

Inclusion

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In today's society people are often discriminated against because they do not look or behave according to societal norms. Everything not corresponding to the "norm", is seen as (too) different and often associated with negative attributes. Paniagua calls this the "Myth of the normal child". (Paniagua, 2017) It implies that there is only one right way how children should act and behave. This often leads to misunderstandings, which manifest through language issues some pupils may have because they speak another primary language. Some teachers consider this to be a learning problem and perceive and label the pupils as "lazy". Paniagua refers to this context of language and inclusion with the acronym LCSD. (Linguistically, culturally, and socioeconomically diverse.) He uses this to include not only people with disabilities, but also people from ethnic minority groups (whose primary language is different than the language spoken in the country of residence), and people who are from low-income households. In his article he suggests that how people respond to diversity, is often mediated through their habitus. (Paniagua, 2017)

Lang-Wojtasik & Schieferdecker employ a wide definition of inclusion as they define it as the right of participation within the society, independent from an attributed or official status. Within this definition, everyone should get the help they need to move forward in life. It is important that not the individual has to adapt to society, but rather society to the individual. Here inclusion refers to the unlimited participation in every aspect of society, independent from the individual condition. (Lang-Wojtasik & Schieferdecker, 2016, S. 78-80)

Naraian goes beyond this and defines inclusion as the attempt to create a framework where everyone can achieve the same output. Within this definition the focus is on reaching the same result, and not receiving the same education. The central point here, is the participation for all pupils, which should be ensured through diverse curricula and other educational structures. Pupil's differing socio-cultural backgrounds are addressed in this way (race, gender, ethnicity, disability, multilingualism, migration, sexuality, family, religion, world-making, and age.) (Naraian, 2011)

Saalfrank & Zierer also define inclusion as the participation in education and knowledge in a broader sense. They highlight three ways in which inclusion can be seen: The role theory in general, as well as communication theory and in particular the network theory. Here, diversity

and heterogeneity figure as two additional important concepts for understanding and defining inclusion. (Saalfrank & Zierer, 2017)

Another possibility to define digital inclusion is to conceptually differentiate it from other terms like exclusion, separation, integration, and assimilation.

Inclusion can also be understood on border and boundary work. Thinking inclusively means to think about inclusion in a relative and relational way, since inclusion always implies and is constituted by forms of exclusion. This characterises every situation, in which a separation is pursued and a boundary between the inside and the outside is drawn. These boundaries can and need to be critically analysed. (Nguyen, 2015)

Inclusion is negotiated in different societal areas such as media, the political sphere, and of course very prominently in the context of education; different scales such as global, national, and local. The issue of power figures prominently within the discourses and practices of inclusion. Within exploring power and government, the question if (digital) inclusion should be a human right is also being raised. (Nguyen, 2015)

According to Nguyen (2015), the discussion about inclusion and exclusion is strongly structured by government policies, as this is the base for the legal and normative coordinates of framing, regulating, and legitimising inclusion in society.

The problem here is that within norms and laws, the voices of individuals and communities particularly affected are not taken into account. One response to this problem is the reference to “voice”, as highlighted by Naraian, as a tool to ensure participation in inclusive communities. If people are allowed to raise their voice and talk about what they want and need, this could account for and enhance an increased participation in society. However, the requirement here is that the voices are indeed heard. (Naraian, 2011) Another research example working with the notion of “voice” are two projects in the UK with the aim of reducing discrimination of the GRT community (Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller). Here, the concept of voice is also used to show how the children can contribute to designing the lessons. (Brook Lapping Productions, 2006)

Literature:

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