Inclusion as a 'North Star' and prospects for everyday life. Considerations about concerns, transformations and necessities of inclusion in schools in Germany

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Abstract

Focusing on the development of inclusive education in Germany in the last 15 years, this article proceeds in three steps. First, after a short sketch of the legal situation and its discussion, the idea of inclusion in schools is illustrated. It is followed by a critical reflection on the development of the inclusion discourse in education policy, associations and in science of Germany. Finally, some necessary conditions for a coherent development in different areas are highlighted.

Key words

Inclusive education; Germany; legal situation; education policy; inclusion in schools.

La inclusión como 'North Star' y las perspectivas de la vida cotidiana. Consideraciones sobre las preocupaciones, transformaciones y necesidades de la inclusión en las escuelas en Alemania

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Resumen

Centrándose en el desarrollo de la educación inclusiva en Alemania en los últimos 15 años, este artículo consta de tres partes. En primer lugar, después de un breve esbozo de la situación jurídica y su discusión, se expone la idea de inclusión en las escuelas. Le sigue, en segundo lugar, una reflexión crítica sobre el desarrollo del discurso de la inclusión en las políticas de educación, asociaciones y en la ciencia en Alemania. Por último, se destacan algunas condiciones necesarias para un desarrollo coherente en distintos ámbitos.

Palabras clave

Educación inclusiva; Alemania; situación legal; política educativa; inclusión en las escuelas.

Introduction

Around the turn of the millennium, the educational inclusion term was introduced into the German- language professional discourse with the aim of clarifying what is involved internationally in inclusion. Until then, German-speaking countries had been largely separated from this international debate about inclusion (Hinz 2004, 2009a, 2010). The much-quoted Salamanca Statement of 1994 is often incorrectly referred to as the beginning of the inclusion discourse. Because the educational inclusion term was unknown in German-speaking countries at that point in time, 'inclusion' was translated with 'integration' in the declaration. In fact, the discourse originated in the 1970s in the US (Hinz 2008).

Today, the situation is different: As a consequence of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN 2008), inclusion is discussed to an extent and with an intensity that was unimaginable a few years ago. And as with any term that represents a new orientation and quickly becomes a blurred till contourless fashion concept, now almost everything is declared as inclusion what is to be shown as positive and progressive. Consequently, it is also quite possible to argue that the legal claim on implementation of an inclusive school system is met (Boban/Hinz/Kruschel 2013). This is logical and dramatic at the same time as this allows the real meaning of inclusion to disappear more and more. By now, inclusion in many places represents rather a caricature: Schools that are already under a lot of pressure in many respects need to include and 'cope with' 'even all the children with disabilities' under insufficient staff, neuter and qualification-related conditions. Thus, inclusion appears as an additional heavy burden – the opposite of what is actually intended.

Inclusion as an entitlement

With the decision of 'Bundestag' (Federal Parliament in Germany) and 'Bundesrat' (Federal Council of Germany) in March 2009, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities came into force in Germany. Particularly Article 24 on education causes massive discussions because thereby also Germany committed to an inclusive education system that ensures non-discriminatory access to public school and the possibility of lifelong learning for children and young people with disabilities (UN 2008). The official translation with its – obviously biased – attenuation of the pressure to act by incorrectly substituting 'inclusion' by 'integration' can't change this fact because the official languages of the UN are legally binding.

Very quickly after the resolution on the Convention, the question about legal consequences was raised, the answer to which is marked by many controversies. It is certain that none of the German school laws at that point in time met the requirements of the Convention – all

of the 16 need to be changed (Poscher/Langer/Rux 2008). According to the international lawyer Riedel (2010), two legal claims derive from the Convention:

- The Convention as an individual entitlement gives parents of children with disabilities the right to a 'non-discriminatory access to the public school system'. The exercise of this right may not be counteracted by resource reservations. This implies - unlike it is often announced - neither the introduction of an option for parents between general and special education nor the demand for a speedy abolition of all special schools.

- The Convention as a systemic entitlement requires the education system in general to be developed in a more inclusive direction – quickly and with effective measures.

In addition to these two legal claims, effective arrangements and high-quality education are claimed, though without defining what that actually means. In this respect, it is not surprising the 'Kultusministerkonferenz', the coordinating body of the federal states responsible for education, takes a different position. First, an immediate individual entitlement is denied for which the amendment of Education Acts is seen as necessary. Furthermore, the systemic entitlement is negated completely by identifying general and special school as equal value educational institutions which both need to be provided (KMK 2011). After a time of widespread uncertainty among representatives of educational administrations about the actual tasks and methods deriving from the Convention, now quite diverse actions of the German federal states can be observed.

With the UN Convention, the discussion about inclusion in Germany sees an unexpected boost, resulting in a massive public debate about its implementation (for examples see Hinz, Körner & Niehoff 2008, 2010). The downside of this development is an increasing reduction of the inclusion discourse to issues of disability. The usual flattening of new terms and concepts to fashion trends and "in-terms" is a further downside (Haeberlin 2007). In connection with the proof of own up-to-dateness and ensuring of corporate interests of (special-) institutions (e.g. VDS 2009), the result is an increasing trend towards transformation and deflection of the inclusion term and its potential. This isn't only the case with educational administrations but also with diverse academics who declare inclusion to be more or less a synonym for integration and thus relate inclusion primarily to issues of dealing with disability and reintegration of the special education system (Klemm/Preuss-Lausitz 2011, 29-32, Preuss-Lausitz 2011, 37-39). Such an understanding abandons the innovative potential of the inclusion concept which is reduced to the question of special needs which can be delegated to special education quite easily. However, considering the international discourse it becomes quite clear that inclusion affects much more than questions about just practices with respect to the difference of disability in the educational context.

Inclusion in schools as a 'North Star'

The discourse about inclusive education is out worldwide – everywhere, education systems are challenged to reflect how they deal with human differences, particularly with ascribed characteristics being important for educational processes. Thus, all countries are confronted with the challenge to reduce discriminatory barriers in the education system.

In other countries, inclusive education is also related to other aspects of diversity, for example in India with "poverty, cultural bias, systemic exclusion" (Alur 2005, 130). Thereby, systemic barriers are focused rather than ‚paupers', ‚girls' and the ‚disabled'. At the same time, in various contexts, it is possible to find evidence for an international awareness for

the limitation of 'inclusive education' to aspects of disability – and in many cases alienation from this narrowed understanding can be identified, for example in the context of South Africa: „There is a tendency in education circles to equate the international inclusive education movement with disability and other ‚special needs'. ... It is important to address the challenges of inclusion in the context of addressing *all* forms of discrimination. This means that discrimination and exclusion relating to social class, race, gender and disability and other less obvious areas (such as different learning styles and paces), should be addressed in a holistic and comprehensive manner" (Lazarus/Daniels/Engelbrecht 1999, 47f.; emphasis in original). Apparently, internationally, there are different positions with respect to the question of reasonable width or narrowness of the inclusion focus. In this connection, interests of associations play a critical role: For example, disability associations in South Africa ensured that local inclusive education didn't adopt the english concept of „barriers for learning and participation" (Booth/Ainscow 2002) which aims to reduce barriers for learning and participation of all people involved, children as well as adults. Instead, with a stronger focus on aspects of special education, „barriers for development" (Naicker 1999) students can be confronted with in various ways are highlighted.

The limitation of inclusive education on a single aspect of diversity – disability – appears to be already problematic because people act in various contexts and processes of discrimination can't be limited to a single aspect. Therefore, a one-dimensional concept of inclusive education can't meet the comprehensive demand of inclusion. Rather, the special position of the respective group of people and the focus by effected persons themselves and their social environment on impairment is strengthened, a process with well-known consequences (Booth 2008, Boban/Hinz/Plate/Tiedeken 2014).

Reflecting the international discourse on educational inclusion, four cornerstones can be identified (Hinz 2004, 46f.): Inclusion ...

- addresses diversity in a positive way. It is perceived not as something which needs to be reduced by organizational arrangements but as a productive moment, all conflicts and tensions included,

- includes all dimensions of diversity (abilities, gender, origins, first languages, races, classes, religions, sexual orientations, physical characteristics and other aspects) which aren't as hitherto discussed separately but brought into a general view,

- is oriented towards the civil rights movement and counters all tendencies towards marginalization because of attributions and

- represents the vision of an inclusive society.

Thereby, it becomes clear that inclusion has a visionary share und thus is never fully achievable. Nevertheless, 'Inclusion as a North Star' gives orientation for next steps of development which can be addressed immediately – and on the basis of the UN Convention have to.

For a differentiation of inclusive education Tony Booth's distinction of three perspectives on inclusion makes sense (2008, 53-64):

The first perspective focuses the *participation of persons*. The question is the full participation of the person in all societal contexts. On this level, also legal debates might take place which investigate the realization of human rights. In this respect, it can be problematic if participation is perceived as dependent on overcoming a disabling characteristic – such a view can have discriminating consequences because the person might be reduced to this single 'characteristic' and other characteristics might be ignored.

The second perspective refers to *participation and barriers in the system*. Existing systems, as for example schools, are asked how they deal with the diversity of their learners. While on the first level, the problem is located rather in the individual person, the second perspective locates it in the system itself. The systemic quality is examined.

A third perspective aims the *implementation of inclusive values*. The basic value orientation of a system is central here, various aspects are at issue. This involves themes as for example participation, equality, community, sustainability or non-violence. Equally, questions about the meaning of courage, joy and love play a role. Every system is based on values – the question is how conscious they are and how far there's a consensus.

One perspective stays necessarily limited, only its supplement allows for an inclusive overall perspective: The participation of persons, the criticism at systems and the shared inclusive basic orientation are necessary aspects of continual reflection.

The challenge of inclusive education: to design opportunities for learning

The pedagogical challenge of inclusion can be described in more detail (Boban/Hinz 2012): How far schools have an inclusive quality depends largely on their design of learning processes. Thereby, it plays a central role how active or passive and how prescribed or self-selected children and young people can learn. This is not only the case with pupils but also with the work of professionals as well as with employees of institutions for advanced training, of education authorities and ministries…
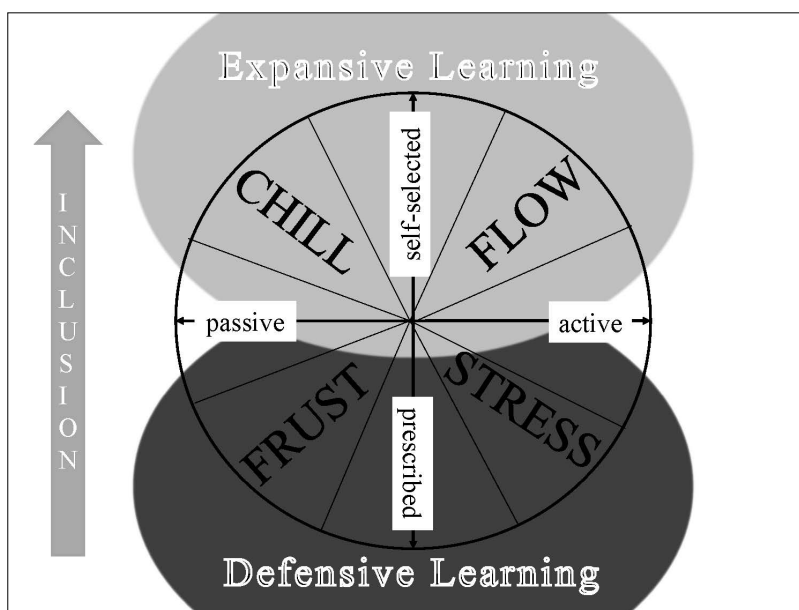

Figure 1. Conditions of learning and their possible consequences (Boban/Hinz 2012, 71)

Is activity primarily made up of fulfilling prescribed tasks, many people get stressed. By contrast, if sitting still and listening is in the majority, some people develop frustration. Often in learning groups, both mechanisms come into effect at the same time. In teacher-centered lessons, teachers get into the difficult 'engine-brake-dynamic' so that they need to push some students and slow down others. Ultimately, the high level of stress for teachers emerges because they hold all learners in a mode of „defensive learning" (Holzkamp 1992, 9) with curricular heteronomy.

The hidden curriculum shows that questions and interests of learners as well as their individual abilities and strengths don't come into effect. Instead, it's important to satisfy teachers by fulfilling their tasks. Following Holzkamp, externally controlled learning aims the defense of punishment; important is the „accountability of learning achievements at the respective supervisory body" (1995, 193). What is learnt hereby, may be in part fragmentary knowledge but primarily people learn how to take the next hurdle without a clash. Often it's even possible to see from the outside that learners linger in a ‚stand-by-mode' because their bodies react by releasing cortisol (when frustrated) or adrenalin (when stressed).

By contrast, self-determined learning stimulates the release of serotonin (in the flow-mode), endorphins and oxytocin (in the case of action and relaxing with others). Thus, it becomes clear which sphere holds the potential of mortification and which contributes to health. Is there a large degree of activity in the "flow-channel" and the intense engagement with a certain thing succeeds, people feel refreshed and rise up inspired and happily exhausted. What is needed then in order to calm down, relax and above all to process the experience, is very little activity: possibilities for 'hanging out'. Such relaxation which allows the processing of things absorbed - two necessary elements of learning – is so far very little valued in educational institutions, at its best in breaks. inclusive education widens the possibilities for „expansive learning"(Holzkamp 1995, 191).

Bridges between vision and daily life – Indexes for Inclusion

Great visions such as inclusion tend to remain without consequences if they can't be connected to everyday practices. The different versions of the Index for Inclusion which underline the process character of inclusion, can help with the design, construction and maintenance of this bridge. Therefore, inclusive education is to be understood as a process whereby all people involved work together to reflect the current educational situation in all its aspects. By improving their responsiveness to the different requirements and needs of learners and staff, they take next steps towards an inclusive 'North Star'. So, inclusion also means to take care of yourself – and therefore all people involved agree that they only take such big steps that they can handle it well, without overcharging yourself and others. Meanwhile, there are versions of the Index for schools (Boban/Hinz 2003), for early years and childcare (Booth/Ainscow/Kingston 2006) as well as for communal contexts (MSJG 2011). Depending on the question, there are different versions of the Index for educational institutions – sensibly with broad participation of the participants internally and in cooperation with respective external associates.

Firstly, the indexes suggest how the development process can be addressed systematically – based on known principles and phase models of systemic organizational development. Furthermore, with a high level of detail, they show which aspects schools can include in their considerations about inclusive development.

Thereby, the framework is made up of three dimensions and two sections respectively (Boban/Hinz 2003, 14-17, 53-96):

- *to create Inclusive Cultures* refers to the self-understanding of schools and includes aspects which tell something about the level of development in community-building and clarity of fundamental values.

- *to establish Inclusive Policies* relates to the internal organization of schools and refers to the question of how far a school is progressed in its development of a ‚school for all' and how far diversity is supported.

- *to develop Inclusive Practices* means the day-to-day-business of teaching and asks for the orchestration of learning processes and the mobilization of resources.

Each dimension and its two sections include a number of indicators which are defined through lots of questions. The result is a big buffet of questions from which not only the inspiring ones are to be chosen but also the people involved can add their own questions. Although at first glance about 560 questions may trigger stress, it is important to seize the variety of the buffet as an offer to pick out the tastiest educational parts of it and select the next steps. The Index can become most effective for action when the participants relate its questions to their own situation and develop new perspectives through dialogue (for examples see Boban/Hinz 2011).

Inclusion in schools in Germany – the discourse in its development

In the following, different tendencies to transformation processes or, in other words, changes which transform the original into something different in an interest-driven way, are elaborated. They're applied to discourses in educational policy, in academics and in their interplay.

Inclusion in the discourse of educational policy: transformation into de-segregation

As a consequence of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the debate about inclusion has seen a massive upswing. However, it can also strengthen the perspective on inclusion as a special theme with a special target group – people with disabilities (Boban/Hinz 2009, Hinz 2009b). Yet internationally, this tendency has already existed before the UN Convention, as the discourses in different contexts show, for example in India or South Africa (Boban/Hinz 2008a).

It's quite comprehensible that social and educational policy as well as educational administration takes the opportunity to understand inclusion in a more specific and thus less comprehensive way so that it is also easier to declare inclusion as accomplished. Additionally, such an understanding can avoid or reduce education policy-initiated conflicts which might flare up with the question of the fundamental approach to diversity and the ‚dangerous proximity' to the old debate about school-structures of the 1970s.

With such a perspective, there are two problems: Firstly, although inclusion is discussed rhetorically, the focus is on de-segregation, namely on those pupils which so far haven't been included into or have been excluded from regular school. Thus, it's logical to place the focus on those for which the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities claims de-segregation. Ultimately, this can be understood as the continuation of special education and consequently in the ministry of educational and cultural affairs, experts for special education hold leading positions. However, the question arises what inclusion has to do with that – at least if one follows the international discourse as described above (Booth 2008).

Secondly, the local discourse often misjudges that the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities doesn't proclaim special rights for a special group of people but simply highlights and concretizes the general, universal and thus indivisible Declaration of Human Rights (1948) for a certain group of people because this appears to be necessary – such as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006).

The preliminary conclusion is that rhetorically the discourse in educational policy involves inclusion but in reality focuses the de-segregation of students with special educational needs. So it is not surprising that

- ministries for educational and cultural affairs strive exclusively for new structures of ‚special educational support' in the regular school,

- programs for teacher training focus on special education (Amrhein/Badstieber 2013) and partly curdle to ‚inclusive qualifications' with emphases on learning, language and social-emotional development in the sense of ‚special education light'.

- special education teachers are generally declared as experts in inclusion – what they're no more than others – and

- all other aspects of inclusion as well as all other professions and competencies remain to a large extent unconsidered.

Dramatically, the development planning by the ministry of educational and cultural affairs is largely limited to structural issues that are fixed top-down by legislation and decrees. Procedural and innovation strategic aspects would have to ensure that teachers get the chance to be competent in inclusive education. In the face of procedures which are determined by administrative logic, orientation towards departmentalizing and legislative periods, it is not surprising that in some federal states inclusion is perceived by teachers and parents as a reckless austerity program and as a consequence, the mood changes. After having moved from the discussion about ‚whether' to ‚how', now there's the real danger of going the next step to ‚why for Christ's sake'.

Inclusion in academic discourse: transformation in the development of special needs education

As in social and educational policy, there are similar trends towards adaption to special educational needs in the academic discourse. It's possible to find numerous attempts to construct inclusive education as a continuum to special education (see for example Biewer 2009). Such depictions share the same narrow focus on people with disabilities. Thus, almost all other aspects remain unnoticed – at best social differences and possibly gender appear.

Furthermore, there are arguments how special education can contribute its specific skills. Lately, the "Response-to-Intervention"-model (RTI) has gained some prominence. It favors intense diagnostic attendance of all children in primary school by tests in cultural techniques. Depending on the results, individual support measures are introduced, as for example in the case of the „Rügener Inklusionsmodell" (Mahlau et al 2011). In extensive training programs, teachers in several federal states are prepared for inclusion with RTI.

Originating in the context of North-America, this approach aims an early „identification and prevention of learning and behavioral problems by an integrative organization of pedagogical and special educational support" with three levels of support (Liebers/Seifert 2012). On the basic level, there are regular screenings of all students. Additionally, the learning level is analyzed at least three times a year and teachers collect diverse information. Based on this, the second level analyzes the learning progress of students identified as prominent by implementing frequent learning controls once or twice a week. Finally, for students reacting ‚not responsively' it follows a third level with a further intensification of individual support over a longer time or more extensive differential diagnostics with further standardized „tests for monitoring the cognitive, socio-emotional, linguistic, motor-driven and receptive competencies" (ibid).

The alignment with tests, particularly with the problematic promise of a linear connection between diagnostics and support, gives cause for concern (Kautter et al. 1998). In the case of RTI, a clear behaviorist approach shimmers through which is based on a linear idea of learning, aims a massive reinforcement of learning development controls and represents the idea that it is possible to arrive at normality by intervention and without any reference to the lifeworld.

With such basis assumptions, RTI conflicts with inclusive education and its idea of learning as an active, expansive process, its acceptance of individual learning paths and accompaniment, including productive friction, between general concepts of development and individual formation of interests, learning-steps and learning paths in positive interdependence, as for example in the case of cooperative learning, pluralistic learning in democratic education (Boban/Hinz 2008b) or additional creative activities (Burow 2011).

RTI is an approach which suggests alleged secure and systematic preventive procedures for teachers in general schools. With RTI, the responsibility of the special needs profession shall be increased up to 25% of all pupils. Its effectiveness hasn't been clearly proved and meanwhile is seen rather critically, even in North America (Moser 2013, 140). The ambivalent relation between prevention and inclusion and the basic conflicts between the basic assumptions of RTI and inclusive education are masked out. Thus, the reasonable impression may arise that Special Needs Education tries to open up a new field and aims to gain an inclusive label by intensifying its cooperation with Teacher Education. That RTI is accepted so willingly by ministries and seems attractive to many teachers can be explained by its clarity and the promise of a systematic control of childhood development, a promise which can't be kept.

Development prospects of inclusion in schools – new power constellations?

RTI - in this respect only a small jigsaw piece - gains currency in a time in which increased effectiveness of education by evaluation, inspection, international comparative analyses and screenings is on the agenda anyway. The economization of the education system is promoted and the pressure on the productive development of ,human capital' grows, also on and by educational science (Radtke 2003). There are several arguments for the thesis of Radtke which he put forward on the conference of researchers in inclusion in 2014 that a triangle of economy (through its foundations which massively influence education), educational policy and embedded science forms a new center of power which finances educational research and thus also defines and gains its legitimacy through appropriate enquiries and studies. This corresponds with the reduction of previous educational opportunities in universities through cost reduction with short study programs and minimized research funds. The impression arises that inclusion is caught by these power interests and thus the previous discourse is increasingly expropriated.

This trend may be illustrated by an example: The education summit in June 2013, organized by the Federal Ministry for Education and Social Affairs as well as the 'Conference of Education Ministers', made it very clear that inclusion is to be reduced to the aspect of disability and is to be aligned with special education. Expert reports by the German Institute for International Educational Research which were carried out in connection with the conference (Döbert/Weishaupt 2013) were mainly rewarded to academics that aren't relevant in inclusive education. If a proven researcher in inclusion is involved, this is qualified by an RTI representative. Experts are massively reminded not to widen inclusion – a very clear way of development control and a proof of Radtke's power triangle. In the future, the previous research about inclusion might face the alternative of either bending into predefined research programs or remaining outside.

Necessary conditions for a coherent development of inclusion in schools

Finally instead of a conclusion some aspects are highlighted which are important for a sensible, ‚inclusion-compatible‘ and ‚inclusion-sustaining‘ development.

Focusing on inclusion as a whole

First of all it is necessary to keep the complete width of inclusion in mind. If this doesn't happen, there are problematic consequences with regard to content and innovation strategies. Is inclusion understood in the wide sense, it's clear that every general school – and indeed much more educational places – is responsible for this topic. Furthermore, inclusion is a cross-cutting theme which can be incorporated so that other themes being on the agenda can be looked upon with ‚inclusive glasses‘ and thus a clearer view or additional aspects may result. By contrast, is inclusion limited exclusively on disability, the responsibility is quickly assigned to special needs education, especially committed (‚integrative‘) primary schools feel predestined or are chosen, for example, to function as 'specially equipped schools'. Other general schools and Teacher Education can lean back and start to delegate tasks and responsibilities. Only if there's a wider understanding of inclusion, inclusion is the direct task of all schools and integral part of school development.

Focusing on structural and procedural support for inclusion

To enable the development of inclusion, clear structural guidelines and consents on the part of the people responsible are essential. The reliable equipment with resources is indispensable; however the devil is in the respecting detail because concretely it has to be defined which resource is necessary for resolving a specific problem or situation – especially difficult with a systemic focus. Often existing resources are used very rarely – be it pupils or extracurricular cooperation partners. As great as the stressor of the ‚one-teacher-system‘ may be, also irrespective of inclusion, and as important it may be to overcome the existence of the lone warrior – to establish a continuous ‚two-teacher-system’ everywhere is neither necessary nor affordable. Second adults quickly threaten to leave the classroom with ‚the disruption‘ instead of initiating a shared thinking process with the learning group about how to deal with the challenge. The solution of staff problems definitely can't be found in the mass recruitment of ‚inclusion helpers‘, a solution which is chosen at the moment because of shortage, helplessness and missing staff flexibility with respect to other resources. This is a homemade problem which emerges if federal states establish two parallel systems (segregation and integration) as a ‚peacemaking solution‘ for the long term which is, by the way, not in accordance with the UN Convention. At this point those responsible are asked structurally – namely not in the sense of additive integrative support for ‚children with special educational needs‘ by the hour but in an inclusive sense with different educational professionals, shared responsibility and general assignment of resources in a 'school for all'.

Those responsible have got another task with regard to system development: they take care of the inclusive development processes. It is very less considered and even less implemented how schools can be able to acquire the necessary competencies for inclusion. At this point, it is crucial to develop support programs and systems which help to develop the reflection about current practices and next steps in a practical, process-oriented and team-based manner. Projects like the state-wide support system "InPrax" in the federal state of Schleswig Holstein (Hinz/Kruschel 2013, 2014) can show the direction of such efforts; also on the international level there are structural inspirations, as for example from New Brunswick (Canada) (Hinz 2006, Köpfer 2013; see also Bunch in this journal).

Focusing on indivisible learning groups

Inclusive education can only be successful if thinking in two groups – the ‚normal‘ and the ‚abnormal‘ – is constantly critically reflected. The legitimization for working in teams is not the existence of ‚special‘ students but the diversity of learning groups with their wide range of 'unique specimens' which can at best be divided administratively but not pedagogically sensible. To let diversity become pedagogically productive is an objective for practices as well as for analyses in research. Particularly, if the trend of social inequality is going in a segregating and perhaps even splitting direction – something which schools should not be reinforcing.

Focusing on inclusive handling of contradictions

Time and again, there's the complaint that general schools come into conflicts which they perceive as a great trial: On the one hand, they should fulfill an increasing amount of situations in which certain standards are controlled (comparative tests, a central A-level degree called 'Abitur', inspections, evaluations, …). On the other hand they're supposed to develop inclusion. In the professional discourse it is essential to map out whether these are antagonistic contradictions which are mutually exclusive or rather difficult tensions which also include aspects with some fit. It might also be that – depending on the wording – standards open up methodical freedom by exempting their achievement. Equally, it might be that comparative tests – depending on their construction and on how narrow or wide their spectrum of ascertainable performances is – are helpful with respect to the reflection of lessons and don't exert pressure on pupils. However, a lot of contradictions are characteristic for the education system in principle, as for example the function of qualification and allocation. These functions can't be resolved because necessarily schools provide qualifications and allocate future chances. Yet, it is possible to shape how rigid this is done and which function is pushed into the background or promoted. To use own respective scope for action for inclusive development and to influence the one of others politically according to inclusion – this might be a sensible inclusive strategy.

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