



Inclusive Education as Complex Process and Challenge for School System

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Abstract: *Education may be considered as a number of processes, actions and effects affecting human being, as the state or level of the results of these processes or as the modification of the functions, institutions and social practices roles, which in the result of inclusion become new, integrated system. Thus this is very complex process. Nowadays the complexity appears to be one of very significant terms both in science and in philosophy. It appears that despite searching for simple rules, strategies, solutions everything is still more complex. The environment is complex, the organism living in it and exploring it, and just the exploration itself is a complex phenomenon, much more than this could initially seem to be.*

Keywords: inclusive education, special needs, teachers' competence

Understanding education as a significant component of social change, shall be noted huge complexity of educational mechanism in the perspective of social world changeability. All the education subjects, particularly teachers, students, and parents not only do participate in these transformations, but also have to meet new challenges (Kwieciński, 2000). Are they ready for these changes? Do the current conditions of inclusive education realisation facilitate only assimilation of attributes forming education, or due to emergence process, will there be formed new quality of education? How to treat the inclusion of the student with special educational needs?

It appears that the inclusion, as a process, strictly depends on how the direct and indirect environment is flexible, ready for changes and ready to meet individual needs. Inclusive education should take place in normal school, ordinary classroom, and with prepared properly teachers, who get proper substantive and organisational support (Hulek, 1992). Inclusive education development should be the process, which starts already in preschool education. The key to inclusive approach is the differentiation, diversification of teaching content and methods according to student's

needs, which is the essence of respect for individual differences. Simultaneously, the obstacles for changes are misperceptions of teaching children with special educational needs and special equipment for them. Inclusive education challenges the school system and the functioning of particular schools by mobilizing them to improve and make the programs and teaching methods more flexible, stimulating teachers competences development and popularization of an atmosphere letting them meet the needs of all the children from the given society with greater flexibility (Głodkowska, 2010). Such atmosphere may encourage the teachers to perceive the students having problems with learning not as a problem, but as a stimulus to improve and develop their own teaching methods (Ainscow, 2000; Firkowska-Mankiewicz, 2000). The aim of inclusive education is extending access to education, promotion of full participation in education system by all the students at risk of exclusion, and promotion of the opportunity of realisation of their own potential. Participation in general education system should be involved with: proper preparation of all the teachers, active involvement of all students in educational process, which must be understandable for them. Supporting parents and shaping pro-social attitudes and values, choice of effective teaching methods considering alternative education pathways. Developing teamwork system by engaging students, their parents, peers, other teachers working in school, supporting staff and the members of team consisting of specialists in various areas, choice of an evaluation system, which supports the education process, considering holistic perspective of student progress measurement (Al-Khamisy, 2013).

Some issues involved with inclusive education have to be considered, according to the perspective of guaranteeing the individual learning pathway. The aim of learning should not be mastering the content by the student, but developing existing competences and new abilities, and also forming habits and behaviours. This requires more personalised participation in learning process involved with developing individual learning programme. This should be facilitated by developing Individual Education Program (IEP) which is the chance for student to adjust to realisation of indicated goals, provides more specialist intervention and extending cooperation with parents, specialists and teachers. The teaching-learning process should be based on teamwork system, cooperation with other students, parents, peers, teachers, and specialists. Apart from universal evaluation, the so-called inclusive evaluation should be used. This is an evaluation method in public educational establishments, focusing on better supporting the learning processes for all the students, effectively contributing to participation of all the students at risk of exclusion, including children with special educational needs in general education (Niemierko, 2002).

Unsatisfying effects of inclusive education indicate that it was established according to assimilation model. Students with special educational needs included to schools, despite the attempt of individualisation of the education process, are not taken into consideration in school efficiency evaluation, which means that they are not considered an integrated part of the system. Still there are too many students in classes, in which are the students requiring special support, there is no adjustment of teacher work to abilities of students, there is inappropriate

attitude and strict following the education program (core curriculum) and attachment to group teaching take place. There is also a problem of incompetence and permanent fear of failure of teachers, and the emotional functioning of children with intellectual disabilities is still unsatisfactory (Chrzanowska, 2003).

These observations are confirmed by research of the author. Among public schools teachers (340 respondents) most frequently chosen for student with disability was the option of form of integrative education (54.3%). The second place was taken by special education (20.7%). The proposition of public school was chosen very rarely (9.6%), and individual teaching is preferred (15.4%) more. It appears that the group of respondents do not see the opportunity of education of students with disabilities in inclusive education. First of all, stereotypical perception of student with disability is still popular, and, in consequence, causes lack of faith in his success and rightness of the actions taken. It appears that there is high resistance to inclusive education among teachers. Providing special assistance is obligation of teachers, in particular in integrative and special education. The results clearly indicate lack of acceptance for meeting the obligation of compulsory education by students with disabilities in public schools. Such opinion is not beneficial for inclusive education, which is on early stage in Poland. It is particularly worrying that such approach to education of students with special educational needs is present among teachers starting their professional work.

More positive fact is that the early education teachers are most favourable to inclusion of students with disabilities to general schools. 52.3% of them sees the possibility of success of inclusive education, but also significant part (47.7%) does not note such chance. Unfortunately teachers of higher classes are significantly less keen on (69.4%) participating in education of student with disability. The most significant objection to inclusive education of students with disabilities is present among respondents from big cities (78.5%), the second place is taken by respondents from mid-sized cities (72.3%) and villages (62.3%). In particular the answers of group from villages is reasonable due to difficulties in contacting specialists, who are present in schools in the cities.

The competence and organisational barriers in inclusive education process listed by teachers also have to be taken into consideration, for example: clear feeling of lack of specialist knowledge, lack of believing in capabilities of student with disability and defining them by "does not meet the requirements" category, belief of too high level of requirements in reference to possibilities of student with disability, and thus the reduction of core curriculum requirements, particularly in higher classes of primary school and in gymnasium. Teachers of higher classes claim that individual work with student with disability is not possible in a class, in which there are students without disabilities. Moreover, there is the belief that National Education Ministry increases the requirements for teachers due to inclusive education, and this results in the belief that it is enormous challenge for the so-called normal teachers. Deficiencies in establishing the strategy of special support cause the feeling of mercy for the student and reduction of requirements. According to the teachers not every disability may be a subject to efficient integration with people without

disabilities, and only specialist centres guarantee competitive assistance (Al-Khamisy, 2013).

It appears that in the process of education evaluation of students with special educational needs is significant problem for teachers. In the new, for a number of teachers, educational reality resulting from inclusive education, they expect not only indirect, but in particular direct assistance. They want a specialist assistant (special education teacher) to accompany them during work with such students. They think that work with students with and without disabilities in large groups causes problems with noticing and understanding individual needs of both students without disabilities, who lose during such lessons according to some beliefs, and those with disabilities.

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