

Inclusive learning in different European countries

Christoph Bierschwale, Bielefeld University, Mail: christoph.bierschwale@uni-bielefeld.de

Prof. Dr. Michaela Vogt, Bielefeld University, Mail: michaela.vogt@uni-bielefeld.de

Project goals

IO 1

- Design of a multilingual criteria catalogue

IO 2

- Development of inclusive teaching material

IO 3

- Publication of project results in journals

IO 4

- Development of a teacher training concept

IO 5

- Accompanying study

State of research

- The term "inclusion" is used very differently in international discourses (e.g. Barrow; Persson & Allan 2016).
- Löser and Werning (2013) found that the inclusion term is "diffuse".
- Thomas et al. (2020) emphasizes the contradictions and complexity of the concept of participation. Furthermore, it can be stated that the terms "inclusion" and "participation" are interrelated.
- The terms are unclear terms that lack a generally accepted definition; they are the subject of debates in various discourses, e.g. in educational policy or scientific discourses (e.g. Nilholm & Göransson 2017, Göransson & Nilholm 2014a).

IO 5: Accompanying study

Research questions

Which converging and diverging relationships between the term inclusion and its comprehension variants can be reconstructed from the international comparison?

How do the socio-cultural context conditions relate to the results of the group discussions?



Methodology



International
Comparison



Participatory
action
research



Interdisciplinarity

Data collection

- **Group discussions** were used for data collection.
- This form of data collection made it possible to uncover shared and different knowledge of teachers from different European countries. Advantages of group discussions are that relevance structures of knowledge and attitudes are most strongly expressed in certain social groupings (cf. Bohnsack, 1997, Kühn & Koschel, 2011).
- This study focuses on the understanding of inclusion as tertium comparationis.
- Group discussions were conducted as part of the project at four project sites with teachers at schools in Luxembourg, Sweden, Germany, and Italy. In accordance with the principles of international comparative research, the group discussions in German and English were guided by standardized guidelines.
- These discussions took place at all project schools at the beginning of 2019.
- The total sample consisted of 32 teachers, 30 of whom were female and two of whom were male.

Data Evaluation

- First, the large amounts of material were processed in a rule-guided manner by means of a thematic summary within the framework of qualitative content analysis according to **Mayring** (2015).
- Four category systems were placed side by side and similarities and differences were revealed. Criteria that were only found in one or a few project countries are integrated into the system as sub-categories. This enabled the knowledge and experience of the individual project schools to flow into the category formation.
- The categories were also created with the help of software by Atlas.ti.

Results

Exemplary excerpts from the interviews

Perspective from Germany

Y: For me that really means all children, regardless of where in the performance spectrum, are taught together in a class and in such a way that they are actually part of the class and not just sit in the room.

Perspective from Sweden:

X: But for me, inclusion is about making sure that every student, every child likes to come to school. Wants to come to school. Wants to learn and have fun to be a part of something. So the student feels like: I want to be here. I like school. They want me to come to school. So they feel good when they are here.

Exemplary results of the study

1. Parallels

- Diagnostic processes that are carried out to assign a need for support and thus have legal consequences are generally of great importance for understanding inclusion.
- In addition, certain factors such as the design and layout of classrooms as well as conditions such as inclusion guides were named as prerequisites for inclusive lessons.

2. Differences

- In Sweden, the participation of students in the classroom served as a condition for inclusion - inclusion was understood as a consequence of participation. Specifically related to the term participation, it was also shown in Sweden that participation is defined as a democratic right of co-determination, which has a strong effect on the design of lessons.
- In Germany and Luxembourg, for example, no correspondingly close interdependencies could be traced in the group discussions.

Discussion

- Due to the small sample ($N = 32$), it cannot be assumed that the individual colleges can be representative of the respective project countries. Rather, they reflect the local conditions and experiences of the teachers in dealing with the specific sociocultural and demographic conditions in their school districts.
- The schools themselves did not have a separate status, e.g., as model schools, they still did not have special financial allocations, in this respect they reflect the conditions that usually exist in schools.
- The deficits are countered by the advantage of consensual validation.
- Furthermore, a comparative view of group discussions in very heterogeneous sociocultural contexts was carried out. Any biases that could occur in an individual school were thus avoided.



<https://pixabay.com/de/vectors/sprechblasen-kommentare-orange-303206/>

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Thank you very much for your attention!

Christoph Bierschwale, Bielefeld University, Mail: christoph.bierschwale@uni-bielefeld.de

Prof. Dr. Michaela Vogt, Bielefeld University, Mail: michaela.vogt@uni-bielefeld.de