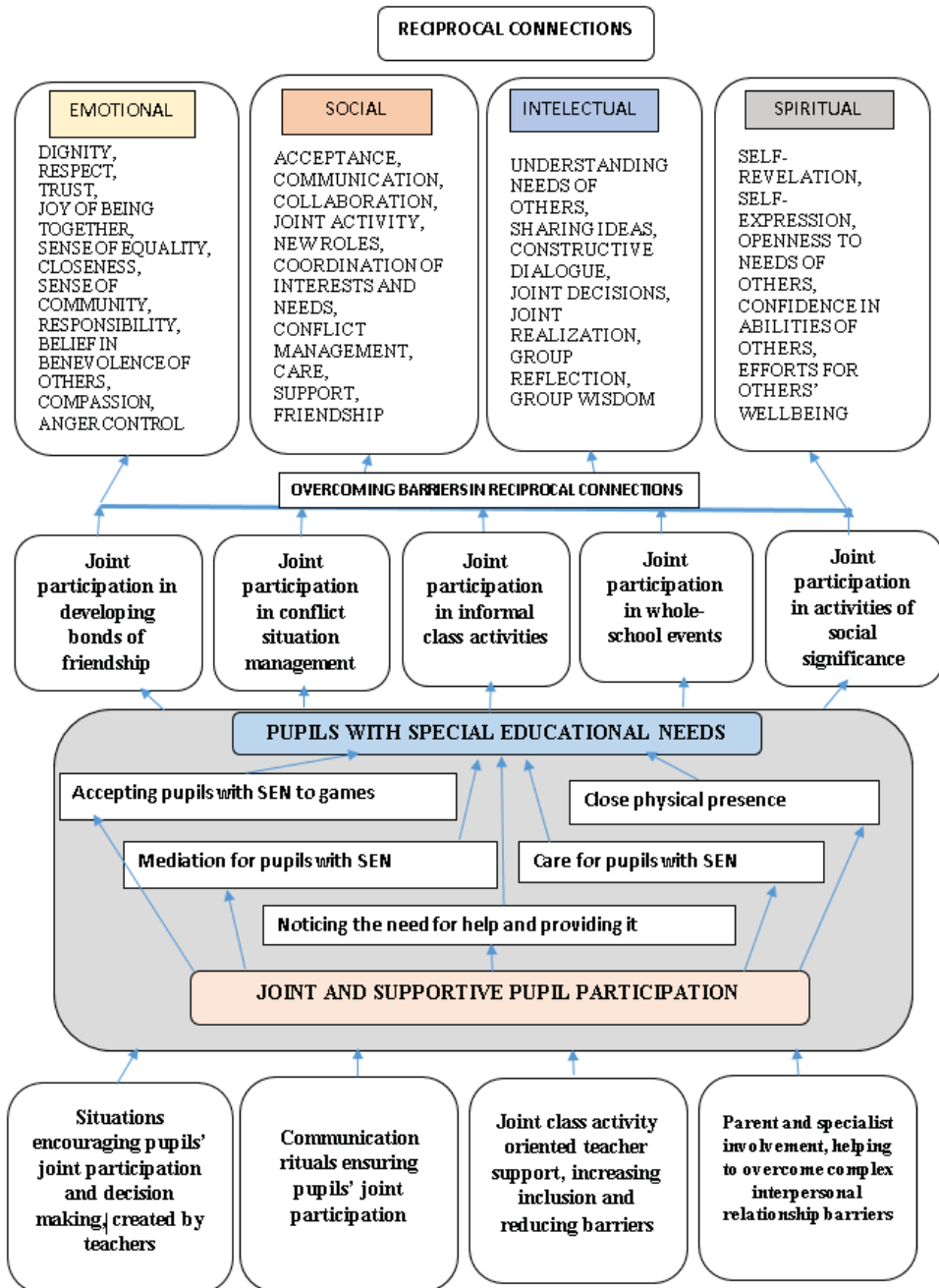
Figure 24. Joint participation building positive reciprocal connections between pupils.

The scheme presented in Figure 24 reveals the effect of joint and supportive participation of pupils on the development of positive interpersonal relationships. Joint

and supportive participation of pupils in developing friendly relationships, conflict situation management, informal class activities, whole-school events, and activities of social significance, which teachers encourage by various means (creating situations for joint participation, practising communication rituals, providing individual support for pupils with special educational needs oriented towards joint class activity, and ensuring involvement of parents and specialists), help the pupils to establish and maintain emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual reciprocal connections as well as overcome barriers in their development. Joint and supportive participation of pupils increases the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs through their acceptance into group games, mediation and assistance for them, taking care of them, and supporting them through close physical presence.

Third aspect: focused learning of coping skills for communication as well as emotional and behavioural difficulties. In order to achieve the development of inclusion-stimulating interpersonal relationships and conflict management in a heterogeneous group, the pupils are provided with possibilities for focused acquisition of means to cope with communicational, emotional, and behavioural difficulties. Although such difficulties are more common among pupils with special educational needs, teachers apply strategies oriented towards the entire class, which improve coping skills not only in pupils with special educational needs but also in others.

The entire class participates in social and emotional skills development program "Second Step". A girl narrates in pupil's interview: *". . . but now we have our lessons. Of social skills. So nobody goes to the psychologist anymore."* When asked for the name of the program, the girl responds: *". . . I think it's "Second Step"* (Interview, ST 19). Other children also mention the program in their interviews (Interview, ST 4). "Second Step" program (Frey, Hirschstein & Guzzo, 2000) helps children learn to relax, calm down when going through strong emotions, provides ways to resist the desire to act on impulse, to control anger and abstain from aggressive behaviour, to solve problems, and see the consequences of one's own behaviour. Teachers indicate that the program tools (posters "How to calm down", "What to do when you're angry", and "How to solve problems") are also used in solving conflicts that take place in the classroom. *"If conflicts arise, we go to the poster . . . "How to calm down". They know it by heart . . . but don't manage to apply it at once;" "We're now discussing a conscious person. . . . So we always think . . . in what way one has behaved, if it was impulsive or conscious"* (Interview, T1). During the observations, (Observation, Class A) a record was made of pupils participating in the lesson and discussing what is needed for people to understand each other. Participation

in the "Second Step" program helps all the children of the class to acquire and apply conflict management strategies, and reduces barriers in emotional and social links, which stem from impulsiveness and anger.

Pupils with special educational needs and other pupils, *in situations of individual interaction with teachers, acquire strategies of overcoming problems through behaviour or directly*: they learn to change critical situations or solve problems that had resulted in painful experiences (to talk to a friend they had fallen out with and to make up; to apologize to a friend they had pushed, etc.) as well as *emotional coping strategies*: they learn what can be done when the situation causing painful experiences is impossible to change, i.e. they learn to improve their emotional state (to talk to someone, to ask for comfort from someone, to calm down, etc.) (Lazarus & Folkman's, 1984 definition of coping is used). Lina, a pupil with special educational needs, follows her teacher's advice and applies behavioural coping strategies: the pupil has learned to address the teacher and her friends for help: *"When there are difficulties, (the teacher) tells me to address (her). (The teacher) tells me what to do. . . . How to address another child. How to approach them."* According to Lina, her friends also *"help when she's in trouble"* (Interview, ST 1, Sn). Lina also employs emotional coping strategies: when she feels sad, she thinks of a situation where she felt happy: *"Well, I stay with it for a bit somehow. I think about something else, about times when I'm happy. And then everything is fine"* (Interview, ST 1, Sn). The pupils' interviews show that all the pupils apply various coping strategies, which improves their emotional state and strengthens interpersonal relationships. The teacher (Interview, T1) claims she often proposes that children should attend art therapy sessions delivered by the school psychologist, since the therapy helps the children acquire ways of emotional coping. The possibility is open not only to pupils with special educational needs but to all the children of the school; therefore, every pupil enjoys more opportunities to develop and receive assistance.

The pupils' interviews show that *when learning conflict management, pupils use the support of the psychologist.* When asked to remember a case when she had fallen out with a friend and what assistance she received, a girl said: *"I . . . Don't know . . . But I know my other friends have experienced it. So they went to the psychologist"* (Interview, ST 19). Teachers underline that the school psychologist helped the children build good interpersonal relations with all the pupils of the class, not only within their own circle of friends: *"There are some very active boys . . . who are prone to leadership and they want things to be only the way they say. Other boys then do not blend in with them. There have been many situations when everyone was willing to be friends with only one boy but he*

already had his own group. We worked a lot with the psychologist, and told (the children): children, there are other children too. You have to talk to others too" (Interview, T1). The solution process of problems that one or a few pupils face is oriented towards improving interpersonal relationships within the entire class, and everyone is involved in solving the problems, including children as well as teachers, the psychologist, and parents.

Priority goals of building inclusion-stimulating interpersonal relationships between pupils at school are efficient as they ensure the absence of bullying. A girl who has difficulties in Mathematics, when asked if others mock her about it, answers: *"No. It never happens,"* and when asked if others are mocked when they fail at something, she also firmly denies it: *"No"* (Interview, ST 19). Children feel comfortable at school because *". . . I have many friends"* (Interview, ST 2, Sn), *". . . I find it fun here because we're very good and cheerful friends"* (Interview, ST 19), *". . . you can talk to your friends"* (Interview, ST 16), *"You can play. So it's never boring during the breaks"* (Interview, ST 4), etc.

Figure 25 presents the summary of the effect of focused acquisition of coping skills on overcoming barriers in pupils' interpersonal relationships.
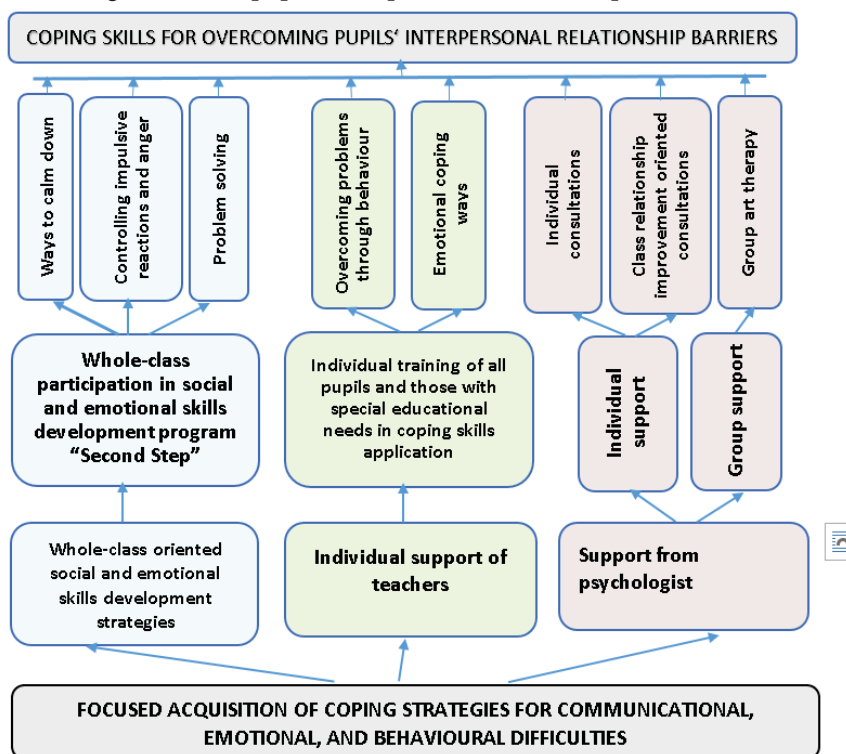
Figure 25. Focussed acquisition of coping strategies that helps overcome pupils' interpersonal relationship barriers.

The scheme presented in Figure 25 illustrates that the following is applied at school: the whole class-oriented strategies of social and emotional skill development in pupils (participation in the "Second Step" program); teacher's individual assistance to individual pupils, which helps develop coping skills; and individual and group support by the psychologist. This helps pupils to acquire ways of behavioural coping: clarifying disagreements, joint search for solutions to problems, predicting consequences of one's own behaviour, asking for help, i.e. changing the tension-generating situation. It also helps to learn ways of emotional coping: to calm down, control impulsive reactions and anger, to talk things through, to express negativity through colours and lines in a painting, to think of something pleasant, i.e. ways to reduce emotional tension in situations that are impossible to change, and thus feel better. Acquiring the above-mentioned strategies is useful both to pupils with special educational needs as well as other pupils as it helps to overcome the pupils' interpersonal relationship barriers, i.e. it helps to develop a positive relationship-based pupil community that increases inclusion and participation.

REFERENCES

Frey, K. S., Hirschstein, M. K. & Guzzo, B. A. (2000). Second step: Preventing aggression by promoting social competence. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 8,* pp. 102-112, DOI:10.1177/106342660000800206.

Lazarus, R. & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping.* New York: Spring Publishing Company.

5.3.2. INTERPERSONAL INTERACTION BETWEEN PUPILS AND TEACHERS IN VILNIUS "VERSMĖS" CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Julita Navaitienė

Interpersonal interaction is the first principle of human nature (MacMurray, 2012). A classroom is a dynamic social system, in which daily interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher takes place. In the educational context, the interaction is linked to beliefs, attitudes, relationships, feelings, self-esteem, and behaviour, which constitute the main cognitive, affective, and behavioural aspects of the interaction. Pupils' emotional and behavioural difficulties are influenced by the nature of teacher-pupil interactions (Poulou, 2014). The interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher is considered an important condition for success in learning as learning and acquisition happen through interaction. Researchers put emphasis on the importance of the interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher for learning results (Anderson, 2012; Brock & Curby, 2016; Bucholz & Sheffler, 2009; de Wilde, Koot & van Lier, 2016; Gablinske, 2014; Wentzel, 2012). It is claimed that the pupils' ability to learn is more strongly linked to interpersonal interaction than to their academic skills (Charalampous & Kokkinos, 2015; Edwards & Mercer, 2012).

A strong and supportive interpersonal interaction helps the pupils with special educational needs to feel safer at school, to develop competencies more successfully, to communicate more comfortably, and to learn better; whereas a conflict-prone interpersonal interaction with the teacher might drive pupils towards failures in communication and learning. Positive interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher helps the pupils to strengthen their motivation to learn and to reveal their weaknesses and strengths (Buli-Holmberg & Jeyaprathaban, 2016). Keamy, Nicholas, Mahar, and Herrick (2007) indicate that all pupils must be accepted in such a manner that values and fosters the pupils' individuality and personality.

Supportive interpersonal interaction gains particular importance in primary school classes as the pupils with special educational needs have to adapt in a new social environment. Lyons, Thompson, and Timmons (2016) characterize the supportive interpersonal interaction between pupils and teacher by a belief in collective efficacy. Supportive interpersonal interaction with the teacher allows the pupils with special

educational needs to feel sufficiently independent as they know that if they face difficulties, they will certainly receive assistance from the teacher. Breeman, Tick, Wubbels, Maras, and van Lier (2014) investigated the relationship between a pupil's behaviour problems and the pupil-teacher emotional closeness in special education, and found a negative correlation between the pupil's disruptive behaviour and pupil-teacher emotional closeness. Bucholz and Sheffler (2009) accentuate the pupils' need to declare their needs to the teacher. Brock and Curby (2016) affirm that the low emotional support from the teacher disrupts social interaction between the pupils and the teacher. Ferlazzo (2015), presenting the content of Social Emotional Learning (SEL), emphasizes encouraging relatedness, which helps pupils feel connected to and cared about by teachers.

It should be noted that interpersonal interactions between pupils with special educational needs and teachers differ from those between teachers and typical pupils (Santos, Sardinha & Reis, 2016). Pupils with special educational needs are more likely to create positive school experiences when they feel appreciated by the teacher and are highly valued as persons (Martin, 2014; Griffiths & Smith, 2017). Mutual interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher in the inclusive classroom is linked to positive emotional, cognitive, and behavioural engagement.

The data received during the research in Vilnius "Versmė" Catholic School revealed specific features of the interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher. Lesson observation data helped to determine the phenomena related to verbal and non-verbal behaviour of the pupils and the teacher. The results of the interviews with teachers and pupils demonstrated how the pupils and teachers perceive their interpersonal interaction.

Positive reciprocal interpersonal interaction between pupils and teacher

When answering the research question of how and what kinds of interpersonal interaction factors on the socio-psychological level of inclusive education prompt the manifestation of respect, dignity, equal rights, assistance, acceptance, co-operation, and willingness to be together, focus must first be put on the perception of interpersonal interaction itself. The pupils perceive their interpersonal interaction with the teacher from the perspective of care receivers: *"I have to do homework and sometimes I don't understand. My mum cannot explain to me and the teacher explains thoroughly and then I understand everything"* (Interview, ST 1), and caregivers: *"I wanted to deliver a lesson on bees"* (Interview, ST 2). Teachers perceive their interpersonal interaction with

pupils from the perspective of caregivers: *"Of course I had to help them but they did it and organized it for the parents"* (Interview, T1), and care receivers: *"They're very active and do everything for me if necessary, they create it, do it, bring it"* (Interview, T2).

Such a characteristic of the perception of interpersonal interaction demonstrates the existence of positive reciprocal interpersonal interaction in the school. In the educational context, positive reciprocal interpersonal interaction is linked to success in teaching and learning. Reciprocity in interpersonal interaction eliminates the traditional relationship of "a teacher as caregiver, and pupils as care receivers", which segregates pupils with special educational needs from other pupils.

Collaboration between pupils and teacher

The results of the research carried out showed that the factor of effective interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher is collaboration. Certain advantages of employing the concept of collaboration emerged in the research: it is more closely linked to the approach of social constructivism, which emphasizes the significance of social context in active construction of knowledge. Collaboration takes place by setting a common goal, designing plans for achieving the goal, and solving problems that arise, i.e. by acting together. The collaboration between the pupils and the teacher creates an interpersonal interaction of a higher level.

The analysis of the results of the research revealed that the factor of collaboration between the pupils and the teacher includes reciprocal feedback, action coordination, positive interdependence, and mutual empowerment (see Figure 26). Disclosing factor components answers a part of our research sub-question that deals with finding out how this factor works.

The collaboration factor is active when **reciprocal feedback** functions in the classroom. Reciprocal feedback in collaboration means that the pupils convey information regarding themselves and their activities to the teacher: *"They come and tell what they did at home, and what pet they keep"* (Interview, T1), while the teacher provides information on himself or herself and their activities to the pupils: *"They ask me: "Teacher, what do you have as a pet, how is your dog, how is your cat doing?" And I tell them"* (Interview, T1). Such reciprocal information exchange is vital in interacting. The knowledge provided by reciprocal feedback increases the efficiency of pupils' and teacher's activity, it improves the pupils' social skills, and helps to build positive interpersonal relationships. In both classrooms in question, reciprocal feedback was provided during the meetings in the morning and after the lessons: *"We begin every*

morning in a circle and we end every day in a circle" (Interview, T1), as well as during the lessons: *"We also talk during lessons, we come into a circle"* (Interview, T1), when everyone willing to speak is listened to with respect, achievements are rejoiced over, thanks are given, it is openly stated how everyone feels, what actions on behalf of fellow pupils have been unacceptable or hurtful, what pupils know about something, and what they have done over the weekend. By providing and receiving feedback, the pupils learn about the needs of other pupils and inform them about those of their own. Reciprocal feedback helps them to learn from each other. The pupils also have a possibility to provide feedback regarding themselves and their activities to themselves by filling a special table: *"Every day they evaluate themselves, how they managed to communicate, and act friendly today, how they managed to work and follow rules during lessons"* (Interview, T1).

Collaboration and **action coordination** are two interdependent processes; therefore, successful action coordination also increases the success in collaboration. Action coordination in collaboration is linked to providing advice: *"The teacher suggests that we should begin with the easiest tasks and move on to more difficult ones"* (Observation, Class B), looking for solution: *"If something happens, then we think about it and solve it"* (Interview, T1), and with asking to give opinion: *"The teacher asks the pupils if they enjoyed the lesson"* (Observation, Class A). When coordinating actions, the teacher does not exploit her status by taking a unilateral decision but provides their opinion and allows the pupils to make the decision themselves: *"We do it all together, I propose and they decide if they need it or not"* (Interview, T2). The pupils also have opportunities to state their opinions and the teacher enjoys her right to provide advice: *"They write their opinions down and then I see, based on their opinions, what we do"* (Interview, T2). During the action coordination with the teacher, misunderstandings occur; however, the pupils accept them without anger but as an inevitable regularity of interpersonal interaction with the teacher: *"She can mislead us somehow too, for example, confuse me with another pupil. It was very funny to me."* (Interview, ST 3).

During collaboration, **positive interdependence** between the pupils and the teacher reveals itself in understanding the existence of common goals, which can only be achieved when staying and acting together. Every pupil is needed and valuable for the school community because of his or her otherness: because they are exactly as they are and have different experience. The pupils with special educational needs convey their own experience to other pupils by acting together, by using their abilities in the activities, thus clearly demonstrating that individual differences are a value rather than

a shortage. Positive interdependence between the pupils and the teacher is realized through unconditional acceptance, which serves as a grounds for the ability to tolerate other people's differences and diversity: *"The teacher lets the pupil who has difficulties in reading not to read"* (Observation, Class A), as well as through the recognition of equity between the pupils and the teachers: *"And we simply stay on friendly terms, we are friends"* (Interview, T2), which manifests itself in the acknowledgement of individuality rather than sameness: *"The teacher always explains but sometimes not very clearly"* (Interview, ST 4). Positive interdependence of the pupils and the teachers manifests itself via respect; therefore, both the pupils and the teacher have a possibility to demonstrate their approach: *"The teacher always tries to reconcile us but we somehow don't let her"* (Interview, ST 1), and to have their needs met: *"The teacher repeats to an individual pupil what she had already told to them all"* (Observation, Class B). Positive interdependence induces the sense of belonging, which reveals psychological membership in the school community as well as personal inclusion: *"I would like two pupils to change, and to act nicely in the classroom. Then it would be great in our class"* (Interview, ST 5), which enhances motivation to be kind towards others: *"When we are playing a game, she interferes and interrupts. But you still have to accept the person because it's not your game but that of the class"* (Interview, ST 1), provides safety: *"The teacher brings the girl who had retreated back, and embraces her"* (Observation, Class A), as well as the joy of being together: *"Sometimes, when it's somebody's birthday, we bring a bag with treats to eat, it's fun"* (Interview, ST 3).

Positive interdependence between the pupils and the teacher is linked to mutual responsibility and strengthens the belief that every pupil and every teacher is responsible not only for their own results but also for the results of the entire class: *"When, for example, nobody answers when asked for a simile in a task, and when nobody can answer what digit it is, then I answer it"* (Interview, ST 5). Joint responsibility enhances achievement motivation in pupils as the results of the entire classroom activity might depend on the effort of a single pupil: *"The teacher reminds the pupil not to give clues because everyone must think for themselves"* (Observation, Class B). Such responsibility facilitates the fulfilment of the needs of a pupil with special educational needs through collaboration, based on the word *have to*: *"I have to encourage them: "Girls, accept her to play"* (Interview, T1). Positive interdependence in the classroom creates a common belief that every pupil and the teacher are closely linked; therefore, they are all necessary and valuable in learning. Such an interdependence highlights the necessity of everyone's effort in order to achieve learning success of all the pupils

in the classroom, that everyone is responsible for the learning success of the pupils of the class, and that the pupils and the teacher cannot feel good if there is someone in the classroom who is feeling bad: *"If there is one who feels bad, then we say we all feel bad"* (Interview, T1).

Positive interdependence increases the pupils' and the teacher's self-respect and confidence in oneself and others. Situations in which the pupils work towards a common goal and the contribution of every pupil (including that of those with special educational needs) can determine whether the goal will be achieved, and strengthen positive interdependence.

Empowerment in interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher is a process, the result of which is the experience of power. By experiencing one's power, both a pupil and a teacher can act successfully and achieve desired results. **Mutual empowerment** is linked to a growing self-confidence, increasing independence, improving self-acceptance, and strengthening of social and emotional support. Mutual empowerment manifests itself in the form of the teacher's support for the pupils: *"In the course of a lesson, you can immediately notice those who don't know or understand, they raise their hands, you come to them, and you see what they don't know how to do, what they don't know, or do it incorrectly; they're not afraid to ask"* (Interview, T2), and the pupils' support for the teacher: *"The teacher doesn't know how to switch off the music, a pupil shows her the way to do it"* (Observation, Class B). Mutual empowerment is also linked to promotive interpersonal interaction, which takes the form of help in the face of a difficult task or a problem, and emotional encouragement in cases of experiencing failure in carrying out a task or solving a problem. Mutual empowerment serves for the pupils and the teacher to facilitate each other's activity: *"The teacher solves many problems"* (Interview, ST 7), *"It's simply that if I need something, I know they can do it"* (Interview, T2).

Communication skills learning

Another factor of a successful interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher is communication skills learning. In the classrooms participating in the research, time is allocated for communication skills learning both during the lessons and during the "class hours" (time for discussing class-related issues). The teachers discuss the patterns, advantages, and benefits of positive interpersonal communication with pupils: *"We have Social Skills lessons"* (Interview, ST 6), they draw attention to the main rules of such communication: *"We learned to say hello*

and goodbye" (Interview, T1). The factor of communication skills learning involves understanding another person in communication, providing rationale for one's own opinion, and maintaining communication (see Figure 26).

Developing **understanding of another person in communication** is inextricably linked to empathetic attitudes, which manifest themselves through the recognition and understanding of other persons: *"I always help everyone because I see and I say: "Why are you crying today? What happened?"* (Interview, ST 4). Empathetic attitudes during interpersonal interaction help the pupils to understand the teacher's feelings, thoughts, and actions, and the teacher to understand the pupils' feelings, thoughts, and actions. The ability to place oneself in another person's shoes and, thus, understand them better and respond more accurately optimizes the interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher: *"A pupil says you have to listen to the end because when others talk, they don't hear anymore"* (Observation, Class B). Understanding another person in communication is linked to the development of positive expectations towards the other person: *"The teacher states a pupil will not cheat because she is an honest pupil"* (Observation, Class B). The teacher's expectations towards the pupils affect the pupils' motivation and learning results. Positive expectations of the teacher towards a pupil with special educational needs increase the pupil's motivation and contributes to his or her better learning results. If the teacher fails to perceive the abilities of the pupils with special educational needs correctly, and often expresses (verbally and/or non-verbally) negative expectations towards the pupils, in the course of time, the pupils confirm the teacher's expectations in their learning activity, and fail to make progress. Therefore, the teacher should express exclusively positive expectations towards all the pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. By expressing positive expectations towards pupils with special educational needs, the teachers confirm their confidence in the pupils' abilities: *"She knows what she wants, she's very artistic, and draws beautifully, she's a truly great girl"* (Interview, T1). It must be noted that positive expectations are a strong motivator not only for pupils but also for the teacher: *"The teacher is very kind"* (Interview, ST 1). It is worth mentioning that one of the teachers observed develops the understanding of another person in communication by dedicating a separate lesson for the purpose, and successfully employing the exercise of drawing according to another pupil's indications.

Providing rationale for one's own opinion in communication is one of the possibilities to develop communication skills. By providing the rationale of their own opinions, both the pupils and the teachers show respect towards each other and

open the way for constructive discussion. The training to provide the rationale for one's own opinion revealed itself in the emphasis put on the reason when expressing one's own opinion: *"The teacher proposes to let a pupil speak because she hasn't spoken yet"* (Observation, Class A), and indicating consequences when expressing one's own opinion: *"I am not friends with the boys or the girls who have hurt me a lot before"* (Interview, ST 7). Stumbling blocks in communication skills learning are numerous: for instance, in the case of aggressive communication, an opinion is usually stated without providing arguments, or by pushing the other person to necessarily accept the opinion. In order to reduce the stumbling blocks in communication skills learning, the teacher's communication model, which teaches to give rationale for one's own opinion when communicating, can become an example for the pupils to follow: *"They said: we'll organize a School of Horror for the parents but I said: "Children, the parents will be afraid to come, they'll feel uncomfortable, and they'll say the celebration wasn't fun."* (Interview, T1).

Maintenance of communication is linked to fostering diversity in communication, when conditions are created to communicate to as many pupils as possible: *"We must learn to talk to all. We try to learn to communicate and collaborate with everyone. I let the children choose independently"* (Interview, T1). The variety of communication helps to build new interpersonal relationships with persons with different experience and different abilities. By encouraging communication variety, the teacher can change the attitude of certain pupils towards those with special educational needs in a desired direction, especially at the initial stages of interpersonal interaction. In a communication-friendly classroom, the pupils develop communication skills with those with special educational needs more easily and more quickly. Maintenance of communication also helps the pupils to develop self-control, which manifests itself in following class rules: *"I like it that we can chat with my friends during breaks, and during lesson we can't"* (Interview, ST 7), and applying ways to calm down after conflicts: *"They know the way to calm down by heart but don't manage to apply it at once"* (Interview, T1). A non-hostile sense of humour also helps maintain communication. Non-hostile humour helps reduce tiredness and overall tension in the classroom or between two pupils, or between the pupil and the teacher, it provides distraction when there is a need, and even helps memorize better: *"Laughing, a pupil says Einstein can be recognized by his head, and other pupils laugh along"* (Observation, Class B). Research results showed that communication is maintained by sincerity that highlights the truth, eliminates manipulations, develops honesty, builds spiritual intimacy, and opens true

feelings: *"The teacher asks the pupil who is hurt if he told the forth-grader that it hurts"* (Observation, Class A). Sincerity during the interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher helps overcome the fear of self-revelation, and gives courage to present one's private self rather than public self in communication. Maintenance of positive communication creates conditions for self-confidence to grow: *"The teacher compliments the pupils who don't know the answer"* (Observation, Class A), as well as confidence in others: *"One girl came and said: "Teacher, I want to tell you a secret, and talk after the lessons"* (Interview, T1), which helps both the pupils and the teacher to feel safe in the interpersonal interaction, when accepting challenges, taking risks, and uncovering feelings and abilities. For example, a pupil with special educational needs believes that when delivering a lesson on bees, she could receive help from *"The teacher, friends, and parents"* (Interview, ST 2), while the teacher has confidence in her pupils: *"She lets the pupils choose themselves who will lead the exercises"* (Observation, Class A).

Individual and personality-related characteristics of pupils and teachers

The third factor of efficient interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher is individual and personality-related characteristics. The pupils and the teachers are separate persons, who perceive, reason, behave, and feel differently and have different personality traits. When personalizing learning, it is important to take the fulfilment of the pupils' specific educational needs as the basis. The needs emerge during the interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher. The satisfaction of specific educational needs is facilitated or impeded by individual characteristics of the pupils and the teacher, linked to, for example, the processes of attention, perception, or reasoning, as well as personality-related characteristics that bring out personality traits such as kindness, openness, and friendliness. The individual and personality-related characteristics as an efficient interpersonal interaction factor cover the individual and personality-related characteristics of the pupils and the teacher.

The interpersonal interaction with the teacher is rendered more efficient by the following **individual characteristics of the pupils**: modelling themselves on the teacher's behaviour, understanding humour, having a motive, and expressing positive emotions (see Figure 26).

The pupils observe the teacher's behaviour both during lessons and during breaks, and can model it. Modelling is a process consisting of copying the observed

behaviour of another person. Modelling of teacher behaviour helps the pupils to follow behavioural rules: *"Sometimes when I'm the goalkeeper and I fail to block a shot, one pupil, if he's in my team, starts to scold me: "Why did you let it through, why, why did you let it through?" I don't say anything, I just walk away"* (Interview, ST 5). When answering to the researcher's question of why it is not allowed to play games on a mobile phone, the pupil says: *"Because you have to study"* (Interview, ST 6). By modelling teacher behaviour, the pupils absorb moral values: *"I've learnt a lot from the teacher. I've learnt you don't have to be selfish"* (Interview, ST 7), they learn to provide help: *"The pupil stays next to one pupil, then to another, and corrects their mistakes"* (Observation, Class B), and to solve communicational problems: *"A conflict is role-played among two "pupils": the "teacher" takes the conflicting "pupils" aside and talks to them"* (Observation, Class A).

Understanding humour facilitates the interpersonal interaction with the teacher as it builds the sense of commonness between the pupils and the teacher when they laugh together: *"A pupil says they learnt about a composer Brazauskas last lesson. Everybody laughs."* (Observation, Class B). In this case, the pupils' and the teacher's laughter came from replacing the composer's name with the name of a former president of Lithuania. Humour reduces tension in interpersonal interaction as someone makes a joke, *"A pupil tells the teacher that the pupil is turning into a wolf"* (Observation, Class B).

Learning cannot be successful without an active and targeted activity, and activity cannot exist without a motive. Having a motive helps the pupils to accept what the teacher proposes: *"He's now doing it, he's trying. He's doing it, which would have never happened before"* (Interview, T2), to present their interests: *"One girl came and said: "I want to deliver a lesson on how people can ruin the world." Well, she's worried about the world and that we must save our world"* (Interview, T1), and to maintain the positivity of interpersonal interaction: *"While kicking the ball in the corridor, a boy is hurt; he's lying on the floor in the corridor crying but other boys tell him to get up. The boy gets up, wipes his tears, keeps his leg up, it's obviously hurting; he stands leaning against the wall for a while and joins in the game again. He's hobbling but playing together with the others."* (Observation, Class A).

The interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher is enhanced and facilitated by verbal and non-verbal expression of emotions: *"They greet with a handshake, saying it's nice to see you"* (Observation, Class A), which increases the significance of everyone taking part in the interpersonal interaction including the pupils with special educational needs. The efficient interpersonal interaction is

maintained by a mutual sense of happiness, smiles, cheerfulness, and enthusiasm: *"I feel happy interacting with the children, when I see smiles on their faces, when I see they did all well in the lessons, that they're cheerful during breaks, they arrive shining and go home cheerful; then I feel the day has gone well. And then I go out happy"* (Interview, T2).

The analysis of research results revealed the following **personality-related characteristics of the pupils** that facilitate their interpersonal interaction with the teacher: friendliness, sincerity and honesty, patience and tenderness, autonomy and consciousness (see Figure 26).

Friendly pupils can engage in the education process better, providing multisided help to the teacher: *"A pupil asks the teacher but his fellow pupil explains it to him on her own initiative"* (Observation, Class B). It must be underlined that the pupils' friendliness in the interpersonal interaction with the teacher can take the form of both constructive criticism towards the teacher: *"A pupil corrects the teacher, saying they have to think of it themselves and not just accept the proposal"* (Observation, Class B), and respect: *"The teacher is so sincere, she gives us all sorts of tools, and teaches us well"* (Interview, ST 5). Friendliness in the interpersonal interaction with the teacher as a character trait in a pupil with special educational needs helps to understand and empower one another better.

Honesty is considered synonymous to sincerity; however, the difference between a person's sincerity and honesty can be defined as follows: sincerity as a trait manifests itself in stating the truth: *"The children tell me absolutely everything"* (Interview, T1), while honesty is visible in stating the truth when asked: *"I saw one child standing there for a long time. He's waiting and waiting for something next to me. I tell him: what's wrong? And he bursts into tears"* (Interview, T1). The pupils' honesty facilitates interpersonal interaction with the teacher since the teacher receives correct information from the pupil and can propose the optimal solution to the problem in less time: *"They tell me, they always come and tell me who'd hurt them, what happened, and how"* (Interview, T1). The pupils' honesty is linked to their self-reflection: *"The pupils admit to the teacher that they don't know openly and bravely"* (Observation, Class B), and courage: *"A pupil announces aloud that she would be able to cheat"* (Observation, Class B). The acceptance and fostering of the pupils' honesty help the teacher learn about the feelings and reasons of behaviour of the pupils with special educational needs, and to take them into consideration. Thus, mutual trust develops in the interpersonal interaction of pupils and teachers: *"A pupil confesses of not being*

able to write a dictation in English" (Observation, Class B), which serves as a basis for authentic relationships.

A learning person must have patience. During the lessons, the pupils might experience annoyance or weariness; however, this does not cause the interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher to break, and the lessons continue according to the timetable. Tolerating annoyance and weariness demonstrates the possession of the trait of patience: *"The pupil is reading with difficulty but everyone listens to him patiently"* (Observation, Class B). Patient pupils realize that the process of the interpersonal interaction with the teacher is not necessarily easy and joyful all the time: *"I wish it was more fun during lessons and we could chat during lessons"* (Interview, ST 4).

Tenderness on behalf of the pupils during the interaction with the teacher creates the sense of warmth and comfort, and reduces anxiety and tension: *"He's very easy. The fourth-grader is not afraid to come and give a hug."* (Interview, T2). By demonstrating tenderness towards the teacher, the pupils also express it in their own interaction with fellow pupils: *"A pupil approaches the pupil with special educational needs and gives her a firm hug"* (Observation, Class A). Tenderness, particularly in its non-verbal form, in the interpersonal interaction of the pupil and the teacher creates expectations of positivity in future interaction: *"Because they all think I'm very kind. They know I won't do anything bad"* (Interview, ST 2).

The pupils' autonomy enables them to feel responsibility for their own activity in the interpersonal interaction with the teacher: *"They did everything themselves, I did not contribute anywhere, they made the postcards, bought the chocolate, and did everything else themselves"* (Interview, T2), and equality with the teacher: *"I leave them to it and don't interfere at all. They find agreement perfectly well on their own, you don't have to interfere"* (Interview, T1). When describing a pupil with special educational needs, the teacher indicated that her autonomy has increased with time: *"She has found her place; she attends after-school groups she wants. She knows what she wants"* (Interview, T1). The possibility to independently decide and manage their activity enhances the pupils' intrinsic motivation.

The higher the pupils' consciousness, the more efficient is their interpersonal interaction with the teacher. The pupils' consciousness reveals itself as they recognize and analyse their emotions, emotional states, and feelings: *"When I'm tired, I get angry at myself"* (Interview, ST 3), as well as by acknowledging their own individual particularities; for example, a pupil with special educational needs claimed: *"For some*

reason, I'm quite sensitive, and I should be like everyone else" (Interview, ST 2). In the classrooms where the research was carried out, the pupils' consciousness is deliberately fostered: *"We're now discussing a conscious person. We always think in what way one has behaved, if it was impulsive or conscious"* (Interview, T1). Moreover, opportunities are provided for the pupils in the classrooms to demonstrate their consciousness: *"A child arrives in the morning and writes down where he or she is willing to spend the day"* (Interview, T1).

The analysis of the research results revealed the following **individual characteristics of the teacher**, which facilitate their interaction with the pupils: attentiveness and good memory, positive thinking and effective problem-solving ability in case of problems arising during the interpersonal interaction (see Figure 26).

Attentiveness is a quick and precise shift of attention towards environmental stimuli. The teacher's attentiveness in interpersonal interaction with the pupils helps timely response to the pupils' needs: *"The teacher quickly notices the pupils' raised hands, and comes to them"* (Observation, Class A). The good memory of the teacher is also of great necessity as the interpersonal interaction in the classroom takes place with 20 to 30 pupils. At the beginning of the interpersonal interaction, quick and precise memorization of the pupils' names is of crucial importance: *"The teacher remembers every pupil's name perfectly well"* (Observation, Class A). In order for the interpersonal interaction to gain more efficiency, the teacher must remember as much information significant to the pupils as possible: *"I chat with the children, they tell me, for example, what they did at the weekend and that their dad was admitted for a surgery. Then I ask them: "How's your dad, is he well yet?"* (Interview, T1).

The significance of the positive thinking of the teacher is non-negotiable in the interpersonal interaction with the children since positive thinking is linked to the psychological phenomenon of self-fulfilling prophecy. The positive ideas regarding the pupils the teacher utters affect the pupils' behaviour; for example, when answering the question if the teacher ever says he's doing well, the pupil indicates: *"She says "Well done, she says let's give him a round of applause"* (Interview, ST 5). By thinking and talking about the pupil's strengths rather than his or her weak points, the teacher "prophesies" success in the pupil's activity, thus maintaining his or her positive development. A positively thinking teacher notices the positive aspects in a situation: *"The teacher tells the pupil that making mistakes is human"* (Observation, Class A). The teacher's positive thinking gains particular importance in the interpersonal interaction with the pupils with special educational needs when the pupils experience

failures and their self-appreciation is challenged. In these cases, a positively thinking teacher encourages the pupil and gives him or her hope: *"The teacher tells the pupil that no one ever came to school knowing"* (Observation, Class A). A positively thinking teacher looks for reasons for satisfaction in various educational situations: *"You search and search. You see this doesn't work, and then you look for something different. If that doesn't work either, you look for something else again."* (Interview, T1). The efficiency of the interpersonal interaction with the pupils increases because of the teacher's determination to find the most suitable strategy of the interpersonal interaction.

Inclusive education creates new, more or less complex situations and problems of interpersonal interaction in the school, which must be solved in a constructive manner. The pupils have little experience in problem solving; therefore, they are usually incapable of solving the problems themselves. The teacher, able to solve the problems arising in the interpersonal interaction with the pupils, recognizes the problem on time, describes it accurately, considers solution alternatives, and chooses the most suitable one: *"When there are difficulties, the teacher tells us whom to address and what to do"* (Interview, ST 2).

The interpersonal interaction with the pupils is facilitated by the following **personality-related characteristics of the teacher**: kindness and obligingness, self-criticism, mobility and sportiness, calmness and self-control (see Figure 26).

The pupils notice and appreciate the teacher's kindness in the interpersonal interaction with the pupils: *"The teacher is very kind"* (Interview, ST 1). Kindness as a personality trait of the teacher manifests itself through words and actions that confirm that every need of every pupil is of great importance: *"A pupil comes to the teacher and whispers something in her ear, and the teacher allows the pupil to sit for a while"* (Observation, Class B). Kindness brings warmth to the teacher's interpersonal interaction with the pupils and helps the teacher to accept the pupils as they are: *"They know I'm like their mother. We have a friendly relationship, we are friends"* (Interview, T2). Kindness contributes to the teacher's ever stronger attitude towards the pupils with special educational needs as persons who are valuable and special despite their behaviour and/or abilities. The teacher's kindness is linked to obligingness as his or her personality trait: *"In the canteen, the teacher takes away the plate a pupil with special educational needs has finished eating from"* (Observation, Class B). An obliging teacher is ready to help the pupils and to bring them happiness by realizing their wishes: *"The teacher gives a pen from her desk to a pupil"* (Observation, Class A). Such a teacher does not think a favour to the pupil reduces his or her authority or self-value:

"He's simply begun to trust me. He sees me as his friend; he knows I'll teach him if it's difficult" (Interview, T2).

The teacher reflects on their professional activity and reveals the trait of self-criticism in the process, by acknowledging his or her mistakes: *"The teacher tells the pupil who had indicated the teacher's wrong expression: "If I said so, then I'm sorry"* (Observation, Class A), and by evaluating him or herself: *"He's so good at telling and formulating. I wouldn't be able to do it that way."* (Interview, T1). By acknowledging that he or she can be wrong or incapable, during the interpersonal interaction, the teacher shows the pupils a possibility to correct mistakes and develop abilities.

The teacher's mobility manifests itself in frequent educational trips organized: *"The teacher thinks of many excursions"* (Interview, ST 1), and helps to bring variety into the learning environment as well as to socialize the pupils: *"We do not only sit at school, we go and travel a lot everywhere. Each month we go out somewhere. In fact, the children behave very well on trolleybuses and elsewhere. During trips, they're so good that I'd go anywhere any time. I'm very happy it's not scary to take them out anywhere."* (Interview, T2). In a travelling classroom, the interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher is tested through new experiences, which can make them closer. The teacher's sportiness activates the pupils' physical activeness, which, on its behalf, improves the pupils' cognitive functions: *"We can play all sorts of sports games with our teacher. It's never boring during breaks."* (Interview, ST 6). Being physically active, the pupils help meet the needs of fellow pupils with disabilities: *"A girl is pushing a boy in a wheelchair in the corridor. She's pushing him very fast, the boy's smiling"* (Observation, Class B). A sporty teacher, by arranging teams for games and by including pupils with special educational needs in them, satisfies the need of the latter ones to relate to other pupils: *"A few pupils are playing "Catch me if you can" on the carpet in the classroom. A pupil with special educational needs is playing with them, although she is not very good at catching"* (Observation, Class A).

Calmness as a personality trait of the teacher helps the teacher to constructively tackle emotionally charged situations in the classroom: *"Some teachers simply get nervous when, for example, the class is disobedient, and the pupils are naughty; then the teacher gets very nervous and shouts at the class. This never happens with us."* (Interview, ST 1). The pupils and particularly those with special educational needs have positive views towards a calm and self-controlled teacher.

The researcher asked a pupil with special educational needs what he would like to change in his class. The pupil wished to make a certain teacher redundant: *"The tall*

one, the one who teaches us to cut wood. I'd sack him" (Interview, ST 3), but he was not willing to indicate the reason. When answering the researcher's question of what the meaning of a friendly person is, a pupil stated the following: *"The one who'd be friendly with you and wouldn't get angry"* (Interview, ST 4). Even a one-time outburst of negative emotions of the teacher can disturb their interpersonal interaction with the pupils. Attention must be paid to the psychological phenomenon of "contagious" emotions. A calm and self-collected teacher does not pass their anxiety, dissatisfaction, or irritation on to the pupils. A self-controlled teacher shows an example to the pupils of the desirable behaviour in conflict situations: *"The teacher simply takes you out to the corridor and has a chat"* (Interview, ST 1). Teachers exposing their personality and individuality to pupils become the models of behaviour for pupils.

As seen in Figure 26, the positive and supportive reciprocal interpersonal interaction between the pupils and the teacher manifests itself through collaboration, communication skills learning, and individual and personality-related characteristics.

Reciprocal feedback, action coordination, positive interdependence, and mutual empowerment facilitate the process of collaboration in the inclusive classroom. Reciprocal feedback is active when pupils and teacher provide information about themselves and their activities, give advice, make decisions, and ask for opinions. Unconditional acceptance of pupils' diversity, an overall sense of equity and respect, psychological membership in the school community, and mutual responsibility expressed by the belief that every pupil and every teacher is responsible not only for their own results but also for the results of the entire class make collaboration between the pupils and the teacher more effective. Mutual empowerment occurs when teacher and pupils are sincerely engaged in promotive interpersonal interaction, which means definite help in the face of a difficult task or a problem, and emotional encouragement in cases of experiencing failure. The pupils and the teacher respond to this engagement with mutual interest and intention to promote growth.

Understanding another person in communication, providing the rationale for one's opinion, and communication maintenance are relevant points for communication skills learning. Empathetic attitudes help the pupils and the teacher to understand the feelings, thoughts, and actions of another person, and enable them to respond more accurately in the interpersonal interaction. Positive expectations enable the teacher to conform her confidence in the pupils' abilities and to verify the understanding of pupils. An emphasis on reason, expressing opinions, and references to outcomes related to expressing the opinion can contribute to communication skills learning

The interpersonal interaction between pupils and teacher

COLLABORATION

RECIPROCAL FEEDBACK
- Students information about themselves and their activities
- Teachers information about themselves and their activities

ACTION COORDINATION
- Advice giving
- Decision finding
- Request for an opinion

POSITIVE INTERDEPENDENCE
- Unconditional acceptance
- Equity
- Respect
- Sense of belonging
- Mutual responsibility

MUTUAL EMPOWERMENT
- Empowerment of pupils
- Empowerment of teachers

COMMUNICATION SKILLS LEARNING

UNDERSTANDING OF ANOTHER PERSON IN COMMUNICATION
- Empathetic attitudes
- Positive expectations

PROVIDING RATIONALE FOR OPINION
- Emphasis on reason expressing an opinion
- References to outcomes expressing an opinion

MAINTENANCE OF COMMUNICATION
- Fostering diversity in communication
- Self-confidence and confidence in others
- Non-hostile sense of humor
- Self-control training
- Sincerity in communication

INDIVIDUAL AND PERSONALITY-RELATED CHARACTERISTICS

INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS
- Modeling of teacher behavior
- Understanding of humor
- Having a motive
- Expression of positive emotions

PERSONALITY-RELATED CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS
- Friendliness
- Honesty
- Patience and tenderness
- Autonomy
- Consciousness

INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHER
- Attentiveness and good memory
- Effective problem-solving ability
- Positive thinking

PERSONAL-RELATED CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHER
- Kindness and obligingness
- Self-criticism
- Mobility and sportiness
- Calmness and self-control

Figure 26. Factors of interpersonal interaction between pupils and teacher in Vilnius "Versmės" Catholic School.

also. Self-confidence and confidence in others, a non-hostile sense of humour, self-control training, and fostering diversity in communication contribute to maintenance of communication between the pupils and the teacher.

Modelling teacher behaviour, understanding humour, having a motive, expressing positive emotions, friendliness, honesty, patience and tenderness, autonomy and consciousness are individual and personality-related characteristics of pupils that facilitate interpersonal interaction with the teacher. Attentiveness and good memory, positive thinking, effective problem-solving skills, kindness and obligingness, self-criticism, mobility and sportiness, and calmness and self-control are individual and personality-related characteristics of the teacher that facilitate interpersonal interaction with pupils.

REFERENCES

Anderson, D. (2012). Inclusion and interdependence: students with special needs in the regular classroom. In D. Anderson (Ed.), *Toward a theology of special education: Integrating faith and practice*, pp. 141-162. Bloomington: WestBow Press.

Breeman, L., Tick, N., Wubbels, T., Maras, A. & van Lier, P. (2014). Problem behaviour and the development of a teacher-child relationships in special education. In D. Zandvliet, P. den Brok, T. Mainhard, J. van Tarwijk (Eds.), *Interpersonal relationships in education: from theory to practice*, pp. 25-36. Rotterdam/Boston/Taipei: Sense Publishers.

Brock, L. & Curby, T. (2016). The role of children's adaptability in classrooms characterized by low and high teacher emotional support consistency. *School Psychology Review, 45*(2), pp. 209-225.

Bucholz, J. & Sheffler, J. (2009). Creating a warm and inclusive classroom environment: planning for all children to feel welcome. *Electronic Journal for Inclusive Education*, *2*(4), article 4. Retrieved from http://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1102&context=ejie

Buli-Holmberg, J. & Jeyaprathaban, S. (2016). Effective practice in inclusive and special needs education. *International Journal of Special Education*, *31*(1), pp. 119-134.

Charalampous, K. & Kokkinos, M. (2015). The classroom psycho-social climate: conceptual content, theoretical background, measurement instruments and relation to students' learning outcomes. *Preschool and Primary Education, 3*, pp. 157-186.

De Wilde, A., Koot, H. & van Lier, P. (2016). Developmental links between children's working memory and their social relations with teachers and peers in the early school years. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, *44*, pp. 19-30.

Edwards, D. & Mercer, N. (2012). *Common knowledge: the development of understanding in the classroom*. New York: Routledge.

Ferlazzo, M. (2015). *Building a community of self-motivated learners: strategies to help students thrive in school and beyond*. New York: Tailor & Francis.

Gablinske, P. (2014). *A case study of student and teacher relationships and the effect on student learning*. Open Access Dissertations: Paper 266. Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1284&context=oa_diss

Griffiths, C. & Smith, M. (2017). You and me: the structural basis for interaction of people with severe and profound intellectual disability and others. *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities, 21*(1), pp. 1-15.

Keamy, K., Nicholas, H., Mahar, S. & Herrick, C. (2007). *Personalising education: from research to policy and practice*. Victoria: McLaren Press.

Lyons, W., Thompson, A. & Timmons, V. (2016). We are inclusive. We are the team. Let's just do it: commitment, collective efficacy, and agency in four inclusive schools. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *20*(8), pp. 889-907.

MacMurray, J. (2012) Learning to be human. *Oxford Review of Education*, *38*(6), pp. 661- 674.

Martin, A. (2014). Interpersonal relationships and student's academic and non-academic development: what outcomes peers, parents, and teachers do and do not impact. In D. Zandvliet, P. den Brok, T. Mainhard, J. van Tarwijk (Eds.), *Interpersonal relationships in education: From theory to practice,* pp. 9-24. Rotterdam/Boston/Taipei: Sense Publishers.

Poulou, M. (2014). The effects on students' emotional and behavioural difficulties of teacher-student interactions, students' social skills, and classroom context. *British Educational Research Journal*, *40*(6), pp. 986-1004.

Santos, G., Sardinha, S. & Reis, S. (2016). Relationships in inclusive classrooms. Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 16(S1), pp. 950-954.

Wentzel, K. (2012). Teacher-student relationships and adolescent competence at school. In T. Wubbels, P. den Brok, J. van Tartwijk, J. Levy (Eds.), *Interpersonal relationships in education: an overview of contemporary research*, pp. 19-36. Rotterdam: Sense Publications.

5.3.3. EDUCATIONAL INTERACTION OF PUPILS' PARENTS: LITHUANIAN CASE

Stasė Ustilaitė, Agnė Juškevičienė

When working towards high-quality inclusive education and the successful learning of every pupil, a close collaboration between the family and the school gains importance, as well as the interaction between them. The benefit of the family and school collaboration is mutual, since the parents can know more about their child's achievements and progress made, their behaviour, emotional state, education curriculum, and the teacher's goals, and help their child accordingly; the pedagogues, who are familiar with the family context, can know better and perceive more profoundly the needs of the child and the parents' expectations, and solve problems arising at school. The flexible engagement of parents (guardians, carers) in the school life encourages responsibility sharing and open discussions, creates an appropriate microclimate, where peaceful and constructive modelling of the education process becomes possible. The creation and strengthening of the relationship between parents and teachers is an integral part of an inclusive school, which helps the child to work towards success. Research results show that both the parents and the teachers take responsibility for the creation of positive relationships, encouraging active participation of both sides.

According to the analysis of the research results, a parent-driven model, recognized in scientific literature, emerges, where teachers and parents are considered equal partners. The teachers' role is not associated with control or mere demonstration of one's superiority, and showing the parents the way they should educate their children; on the contrary, the aim is to engage parents as equal participants in the education process. It is worth noting that collaboration with parents is based on their personal commitment, which stems from personal and collective trust in one another. The researchers refer to this teacher–parent union as concealed power, and the parents' engagement is an important part of the interaction between the teachers and the pupils. Therefore, the analysis of the parent focus group data allows the researchers to distinguish the following main aspects of family and school collaboration, which arise in the context of equivalent collaboration: building reciprocal relationships based on trust and other human values; strengthening mutual support between

teachers and parents; parents' involvement in decision-making at class and school level; communication between parents in order to achieve the educational success of the child; and teachers' and school specialists' support for parents.

Building reciprocal relationships based on trust and other human values. It is worth noting that the development of a close reciprocal relationship between parents and teachers emerges as an integral part of an inclusive school, which creates conditions for the strengthening of school community and family communication culture. In order to foster the previously mentioned communication, informal activities of children as well as parent and teacher meetings are significant, which create favourable circumstances for the development of their relationships, and the formation of a system of values: "*The establishment of a small community is of great benefit to the children and the parents because if problems arise, we can solve them, and discuss, at the same time getting to know each other better . . . It is a truly warm relationship, we are like a family*" (Interview, P3). It is obvious that the establishment of a harmonious community with the relationships based on trust has a positive impact on all the participants in the education process. Furthermore, such a community-like relationship strategy leads to knowing the pupil as an individual, noting the main events in their lives such as the children's birthdays: "*. . . closer relationships, birthdays, various common after-school activities. And I think that common celebrations and get-togethers next to official meetings, and friendly time together help a lot*" (Interview, P3). Moreover, in order to create a cosy and family-like environment, school community celebrations are organized intentionally: "*In spring we have a family celebration . . . And also a sort of family dinner before Christmas (Christmas Eve). That night a theatre performance is organized at school, then a Christmas Eve table is set, we draw a straw* (a traditional Christmas Eve magic – transl.), *we share best wishes*" (Interview, P6).

The importance of parents' positive attitudes towards the teacher's activities and their confidence in the teacher emerged. It can be stated that in an inclusive school, feedback for the teacher is important, which allows him or her to feel appreciated, to believe in their own idea, and develop it in their work with the pupils: "*Sometimes, the parents suggest interesting things you don't come up with yourself. Such collaboration with parents is very helpful. Now too, a mother wrote me a letter, where she appreciated and expressed joy over the circles in the morning and at the end of the day in the classroom*" (Interview, T1).

The teacher pays particular attention to the development of pupils' interpersonal relationships, and receives positive evaluation from parents who acknowledge

the teacher's personality, commitment to children, and her authority: *"The teacher is absolutely unique. It's hard to believe how a person can give so much of herself to the children. She is an authority to our children, and in primary classes, I think, the relationship between the teacher and the children is very important"* (Interview, P4)*;* *"We have indeed been very lucky to meet such beautiful and bright people, and I wish there were more of them"* (Interview, P2); *"The teachers are able to respond to the children's expectations"* (Interview, P3). Parent acknowledgement, positive evaluation of the teacher's educational activity, and feedback is of great importance to the teacher as it enhances confidence in himself or herself as a professional, as well as in the activities they carry out.

Strengthening mutual support between teachers and parents. The research data reveals that in an inclusive school, it is important to develop the relationship between the teacher and the parents based on mutual understanding and help to each other. Firstly, the teacher aims at parents' understanding of her role as an assistance provider: *"In the evening, we sit together at a round table with some tea or coffee and have a chat. It's not that the teacher is like some leader. We are all together and the parents know they will receive help from me"* (Interview, T1). As an assistance provider, the teacher also initiates formal meetings, inviting the parents to collaborate and involving them into the education process by applying a consultation strategy: *"Twice a year, there are Consultation Days at school, when the parents can discuss issues related to their child's education, which are of interest to them, with the teachers"* (Interview, T1).

At the same time, the teacher aims at making the parents see themselves as assistance providers: *"And I know that if I need it, I'll also receive help from them. There certainly is reciprocal communication and help"* (Interview, T1). Informal meetings between parents and the teacher provide an opportunity for the teacher to join the parents' community more easily, to know them better, perceive each other's expectations and create companionable relationships: *"It's not that I, as the teacher, am more important than the parents, I simply blend in to their group"* (Interview, T1).

Parents' involvement in decision-making at class and school level. The analysis of interviews with parents highlights the parents as equal participants in the education process as the teacher endeavours to involve the parents in their children's education process by inviting them to observe the lessons she delivers and, based on the parents' particular professional experience, organize educational activities: *"With us, everyone can have the stage, come to the lesson and tell about their workplaces, to share their professional experience, e. g. in the police or printing house. The parents organize trips to*

their workplaces for the children themselves, they come and tell about interesting travels, places, they deliver lessons. For example, Lina's mother gave a lesson on healthy eating habits, she organized a lesson in a café: baking pizzas, etc. Žilvinas, together with his mother, talked about Guatemala, where their family lived for a year" (Interview, P4).

Reciprocal communication provides the parents with information on the progress their children make, and involves the parents in the pupils' education process. When the parents are involved in discussions on every child's achievements, they have an opportunity to know more about what and how their children learn, what they are good at, and what is more difficult to them: *". . . with every parent, we discuss their child's achievements personally"* (Interview, T2).

With the parents whose children have special educational needs, the teacher discusses the adaptation of curricula for the child; they discuss a lot, talk about the child's possibilities, abilities, and progress after the curriculum adaptation: *"We adapted the curricula for Lina once we discussed her abilities and possibilities"* (Interview, T1).

Individual conversations between the teachers and the parents allow the teacher to establish closer and firmer connections with the parents; they provide a chance to discuss the expectations of the parent and pedagogue community towards the children, to receive information on what is to be done, what role is expected of the parents, and also receive informal information on their child: *"When you meet with the teacher to talk privately, you can solve many problems"* (Interview, P1). Moreover, in many cases, the parents become initiators of various informal activities: *"The children travel a lot with the teachers and we, the parents, always show initiative, we suggest places to go to, and things to do and see"* (Interview, P3)**.**

The family and school community spirit manifests itself in the knowledge of the children's daily lives: *"Of course, nowadays we all communicate via emails, via logbook, by telephone, and we find everything out instantly"* (Interview, P1).

Communication between parents in order to achieve education success of the child. Strengthening the parents' community is again an important part of an inclusive school because their community is established in the school, and friendly mutual relationships between parents are fostered: *"Now, in autumn, the parents went to the cottage house of one girl to pick mushrooms. Oh, it's so much fun there. Sadly, I wasn't available that day. I couldn't make it, by no means. They later sent me some photos. The families had got together and cooked mushrooms"* (Interview, T1). Thus, the parents maintain relationships among them by using contemporary communication technologies: *"There*

are parents who are friends. There really are parents who have created their own platform and keep in touch among them via the platform" (Interview, T2).

The interview with the teacher shows that teachers aim at establishing closer relationships with the parents in a targeted and purposeful manner, and also to encourage the parents and children to keep in touch among themselves. Close collaboration between the pedagogues and the parents has a positive effect on the child; by seeing how the pedagogue and their parents communicate, the children develop social skills: *"I encourage parents to let children invite their classmates home to play together"* (Interview, T1). The teacher notices the positive impact of the strategy both on the children and the parents: *"Now I see the boys strategize themselves about who's going to go to whose place, and their parents have also established connection"* (Interview, T1). If parents establish relationships between them, a possibility arises to work together, receive support from each other, and to solve problems: *"Within the parent community, we all know each other and our community spirit has evolved into writing and calling each other, and has led to open conversations"* (Interview, P1). Parents willing to improve in the field of child cognition and thus strengthen their own individual powers as educators engage in the process of constant learning: *"Mothers are responsible for inviting interesting people, professionals in various fields, able to deliver lectures on how to treat children"* (Interview, P2).

Research data shows that a Parent Initiative Group (PIG) is active in the school, which, together with the school leaders, plans and initiates various activities, projects, and parent and teacher self-education. Moreover, the most active parents engage in the activity of the school Parent Board: *"There's also a Parent Board active in the school, which, together with the founders and the administration, take decisions important to the school on housekeeping and educational matters"* (Interview, T1).

Teachers' and specialists' support for parents is another aspect of school and parent collaboration. Research data shows that in an inclusive school, individual assistance of specialists as well as consultations are continuously provided for parents, during which education possibilities and strategies for pupils with special educational needs are discussed: *"We have a good psychologist and social worker, who give very good pieces of advice on how to treat the child and motivate him"* (Interview, P2). Interview data confirms that the parents appreciate the actual assistance the specialists provide to the children: *". . . when we receive specialist assistance, the benefit is obvious"* (Interview, P3). Moreover, collaborative connections are built with subject teachers in an inclusive education environment: *"For me, the most acceptable is meeting with*

teachers, especially subject teachers, because when you meet with them for a private conversation, you can solve many problems" (Interview, P1)**.**

In modern society, neither parents nor teachers can be isolated and look after the children's education and meet their individual needs separately; therefore, their collaboration is an inevitable and necessary component of an inclusive school in order to ensure educational success for every child. Data analysis allows the researchers to state that, in order to ensure inclusive education quality, a significant role of the teacher is highlighted in creating a collaborating family and school community that fosters its unifying values. Relationships based on common human values and positive emotions are significant both in parents' involvement, and in the activity of the teacher as a professional; the parents' positive attitude and their confidence in the teacher shape the family's views on their children's education. What is more, it is important for the teacher to feel trust and the resulting belief in his or her professional powers. In a community oriented towards the satisfaction of the needs of every pupil as well as towards their successful learning experience, it is important to create and nurture the relationship between the family and the school, based on mutual trust, assistance and support, parents' active involvement in decision making, and parents' reciprocal collaboration.

5.3.4. PROFESSIONAL INTERACTION NETWORK OF THE TEACHER

Stasė Ustilaitė, Agnė Juškevičienė

Teacher relationship with fellow teachers. The inclusive school idea brings out the importance of collaboration between the teachers, when a teacher is not isolated or restricted in the space of a certain classroom but, on the contrary, their common work creates an environment based on companionable communication within the entire school. Companionability is important for personal satisfaction of the teacher as a professional in the field, and, as McLaughlin and Talbert (2001) put it, teacher collaboration influences their morals, values, and professional growth. At the same time, companionability helps to implement change in areas of pupil education more easily, and to respond to arising challenges.

Interview data shows that communication between teachers takes place in both formal and informal environments, whereas their collaboration-based professional relationships serve as an obligatory condition for the improvement of the school, and sharing knowledge and other experience that reflects contemporary realia (Fullan, 2001). Informal communication is linked to establishing and fostering friendly and not purely professional relationships with colleagues. According to the research data, it was determined that informal teacher communication evolves in the following directions:

a) Cordial communication of teachers of a specific field, when teachers communicate with their colleagues in informal get-togethers. *"We, primary school teachers, once spontaneously went to the cottage of one of us, to a swimming pool. We also sometimes go out somewhere to a café"* (Interview, T1). Such communication allows them to know their colleagues and their attitudes, and thus create possibilities for the strengthening of mutual relationships.

b) Teacher's participation in the whole-school community. It is worth noting that "Versmės" school is Catholic and teachers working there cherish values of a Catholic community, which bring the school teachers together into a community when participating together in the Mass, retreats, trips, visiting symbols of the Catholic world: *"Before the schoolyear, then in December before Christmas Eve, and at the end of the schoolyear we go out on retreats, and also the entire school community attends the*

Mass" (Interview, T1). Such communication allows them to know the school, as well as create and cherish the school community culture. According to the research data, it is revealed that in order to build the school community and create an opportunity for everyone to meet the school administration, a coffee-break is organized every day after the second lesson, when various topical information is presented, and school life realia are discussed. Targeted and purposeful creation of school community traditions is highlighted. It is visible in the operation of a spiritual guidance group in the school, which is responsible for informal communication between the teachers: *"There's a spiritual guidance group, which is responsible for all the events for teachers, including greetings on anniversaries"* (Interview, T1).

Analysing the research data, formal communication was also highlighted, linked with professional relationships among teachers. Two groups thereof should be distinguished:

a) Companionable communication in professional field, aiming at familiarizing with innovative trends in education. In an inclusive school, continuous improvement of educators is important, as well as deepening and maturing their professional experience by receiving information from external sources. The research data shows that pre-planned methodical meetings are important, which take place once a month, and where experience gained in seminars is shared: *"We have methodical meetings, where we discuss educational matters, and new things that we have learnt. The meetings are pre-planned because it is always interesting to know more"* (Interview, T2); *"After seminars, we share what we have learnt, we discuss how we can apply it in our work"* (Interview, T1).

b) Companionable communication in the professional field by disseminating previously acquired and realized experience. When implementing an inclusive school model, a particularly important aspect is the teacher's interpersonal relationships, based on self-evaluation in the context of activities the teachers carry out, on distinguishing positive aspects, and disseminating professional experience to others. It is confirmed by the research data as the knowledge acquired, and methods designed are shared among teachers together with the possibilities of their application: *"I know what my colleague does. For example, she applies the flower method as a means of enhancing the pupils' motivation; its essence is collecting petals. I was also considering possibilities to apply it, firstly by evaluating how suitable it is to me, and how I could apply it"* (Interview, T1). This idea confirms that the teachers' interpersonal relationships develop when, firstly, the teacher is able to identify his or her best professional practices, which strengthen

him or her as a professional, and is willing to share them with others; and, secondly, the teacher assigns significance to the recognition coming from their colleagues. For example, collaboration with subject teachers of other areas by showing interest in the activities they carry out is highlighted: *"I also interact with subject teachers. For example, the teacher of Physics gives lessons on how a bulb lights up for us, the fourth-graders. I am currently getting ready with the teacher of Chemistry. She will lead experiments for us"* (Interview, T1). Such relationships also include the pupils as their research activity competencies are strengthened.

The aspects indicated suggest the teachers' sense of self-satisfaction, growth in self-esteem, and successful realization of various educational activities. A research participant confirms that *"Now we have a joint project of the first to fourth grades that we participate in, and also we organize various events, all the primary school teachers together"* (Interview, T1).

Summarizing both formal and informal communication trends, which are important in strengthening relationships among teachers, it is worth noting that according to the research data, what also emerged was initiating change with the aim of creating a community of teachers learning together. It can be claimed that an inclusive school is a community of teachers learning together, with the focus on also improving fundamental elements. Prediction of the quality level of the relationships between teachers and the identification of expectations therein are highlighted, since more frequent informal meetings among teachers by applying methods that encourage collaboration and communication are acknowledged as important: *"I'd like to sit down in a circle with my colleagues once a week and simply discuss a certain issue that we would raise, simply in order to hear everyone out"* (Interview, T1). It shows that the relationships between teachers and the quality thereof depends on the ability to self-evaluate the positive aspects and those to be improved on, and the teachers' social skills are also considered as one of inclusive school priorities.

Teacher's relationships with other school specialists. Communication with professionals of various fields working in the school is based on the needs of a specific classroom, when professional experience of professionals in various fields is employed to tackle the pupils' educational and behavioural problems. The importance of distributing responsibility for pupils with special educational needs is highlighted, since consultations with specialists serve to look at ways to work with a specific child, to adapt curricula, and are later used for sharing feedback, and reflecting on cases of success and failure. In an inclusive school, the need for psychological assistance

and the importance of therapy sessions emerge particularly clearly. When solving behavioural problems of the children, the teachers, after discussing the issues with the psychologist and the parents, propose art therapy for the correction of the children's behaviour. In order to respond to every child's needs, the teachers, collaborating with the school specialists (speech therapist, special needs teacher, social pedagogue, etc.) design individualized curricula, continuously reflect on the education process, and, working alongside the special needs teacher, they focus on the pupils' academic achievements, and, for example, the support for the pupil in lessons of the Lithuanian language and Mathematics. The pupils' academic achievements are a constant topic for discussions between teachers and the special needs pedagogue.

It is obvious that the pedagogue is the leader of the education process, and specialists working in the school must be prepared to react to multifaceted situations by responding to every child's needs. Joint work of the teacher and the specialists is obligatory for this purpose.

REFERENCES

Fullan, M. (2001*). Leading in a culture of change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
McLaughlin, M. W. & Talbert, J. E. (2001). *Professional Communities and the Work of High School Teaching*. London: The University of Chicago press.

5.3.5. LEARNING – TEACHING APPROACH: LITHUANIAN CASE

Alvyra Galkienė

Inclusive education philosophy includes the perception of an educational environment favourable to the success of every pupil. Research results show that such an environment is built through flexibility in both the curriculum and the application of methods, as well as in co-operation between educators, and the school ethos based on trust and respect (Fernández-Batanero, 2014; Specht et al., 2016). At the Lithuanian school where the research was carried out, primary school teachers work in primary classrooms. Some subjects (music, foreign languages, and religious studies) are taught by subject teachers. They are assisted by a team of specialists (special needs teachers, psychologists, speech therapists, and social pedagogues), which is beneficial to pupils of all the classes. In classrooms with pupils with major educational needs, teacher assistants are present to help during all lessons. The classrooms participating in the research do not have constantly present teacher assistants; however, when needed, the latter are called from other classrooms.

Learning design

This dimension in the diaries reflects the teachers' engagement in modelling ways to increase interpersonal interaction and pupils' susceptibility to learning motivation. They focus on the issues of the application of curriculum planning methods less but rather are strongly oriented towards creating access to education and the appeal of the process to every pupil.

Children as equal learning designers. Teachers' discourse demonstrates a clear intention to acknowledge pupils as equal designers of the education process. Teachers ask pupils to evaluate the quality of the day at school that is coming to an end. The practice takes place every day during a Goodbye Circle. Together, pupils plan classroom activities or solve arising difficulties by participating in group discussions with their fellow pupils. The pupils are continuously encouraged to discuss, choose, and make decisions. The teacher acknowledges the help from the pupils as important advisors in decision-making: *"All the children will take part in the theatre performance but there are only two roles: girls and grandmas. The girls compete. They all want the role. I allowed a few girls to try but we will have to choose only two of them. So, I am faced with a dilemma, whether to select the ones that I can see could do it best, or to*

choose randomly by drawing lots. I'll have to discuss it with the girls tomorrow" (Diary A.) Thus, pupils are encouraged to reflect on the criteria of the final result of the activity they are engaged in. In this case, it is either the quality of their joint activity as a recognition of a common achievement, or the realization of personal wishes. In reflections of this nature, the children are called on to take a deeper look at the phenomenon of the sense of community and individuality, to reflect on and evaluate their own personal capabilities.

   Success for each child as the reference point for learning design. Teachers who design the education process consider every pupil's (individual) success and overall feeling. Characteristically, in cases of success and failure of pupils with learning difficulties, teachers plan their own influence on the pupils' motivation purposefully. *"There are several children who don't care at all about doing the tasks they hadn't done before, I'll have to think of strategies or motivation to make them care about doing the tasks"*, *"I'm very happy about Lina. Today during the lessons she was active and even raised her hand, which is not like her at all. I will have to compliment her in the class journal"* (Diary A). The goal in both cases is the pupils' conscious participation in the education process, by understanding the consequences of their behaviour and expecting positive results. A motivating activity naturally raises good feelings within a pupil. Therefore, when considering educational activities, teachers also model the environment favourable for the good feelings of every pupil. In this respect, three directions of focus emerge in their deliberations: the pupil's feelings, relationship with the pupil's family, and the teacher's feelings. While solving the issues of every pupil's emotional well-being, teachers focus on the general social and educational context: *"Some children feel shy and do not want to read pieces they compose aloud. Which means that we are still unable to accept each other in such a way that everyone could feel good . . ."* (Diary A). The social and educational context in the school is determined not only by the situations that emerge in the school but also by episodes of life at home, the experiences of which children bring to school. Pedagogical experience reflection diaries reveal high attentiveness on behalf of teachers towards children's experiences at home. *"Today, everyone had to have a pair of compasses during Maths lesson. Edgaras said he went to get one with his parents at 9:30 PM. He had probably forgotten he needed one"* (Diary A). Such an episode in family life helps the teacher, on the one hand, to evaluate a wonderful lesson of responsibility that the pupil received from his parents, and, on the other hand, it encourages her to review her own working style in order to create educational consistency throughout the entire educational environment of the

pupils. *"I am overly lenient and inconsistent. I will have to go through it again and set clear criteria. If they chat during the lesson and I give them good assessment, they take it as a good thing to do," "Now I clearly feel that modelling behaviour, communication, and following rules as well as assessment must be stricter and clearer because the children have started to manipulate"* (Diary A). A teacher who sees himself or herself as an equal participant in educational activity not only constantly looks for the most suitable educational models but also continues to learn and improve themselves.

Parents' and pupils' point of view. During group interviews, pupils' parents emphasize three aspects in education modelling that are important for the success of their children at school. In their opinion, encouraging motivation for learning is a crucial criterion for success in learning. Children with high motivation for learning, in parents' views, are less dependent on the teacher's leadership in the education process. They also note that a pupil's self-confidence is directly linked to their motivation for learning; therefore, attempts are made in the family to encourage the motivation by various means. Parents see the promotion of pupils' initiative in the education process as another important criterion. They emphasize opportunities provided for children to act independently, for example, to organize celebrations by also including parents in them. The parents notice that the attitude the teacher displays when organizing an educational activity is also present in the relationships with the parents that she builds. Attempts to constantly seek the pupils' parents' advice encourage their active involvement in modelling educational activities. The third aspect that the parents highlight in their discourse on the process of inclusive education in their classrooms is the open relationship that is created between the teacher and the pupils. The teacher's ability to focus on the children's expectations builds a relationship of active partnership between all the participants in the educational reality.

The data from interviews with pupils shows that the pupils do not assign relevance to their own participation in education organization processes, but they put particularly strong emphasis on the teacher's activity together with them (conversations, joint sports activities, and participation in games). The inclusion of pupils in the planning process of educational activities reflects the style of pedagogical leadership through collaboration, which deformalizes the education process, and builds an environment for equal activity of all participants in the education process.

Collaboration. The teachers' diaries give the strongest relevance to the aspect of collaboration in the education process. The collaboration network that the teachers

discuss embraces education participants at an institutional level. Inter-institutional or inter-service collaboration was not brought to light in the research. Research participants indicate special pedagogical or psychological assistance providers working at school as significant partners in the education process, namely, special needs pedagogue, speech therapist, psychologist, social pedagogue, and teacher's assistant.

Collaboration with special needs pedagogue. The role of the special needs pedagogue is revealed in three areas in the teachers' reflections: 1) overall planning of child's activities: *"I must make a plan, together with the special needs pedagogue, for developing Lina's mathematical skills"* (Diary A); 2) direct provision of learning assistance to the pupil by the special needs pedagogue: *"Lina gladly works with the special needs pedagogue and clarifies tasks she had not understood previously. Especially in Mathematics. This time they went through the test and clarified the tasks"* (Diary A); 3) evaluation of pupil's achievements: *"We discussed Lina's achievements with the special needs pedagogue"* (Diary A), *"We rejoiced over Paulius' achievements in Maths as well as over Antanas' efforts and results"* (Diary B). Teacher diary entries show that the assistance of the special needs pedagogue for the pupil is planned together with the teacher. The planning process includes the evaluation of the pupil's success in class and the identification of specific difficulties in participating in class activities. The teacher and the special needs pedagogue exchange insights, each according to their competencies, and plan ways to increase learning efficiency of the pupil together. The principle of direct assistance of the special needs pedagogue to the pupil is to help prepare for learning activity in the class. The special needs pedagogue evaluates the pupil's achievements together with the teacher. The quality of the pupil's learning activity and the efficiency of assistance are evaluated.

Collaboration with speech therapist. The assistance by the special needs pedagogue is complemented by the assistance of a speech therapist for pupils with written language or speech difficulties: *". . . he makes quite many mistakes, his vocabulary is rather poor, and he finds it difficult to formulate sentences"* (Diary A). Diary entries show that the teacher and the speech therapist discuss the nature of speech therapy assistance for the pupil: *"The speech therapist worked with children who need help. We discussed the children's work during the speech therapy lesson with the therapist"* (Diary B). However, the assistance of the speech therapist is more detached from the curriculum in the general classroom than is the assistance of the special needs pedagogue.

Collaboration with psychologist. Teacher diary entries reveal a highly intensive collaboration between the teacher and the psychologist. His or her role is linked to a

possibility to know the child and the entire class more deeply: *"It was interesting how she saw my class last week when I was away"* (Diary A); the psychologist is also involved in the search for ways of solving psychological problems of individual children: *"Solutions to the psychological issues of these girls were discussed with the psychologist more than once"* (Diary A). Teachers appreciate the psychologist's advice regarding ways to stop undesirable behaviour in pupils: *". . . she advised seating him at the desk alone for a while"* (Diary A). The research results show that the psychologist's activity in the classroom includes the observation of the children's psychological state, teacher consultations, as well as direct assistance to pupils, which is greatly appreciated by teachers. In this particular case, the psychologist organizes art therapy sessions: *". . . one of them was proposed to attend art therapy sessions"* (Diary A), as well as psychological support groups: *"Žilvinas' behaviour worries me. I'm glad the child goes to sessions with the psychologist"* (Diary B). The research reveals that psychological support is important and is provided both to the pupils and to the teachers: *"The psychologist calmed me by saying that the children will only learn through consequences"* (Diary A).

In dealing with pupil behaviour issues, teachers are assisted by a social pedagogue. His or her activity is based on cognitive education: *". . . children were called in, and they had a conversation"* (Diary B). However, the role of the social pedagogue is given very little reference in this research. Perhaps in the given age group (ten to eleven years old), the pedagogical and psychological assistance provided by teachers themselves as well as by the psychologist is used more.

Teacher assistant as team member. An important member of the educators' team in implementing inclusive education is the teacher assistant. As mentioned previously, the classes participating in the research do not have teacher assistants constantly working with them as they have no children in need of continuous help from a teacher assistant. However, teacher diary entries show that in cases of need, teachers address the management team member coordinating special pedagogical assistance, who sends a teacher assistant to help, or the teacher calls the teacher assistant assigned to help in their class directly. The roles of a teacher assistant may vary including direct assistance to the child during lessons: *"She helped Paulius during the Lithuanian lesson"* (Diary B), or assistance to the teacher in organizing the education process. For example, *"she helped look after the children"* during a class outing (Diary B). The teacher assistant also assists the teacher in solving other education-related situations, e.g., preparing educational material, accompanying pupils to other educational premises, etc.

The teachers' team. Collaborative relations with teachers working in other classes develop in an inclusive educational environment. When reflecting on their educational activity, the teachers emphasize that *"collaboration with colleagues helps solve a great many of problems"* (Diary A). Arrangements among teachers working with pupils of the same class are particularly important, especially if the class includes pupils with behavioural and emotional management difficulties. For example, in a meeting, the class teacher, together with music and religion teachers working with the same class evaluate the nature of the pupils' behavioural difficulties, agree on consistent requirements as well as the application of other means of education, and assess education efficiency. These meetings are organized by the class teacher. Such meetings also take place among teachers working with parallel classes, with the aim to compare education results and share experience: *"We discussed third-graders' achievements in Mathematics with a colleague. My colleague shared her observations, material, and tasks she used"* (Diary A). Joint work together with colleagues working in other classes and sharing each other's educational materials enriches and facilitates the education organization process greatly. Pedagogues share successful pieces of their creative activities: *"It feels very good to know that my colleague has decided to build a theatre performance "A Child of God" with the children of her class, which I had staged long ago. I gave her the script. I must remember to bring her the music tomorrow"* (Diary A). Joint events organized by teachers educating pupils of the same age facilitate the education organization process greatly as well: *"Teacher X is taking care of our outing to the Christmas festivities. . . . She constantly comes and reminds me of what there still is to be done"* (Diary A). Collaboration between teachers not only enriches the education process and facilitates its organization, but it also creates a safe and engaging environment for the pedagogues: *"Working with such colleagues feels good and safe"* (Diary A).

Parents in the school network. The research results reveal strong collaborative relations between teachers and parents. Interestingly, teachers do not distinguish their own role as a provider of information on the pupils' achievements to the parents (which is a common phenomenon in schools). In this case, the opposite is true; the role of a teacher as a recipient of information on education process organization provided by the parents emerges: *"Agnė's mum sent a note on morning greetings. Apparently, the children allow themselves to mock each other. We'll have to discuss it"* (Diary A). This shows a strong connection on the co-operation chain between the teacher, the pupil, and the parents, which helps the teacher to have a deeper

insight into all the situations in class and to act accordingly: *"Parents always talk to their children, which helps me in my work"* (Diary B). On the other hand, the data from interviews with parents shows that parents are kept constantly informed about the successes and failures of their children at school. This takes place via email, or during private or whole-class meetings. The data from interviews with parents shows that the pupils' parents greatly appreciate the possibility to contribute to the planning and implementation of educational activities that the teachers provide. This opportunity is also of great importance to the children. During interviews, the children mentioned two episodes of their parents' engagement in school activities: participation in celebrations and outings, and organizing activities for the pupils of the class in their workplaces. The data from the interviews with the pupils' parents and the children shows that the partnership network with the parents, developed by the teacher, evolves into parents' interpersonal communication, mutual assistance, and joint learning.

Children as members of class network. One of the crucial collaboration aspects under the conditions of inclusive education is partnership with the pupils built by the teachers. The pedagogues highlight children's communication with them (the teachers) as a value: *"I appreciate communication with the children the most"* (Diary B). The pupils' communication with teachers covers various educational reality aspects. A sincere overall communication with the pupils on behalf of the teacher (*"the children were telling things very sincerely"* (Diary B) encourages friendly relationships between the pupils: *"the children did not sledge separately from one another but they joined into groups, they put their sledging equipment together. It was wonderful to watch them so happy"* (Diary B). When organizing the education process, the teachers continuously engage the children into it and invite their own decision-making through discussion and looking for compromise: *"Today we discussed tomorrow's Physical Education class with the children. Some said they didn't want to go outside to sledge anymore. I let them choose: two lessons outside or one in the gym"* (Diary A). Learning to find agreement, to make up one's mind, and later follow the agreements at the same time develops one's intrapersonal control skills. Together with the teachers, the children become problem solvers when difficulties occur in the classroom. For example, in an attempt to help a classmate control his behaviour: *"Together with the children and the teacher, we made some agreements, and indicated consequences for failing to follow them"* (Diary A). Thus, the failure of one child becomes the responsibility of the entire classroom community. Together with the pedagogues, by analysing situations evolving in the

classroom community, the children learn to understand the essence of events, analyse them, and foresee consequences.

Having looked into the teachers' reflections, it can be claimed that co-operational directions in the education process reflect two-way communication between education participants rather than well-developed partnership networks. A teacher collaborates with another teacher, as well as with a specialist, the pupils' parents, or with the pupils themselves. The research did not highlight any tradition of targeted interdisciplinary groups involving the children as equal partners in them.

Teacher as support giver

The roles of a collaborating teacher acquire particular importance in providing educational or socio-psychological assistance to the pupils. The attention span of the teacher, when aiming at providing assistance to the child, covers various directions. Assistance is provided not only at school, which serves as the main space of activity of the teacher, but it can also reach the family space, if there is a need for assistance to the child or his family.

Help that educates. In the course of this research, a drama occurred in the family of one girl. The child's mother fell seriously ill. The teacher observes the girl closely and gets gradually involved in her family matters. The entries in the teacher's diary provide a perfect illustration of the situation:

> – *"After the rehearsal, Aistė burst into tears. Apparently, the girl is worried her mum will not be able to come to the celebration because she is still in hospital. The mum underwent a bile surgery as some stones had developed there. We had a chat. I will have to talk to many others too"* (Diary A, December 12).
>
> – *"Immediately after the holidays I realized something was wrong with Aistė's mother. She is still in hospital. She has already been there for almost a month and a half. I thought she would be released after the bile stone surgery. The grandmother called the principal and told her that following the surgery, the mother got sepsis. We all prayed for her in the chapel"* (Diary A, January 18).
>
> – *"I called Aistė's dad today. Aistė's mum is not doing well. The dad is toiling over four children on his own. I wrote the other parents that perhaps somebody could take Aistė for the weekends or maybe we could come up with some other ways to help"* (Diary A, January 21).

The teacher is obviously watching what the child feels like at school and tries to uncover the true reasons of what might at first glance seem to be an ordinary school-like reaction to the fact that the mother will not be able to come to the celebration. The thoughts of a teacher building an engaging community are not limited to solving a sole specific case. The reaction of one child serves as a trigger for her to look into potentially unfavourable situations other children might be in. She decides to talk to other children as well in order not to miss out on cases where a teacher's help is needed so that the child's good feeling at school could be ensured. Her decisions aimed at helping a specific child are not limited to momentary support: listening, calming, and comforting the child. She brings together the entire classroom community in order to help. By inviting the children for a joint prayer for the health of their fellow pupil's mother, she teaches them to understand the situation and feeling of someone next to you; the teacher awakens empathy in the children and teaches them various forms of help. The classroom community is not limited merely to the school. The pupils' families are part of it. This is obviously proven by the behaviour of the teacher cherishing values of inclusive education. She aims at helping the family where the ordinary family life rhythm has been disturbed by the serious illness of the mother: the father must take care of four children and his ailing wife on his own. The teacher looks for solutions by creating a bigger family assistance network together with the families of other pupils. By inviting families to look for support solutions together, not only does she strengthen the community and improve the feeling of a child undergoing emotional tension, but she also teaches the children to build community relationships in real situations. Thus, assistance that educates evolves under the conditions of inclusive education.

Help that enhances autonomy. In other cases, the teacher provides the children with direct help in learning: *"I helped the pupils who had difficulty in doing group tasks"* (Diary B). However, diary entries show that the teacher, when creating an educational environment for successful learning of every pupil, attempts to foresee potential failure and prevent the child from experiencing it: *"In the circle, I sat next to Lina as I thought she might fail to find the nouns in the sentence and I was going to help her but she said everything like a machine gun. Well done"* (Diary A). Preventive assistance for the pupil on behalf of the teacher is also organized indirectly by offering specialized learning tools: *"I prepared rule sheets for Paulius and Antanas to use in the lesson"* (Diary B). By providing auxiliary means, the teacher creates conditions for the pupils to independently participate in a common education process. Some children are in

need of assistance in order to learn how to use the tools designed for them. Teachers help solve the problem as well: *"I showed Paulius how to use the rule sheet, and how to find the rule he needs"* (Diary B). The teacher constantly monitors the child's success in learning and applies flexibly the different ways of assistance that allow the pupils to continuously experience learning success: *"Paulius and Antanas did great even though they follow an adapted curriculum"* (Diary B). A teacher who applies inclusive education strategies also notices difficulties faced by extremely brilliant pupils: *"Juozas is great in Maths but he lacks working skills, so he wastes a lot of time"* (Diary A). Consequently, the teacher is going to help the pupil to obtain command of learning strategies in order to help the pupil to use all his learning powers efficiently. Preventive assistance on the teacher's side, which helps the pupil to avoid failure, develops the pupils' self-confidence and independence skills.

Help that enhances self-directed learning. Diary entries show that in providing help, the teachers aim at much higher goals than merely helping the child overcome a specific obstacle in learning. They set themselves a goal to teach the children strategies of self-directed learning and interpersonal relationship regulation, which the children can later use independently. The entries in teacher diaries reveal the use of the method of pupil self-teaching, when one of the pupils prepares and delivers a lesson in his own class. In such cases, the teacher's assistance is of a supportive nature towards the child's emotional well-being and leading towards optimal performance of the task underway: *"Today was the Pupil Teacher Day, Martynas was very nervous, so I had to give him a few boosts of confidence but I believe he did excellent and the children learnt to multiply by exact tens"* (Diary A), *"After school, we'll have to discuss his lesson in Mathematics with Martynas"* (Diary A). By helping the children to reflect on the task they have done, analyse situations, and evaluate their own activity, the teacher enhances self-confidence in pupils as well as helps them evaluate the activity carried out critically and take independent decisions. Conversations with the children are a specific form of help provided by the teacher, directed towards enhancing both self-regulation and interpersonal skills. *"Today I took five minutes of the break to talk to Žilvinas. We discussed things that interest him. The result was good. I think I will have to dedicate some time to this child every day during the lunch break"* (Diary B). Teacher's attention shown to a child personally, and interest in their matters help the child to focus on themselves and overcome episodes of undesirable behaviour not only when they are surrounded by the teacher's attention but also during other activities that used to see frequent behavioural difficulties. The teacher's assistance, encouraging the

pupil to look deeper into the event and perceive its essence, helps the children restore disturbed interpersonal relationships: *"We spoke with both girls, they both explained how they felt, what makes them sad and hurts them, and what makes them happy. They both made a decision to try and communicate without anger, inciting, or gossiping"* (Diary A). Reflecting on various situations together with the teacher, and listening to each other's feelings help the children perceive themselves in the context of the classroom community and learn to take mutually favourable decisions.

Parents' and pupils' point of view. In the discourse of a group interview with the pupils' parents, when discussing the roles of assistance providers, the strongest emphasis is put on specialists' support to children. In this case, the teacher takes the role of a mediator by directing the parents to the specialist able to help in the most efficient way. Parents note that, in many cases, the children's problems are solved at school in the way that they never reach the family. In other cases, on the contrary, parents are instantly informed of adverse events, thus including the parents in the child assistance network. Trusting in the professional abilities of the teacher, the parents also entrust her with their own problems, and look for solutions together. In parents' opinion, such a flexible way of developing an assistance network not only helps to overcome the children's difficulties efficiently but also builds a confidence-based community.

The data from the interviews with pupils shows that although the pupils consider assistance by the teacher very important, they put even greater emphasis on help provided by friends. The pupils associate assistance from the teacher with learning more, although, on the other hand, they interpret the teacher's involvement in pupils' interpersonal relationship solutions as assistance as well, and they appreciate it. The data from pupil interviews shows that assistance as a phenomenon is of great importance in an inclusive education reality. The pupils emphasize not only the help they receive from teachers and specialists; they see the help they provide to each other as highly important as well.

Teacher as support taker

This component of educational activity is the least visible in teacher diaries. Interestingly, the teachers do not assign collaboration with specialists and other pedagogues to the category of assistance provided to them. According to the teachers, it is their pupils who provide assistance to them. The diaries indicate several types of assistance. Firstly, direct assistance to the teacher is referred to: *"After the lessons, Viltė*

sorted the drawings and put them into everybody's files" (Diary A). The children join the teacher's activities by simply helping the latter. The teachers notice such assistance, appreciate, and encourage it: "*Good girl, she offered her help herself. She often helps me. I must compliment her*" (Diary A). The pupils also provide indirect assistance to teachers by helping their classmates who have more difficulty. The teachers appreciate such help and see it as assistance to the teacher as it facilitates the task of education individualisation: "*Elzė helped me a lot during the Maths lesson today. She is already good at using the compass, so she helped other children who had difficulty*" (Diary A). In a classroom with more children in need of individual assistance from the teacher, mutual assistance among pupils allows for more pupils to achieve such support. The teachers see self-regulation of interpersonal relationships among pupils as assistance to the teacher as well: "*the children help me, they discipline Žilvinas. It has positive effect on Žilvinas*" (Diary B). The teachers also give slight indications of seeing good behaviour of the pupils as a certain type of assistance to the teacher: "*The children help me by being quiet during lessons, and ignoring Žilvinas' comments*" (Diary B). The research results reveal that the perception of assistance of a teacher who bases their activity on values of inclusive education is directed towards the potential learning success of every pupil. They accept the pupils' assistance to the teacher as another opportunity of personality development, while the assistance of specialists to the teacher is seen as collaboration among professionals in working towards common goals.

Teaching process

Reflections on the education process in teacher diaries show that a Catholic school implementing inclusive education follows its own traditions. These are reflected in the organization of the education process.

Cherishing traditions in the education process. Every morning, at school the lessons begin with a brief prayer, going through the upcoming events of the day, and concentrating for the day about to begin: "*All the children heartily said their prayers*" (Diary B). Sometimes, the morning prayer continues in the school chapel at other times of the day, especially in cases of evident trouble in the classroom community: "*. . . we went to pray for Aistė's mum*" (Diary A). Another morning ritual is linked to class traditions. In both classes participating in the research, every morning the lessons begin with the method of a Morning Circle. The children stand in a circle, greet each other and share an important event of the previous day briefly: "*During the*

Morning Circle, the children gladly reflected on the theatre performance. They liked the scene where Emil saved Alfred best. It shows that the children think deep and appreciate human relationships" (Diary A). In cases when there are no events important for the children, they discuss their own personal experiences: *"On every Monday morning, the children talk about their weekend during the Morning Circle"* (Diary B). One of the teachers participating in the research also applies the method of a Goodbye Circle. The day at school ends in a joint circle, with the pupils evaluating the day gone by and saying their goodbyes. Other traditions are determined by cultural specificities of the country. During the research period, the school was preparing for Christmas celebration. The event is also reflected in education organization processes: *"During the breaks, everyone was gladly rehearsing for the celebration. Everyone was friendly, and Liudas needed some encouragement"*, *"I was surprised by the children's co-operation when preparing for the celebration. They were all very keen to participate, there was no need to discipline them during the rehearsal"* (Diary B).

Traditions aimed at knowing each other better, sharing ideas, joint creative activities, and encouraging listening to one another play a particularly important role in shaping a community composed of pupils with different needs. Not only do they create an environment for communication, but they also allow for deeper understanding and acceptance of the pupils' differences as well as the manifestations of the latter in interpersonal relationships.

Pupils' experiential learning. The research results show that pedagogues engage in creative application of educational methods that allow all the pupils to naturally engage in educational activities. One of the methods is the "Pupil Teacher" method. Its application not only creates conditions for the pupils' self-expression but also helps solve certain problems. The pupils who are willing have the opportunity to prepare a lesson and deliver it to their fellow pupils. *"We discussed the organization of Vytautas' lesson with him today. He decided to present extinct reptiles, namely, a snake called Titanoboa, to the children. Well, if the children are interested in it, then let it be so. . . We arranged and piled the material he had (the children still lack material processing skills), we watched the videos he had selected. . ."* (Diary A). Vytautas is a pupil with exceptional abilities. A possibility to prepare a lesson for his classmates provides a chance to independently analyse and present the content he considers interesting and important. The remaining pupils might find the topic presented by Vytautas unexpected. Therefore, the bright pupil is faced with a challenge to think of a way to present the topic so that it was understandable and interesting to all his classmates.

The teacher gladly provides a possibility to organize a lesson to all willing pupils, seeing a different benefit for the pupil in each case. Martynas is a new pupil in the class who is facing difficulty to adapt in it and join the rest: *"We discussed the Maths lesson with Martynas. I believe it will be very important for him to show and reveal himself to his classmates. He is new and slightly reserved, so it's not easy to find contact with the boys"* (Diary A). Martynas does wonderfully in Mathematics. Therefore, the teacher creates conditions for him to use his strengths in overcoming the difficulties that have arisen. She helps the pupil to properly prepare for the lesson as, in this case, success is of particular importance to him: *"We decided to improve the lesson; Martynas is always in a hurry to do everything, so we set a challenge to slow down and think everything through very well"* (Diary A). This method of teaching organization does not only allow the children to take up the role of an educator but also to understand the specificities of interpersonal interaction. Žilvinas is a bright pupil, but he has difficulty in controlling his behaviour. He has also been given a chance to organize a lesson for his fellow pupils. However, during the Goodbye Circle after the lesson, Žilvinas admitted he was disappointed by one boy's behaviour during his lesson. The teacher interprets the situation as a good lesson for Žilvinas himself, allowing him to perceive the consequences uncontrolled behaviour has on other people: *"It is very good that the children felt what respect or lack of respect for a person, his work, and efforts is"* (Diary A).

Peer learning. In teaching analytical reasoning to the pupils, the "Insight" method is applied. The teacher invites the pupils to find an answer to a proposed question by analysing certain features: *"During "The World and Me" lesson, they had to guess the answer and then refer to the text to find relevant statements to check if their guesses were correct"*. Such an attractive learning method allows everyone to act, each according to their own abilities. The pupils who have slightly more difficulty, and fail to find correct answers based on the features provided, receive help from other pupils as the teacher encourages them to share their knowledge: *"Well done, they help each other"* (Diary A). Sharing and co-operation are extremely welcome elements of inclusive education. For this purpose, the teacher uses the "Knowledge Sharing" method that encourages the pupils not only to share their knowledge but also to collaborate on the subject: *"I love the method when we all sit in a circle and share our knowledge. You can find out so many different things"* (Diary A). When applying the method under the conditions of inclusive education, conditions are created for pupils with different abilities to learn from each other. The interest the brighter pupils have in certain phenomena raises

interest in pupils with poorer abilities as well. The pupils with a lack of abilities to learn on their own receive help from their classmates: *"Most children already knew the meaning of "minuscule", and they explained to each other"* (Diary A).

Developing behavioural self-control. The discourse in the teacher diaries reflects the fact that the teachers pay much attention to modelling the pupils' behaviour, especially in the class with the pupil with the difficulties in self-control. Teaching to control one's behaviour takes various forms: by evaluating the reasons of improper behaviour and attempting to respond to them: *"Žilvinas is back after his illness, and he's trying to attract attention to himself. I had to focus on him more"* (Diary B); by individual discussions with the pupil: *"I talked to him during the break, I asked him to tell me what he did at home when he was ill"* (Diary B); by systematic application of self-control methods: *"Today is the last day, so we'll stick little flowers on the Tree of Discipline"* (Diary B).

The results of the research reflect education organization principles favourable for the implementation of personalized education. When organizing education in classes with pupils with different abilities, the teachers employ methodical approaches that provide a possibility for every pupil to engage in joint activities and act at the level of their own ability. Experiential learning, co-operation-based methods, discussions, and group activities open the possibilities for the pupils to exchange their knowledge, teach each other, and reveal their individuality, while the teacher can distribute their attention to every child individually, considering each pupil's needs. Individual needs of the pupils are particularly actualized in this education system.

Meeting pupils' needs

Different pupils with abilities that are exceptional or significantly below the average (the teachers prepare adapted curricula for the latter ones) learn in the same classes. The classes participating in the research do not have children with significant social or cultural differences; however, these reasons can also become the cause of special needs that the teachers must acknowledge and respond to in the education process. The discourse in teacher diaries reveals several types of pupils' needs.

Need for self-realization. Self-realization is important both to particularly bright pupils and those with special educational needs. The teacher notices it: *"The pupils already need challenges. I saw it particularly well today when they showered me with offers to deliver lessons"* (Diary A), and attempt to respond to them in various ways stemming from the pupils' needs. A seemingly simple learning activity, for instance,

solving mathematical problems, becomes a pleasant challenge to the brightest pupils as well: *"It was very interesting during Maths, when the children solved Olympiad problems. Of course, Juozas stood out. He really needed such an encouragement, he felt great, and worked brilliantly indeed, and did all the most difficult tasks"* (Diary A). Juozas is the previously mentioned new pupil with a few difficulties to adapt in the class environment. The success also helps solve his adaptation-related need. With an attempt to respond to the children's needs, teachers seemingly follow the children's ideas in order to create space for good quality realization of their ideas: *"We will discuss the lesson with Vytautas after the theatre performance. He always finds topics interesting to him. He's now so much into gladiators that he can talk about them for ever. He has a brilliant memory and analytical mind. He's very pleasant to collaborate with when designing lessons"* (Diary A). The results of the pupils' self-expression create a joyful working mood, they serve to bring about deeper self-awareness in pupils, raise teacher's insights in designing the pupils' education: *"I'm happy that Vytautas delivered his "The World and Me" lesson very masterfully. All the children even gave him a round of standing ovations. He is capable of answering questions wonderfully, like a real professor. He could definitely work as a university teacher. He'd be a very appealing one"* (Diary A). The creative success of some children raises a desire in other children to express themselves through similar activities as well. It serves as a perfect example for the children with special educational needs: *"Lina's mother told me today that Lina is also getting ready to deliver a lesson, on bees. I'll wait till she tells me herself, and if she's too shy to, I'll invite her to"* (Diary A). Lina is a girl with special educational needs, she follows an adapted curriculum. The initiative of these children is also important, and the teacher, exploiting every opportunity, aims at maximum benefit for the child. By waiting for the girl to offer to prepare a lesson herself, the teacher aims at encouraging her self-confidence and her independence; however, in case the child is too shy, she intends not to miss the opportunity to provide conditions to realize the child's idea.

Teachers note that realizing the pupils' need for self-realization in a team encourages community development, especially when the pupils themselves are the initiators: *"The children like various events, they want to prepare for them and to perform"* (Diary B). Teachers creating conditions for the pupils' self-realization appreciate it and accept additional responsibilities, for example, to organize a school event: *"There's not much time left. It is a hard task for the teacher . . . We all decided to take the risk and prepare for the celebration"* (Diary B). The teacher sees the positive emotions experienced by the children as a value with an undisputed educative effect: *"The children were*

very happy to know they will have to perform in front of the teachers too" (Diary B). The results of the research show a clear orientation among the teachers towards the creation of an environment favourable for self-realization of all the pupils as well as for the educational community. Such community is the place where various aspects of interpersonal relationships are formed. It is very important to be able to accept not only the evaluation of success or compliments but also rational criticism. It is, evidently, the goal of the teachers participating in the research. The teachers give the children a chance to assess each other and state their opinion: *"The children loved assessing other pupils. They had assessment cards and assessed other pupil's reading"* (Diary B), and also to accept others' opinion. In an environment based on mutual trust, the children open up to each other and share their experiences: *"During the Morning Circle, Danielius shared his pride to have won at a basketball match"* (Diary B).

   Need to receive help. For the success of participation and learning of some pupils, timely assistance is crucial. The research results show that the necessity of assistance in classroom communities implementing inclusive education is a phenomenon understandable not only to teachers but also to all the pupils of the class. In case of necessity, children provide it to each other: *"Aušrinė immediately starts panicking that she doesn't understand something before she even tries to read. Ingrida immediately puts Aušrinė's outburst out, she calmly explains and helps her. They're wonderful children"* (Diary A). The teachers help the pupils with difficulties continuously and in various ways. Direct assistance is provided to the pupil as they face an obstacle: *". . . I helped the pupils who found it difficult to do tasks in groups"* (Diary B). However, diary entries reveal the teachers' strong effort to provide help indirectly as much as possible, by mobilizing the abilities of the pupils themselves towards successful learning: *"Pupils with special needs are continuously encouraged and praised for every task they do well or efforts they put"* (Diary B). Emphasizing the pupil's successes is particularly encouraging for the children's motivation and self-confidence. An equally important precondition for successful participation in the education process is the child's sense of security. All the pupils are provided with conditions to engage in joint activities together with other pupils; however, due to differences in abilities, in certain cases, a need for more evident care for the pupil arises. Ensuring security for pupils is the goal of assistance from the teacher: *"During the trip, Paulius was given a lot of attention as the pupil follows an adapted curriculum and he can get lost among the children, or stay behind in the theatre. I tried to keep Paulius next to myself"* (Diary B). On the other hand, intensive assistance can make a child stand out among others, or restrict his or

her independence. Therefore, the teachers aim at creating conditions for the children to feel as equal participants in the education process: *"I try not to make the children stand out among others, and to stress every child's good traits"* (Diary B). Accentuating the abilities and success of the children, as well as a possibility for equal participation, increases self-confidence and encourages freedom of action. The results of the research show that in providing assistance to pupils, teachers actively work towards the latter goals.

Social needs realization. Shaping interpersonal relationships is an important goal of assistance provided in an inclusive education system. When reflecting on their experience in providing assistance to pupils, the teachers firstly stress the targeted creation of a personal teacher–pupil connection: *"I haven't found the key to Juozas' heart yet. Our relationship is good, he always stands next to me in the circle and he likes it. We often give each other a hug. However, sometimes he behaves terribly. He does whatever he wants and aims for his own benefit"* (Diary A). As teachers see it, the connection between the teacher and the pupil, as well as the ability to understand each other are of great importance: *"I still haven't managed to find the common language with Vytis"* (Diary B). In cases where a strong connection is absent, difficulties arise in developing both the child's knowledge and overall personality.

The development of rational interpersonal relationships among pupils is another important aspect of social needs realization. The research results show that the teachers continuously observe the pupils' interpersonal relationships and strive towards assisting the children to learn to build them rationally. It is a particularly relevant issue in educating pupils with special educational needs. Lina is a sensitive and sincere girl with a disability. She particularly treasures her friendship with Aistė, who experienced psychological tension during the research period due to her mother's illness. As the teacher brings the classroom community together for the support to the family, Aistė receives more attention from her classmates: *"Today at lunch, she cried. I asked her what was wrong, and she unwillingly told me she was afraid Aistė might get angry that she did not carry Aistė's pencil case after the English lesson, while Domas did it. I had to tell her she did not have to serve Aistė but she could help her if Aistė asked"* (Diary A). A less self-confident child suffers tensions in personal relationships; the teacher, observing it, attempts not only to reduce the tension but also to raise the child's self-esteem and self-confidence in various situations: *"When we went sledging, she turned into a true daredevil* [referring to Lina]*, she keeps climbing ever higher. I told her to try out sledging from a lower place and then keep going up. And there you*

go, it is the fourth day that we've gone sledging and she has already reached the top of the hill" (Diary A). The teacher's attention and support in various situations send the child signals about the limits of their possibilities, and help reveal them to the surrounding people. Thus, social links favourable to all the children gradually develop. The research results show prominent change in children's behaviour: *"Benas and Vytis have also started talking"* (Diary B), *"Lina is becoming ever more free-and-easy, she communicates more and chats and laughs with Aistė. Although she is still worried Aistė might get angry"* (Diary A).

The research results display a variety of pupils' needs, resulting from various reasons. For example, extremely bright pupils and those with learning difficulties learn in the same class, as well as highly sensitive children and those who find it difficult to control their behaviour. Interestingly, the pedagogues, when reflecting on the field of the realization of the children's needs in the education process, do not emphasize the issues of education differentiation, common in inclusive education. Instead, the teachers focus on creating a socio-psychological and educative educational environment where different needs of the pupils are realized.

Parents' and pupils' point of view. During interviews, the pupils' parents stress the importance of creating a favourable educational environment for the educational success of their children. They accentuate the development of emotional intelligence as a criterion of sustainable educational results. They expand the confines of the educational community further on to the pupils' families, as well as their sense of community, and learning together. Equally to teachers, the parents believe that possibilities for self-expression are highly important for personality development. Observing their children, they emphasize the children's participation in the preparation of traditional and class celebrations as a possibility for self-expression. However, differently from the teachers, the parents see the continuous participation of a teacher assistant or a second teacher in the education process of pupils with special needs as a criterion of successful education organization. In their opinion, constant participation of these educators would help to better identify the pupils' needs and meet them in a more targeted manner. On the other hand, the parents also emphasize the importance of close contact between the teacher and the pupil. To their mind, a teacher with thorough knowledge of the child and their needs can understand the child substantially, and meet his or her needs.

Lesson observation protocol entries demonstrate that in response to the pupils' needs, the teachers provide direct assistance to the pupils who have more difficulty

or who ask for help. It is also evident that helping one's fellow pupil during a lesson is a natural phenomenon in an inclusive education reality. For example, a deskmate helps a girl with special educational needs in a lesson. The teachers keep focus on developing these abilities in pupils through various exercises to teach them to listen to the one who is speaking, to anticipate a friend's idea, namely, to understand what a friend meant, listen to a fellow pupil even when they are less proficient in it, when it takes them longer, etc. When organizing work, the teachers respect the pupils' choices, for example, to work individually or in groups. Thus, next to being the object of the teacher's focus, pupils' needs also become part of interpersonal relationship culture.

Curriculum and environment actualized by teachers

The deliberations on curriculum and educational environment in teachers' diaries reflect the above-mentioned orientation towards creating conditions for successful learning of all pupils. Interestingly, teachers touch upon the curriculum individualization and its implementation techniques only slightly, although the classes participating in the research contain pupils with different learning abilities. These educational components are common elements in the practice of inclusive education. They do not call for deeper reflections on this type of activity.

Reflection of educational directions in curriculum. When reflecting on curriculum, teachers highlight the topics of social skills that they discuss with the children; for instance, developing aesthetic sense: *"the girls now come wearing neat braids. They probably needed that conversation. They are now so tidy and pretty. I've complimented them"* (Diary A). The reflections in diaries highlight the development of self-directed learning skills. A focused teaching to control one's behaviour is visible: *"the children stuck their little flowers on the Tree of Discipline. Some had flowers with one or two petals missing"* (Diary B). The goals of this educational method are directed towards children with difficulties in self-control, but it is used by all the pupils. It urges the assessment of one's own behaviour as well as the quality of the relationship with fellow pupils. Diary entries also reveal the practice of developing education planning skills by applying certain marketing elements: *"they got into the game that we had agreed on together (that of assessment and self-assessment) and now they manage their "remuneration" themselves. I gave them a task to learn to read a poem, or those willing could memorize it (for a bigger "remuneration"). As many as six children learned it by heart"* (Diary A), or by using insights into a potentially interesting topic that is worth sharing with other pupils: *"Together with Viltė, we decided to invite her neighbour to come to our class and*

tell us about her travels. Viltė interviewed her and is fascinated by her neighbour's travels" (Diary A). Not only do the pupils add to curriculum planning with their suggestions, but they also contribute to its realization: *"She decided to tell us about the town of Rusnė. She loved the little town, so she decided to introduce us to it too"* (Diary A). The rhetoric employed by the teacher in her diary reflects learning classroom community culture. The curriculum proposed by the pupils is also important to the teacher as a possibility to learn alongside the pupils.

Educational environment variety. In order to implement a flexible curriculum meeting the pupils' interests, the teachers use various educational environments. Outings are popular: *". . .to The House of Butterflies. An amazing trip"* (Diary A), *"Today we went to a theatre performance "The Princess and the Pea"* (Diary A). What is important is that conditions are built for the pupils to also choose the educational environment themselves: *"The children asked that we should go outside during the PE lessons again. So we go sledging down the hills"* (Diary B). The teachers take flexible positions regarding the most favourable environment for the implementation of goals at school. It is clearly reflected in the diaries: *"During Maths, half of the class stayed at the chess room, and the other half were with me," ". . . during other lessons, we rehearsed the performance in the main hall"* (Diary A).

Classroom environment is important for successful implementation of a flexible curriculum. The research participants stress special spaces that help achieve inclusive education goals: *"The carpet is a special spot in the classroom. It serves as a link among us all. The circle around the carpet means hearty conversations, book presentations, task clarification, when you see everyone's eyes and stay together with them"* (Diary A). Technical means in the classroom facilitate the organization of the pupils' active learning for the teacher: *"I appreciate the fact that I have a projector. I can thus deliver more interesting lessons to the children"* (Diary B). Group work methods are constantly applied in the classroom; therefore, it is important that the furniture in the classroom is movable: *"The pupils love group work in the lessons"* (Diary B).

Parents' and pupils' point of view. In their interviews, both pupils' parents and the pupils themselves affirmed the efficiency of applying unconventional and diverse curriculum under the conditions of inclusive education. The pupils' parents also stress as a value the possibility for them to be involved in the education process and enrich it by sharing their own experience with the children. They put particular emphasis on trips to parents' workplaces, where the parents create conditions for the children to get practically acquainted with the activities of people of various professions,

for instance, the police, a printing house, or a restaurant kitchen. When discussing their educational activity, pupils also refer to lessons at parents' workplaces as very interesting and successful ones. Pupils' parents as well as the pupils themselves highly appreciate all informative outings and the fact that the pupils' parents and the pupils themselves have a possibility to actively participate in planning the outings. Thus, the curriculum is enriched greatly, and meets different needs of the pupils. The pupils consider the possibility to participate in a creative activity such as preparing sketches and performances, taking part in the organization of traditional and family celebrations particularly favourably as they expand the curriculum greatly. They also emphasize charitable activities (support for poor children in the Philippines). The pupil interview data proves the value of providing pupils with a chance to deliver lessons for fellow pupils. A child with disability highlights it particularly clearly.

Discussing the educational environment, the pupils' parents underline the advantages of a low number of pupils in the school and in the classrooms. The pupils find the school bell that plays melodies important, as well as cleanliness and tidiness in the classrooms and corridors. All this, which at first glance might seem to be minor details, helps create harmony in the school.

A trend of education organization in the Lithuanian school

The discourse in teacher diaries reflecting on the educational reality in the Lithuanian school implementing inclusive education reveals a trend in education organization towards focusing on individual learning success of pupils within a learning community (Figure 27).

The research data reveals a clear trend of considering a successfully learning community as the educational purpose, which realizes two goals. Goal No. 1: developing self-directed learning skills. Teachers aim at engaging children in education process planning and the realization of planned goals as much as possible. Goal No. 2: developing learning skills in all pupils. The research data reveals a targeted focus among teachers to build an educational environment filled with the sense of community and co-operation, which creates conditions for the participation of all pupils. Self-control and aesthetic grooming skills are also important in developing learning skills. The reflections on education process include no comments on the pupils' intended level of knowledge or abilities. The latter depends on the needs of individual pupils.
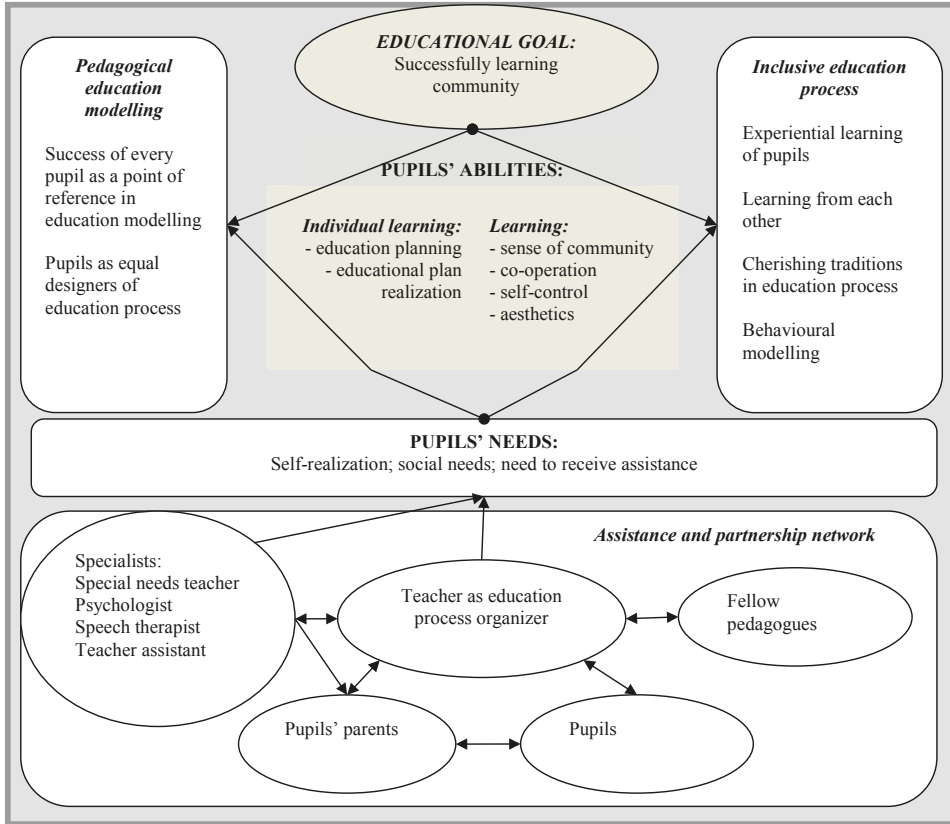
Figure 27. Teaching and learning system in the Lithuanian school implementing inclusive education.

In the context of conclusive education, the pupils' needs serve as an important focus of educational goals and their realization. The research data show an evident need for pupils' self-realization. In meeting the need, the maximum level of realization of pupil's individual possibilities is achieved. For certain pupils, receiving necessary assistance acts as a particularly significant need. Assistance provided in the process of inclusive education plays various roles: it provides support to pupils, teaches mutual help and encourages empathy, increases pupils' autonomy, and enhances self-directed learning abilities. The need for social skills is revealed in the research to a great extent. Good interpersonal relationships are an important characteristic of a favourable educational environment.

The research results show that the element of pupils' needs plays a highly important role in planning and realizing inclusive education. When modelling inclusive education, the learning success of every pupil in the context of the entire class serves as a reference point for the teacher, while pupils are considered partners in educational reality modelling. The teacher asks for their opinion, and provides opportunities to plan the education and realize their ideas, thus creating conditions to unfold individual abilities and needs of the pupils.

Education based on the pupils' needs is realized by applying various forms of education realization. The most appreciated ones are the following: experiential learning and learning from each other. In the context of inclusive education, education organization traditions are evident, and they are consistently followed. Moreover, the component of pupil behaviour modelling, which is important, has been highlighted, particularly in the classroom with the pupil with poor self-control skills.

The assistance and partnership network centred on the teacher serves as a buffer for differences in the inclusive education process. The roles it plays, together with the assistance provided to the pupils, ensure learning success for every pupil. The teacher brings together the collaboration network, including the specialists, the pupils' parents, colleagues, and the pupils themselves into it. The most intensive collaboration takes place between the teacher, the specialists, and the pupils' parents. The results of such collaboration usually reach the education process via the teacher, or, in certain cases, via specialists. The co-operating groups, namely, the pupils' parents, pupils, and fellow pedagogues not working with the class, join together in the education process via a teacher-coordinated process.

The research results show that the fundamental component in an inclusive education process is the creation of a socio-psychological and educational environment favourable for the successful education of every pupil.

REFERENCES

Fernández-Batanero, J. M. (2014). Strategies for inclusion in the face of social exclusion. Case study in Andalusia (Spain). *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *29*(3), pp. 415-428.

Specht, J., McGhie-Richmond, D., Loreman, T., Mirenda, P., Bennett, S., Gallagher, T. & Lyons, W. (2016). Teaching in inclusive classrooms: efficacy and beliefs of Canadian preservice teachers. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *20*(1), pp. 1-15.

5.3.6. INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE LITHUANIAN SCHOOL: SUMMING UP AND CONCLUSIONS

Ona Monkevičienė

The results of the research carried out in Lithuania show that the inclusive education model at the school is complex and dynamic. In light of Education Complexity Theory (Mason, 2008), inclusive education is a system developed through dynamic interaction of a number of components (goals, content, processes, environment, discourse, and outcomes) and participants (pupils, teachers, specialists, administration, parents, and social shareholders). From the perspective of the Complexity Theory, it is relevant to reveal the manner of functioning of the inclusive education system, and what factors influence it. The inclusive education index by Booth and Ainscow (2002) introduces the indicators of inclusive education at schools, which embrace the school culture, policy, and practice; however, every school arrives at that point via different paths.

During the research, the Lithuanian school's socio-psychological aspects (interpersonal relationships between the pupils as well as pupils and teachers, links within the school community, etc.) as well as educational ones (education curriculum, process, environments, support provision, etc.) were analysed. Different factors were expected to emerge in the areas. However, the research data revealed a number of universal factors that are active in all the areas of the school life and benefit the education of every pupil. The universality of the factors is determined by the fact that education based on the new paradigm (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012) changes the balance of pupil and teacher roles: teacher(s) and pupil(s) construct knowledge together, as the pupils experiment, explore, and solve problems (Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2016); socio-psychological factors, such as pupil and teacher personalities, the pupil's social, personal, and academic self-concept, expectations, needs, motivation, and interpersonal relationships merge with educational factors (Cambra & Silvestre, 2003); classrooms evolve as learning communities driven by co-operative involvement of the pupils and the teacher in the strategies of collaborative engagement in shared learning activities, and the strategies of joint participation (Sewell, St George & Cullen, 2013). The universal factors revealed allow for a presumption regarding the existence of universal design for instruction in the school. The concept of the universal design for

instruction was presented by McGuire, Scott, and Shaw (2006); similar ideas were also developed by Florian (2015).

The main universal factors will be further discussed.

The school life and the education of the pupils is based on the values of dignity, respect towards differences, acceptance, equality, participation, co-operation, love and care, assistance, optimism, confidence in oneself and in others, time together at school, and the joy of learning. Following these values in the school creates a warm, democratic, and supportive microclimate in the classroom as a community. Respect towards differences, care, and other values result in the relationships with the pupils with special educational needs in the classrooms varying from friendship to care, yet no one is alienated. The results of many studies show that the relationships between children with special needs and their peers might cover a great spectrum: from reciprocal connection to social isolation (Webster & Carter, 2013; Degotardi, Sweller & Pearson, 2013); they might cover a variety of friendship relationships including best friends, regular friends, just other children, the one I'll help, children of inclusion, or guests (Webster & Carter, 2007). The relationships are usually determined by the peers' acceptance / non-acceptance (of the other as a person or of his or her actions) as well as different ways of support (Chisholm & Pitcairn, 1998). The values of acceptance that prevail in the Lithuanian inclusive school help to avoid social isolation and rejection.

Values are relevant not only in constructing relationships between pupils but also for the nature of pupil-teacher relationships. Following the inclusive values revealed in the Lithuanian school contributes to developing and maintaining positive interpersonal relationships between the pupils and the teachers, which manifest themselves through positive interdependence between the pupil and the teacher, personality-related characteristics of the pupil and the teacher that facilitate interpersonal interaction, and using a non-hostile sense of humour. Other researchers (Marsh, 2012; Keamy et al., 2007; Samsonienė et al., 2006) also emphasize personalized interaction between pupils and teachers as a positive factor; however, they fail to reveal inclusive value-based aspects of the relationships.

Usually, the values selected determine the characteristics of the education processes. In the Lithuanian school, inclusive values are also applied in the education process. The teachers acknowledge the children as equal learning designers; they provide various types of assistance, such as educating help, which is focused not only on cognitive but also on social and emotional aspects of learning. In the school, the teachers see positive learning discourse as particularly important in the education

process, namely, the pupil's personality, his or her social connections both within the class and the school but also in the home environment. As Ainscow, Booth, and Dyson (2006) put it, following inclusive values develops every pupil's involvement in the educational processes or encourages the reconstruction of the educational school system so that it responds to the learning needs of every pupil. Teachers and pupils become equal-valued organizers and participants in the education process (Sewell, St George & Cullen, 2013).

Commitment to inclusive values changes the school community culture. In the Lithuanian school concerned, the values of respect for differences, optimism, mutual trust, equality, participation, co-operation, and community spirit prevail in the relationships of the teachers and the parents, as well as those between the parents, and professional relationships of teachers and the specialists providing assistance. The research carried out in Lithuania broadens the results of previous research, which demonstrates that commitment to values, for instance, the value of co-operation, stimulates broader interpersonal and professional connections, namely, co-operation in education planning, whole-school approach to decision-making, and closer co-operation with parents (Mulholland & O'Connor, 2016), that respect for differences on behalf of the parents encourages their children to accept those with special educational needs as their equals, and establish friendships with them (De Boer, Pijl & Minnaert, 2010).

Booth (2011) puts particular emphasis on the power of inclusive values to induce fundamental educational and social transformations. Norwich (2013) underlines that inclusive education is based on decisions that are rarely grounded on a single value but rather on a set of multiple values; moreover, the decisions are open to change. The research carried out in the Lithuanian inclusive school revealed the set of values of the school as well as the impact they exert on various areas of the school functioning.

Following the concept of transformability. The research showed that in the Lithuanian inclusive school, the teachers believe in the transformability of pupil powers. They believe in their ability to establish positive relationships with fellow pupils, and in their ability to study. Through their personal rhetoric and behaviour, the teachers demonstrate positive expectations towards the pupils, and provide positive feedback regarding their abilities. As a result, the pupils notice the positive dynamic change in their own abilities and those of other pupils, and also believe in the transformability of their own powers and those of the other pupils. In the education process, the teachers build partnerships with the pupils; they encourage pupils' self-

directed and independent learning, learning from each other, and learning through co-operation, thus demonstrating confidence in the pupils' powers. The teachers' professional interaction highlighted their confidence in their own professional skill to consider every pupil's needs in the education process, with the help of the assistance of the school specialists, as well as their conviction that the school structure can be transformed in order to respond to challenges arising from the pupils' needs.

Florian and Spratt (2013) believe that the idea of transformability is the fundamental one in inclusive pedagogy. It includes the teachers' perception that every pupil's learning and its results depend on the teacher's pedagogical decisions and choices along the education process and on the links within the school community, including trust, representation, mediation, and support, rather than on the pupil's special educational needs. Research shows that the teachers' belief in their future success in considering every child's needs is significant for the development of the perception of transformability (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Hosford & O'Sullivan, 2016; Jordan, Schwartz & McGhie-Richmond, 2009). The research carried out in the Lithuanian inclusive school broadens the theoretical deliberations of the above-mentioned researchers, by bringing out a number of pedagogical practices of the implementation of the concept of transformability in the school.

Separate research exists that demonstrates that by changing education methods, the teacher causes significant impact on the pupils' education results. One of the studies reveals that by creating conditions for the pupils to co-operate in artistic activity projects, the teacher achieves significant results: not only do the pupils gain a better understanding of different approaches to art stemming from cultural differences, but they also become active agents of democratic relationships within the school; they familiarize with each other, and establish deeper friendships (Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2016). The research carried out in the Lithuanian inclusive school differs from such research in the way that it reveals the impact of adhering to the concept of transformability in all the spheres of the school life, rather than the impact of a separate method on the pupils' results.

The focus of education modelling is on every pupil's success. In the Lithuanian inclusive school, the factor was best highlighted in the education process. The teacher sees every pupil's success and feeling as important. The ways to achieve it include modelling the impact on the pupils' motivation, preventive planning of support in order to prevent the pupil from experiencing failure, and developing the pupil's skills of independence, self-directed learning, overcoming challenges, etc. However,

the mentioned factor manifests itself in the social contexts of the school as well. In the interpersonal interaction between the teacher and the pupils, the teacher aims at enabling the pupil: to help experience his or her power so that the pupil could act successfully and achieve desired results. In this interaction, the pupils learn decision-making, justifying their opinion in communication, etc. In order for every pupil to successfully create interpersonal relationships by overcoming challenges and barriers, the school provides conditions for joint participation in various activities, and the teachers, the specialists, and the parents ensure support that promotes inclusion and joint participation. Mutual co-operation between the parents of the children attending the school, and the activity of the parents' initiative group is aimed at successful development of the children's interpersonal relationships and learning.

Research carried out by other researchers also demonstrates that the school norms, every pedagogue's trust in their professional skill, accepting responsibility for the pupils, as well as the teacher's personal efficiency ensure pedagogical practices that predict learning success for every pupil (Jordan & Stanovich, 2001; Jordan, Schwartz & McGhie-Richmond, 2009; Campbell, Gilmore & Cuskelly, 2003; Brady & Woolfson, 2008); the development of every pupil's abilities requires the review of programmes, methods, and pedagogical practices (Terzi, 2014). Individual research reveals the impact the unpreparedness of the entire school structure for pupil variety has on the pupils' educational success (Min & Goff, 2016). The research carried out in the Lithuanian inclusive school complements the results of the previously mentioned research, and provides answers to the question Hansen (2012) puts forward: under what conditions and in what ways does a pupil with special educational needs learn with the greatest success? The research highlights the practices of the Lithuanian school in all the spheres of its functioning, which are oriented towards ensuring success for every pupil.

Two-way interaction of support provider and receiver among all school community members. A unique phenomenon has been revealed in the Lithuanian inclusive school, namely, a mature two-way interaction between support providers and receivers dominates among all community members both in their interpersonal interactions and educational processes. Among the pupils, mutually supportive interaction prevails. In the interpersonal interactions between the teacher and the pupils, pupils perceive their interaction with the teacher not only from the perspective of a support receiver but also from that of a support provider; whereas the teachers see their interaction with the pupils not only from the perspective of a support provider but also from that

of a support receiver. A similar situation is observed in the educational process: the teachers provide educational help to the pupils, as well as help enhancing autonomy, and help enhancing self-directed learning, but they emphasize that the pupils provide assistance to them as well by joining in the teacher's tasks, helping their fellow pupils that have more difficulties, etc. When co-operating with the specialists, the teachers act both as support receivers and providers, since they share their insights on the pupil, his or her success, they engage in education planning, and provide individual assistance. As the parents' and teachers' interviews suggest, the parents see the teacher both as a support provider and a support receiver; she puts effort into making parents see themselves as support providers rather than purely support receivers too. According to other researchers, the parents' attitude towards inclusive education and their role in the school community is determined by their experience of their child's education in an inclusive school (De Boer, Pijl & Minnaert, 2010).

The research review demonstrates that the researchers reveal the roles of the teacher as specialist support receiver, and support provider to pupils or their parents in the field (Strogilos & Tragoulia, 2013; Pancsofar & Petroff, 2016; Mulholland & O'Connor, 2016); however, they do not analyse two-way interactions between community members (those of a support provider and support receiver at the same time), which have been revealed in the Lithuanian inclusive school.

Community spirit. The factor mostly emerged in the relationships between the teachers as well as teachers and parents in the Lithuanian inclusive school; however, it is also relevant in other spheres. The school nurtures Catholic values, which bring the teachers and other school staff together into an informal community. Informal communication traditions are built. Informal communication in the form of sharing experiences and providing mutual support among teachers was revealed as an aspect of particular significance. The parents emphasize the warm, family-like environment of the school. In the education process, teachers do not only organize learning but also observe the children's feelings; they provide assistance to families, if need be, and bring together family support networks. The interpersonal relationships between the teacher and the pupils at school are warm and personalized, and the bonds between the pupils are emotional and social, as well as spiritual. Therefore, the school life is characterised by community spirit.

Some research emphasizes that in the field of teacher co-operation, priority should be given to structured teacher meetings at pre-arranged times (Mulholland & O'Connor, 2016); however, the Lithuanian case demonstrates that informal communication and

a co-operative culture, built on school values, can serve as an equally important factor in inclusive education, as does proper formal structure.

REFERENCES

Ainscow, M., Booth, T. & Dyson, D. (2006). *Improving schools, developing inclusion.* London, Routledge.

Avramidis, E. & Norwich, B. (2002). Teachers' attitudes towards integration / inclusion: a review of the literature. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 17*(2), pp. 129-147, DOI: 10.1080/08856250210129056

Booth, T. & Ainscow, M. (2002). *The index for inclusion: Developing learning and participation in schools.* Bristol: CSIE, revised edition.

Booth, T. (2011). The Name of the rose: Inclusive values into action in teacher education. *Prospects, 41*(3), pp. 303-318.

Brady, K. & Woolfson, L. (2008). What teacher factors influence their attributions for children's difficulties in learning? *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 78,* pp. 527–544.

Cambra, C. & Silvestre, N. (2003). Students with special educational needs in the inclusive classroom: social integration and self-concept. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 18*(2), pp. 197-208, DOI: 10.1080/0885625032000078989.

Campbell, J., Gilmore, L. & Cuskelly, M. (2003). Changing student teachers' attitudes towards disability and inclusion. *Journal of Intellectual & Developmental Disability, 28*(4), pp. 369-379.

Chisholm, V. & Pitcairn, T. (1998). The Communication of differential relationships in preschool children: Preference and social theme. *Social Development, 7*(2), pp. 164-180.

De Boer, A., Pijl, S. J. & Minnaert, A. (2010). Attitudes of parents towards inclusive education: a review of the literature. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 25*(2), pp. 165–181.

Degotardi, S., Sweller, N. & Pearson E. (2013). Why relationships matter: parent and early childhood teacher perspectives about the provisions afforded by young children's relationships. *International Journal of Early Years Education, 21*(1), pp. 4-21.

Florian, L. & Spratt, J. (2013). Enacting inclusion: A framework for interrogating inclusive practice. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 28*(2), pp. 119-135.

Florian, L. (2015). Inclusive pedagogy: A transformative approach to individual differences but can it help reduce educational inequalities? *Scottish Educational Review, 47*(1), pp. 5-14.

Hajisoteriou, C. & Angelides, P. (2016). Collaborative art making for reducing marginalisation and promoting intercultural education and inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education.* DOI:10.1080/13603116.2016.1197321, pp. 1-16.

Hedegaard J. H. (2012). Limits to inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 16*(1), pp. 89-98, DOI: 10.1080/13603111003671632.

Hosford, S. & O'Sullivan, S. (2016). A climate for self-efficacy: the relationship between school climate and teacher efficacy for inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 20*(6), pp. 604-621, DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2015.1102339, 604–621.

Jordan, A. & Stanovich, P. (2001). Patterns of teacher-student interaction in inclusive elementary classrooms and correlates with student self-concept. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education, 48*(1), pp. 33-52, DOI: 10.1080/10349120120036297.

Jordan, A., Schwartz, E. & McGhie-Richmond D. (2009). Preparing teachers for inclusive classrooms. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25,* pp. 535–542.

Kalantzis, M. & Cope, B. (2012). *New learning. Elements of a science of education.* New York: University Press.

Keamy, K., Nicholas, H., Mahar, S. & Herrick, C. (2007). *Personalising education: From research to policy and practice.* Victoria: McLaren Press.

Marsh, H. (2012). Relationships for learning: using pupil voice to define teacher-pupil relationships that enhance pupil engagement. *Management in Education, 26*(3), pp. 161-163.

Mason, M. (2008). Complexity theory and the philosophy of education. *Complexity theory and the philosophy of education.* Ed.by M. Mason. Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 1-15.

McGuire, J. M., Scott, S. S. & Shaw, S. F. (2006). Universal design and its applications in educational environments. *Remedial and Special Education, 27*(3), pp. 166–175.

Min, S. & Goff, P. T. (2016). The relations of a school's capacity for institutional diversity to student achievement in socio-economically, ethnically, and linguistically diverse schools. *International Journal of Inclusive Education.* DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2016.1168876, pp. 1-16.

Mulholland, M. & O'Connor, U. (2016). Collaborative classroom practice for inclusion: Perspectives of classroom teachers and learning support/resource teachers. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 20*(10), pp. 1070–1083.

Norwich, B. (2013). *Addressing tensions and dilemmas in inclusive education*, London: Routledge.

Pancsofar, N. & Petroff, J. G. (2016). Teachers' experiences with co-teaching as a model for inclusive education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 20*(10), pp. 1043-1053, DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2016.1145264.

Samsonienė, L., Adomaitienė, R., Eidukevičius, R., Juozulynas, A., Prapiestis, J. & Lukšienė, A. (2006). A model of the psychosocial environment for integrated education opportunities of people with disabilities in Lithuania. *Acta Medica Lituanica 13*(4), pp. 281–286.

Sewell, A., St George, A. & Cullen, J. (2013). The distinctive features of joint participation in a community of learners. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 31*, pp. 46-55.

Strogilos, V. & Tragoulia, E. (2013). Inclusive and collaborative practices in co-taught classrooms: Roles and responsibilities for teachers and parents. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 35*, pp. 81-91.

Terzi, L. (2014). Reframing inclusive education: Educational equality as capability equality. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 44*(4), pp. 479-493, DOI: 10.1080/0305764X.2014.960911.

Webster, A. A. & Carter, M. (2007). Social relationships and friendships of children with developmental disabilities: Implications for inclusive settings. A systematic review. *Journal of Intellectual & Developmental Disability, 32*(3), pp. 200–213.

Webster, A. A. & Carter, M. (2013). A descriptive examination of the types of relationships formed between children with developmental disability and their closest peers in inclusive school settings. *Journal of Intellectual & Developmental Disability, 38*(1), pp. 1–11.

5.4. EXPRESSION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: POLISH CASE.

Remigiusz Kijak, Tamara Cierpiałowska, Joanna Kossewska

In Poland, a "multi-path education" model is implemented (Woźniak, 2008). Non-segregated forms of schooling consist of integration and inclusion. Integration, even though increasingly popular, has become – more and more often – subject to criticism since it is esspecial educational needs tially based on dividing pupils into subgroups of those with and without special educational needs, while, as practice indicates, that is a gross oversimplification and in reality this approach does not fully enhance creating the conditions, under which the school would become the optimal space for the development of each individual pupil and the whole group of pupils as a community.

The goal can possibly be achieved by means of educating children with special needs under the framework of an inclusive system. Yet, as it needs to be made clear, it is a highly challenging task, which can only be successfully completed when all actions are based on solid axiological grounds. In other words, the project headlined "School for All" must be based on inclusive values.

Description of the research environment and data codes

The study assumptions and general characteristics of the target group. The study prespecial educational needs ted in the following subchapters was designed to find examples of inclusive education as it is implemented in Polish schools, and, added to that, the focus was on the axiological context of the activities concerned and statements obtained. The study was conducted in two school classes in the Integrated Secondary School No. 1 in Cracow. It embraced all subjects related to the educational reality, i.e. pupils, teachers and parents. The results are prespecial educational needs ted below according to the research questions. The original Polish narrative data extracts were translated into English.

Description of the tested classes. Two classes were involved in the research. Class 1B was made of 19 children: 13 girls and six boys including five children with special educational needs. Class 3B consisted of 15 pupils: eight boys and seven girls, and among them five were children with special needs.

Pupils' anonymity. In the citations, taken from different sets of data, the pupils' real names have been replaced by different names for confidence.

Pupils with special educational needs. In each class, there were five pupils with special educational needs (SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS). Their individual levels of development as well as social adjustment differed significantly. There were pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs), severe communication problems and intellectual disabilities.

What follows is a summary of the characteristics of the SEN pupils in question from the first grade. Class 1B is made of 19 children: 13 girls and six boys.

Monika is a girl with a communication disorder; she understands speech, but she does not communicate verbally;

Ewelina is a girl with a communication disorder, aphasia, caused by postpartum complications, and physical disability reducing her arm movement;

Bartłomiej is a boy with an ASD; he has problems with communication, maintaining social contact and expressing emotions. He rarely reacts to his name and avoids eye contact. He is willing to help but unwilling to accept help from others.

Kajetan is a boy with an ASD, pharmacologically treated because of behavioural disturbances. He has difficulties in controlling emotions. He communicates with full special educational needs tences, tries to explain his behaviour, understands orders and is learning to react adequately to communication from others;

Sebastian is a boy with a communication disorder. He has difficulty in understanding speech, which results in learning difficulties. Concentration difficulties prevent him from participating actively in lessons. He is open to contact with peers, with whom he communicates effectively;

Class 3B consists of 15 pupils: eight boys and seven girls, and among them five are children with disabilities.

Sara is a girl with multiple disabilities resulting in problems in communication and mobility. She joined the class later and, in her case, the process of adaptation to the new situation and social group is still ongoing. She does not participate in swimming pool activities but takes part in other therapeutic classes;

Gabriela is a girl with a severe bilateral hearing impairment and above average verbal intelligence. She wears a hearing aid. She understands simple verbal communication, learns word significance in reference to concrete examples, which she is able to write down subsequently. She is open and outgoing when it comes to social contacts;

Piotr is a boy with below-average intelligence; he lives in a children's home, together with his two older sisters. The boy suffers from communication issues and was provided with a complex rehabilitation scheme. He finds it difficult to communicate effortlessly with his peers due to disturbed development of active speech. The boy syllabizes short special educational needs tences and copies texts from the blackboard. He quickly gets discouraged with school tasks but is motivated to work for the sake of the school and feels responsible for other children;

Bartek is a boy with below-average intelligence and a physical disability, which causes limited graphomotor development. He lives in a children's home and is diagnosed with indications of Fetal Alkohol Syndrome. He writes without errors, although at a slow pace. He has a surprisingly wide range of knowledge. He works independently and displays a high level of motivation and tendency to complete tasks;

Krzyś is a boy with below-average intelligence, limited development and motor disability, living in a childrens' home. He was diagnosed with a serious neurological disorder of genetic origin. He displays an alternating attention-span and a slow pace of work. He reads fluently, counts in reference to concrete objects and in his head. He is serene and motivated to work.

Pupil analysis involved the use of sociometry, observation and interviews, although the latter proved to be of little use since children at the younger school age are not yet capable of self-introspection and in-depth assessment of social situations. Sociometric analysis was carried out with the use of the classic Moreno technique, which included all the pupils in the first grade (19 children) and the third one (15 pupils). The aim of the sociometric analysis was to discover the informal structure of the classes in question. Each pupil was asked to answer the following three questions by giving the names of three pupils that meet the criteria indicated: (1) With whom would you like to study? (2) With whom would you like to play? (3) In whom would you like to confide your secret? Added to that, five interviews were conducted with SEN pupils from each class in question. All pupils were subject to observation, which was conducted by the research team, assisted by students of Special Needs Pedagogy.

Analysis of teachers' experience was conducted on the basis of in-depth interviews and diaries they kept throughout a few-month period. The analysis involved two experienced teachers. Both relationships between the teachers and relations of the teachers with the outside (out of school) environment were of interest here. Another goal was to discover the kind of relationships that exist between the teachers and the pupils, that is to say, seek examples of inclusive behaviours on the

part of the teachers towards their pupils. The key aspect of the study was to recognize effective methodology within the context of special needs among "School for All" pupils.

Parents were also included in the scope of the research. Two focus discussions were organised during periodic meetings with parents. They were asked to share their experiences and reflections on their co-operation with teachers, therapists, school management and other parents. It was suggested that they should refer to both positive and negative experiences (provided they had had the latter). Since the group discussion also dealt with co-operation with other parents, it was not only an opportunity to get to know other parents' opinions and experiences but it also made the participants aware of how important, beneficial and fruitful their co-operation can be.

The data obtained during the research procedure were given reference codes prespecial educational needs ted in Table 12.

Table 12. Reference codes

TYPE OF DATA	REFERENCE CODE
Teachers' interviews	Interview, T1 Interview, T2
Pupils' interviews in Class 1B and Class 3B	Interview, ST, 1B Interview, ST, 3B
Parents' group interviews	Interview, P / Class 1B Interview, P / Class 3B
Observations in Class 1B and Class 3B	Observation, Class 1B Observation, Class 3B
Teachers' diaries	Diary A Diary B
Socio-metric measurement in Class 1B and class 3B	Sociogram class 1B Sociogram class 3B

5.4.1. INTERPERSONAL INTERACTION BETWEEN PUPILS IN THE INTEGRATED SECONDARY SCHOOL NO. 1 IN CRACOW

Joanna Kossewska

Interpersonal relationships between pupils in the informal class structure were analysed by sociometric method, namely, photographic observation carried out during the lessons as well as breaks. Also, individual interviews with pupils were examined. The social structure of the monitored classes was mapped by socio-metric assessment. Pupils of the tested classes were asked three questions: (1) With whom would you like to study? (2) With whom would you like to play? (3) In whom would you like to confide your secret? Their answers are prespecial educational needs ted in the figures enclosed below.

The data are prespecial educational needs ted separately for Classes 1B and 3B, reflecting all three research questions related to three core fields of interpersonal relationships within the informal school structure. The Figures 28, 29 and 30 prespecial educational needs t the results of Class 1B, and Figures 31, 32 and 33 prespecial educational needs t the results of Class 3B; moreover, Figures 28 and 31 describe the subjective willingness to study together with the classmate, Figures 29 and 31 show informal relationships in co-operative play, and Figures 30 and 32 point out the readiness to confide a secret within the classroom community.

Different sociometric positions were identified within the classroom community. Within the informal group, we can identify the so-called "celebrities", in other words, pupils who were choSEN most often; "average persons" who were choSEN less often, and "isolated persons" who were never mentioned. It is also possible to discover whether inside choices (i.e. those within the same gender category) or external ones (i.e. when boys pointed to girls and vice versa) prevailed.

Analysing the sociograms (Figs. 28, 29,and 30), a high level of interaction between girls and, on the other hand, between boys can be noticed, most likely determined by the pupil's age. At that period, distance between the sexes still prevails. What is more, it can be presumed that the children are not yet familiar with each other well, as they are still in their first grade.
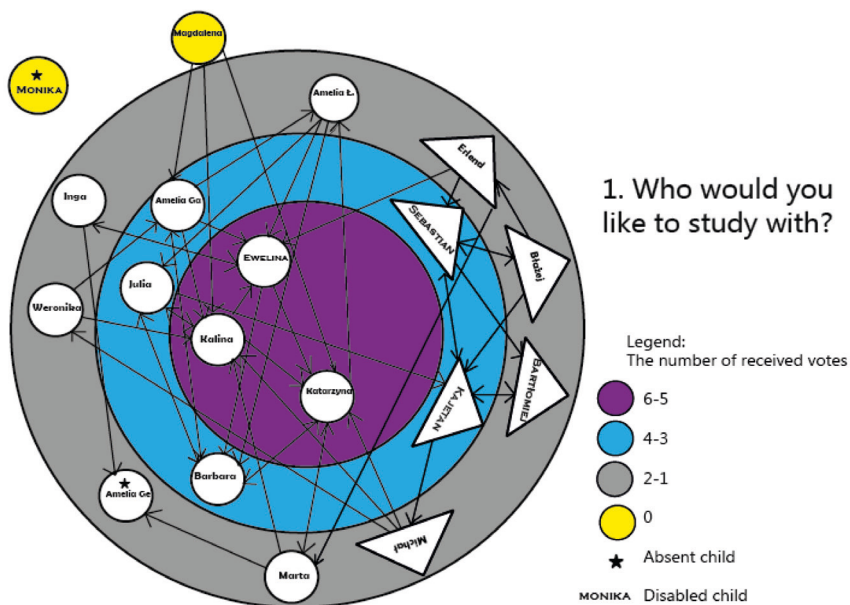
Figure 28. Willingness to study together with a classmate. Class 1B.
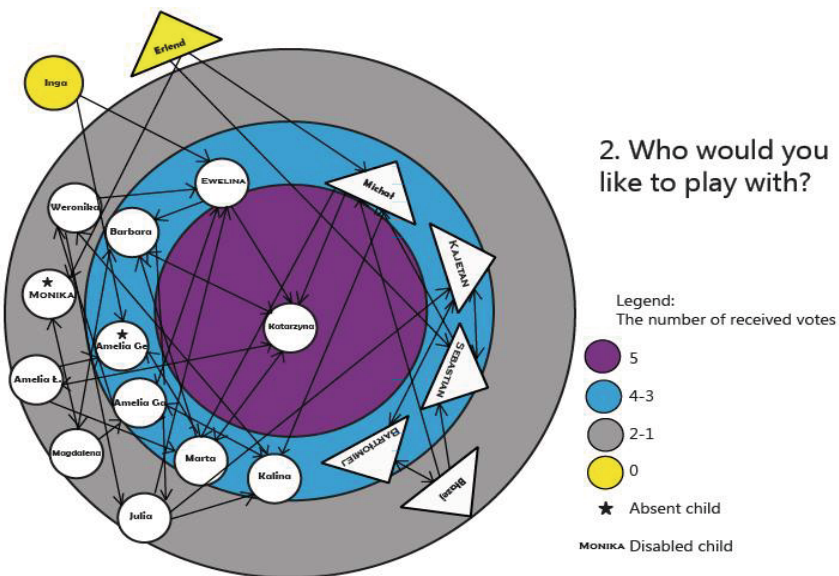
Figure 29. Informal relationships in co-operative play. Class 1B.
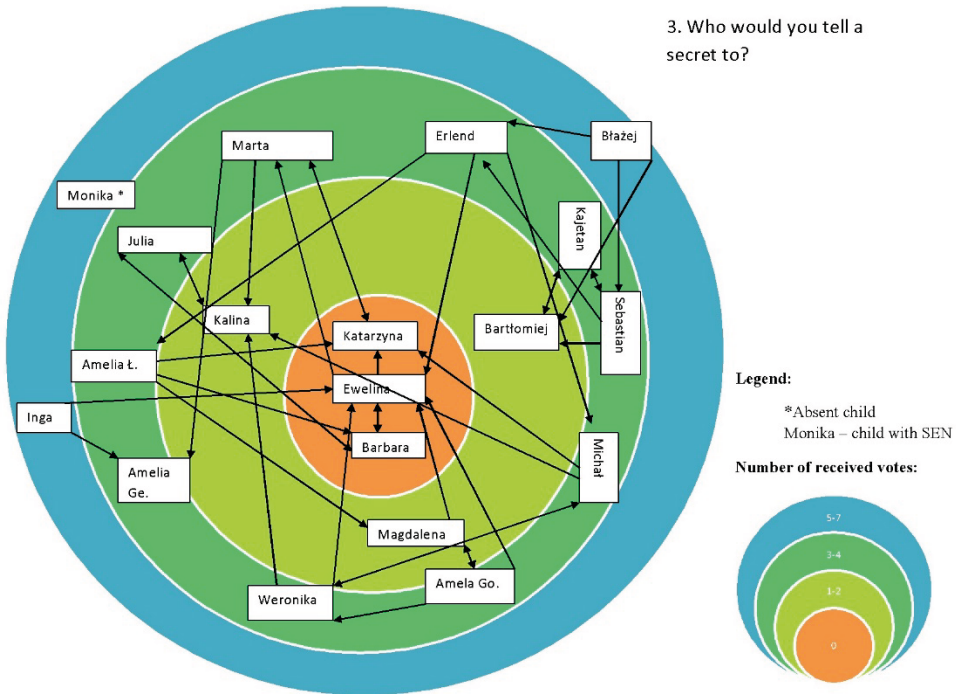
Figure 30. Readiness to confide a secret within the classroom community. Class 1B.

The choices might not have been motivated by the question content, but rather by e.g. the fact of sharing the same desk. The aspect of some children attending the same kindergarten together is not considered due to the lack of collected information on the topic. Another aspect that needs to be taken into account when it comes to analysis is the fact that the girls are far more numerous in the class than the boys. The boys comprise 31.6% of pupils in the class, while the girls make up 68.4%. Since the "inside choices" prevailed, it would be interesting to consider what the results would have been if the numbers of boys and girls in the class were similar.

Children often looked around the class while making their choices, and thus, the abspecial educational needs ce of two girls (what is significant is that one of them has a disability) has had a considerable impact on the results obtained. Monika's sociometric position (prespecial educational needs ted in Figs. 28, 29 and 30) can result either from her temporary abspecial educational needs ce or permanent attitudes of her peers.

Among the children with special educational needs, one girl (Monika, who was abspecial educational needs t on the day of the survey) was sociometrically positioned as an "isolated person". The rest of the pupils in the group were most often positioned

as "average persons". One girl with special educational needs, Ewelina, reached the sociometric position of "celebrity". Thus, it can be concluded that the sociometric position of a child with special educational needs can vary.

Regarding the first criterion (study co-operation), the position of an "isolated person" was taken, apart from Monika who has special educational needs, by Magdalena without SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS . Within the scope of the second criterion (joint play), Inga and Erlend, non-SEN children, turned out to be "isolated persons". Within the third criterion (entrusting a secret), apart from the Monika with SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS , non-SEN children Inga and Błażej were identified as "isolated".

Due to a limited and brief period of observation, it was not possible to interpret the reasons the non-SEN children were positioned as "isolated persons". The analysis shows that special needs do not determine isolation or rejection by peers. Having analysed sociometric status indicators in reference to the SEN pupils, it must be emphasised that a number of pupils receive low status indicators, except for Ewelina who is regarded by her peers as a person one can confide in (0.44) as well as a partner for study (0.32), and play (0.25). Considering group cohesion indicators, it must be stated that the highest value is found in the category of joint play (0.75), whereas the highest values in the other two categories were lower, yet similar: 0.56 in joint studying, and 0.50 in the category of trust. It can be stated that in Class 1B, the key informal group function is the ludic one, while educational and trust functions are less relevant for the younger school age.

The observation of the pupils within the school premises (during lessons, breaks and in their free time) has allowed the interaction to be classified into basic categories, which can indicate the integration degree of the group as well as openness of the non-SEN pupils towards special needs of their peers.

Help vs. individualism. Help can be provided by non-SEN peers who, in their interpretation of proper social indications, anticipate the needs expressed by people with special educational needs in a given moment, which happened in the case of Sebastian who did not have his homework. His classmate offered her help in the situation, when the teacher told the pupils to catch up with the work during the lesson. Help can also be provided upon request of the person lacking resources that would allow them to meet their needs on their own, which happened in the case of Kajetan when his friend helped to fix his trousers during a PE lesson.

Cases of individualistic behaviour were also observed, especially in the case of ASD pupils who rejected the possibility of or distinctly protested against co-operation during an IT lesson. Bartek was supposed to work with Sebastian on the same computer, yet the latter preferred to work individually and did not give access to the computer mouse to the other pupil. He ignored his desk mate and his requests to allow him to use the computer. Sebastian also displayed other similar cases of individualistic behaviour. He often spoke unasked or spoke in an irrelevant way.

Cases of co-operative behaviour were also noticed, especially during IT lessons, where the children were to use a computer in pairs and do a task in PAINT Programme together. In such a situation, Monika readily co-operated with her fellow pupil, which she mentioned during an interview *"I prefer working with somebody to working on my own. . .".* (Interview, ST 1B)

Yet, the ASD children often showed a tendency for isolation and exclusive behaviour. During the breaks (in-between lessons and in the lunch break), which were supposed to serve as a time out of the scheduled lesson structure, Kajetan did not leave the classroom (he was one of four children who stayed in the classroom). During the break, he did not interact with his fellow pupils. He, however, spent time drawing with great passion. He kept verbal contact with the teacher on duty, whom he showed his picture to, expecting to receive praise to satisfy his need for affiliation. Bartek also eagerly drew during the breaks. He did not talk to the other classmates, but rather sat at his desk, absorbed in his work. When asked for the topic of his drawing, he did not react.

In the case of children with SEN , the need to establish contact with others can be observed, as well as the need for support and assistance from their peers in completing various school tasks; as a result, their will for joint studying is declared. They are not chospecial educational needs , however, by their non-SEN counterparts, which can be explained, on the one hand, by developing cognitive competences, insight into their own capabilities and those of the others, and critical assessment of those, as well as by differences in curricula followed by particular pupils.

As the analysis of the sociometric data of Class 3B showed, children with SEN are not sufficienty adequate partners for joint studying for non-SEN children whose cognitive processes develop at the average or above-average level, and who follow a broad curriculum. The SEN pupils fail, therefore, to receive support from the latter in the form of interest in and willingness to study together (Fig. 31).
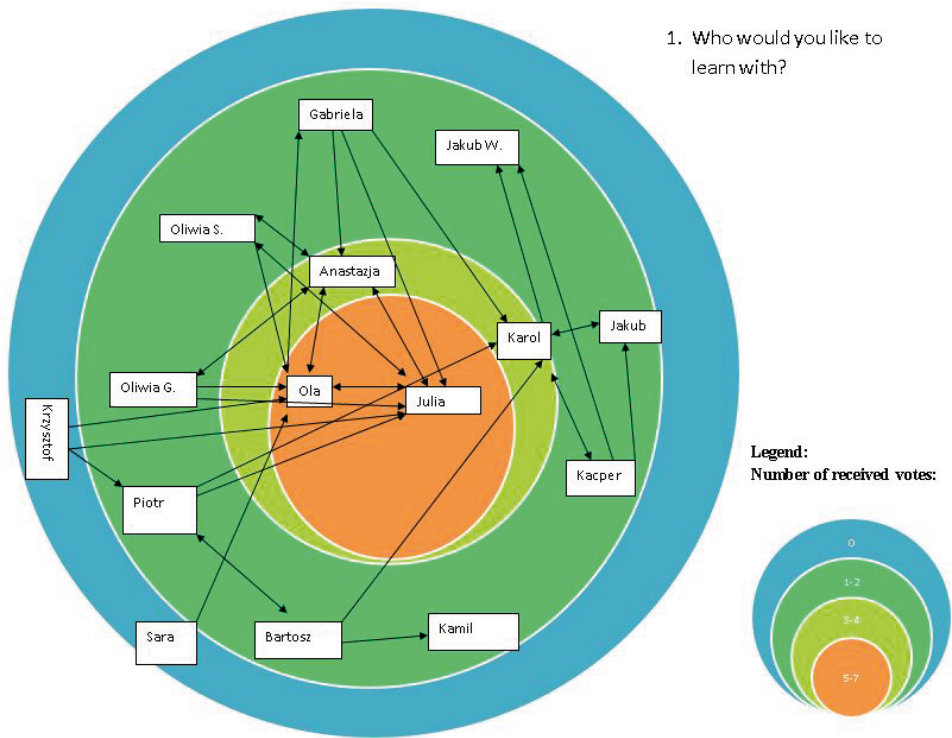
Figure 31. Willingness to study together with a classmate. Class 3B.

Children at the younger school age experience a strong need for belonging and affiliation, which can be satisfied in common play. Yet, the emotional needs of the SEN pupils cannot be satisfied. In the light of the sociometric analysis, it can be stated that they are not attractive partners for play, as viewed by their classmates. They are not chosen for company in a spontaneous way. They themselves, however, want to play with others and declare they would like to play with their non-SEN peers (Fig. 32).
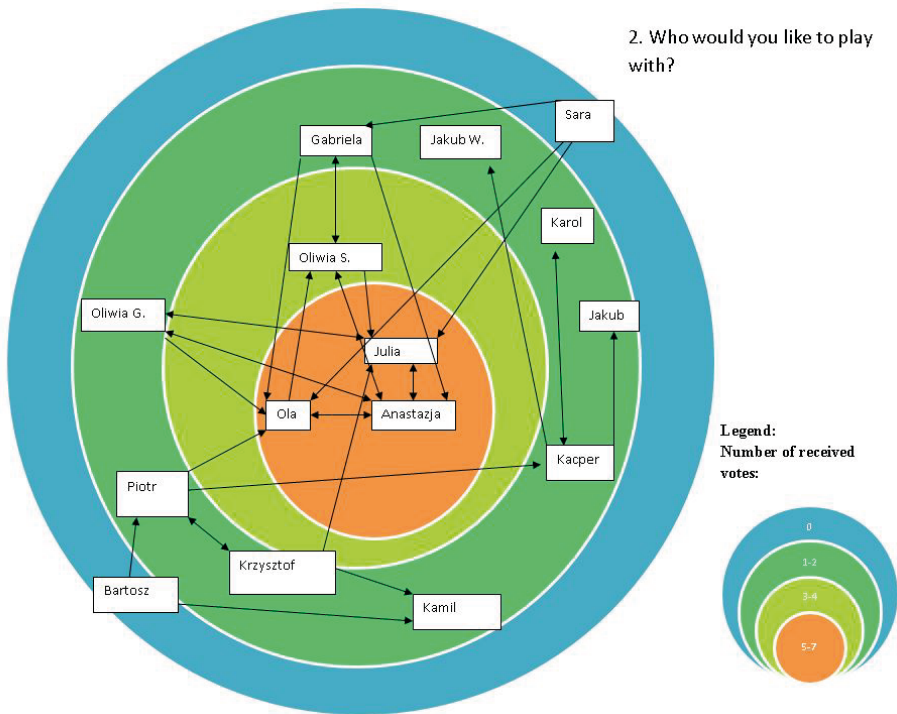
Figure 32. Informal relationships in the field of co-operative play. Class 3B.

All children feel the need to have a friend and to develop close relationships with others, yet in most cases their peers do not trust them (Fig. 33)

It can be presumed that a person who does not control his or her emotional sphere is also unreliable to others, and as such cannot be confided in due to his or her lack of self-control. Such children might betray their trust, and the secret might reach the wrong ears. Consequently, the non-SEN children are not inclined towards confiding in such a person. The only pupil who received a relatively high indicator of sociometric status in the category was Gabriela (0.36).

Having analysed the group cohesion indicator, it needs to be stated that within the class in question, a relatively small number of mutual choices was identified, slightly fewer than in Class 1B. This might be considered a sign of diminishing mutual attractiveness among the members of the class group, the process which takes place as the children grow older and have stayed at school longer.
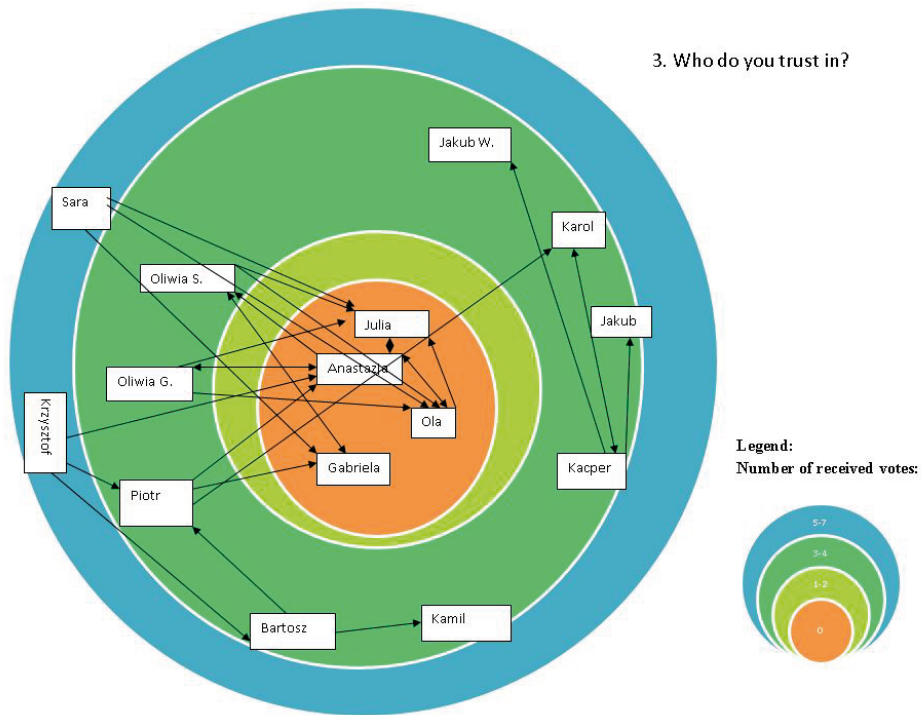
Figure 33. Readiness to confide a secret within the classroom community. Class 3B.

In Class 3B, the pupils with SEN are positioned on the outskirts of the informal classroom community, as they cannot meet the expectations of their non-SEN peers because of their behaviour and constitutional traits. Partner relationships fail to develop between children with and those without special educational needs. The SEN pupils do not seem to be adequate partners in emotional, cognitive and task-related spheres. Yet they themselves display similar needs, which are most often met through relationships with their peers with special educational needs. A child who fulfils expectations of others, in cognitive terms, functions at the level of intellectual standard, develops emotional control abilities adequately and inspires trust of his peers and becomes a partner in informal relationships within the class, regardless of his or her special needs. Thus, a general conclusion can be reached that personal resources are an important indicator of participation in the informal structure of the class, irrespective of the limitations that result from the specific type of special educational needs. Although, on the other hand, those resources tend to be limited

or shaped in a particular way due to experiences bound to the fact of suffering from special needs.

The analysis of the material collected during the observation reveals similar characteristics, as far as relationships between classes are concerned. On the one hand, individualism and **isolation** can be noted in the case of Sara who has SEN . She does not participate in swimming pool activities; she sits alone at a class desk during lessons observing her peers, yet not establishing contact with them. She spends time during breaks on her own as well. She leaves the classroom during the break, but comes back on her own, without joining the group. On the other hand, the class demonstrates **helpful behaviour** towards her. Oliwia packed Sara's books into her backpack, put her pencils into the pencil case, arranged objects on her desk and marked the exercises for homework. The children in the class demonstrated behaviour that indicates their **respect** towards the pupils with SEN . They respect the SEN pupils' dignity and the fact that their process of education is facilitated because of their deficiencies (using an abacus, writing with a pencil, more time allocated for tasks and the teacher's help). The non-SEN pupils do not display negative reactions to the SEN children's behaviour determined by the peculiarity of his or her development (neutral approach to autostimulating actions or clumsiness). They listen carefully to statements made by their classmate and her responses to the teacher's questions (they listen to the non-SEN pupils in a similar way). In spite of the difficulties in articulation the SEN pupils' experience, they are not mocked. In the ludic situations observed, the phonetic distortions were regarded and treated rather as an interesting linguistic phenomenon, leading to funny semantic errors, than as a reason for exclusivist attitudes.

5.4.2. INTERPERSONAL INTERACTION BETWEEN PUPILS AND TEACHERS IN THE INTEGRATED SECONDARY SCHOOL NO. 1 IN CRACOW

Remigiusz Kijak

As it was established, the teachers concerned easily recognize the educational needs and psychophysical capabilities of their pupils. In the case of any disorder or dysfunction, they were able to diligently prespecial educational needs t difficulties in communication, development and peer contacts as experienced by their pupils. The issue of teachers' well-being in their contact with pupils is not without significance either. As the teachers admit, the contacts give them a lot of joy and satisfaction. They cherish the pupils' development, the progress they make in learning and the ever more effective improvement of their social and peer contacts. The statement made by one of the teachers can serve as a good illustration here:

> *"The children accept us, I can see their smile, from timid children they have become self-confident, when I see they are making progress, I feel joy and satisfaction".* (Interview, T1)

As the conducted study shows, the teachers realize that inclusive education is a difficult but satisfying proposal for all the children; however, its efficiency is determined by a number of factors. As it was stated by a Polish authority in the field of special education, "*a number of factors determine the efficiency of inclusive education. They are linked, according to the author, to the formation and education process. Undoubtedly, in order to talk about a full integration, work in an inclusive class has to be organised in such a way so that a child with SEN becomes a rightful member of the group and does not feel isolated".* (Apanel, 2013, p. 402)

In teachers' opinion, inclusion becomes feasible only when activities are organised in such a way so that those children could participate in them to the highest possible degree as well as were able to affect, to a certain extent, what is happening during the lesson. It is important that they should take part in what their classmates engage in, yet it is far from easy when one works with a big group of pupils. The inclusive class is also extraordinary due to its group diversity, namely, children with various educational needs and the simultaneous prespecial educational needs ce of two pedagogues. To illustrate the points, the following statements made by the teachers can be quoted:

> *"The children can take part in planning the lessons. I always ask them whether they accept my ideas, and sometimes I give them two options, which lead to the same result, yet the children have a special educational needs se of choice and autonomy".* (Interview, T2)
>
> *"During the PE lessons, children can decide what we play; they do not really make decisions regarding fundamental issues, but when it comes to choosing games or exercises they can suggest something themselves, and to make it easier for them I always give them a few options they can choose from".* (Interview, T2)
>
> *"For me, what is important is the children's initiative, the so-called integrated ones are not different from the ones without disabilities. Sometimes when it comes to suggesting ideas, the former ones are better than the latter. For me their voice, that is to say, the voice of all children is important".* (Interview, T1)

Taking into account the diverse educational needs of the children, the teacher should also devise IEP for each child with SEN. The teachers participating in the research have no difficulty in recognising their pupils' problems. They can describe each pupil with great precision. They can organise class topics and plan children's work in such a way to make each child feel well and at ease in the classroom.

> *"I always take the specific needs of my pupils into account. I know what is good for each of them; sometimes I must split a single issue into more than 10 scenarios (that is the number of children I have) so that each child knows and has the opportunity to achieve success rather than experience failure".* (Interview, T2)
>
> *"I adjust work to the capacities of my pupils so that each of them could complete the tasks. I also assess the level of difficulty for those who are more gifted and for those who work slower. Simply put, I adjust the curriculum to specific needs of my pupils".* (Interview, T1)

The teachers participating in the research adjust the curriculum to the individual capacities of their pupils so that they could best benefit from the lessons and work with the whole group. They plan lessons so that their content and tasks were individualised for each pupil, and thus adjusted to their level of development and their capacities. The teachers concerned admit that exercises dedicated to the pupils with special educational needs are modified in the manner that they could also be used with the whole class, and the sets of exercises were the same rather than different ones.

> *"It would be strange if I prepared completely different sets for two autistic pupils and for the three others with other disabilities; they are the same exercises yet modified a little. The point is that the pupils should not feel they are peculiar, but that they are the same as others".* (Interview, T1)

It needs to be emphasised that to make teaching in an integrated class meet **the needs of all pupils**, teachers' actions should be planned. The attention of the main teacher should not be focused only on the non-SEN children. His or her task is also to motivate the pupils with special educational needs. Apanel (2013, p. 403) also adds that the work of the assisting teacher should be orientated at guiding the pupils' attention towards the course of the lesson, at assisting them both during group and individual work. The work should be organised in such a way that no pupils disturb one another. From the analysis of the material gathered, some teachers' statements emerge that refer to this point.

> *"Everything is important in the work with the non-SEN pupils and those with special needs. It takes a lot of time, but I know how important it is not to focus my attention on those with disabilities only (it is easier, isn't it?) They occupy my time and attention, while the non-SEN pupils complete the tasks; yet, sometimes it is easier to communicate with the non-SEN pupils. They are, so to say, more organised, but it needs to be done in such a way that there are no differences in approach to either non-SEN pupils or those with disabilities".* (Diary A)

> *"In my work with the pupils, what is important is our co-operation: mine, as a leading teacher, and my colleague's, who is an assisting teacher. How the pupils work in the classroom depends on our co-operation".* (Diary B)

The teachers participating in the research showed many kinds of support towards their pupils. They considered a good atmosphere in the classroom important. They took care of each pupil so that they felt at ease, and they also tried to motivate their pupils to action.

> *"Błażej's behaviour in the classroom is often inadequate. He has excessive salivation, makes a series of uncontrolled movements and children avoid contact with him in the classroom. It is a problem because he is often sad. We talk a lot in the classroom, and the children can express their views. He knows he has such a problem, but the children have also become used to him. We talk a lot, as nothing can be achieved by force. But I care for the atmosphere in the classroom to be adequate, and that will*

be achieved when other children understand what Błażej's disability is about". (Diary A)

For a majority of children, learning in an inclusive class is the first contact with special educational needs; therefore, getting to know each other, mutual understanding and an acceptance of individual differences should be facilitated. Children have to be made aware that each of them is different and has the right to be different, that nobody is ideal and free from limitations. At the same time, the children should be shown the good sides of each person and taught how to cherish small successes and even the slightest progress made. Shaping adequate relationships and attempting to make children understand the concept of inclusion are far from easy. The teachers in question declared that they pay attention to creating **an atmosphere of acceptance in the classroom**, that they dedicate a lot of time to the issues of respect and building a positive image of people with special educational needs. The following statements made by the teachers illustrate the point:

"When Bartosz joined the class, he was an autistic child. I talked to the children for a long time about the fact that Bartek is a little bit different – that sometimes his behaviour may seem strange to us, but each of us is different and we have to accept one another". (Diary B)

"We listen to one another. Being more outspoken is important, so in the classroom we often mention those topics". (Diary B)

5.4.3. PROFESSIONAL INTERACTION NETWORK
OF THE TEACHER: POLISH CASE

Remigiusz Kijak

The class teacher in an integrated class should also remember to co-operate closely with the child's family. Not knowing the conditions in the family, it is difficult for the teacher to find an adequate level of stimulation and assistance to the child's development that would be the most beneficial to them.

Together with SEN pupils and their parents, the class teacher learns to accept what is worse and weak in humans. He or she learns patience and belief in the special educational needs se of the work that is often hard and not very effective. He or she learns to respect the effort that must be made to achieve what is sometimes just a small amount of progress. It is also the task of the class teacher to come up with activities aimed at shaping a proper parental attitude towards their SEN and non-SEN children, informing them about the pupil's current progress during the lessons at school, giving instruction on how to do homework and providing advice.

The teachers participating in the research were aware of the need to co-operate with the parents. They often tried to get parents involved in the work and in school activities.

> *"Parents are important. They come here and work for the sake of the school so that, as we put it here, the school was open; they must be in it, attend reunions, take part in various school activities, well, for example, in school trips, in working with their child at home, etc.".* (Diary A)

Parents' expectations differ both in their form and content. On the basis of the analysis conducted, it can be said that from the perspective of the teachers, parents expect them to be well-prepared, have well-developed interpersonal skills and be able to create conditions, which can guarantee safety to their child and enable him or her to develop comprehensively. The results are consistent with the ones obtained by, among others, Przybyszewska (2014), Gajdzica (2014) and Dryżałowska (2007). The parents expect teachers to develop an individual approach to their children, give reliable information about school activities, teach their children to become independent, use multiple information sources, treat the pupil in a just way, help them in overcoming difficulties and create a friendly atmosphere. Moreover, the parents also

expect professionalism, qualified teaching and specialist staff, support in personality development, help in difficult situations, noticing the fact that the child is different and taking adequate measures. The following statements can illustrate the point:

> *"The parents expect a lot from me; sometimes they expect miracles, yes yes miracles. They expect me to take into account the individual needs of their child, so that their child was always treated in an exceptional way, as an exceptional child, one of the kind".* (Diary A)

> *"Children are different and so are their parents. Parents expect us to take into account the distinctness of their child, help them when they're in difficulty, treat them, so to say, psychologically in their failures, fight for their well-being at school, well yes, treat them exceptionally".* (Diary B)

> *"The parents have many expectations but they are justified. The point is to make their child feel good and be accepted at school".* (Diary B)

The teachers concerned organise educational and formation classes under the integrated framework creatively. In particular, they co-operate with other teachers and the school's external environment. Teachers get involved in various types of extracurricular activities, including theatres, after school clubs, museum classes, etc.

> *"Our activity is based on good contacts with the outside environment. We do a lot to make our activities visible not only in the school but also outside of it – of course not for our sake, but for that of our pupils who need that kind of support".* (Diary A)

Together with special needs pedagogues, the teachers who give lessons prepare curricula, outside-of-the-school formation programmes and prophylactic programmes, which take into account the individual educational needs of the children and youth, as well as their psycho-physical capabilities. Individualised education programmes describe the scope of integrated activities carried out by the teachers and specialists, and the types of rehabilitation or sociotherapeutic sessions planned. Assisting teachers hold those sessions and providing help to leading teachers in educational lessons.

> *"I realize that inclusion means giving time for everybody. I, as a teacher with experience in working with pupils with disabilities or even those who fail to adapt, know how important it is to support the young as well as those who have been teaching a single subject in the classes where the pupils were of a rather standard development, a little bit below it at the most, for years. Now, there are various pupils at school. Well, not only those with disabilities or those who fail to adapt themselves. The class*

> *groups are more and more varied; we encounter many new and diverse problems. Teachers must create a network of co-operation, they must help each other. That is clear to me".* (Diary A)
>
> *"For years, I had been working in a special school, then in an integrated one, now in an inclusive one – that is to say, it is the same school but the proportions of children have changed and now we have inclusion, where many children of standard development came to us as well. New teachers have come as well, sometimes they have no experience in working with such pupils, i.e. those with disabilities, or, as they put it nowadays, those with special educational needs. In the school, a support network is created. The head office also supports us".* (Diary B)
>
> *"Apart from what we do at school, that is teaching, we also co-operate with the surrounding environment, that is to say, with the pedagogical counselling centres of the outside world, intervention centres, etc.".* (Diary A)

A very important issue is the ability of teachers to co-operate, their openness, honesty or, which is sometimes indispensable, ability to compromise; in many cases these become very important components in working in the inclusive system. These were characteristic traits of the teachers participating in the research, and here are some statements illustrating them:

> *"Under the conditions of inclusion, well, well, work is not easy, but you know what? The most important thing is to be honest among ourselves, I cannot imagine that work in a team would be successful without it. Sure, one can think that when something is done behind anothers back, it will not come out. It will; it always comes out, so being honest is the most important issue, and so is being helpful. I know how important it is in work at a diverse school".* (Diary B)
>
> *"I often help my colleagues when they have difficulty in working with some pupils. I help them; they also help me, and that is important".* (Diary A)
>
> *"Sometimes we must accept a compromise, well, we do not need to . . . but that is mostly the point. It is the point in the situations when we do not agree with a pupil on therapy or something".* (Diary B)
>
> *"The most important thing at work is being open. You are asking me how to build work ethos in an inclusive school? Well, it is built by openness, an uncompromising approach, and always being helpful and honest".* (Diary A)

Co-operation and a certain level of conscientiousness in interactions constitute the abilities, without which success at an inclusive school is difficult to accomplish. The situation in which team members can rely on one another is crucial for success. The teachers interviewed indicated that. As Apanel (2013, p. 405) writes, teachers should treat each other as equal partners. It is important that their personalities correspond and that they understand one another. The researcher further states that only such a relationship of mutual acceptance gives the possibility to act.

> *"I help my colleagues, and they help me; well, for instance when Jaś had communication and aggression problems, we all sat together and each of us tried to suggest some solutions, it did not end with conversation only, we acted together and it turned out that after a few such meetings everything started to go well somehow".* (Diary A)

> *"Relationships with other teachers are good. We look for good solutions. We also have teams, and each time a need arises, we meet; we get on well. We must find an adequate solution if something is happening in the class, we act together".* (Diary B)

> *"Feedback from colleagues is taken into account".* (Diary A)

Inclusion also means establishing wider contacts, the ability of the teacher to build a support network for his or her activity, seeking positive solutions outside of the school and the ability to implement those solutions in one's teaching practice. Trips, strolls and playing on the sports field or in the classroom serve the purpose. It turns out then that we can be equal partners, co-operate, play together and help one another. Such experiences and situations motivate individuals to work. They bring hope that the uneasy job, the everyday wrestling with difficulties is meaningful even if the SEN children do not learn everything that the non-SEN children are able to; the former may learn something different, for instance, what real life is like, and be able to participate in it to the extent of their capabilities (*see* Szumski, 2006; Apanel, 2013).

Another important aspect that was identified during the study was understanding. Understanding remains closely tied to the teacher's empathy or ability to empathize with children's psychological processes and inner states. The crucial element in the empathetic understanding that the teachers participating in the research have of the children was active listening. The teachers refrained from making any kinds of assessment or critical remarks in reference to the children. The diaries kept by the teachers showed a number of situations in which the particular ability of the teachers could be observed.

"Błażej requires a lot of help too; his desk is always in chaos. Several times during the day we have to tidy it up (his things are often scattered on the desk and underneath it) and put the desk in its proper position because he keeps moving it forward. I often have to sit next to him so that he does the tasks, especially if it is something to write". (Diary A)

"Walking between the desks, we always try to praise children for the effort they have made". (Diary B)

"We encouraged the pupils to spend their free time outdoors. Kamil was eager to speak and told us how he spends his free time hiking in the mountains with his parents. Bartek and Krzyś also told us how they go on trips with their carers from the children's home. Girls only joined in to say how they spend time outdoors. The lesson was very interesting because the topic was close to the children; each of them has a laptop or a computer and often, which was mentioned during the lesson, they are better users than their parents". (Diary B)

The teachers participating in the research provided an important complement to the above statements during the interviews, pointing at the attitude of acceptance of and empathy towards the pupils. They indicated another important trait of an inclusive school teacher, namely, authenticity and accordance with oneself. The collected material might lead to the conclusion that the authenticity of the teachers concerned took the form of an open, spontaneous behaviour, being themselves and consistency of their emotions, speech and behaviour. The teachers realized that honest and natural behaviour would render them a meaningful person for the children.

"Piotr, following my encouragement, uses hints and raises his hand and achieves success compared to other peers, which stimulates him to continue working during the lesson. The boy cherishes even the smallest kind of praise. His relationships with his peers vary depending on the circumstances, day, weather and mood". (Interview, T1)

"On that day, only school celebrations were held; the first graders took an oath, and other pupils from the first to the third grade took part in it. Everybody was smartly dressed with ties that had a school logo on them. The pupils looked beautiful and smart. The behaviour of the pupils from our class was impeccable on that day. Everybody was excited by the performances of the first graders who were becoming pupils in a ceremony lead by the headmaster. After the celebrations, the pupils moved to the

school club, under the care of their teacher, where they could spend their time playing and doing other activities". (Interview, T1)

"Walking between the pupils' desks, we always try to praise children for the effort they have made. We arranged a little exhibition in the classroom of the works produced by the pupils and later evaluated them. Thanks to the exhibition, upon coming into the classroom, the parents have the opportunity to see the works created by their children. They are very happy to see the works, and the children readily prepare them for the parents to see". (Interview, T1)

"After the arts lesson, we had a little lesson in math, namely, a recapitulation on how to read the clock. There were lots of problems with calculating how much time had passed e.g. from one hour to the other, naming the hours, calculating how many minutes passed and arranging the hands of the clock. Bartek, Piotrek and Krzyś as well as Gabrysia and Sara are able to read the time on an electronic clock, yet they have huge difficulty in reading the dial of a clock. They need constant assistance fro the teacher and an individual demonstration on a big clock dial with movable hands. The girls – Sara and Gabrysia – can follow the teacher's instructions, whereas, the boys – Bartek, Krzyś, Piotrek and Kamil – can hardly concentrate on the task and they require numerous exercises and specific activities of the use of a big clock dial, and also many repetitions. After the lessons at school, we take a coach to a swimming pool. There was an argument between Bartek and Piotrek in the cloakroom. The point was that Piotrek had closed Bartek's locker by accident. I asked the boys to stay and had a talk with them about the situation. I suggested that Piotrek had been a pupil of our class for three years while Bartek only came in September, and so the former could look after of the latter because his classmate does not know many things yet, while he does. The boys made peace and agreed to the suggestion". (Diary B)

The most important aspect in creating conditions conducive to children's versatile development is enabling them to constantly seek and create knowledge and apply it reflectively. The conditions that are conducive to a child's learning in a group mainly include creating the atmosphere of freedom and supporting the process of learning. The following statement deals with the issue:

"I know how important it is to support a pupil, not only in a way that . . . but, well, they need to be supported in many situations, but what I mean is to create a climate for them for their creativity and freedom of reasoning. It is not always possible but I have a feeling that it is the way it should be done; each pupil is special and each one is able to achieve much; we only need to support them in many situations and give them opportunities to act". (Interview, T2)

In sum, it can be claimed that contemporary school needs a teacher who not only imparts knowledge, but is somebody who creates a modern space of education and training. The 21st century school is a place where the role of conveying knowledge is diminishing. Much more importance is, instead, assigned to adequate shaping of attitudes and values, as well as creating a friendly atmosphere within the school.

The right to decide on the content and methods of teaching should belong to the teacher. This might enable the creation of a comfortable atmosphere at work and an authentic community with the pupils. The teacher should act both as a master and as a member of the learning community at the same time. He or she should support his or her pupils in learning to be self-taught, and, in parallel, develop his or her professional competences (fig.34).
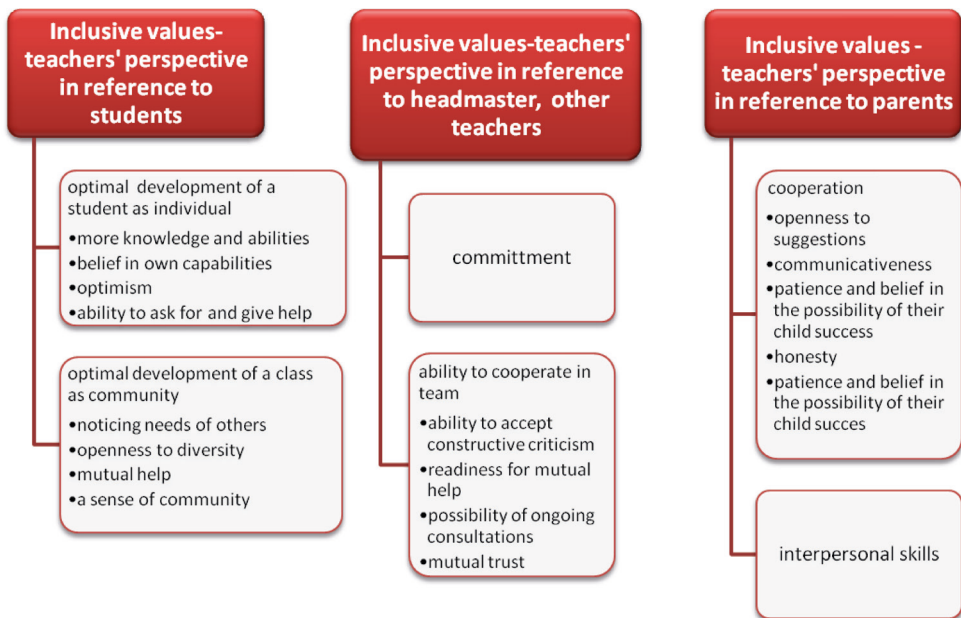
Figure 34. Inclusive values - teachers' perspective.

5.4.4. EDUCATIONAL INTERACTION OF PUPILS' PARENTS: POLISH CASE

Tamara Cierpiałowska

The role of parents in the widely understood process of the preparation of a child for adult life is initiated even before its conception. At that time, a responsible and conscientious parent avoids risk factors and strives to create optimal conditions for the development of their child. After the child is born, the protective role gains dominance, yet soon it is accompanied by upbringing and education, which remains the subject of parental care and efforts for many years. The endeavour continues once the child is included into the system of institutionalised education: at first the kindergarten, followed by the school. Throughout childhood and adolescence, parents remain one of the main pillars determining the possibility of the child to achieve intended educational goals. Their **committed participation** in the process of school education is significant in the case of all children, but it is of particular importance in cases of children with special needs. The crucial element of the parents' committed participation in the process of their child's education is their co-operation with the head of the school, teachers, therapists (e.g. speech therapist or physiotherapist), as well as the parents of other pupils.

In chronological terms, co-operation between parents and represpecial educational needs tatives of the school environment can be divided into two stages: the first stage taking place before a child is admitted to a given school, and the second stage beginning when the child becomes a pupil.

Initiating co-operation. There is no denying of the fact that *"admitting a child with a disability into a mainstream school is a process; a number of aspects should be implemented before the child appears in a class among their non-SEN peers"* (Kosmalowa, 2012, p. 34). For the process of integration, and even more for that of inclusion, to be successful, it cannot happen spontaneously, without ensuring all conditions that might influence it. A number of measures are necessary, which will help the child, the parents and the school employees to embark on a constructive co-operation. Before establishing the first contact with the school, parents are often full of fears. In most cases, they realize the developmental difficulties of their child, and, at the same time, they would like the school to become a place of his or her intellectual, emotional and

social development. The parents are not certain whether their child will indeed find optimal conditions in reference to his or her needs and capabilities in a specific school. In their narratives, the parents often pointed out that, as far as the first contacts with the school were concerned, **openness, friendliness and understanding** on the part of the headmaster and the teacher who was to teach their child were of the greatest importance to them. The following statement by a mother of a SEN child serves as an example:

> *"Before (the name of the child) became a pupil of this school, we had arranged an appointment with the principal. We had lots of doubts and fears; in fact, we did not know which school to special educational needs d our child to. I have a very good recollection of the first meeting. The principal received us in a nice and friendly way, she dedicated a lot of time to us and replied patiently to our questions. Already after the first meeting, we were convinced that the school was a good choice. Later, we had a few more meetings (with the teacher who teaches him now, with a psychologist and with somebody else) and we felt assured this would be a good place for us. We were even invited to a class of older pupils where there was a pupil with similar difficulties as those of our son, to observe a lesson. That was a very important beginning of our co-operation, so to speak. A very good co-operation".* (Interview, P / Class 1B)

At the stage of compiling a new class or including a SEN pupil into an already existing class, the issue of revealing special needs is relevant. The parents were asked whether, in their opinion, the special needs should be revealed, and, if so, to whom and in what form. They were also asked about the risk that, according to the parents, can be linked to revealing their child's difficulties and the benefits that revealing those difficulties might bring. The parents turned out to be divided in their opinions. However, the overwhelming majority was of the view that the parents should provide complete information on the child to the class teacher and the headmaster, as this is a way to constructively participate in the diagnostic process, help to identify the child's needs and capabilities and contribute to the optimal adjustment of the education process, therapy and upbringing or formation.

Parents point to the necessity of, on the one hand, **trust** towards the teachers and specialists, and, on the other, **discretion, tact and respect.** Otherwise, co-operation would be hardly imaginable. These values are an indispensable element of good co-operation.

"Each parent would like to be able to say only good things about their child. Talking about problems and difficult behaviour is not easy. But we knew we must trust the teacher, and indeed, I can say that the class teacher never fell short of our trust. She always treats her as other children, sets high requirements and helps her to fulfill them. Thus, she neither favours her, nor discriminates against her. And that is exactly the point". (Interview, P / Class 3B)

Some parents underline that the teacher needs to be informed, as it contributes to providing the child with a stronger special educational needs se of security.

"If a teacher knows what, for example, causes the child's difficult behaviour, he or she will be able to counteract in advance to such situations, so I think the teacher needs to be informed about everything, and he or she should be discreet and put the knowledge to good use. And revealing it to other parents and pupils? Surely, that should not be obligatory; it should depend on the parents. If they feel the need to talk about their children, they should have such a possibility". (Interview, P / Class 3B)

However, some parents believe that revealing the special needs stemming from the child's particular characteristics or their illness is not necessary, as special needs might result from various causes. One of the interviewed mothers (mother of a highly-functioning autistic child) expressed her views in the following way:

"I think neither the teacher, nor the parents of other children should be informed because it could have a stigmatising effect. It often happens that non-SEN children function worse that the SEN children, and I do not understand why it should be so that everybody should be informed about it [a child with SEN – interviewer's addition]*".* (Interview, P / Class 1B)

Some fear that revealing their child's difficulties could be risky, as it might evoke the so-called Rosenthal effect.

"That is the so-called special educational needs sitive data, and special educational needs sitive data should not be made public. After all, help should not be given in such a way that others would know whether somebody is with or without special educational needs:. (Interview, P / Class 1B)

"Once the teacher knows that the child's capabilities are lower, he or she will expect less of them, will have fewer requirements and, as a result, such a child will learn less. And, as far as other children are concerned,

they will also think that the child is different and will treat him or her in a peculiar way, and it will "come out" anyway [i.e. it will be revealed – interviewer's addition]. *But it will happen naturally instead of attaching a label from the very beginning".* (Interview, P / Class 3B)

It is worth noting that in the incessant process of diagnosing the pupils' capabilities, abilities and needs, their parents are an invaluable source of information, which an open-minded teacher uses eagerly. It is also of importance for the parents because, as interviews suggest, parents expect **to be treated as authentic partners by the school.** They have better knowledge of their child than anyone else, they have the greatest concern about his or her development, and, finally, nobody experiences the daily difficulties they face, and nobody's anxiety regarding the child's future compares to that of the parents'. The same applies to the stage when the child is already a pupil at school, as the necessity for close co-operation remains relevant between the parents and, in the first place, the child's teachers, therapists and other staff from the school environment, from the headmaster's office to auxiliary personnel.

Getting to know a child thoroughly is a necessary precondition to optimize the educational and therapeutic activities for the given child. As far as children with special needs are concerned, the adjustment takes place when the teacher familiarises themselves with the documentation on the child provided by the parents (including opinions, official statements, and results of previous psychological and pedagogical tests). Getting to know each pupil in person is also important, by assessing their knowledge, abilities, and competences, mainly through observation of their functioning in what is referred to as natural conditions (which constitutes functional diagnosis). On the basis of the latter, the teacher learns about the pupil's potential capabilities and the type of their special needs, which enables the teacher to determine provisional direction of teaching strategies and the process of assistance adequately. As for the parents, it is of great importance that the teacher, when developing the picture of the child's needs and capabilities, succeeded in noticing the child's capacities. In their view, the teacher should not only compensate for his or her deficiencies but also develop the areas where the child copes well.

"My (the name of the child) has linguistic problems but is very good at mathematics. I am happy that at the school they not only try to help him in his difficulties, but also develop his talents. Thanks to that, he took part in a math competition, and that was fantastic. He is very proud of that and, of course, we are also proud. That way, it seems to me his difficulty

in speaking has become less noticeable because others no longer see him as the one who speaks poorly but as the one who is good at mathematics". (Interview, P / Class 3B)

Successful co-operation with the teacher is also conditioned by **easy access to contact** with the teacher.

"Co-operation with the teacher is very good. Whenever I ask for an individual meeting, it is possible to discuss the current state. Two weeks ago, we had such a meeting, during which I discussed several issues that bothered me . . . The teacher reacted immediately and with full understanding of the child's needs". (Interview, P / Class 1B)

In terms of co-operation, time is also of great relevance.

"I appreciate it very much that the teacher is available all the time by phone and by mail. She will always find time to talk about the child if such a need arises". (Interview, P / Class 1B)

As analysis of the parents' discourse shows that they attach great importance to authentic commitment on the part of the teacher towards pupil-oriented activities. The teacher's commitment is visible in his/her **highly developed competences.**

Literature on pedeutology tackles teacher's competences in a two-fold manner. Sometimes they are identified through qualifications or even titles, which are indispensable for effective exercising of the teaching profession (Kuźma 2005). In other cases, competences become a superordinate concept in reference to qualifications (Majewicz 2008) and denote a structure consisting of values, knowledge and abilities. It is underlined, however, that the esspecial educational needs ce of competences rests in axiological orientation, namely, being rooted in a recognised system of values.

The current inclusive school teacher corresponds to a definition from the beginning of the 21st century of a "teacher of the future" who, in reference to the concept of Józef Kozielecki (1988), to deal with a number of new challenges, should be *"a multidimensional human: free, autonomous, transgressive, creative, flexible, and independent"* (Kuźma 2000, p. 232).

The analysis of the interviews conducted leads to the conclusion that most parents realize the level of difficulty of educating and training children, especially when their development is disturbed in some special educational needs se. The parents appreciate it if the teacher has the knowledge and ability to work with their child in a way that leads to his or her best development.

> *"Our teacher is very well prepared. Apart from early school education, she also completed postgraduate studies in Special Needs Pedagogy, attended various courses and keeps on studying. She has broad knowledge and high abilities. It can be seen because she works with the children wonderfully and she can reach every pupil. And the children are really diverse".* (Interview, P / Class 3B)

> *"Our son likes the teacher very much because she is indeed warm and kind to the children, although also demanding and consistent, and she explains things in a very clear way. She comes up with interesting tasks, understands everything and goes to school gladly."* (Interview, P / Class 3B)

> *"The teacher really knows what to do. She teaches very well, slowly and peacefully, and children really make progress. My daughter goes to school and does her homework readily because she knows the teacher will give her praise".* (Interview, P / Class 1B).

As the quoted statements suggest, apart from knowledge and abilities, both parents and children assign importance to the **soft competences** of the teacher, expressed in his or her mode of behaviour as well. Children function well when the teacher provides them with a special educational needs se of emotional security, when, on the one hand, the teacher is kind, caring and cheerful, and on the other hand, he or she sets rules and sees to them being followed.

> *"I generally think that what kind of person a teacher is, is a really important issue, especially in lower grades. I even think that it is less important if the school is modern and well-equipped, or even what results the children achieve in final tests. It is the teacher who is the most important in lower grades. If he or she is kind, friendly and cheerful, if he or she is not nervous, does not shout at pupils, then they like such a teacher, they like going to school and they like studying. So I think what is the most important here is the personality of the teacher."* (Interview, P / Class 1B)

Parents **have particular appreciation of the teachers who have a passion for their job** because they are aware that a high level of commitment creates a good atmosphere and contributes to the fullest possible development of the pupils, who, via their contact with the teacher who is also a friend, develop higher aspirations themselves, put forth effort and overcome their limitations. The following statement by the father of a boy with cerebral palsy can serve as an example here:

> *"Our teacher is really great. She has a passion for the job and children can feel it, and they also put in a lot of effort."* (Interview, P / Class 3B)

A competent teacher at the contemporary "School for All" can adjust the educational process to the needs and capabilities of specific pupils in an optimal way. To make this possible, in-depth knowledge of the children is obligatory.

A child continuously develops and obtains new knowledge, abilities and competences. Therefore, diagnosis has to be a dynamic process with constant modifications. Therefore, knowing the pupils better, planning education and therapy and putting them into practice, requires **time for the pupils** as well as **time for the parents**. Certainly, haste or insufficient time are unconducive to getting to know the pupils well or establishing good relationships with their parents. Yet, Polish teachers complain about excessive paperwork and a lack of time for contacts with the pupils and their parents, which should be the crucial element in a teacher's work.

Parents realize the teachers' overload with duties only in part, as in Polish society, a stereotypical image is deeply rooted of a teacher as a person with significantly shorter working hours compared to those of employees in other sectors. Some parents do not realize that, despite its greatest importance, work in the classroom comprises only one part in the range of a teacher's duties. Only a small number of parents are aware of the degree of time consumption associated with proper preparation for work with the children that a committed teacher engages in. The difficulty of the situation of the teacher and his or her workload is only perceived by the parents who work as teachers themselveles, or have relatives in the profession. This is how the problem is characterized bitterly by one of the interviewed mothers:

> *"I am a teacher myself, and I know perfectly well how much time it takes to prepare well for the lessons. It often means staying up late at night, thinking about what and how to do it. Yet, for the time being, I do not have pupils with disabilities in my lessons. I can imagine how much time it takes for the teacher (the surname) to adjust to each of the pupils. It is a really highly demanding job that is completely taken for granted in this country, both in financial and all other terms".* (Interview, P / Class 3B)

The rest of the parents are generally unaware of the problem, or at least the collected empirical material did not suggest otherwise. Many parents appreciate, however, the fact that the teachers are willing to sacrifice their own free time to give extra consultations, organise extra classes, or talk to pupils or to their parents. An example can be seen in the following statement:

> *"I know they will always have time for a conversation, that I can ask about the behaviour of my son as often as every day, without having an impression that I am disturbing".* (Interview, P / Class 3B)
>
> *"Whenever I ask for an individual meeting, it is always possible to talk about the current matters. Two weeks ago, we had such a meeting, during which I discussed several issues that bothered me . . . The teacher reacted immediately and with full understanding of the child's needs".* (Interview, P / Class 1B)
>
> *"The teacher is always ready to get in touch with us. She always answers the phone or calls back quickly; she replies quickly to e-mails".* (Interview, P / Class 3B)

The analysis of the conducted interviews leads to the conclusion that the parents of the children with special educational needs **appreciate the fact that teachers receive additional training**. Interestingly, the interviews with the parents suggest that, in reference to the teachers mainly as a professional group, the parents consider the need to develop their qualifications and competences, especially when referring to teachers with multiannual experience in the job. The parents claim that in the past, university curricula did not cover any content on the recognition of special educational needs, developing individualised education programmes and adjusting the education process to the needs and capabilities of SEN pupils flexibly. The teachers with multiannual experience in the field usually lack experience of work with SEN children, especially with those with more serious development disorders or disabilities (e.g. ASDs or Down syndrome, blindness or visual or hearing impairment). Earlier, in the Polish educational system, the latter pupils were educated and underwent therapy almost exclusively in specialized schools. Nowadays, with the growing relevance of integration and inclusion, they attend mainstream schools and, prior to those, mainstream kindergartens. Some of the interviewed parents even claim that a teacher without previous preparation and experience virtually cannot cope with the situation they are placed in, and, both the teacher and their pupils are doomed to fail. One of the mothers characterises the experience of her friend in the following way:

> *"My friend has an autistic son. Intellectually, he is rather fine, but his behaviour, well . . . it is rather difficult. Somebody advised her to special educational needs d him to a mainstream school. Unfortunately, the teacher of the first grade was an elderly lady, probably almost at retirement age. It is too scary to talk about what was happening there. The teacher*

was completely out of control; she did not know how to cope with him. Finally, the parents of other pupils started to complain and that came as no surprise, as sometimes it was dangerous to be in the classroom. A few parents even decided to transfer their children to another class. Once, when he started to misbehave, the teacher broke out in tears and left the classroom! She was continually on sick leave and the children had lessons with substitute teachers. For an autistic child, it is a highly adverse situation, so there always were problems. Eventually, the elderly teacher went on a convalescent leave and, fortunately, the situation became gradually peaceful because a new teacher appeared, who was very well prepared". (Interview, P / Class 1B)

The interviewed parents also **appreciate the teachers' openness and flexibility**. They attach importance to the teacher's ability to understand the difficulties their child faces and to show patience. The following is one mother's testimony of her experience:

"I know that my son is not an easy pupil. When I try to explain something to him, I sometimes think I've had enough. His concentration is poor and he quickly forgets. And the worst is if he gets too much to do at one go. Then, he does nothing and begins to disturb the others. That is why I admire the teacher. She is so patient and calm; she does not get annoyed with my son. When she is calm, he calms down, too". (Interview, P / Class 1B)

"My child is autistic and sometimes protests and even becomes aggressive towards other children or the teacher. The teacher understands that the difficult behaviour results from my son's disability, she is patient and understanding, and teaches the same attitude to other pupils". (Interview, P / Class 1B)

Thus, the teacher who understands and accepts the difficulties a child with SEN faces in functioning becomes **a role model in the process of shaping positive attitudes**. Furthermore, he or she reduces the risk of potential stigmatisation.

The parents also consider the teacher's ability to notice and appreciate even minor progress of the pupils as very important. The following is an example by a mother of a child with an intellectual disability:

"The teacher can praise our son's effort and commitment in public. He does not abuse his weaknesses. He supports him". (Interview, P / Class 1B)

The parents of the children with SEN also co-operate with an array of specialists, who hold additional individual therapeutic classes on the school premises; namely, a

speech therapist who assists in the development of communication skills, a psychologist who supports emotional and social functioning or assists in developing cognitive capabilities, a special educational needs sory integration therapist who optimises the reception and processing of special educational needs sory stimuli, a physiotherapist who helps towards a child's better motor functioning or other specialists. Constant and regular contact between the specialists and the parents is crucial since, for the therapy to have permanent results, the therapeutic practices must be integrated into the child's everyday life.

Parents express deep appreciation for their children being assigned individually adjusted and implemented therapy. Similarly, as in reference to the teachers, the parents expect specialists to be, above all, involved to a large extent. Several of the interviewed parents pointed out that they consider it important to know the reasons the specialists assign certain tasks to be done at home. Parents call for precise specifications, or rather constant specifying on what exactly they should concentrate on in their work with the child at home.

The analysis of the interviews has shown that the parents attach high importance to receiving precise information on home tasks from the specialists; some parents simply expect "instructions", referring to precise orders on how to work with their own child. The following statement exemplifies parental expectations as expressed by one of the mothers:

> *"Valuable instructions from the teacher is very important information for me, namely, what and how I have to work on with my child to facilitate his further development"*. (Interview, P / Class 3B)

In the parents' opinion, it is also important that the teacher or therapists appreciate their efforts and commitment.

> *"Maybe it is ridiculous, but for me it is very important that the teacher tells me she sees I work well with my child at home. When she does so in the prespecial educational needs ce of my husband, then I really feel appreciated, and the effort that costs me a lot does not matter then and I have energy to continue working with my son"*. (Interview, P / Class 3B)

Several parents pointed out that "*they are only human*", and are often overwhelmed with various household chores and professional duties themselves. Consequently, getting involved in the process of the education and therapy of their child, as would be advisable, is not always possible for them. Those parents feel discomfort about it. On the one hand, they know that their involvement in the support, as conceived

in its broad special educational needs se, for their child's development is important and indispensable; yet on the other hand, they feel a lack of commitment on their behalf compared to what would be desirable. No explicit declarations of the fact are prespecial educational needs t in the interviews, but it can be deduced that in such situations, a parent would like to receive even more understanding and assistance from the therapists in the form of informational support. Therefore, precise orders on how to work at home with the child, and, above all, emotional support, namely, understanding the parent and his or her difficult situation, are welcome.

> *"Our speech therapist noticed I do not work with my child regularly at home. I know how important regularity is in this respect, but what can I do? I have four other children, and I need to dedicate some time to each of them. The speech therapist suggested she would find a trainee who would visit us at home and practise with my (name of the child). I agreed, even though at the beginning I did not believe such a trainee would be able to manage it because he is not an easy child to work with. But it turned out to be great because the student receives advice from the speech therapists on what to do, and it is great. She visits us twice a week. (The name of the child) took to her very much and practices readily. I am not nervous about it anymore, although earlier I was really worried about how to do it all. So, I am very grateful to the speech therapists and especially to the trainee for being willing to do it, even if she says for her it is great because this is how she learns a lot. So, everybody is happy and the effects are great".*
> (Interview, P / Class 1B)

Trainees from the Pedagogical University of Krakow and volunteers serve as support providers for the parents under pressing workloads. Committed volunteering interns hold therapeutic classes under the supervision of therapists, and in difficult situations they also help at home. Tutored by specialists (e.g. a speech therapist), they visit a pupil regularly in his or her house, work with them and thus help the parents, at least in part.

5.4.5. LEARNING – TEACHING APPROACH: POLISH CASE

Remigiusz Kijak

On the basis of the study and the analysis of literature on the subject matter, it is possible to identify a few areas that are crucial from the perspective of learning and teaching at an inclusive school. We can thus look at several dimensions of the process.

The first of the identified dimensions is the ability to **diagnose the needs and capabilities of the pupils** and treating the diagnosis as **a continuous process.** Building his on her knowledge on the pupil, the teacher strives to keep a positive attitude towards the pupil, namely, to attempt to reveal the best aspects in him or her.

> *"Moreover, Błażej requires a lot of help; his desk is always in chaos. Several times during the day, we have to tidy it up (his things are often scattered on the desk and underneath it) and put the desk in its proper position because he keeps moving it forward. I often have to sit next to him so that he does the tasks, especially if it is something to write".* (Diary A)

Similarly, it is esspecial educational needs tial for the teacher to able to diagnose the child's needs in a comprehensive way – in other words, assess the child's functioning in all developmental areas, including intellectual, motor, special educational needs sory functioning, speech, emotions and relationships with others. It also covers the **developmental** dimension, namely, the teacher should be able to indicate the abilities of the pupil that indicate his or her acquisition of knowledge and capabilities in spite of their limitations and difficulties.

> *"The boys completed all the tasks that were to be done that day. Bartek worked on his own; he only needed checking if the tasks were done correctly (he does not always understand the instructions). He was able to formulate statements on a given subject. The difficulty arose in focusing on the topic of the lesson. He had to be directed at it and made interested in it. Often, that means making references to information he has read earlier, and encouraging him to listen to what is happening during the class. Today, he stayed focused when we used the multimedia manual, he listened carefully and raised his hand to speak".* (Diary B)

Another dimension identified during the study is the ability **to prepare IEPs and putting emphasis on their flexibility in the context of individual pupils' needs.**

"After the break, the math lesson started; the pupils were solving simple mathematical problems and exercises and making calculations up to 100. Bartek needed the teacher's help as he calculated in reference to concrete objects. When something did not work, he got very irritated; he needed directing and verbal support that assured him he could do it. He worked in silence and was very much focused on the task. Other pupils did not need help; they worked on their own during the lesson. The teacher checked the completed tasks for every pupil, Gabrysia and Anastazja made errors in two examples and had to redo the calculations. At the end of the lesson, Bartek, who was on duty in the class, collected the books and put them in a locker in the classroom. He was very proud to have been appointed "the book monitor". After the primary school lessons, the pupils went to English lessons, which are held in small groups". (Diary B)

"What is important is the individual adjustment – that is to say, each pupil has different tasks but it has to be done in such a way that nobody knew they have been given special tasks. Preparing IEPs (individualised education programmes) takes a lot of my time but it is very important for my work to have meaning". (Diary A)

Another dimension brought to light during the study is the ability **to adjust the educational process,** namely, **to seek new forms and methods of work as well as to apply individual didactic measures.** The prespecial educational needs ce of children with disabilities in mainstream schools calls for developing the existing methods in the teachers' work with the diverse educational needs, as well as introducing new ones. Developing teacher qualifications is key to ensure proper care for the children and support in the process of education. As the study suggests, teachers recognize the necessity thereof.

"Certainly, new methods and higher qualifications are important; it also guarantees that my work will be better, that it will serve the children better". (Diary B)

The **ability to assess the pupils** is an important element of the teacher's work. In Polish schools, the mark can take the form of a description or be expressed by a number. Assessing pupils with special educational needs brings additional difficulty, as in many cases their performance results are poorer.

Thus, it is important for the teacher to be able to assess pupils in an individualised way. In accordance with the inclusion concept, the school becomes a meeting space.

Children of different developmental levels find an opportunity to seek and construct their potential in a creative way there. In the situation where the pupil becomes, to a certain extent, the centre of his or her own learning, his or her achieving goals adjusted to their needs and capabilities becomes a precondition for an effective educational process. To make it possible, the teacher should have command of what can be reffered to as "forming assessment", understood as a process of continuous analysis of a particular pupil's level, regardless of the scope of the pupil's capabilities since his or her progress is evaluated purely in reference to that particular pupil. Therefore, assessment should be a continuous observation-based process.

> "After checking the tasks, we went on to work with exercises in math; the pupils solved a word problem, using a multiplication and division table within the scope of 50. Just as in the case of reading, I sat next to Piotr and I read out the instructions to him, and later the boy completed the task himself. Ola had difficulty with the multiplication table, while Sara and other pupils could multiply efficiently within the scope of 50, yet some had problems with division. In one of the tasks, the pupils were supposed to calculate the result and colour a picture using a given colour code. Krzyś had a problem because he forgot his coloured pencils, but Piotrek and Kamil lent him some. Sara's pencils kept on breaking but Anastazja helped to sharpen them. The teacher checked the tasks. Piotr and Bartek got a 5 (very good) with annotation (with a plus). Soon the marks started showing on the children's faces; they started smiling, and the rest of the class started applauding them, which encouraged the boys to work even harder". (Diary B)

The above citations reveal the complexity of assessment and the responsibility of the teacher regarding the children's emotions the feedback evokes. This influences the pupils' self-esteem and self-acceptance (Kazanowski, Mazur, 2004).

Concluding comments: Polish case

The conducted study, taking into account both its qualitative and quantitative data, enables attempts to be made to create a general picture of the process of shaping peer relationships in an integrated class. The normalization of life conditions for people with disabilities (in the special educational needs se of providing them with regular life conditions to the most possible degree, including rejecting segregation and institutionalisation to establish natural contacts with non-SEN peers) is an

axiologically justified postulate (Krause, 2009). However, when taken to the maximum, it might become utopian, even detrimental, since *"we should not look at integration solely in the light of social declarations".* (Grzyb, 2013, p. 195)

If a child's social integration, seen as manifesting itself through the special educational needs se of bonding and acceptance in an informal group, advantageous social position and empowered participation in children's activities and decisions (Al-Khamisy, 2002), is taken as a criterion indicating success in integrated schooling, then the contemporary school seemingly fails to fulfill the criterion. Informal relationships noticed in the observed classes have, referring to the typology of Zenon Gajdzica (2013), an asymmetrical character. On the one hand, they focus on providing special treatment to pupils with disabilities due to their special needs and capabilities, which facilitates assistance-driven behaviours, which in turn can add to emphasising their deficiencies and dysfunctions and the development of discriminatory attitudes among pupils. The exclusion of pupils with disabilities from the informal peer groups and their isolation constitute visible signs of such relationships. On the other hand, however, the asymmetrical relationships tend to facilitate "more favourable" treatment of the pupils with disabilities, which also leads to their isolation or rejection, especially in cases of intellectual disability (Twardowski, 2009). Many studies conducted in Polish schools confirm the conclusions drawn from this study (e.g. Domagała-Zyśk, 2012; Janion, 2000; Brasławska-Haque, 2002; Bąbka, 2003; Ćwirynkało, 2003; 2009; Grządziel, 2003; Wiącek, 2005, 2008; Sidor-Piekarska, 2012; Rozenbajger, 2008).

The results of the Polish studies indicate that pupils with disabilities often experience social isolation and rejection in mainstream integrated classes, especially if they display ASD-driven difficult behaviours (Grządziel, 2003). A sociometric analysis conducted on a large group of pupils of the second and third grades demonstrated that the majority of pupils with physical and intellectual disabilities are subject to isolation or rejection. What is more, the results contradict the declarative attitudes, in which the pupils claimed they accept common play and doing homework (Rozenbajgier, 2008). The older the non-SEN pupils are and the longer they have been attending school, the lower is their level of emotional acceptance and kindness towards their classmates with disabilities (Wiącek, 2008). This serves as the main cause, apart from the lack of positive educational effects, of requalification into a special school (Grzyb, 2013).

The prespecial educational needs ted studies show that the crucial conditions for inclusion are the following: individualised requirements, the adjustment of assessment to the pupil's capabilities and co-operation between the school and committed parents

who, together with the teachers, create a space within the school for professionalisation and improvement in the quality of care and education. In the case of inclusion, teachers see key success in creatively organised and professionally managed education process. They appreciate the role of the headmaster as the leader of innovative changes. The teachers also underline the importance of activating individual and social resources within a person and co-operating in diverse teams. The teachers consider inclusive school as a space of acceptance, equality and, at the same time, diversity. The inclusive school space is also created through co-operation with other units, which form part of the school's external network, that work for the improvement of the life quality of the children (Baran, 2012). The school's tasks also cover the usage of resources in a given locality (including museums, theatres and various establishments). All in all, the results of the study are coherent with insights given by Gajdzica (2014) and Chrzanowska (2014).

The analysis of the data collected during the study has demonstrated that as far as parent-teacher relationships are concerned, the teachers value authentic co-operation between the teacher and the parents, based on partnership, mutual respect and complete trust. The parents also appreciate professionalism (knowledge, skills and continuous aspiration for professional development) as well as personality traits (openness, flexibility and emotional and cognitive empathy) (Kossewska, 2000; Baraniewicz & Cierpiałowska, 2014). These values enable the acceptance of the child's special needs and noticing his or her special capabilities. Furthermore, communicativeness and readiness to dedicate time to the pupil and their parents according to the needs is of considerable significance. The results of the study are coherent with the insights of Kunicka (2005). The above considerations based on empirical data allow to construct educational inclusion model describing the process as a self-improving mechanism set in the socio-ecological context, as prespecial educational needs ted in Figure 35.

The above results make it possible to look at the experience of educational inclusion from the perspective of three subjects involved. They show the complexity of the phenomenon analysed and suggest the necessity to exercise caution towards adopting integration (or, in broader terms, educational inclusion) without critical consideration, but rather as a universal form of implementing the concept of "School for All". Because of the naturally occurring diversity in population, maintaining the current diversified forms of schooling seems more justified, namely, preserving the framework that gives possibility to choose the most advantageous form in the individual situation of every pupil.
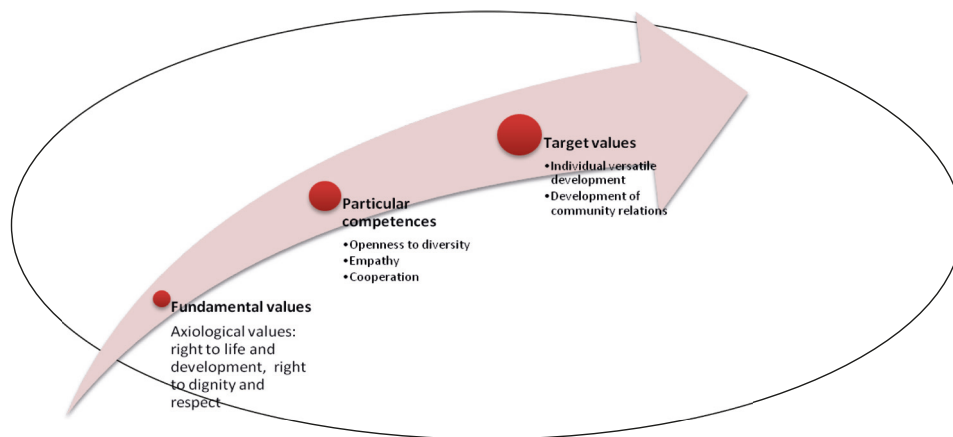
Figure 35. Axiological view of educational inclusion from a dynamic perspective.

REFERENCES

Al-Khamisy, D. (2002). Gotowość nauczycieli do pracy z dziećmi o specjalnych potrzebach edukacyjnych. [Teachers' readiness to work with children with special educational needs]. In: D. Al-Khamisy (Ed.), *Integracja społeczna. Praktyczne próby wdrażania.* [Social integration. Practical implementation attempts]. pp. 9–16. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie „Żak".

Apanel, D. (2012). Nauczyciel wspomagający w kształceniu integracyjnym i inkluzyjnym – rola, zadania, dyspozycje osobowościowe. [Supportive teacher in integration and inclusion settings: the role, tasks, personality traits]. In: J. Krukowski, A. Wołoch (Ed.) *Szkoła twórcza w odtwórczym świecie.* [Ctreative school in imitative world]. Biblioteka Współczesnej Myśli Pedagogicznej, Kraków.

Baran, J, (2012). Poradnia i szkoła w systemie wsparcia dzieci i młodzieży z uszkodzeniami słuchu oraz ich rodzin. [Treatment and school in the support system for children and youth with hearing impairment and their families]. In: K. Krakowiak, A. Dziurda-Multan (Ed.) *Wychowanie dzieci z uszkodzeniami słuchu: nowe wyzwania dla rodziców i specjalistów.* [Upbringing of children with hearing impairment: new challanges for parents and professionals]. pp. 159–167. Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL.

Baraniewicz, D. & Cierpiałowska, T. (2014). Model osobowości pedagoga specjalnego - wskazania Marii Grzegorzewskiej a perspektywa współczesnych studentek pedagogiki specjalnej. [Special needs teacher personality model: Maria Grzegorzewska's instructions and the contemporary perspective on special needs students]. In: E. Dyduch, A. Mikruta, J. Zielińskiej (Ed.) *Idee Marii Grzegorzewskiej jako inspiracje rozwoju współczesnej pedagogiki specjalnej.* [Maria Grzegorzewska's ideas as inspiration for contemporary special education development]. pp. 88-99. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego.

Bąbka, J. (2003). Psychospołeczne aspekty efektywności edukacji dzieci w systemie integracyjnym. [Psycho-social aspects of schooling effectiveness for children in integration system]. In: Z. Kazanowski, D. Osik – Chudowolska (ed.), *Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji*

i interakcjach społecznych. [Integration of persons with disabilities in education and social interactions]. Lublin, Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Błeszyńska, K. (1992). Determinanty przystosowania ucznia niepełnosprawnego do środowiska szkoły masowej. [Determinants of the adaptation of children with disabilities in regular school environment]. In: A. Hulek, B. Grochmal-Bach (Ed.) *Uczeń niepełnosprawny w szkole masowej.* [Pupil with disabilities in regular school setting]. Wyd. UJ Kraków.

Brasławska-Haque, M. (2002). Stosunek do niepełnosprawności dzieci pełnosprawnych uczęszczających do przedszkola integracyjnego. [Attitudes towards disability among children of integrated kindergarten]. In: A. Pielecki (ed.), *Problemy pedagogiki specjalnej w okresie przemian społecznych.* [The issues of special education in social transition]. Lublin, Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Chrzanowska, I. (2014). Nauczanie inkluzyjne w doświadczeniach polskich – podstawy prawne i społeczne uwarunkowania. [Polish experience in inclusive teaching: legal background and social conditions]. *Studia Edukacyjne*, *30*, pp. 109–117.

Ćwirynkało, K. (2003). Pozycja socjometryczna uczniów niepełnosprawnych a postawa nauczycieli wobec integracji. [Sociometric position of students with disabilities and teachers' attitude towards integration]. In: Z. Kazanowski, D. Osik – Chudowolska*, Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i interakcjach społecznych.* [Persons with disabilities integration in education and social interactions]. Lublin, Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Ćwirynkało, K. (2009). Relacje interpersonalne z rówieśnikami osób z lekką niepełnosprawnością intelektualną. [Interpersonal peer relationships of persons with mild intellectual disability]. In Cz. Kosakowski, A. Krause, M. Wójcik (Ed.*), Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 8. Relacje i doświadczenia społeczne osób z niepełnosprawnością.* [Special education discourses 8. Relationships and social experience of persons with disability]. Toruń, Akapit.

Domagała-Zyśk, E. (2012). Relacje rówieśnicze uczniów z niespecyficznymi trudnościami w nauce. [Peer relationships of students with unspecific learning disorders]. In E. Domagała-Zyśk (Ed.), *Uczeń ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi w środowisku rówieśniczym*. [Student with special educational needs in peer relationships]. Lublin, Wydawnictwo KUL.

Dryżałowska, G. (2007). *Rozwój językowy dziecka z uszkodzonym słuchem a integracja edukacyjna. Model kształcenia integracyjnego*. [Language development of the child with hearing impairment and school integration. Integration education model]. Wyd. Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa.

Gajdzica, Z. (2013). *Kategorie sukcesów w opiniach nauczycieli klas integracyjnych jako przyczynek do poszukiwania koncepcji edukacji integracyjnej.* [Success categories in the opinion of integration class teachers as the contribution to the search for the concept of integrated education]. Kraków, Impuls.

Grządziel, G. (2003). Dziecko autystyczne na tle środowiska szkoły ogólnodostępnej bez klas integracyjnych. [Autistic child on the background of mainstream school environment without integrated classes]. In: Z. Janiszewska – Nieścioruk (ed.), *Człowiek z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną, Tom I, Wybrane problemy osobowości, rodzin i edukacji osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną.* [A person with intellectual disability, Volume I, Selected issues of personality, families and education of people with intellectual disabilities]. Kraków, Impuls.

Grzyb, B. (2013). *Uwarunkowania związane z przenoszeniem uczniów niepełnosprawnych ze szkół integracyjnych do specjalnych.* [Conditions associated with the transfer of students with disabilities from integrated schools to special ones]. Kraków, Impuls.

Janion, E. (2000). Dynamika zmian we wzajemnych relacjach między dziećmi pełnosprawnymi i niepełnosprawnymi w przedszkolnej grupie integracyjnej. [Dynamics of interpersonal relationship chan ges between children with and without disabilities in preschool integration group]. In A. Rakowska, J. Baran (Ed.), *Dylematy pedagogiki specjalnej.* [Special education dilemas]. Kraków, Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogicznej.

Kazanowski, Z. & Mazur, B., (2004). Samoocena młodzieży niepełnosprawnej intelektualnie w stopniu lekkim jako wyznacznik integracji społecznej. [Self-esteem in youth with mild intellectual disability as social integration determinant]. In: G. Dryżałowska, H. Żuraw (Ed.), *Integracja społeczna osób niepełnosprawnych.* [Social integration of people with disabilities]. Wyd. Akademickie „Żak", Warszawa

Kossewska, J. (2000). *Uwarunkowania postaw. Nauczyciele i inne grupy zawodowe wobec integracji szkolnej dzieci niepełnosprawnych.* [Determinants of attitudes. Teachers and other professional groups towards school integration of children with disabilities]. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej.

Kozielecki, J., *O człowieku wielowymiarowym. Eseje psychologiczne.* [On multidimentional persons. Psychological essays]. Warszawa: PWN 1988

Krause, A. (2009). Relacje i doświadczenia społeczne osób z niepełnosprawnością – wyjściowe tezy dyskursu. [Relationships and social expereinces of people with disability – the output discurse thesis]. In Cz. Kosakowski, A. Krause, M. Wójcik (Ed.), *Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 8. Relacje i doświadczenia społeczne osób z niepełnosprawnością.* [Special education discourses 8. Relationships and social experience of persons with disability]. Toruń, Akapit.

Kunicka, M. (2005). *Temporalne orientacje teleologiczne nauczycieli.* [Teachers' temporal teleological orientations]. Kraków: Impuls

Kuźma, J. (2000). *Nauczyciele przyszłej szkoły.* [Teachers of future school]. Wydawnictwo Naukowe AP, Kraków.

Kuźma, J. (2005). Pedeutologia nauka kreującą mądrych, sprawiedliwych i dobrych nauczycieli, [Pedeutology as the science creating the clever and righteous]. In: H. Moroz (Ed.), *Rozwój zawodowy nauczyciela.* [Teacher's professional development]. Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls", Kraków.

Majewicz, P. (2008). Pedagog specjalny – osobowość i możliwości jej formowania. [Special teacher – personality and posibilities of its forms]. In: P. Majewicz, A. Mikrut (Ed.), *Kompetencje pedagoga w kontekście teorii i praktyki edukacyjnej.* [Teacher's competences in the context of theory and practice context]. Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls", Kraków.

Piotrowicz, R. (2012). Zrozumieć niepełnosprawność. Wspomaganie w uczeniu … do rodziców, terapeutów, [Understanding disability. Support in learning …to parents and therapists]. In: D. Al-Khamisy, J. Kosmala, R. Piotrowicz (Ed.), *One są wśród nas. Poradnik dla nauczycieli i specjalistów edukacji włączającej oraz rodziców dzieci i młodzieży z niepełnosprawnością opracowany w ramach pomocy dla Gruzji.* [A guide for teachers and inclusive education specialists and parents of children and youth with disabilities developed in the framework of assistance to Georgia]. Publikacja Ośrodka Rozwoju Edukacji, Warszawa.

Przybyszewska, D. (2014). Rodzice uczniów kształcących się w klasach integracyjnych – ich motywy i oczekiwania. [Parents of children in integrated school setting – their motives and expectations]. *Interdyscyplinarne Konteksty Pedagogiki Specjalnej*, 6, pp. 49–68.

Rozenbajgier, M. (2008). Dziecko niepełnosprawne w grupie rówieśniczej. [Child with disability in peer group]. In W. Pilecka, K. Bidziński, M. Pietrykiewicz (Ed.), *O poznawaniu siebie i świata przez dziecko ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi.* [About self and word knowledge in the child with special educational needs]. Kielce, Wydawnictwo UHP Jana Kochanowskiego.

Sidor-Piekarska, B. (2012). Relacje uczniów z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną z rówieśnikami w kształceniu niesegregacyjnym. [Relationships of children with intellectual disability in the non-segragative settings]. In: E. Domagała-Zyśk (Ed.), *Uczeń ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi w środowisku rówieśniczym.* [Student with special educational needs in peer relationships]. Lublin, Wydawnictwo KUL.

Skibska, J. & Warchał, M. (2011). Edukacja inkluzyjna dziecka niepełnosprawnego w szkole ogólnodostępnej a integracja społeczna. [Inclusive education of child with disability in regular school setting, and social integration]. In: K. Denek (Ed.). *Edukacja jutra w*

kontekście wyzwań współczesności. [Tomorrow's education in the context of contemporary challenges]. Oficyna Wydawnicza Humanitas: Sosnowiec.

Twardowski, A. (2009). Uwarunkowania skuteczności nauczania integracyjnego dzieci z niepełnosprawnościami. [Conditions of the efficiency of the integrated education of children with disabilities]. In: N. D. Baczała, J.J. Bleszyński, M. Zaorska (Ed.), *Osoba z niepełnosprawnością – opieka, terapia, wsparcie.* [A person with disability – the care, therapy and support]. Toruń, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK

Wiącek, G. (2005). Pomiar efektywności kształcenia integracyjnego dzieci ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi. [Efficacy measurement of integrated education of children with special educational needs]. In: Cz. Kosakowski, A. Krause (Ed.), Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej 4. *Normalizacja środowisk życia osób niepełnosprawnych.* [Special education discourses 4. Normalization of the living environment of people with disabilities]. Olsztyn, UWM.

Wiącek, G. (2008). Dziecko ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi w klasie – wskazówki praktyczne dla organizacji kształcenia integracyjnego. [Children with special educational needs in the classroom – practical tips for integrated education organization]. In: W. Pilecka, K. Bidziński, M. Pietrykiewicz (Ed.), *O poznawaniu siebie i świata przez dziecko ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi.* [On self and world knowledge in the child with special educational needs]. Kielce, Wydawnictwo UHP Jana Kochanowskiego.

Woźniak, Z. (2008). *Niepełnosprawność i niepełnosprawni w polityce społecznej. Społeczny kontekst medycznego problemu.* [Disability and people with disabilities in social policy. Social context of medical problem]. Wydawnictwo Szkoły Wyższej Psychologii Społecznej: Academica.

5.5. SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS FACILITATING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: DISCUSSION AND FINAL CONCLUSIONS

Alvyra Galkienė

In order to answer the fundamental question of the research–"What socio-educational aspects facilitate and enhance quality of inclusive education?"–the results of the empirical research in all the countries must be generalized. The data analysis serves to establish inclusive education factors that reoccur in different educational contexts (schools in four different European countries) and lead to the revelation and development of the individual nature of every pupil's abilities in social and educational interaction. The analysis is built on the theory of learning based on the synergy of the ideas of Piaget's cognitive psychology and Vygotsky's social constructivism (Powell & Kalina, 2009). It is claimed that a pupil constructs his or her knowledge by accepting and broadening their current knowledge and changing the already developed schemes of knowing and behaviour (by means of assimilation and accommodation) on the grounds of experience acquired by acting in social and cultural environments. Social and cultural environments, as well as the pupil's interaction therein, serve as an important source of education.

The construct of inclusive education is revealed via the following dimensions: prioritization of personal individuality and strengths; emphasis of learning together; personalization of educational activity in the context of joint learning; diversification and naturalization of support provision strategies to a pupil; and acknowledgement of the transformation of pupil's powers (Florian & Spratt, 2013, 2015).

Variety of schools participating in the research

The results of the empirical research support the idea that the education policy provisions in the four European countries (Austria, Finland, Lithuania, and Poland) are clearly oriented towards ensuring equal rights and opportunities in education for every pupil. The realization of inclusive education principles in education is recognized as a means for the implementation of the goals (*see more* in Chapter II). However, the countries do not share identical inclusive education experiences in their education

systems. The paradigmatic and methodological grounds of education organization in the schools that participated in the research differs as well (*see more* in Chapter IV).

The Integrated Learning Center Brigittenau in Vienna (Austria) bases its approach on the principles of progressive education and implements inclusive multi-age learning. The community of the classes that participated in the research consisted of pupils of three grades. The basis of the learning activity is pupils' independent learning as a priority, whereas consulting and assistance to the pupils constitute the grounds of the activities of the pedagogues. The pupils are active participants in planning their learning process, and implementing its goals.

The Teacher Training School of University of Lapland in Finland plays two roles in the Finnish educational community: it takes part in the teacher training program and educates local community pupils at the same time. The educational paradigm realized in the school is based on the principles of social constructivism, with particular emphasis put on the welfare of every pupil both at school and in the surrounding community. The means to achieve this include ensuring equal rights and conditions in interpersonal interaction as well as at the level of curriculum and its implementation.

The Vilnius "Versmės" Catholic School implements inclusive education, building the school's education policy on a Christian humanistic worldview. Following the educational tradition of St. Marie Eugenie, the school aims at establishing firm value-based foundations and developing the pupils' ability to co-operate and commit for the sake of peace and society. By providing pedagogical, psychological, social, and other pupil-enabling assistance, a favourable educational environment is created for joint educational activities of pupils with different abilities and physical capabilities, considering every pupil's individuality and personal needs. Children of various abilities are provided with equal opportunities to work towards the highest level of education potentially possible for everyone in all areas.

The Integration Secondary School No. 1 in Cracow has been one of the first mainstream schools in Poland to begin to educate pupils with special educational needs. The educational model of the school corresponds to the integrated education model applied in the Polish education system. In the classrooms of the school, pupils with special educational needs learn together with regularly developing ones. Next to teachers, the school has specialists that provide individual assistance to pupils or work as second teachers in the classrooms.

Generalization of factors promoting inclusive education

As can be seen from the brief review of the research schools, in all four of them, conditions are created for successful learning of pupils with different needs and possibilities. However, the educational contexts of the schools differ rather noticeably not only in terms of traditions and experience of the country but also the education system framework at schools. This leads to an opportunity to discover the fundamental educational factors that enhance the process and quality of inclusive education. By comparing the results of the empirical research in the four schools, the factors promoting inclusive education are analysed with regard to five dimensions of educational reality.

Dimension 1. Prioritizing personal individuality and strengths

Recognizing personal individuality and creating conditions for its development in a common community of learners together with other learners developing their own individuality is one of the fundamental prerogatives of inclusive education. This goal distinguishes inclusive education from unified education systems based on unanimous educational goals and desirable outcomes. Thomas (2013) claims that the education system in the 21st century can no longer prioritize the goal of overcoming learning difficulties and disabilities but, on the contrary, it perceives personal differences as the grounds of equality, and creates conditions to accumulate social and educational capital by means of socio-educational relationships in a learning community. Aiming at this purpose at all levels of the education system, from education policy to education organization in the classroom, personal individuality and strengths become an epistemological goal and reference point, and education organization is based on the principle of universal design that allows educators to embrace the individual physical and intellectual needs of every pupil in common activity (Meyer & Rose, 2000; Jackson & Harper, 2005; Meo, 2008; Mitchell, 2014).

The Austrian, Finnish, Lithuanian, and Polish school communities that participated in the research take every pupil's individuality as an important reference point in education organization. The inclusive education dimension of "Prioritization of personal individuality and strengths" revealed factors that emphasize the psycho-social relationships of a person in the context of education.

Child self-esteem development factor. The expression of a pupil's individuality within the community is an important factor in the development of his or her social connections and status in the group. The research results demonstrate that the

pedagogues implementing inclusive education take as their goal the development of positive attitudes towards oneself and other community members in every pupil (both bright ones and those with special needs). All circumstances occurring in the educational reality are exploited for the purpose, in order to create conditions for the pupil to experience success in the education process and in interactions with other community members. The structure, content, and methods applied in the lessons allow every pupil to reveal themselves. The pedagogues notice and emphasize the pupils' correct decisions and tactical choices, and direct their focus towards personal success. Personal connection to the teacher contributes greatly to the development of positive relationships with students. The relationship evolves in the context of the daily school routine. When discussing tasks with the pupil in person, the pedagogue encourages him or her, and enhances self-confidence, which constitutes creating conditions to understand the reasons behind one's personal success or failure. The pedagogues implementing inclusive education also underline the importance of help to children with extraordinary capabilities and talent in overcoming psycho-social barriers. Assistance to these pupils in developing fully-fledged relationships with their peers is an important factor of inclusive education. The results of our research demonstrate that the teachers who base their activity on the effort towards practical implementation (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Terzi, 2014) of the values of equal rights, equality, and non-discrimination (Barton & Armstrong, 2007), assign priority to assistance to every pupil, which helps them to know their personal strengths and gain recognition within the community.

Factors that help the pupil to discover their place within community. Class community is a dynamic and living organism. A developing personality must find its space of activity within it, at the same time learning to leave sufficient space to other community members. Our research results show that the pedagogues aiming to help the pupils build equal community-like relationships also aim at instilling inclusive education values both in their own worldview as well as that of the pupils, since, as Booth (1999) puts it, an inclusive education process increases participation possibilities for every pupil and reduces exclusion, and, according to Leatherman and Niemeyer (2005), the teacher's attention and positive attitudes towards every pupil are of particular significance for their success at school. The beliefs of the teachers participating in the research reflect a clear goal not only to show attention to every pupil but to organize education in the way that would unveil every pupil's capabilities to make them visible to other community members. By organizing personal celebrations

for pupils and showing special attention to the weaker ones, by creating conditions for the most gifted pupils to raise interest in their knowledge among their peers and thus experience recognition from the latter, by remaining loyal to the pupils in case of difficulties, the teacher presents examples of real-life realization of inclusive values and facilitates the entrance into the community for those for whom it naturally poses more difficulties. Although the starting point in evaluating the quality of inclusive education is the recognition of every person's individuality and striving towards his or her personal progress (UNESCO, 2004), nevertheless, certain pedagogues (in this case, in the Finnish school) do not reject competition within the community, nor actions that highlight pupils' individual success. By encouraging the pupils to compete, the teachers invite them to work at their full capacity, and by emphasizing fellow pupils' success, they dare everyone to aim at their highest possible personal result.

Personal difference interpretation factor. Personal difference interpretation is a relevant educational task in every community of learners. In the environment of inclusive education, the issue gains ever more relevance. Pedagogical leadership, helping the pupils to interpret their personal differences correctly, serves as a factor of high importance not only in shaping the pupil community but also in ensuring every pupil's well-being within the community. Research results show that the primary means that helps to interpret personal differences correctly is the pedagogue's fairness and openness with the pupils in the face of the consequences of otherness. Conversations focussing on personal differences help the pupils understand the reasons behind differing activity results, choices, or behaviours. The results of this and other research (Galkienė, 2009, 2016) demonstrate that in cases where a person's otherness in the community is treated as a natural life phenomenon, when opportunities are given to pupils to emphatically experience the situations of their friends with limited possibilities, and when children are taught to ask for help and provide it, natural interpersonal relationships evolve between pupils with different possibilities, different tasks, and scope of requirements no longer raise surprise. In certain cases, when pupils have difficulties in controlling their behaviour or severe disabilities, pedagogical assistance in developing interpersonal relationships within groups of pupils must be particularly intensive and targeted, as in these cases the pupils tend to be identified as undesirable partners in play, or simply be excluded more often.

Dimension 2. Emphasizing joint learning

The research results show that the main focus in schools implementing inclusive education is put on the sustainability of a co-operating community. Co-operation culture is a distinctive feature of inclusive education. In the school, it is built in a targeted and continuous manner, since, as Sánchez, Chism, Serafini, and Judd (2012) put it, co-operative relationships form the basis of rich and memorable learning experiences. Co-operation culture gives rise to deeper knowledge of others, and leads to becoming a person open to other cultures. The results of the research reveal co-operation in school communities via the dimension of joint learning.

Interpersonal respect and acceptance factor as a group of values realizing inclusive education. Accepting every child as an equal member in the community is not a self-fulfilling phenomenon based on common moral norms. Rather, it is a conscious target in the education process. Two schools participating in the research (in Austria and Lithuania) create everyday rituals in their classroom communities (Morning Circle, Circle of Goodbye). Application of these methods for enhancing social connections allows all the pupils to talk about themselves and others under equal conditions, and to discuss situations they find relevant. Bruce, Fasy, Gulick, Jones, and Pike (2006) note that the elements of the Morning Circle routine provide an opportunity for every participant to hear and look into ideas each pupil voices and finds significant, thus providing a possibility for them to feel an important member of the community.

In all research schools, the pedagogues aim at creating a close and immediate connection with the pupils. By providing an opportunity for the children to speak (during breaks or joint lunch), by creating a joyful learning environment, systematically reflecting on the cases of the pupils' learning or behavioural success, helping pupils to overcome the consequences of their scruffiness or other flaws patiently and without emphasizing it, the teachers encourage the children to be brave and open in all educational situations, and to understand that the pedagogue is also a close partner in their learning activity. The mutual connection between the pedagogues and the pupils is significantly strengthened by the respect the teacher shows towards the pupil in daily interactions. The teacher's soft and calm way of speaking, avoiding interruption of the pupils' conversation, communication by eye contact, and sharing stories about oneself increases the pupils trust in the pedagogue without rendering the relationship overly casual. The feeling of being a fully-fledged participant in learning activity is also enhanced by the opportunity to act as learning activity designers, assigned to the pupils: to choose, propose an activity, and express

one's own opinion about it. The research results show that the tools the pedagogues employ that strengthen the expression of interpersonal respect and trust, apply equally to all pupils, regardless of the nature of their abilities and needs, thus creating a single multi-voiced learning community. All the pupils, each according to their powers, accumulate social capital. Botha and Kourkoutas (2016) confirm that all the children, including those with behavioural difficulties, should have a possibility to use their social capital both individually and within the community. It helps them develop their social, emotional, and academic skills, create positive personal relationships, perceive themselves among others, and have self-confidence. Research results show that the pupils of the classrooms that participated in the research identify themselves as members of their classroom community, and build social connections by identifying themselves with each other on the grounds of common experiences or social contrast; however, they achieve results each at their own pace and according to their own capabilities. In all the classes that participated in the research, the group of social leaders and that of the outcasts include both pupils with and without special educational needs. However, pupils with special educational needs face higher difficulties in social inclusion processes. The results of the research by Krull, Wilbert, and Hennemann (2014) confirm that compared to pupils without learning difficulties, those with learning difficulties, particularly behavioural difficulties, more often become subject to social exclusion and have difficulties in becoming equal members of a community. Therefore, injecting values of respect and acceptance into the creation processes of actual pedagogical interaction is one of the basic factors that harmonize communities.

Community skills education is another significant factor in joint learning, identified during the research. The factor is particularly visible in all the classroom communities that participated in the research. All the pupils acquiring sufficient social capital, being involved, and participating in common activities are among the most important goals of a learning community.

The application of co-operative learning strategies also serves the purpose of developing community skills. The strategies are commonly used in all the schools that participated in the research. Co-operating pupils have an opportunity to discover common interests, know each other, and distribute roles in the team adequately. Louvet and Deneuve (2013), who looked into social inclusion issues of pupils attributed to risk groups, confirm the significance of co-operative learning for the quality of interpersonal interaction in a peer community. The authors claim that the social

inclusion of pupils from social risk groups increases significantly as they participate in joint sports activities together with other pupils. It creates common interests and values, as well as determination to accept personal responsibility for the common result among the pupils.

The pedagogues of the schools that have participated in the research frequently organize unconventional educational activities in various spaces, including outings, celebrations of personal occasions, creative tasks, etc., which brings opportunities to build interpersonal connections through natural communication between the pupils and the teachers in an emotionally elevated and joyful environment (Polish pedagogues put particular emphasis on it). More humour is used in this environment. Fovet (2009) indicates subtle application of humour in educating pupils with social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties as a gateway that opens possibilities for the development of closer mutual relationships.

Finnish and Lithuanian pupils are taught in a targeted manner ways to communicate and solve personal interaction tasks. The pupils are taught to recognize other person's feelings, identify with his or her situation, develop positive expectations towards another person, and to justify one's own opinions. In the schools, the pupils are actively involved in the process of solving complex communicational situations. Together with the pedagogues, they look for potential solutions to real-life situations by re-assessing separate episodes of the interaction and accumulating experience. The pupils learn communication in a natural manner through daily life situations by playing together, mediating, and helping fellow pupils with special educational needs. The efficiency of a targeted teaching of communication and, in particular, solving conflict situations is confirmed by the results of the research by Sagkal, Turnuklu, and Totan (2012). The authors prove that targeted teaching of pupils, starting with the first grades, to solve conflict situations in peaceful ways and based on empathy, increases empathy skills significantly both in boys and girls. Empathy acts as prevention against marginalization, rejection, and hostile attitudes towards another person. It enhances peace between people and within the group, and, in the long run, is likely to enhance international peace as well.

The results of the research confirm former research results (Kugelmass, 1989; Galkienė, 2009) showing that interpersonal relationships between pupils in an inclusive education environment do not form spontaneously. Targeted pedagogical effort is essential, helping the pupils to know and accept each other, as well as build mutually favourable social connections.

Professional partnership network is another important factor for realizing inclusive education, emphasized in Austrian, Finnish, Lithuanian, and Polish schools. The Austrian school pedagogues assign particular relevance to partnership with the teacher community. The classrooms of the school are characterised by an exceptionally wide variety of pupils. The variety stems from cultural differences (pupils with migrant backgrounds), differences in learning abilities (pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities), and pupils of different age (pupils of three age groups learn together, for instance, the third, fourth, and fifth grades). There are two or three pedagogues and specialists working in every joint classroom of the school. The specificity of education organization in the school reveals the needs and expectations of collaborating teachers particularly well. As Specht et al. (2016) claim, teacher collaboration is the key to success in inclusive education; however, it poses questions linked to coordinating ideas and actions, and agreements facilitating targeted movement towards multifaceted goals. The cultural foundation of such movement consists of values that promote the participation of all: fairness, community spirit, compassion, respect for differences, and equality (Booth et al., 2002).

Pedagogues' collaboration, its nature and techniques are emphasized in the results of all the schools participating in the research. In many cases, the collaboration is based on mutual assistance. The moment of assistance is a highly important aspect in inclusive education. Our research results revealed that assistance in the inclusive education environment is both a social and educational phenomenon. It is clearly visible in interpersonal and group interaction. Collaboration and assistance of the pedagogues to each other and to pupils requesting it develops mutual assistance among pupils, while respect and carefulness motivates their courage to ask for assistance as well as respectful behaviour when providing it to those who ask.

Interdisciplinarity is a clear feature of professional groups collaborating in inclusive education. In order to achieve basic goals of the learners, the teams usually consist of teachers, special needs teachers, and teacher assistants. However, research results demonstrate that teams of more extensive or different composition can be formed. In Finland, special needs teachers are accompanied in teams of educators by resource pedagogues; in Poland it is assisting teachers, while in Lithuania, close co-operation is maintained with the school psychologist. As educational goals broaden, the network of collaborating educators expands accordingly. In cases of need, social needs teachers, speech therapists, and other specialists join the teacher collaboration network. The scope of the collaborative field in inclusive education is broad, covering the classroom

community, school community, parents' community, institutions providing assistance, non-governmental organizations, and social partners. All collaborative and partnership links serve various yet well-defined educational goals. The Finnish senior citizen voluntary program "Godgrandfathers and Godgrandmothers" teaches coexistence between generations; in Lithuania, the pupils' parents, by inviting the pupils to their workplaces, reveal the diversity of social structure, allow the pupils to gain hands-on experience of it, and gradually model their professional future; in Poland, specialists working in revalidation or sociotherapeutic classes support the implementation of training programs for disturbed functions.

Inclusive education culture is a culture of sharing. Acting together, the educators observe the children from various perspectives, and share opinions. Planning and realizing their ideas together, they create novel educational methods, share resources, and, by acting together, they watch each other's work and take over best practices. The ability of collaborating educators to establish success-oriented connections is the guarantee of sustainability in inclusive education. The research results show that successful teamwork is determined by the following: availability of time dedicated to collaboration, ability to tolerate different opinions, synchronizing actions of collaborating teachers, and bringing the community of educators together for self-development. Research by other authors demonstrates that it is impossible to gain command of the skills of collaboration in interdisciplinary groups intuitively, merely by respecting inclusive education values and aiming to use them as grounds for practice. They have to be learned while training to become a pedagogue, as well as later by continuously improving one's professional competence (McKay, 2016; Bristol, 2015). Our research results highlight the need to develop the competencies of the entire collaborating team of pedagogues in the context of specific educational situations. Coaching sessions aimed at the whole team serve the purpose perfectly. Their intensity depends on the needs of the team.

Leaders play an important role in maintaining the culture of collaboration and sharing. Management style and principles have direct influence on inclusive education quality. Schoolmasters' positive inclination towards the pedagogues, prioritizing their success, and buffer-zone position against negative external impact has direct influence on the teachers' professional success (Hoppey & McLeskey, 2013). Our research results show that the pedagogues implementing inclusive education mostly associate the role of the head of school with the function of communication that maintains emotional balance (Austria and Poland). The headmaster's sincere interest in the causes of

difficulties the teachers face, his or her involvement in the search for solutions, and mediation in coping with complex situations in relationships with the pupils' parents plays an important role in reducing professional emotional load for the pedagogues. The head of school takes an identical role in introducing the worrying parents of pupils starting school into the school community.

Dual interaction of pedagogues and pupils' parents. In the schools of all countries participating in the research, co-operation with the pupils' parents is emphasized as a significant factor in order to achieve quality in inclusive education. The activities with the pupils' parents vary, ranging from providing information, consultation, to joint planning, and activity implementation. The aspect of consultation takes a special place in the chain of co-operation with parents. The parents expect the description of their children's learning activity from the pedagogues; yet *the pedagogues also expect sharing as thorough an experience as possible on their child's education from the parents*. Adams, Harris, and Jones (2013) provide deeper insight into the phenomenon. A conclusion is made that the pedagogues, willing to overtake the parents' experience and strategies in their child education, build strong co-operative connections with the parents, take over the information important to the child's education, and turn differences into strengths. Our research reveals that a subtle relationship based on trust and support serves for the establishment of such connection. The parents expect reinforcement, support, and information on their child's success and strengths from the teacher. In the context of the relationship of support and acknowledgement, the parents gladly take responsibility of being involved in the implementation of their child's education program, and, if need arises, in the processes of tackling their child's difficulties. Polish pedagogues put particular emphasis on the parents' involvement in support activities for their children together with the specialists not only from the school but also from various pupil support institutions. The system of communication with the pedagogues is substantial for the parents' involvement in school activities. All the research schools note a possibility to communicate with the parents via modern information technologies; however, it is live (face to face) communication that determines the parents' active inclusion into the processes of socio-pedagogical interaction. Confidence in the parents in their child's matters, the pedagogues' openness to accept the parents' assistance, attentiveness towards the ideas put forward by the parents, and guarding secrets regarding the child or their family make up the factors that help build firm bonds between the pedagogues and the pupils' parents. The pedagogues who are able to invite the pupils' parents to plan and realize educational

activities together, and solve more complex child education situations together, expand their educator partnership network, at the same time increasing the parents' confidence in the pedagogues educating their children as well as the entire education system.

Interpersonal respect and accepting every member of the community are inclusive education values, which, according to Booth (2011), must be active in the culture, practice, and policy of education institutions. Through targeted development of pedagogical interaction based on these values, all the pupils gradually become members of the community.

Dimension 3. Education personalization in common activity context

The paradigm attitude in inclusive education gives priority to personal individuality and the person's full participation in educational activity (Booth et al. 2002; Spratt & Florian, 2015). The goal of ensuring quality in education organization in this dimension presents requirements for the competence of pedagogues.

Identification of pupil needs and competencies is a factor that contributes to education personalization in the context of joint activity. The results of this research show that identifying individual needs of each pupil and responding to them in the education process constitutes a substantial goal for a pedagogue. However, the differences in pupils' needs assign particular relevance to the requirement to provide equal rights to every pupil and enable them to an equal extent to carry out certain duties. A person's special needs cannot become the basis for dividing pupils, formally or informally, into categories, making exceptions from common rules, or the presumptions of the consequences of actions carried out. Nevertheless, personal needs determine the pupils' learning possibilities. Therefore, in order to create equal learning conditions to all pupils, their pedagogical assessment must particularly focus on every pupils' educational circumstances. It is the object of pedagogical activity, which allows the teacher to realize equal-valued education in common space, accepting and respecting pupils' individual needs. Acknowledging the pupils' different learning circumstances, the pedagogue can adjust them flexibly, taking into consideration the pupils' needs and, at the same time, applying the same rules to all. The effect that adapting the socio-psychological education environment has on the quality of education is the focus of inclusive education researchers. The research results by other authors confirm that influencing the socio-psychological education environment towards the learners' needs might lead to a higher quality of education

as well as intercultural coexistence in school communities among pupils, pedagogues, and pupils' families (Nieto, 1992).

Education differentiation factors. The scope of differentiation-related issues covers education planning, organization, and education environment. The solution to the problems of this field is defined in the concept of Universal Design for Learning (Rose, 2000; Rose & Meyer, 2002; Edyburn, 2005; Meo, 2008). An interactive solution that covers all these education components and is oriented towards individual needs in a general education context has a preventive effect as it eliminates educational barriers before the pupils approach them. Our research results confirm the conclusion, yet they give relevance to educational reality benchmarks that help prevent countereffects such as inner segregation and eclecticism in the education process. It has been established that when deciding on the limits of differentiation in education, both the goals of the subject content as well as socio-psychological goals of participation come into play. The limits of curriculum differentiation determine the level of common activity. An overly broad extent of differentiation naturally divides the children into separate groups and reduces possibilities for joint work. On the other hand, such means as providing the pupils with the option to independently choose when and at what pace to do the tasks assigned by the teacher, increase the pupils' independence and responsibility for their own learning. When planning the limits of differentiated education, decisions must be made taking into consideration a much broader goal than merely the curriculum accessibility. The pedagogue's engagement in every child's situation and for the sake of their needs is the key element in the decision-making process. Such attitude of the teacher helps ensure security for the child and emotional balance within the community, which plays a crucial role for the child's education according to his or her nature, as Vygotsky (1980) puts it, shifting from ability expression at the interpersonal level to the individual level.

Factors synchronizing educational activities. The construct of successful inclusive education has fundamental differences if compared to the classic one in the sense that it brings together two essentially different educational phenomena–namely, individualization, the goal of which is to reveal and develop pupil's personal capabilities, and co-operation, which aims at joining the entire learners' community in common activities (César & Santos, 2006; Whitecotton, 2009). Our research results show that the pedagogue working in an inclusive education system, similarly to the conductor of a multi-voiced orchestra, must achieve harmony in the educational community. The methods the pedagogues apply differ; the main ones including the

following: co-operative group teaching, which helps the pupils learn from each other, and peer tutoring, which promotes mutual assistance. Research by Mitchell (2014) reveals identical results. By applying co-operation-oriented methods, the pedagogue opens ways for every pupil to work towards results within the scope of his or her capabilities, and engage in fully-fledged activities together with others. Our research results demonstrate that the field of pupils' active learning is created when the pedagogue abandons part of it, thus leaving more space for the pupils' self-expression in learning. The pedagogue associates his or her role more with creating conditions favourable to pupil co-operation rather than with direct knowledge conveyance. He or she appears amidst the learning groups when there is a need to explain fully new material. Co-operating pupils naturally teach each other, providing assistance, which acquires the connotation of joint learning rather than support, as is usual. The pedagogue distributes their attention to all learners, yet provides slightly more intensive support to the pupils with attention concentration disorders. Pupils with learning difficulties receive assistance from fellow pupils, while the teacher gives his or her attention to them indirectly. Researchers that looked into the application of co-operative education strategies (Cushing & Kennedy, 1997; Carter et al., 2005; Bond & Castagnera, 2006) note that pupils learning together not only absorb the knowledge better than in the case of learning based on teachers' explanations, but they also acquire better communication and co-operation competencies, realize their need for belonging to a community, and perceive interpersonal links in society.

Joint learning activity requires certain social skills from the pupils. The research results show that developing communication and co-operation skills is one of the goals of inclusive education. The pupils are taught to know their educational environment, situations, and each other, and choose correct strategies for joint learning. For example, when preparing to share his or her knowledge with fellow pupils, a pupil with extraordinary abilities thinks through the content and ways for its presentation in the context of the interests and capabilities of the fellow pupils. Individual consultations of the pedagogues for single pupils or groups of pupils also increase the possibilities for all pupils to join in the common learning space. In certain cases, the need for higher individualisation prompts episodes of autonomous learning among pupils. This form of education organization is also applied in an inclusive education system, in order to expand possibilities for pupils' self-directed learning.

Planning is crucial for the success of co-operation-based education. Research results reveal that the educational routine in the teams of educators is thoroughly

planned and all team members follow the agreed-upon plan. Planning involves not only specific benchmarks of curriculum and applicable methods but also partnership relationships, and creative and playful elements of the educational activity in the process of education. Assessing pupil's achievements and monitoring their progress serves as a reference point in setting individual educational goals for the pupil. Young and Luttenegger (2014) claim that the strategies of planning "lessons for everybody" alter the pedagogue's reasoning and encourage them to think of the educational goals for every pupil before beginning to design a specific lesson plan. Thus, a broader variety of pupils is involved in joint educational activity, and equal opportunities to act are provided to everybody.

Inclusive education factors promoting learning motivation. The research results show that certain components of inclusive education organization have a particularly strong enhancing effect on the pupils' motivation to learn. One of the latter is self-directed learning. The pedagogues note that the pupils' learning motivation increases exponentially when conditions are provided for them to choose educational content and decide on the pace of its analysis (e.g. educational content is planned for an individual pupil for a week and the pupil is allowed to choose the sequence and tempo of its implementation; the pupil is allowed to choose content for homework, etc.). Another factor raising motivation to learn is problem-based group learning; the research of Belland, Glazewski, and Ertmer (2009) confirms its impact on strengthening learning motivation. When the pupils perform group tasks with clearly identified roles, it includes not only processes of learning and mutual assistance but also experiences of collective learning success and security. The learning success that the pedagogue plans for the pupil is one more factor that drives the increase in the pupil's learning motivation. Research results show that the following contribute to ensuring every pupil's success in learning: curriculum adaptation considering the pupil's abilities and needs, equipping educational environment with necessary educational means, application of educational methods corresponding to the pupils' needs, consistency in setting individual educational goals, assessment of the pupils' achievements by emphasizing successful results, providing conditions for the pupil's self-realization, and other means.

The recognition of the pupils' individuality as an essential reference point in deciding on educational goals and the application of co-operative learning in order to achieve the goals is the fundamental strategy of inclusive education, which allows every pupil to experience learning success.

Dimension 4. Emphasis on assistance to pupil

The phenomenon of assistance is one of the significant dimensions in an inclusive education system. It can be realized in various forms, including the following: direct assistance of the pedagogue to the pupil, assistance by teacher assistant and specialists to the pupil, mutual assistance among pupils, assistance of pupils' parents to the pupil, and other forms. Assistance to pupils has multiple consequences. When provided rationally, assistance can significantly strengthen the pupil's learning possibilities, while irrational assistance, on the contrary, might restrict the pupil's independence, reduce his or her self-confidence, and supress learning motivation. Therefore, the phenomenon of assistance deserves researcher attention and is subject to active examination.

Our research confirmed the significance of assistance in an inclusive education system, and allowed us to identify a number of forms it takes.

The factor of pupils' mutual assistance was particularly clearly revealed in all the research schools. The pupils' mutual assistance in the schools manifests itself as a natural part of a consistent learning process. The pupils continuously help each other when learning together. They know the ways to do it since the pedagogues constantly encourage rational mutual assistance. Assistance provided during joint learning is not perceived as assistance in most cases. Whereas assistance provided while the pupil carries out tasks autonomously is considered as an element of assistance for learning. The pupils' mutual assistance might be provided in the form of a favour (lending a pencil, sharpening it, accompanying each other somewhere, etc.). It has been noticed that the pupils with good social skills tend to help the more passive ones with slower orientation. The research results demonstrate that the pupils are open to accept assistance from other pupils and willing to provide it to others.

Teacher's direct assistance to pupils. The pupils' difficulties are a professional challenge to the teacher. When planning the learning process, the teacher must preventively foresee potential difficulties for every pupil and organize assistance provision in the way that the pupil would not experience insurmountable difficulties while learning (Spratt & Florian, 2015). The research results show that when planning assistance to pupils, teachers consider both educational and socio-psychological aspects in the educational context of the entire class. The assistance they provide covers the learning activity, interpersonal relationships, learning tools, and other elements of the pupils' educational activity. The teacher assigns importance to creating conditions for the pupil's participation in the common learning activity; therefore, he or she puts

vast effort into dealing with the pupil's participation issues. The nature of the teacher's assistance also depends on the pupil's learning form: the more autonomous the pupil's learning, the more individualized the teacher's assistance, while in co-operating groups of pupils the teacher's assistance is directed towards the whole group. In co-operating groups of pupils, the pupils provide part of the teacher's assistance to each other. In this way, the teacher can focus on the pupils in need of more intensive or complex assistance.

Special pedagogical assistance factor. Researchers who treat inclusive education as a synergy of elements from mainstream and special needs education (Hornby, 2015; Van der Bij et al., 2016) emphasize specialist support as one of the elements of great significance for pupils with special educational needs. This type of assistance can be provided from the internal resources of the school or come from outside; however, it should be organized and coordinated appropriately in all cases. Our research results confirm the significance of specialist involvement in inclusive education processes, and highlight the multifaceted nature of their activities. The specialist support might be directed towards the pupil, the pedagogue, or the pupil's family. It is organized in a flexible manner and can be provided to the pupil either directly, or indirectly via consultations for the pedagogues and parents. The research results indicate that specialist assistance is of importance both for the pupils and the teachers reflecting on their decisions, experiences, and values. Coaching sessions for groups of collaborating pedagogues, individual psychologist consultations, and informal teacher community activities strengthen the communities of educators, and help find answers in cases of professional dilemmas.

Pupil-supportive education organization factor. Our research results highlight education organization as a key factor to the dimension of assistance to pupil, and reveal a clear trend of the organization of a pupil-responsive environment. Education differentiation, realized via distributing curricula of different levels in different environments open to the pupils' choice (e.g. learning in a group with teacher's assistance or a group where the pupils learn independently; doing homework at home independently or with assistance in a homework group, etc.), not only enhances self-directed learning, but it also creates an indirect assistance environment supportive to the pupil. Such an environment is also strengthened by flexibly constructed education plans corresponding to the pupils' needs. Certain lessons might be replaced with other lessons for the pupil if the latter ones meet the pupil's needs better, or groups of pupils can be formed for metacognitive or other skills development. Such an educational

environment increases the pupils' sense of responsibility for their own learning. As the results of the research by Ottmar, Rimm-Kaufman, Larsen, and Berry (2015) indicate, a responsive classroom, which includes components such as the following: Morning Circle, rule creation, interactive modelling, positive teacher language, logical consequences, guided discovery, academic choice, classroom organization, working with families, and collaborative problem solving, not only increases the pupils' willingness to participate in educational activity, but it also helps achieve significantly higher academic results.

Education assistance network. Co-operation-based education promotes educators' collaboration networks, which determine both the pupils' learning success, and pedagogues' professional mastery. Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011), when providing the grounds for the inclusive education concept, emphasize the pedagogical competence to recognize every pupil's needs, rejecting the stigma of a "different" pupil and dividing the pupils into stronger and weaker ones, but rather creating a successful learning environment for every pupil. This pedagogical attitude obliges the pedagogue to recognize the pupils' different needs and competencies, and to build a universal education environment (Hitchcock, 2001; Rose, Meyer & Hitchcock, 2005; Meo, 2008; Katz, 2013), which creates conditions for successful social and educational participation of every pupil. The basic professional level of training of the pedagogue provides primary knowledge on the variety of pupils' needs; however, it cannot ensure solution knowledge in all socio-psychological and educational situations. Pijl (2010) highlights teachers' teamwork as a precondition for continuous improvement of the pedagogues' competence in actual contexts of educational reality. Our research results revealed that as teachers work together, share ideas, and observe each other's experience, not only new education organization methods are learnt but also incentives emerge to develop unique education methods corresponding to cultural contexts and situations.

Our research results demonstrate that the educational assistance network providing preconditions for the participation of every pupil does not exclusively cover the community of teachers. A very important role in the network falls on the pupils' parents as experts on the child's needs and participants in the child's education process, as well as the pupils themselves. Assistance networks in inclusive education are based on co-operative partnership, which is harmonized and its efficiency is increased by internalized values. The research results highlight deep respect of the pedagogues towards the pupils' parents, opinions, and expectations. It is acknowledged that the

greatest value for a child is his or her parents, and for the parents it is their child's good feeling at school. The relationships between pedagogues are dominated by fairness and openness to mutual assistance. The teacher's relationship with the pupils is based on bonds of trust, which are transferred and further developed in the pupils' community. Obviously, the educational environment favourable for the participation of all pupils is not determined purely by educational techniques but, as Ainscow, Booth, and Dyson (2006) state, by enacting inclusive values in the education process.

Dimension 5. Recognition of pupil power transformability

Mead (1934) claims that an individual perceives oneself as an object by accepting the attitudes of other individuals towards himself or herself in the context of social environment and experience. In the communities with clear differences in individual possibilities, danger arises for the contrasts in capabilities, appearance, or experience to become more visible, which might affect the development of a person's self-perception. Peixoto and Almeida (2010) prove that success or failure at school and in personal relationships has extensive impact on the development of a pupil's self-esteem. The pedagogue's attitudes in this respect play an exceptional role. The research by Rupšienė (2000), Yang and Montgomery (2011), and Baştürk (2016) demonstrate that the causal attribution of the pedagogue towards pupils with cultural, social, or educational differences is of great significance to the pedagogue's educational solutions as well as forecasted education results. Our research results reveal that the pedagogues building an educational environment favourable for the development of every pupil's adequate self-esteem are characterised by positive attribution towards every pupil. They notice the progress the pupils make, emphasize their successes, and believe that upon eliminating obstacles, every pupil's capabilities can be transformed to a higher level. Pupils, educated in the environment of confidence, strive to overcome their difficulties with the help of the teachers. The teachers encourage and support the pupils not only in the educational process but also in their relationships with their friends, parents, and the teacher. The research results show that the pupils maturing in a community where the feelings of every member are reflected upon (Morning Circle), and situations and results of decisions are considered, learn to observe and evaluate themselves and their fellow pupils in communal context. Both the pedagogues and the pupils are able to evaluate change in one's feelings, results of social skills development, and learning success.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

Having looked at inclusive education legitimation and its scientific justification in the four European countries, it is obvious that in their basic legislation regulating education, Austria, Finland, Lithuania, and Poland have established every child's right to learn in their local community school and receive education corresponding to their individual needs and powers. Legislation in all the countries set out the main directions for the implementation of inclusive education. Scientific research in Finland and Austria is directed towards the development of inclusive education models and supports the establishment of the system in the country; research in Lithuania and Poland is more inclined towards the evaluation of the existing inclusive education system and revealing its strong and weak points. The schools engage in practical realization of the legal provisions, using scientific recommendations as well as independently creating their unique micro-socio-educational systems of the school and classroom. The schools organize activities in the cultural contexts of their countries and regions.

Having summarized the results of the empirical research in the schools in different countries in five education reality dimensions (prioritizing personal individuality and strengths; joint learning; education personalization in common activity context; assistance to pupil; and recognition of pupil power transformability), where socio-psychological and educational factors that promote inclusive education are emphasized, inclusive education can be defined as developing the environment of successful learning, enabling every pupil to actively participate and co-operate. An inclusive education system gives priority to every pupil's strengths, uses them as a basis for educational goals, and encourages their expression in the community. Orientation towards every pupil's needs brings relevance to education differentiation; however, it has been noticed that a wide amplitude of individualization without planning a common axis for education increases the extent of individual learning practice and reduces that of joint learning.

A pedagogue that invites the pupils' self-expression and co-operative learning does not occupy the time and space of active learning. He or she manages education organization tools wisely, creating a joint learning network and leaving as much space for the pupils' cognitive activity as possible. An inclusive learning platform is based on the culture of sharing as well as the principles of mutual assistance.

The variety of pupils broadens and deepens the scope of the search for knowledge and its dissemination. Activity in a heterogeneous group enables the brighter ones

to unveil knowledge, gain essential understanding of it, and transform it so that it can become more accessible to the co-operating listeners. Experienced success raises the desire to create and share, and it also promotes recognition from new friends. The attentive ones search together, and accept assistance that is perceived as a natural component of co-operation. The pupils accumulate social capital together.

Mutual assistance in classroom communities is perceived as a natural phenomenon of interpersonal communication and as an educational instrument. The pedagogue, by accepting assistance from the pupils, their parents, and their own colleagues, is learning as well as shaping the pupils' attitude towards assistance as a way of learning, rejecting its connotation as a phenomenon that brings out weakness. In the culture of co-operative sharing, partnership networks develop. They cross the walls of educational institutions, embracing the structures of micro- and macrosociums for the purpose of common socio-educational goals.

The factor of the transformability of the pupils' powers is an encouraging motivation. Through empowerment, prioritization of one's strong capabilities, dialogue, social skill development, and opening space for successful learning activity, preconditions are created for the evolution of socio-psychological and educational powers. Curriculum that corresponds to the pupil's abilities and needs and societal expectations is one of the components along the path of one's transformation into a fully developed human. However, the participants in the research put the least emphasis on this component, giving priority instead to an education environment where conditions are created to work towards the highest potential personal academic and social result for every pupil.

Education process organization is one of the key components of the activity of a pedagogue, which determine pupils' individual success. The tools employed by the pedagogue include the following: confidence-based delegation, dialogue, collaboration, and social skills development. The list of competencies of a pedagogue implementing inclusive education, as compiled by the European group of researchers under the leadership of the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, includes: 1) valuing learner diversity; 2) assistance to all pupils; 3) working together with others; 4) personal professional development (Watkins, 2012). It could be supplemented by another competency, which was particularly clearly revealed in our research, namely, the ***competency of leadership shared with the children***.

Education based on the culture of participation and co-operation opens space for every pupil to work towards the highest personal result and mature in an environment of respect and trust.

REFERENCES

Adams, D., Harris, A. & Jones, M. S. (2013). Teacher-Parent Collaboration for an Inclusive Classroom: Success for Every Child. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Sciences*, 58.

Ainscow, M., Booth, T. & Dyson, A. (2006). *Improving schools, developing inclusion*. Routledge.

André, A., Louvet, B. & Deneuve, P. (2013). Co-operative group, risk-taking and inclusion of pupils with learning disabilities in physical education. *British Educational Research Journal*, *39*(4), pp. 677-693.

Barton, L. & Armstrong, F. (Eds.). (2007). *Policy, experience and change: cross-cultural reflections on inclusive education* (Vol. 4). Dordrecht: Springer.

Baştürk, S. (2016). Secondary school mathematics student teachers' causal attribution for success and failure in mathematics. *European Journal of Science and Mathematics Education,* 4(3), pp. 365-379.

Belland, B. R., Glazewski, K. D. & Ertmer, P. A. (2009). Inclusion and problem-based learning: Roles of students in a mixed-ability group. *RMLE Online*, *32*(9), pp. 1-19.

Bond, R., & Castagnera, E. (2006). Peer supports and inclusive education: An underutilized resource. *Theory into Practice*, *45*(3), pp. 224-229.

Booth, T. (1999). Viewing inclusion from a distance: Gaining perspective from comparative study. *Support for Learning*, *14*(4), pp. 164-168.

Booth, T. (2011). The name of the rose: Inclusive values into action in teacher education. *Prospects*, *41*(3), pp. 303-318.

Booth, T., Ainscow, M., Black-Hawkins, K., Vaughan, M. & Shaw, L. (2002). Index for inclusion. *Developing learning and participation in schools*.

Botha, J., & Kourkoutas, E. (2016). A community of practice as an inclusive model to support children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in school contexts. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *20*(7), pp. 784-799.

Bristol, L. (2015). Leading-for-inclusion: Transforming action through teacher talk. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *19*(8), pp. 802-820.

Bruce, S., Fasy, C., Gulick, J., Jones, J. & Pike, E. (2006). Making morning circle meaningful. *TEACHING Exceptional Children Plus*, *2*(4), n4.

Carter, E. W., Cushing, L. S., Clark, N. M. & Kennedy, C. H. (2005). Effects of peer support interventions on students' access to the general curriculum and social interactions. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, *30*(1), pp. 15-25.

César, M. & Santos, N. (2006). From exclusion to inclusion: Collaborative work contributions to more inclusive learning settings. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, *21*(3), pp. 333-346.

Cushing, L. S. & Kennedy, C. H. (1997). Academic effects of providing peer support in general education classrooms on students without disabilities. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, *30*(1), pp. 139-151.

Edyburn, D. L. (2005). Universal design for learning. *Special Education Technology Practice*, *7*(5), pp. 16-22.

Florian, L. & Spratt, J. (2013). Enacting inclusion: a framework for interrogating inclusive practice. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 28*(2), pp. 119-135.

Florian, L. & Black-Hawkins, K. (2011). Exploring inclusive pedagogy. *British Educational Research Journal, 37*(5), pp. 813-828.

Fovet, F. (2009). The use of humour in classroom interventions with students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, 14*(4), pp. 275-289.

Galkienė, A. (2009). Asmens lygiavertiškumo puoselėjimas–orios asmenybės ugdymo prielaida. [Nurturing a person's equal value as a precondition for dignified personality education]. *Pedagogika, 95*, pp. 45-52.

Galkienė, A. (2016). Neįgalumo kaip socialinio reiškinio internalizacija įtraukiojo ugdymo realybėje. [Internalisation of disability as a social phenomenon in the reality of inclusive education]. *Pedagogika, 121*(1).

Hitchcock, C. (2001). Balanced instructional support and challenge in universally designed learning environments. *Journal of Special Education Technology, 16*(4), pp. 23-30.

Hoppey, D. & McLeskey, J. (2013). A case study of principal leadership in an effective inclusive school. *The Journal of Special Education, 46*(4), pp. 245-256.

Hornby, G. (2015). Inclusive special education: development of a new theory for the education of children with special educational needs and disabilities. *British Journal of Special Education, 42*(3), pp. 234-256.

http://yanko.lib.ru/books/psycho/vygotsky=ps_pzv_cheloveka=ann.htm#_Toc126100267

Yang, Y. & Montgomery, D. (2011). Behind cultural competence: The role of causal attribution in multicultural teacher education. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 36*(9), pp. 1-21.

Young, K. & Luttenegger, K. (2014). Planning "Lessons for Everybody" in secondary classrooms. *American Secondary Education, 43*(1), pp. 25.

Jackson, R. & Harper, K. (2005). Teacher planning for accessibility: The universal design of learning environments. *The universally designed classroom: Accessible curriculum and digital technologies*, pp. 101-124.

Katz, J. (2013). The three block model of universal design for learning (UDL): Engaging students in inclusive education. *Canadian Journal of Education, 36*(1), pp. 153-194.

Krull, J., Wilbert, J. & Hennemann, T. (2014). The social and emotional situation of first graders with classroom behavior problems and classroom learning difficulties in inclusive classes. *Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal, 12*(2), pp. 169-190.

Kugelmass, J. W. (1989). The "shared classroom": A case study of interactions between early childhood and special education staff and children. *Journal of Early Intervention, 13*(1), pp. 36-44.

Leatherman, J. M. & Niemeyer, J. A. (2005). Teachers' attitudes toward inclusion: Factors influencing classroom practice. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education, 26*(1), pp. 23-36.

McKay, L. (2016). Beginning teachers and inclusive education: frustrations, dilemmas and growth. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 20*(4), pp. 383-396.

Mead, G. H. (1934). Mind, self and society (Vol. 111). University of Chicago Press: Chicago.

Meyer, A. & Rose, D. H. (2000). Universal design for individual differences. *Educational Leadership, 58*(3), pp. 39-43.

Meo, G. (2008). Curriculum planning for all learners: Applying universal design for learning (UDL) to a high school reading comprehension program. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth, 52*(2), pp. 21-30.

Mitchell, D. (2014). *What really works in special and inclusive education: Using evidence-based teaching strategies.* Routledge, 236 – 242.

Nieto, S. (1992). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education.* Longman, 10 Bank Street, White Plains, NY 10606.

Ottmar, E. R., Rimm-Kaufman, S. E., Larsen, R. A. & Berry, R. Q. (2015). Mathematical knowledge for teaching, standards-based mathematics teaching practices, and student achievement

in the context of the responsive classroom approach. *American Educational Research Journal*, *52*(4), pp. 787-821.

Peixoto, F. & Almeida, L. S. (2010). Self-concept, self-esteem and academic achievement: Strategies for maintaining self-esteem in students experiencing academic failure. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, *25*(2), pp. 157-175.

Pijl, S. J. (2010). Preparing teachers for inclusive education: some reflections from the Netherlands. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, *10*(s1), pp. 197-201.

Powell, K. C. & Kalina, C. J. (2009). Cognitive and social constructivism: Developing tools for an effective classroom. *Education*, *130* (2), pp. 241.

Rose, D. (2000). Universal design for learning. *Journal of Special Education Technology*, *15*(1), pp. 67.

Rose, D. H. & Meyer, A. (2002). *Teaching every student in the digital age: Universal design for learning.* Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1703 N. Beauregard St., Alexandria, VA 22311-1714 (Product no. 101042: $22.95 ASCD members; $26.95 nonmembers).

Rose, D. H., Meyer, A. & Hitchcock, C. (2005). *The universally designed classroom: Accessible curriculum and digital technologies.* Harvard Educational Pub Group.

Rupšienė, L. (2000). *Nenoras mokytis–socialinis pedagoginis reiškinys.* [Unwillingness to Learn as Social Pedagogical Phenomenon]. Klaipėda: Klaipėdos universiteto leidykla.

Sagkal, A. S., Turnuklu, A. & Totan, T. (2012). Empathy for interpersonal peace: Effects of peace education on empathy skills. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*, *12*(2), pp. 1454-1460.

Sánchez, O., Chism, N. F. D. P., Serafini, K. & Judd, T. (2012). Empowering culturally diverse students within a collaborative learning community: A student perspective. *Psychology Learning & Teaching*, *11*(3), pp. 406-412.

Specht, J., McGhie-Richmond, D., Loreman, T., Mirenda, P., Bennett, S., Gallagher, T. & Lyons, W. (2016). Teaching in inclusive classrooms: Efficacy and beliefs of Canadian preservice teachers. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *20*(1), pp. 1-15.

Spratt J. & Florian, L. (2015). Inclusive pedagogy: From learning to action. Supporting each individual in the context of 'everybody'. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *49*, pp. 89-96.

Terzi, L. (2014). Reframing inclusive education: Educational equality as capability equality. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *44*(4), pp. 479-493.

Thomas, G. (2013). A review of thinking and research about inclusive education policy, with suggestions for a new kind of inclusive thinking. *British Educational Research Journal*, *39*(3), pp. 473-490.

UNESCO (2004). EFA Global monitoring report. The quality imperative. Paris, UNESCO, 143.

Van der Bij, T., Geijsel, F. P., Garst, G. J. A. & Ten Dam, G. T. M. (2016). Modelling inclusive special needs education: Insights from Dutch secondary schools. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *31*(2), pp. 220-235.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1980). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* Harvard university press.

Watkins, A. (2012). *Teacher education for inclusion: Profile of inclusive teachers.* European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education.

Whitecotton, Ch. (2009). Collaboration Inclusive Learning. *Leadership, 38*(4), pp. 16-18.

Выготский Л.С. (2005). Психология развития человека. [Human development psychology]. Москва: Изд-во Смысл; Изд-во Эксмо, (Библиотека всемирной психологии). ISBN 5-699-13728-9.

APPENDIX 1. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Main research questions	Method	Deadline
Pupil to pupil / pupils to pupils		
1. How do pupils communicate in the context of the diversity of possibilities and needs in the classroom? 2. How do pupils cooperate and communicate: aspects of equality, respect, dignity, support, acceptance, cooperation, pleasure to be together, and tolerance?	Observation (5 days)	April, 2015
Please share about the interpersonal relationships among pupils in your classroom: 1. What signs of equality, respect, and dignity do you observe? 2. What signs of acceptance, pleasure to be together, and tolerance do you observe? 3. What signs of support, and cooperation do you observe? 4. How do you create the relationships in the classroom? 5. How do you try to solve relationship-related problems in the classroom?	Interviews with teachers	April, 2015
Please, share on the following: 1. How do you feel in this classroom? Why do you feel so? 2. What do you enjoy in the everyday life of your class? 3. What do you not like in the everyday life of your class? 4. Who is/are your friend/s? Why she/he/they is/are your friend/s? 5. What would you like to change in your class?	Interviews with pupils: pupils with special needs, pupils with general needs; gifted pupils	April, 2015
1. With whom would you like to learn together? 2. With whom would you like to play together? 3. With whom would you like to share your secret?	Sociometric measurement	April, 2015
Pupil/pupils to teacher		
1. Please share on what makes you happy in your relationships with your pupils? 2. How can pupils participate in everyday decision-making process in your classroom? Please provide specific examples. 3. What possibilities do you have to talk, to support, to motivate, and to encourage pupils individually? 4. What do the pupils want to talk to you about the most? Please provide specific examples. 5. How can you recognise the different needs of pupils, and how do you create positive relationships with them? 6. What would you like to change in your relationships with the pupils?	Interviews with teachers. Observation of good examples.	October, 2015
1. Please share the ways you create ethos in your heterogeneous school community. Do teachers have common leisure time? Please provide specific examples. 2. Please share on how you create professional relationships in the community of teachers? 3. How do the teachers share the good and bad experiences? Please provide an example of something valuable you have learned from your colleagues. 4. What would you like to change in the relationships within the community of teachers, why and how?	Interviews with teachers	October – November 2015

Main research questions	Method	Deadline
Teacher to teacher		
1. Please share on the ways you create ethos in your heterogeneous school community? Do teachers have any common leisure time? Please provide specific examples. 2. Please share on how you create professional relationship within the community of teachers. 3. How do the teachers share their good and bad experiences? Please provide an example of something valuable you have learned from your colleagues. 4. What would you like to change in the relationships within the community of teachers, why and how?	Interviews with teachers	October – November 2015
Teachers to parents		
1. Please share on the ways you create relationships with parents. 2. What do you feel are the most effective ways to communicate with parents? 3. Please describe the reasons why parents contact and communicate with you. 4. What would you like to change in your relationships with parents, why and how?	Interviews with teachers	November 2015
Parents to parents; parents to teachers		
1. Please share on the ways you communicate and cooperate with other parents. 2. Please provide examples of something valuable you have learned from other parents. 3. What do you feel are the most effective ways to communicate and cooperate with teachers? 4. What kind of the most effective help have you received from the school staff? Please provide specific examples. 5. What would you like to change in your relationships with the school staff, why and how?	Interviews with parents (focus group)	November 2015

STRUCTURE OF DIARY

Data collection: September – December, 2015

Field of education	Basic questions
Design of learning	How do I do it? What challenges do I meet? How do I/we solve the problems in certain circumstances? How do I/we overcome it? What was there of the best today? What was there of the best this week?
Teacher as a support seeker	
Teacher as a support giver	
Cooperation and my experience in it	
Meeting the needs of learners: planning, implementing, evaluating	
Reflection and evaluation of my teaching process	
Learning environment: What would I have needed more of today?	
Learning environment: What did I appreciate today?	

NAME INDEX

There are many publications about inclusive education although only a few review international comparative studies. This book presents the nexus of theory and practice, gives opportunities for the reader to observe inclusive education through socio-educational lenses and, thus, promotes reflective thinking. It is noteworthy, that the book makes the respondents', i.e., parents', teachers' and students' voices heard. It is crucial for creating inclusive education to appreciate experiential expertise and enhance the agency of all members in the school community. The authors of the book deal with the integrated entity of four interesting and quite different cases of inclusive schools in theoretical and socio-educational frames.

The work focusses on the very important subject of inclusive education.
A thorough introduction to goals and methods of the research is followed by ana-logies in the legal context of inclusive education in the participating countries. Further on, the conceptualization and realization of inclusive education is highlighted, and the similarities and differences between Austria, Finland, Lithuania, and Poland are ex-plicated.

Dr. Eva-Kristina Franz
Heidelberg University of Education
Germany

The idea of collecting the perspectives of representatives from countries with different cultures, traditions, and political situation is very interesting and enriching in the discourse of inclusive education. It may contribute to discovering universal fac-tors as well as those that are specific and depend on political and cultural conditions. To sum up, the scientific work is of great value in presenting a high level of expertise and enriching our knowledge of factors affecting inclusive education.

Dr. Agnieszka Drzazga
The University of Wroclaw
Poland

The findings of the research and analysis became available at the time when they are needed most. They are important for alleviating fears and for giving hope to countries which are still sceptical or resistant to inclusive education. The model/s to be developed will definitely make a huge impact in the lives of children and in society at large. Countries in Europe and other continents will benefit from the findings of this work. In particular, they will build upon these findings for future research.

Prof. Nareadi Phasha
University of South Africa
South Africa

The findings of this research and analysis offer insights for developing a colla-borative approach to inclusive education based on the principles associated with inclusive pedagogy that privilege difference as an ordinary aspect of human deve-lopment, and teachers as competent agents who have the capacity to teach diverse groups of students by working collaboratively with others. It is a welcome addition to the literature on inclusive education.

Prof. Lani Florian
University of Edinburgh
United Kingdom