ANTHOLOGY NO 1 COMPARATIVE CLASSROOM STUDIES TOWARDS INCLUSION

Research Project Preparation within Education and Special Needs Education

Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Research Plans

Berit H. Johnsen (Ed.)

CAPPELEN DAMM AKADEMISK

Research Project Preparation within Education and Special Needs Education

Anthology no 1: Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion

Research Project Preparation within Education and Special Needs Education

Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Research Plans

Edited by Berit H. Johnsen

CAPPELEN DAMM AKADEMISK

ISBN: 978-82-7634-977-1
ISBN web-PDF: 978-82-02-71500-7

1st edition, 1st print 2013

This is an Open Access edition of a book first published, in printed form, in November 2013.
Five chapters from the original printed edition of the book are not included in this edition:
8. *Research Project Preparation* (Berit H. Johnsen)
10. *Preventing Literacy Failure in Children at Risk: Effects from a Preschool Intervention on Language and Literacy. A Comparative Study of Effects from an Oral Language Intervention on Native Norwegian Speaking Children and Bilingual Minority Children* (Monica Melby-Lervåg)
11. *Educators as Custodians of Democracy? A Comparative Investigation of Multicultural School Environments in the Scandinavian Capitals* (Heidi Biseth)
12. *Creating Knowledge through Artefact-Oriented Collaboration: Mechanisms, Characteristics and Technological Support* (Crina Damşa)
18. *A Case Study of a Child with Cochlea Implants within the Inclusive Classroom* (Zora Jachova)

Cover design: Roy Søbstad
Typesetting: Bøk Oslo AS
Printing and binding: Livonia Print SIA, Latvia

www.cda.no
akademisk@cappelendamm.no

This book is dedicated to
current and future researchers
within education and special needs education.
May their cooperation strengthen the
development towards inclusion.

Acknowledgements

This book is the result of cooperation primarily undertaken with research colleagues not only at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Oslo, and at the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla and Zagreb, but also with research colleagues at other Norwegian and international universities. Furthermore, it is inspired by more than twenty years of work with international Master students and Doctoral research fellows who have searched eagerly for possibilities to conduct further education and research. They all deserve thanks for their contributions and inspiration.

A formidable number of researchers, PhD research fellows and Master students took part in the WB 06/04 project Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building: Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo. The project activities leading to several of these articles were led by the academic coordinators, Dragan Rapaić at the University of Belgrade, Stanislav Košir at the University of Ljubljana, Sadeta Zečić at the University of Sarajevo, Zora Jachova at Ss. Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje, Nevzeta Salihović at the University of Tuzla, Ljiljana Igrić at the University of Zagreb and the author, Berit H. Johnsen, at the University of Oslo, along with administrators and in some cases also local interpreters with the universities. All deserve thanks for their enthusiasm, hard work and endurance throughout the project.

Both our project interpreters, Mr Goran Đapić and Ms Vera Đapić, and local interpreters made this cooperation possible, and their fast, smooth and professional interpretation played a key role in creating efficient seminars.

While only authors or co-authors of this first of three anthologies are mentioned by name, it should be remembered that many other researchers, students and administrators are behind the project results and articles in this book, having contributed to project activities and/or acting as local peer reviewers or discussants and interpreters. Some of these individuals are authors of articles appearing in the next two books. The authors in this book from the universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla and Zagreb are Dragan Rapaić, Goran Nedovic, Irena Stojković, Snežana Ilić, Stanislav Košir, Damjana Kogovšek, Martina Ozbič, Sadeta Zečić, Irma Čehić, Selma Džemidžić Kristian-

sen, Selmir Hadžić, Zora Jachova, Nevzeta Salihović, Alma Dizdarević, Melika Smajić, Ljiljana Igrić, Ana Wagner Jakab and Daniela Cvitković.

Additionally, when it comes to articles written mainly in Norway, a considerable number of research colleagues, students and professionals at research-related institutions have participated in the creation of this book. Several researchers at different faculties, who are not mentioned by name here, have helped in the search for sources connected to issues of historical matters and preparation of research plans, or as discussants of article drafts. The Internet also deserves mention as a relatively new and fast developing media of great help in the search for information, and as a supplement to the splendid service provided by staff members the Humanities and Social Science Library, University of Oslo. Authors, peer reviewers, informants and participants in studies deserve great thanks for their contribution. They are Emad Al-Rozzi, Edvard Befring, Heidi Biseth, Birgit Brock-Utne, Crina Damşa, Eva-Signe Falkenberg, Greta Björk Guðmundsdóttir, Natasa Hanak, Thor Arnfinn Kleven, J. Kovacevic, Tone Kvernbekk, Solveig-Alma H. Lyster, Solveig Bauge Løland, Monica Melby-Lervåg, Ivar Morken, Anders I. Mørch, N.N., Liv-Randi Opdal, Snorre Ostad, Berit Rognhaug, Eva Simonsen, Reidun Tangen, Steinar Theie, Arnfinn M. Vonen and Siri Wormnes.

The cooperation with the articles' authors concerning editing, peer reviewing and proofreading has been an excellent joint effort to increase their quality.

The publication of the three anthologies was made possible through funding 1) from the research group Humanity Studies in Pedagogy (HumStud) at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO, and 2) from the international research cooperation project WB 06/04, which was partly financed by the Norwegian Cooperation Program on Research and Higher Education with the Countries in the Western Balkans (CPWB).

The cooperation with generous and patient editor Bjørn O. Hansen at the publishing house Cappelen Damm Akademisk has been highly appreciated throughout the process of creating this book. . Finally, having a competent proofreader is essential for those of us who do not have English as our first language, and proofreading of research literature requires a high level of language competence as well as relevant academic terminology. The close dialogue with publishing house proofreader , Karin Lee-Hansen has, due to her conscientious and detailed work, provided a fruitful learning experience. As with interpreters, establishing familiarity between author and proofreader is essential in order to maintain clarity as well as capture the nuances of the text, and I look forward to further cooperation with my proofreader.

Contents

Part One
International Comparative Classroom Research and Theory of Science

1. Berit H. Johnsen: *Development towards the Inclusive School – Practices, Research and Capacity Building* 17
2. Tone Kvernbekk: *Philosophy of Science. A Brief Introduction to Selected Topics: Categorization, Justification, and the Relation between Observation and Theory* 37
3. Tone Kvernbekk: *Evidence-Based Practice and Educational Research* 62

Part Two
Doctoral Programmes in Past and Future

4. Berit H. Johnsen: *Doctoral Programmes in Past and Future* 77
5. Berit H. Johnsen: *From Dr. Philos to PhD. Senior Researchers' Experience and Views on Practice and Development within Doctoral Studies over the Last Half Century* 80
6. Berit H. Johnsen: *Doctoral Studies at the University of Oslo from 1811 to PhD* 96
7. Berit H. Johnsen, Dragan Rapaić, Anna Wagner and Daniela Cvitković: *Doctoral Studies from Yugoslavian Times to the Bologna Process. Historical Milestones in the Establishment of Universities, Educational and Special Needs Educational Sciences and Doctoral Degrees at the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb – and Oslo* 117

Part Three
Research Project Preparation

9. Berit H. Johnsen: *Developing and Writing a Research Plan. Possibilities and Barriers* 147

Part Four
Research Plans in the Joint International Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion

13. Berit H. Johnsen: *Seven Independent Studies in a Unified Comparative Project. Research Plans within the Joint International Research Project: Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion* 175

14. Berit H. Johnsen: *Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion. Joint Research Plan for Cooperation between the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo* 180

15. Dragan Rapaić, Goran Nedović, Irena Stojković and Snežana Ilić, University of Belgrade: *A Study of the Implementation of a Legal Framework for Supporting Children with Disabilities in Regular School* 197

16. Damjana Kogovšek, Stanislav Košir and Martina Ozbič, University of Ljubljana: *A Study of the Process towards Inclusion Related to Slovenian Pupils with Hard of Hearing or Functional Deafness* 207

17. Sadeta Zečić, Irma Čehić, Selma Džemidžić Kristiansen and Selmir Hadžić, University of Sarajevo: *Supporting Pupils with Language and Speech Difficulties in Regular Primary Schools. Comparative Research and Intervention in the Classroom towards Inclusion* 216

19. Nevzeta Salihović, Alma Dizdarević and Melika Smajić, University of Tuzla: *Provision of Education and Rehabilitation Support of Children with Special Needs in Regular Classrooms* 230

20. Ljiljana Igrić and Daniela Cvitković, University of Zagreb: *Supporting Inclusion of Children with Special Needs. A Study of Classroom Assistants and Mobile Team of Special Needs Educators in Regular Schools* 246

21. Berit H. Johnsen, University of Oslo: *A Classroom Study of Inclusive Practices* 257

Contributors 273

Preface

The process and results of the *International Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion* are documented in three anthologies. They are partly financed by the international research cooperation project WB 04/06: *Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building: Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo.* Anthology no 1 and 2 describe and discuss the joint research process as well as the diversity of the studies of the seven research groups within common frames. Anthology no 2 focuses on methodological, theoretical and ethical considerations. The third anthology is devoted to the research findings, and with specific focus on qualitative methodology in these international comparative classroom studies.

Anthology no 1 deals with how to prepare and formulate research projects. It also situates the studies within the historical development towards current educational and special needs educational research communities and within philosophy of educational research. This Open Access version contains a major selection of relevant articles in the original book.

Oslo 15.11.2020
Berit H. Johnsen

PART ONE

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE CLASSROOM RESEARCH AND THEORY OF SCIENCE

1

Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices, Research and Capacity Building

Berit H. Johnsen

Introduction

This book is the first of three anthologies in the series *Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion*. It focuses on two related questions, namely how to prepare research projects and how research competence has been and is developed through establishment of universities, higher education, doctoral programmes and research projects.

The book is inspired and initiated as a result of the cooperation of senior and junior researchers in the planning phase of our joint Western Balkan-Oslo project. Thus, it is a contribution to researchers who intend to apply to international cooperation programmes and international students searching for PhD fellowships as well as for researchers in the implementation process of studies, supervisors, peer-reviewers and doctoral committee members. It aims at capacity building through updating practicing and upcoming researchers within education, special needs education and related fields. Keeping in mind the recent fast growing number of international research cooperation programmes and doctoral fellowships, the book offers insight into the changing history of recruitment and training of researchers through a steadily changing Europe. Thus, it also provides reflections concerning the on-going Bologna Process of Higher Education.

Citation of this chapter: Johnsen, B. H. (2013). Development towards the inclusive school: Practices, research and capacity building. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 17–36/pp. 15–34 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org/10.23865/noasp.124

This is an anthology directed at two areas of activity: 1) international research, including PhD studies, using the Norwegian university system and the University of Oslo (UiO) in particular as example, and 2) international research cooperation between universities in Norway and other countries, focusing on research on practice within the educational, special needs educational and related sciences. The publication of the book is financed from these two areas of activities: 1) the research group Humanity Studies in Pedagogy (HumStud) at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO; and 2) the international research cooperation project WB 06/04: *Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building: Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo*.

Part One of this book consists of three articles. Two of them are contributions to on-going capacity building. They discuss selected key concepts within theory or philosophy of science. This article, the first one in the collection, situates this first anthology as the beginning of a complete research process from preparation to conclusion. It gives an overview of the book's various articles, and it provides a preliminary discussion of the core concept of the joint research project being the primary purpose of the classroom studies described and discussed in these anthologies, namely to provide examples of schools moving "towards inclusion".

The first anthology in a series of three

As mentioned, this book is the first in a series of three anthologies presenting the research process from planning to conclusion of the joint international comparative classroom study, which is the main topic of the project *Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building: Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo*. The joint study is the main activity and covers one of three related goals of the project, as quoted from the project description (WB 06/04):

1: Comparative classroom studies towards inclusion
2: Improving competence in classroom research with focus on methodology and theory
3: Sharing of knowledge and experience related to the Bologna Process

Thus, this first book, *Research Project Preparation*, covers the planning process of the research project, which is the first mentioned goal and by far the largest part of the WB 06/04 project. As mentioned, the articles on philosophy of science are contributions to the second goal concerning improvement of research competence. In addition, focus is also directed towards the third goal concerning sharing of knowledge and experience related to the Bologna Process, as discussed in more detail later in the article.

In the second anthology, with the working title *Theory and Methodology in International Comparative Classroom Studies*, focus is on the research process. A large part of the book covers the second main project goal concerning improving competence in classroom research with focus on methodology and theory. Several of these articles have been written by distinguished international researchers, who were invited to give open lectures combined with project seminars at the ambulating workshops. It also contains seven articles on methodology written by each of the project universities.

The third anthology has the working title *Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion – Studies on the South-Eastern and North-Western Outskirts of Europe*. Here the results of the joint comparative study are presented along with individual articles about the studies from each of the seven universities. As initially mentioned, the anthologies are included in the book series *Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion*.

The common research theme, towards inclusion, serves as a "red thread" throughout the three books. This article marks the starting point of the discussion of this concept with a short preliminary introduction.

Towards inclusion

What is inclusion? What is the history and context of this principle? What encompasses the concept, and which aspects of it are in focus in the international comparative research project presented here? The following introduction of the concept is not intended to be comprehensive. Rather, the aim is to develop the concept in theory, context and practice throughout the series of books. But what do we mean with a concept in this presentation? As a beginning, this needs to be clarified.

Concepts cannot be universally defined. They are not static. On the contrary, they are steadily changing in relation to historically, culturally and individually based interpretations (Johnsen, 2000; 2001). Bakhtin (1986) argues that the

essence of a text or an utterance develops between two subjects- the author of the text and the reader – at any given time. Thus, the meaning differs from one individual reader to another within the same time and place as well as across cultures and history. However, although concepts are continuously changing, some degree of inter-subjective agreement is necessary in order to maintain an on-going discourse between groups of individuals, such as between the author and the reader or between a group of cooperating researchers (Johnsen, 2000; Rommetveit, in press 2014; Schriewer, 1999).

As pointed out, the concept of inclusion is a basic concept in the international comparative classroom study. How is it manifested in international discourse? Inclusion is not a new term. It may be traced back to 1600 (merriam-webster.com/dictionary), and it is applied within a number of different areas from mineralogy to educational sciences. The humanist educational philosopher Martin Buber (1947) applies the term inclusion in his discussion of communication and the communication act. Buber relates 'inclusion' to concepts similar to communication, namely 'dialogue' and 'dialogical relation', and argues that 'inclusion' is the opposite of 'empathy'. He proceeds with a conceptual description of inclusion:

> It (inclusion) is the extension of one's own concreteness, the fulfilment of the actual situation of life, the complete presence of the reality in which one participates. Its elements are, first, a relation, of no matter what kind, between two persons, second, an event experienced by them in common, in which at least one of them actively participates, and, third, the fact that this one person, without forfeiting anything of the felt reality of his activity, at the same time lives through the common event from the standpoint of the other.
>
> A relation between persons that is characterized in more or less degree by the element of inclusion may be termed a dialogical relation (Buber, 1947: 124–125).

Unaware of the ensuing widespread importance assigned to the concept, Buber argues for inclusion as an interpersonal ideal. However, it was not until 1994 that inclusion was introduced formally and gained international acceptance as a principle bringing together education and special needs education. At that time UNESCO called upon all governments to "adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in ordinary schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise" in the *Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education* (1994: ix). Since then, the principle of inclusion has been widely defined, discussed and applied in discourses on human rights, educational and social matters.

What, then, is the historical and international context of this relatively recently introduced principle of inclusion? And how is the principle described within different contexts? The following brief presentation places the principle of inclusion within these two contextual dimensions, the historical and the international.

Starting with the international context, the principle of inclusion emerges out of a number of human rights documents on behalf of United Nations (UN) and UN System agencies, such as the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991) and UNESCO's first conferences on education for all (EFA) in Jomtien (1991), together with the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disability (1994), which was published the same year as the Salamanca Statement. The principle was confirmed in the later UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). On UNESCO's homepage the long-term Education for All (EFA) project and the principle of inclusion are closely connected, and a large number of texts and materials related to the principle are presented. In these texts the principle is applied as educational inclusion or inclusive education, the inclusive school or the inclusive classroom. The latter two expressions usually place the focus on inclusive practices (http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/). Ideas about inclusion have developed and spread all around the world to schools, politicians, governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and to higher education and research institutions. Several universities and university colleges offer educational programmes in inclusion[1]. Through their educational activities within EFA and Inclusion programmes, UNESCO supports initiatives related to vulnerable and marginalized groups, aiming at development of inclusive quality Education for All. In their *Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education* (2009: 4), the following interpretation of the principle of inclusion is presented:

> The concept and practice of inclusive education (…) is increasingly understood more broadly as a reform that supports and welcomes diversity amongst all learners. Inclusive education is a process that involves the transformation of schools and other centres of learning to cater for all children – including boys and girls, students from ethnic and linguistic minorities, rural populations, those affected by HIV and AIDS, and those with disabilities and difficulties in learning and to provide learning opportunities for all youth and adults as well.

1. Instead of documenting few examples related to inclusion, the reader is advised to take a look at the vast amount of information on the Internet.

This statement contains two important points. 1) Catering for the diversity amongst all learners requires a transformation process to take place in schools. 2) The groups of children that need special attention in this transformation process, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, are further specified as including "boys and girls, students from ethnic and linguistic minorities, rural populations, those affected by HIV and AIDS, and those with disabilities and difficulties in learning". This specific litany of different groups may be seen as an attempt to prevent disadvantaged groups remaining invisible in the "Education for All" efforts. Currently, UNESCO is focusing specifically on Roma children, street children, and child workers, children with disabilities, indigenous people and rural people (http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/strengthening-education-systems/inclusive-education/).

The principle of inclusion is also applied to so-called social inclusion, and another of the UN System agencies, UNICEF, is strongly involved in this field. A basic description of social inclusion has not been found on behalf of UNICEF. Rather, it seems that the concept is described in relation to other concepts, such as in contradiction with social segregation and marginalisation, or in relation to security, employment and education. However, the concept has gained international application, and two attempts at descriptions or clarifications are presented in the following. The first relates to one of the Norwegian ministries, namely the *Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion*, which is presented as seeking "To strengthen consumer rights, interests and safety. To allow children and young people to grow up safely and to participate in public decision-making processes. To promote economic and social security for families. To promote full equality of status between men and women" (http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/bld). A somewhat clearer concept description is presented at the Victorian State Department of Health, Australia:

> A socially inclusive society is defined as one where all people feel valued, their differences are respected, and their basic needs are met so they can live in dignity. Social exclusion is the process of being shut out from the social, economic, political and cultural systems which contribute to the integration of a person into the community (Cappo, 2002 in Victorian Government Health Information: http://www.health.vic.gov.au).

From the perspective of social inclusion, educational inclusion is an often mentioned sub-category. UNICEF has also arranged conferences and other activities regarding educational inclusion, such as the Regional Conference on Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities (Johnsen, 2011b).

In order to give a short account of the historical dimension of the principle of inclusion, the presentation is delimited to Norwegian school history, where the principle of the inclusive school is situated in relation to the two other highly related official intentions, namely the principles of "the school for all" and "the unified school" (Johnsen, 2000; 2001b).

The compulsory school has a long tradition in Norway, dating back to King Christian VI's Decree relating to the free elementary school "for all and everybody", as it read in 1739 (Forordning, 1739). What kind of school was this in the beginning? According to official documents and scattered pieces of information from these early years, the main intention seems to have been to establish schools in every local community so that "all and everybody, even the poorest of children, would receive sufficient education". While the term "sufficient education" primarily meant reading and the acquisition of Christian religious knowledge, the Decree provided additional possibilities of teaching pupils writing and arithmetic if the parents so desired. Since its establishment the Norwegian compulsory school has been the object of wave after wave of different and at times contradictory ideologies, legislation and practices. Concerning this very first statement about "the school for all", the much later school laws of 1889, the "People's School Laws" (compulsory primary school. Lov om Folkeskolen) indicated that at this point in time, the authorities had noticed that a certain number of children would not manage to cope with the new and much more sophisticated curriculum that contained a number of school subjects corresponding to those taught at the private payment schools at that time. Confronted with the choice between the school for all children or for those only that were able to fulfil the requirements of the school, the new laws represented the latter option, thus excluding children with certain characteristics or diseases from attending compulsory school. A few years prior to this event, the first Norwegian special school law had been passed. However, the concept "a school for all" reappears later.

Another concept related to the development towards inclusion is the principle of the unified school, which came to play a prominent role in Norwegian school development. The principle dates back to the early nineteenth century, with Frederik Moltke Bugge (1806–1853) as the first scholar to make a holistic design for a Norwegian educational system from elementary to university level. He brought the ideas home from continental Europe and the Prussian educator and philosopher Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835). Bugge's plan for the unified school was a systematic organisation of all levels of education within a national framework. His plans had little to do with what is today called educa-

tional equality. Indeed, at this time the great majority of pupils attended only elementary schools financed by the municipalities, whereas children of a small number of wealthier families went to private elementary schools and from there moved on to higher education (Johnsen, 2000). It was not until the turn of the next century that the principle of the unified school came to mean that pupils from all societal levels were expected to go to the same school (Dokka, 1974; 1983; Høigård and Ruge, 1971; Johnsen, 2000). During the twentieth century the content of the principle of the unified school was further expanded. In the nineteen-seventies the concept of the unified school came to include all pupils regardless of economic or social status, geographical location, cultural background, gender or ability (Østvold, 1975). With the last decade's rapid change towards an internationalised society, the principle is again being challenged in the direction of new extensions, including multi-linguism and multi-culturalism.

From the 1960s on, the concept of the "school for all" reappeared in Norway, only now with focus on children with special needs. In the years that followed, public information and debate were advocated by parents, special needs educators and politicians. It led to changes in legislation, national curricula and school practices. Decentralisation to local communities was also an international trend. Institutionalisation of persons with disabilities was seriously questioned in Denmark and Sweden in the 1960s. Thus, when the two pioneers Niels Bank-Mikkelsen and Bengt Nirje presented the principle of normalisation in the USA, it soon became an international principle. (Bank-Mikkelsen, 1980; Kirkebæk, 2001; Johnsen, 2001a; Nirje, 1980; Wolfensberger, 1980). Nirje described the principle in the following way:

> Normalization means sharing a normal rhythm of the day, with privacy, activities, and mutual responsibilities; a normal rhythm of the week, with a home to live in, a school or work to go to, and leisure time with a modicum of social interaction; a normal rhythm of the year, with the changing modes and ways of life and of family and community customs as experienced in the different seasons of the year (Nirje, 1980:32–33).

A huge wave of system criticism swept over international discourse, focusing on the vulnerability of institutions to neglect, abuse and cover up, and of isolated living conditions for children and adults with disabilities. The wave hit institutions for persons with disabilities on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean hard, as it also did with orphanages. In Norway, journalists revealed harsh and unethical conditions for children with intellectual challenges. Parents started to organise in NGOs (nongovernmental organisations). NFU – Norwegian Association for People with Developmental Disabilities, which was founded in 1967, had and

has on their main agenda equal rights, a comprehensive local school for all and inclusion. Concerning education, Norway fronted the Nordic turn towards normalisation starting with the so-called Blom Report (KUF, 1970). It introduced the principle of integration explicitly and stated the following three criteria:

a) Belongingness in a social community
b) Participation in the benefits of the community
c) Shared responsibility for tasks and commitments

As a consequence of this work, the third and final Norwegian special school law was abolished, and matters of special education were integrated into the Educational Act in 1975. The new main principle was that all children were to fall under the same educational act. The consequences of the principle were described in more detail in the Act of 1969/75 and in the current act (Education Act; 1969/75; 1999/05). Three pillars in Norwegian education acts and national curricula after the turn in 1975 outlined the principle of the school for all in the local community for all. Those are:

1) The school shall have room for everybody and teachers must therefore have an eye for each individual learner. The mode of teaching must not only be adapted to subject and content, but also to age and maturity, the individual learner and the mixed abilities of the entire class (L, 1997:35)

This passage focuses on the right for all children to attend their own local regular school. The right was stated in the Educational Act (1969/75. See also Educational Act, 1999/2005, section13–1).

2) Teaching is to be adapted to the abilities and aptitudes of individual pupils, apprentices and trainees (Educational Act, 1999/2005, section1–2)

3) Pupils who either do not or are unable to benefit satisfactorily from ordinary instruction have the right to receive special education (Educational Act, 1999/2005, section 5–1).

The current Educational Act (1999/2005) is related to primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education, including adult education within the level of primary- and lower secondary education. It also contains the same rights and additional resources for special needs education at preschool age. In addition to the core principles quoted above, the Act describes special regulations, such as securing the right to use Braille writing system. A few minority languages have their own national curricula, such as sign language and the Sami languages.

Aspects of the abovementioned educational principles became the focus of educational debate in Norway as well as internationally under several headings, such as comprehensive schools, mixed-ability teaching, mainstreaming, normalisation and integration. The current shift of terminology to the concept and principle of inclusion may be seen as a criticism of tendencies in educational integration policies. The criticism focused on what was seen as half-hearted efforts when local ordinary schools were opened only to pupils with certain types of special needs or when special classes or "special schools" were organised as special units within ordinary schools. Some main ideas behind the principle of the inclusive school may be described in the following way:

- Every child belongs to her or his local community and to an ordinary class or group
- The school day is organised with a great amount of co-operative learning tasks, educational differentiation and flexibility with regard to content choice
- Teachers and special needs educators co-operate. They have knowledge of general, special and individual learning strategies and tutoring needs, and how to facilitate and appreciate the plurality of individual differences when organising class activities.

To sum up, the two principles of the school for all and the unified school with their continuous changing conceptual content, and current principle of the inclusive school, may be seen in many respects as similar to one another. The main issues of the three principles are that every person has the equal right to receive meaningful and individually adapted education in their local community along with other citizens. The specific focus in this article, as in the three anthologies, is on the rights of individuals with disabilities and special educational needs.

On the basis of this summary review of international and historical contexts out of which the concept of inclusion has emerged, it is timely to repeat the questions: What is inclusion, what encompasses the concept, and which aspects of it are in focus in the international comparative research project presented here? As indicated above, the concept of inclusion was introduced and gained recognition as criticism of what was described above as half-hearted efforts when it came to interpretation as well as implementation of former similar concepts such as integration and the school for all. It may be assumed that this criticism was a reason for pointing out in the Salamanca Statement that: "It is not our education systems that have the right to certain children. It is school

system of a country that must be adjusted to meet the needs of all children" (UNESCO, 1994). This point illustrates the essence of the principle of inclusion and also connects the concept of educational inclusion to the previously described normalisation principle.

Sadly, an international literature review of articles on inclusion would reveal the same limitations to the application of this newest concept as to those it was meant to replace. Although the principle of inclusion (UNESCO, 1994; UN, 2006) is accepted by a large majority of governments, questions about how this new principle is interpreted and implemented on the national level as well as in local schools have not yet found satisfactory answers, in spite of a large number of innovation- and research projects worldwide. Julia Kristeva (2008) warns against pitfalls and backwards interpretations of the relationship between people with disabilities and the principle of social inclusion. Such interpretations, she argues, involve a reductionist ideology that renounces disabilities and needs for special education and other kinds of support while at the same time praising the way disability almost disappears by giving the persons with disabilities what she calls "greater social responsibility". She argues that behind this attitude is a desire for economic gain.

In view of the huge difference in economic and other resources and frame factors between countries and continents, reductionist interpretations and limited implementations are not surprising. School history shows that it may take years, decades and even centuries to realise educational principles. This also applies to Norway, where although educational legislation favours the inclusive school, there is a serious gap between these official aims and actual practices. Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that practicing the principle of inclusion is hard with current increasing competition with other educational intentions in the race towards attaining "the best school system" in Europe or the world. Opening school to all children with the fundamental aim of supporting each pupil in a meaningful learning process demands a radical change from deep-rooted academic and competitive educational traditions (Johnsen, 2000; 2011a). In light of international discourse and current answers to questions regarding how the principle of inclusion is understood and what it encompasses, it is fair to say that inclusion is understood differently on different levels from official aims to practices or lack of practices in the local school.

What aspects of inclusion are in focus in the international comparative research project presented here? Professor Ljiljana Igrić, who is the main project coordinator in the WB 04/06 project on behalf of the University of Zagreb,

has adopted a conceptual description which is an extension of UNESCO's Salamanca statement (1994) and in line with current description of inclusive education on UNESCO's home page, as quoted above (2009). She characterises the inclusive school as a place where everyone belongs, is accepted, supports, and is supported by his/her peers and other members of the school community in the course of having his/her educational needs met (Stainback and Stainback, 1990, in Johnsen, in press, 2013). This understanding of educational inclusion is in line with the introductory clarification of the principle presented in the common WB 04/06 project plan, which is presented in Part Four of this book (Johnsen, 2013c). When considered together, the two statements or conceptual descriptions are complementary and they are also in accordance with UNESCO's current outlines of the inclusion principle. They support and supplement each other with additional nuances. The introductory project description of inclusion is as follows:

> Educational inclusion is seen as the global policy prescribing development towards a local regular school that welcomes all children with their unique individual characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs; all children with and without special needs and disabilities; a school combating discriminatory attitudes, and offering a meaningful and individually adapted education to every pupil within the community of the class (Frederickson & Cline, 2002; Johnsen, 2000; 2007; 2013c; UNESCO, 1994).

All six countries participating in the WB 06/04 project; Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Norway, Serbia and Slovenia; have incorporated the principle of inclusion in their educational laws in different ways and at different times. The six countries differ regarding official emphasis and how far the implementation process has come. However, a common trait is, that none of the countries have reached full inclusion in official intentions or practice yet; a trait that these countries share with the rest of the world. The concept of 'towards inclusion' is therefore fundamental to this joint research project. "Towards inclusion" is a concept that admits the lack of satisfactory realisation of inclusion, and emphasises the process towards fulfilling the principle in school practices; the development towards the inclusive school. Moreover, the main focus of the joint project is research on practices.

The perspective towards inclusion is thus the primary focus underlying the joint research process presented and discussed in the three interconnected anthologies. Aiming towards inclusion is the normative perspective for 1) the joint descriptive research process, 2) the common capacity building in research methodology, theory and former studies related to inclusive practices, and

3) the emphasis on cooperation between regular teachers and special needs educators, also taking into account the history and development of higher education within these two related professional and research disciplines.

The next topic that needs introduction and clarification is the joint upgrading and further development of research competence, paying special attention to the first part of the research process; preparing and presenting a research plan.

Development of research competence

Development of research competence is a matter of individual education as well as institution building. This section gives an introduction to institution building with focus on establishment and development of universities, research disciplines and methodology. Norwegian and European university development is in focus, but with particular attention on the seven universities in the WB 06/04 project; the universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo.

Knowledge about research institution building in the past is an important source of reflection. Part Two, *Doctoral Programmes in Past and Future*, contains historical articles that shed light on the establishment and development of European universities and doctoral degrees, and more specifically the development of education and special needs education as research disciplines. Two articles focus on the Norwegian development from different points of departure and applying different sources. Thus, an article presenting an interview study of four professors with many years of experience as doctoral researchers and as subsequent doctoral supervisors and adjudication committee members, adds interesting in-depth information to a historical text study of similar historical topics. In a third article glimpses into European university history are presented in a joint contribution of colleagues on behalf of the seven participating universities in the WB 06/04 project.

Part Two is in this way directly related to one of the three main goals of the WB 06/04 project mentioned above, which is about sharing knowledge and experiences related to the Bologna Process. This was a continuation of a former cooperation project (SØE 06/02) between the universities of Tuzla, Sarajevo and Oslo. In the WB 06/04 project the information exchange was continued and extended to all the participating universities. Over the years, while the two projects were formally taking place, all seven universities went through transition processes concerning the structure and content of higher education related

to the European Bologna Process. These processes are still on-going (Bologna Declaration, 1999; The Official Bologna Process Website July 2007 – June 2010). During the later project, time was allocated for these discussions at the workshops, which rotated among the universities and was held each semester. The historical articles in Part Two are initiated and inspired by these discussions.

Research project preparation

Development of research competence is, of course, closely connected with the ability to prepare and present a high quality research plan. This section draws attention to the researcher and the research project, whether it is an individual contribution or a cooperative project. When it comes to development of individual research competence, the issue of "studying abroad" is addressed, specifically when it comes to opportunities and barriers for foreign applicants to Norwegian PhD studies and research projects.

Regarding international research at Norwegian universities, there is a need for a broad and thorough understanding of the opportunities and barriers encountered by international or non-Norwegian researchers and PhD applicants. Generally speaking, research and research methodology are undergoing rapidly accelerating developments. This is also the case within the educational sciences. Therefore continuous upgrading is an obligatory part of every researcher's capacity building, as it also was for all of us who took part in the WB 06/04 project. Research discourses and development take place on different levels, including national and local levels related to specific sciences and universities. Thus, there are certain explicit as well as implicit particularities within the local research traditions and discourse in Norway and at the University of Oslo as well, including at the Faculty of Educational Sciences. It may be difficult enough to be socialized into general and local research discourse for Norwegian students and research candidates. But it is even more challenging for foreign researchers and PhD applicants who are socialized within other local traditions and, in addition, do not master Norwegian language. Many years of experience working with Master students and PhD research fellows at UiO coming from different countries and continents has made me aware of this challenge. At the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO, there have been steady improvements when it comes to information in English during the last few years. However, new information still tends to be published later and with fewer details than in the university's local language. Part Three in this book is an

attempt to cover the gap regarding access to information as well as contribute to general capacity building for international benefit. It is also an effort to provoke reflection upon the continuously changing field of research through history and, as it is also assumed to be, in the future. Three articles in this part consist of examples of successful research plans to PhD and Post Doc scholarships within different areas of education and special needs education. (Biseth, 2013; Damşa, 2013; Melby-Lervåg, 2013). The three articles represent a selection among the few successful research applications in the English language at our Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO, since they are difficult to find, while it is easier to gain access to successful research applications in the Norwegian language. In addition, Part Four contains a shortened version of the joint plan for the project *Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building: Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo* (WB 06/04), with a focus on international comparative classroom studies towards inclusion. This part also contains individual research plans made by each of the seven participating universities based on the joint project plan.

However, the first article in Part Three is based on an interview study with senior researchers and successful international PhD applicants. The intention of this study was to shed light on possibilities, dilemmas and challenges related to development and presentation of research plans (Johnsen, 2013a).Thus, the article may be seen as an addition to the general advices found in research handbooks.

Theory or philosophy of science is a powerful tool for systematic reflections and argumentation for methodological choices in relation to research topics. Tone Kvernbekk (2013a and b) gives an introduction to the philosophy of science with two articles in this first part of the book. We will return to these contributions at the end of this article.

The structure of the book

Previously, the articles in this book have been introduced in connection with the two main target groups for the book, who are 1) international researchers and research applicants to Norwegian universities and other research institutions, and 2) researchers applying for or taking part in international cooperation projects. The articles have also been situated in relation to the three main goals of the European WB 06/04 research cooperation project.

As mentioned, the focus in this first anthology is on the preparatory steps leading up to the beginning of a research process. The book is divided into four parts:

Part One contains three articles, whereof this is the first. The next two articles provide an introduction to theory of science and discuss a selection of essential philosophical aspects related to educational research.

Part Two contains a discussion of the emergence and development of doctoral programmes from medieval to present time with a glance at further developments. The part consists of three articles and an introduction.

Part Three focuses on how to prepare and present research plans through an article based on interviews with senior researchers and PhD research fellows. Three examples of successful research plans within the educational sciences are presented.

Part Four is devoted to the WB 06/04 project containing eight research plans; one joint plan for the common project and seven individual project plans related to the common plan, one from each of the cooperating universities. The title of the joint research project is *International Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion*.

Philosophy of educational research

What is science and research? And what characterizes educational research? These questions lie behind the simpler questions we may ask ourselves in the heat of research preparation or in the middle of a research cooperation process: "Is it worth it to spend so much time on this activity? Does this study lead to more applicable knowledge about education?" Such questions may be even more intrusive today than forty years ago when I was preparing my first study, since the landscape of research methodology has become much more diversified than in my student years. Methodological approaches which then seemed self-evident may now stand out as one of several options. As an example, qualitative methodologies were tried out for the first time by some of the universities in the WB 06/04 project, which had long traditions within quantitative methodology. The growing complexity in the field of educational research calls for analysis of different scientific options with its possibilities and limitations. The meaning and applicability of the key aspects constituting the scientific quality of a research project need to be examined.

In the two following articles Tone Kvernbekk (2013a and b) focuses the attention on a selection of key concepts within the educational sciences; categorization, justification and the distinction between observation and theory. She cites different interpretations and applications and offers a critical analysis

of their applicability and limitations. The concept of evidence- based practice has currently become a trade mark of different educational programmes and approaches, however, not without controversy among researchers as well as practitioners. Kvernbekk clarifies a number of the main discussions related to the concept in her second article.

References

Bakhtin, M. (1986). *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Bank-Mikkelsen, N. (1980). Denmark. In R. Flynn & K. Nitsch (Eds.). *Normalization, Social Integration, and Community Services* (pp. 51–70). Austin, Texas: PRO-ED.

Biseth, H. (2013). Educators as Custodians of Democracy? A Comparative Investigation of Multicultural School Environments in the Scandinavian Capitals. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.*). Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans*.Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Buber, M. (1947). *Between Man & Man*. London: The Fontana Library.

Damşa, C. (2013). Creating Knowledge through Artefact-Oriented Collaboration: Mechanisms, Characteristics and Technological Support. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.*). Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Dokka, H-J. (1974). Enhetsskoleproblemet i den norske skoles historie. (The Unified Shool Problem in Norwegian Educational History). Article in *Kirke og kultur* no.10/1974.

Dokka, H-J. (1983). Enhetsskolevedtaket av 1920 – dets historiske og politiske bakgrunn. (The Unified School decision in 1920 – Historical and political Background). Article in K. Jordheim. (Ed.). *Skolen. Årbok for norsk skolehistorie*. NKS-forlaget.

Education Act (1969) with amendments.

Education Act (1999). Act Relating to Primary and Secondary Education. Last amended 17 June 2005.

Forordning om Skolerne paa Landet i Norge, og hvad Klokkerne og Skoleholderne derfor maa nyde. 1739.

Frederickson, N. & Cline, T. (2002). *Special Education Needs, Inclusion and Diversity*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/inclusion

http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/bld.html?id=298. Visited 20.04.2013.

http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/

http://www.health.vic.gov.au/agedcare/maintaining/countusin/inclusion.htm. Last updated 20. December 2011.

Høigard, E. & Ruge, H. (1971). *Den norske skoles historie*. (History of Norwegian Education). Oslo: Cappelens forlag.

Johnsen, B. H. (2000). *Et historisk perspektiv på ideene om en skole for alle (An Historical Perspective on Ideas about a School for All*). Oslo: Unipub.

Johnsen, B. H. (2001a). Educational Policies and Debate concerning the School for All and Special Needs Education. In B. H. Johnsen & M. D. Skjørten (Eds.). *Education – Special Needs Education. An Introduction* (pp.155–172). Oslo: Unipub.

Johnsen, B. H. (2001b). Introduction to the History of Special Needs Education towards Inclusion. A Norwegian and European Context. In B. H. Johnsen & M. D. Skjørten (Eds.). *Education – Special Needs Education. An Introduction* (pp.133–154). Oslo: Unipub.

Johnsen, B. H. (2007). *The Classroom towards Inclusion – Good Examples and Difficult Dilemmas*. Report from a series of workshops in Bosnian schools. Sarajevo: Connectum.

Johnsen, B. H. (2011a). Julia Kristeva, sårbarhetens politikk og spesialpedagogikkens rolle i den norske skole (Julia Kristeva, the Policy of Vulnerability and the Role of Special Needs Education in the Norwegian School). *Tidsskriftet FoU i praksis* 5(1), 67–78.

Johnsen, B. H. (2011b). *Sector Reforms on Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in Norway*. Invited presentation on the Regional Conference on Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities. Organized by: UNICEF Regional Office for CEECIS & UNICEF Country Office in the Russian Federation, 27–29 September, 2011, Courtyard by Marriott, Moscow.

Johnsen, B. H. (2013a). Developing and Writing a Research Plan. Possibilities and Barriers. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.*). Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Johnsen, B. H. (in press 2013b). *A Curricular Approach to Inclusive Education. Some Thoughts concerning Practice, Innovation and Research*. Zagreb.

Johnsen, B. H. (2013c). Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion. Joint Research Plan for Cooperation between the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans*.Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Kirkebæk, B. (2001). *Normaliseringens periode* (The Period of Normalisation). Holte, DK: SOCPOL.

Kristeva, J. (2008). *Brev til presidenten om mennesker med funksjonshemminger* (Letter to the President about Persons with Disabilities). Oslo: Cappelen akademisk forlag.

Kvernbekk, T. (2013a). Philosophy of Science. A short introduction to selected topics: Categorization, justification, observation and theory. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.*). Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Kvernbekk, T. (2013b). Evidence-Based Practice and Educational Research. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.*). Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

KUF. (1970). *Innstilling om lovregler for spesialundervisning m.v*. (Commissioned Report on Legislation concerning Special Education etc).

L 1997. *Læreplanverket for den 10-årige grunnskolen*. (The Curriculum for the of 10-Year Compulsory School in Norway). The Royal Ministry of Education, Research and the Church Affairs.

Lov om Folkeskolen i Kjøbstæderne. 1889.

Lov om Folkeskolen paa Landet. 1889.

Melby-Lervåg, M. (2013). Preventing Literacy Failure in Children at Risk: Effects from a Preschool Intervention on Language and Literacy. A Comparative Study of Effects from an Oral Language Intervention on Native Norwegian Speaking Children and Bilingual Minority Children. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.*). Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans*.Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Nirje, B. (1980). The Normalization Principle. In R. Flynn & K. Nitsch (Eds.). *Normalization, Social Integration, and Community Services* (pp. 31–49). Austin, Texas: PRO-ED.

Rommetveit, R. (in press 2014). On Dialogism and Scientifically Disciplined Discourse and Conversation Analysis. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Theory and Methodology in International Comparative Classroom Studie* . Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Schriewer, J. (1999). Coping with Complexity in Comparative Methodology: Issues of Social Causation and Processes of Macro-Historical Globalisation. In R. Alexander, P. Broadfoot & D. Phillips (Eds.). *Learning from Comparing. New Directions in Comparative Educational Research*. Volume one; Contexts, Classrooms and Outcomes (pp.33–72). Oxford: Symposium Books.

SØE 06/02. (2002). *Institutional Competence Building and Cooperation with Two Bosnian Universities: "Special Needs Education towards Inclusion"*. The Cooperation Programme with South-East Europe (CPSEE) 2002–2004.

The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999. THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA. Joint declaration of the European Ministers of Education. http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/Declarations/BOLOGNA_DECLARATION1.pdf.

The official Bologna Process website July 2007 – June 2010. Participating countries and organisations. http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/.

UN. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. N. Y.: United Nations.

UN. (1991). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. N.Y.: United Nations.

UN. (1994). *Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disability*. N.Y.: United Nations.

UN. (2006). *The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. New York: United Nations.

UNESCO. (1991). *Education for all I, II & III*. Jomtien, Thailand World Conference on Education for all. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2000). *The Dakar Framework for Action*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2004). *Changing Teaching Practices Using Curriculum Differentiation to Respond to Students' Diversity*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2009). *Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education*. Paris: UNESCO.

WB 04/06. (2006). Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building: Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo.

Wolfensberger, W. (1980). A Brief Overview of the Principle of Normalization. In R. Flynn & K. Nitsch (Eds.). *Normalization, Social Integration, and Community Services* (pp. 7 -30). Austin, Texas: PRO-ED.

Østvold, H. (1975). *Mål og midler i norsk skolepolitikk*. (Aims and Means in Norwegian Education Policy). Article in *Kirke og kultur* no. 1/1975.

2

Philosophy of Science

A Brief Introduction to Selected Topics: Categorization, Justification, and the Relation between Observation and Theory

Tone Kvernbekk

Introduction[2]

We have a long tradition of viewing scientific knowledge as the greatest achievement of the human mind, the epitome of rationality and reliability; or, as Ian Hacking puts it, "the crowning achievement of human reason" (1995:1). One may of course raise certain doubts about this description. Scientists basically do what we all do in our everyday lives, namely make inquiries and observations, draw inferences and construct beliefs about the world around us or certain limited aspects of it. But scientists have at their disposal a huge apparatus of normative principles as well as methodological and statistical techniques designed to help safeguard the tenability and truth of their claims and theories. Science has much stricter standards and ideals for evidence, argumentation and justification than does common sense.

Philosophy of science is not commonsensical; it is, rather, located at a fairly high level of abstraction. Paradoxically, this does not preclude it from being very applicable to commonsensical belief constructions, as I hope to demonstrate. Basically, the philosophy of science comprises what might be called

Citation of this chapter: Kvernbekk, T. (2013). Philosophy of science. A brief introduction to selected topics: Categorization, justification, and the relation between observation and theory. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 37–61/pp. 35–59 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org./10.23865/noasp.124

2 This article is a modified version of Professor Tone Kvernbekk's lecture at the first project cooperation seminar in Sarajevo, November 11, 2006.

meta-concepts – concepts that enable us to discuss science: its methods, its representations and their relation to the objects within their scope. There is an abundance of such concepts, including theory, data, induction, truth, meaning, evidence, realism, falsification, foundationalism, observation, justification, models, demarcation and hypotheses – all of which have been much debated. Needless to say, not all of these concepts are treated here. The present selection could have been infinitely larger than it is, but the topics are central and important to empirical researchers, and they straddle the infamous qualitative-quantitative distinction. The topics included here are partly meant to be tools for critical analysis, both of everyday belief constructions and scientific claims; and partly to reflect at least some of the classical topics with which all researchers are expected to be familiar. I shall begin by laying out central concepts that will be much employed in my subsequent discussion, namely the so-called observation/theory distinction and induction related to inference and interpretation.

The O/T distinction

The centrality of this distinction between observation and theory becomes evident when we recognize its close connection to questions of construct validity, operationalisation, inferences and interpretations. The main purpose of the distinction is to separate the empirical from the non-empirical, which in turn is important because they enjoy a different epistemic status. The empirical has what we call epistemic priority: data can falsify theory, but not vice versa – a principle utilized by philosopher of science Karl Popper in his falsificationism, as we shall soon see. This epistemic priority is also recognizable from everyday life: if we have a choice of what to believe, theory or data, we generally choose to believe in the data (the observation). But why do we think observation is more trustworthy than theory?

The problem of epistemic priority made it imperative to find a sound criterion for the distinction. Historically, positivists put a great deal of energy into this question. Rudolf Carnap (1936) made a sharp division between observable and non-observable attributes or properties. Observational terms, henceforth called O-terms, are terms that refer to directly observable entities, for example objects (chairs, cups), properties (blue, heavy) and relations (warmer than). In passing, it should be noted here that by "observational" is meant not only that which can be seen, but also in any sense experience. The meaning of O-terms was, according to positivists, unproblematic, as it was determined directly through sensations or experiences and therefore enjoyed a very high degree of

intersubjective agreement and certainty – two observers could easily agree on whether something is a cup and whether it is red.

Theoretical terms, henceforth called T-terms, are more difficult to handle. There seems to be two ways of understanding T-terms that exist side by side; I am going to call them the strong and weak sense, respectively.

- Strong sense: genuine T-terms refer to non-observable entities and belong to one or more scientific theory. For example, electrons, positive reinforcement or gravity.
- Weak sense: T-terms are all terms that denote non-observable entities, whether they belong to a scientific theory or not. For example, personality, boredom and thinking. It does seem that this has become the established use, a fact of some importance for the relation between theory and observation, a topic to which I will return.

Examples of typical T-terms are gravity, electron, and cause. In the social and educational sciences all our interesting phenomena are of this kind: understanding, intrinsic motivation, meaning, learning strategy, intention, self, etc. The philosophical questions concerning T-terms have always included the following: Since we cannot access them directly through sensation or experience, how do we know they exist? How can we study them, assuming they do exist? And how do the T-terms cover their meaning, since it cannot occur directly from experience?

The fate of the distinction is clear: While it cannot be drawn universally, as Carnap (1936) had envisioned, it can be drawn contextually, e.g. between observation and interpretation. This recognition changes with knowledge and technological development in a field; the tendency is that terms which used to be T-terms become O-terms. That is, the view of what is *empirical* may change. However, even if the distinction itself is problematic, the epistemic priority of data and observations remains both in science and everyday life. We tend to trust data over theory.

Induction: inferences, interpretations

Induction is a principle for making inferences. In inductive reasoning we arrive at conclusions that are more or less probable. We reason from the known to the unknown, from the seen to the unseen. Such reasoning is of course much used in both science and everyday life. Many inductive inferences may be recognized by such linguistic formulations as “in general”, “for the most part”, “most often”, “regularly”, etc. Below are examples of inductive reasoning. All

inductive conclusions merit inquiry or mild criticism; they may be wrong even if the premises are correct.

- From particular to general (generalizations). In commonsensical belief formation such inferences can be hasty or unrestrained, maybe based on one or two examples: Having met one dour Norwegian, one can inductively infer that all Norwegians are dour. In science, methodology helps harness such inferences
- From sample to population (a subcategory of generalization)
- From particular to particular. For example, one has met a child and inductively infers that the mother must be….
- Future. This strategy worked well in 5th grade this year, so it will work next year, too
- From known correlations to causal connections
- From O-terms to T-terms. One has observed behaviour x, y, z in a student and infers that the student is hyper-motivated (or whatever). This is an example of a single person's interpretation involving an attribution of an unobservable trait. The attribution may be wrong even if the observations are correct. Measurement is another version of this kind of inference, addressing as it does the problem of which indicators we should use to tap the concept we are investigating. The problem of construct validity concerns how we justify that our indicators are adequate.

Common to all forms of inductive reasoning is that they are connected to probability, not certainty. All inductive conclusions must therefore be justified and argued for.

Categorization

Categorization is an important ingredient in theorizing and treatment of data. No phenomena ever come labelled, especially not in research on complex social and educational phenomena.

A category is a grouping of things, phenomena or entities that are somehow considered to be equivalent. Everyday categorization often proceeds on two presuppositions: some *similarity* between the things that are grouped together and some properties that form *discontinuities* that we perceive as natural (e.g. the difference between cats and dogs). The *similarity* in question may be observable or wholly abstract – note the importance of a theoretical background to decide what the basis for the equivalence is to be.

Categories are constructed for several reasons. We use categorization to organize data; to partition large phenomena into more finely grained ones; and to gain overview, structure and coherence. Categorization allows the researcher to simplify things and thereby be able to handle masses of data. There is disagreement among philosophers whether categories can be true or false or whether we can only assess them in terms of their adequacy for our purpose (see e.g. Suppe, 1989, ch. 7, for discussion and historical overview).

Categories are generally organized in systems (taxonomies). Often, but not always, they are connected by class inclusion. This way of thinking is very old, coming as it does from Aristotle. Such taxonomies have become part of everyday thinking and are easily recognized: Fifi (a particular dog with a pink collar) is a member of the class of greyhounds; greyhounds are members of the class of dogs; dogs belong to the class of canines; canines are mammals; mammals are living creatures. Such systems proceed from the concrete to the more general and inclusive. They aptly illustrate the fact that concepts have different levels of generality: canine is a more general concept than dog, dog is more general than greyhound. The more general the concept is, the more individuals are subsumed under it. Researchers are well advised to be clear about which level of generality at which they wish to operate and discuss.

Aristotle (384–322 B.C.) has provided us with what has become known as the classical theory of categorization (Aristotle, 1972). He tried to distinguish "natural" from "artificial" categories, and much philosophical work has since then been spent on determining what is natural (the nature of natural kinds). But not even natural kinds are given; sometimes re-classifications happen (we thought x was an A, but it turned out to be a B).

If a taxonomy is not natural, then it is artificial. Artificial taxonomies are constrained by their usefulness in relation to some purpose. But the same requirements hold for artificial as for natural taxonomies, according to Aristotle:

- Taxonomies should be *exhaustive*: All objects in a main category must be placed in one of the subcategories. For example, all canines must be placed in the subcategories of dogs, wolves, foxes. If there should be a canine animal that does not fit into one of the subcategories, the taxonomy would be criticized for failing
- *Mutual exclusiveness*: All objects should belong to *one* category only. Thus a canine is either a dog or a wolf or a fox, as the same animal cannot be viewed as belonging to two or more categories at the same time (which may make hybrids tough cases)

- *Criterion*: The basis for dividing objects must be clear (e.g. colour, size, shape, function) with respect to *what* makes the objects similar. It can of course be a combination of criteria, and not just one. For example, if we categorize on the basis of colour, all green things are placed into one category, all red things in another, etc. If our criterion is shape, we carve up the world in a different way and a different pattern emerges; there are circles in one group, triangles in another, etc. Thus, the choice of criterion is important and researchers would do well to be highly aware of this

Needless to say, Aristotle's requirements are very strict and few if any taxonomies in the social sciences satisfy them. Nevertheless, he reminds us of the importance of justifying why we group things (and data) the way we do, and that category systems, or taxonomies, can be made in many different ways.

As suggested above, Aristotle maintains that only a limited number of classes or categories are natural. Natural classes have a form, and essential nature, an essence – artificial classes do not. This form, or essence, is eternal and unchanging, according to Aristotle. Thinking in terms of essences is interesting for many reasons, not least to criticize cases of misuse or avoid misusing it oneself. An instructive example is Rousseau's description of Sophie in *Emile* (1762/1984), where he states that the essence of woman is to be man's delight – it is the law of nature, as he puts it, and so it cannot be changed.

But another reason is its connection to modern definition theory (e.g. Popper, 2007; Scheffler, 1974). Essences are specified in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. The necessary conditions make up the definition of something; they are necessary for something's being what it is. Such conditions are individually necessary, and together they are sufficient for something's being what it is. For example, we observe a living creature and in order to define it as, say, a bird, we look at the necessary conditions for being a bird: having feathers, laying eggs, and flying. While colour, number of eyes, shape of beak, etc. are also properties of birds, they do not make a bird what it is.

Stating that a property is necessary is to say that a living creature *must* have it in order to be considered a bird. If it lacks this one property, it cannot be defined as a bird. This is a philosophical approach to categorization with a strong normative touch to it. It is very precise, but also problematic. Many items and objects may fall outside a category. For example, we see that neither ostriches nor penguins count as birds according to this approach. Being flightless, they fail to satisfy one of the necessary properties of "birdhood".

At the same time, a selection of properties that are to be viewed as necessary

is vital. Not all properties of an object can be necessary, because if they were, then every single object would be a category of its own and no simplification, organization, overview or easy handling can be obtained. This is why a criterion for categorization is needed in order to help us make reasonable arguments about the properties that should be regarded as necessary. But needless to say, there is hardly one correct or self-evident answer to this question.

While Aristotle's theory of categorization is normative – worldly materials simply do not satisfy the ideals of mutual exclusiveness and exhaustiveness – the American psychologist Eleanor Rosch (1978) has conducted a number of empirical inquiries into what people *actually* do when they categorize, suggesting that in a fundamental sense categorization is done on the basis of psychological principles:

- To gather the most possible information with the least possible cognitive effort. That is, we reduce differences to manageable proportions; a principle we also recognize as originating in Aristotle's theory
- The world is perceived as structured or ordered at the outset, not as random or unpredictable. That is, categories are applied already when we perceive the world. This allows us to recognize patterns, or sometimes even "see" patterns where none exist.

Categories, Rosch says, are defined by a prototype: the most typical one. People tend to view sparrows as more typical birds than hens, and ostriches are atypical. But they are still birds!

Like Aristotle, Rosch points out that concepts or classes have different levels of generality. The level that we usually refer to is called the *basic level*. This notion may be combined with an Aristotelian way of thinking; for example, dog is the basic category, with subcategories of poodles, German shepherds and cocker spaniels, and a larger category of dog is canines. Chair is a basic category, subcategories are kitchen chairs and barstools, and the larger category is furniture. What is important for any researcher to consider here is the level of generality and precision: What does my project need or desire? Such choices need to be consciously made and maintained, because if Rosch is right, we will automatically slide into the basic category level unless we are conscious of what we are doing.

The main difference from Aristotle to be noted here is that Rosch's mapping indicates that categories have no clear, fixed boundaries. On the contrary, we group objects by typicality and their contrast with other objects, and the result

is that we have no exhaustive categories. It is a more flexible way of thinking, although not as precise as the Aristotelian system.

Interestingly, in Rosch's way of thinking, it becomes clear how categories are connected to induction. It is of course much easier to generalize if a phenomenon is typical or representative. Nevertheless, there is a pitfall lurking here, because research also shows that we tend to believe that phenomena, situations, individuals or behaviours are more representative than they actually are – another point of which researchers need to be aware.

Category systems are not theory-exclusive. That means that the same system can be used with different theories. Categorization is an important tool in theory construction, in domains where there is little theory as well as in theory testing. But one should be aware that categories may have a difficult epistemic status: Do they have an empirical basis or not? How should we judge their adequacy?

Justification

Justification is one of the most central concepts of epistemology, and it lies at the heart of all scientific activity. Justification is concerned with our understanding of truth; how we support our claims and how we evaluate the reasons or the evidence we present to support our claims and theories.

Knowledge and evidence

I shall begin by presenting the standard definition of the term *knowledge*. This definition dates back to one of Plato's dialogues in *Theaetetus*, and has withstood most onslaughts to the degree that it has passed into our everyday understanding of what it means to know something as opposed to believe something (Plato, 1987). The classical definition concerns propositional knowledge, that is *knowledge that*, not knowledge *how* (Dancy, 1994).

Plato defines knowledge as *justified true belief*. This is called a tripartite definition, since it contains three items. This may seem relatively simple, but when unpacked it reveals several complex assumptions about truth, evidence and the certainty of our claims and representations.

Basically, the definition says that person A knows something (x) if and only if the following conditions are met:

- X is true
- A believes that X
- A is justified (has good reasons or evidence) in believing X

All three conditions are necessary. If one of them is not satisfied, we cannot say that we know x, but we may say that we believe it. Condition 3, the evidence condition, is there for at least two reasons. First, it was important for Plato to distinguish between knowledge and belief; second and it was important to nail down the principle that a belief is not justified simply by being true (that would make a lucky guess count as knowledge, and Plato wanted to rule that out). Hence, we have a condition that requires evidence, reasons, data, and arguments.

In science, this condition is to be taken much more seriously than in everyday life. Scientific claims to knowledge require much higher standards than do common sense. This is also an ethical point: Researchers should not deceive their audiences. When researchers claim to know something, they are implicitly saying: "Trust me that this is so, the world is like this".

The truth condition states that in order for us to know something, for example X, then X must be true. If X should turn out to be false, we can no longer claim to know, but we can say that we *thought* we knew but were mistaken. The truth condition makes knowledge incompatible with mistakes, thus setting a high standard indeed. It commits us to the existence of a given state of affairs in the world, the something that we claim to know ("this is how it is"). However, truth and absolute certainty is not the same thing. Science no longer deals in certainty, but in probabilities. Believing that a theory is true is not the same as believing that we can be certain that we have found the truth. Truth and fallibility are therefore nicely compatible entities (Scheffler, 1983). There is always the possibility that we might be wrong.

What does it mean to say of a claim that it is true? That depends on which theory of truth one employs. There are at least 6 or 7 such theories. However, the correspondence theory of truth is frequently simply assumed. According to this theory, truth is a kind of relationship between (linguistic) claims and some aspect of the world. A claim is true if it describes a certain state of affairs the way this state of affairs actually is (Kirkham, 1997), meaning a claim is true if it corresponds to some fact in the world. So the claim "there is a cup on my desk" is made true by the fact that there actually is a cup on my desk. The world itself makes our beliefs true or false, and presumably also constrains the beliefs that we construct about it. I think the correspondence theory is the everyday

theory of truth; this is how we learn to think about truth and falsity when growing up. Of course, much philosophical criticism has been levelled at this theory. For example, how do we know there is a correspondence between belief and fact? This requires making a comparison between them, which in turn demands access to both sides. However, we only have access to the fact (the world) through the belief that the fact is supposed to correspond with – and thus we end up in a vicious circle. Nevertheless, I believe that the correspondence theory should not be discarded for the reason that it captures what researchers try to do, namely talk about how real phenomena are, behave or change (see Kvernbekk, 2007, for a discussion).

For many years, the coherence theory of truth has been hailed as the most sensible theory of truth in the social sciences. This theory states that a belief is true if it is part of a coherent system of beliefs. There is no correspondence with any phenomenon involved, but rather the internal state of a belief system (Kirkham, 1997). It is important to note that while this theory defines truth for the individual parts in a system, it says nothing about the truth value of the system as a whole. Nor is it entirely clear what *coherence* means, except that it should not be identified with truth, since that would render even this theory viciously circular (a belief is true because it is true). Coherence theorists differ in their claims as to how strong and strict the coherence must be (see Dancy, 1994, for an overview).

One final theory of truth to be mentioned here is the instrumental theory of truth, also called the pragmatist theory of truth. According to this theory, a belief is true if it "works"; that is, if it is useful and effective in our interactions with the material and social world. Objections have been raised regarding both this theory and the coherence theory, as it has been pointed out that swindlers' stories and lies may be beautifully coherent and work nicely to deceive people – and yet simultaneously be untrue. It should be noted that this objection presupposes the correspondence theory of truth, claiming that lies are untrue because they do *not* describe the world as it actually is.

We see already that even the first condition of the tripartite definition of knowledge causes us problems. Some philosophers have given up the truth condition and settled for the evidence condition instead – this is in reality what e.g. John Dewey (e.g. 1929/1990) did. But let us look more closely at this condition.

Evidence and justification are intimately linked, since we justify claims by providing evidence for them. Questions in the form of "how do you know this" and "why should I believe this theory" are requirements for evidence. As sug-

gested above, this condition is at least partly based on the idea that knowledge should be more than just true belief, since that would make even lucky guesses count as knowledge. Versions of this are well known from everyday life, as when we take our ailments to a medical doctor and want her diagnosis of us to be based on knowledge and reliable tests rather than on guesses that just happen to be true. But it is not only a matter of providing evidence or reasons, either. It is equally important to evaluate both the quality and the degree of evidence provided for a claim; this is especially important in scientific contexts where people are generally expected to be critical thinkers. Not just anything may be accepted as evidence and one must be able to distinguish between good and bad reasons for a claim.

In science, evidence mostly comes in the form of empirical data, reasons, and arguments. Some ideas about evidence are very old, such as evidence given by humans in the form of witnesses, testimony or authority. There has been an interesting historical change here: nowadays, arguments from sources of authority are considered a fallacy. In the course of history ideas were introduced about evidence provided by objects; evidence that came from signs or indications (Hacking, 1975). Indications tie in nicely with O-terms: they indicate something else, they point beyond themselves. They are not private experiences, but publicly or intersubjectively accessible. And, as we can see, in pointing beyond themselves indications form the basis of inductive inferences.

It is important to be precise about *what* one wants evidence for, since the *what* largely determines what can count as evidence. Do I want evidence for a correlation? A causal connection? A generalization? A certain interpretation of some philosophical doctrine? Support for a normative conclusion? What sort of data or arguments is needed? Will anecdotal evidence do? Must I look for textual evidence? It is sometimes hard to say what evidence is required, especially when non-occurrences are vital evidence, as is the case with for example causal inferences. Good research designs and methodological awareness may help us here.

What about the belief condition? According to Jonathan Dancy (1994), this condition is minimal; it states that if we know something, we thereby also believe it. But not the other way around! Beliefs have no inherent truth condition, and one may suspect that we nowadays make a less defined separation between knowledge and belief, although we still find the distinction an integral element of our everyday language. However, constructivists such as e.g. Ernst von Glasersfeld (1984) hardly make the distinction anymore and call "every-

thing" knowledge. Any combination or re-combination of concepts constitutes knowledge, he says, and no evidence or justification is needed to adopt one such combination over another. There is no correct, no incorrect, no right, no wrong. This view is interesting to juxtapose to Plato's original definition: only the belief condition is left to define knowledge, as both truth and evidence conditions have disappeared. If this is the case, why do we accept one "knowledge combination" and not the other? According to von Glasersfeld, this is a matter for social negotiations among researchers (and perhaps other stakeholders). This move effectively undermines the role of evidence and reasons in scientific activity, and should in my opinion be resisted. Acceptance of theories should be more than a question of power and negotiations.

Foundationalism and non-foundationalism

One way of answering the question "how do you know that" is called foundationalism. It is mainly designed to solve the problem of infinite regress. The concept regress is famously expressed by among others postmodernist Jean-François Lyotard, paraphrased here as: "How do know that? By this proof. And how do you prove the proof? By another proof. And how do you prove that…?" (Lyotard, 1984). Infinite regresses and vicious circles are generally disliked by philosophers, since they both fail to justify a conclusion. Foundationalism is a way of stopping the infinite regress and, hence, of providing an answer to the question: "How do you know that?"

Foundationalism is an epistemological doctrine that categorizes all beliefs into two groups: those that need support from other beliefs and those that do not (Dancy, 1994). There is, in other words, a fundamental asymmetry between types of beliefs; a distinction between basic and non-basic beliefs, those that need justification and those that provide it.

So, what kind of beliefs does it take to stop the regress?

- Beliefs that are justified by something other than beliefs, e.g. by sense experiences
- Self-justifying beliefs
- Beliefs that need no justification

All these belief types are foundational. They comprise the "bedrock" of our belief systems, the ground upon which all other beliefs are built, and these other beliefs are justified because the "bedrock" provides the justification. Founda-

tionalism comes in different versions, the best known of these being the empiricist. This is also the most interesting version because it is so strongly similar to the commonsensical way of thinking; that is, the commonsensical way of thinking is empiricist in this particular respect, working in the following manner: After hearing a number of questions such as "How do you know that…?", one finally says: "Because I saw it with my own eyes". This is sense experience as bedrock, either one's own senses or those of other witnesses. There is a great deal of social-psychological research demonstrating that this is generally how we reason in our daily lives, and that it generally does not make much sense for us to problematize what people claim to have seen with their own eyes. There are no more "How do you know that's" after someone has declared himself an eyewitness to some event.

Sense experiences are not themselves beliefs, but a point of departure for the reports that constitute a foundation. One cannot doubt what one has seen with one's own eyes, and this stops the regress. The empiricists believed that we cannot be mistaken about our own sense experiences. True enough, we may *describe* them incorrectly, but we cannot be mistaken with regard to the experiences themselves.

Two brief notes concerning the O/T distinction should be interjected at this point:

- The distinction is involved in foundationalism, since O-terms were thought to acquire their meaning directly from experience. O-terms were therefore assumed to have a certain, trustworthy, intersubjective content.
- Foundationalism also plays a part in the difference in epistemic status of O-terms and T-terms, a difference that makes observation capable of falsifying or confirming (or confirm) theory – but not vice versa. It is generally an accepted view in science that data in this sense has epistemic priority.

Foundationalism may for the above reasons be a tempting perspective to adopt. Some people, however, are self-confessed non-foundationalists, and their views are also well worth considering.

The renowned pragmatist John Dewey (1929/1990) is quite adamant in his belief that there is no certain, firm or secure basis for belief. Conditional justification (belief A is justified *if* belief B is justified, B is justified *if* C, etc. – the regress alluded to above) is sufficient. It is simply all we have, because we have no access to correspondence truth. We use ideas in interaction with the material and social world; some ideas are useful and adequate, others brush up against

experience and do not bring us the results we want. This is the instrumental theory of truth: ideas work or they do not work. Dewey is a wonderfully stark consequentialist here. *No* ideas are immune to this kind of testing, he claims, not even his own pragmatism. We test pragmatism as we test other ideas, and if it proves useful we can keep it; otherwise, we may throw it out!

While experience is a central concept for Dewey, his conception of it differs from that of the empiricists (which is sense experience). Dewey is an experimentalist thinker; he needed a concept of experience for his theory, and he spent much time developing one. He went back to the common sense use of the word: Experience is to be acquainted with practical things based on previous behaviour – this concept is broader than sense experience or cognitive experience. Moreover, researchers' experience is also of this practical nature! Things generally are what we experience them to be, according to Dewey. For instance, we all have experience with umbrellas, bruised knees, forks, spoons and staircases. We *do* something with things rather than *know* them; use, enjoy, trade, treat, etc. Secondary experience is reflective; its objects are not things but theoretical entities. The individual's reflective experience is supposed to explain their primary experience; and this experience, too, shall return to interaction with the world. But Dewey does not quite agree with himself on this point, as he makes different claims in different places about whether *all* reflection should eventually feed into action.

Dewey is a Darwinist. That means that he is preoccupied with *change*; that something is *becoming* rather than *being*. This is the basis for his unrelenting criticism of Greek ideas and of what he calls the spectator theory of knowledge. Dewey is thus deeply critical of anything that tastes of essentialism in the Aristotelian sense which, as we have seen, is static, eternal and unchanging. Learning demands participation, Dewey says, not watching.

Another non-foundationalist is Karl Popper (1959/1992). This may be somewhat surprising, since Popper also insists that data can falsify theory but not the other way round. Falsification is based on an asymmetry between data (O) and theory (T). It is thus incumbent upon Popper to ground, or to justify, the epistemic status of data in order that they will be able to perform this function.

The mechanism of falsification is *incompatibility*: when an accepted observation, called a basic statement, is incompatible with a theoretical claim, we conclude that the claim must be rejected as false – and this is a deductive inference. The most famous example is that of the white swans. Our theory is that all swans are white; then we have an accepted observation of a black swan, and we deduce

that our theory has been falsified. It cannot be true that all swans are white if we have a black one. Two points must be noted here. First, the observation must be *accepted*. That is, a random sighting of a black swan by one person is not enough. Second, following from the first point, an accepted basic statement is only a necessary condition for falsification. It is not a sufficient condition for falsification, precisely because there can be random results. Additionally, the observation must be replicable or reproducible.

Furthermore, a theory is in Popper's view scientific only if it is falsifiable by experience. Falsification is his criterion of demarcation, as it separates the scientific from the non-scientific. Theories are representations; they tell us what the world is like, and they admit of truth and falsity. Popper is a strong defender of the correspondence theory of truth; indeed, he believes it is the only theory of truth worth having. Yet, while truth is the aim of all research, Popper also says that we can never attain it. We can never know if a theory is true, but we can know if it is false. This view of the aim of science has drawn a lot of criticism – it is not rational, critics say, to have an aim that you in principle can never reach (e.g. Newton-Smith, 1981).

We are going to inquire a bit further into the nature of basic statements. A basic statement is defined by Popper as *an interpretation in the light of theory*. Such statements are about observable events or phenomena, which must be intersubjectively accessible and testable (observable event x happened at time t at place y). Observations are (often) connected to perceptual experiences, but are not justified by them. The relation between perception and belief is a *causal* one. Your perceptions (or experiences) may therefore *explain* why you have belief X, but not *justify* it. Importantly, there is a major difference between explanation and justification. It is precisely at this point that Popper disagrees with the empiricists and their version of foundationalism. As we have seen, they believe that (sense) experience can justify claims or beliefs. Claims, according to Popper, can only be justified by other claims – a view which, as we have seen, leads to an infinite regress if we demand that all claims must be justified. It is not clear to me just how Popper deals with this particular problem, but justification is certainly necessary in Popper's view. If we do not justify our theories, acceptance of them becomes a question of dogmatism and power rather than evidence and argument.

So, Popper is not a foundationalist. Foundations are not really interesting, he claims, since science is to test our theories intersubjectively. Basic statements can be further refined into "smaller" observations. While this process may yield

an infinite regress as well, Popper maintains that it is harmless because one does not try to show or establish or confirm anything, only to falsify something. But, eventually all tests come to an end; not as a matter of principle, but rather as a convention or for practical reasons.

As a result, Popper concludes that the empirical basis of science is not absolute, foundational or firm. If this is the case, then how can it be used to falsify theory? This is indeed a problem for Popper. Basic statements are interpretations in the light of theory, and since theories may be false, the observation may be incorrect. So, how can theory-impregnated observations have an epistemic status that allows them to falsify theory? The overall conclusion of Popper's critics is that he does not justify the epistemic status of observations that his falsificationism needs because he is a non-foundationalist and rejects the O/T distinction that could have helped him ground it. Furthermore, at the same time he insists that only data can be appealed to for acceptance or falsification of theory. As for observations, not even "this is a glass of milk" is an unproblematic observation according to Popper!

What conclusions can we make, then, concerning evidence, knowledge and justification? I suggest only the following: 1) Present available evidence in an honest way 2) Produce the best arguments that we can and 3) Assume an overall attitude of fallibility due to the fact that all claims may in time prove to be wrong, including our own. That also holds true for our observations, as it will be argued for in the next section.

Observation and theory

No matter what their epistemic status may be, observations have always been a primary source of scientific data. On the other hand, there are diverging views of what scientific observation really is and how important it actually is; views that most likely vary from discipline to discipline.

In this section we will meet theory in both its strong and weak sense, quite possibly mostly the latter. The problem of the relationship between theory and observation is of course related to problems of the relationship between theory and experience, theory and practice – the well-known problem of "what comes first".

Conceptions of scientific observation

As indicated above, there are diverging views of scientific observation. I have purposefully selected two examples of definitions that differ substantially from one another.

The first view is relatively recent, namely Liv Vedeler's definition (Vedeler, 2000) in which she defines observation (specifically addressing the discipline of education) as a systematic collection of information about the physical and the social world, as it appears to us directly through our senses and not indirectly, e.g. via witnesses. Once the information is gathered, it must be categorized, and only then does theory enter the picture. This definition should be easily recognizable as being both inductivist and empiricist in nature. First, we make our observations, and then we use theory – observations have no theory involved in this definition. In fact, I find it astoundingly empiricist, and I hasten to add that the book subsequently becomes much more sophisticated, and that Vedeler does not truly treat observation in accordance with her own definition of it, which I find to be positive. If all we can have are descriptions of directly observable entities, we will have meagre data indeed.

Now, let us contrast Vedeler's definition with that of Peter Achinstein (1968). This definition, although it was developed some 35 years before Vedeler's, is much more complex. According to Achinstein, scientific observation 1) involves attending to something in a way which is influenced by the observer's knowledge and intentions 2) does not require recognition of what is observed 3) may involve seeing intermediary images 4) allows seeing what is hidden from view and 5) allows different, but equally correct, descriptions of what is observed. Whereas Vedeler's definition entails that what we observe must be directly accessible to the senses (especially eyesight), Achinstein's definition goes well beyond direct perception. It is important that Achinstein allows for indirect observations; that is observations via indications or signs. Merely seeing something as a visual sense experience is not sufficient for observation. Observation is essentially *seeing-that*, a linguistic formulation which expresses the intimate relationship between seeing and knowledge.

Let us look at some implications of Achinstein's view.

1) A somewhat minor implication, namely that it is a mistake to make principal and necessary connections between the human sensory apparatus and scientific observation. It would seem that Vedeler makes such a connection, although it must be remembered that she is speaking about the educational

sciences. But for that matter, even psychological research occasionally uses instruments to measure heart rate or eye movements. The point is that use of instruments allows scientists to make highly complex observations that humans cannot make, such as magnetism on the sea floor, the behaviour of neutrinos, or solar storms.

2) Observations may be placed on a continuum from simple to highly complex. Examples of simple observations are; we see a book falling off a shelf, or we see that two children are fighting (even this is assuming that we know what it means to fight). Examples of complex observations may be about children's social skills, or, as I once heard a teacher say: "I saw immediately that he (a pupil) was a potential welfare client". Needless to say, observations about potential are exceedingly complex (and rather dubious).
3) When indirect observations are allowed, the boundary between observation and interpretation becomes blurred. It certainly cannot be upheld universally, but contextually. However, even that may be difficult at times. Consider the following example: "The student teacher was trying to teach the children norms for good behaviour". Is this a description of an action or an interpretation? It is difficult to say. But the statement obviously has some distinctively interpretative qualities about it, since it largely refers to an intention behind an action, the intention of teaching children good behaviour.
4) Achinstein's definition of observation brings us much richer forms of data than does Vedeler's definition. What is it that appears directly before our senses? What data does it yield? Certainly nothing about what people try to do, since that implicitly refers to an intention and intentions are not directly observable. Empiricist observations are, strictly speaking, restricted to sensory experience, and are therefore of limited use in educational research, I venture to say.
5) As suggested above, Achinstein's definition opens up for the legitimate use of indications in observations – this is in fact what indirect observation consists of: "Observations O1… O4 indicate T". This is how we "see" a diagnosis, for example. But it presupposes, of course, that the indications are actually indications of some theoretical terms; and if the theory behind it is well argued, then we have may believe that our indications are justified.
6) Closely related to the previous point, this form of indirect perception is very common in daily life. Almost all of our everyday observations go well beyond what our senses provide. Following epistemologist Fred Dretske

(1990), I would like to introduce the concept of fact perception. Many of the entities educationalists (including teachers, special needs educators and researchers) see are facts expressed in terms of seeing-that. For instance, we see that students are writing, that three students are making a drawing together and that the curtains have not been ironed. The facts that we observe are the facts that students are writing or drawing, or the fact that the curtains have not been ironed. But we also say that we see that people take pride in their work, that somebody is in deep thought, that a student is poorly motivated for doing schoolwork or an audience is bored. Although none of the above facts are directly observable, we nonetheless claim that we see them. In his explication of how it is that we see such facts, Dretske basically makes the same distinction that has been alluded to above, namely a distinction between direct and indirect fact perception. We see whatever is indirect by seeing something else; for example, we see that somebody has excellent social competence by seeing that she asks other students how they are doing, etc. Again, this is an inference, and it may be wrong even if the initial direct perceptions are correct. But whereas scientists are required to be clear about what they see and what they infer from what they see, in everyday life we often conflate the two. We tend to believe that we see directly what we actually only see indirectly, because the inferences are so fast. This is potentially dangerous, because if we believe that we have seen something with our own eyes, we also believe that our perception is true – it generally does not make sense for people to problematize what they and others claim to have seen for themselves. But there is no way that we can see directly that people are deep in thought! In everyday life we do not bother to worry about the connection between our direct and indirect fact perceptions. The connection comes from common sense, and is usually not justified at all (although it may of course be adequate). However, the danger lies in the merging of direct and indirect, when we think that we have observed directly what we in fact have only observed indirectly.

The above considerations also point to my penultimate point, which is that the more knowledge we have, the more observations we are able to make. By acquiring theoretical knowledge, our ability to make especially indirect fact perceptions increases dramatically.

My final point is that the above considerations are of great importance to educational researchers, since social phenomena are not directly accessible for observation, but rather are of the indirect kind.

Hanson's thesis

Hanson's thesis, named after the philosopher Norwood Russell Hanson (1924–1967), states that all observation is theory-laden. It may seem somewhat unfair that Hanson's name should be so closely connected with this doctrine, as the idea itself has been around much longer. But Hanson (1958) gave it a thorough and detailed description and a philosophical justification. It should be noted that the doctrine also has plenty of empirical backing; in fact, it is one of psychology's best documented empirical findings. So Hanson's thesis is well justified.

Like Peter Achinstein (1968), Hanson maintains that seeing is essentially seeing-that. Moreover, it is so because seeing is shaped by knowledge and thus is an epistemic achievement. Whatever else is involved – seeing pencils, ironed curtains and people who are in deep in thoughts, etc., is to have knowledge of certain sorts. It is easily seen, then, that Hanson's thesis is a criticism of empiricism; both of the doctrine that all knowledge begins with sensations or experiences and of the foundational doctrine that all justification must be empirical. It follows that Hanson's thesis also questions the O/T distinction, at least in its universal version.

To repeat, seeing-that expresses the relationship between seeing and knowing. It is not the case, Hanson says, that we see the same thing but interpret it differently. Having a different interpretation is simply seeing something different. Among Hanson's stock of examples are the drawings (probably originating in Gestalt theory) that can be seen as two different pictures; duck or rabbit, young or old woman. Whether we see the young or the old woman is not a question of superimposing an interpretation, but of the organization of what we see; that is, of the way in which the elements of the visual field are appreciated. There is a sense in which we are visually aware of the same thing. However, visual stimulus of the retina is a physical event and not the same as a scientific observation. The *ways* in which we are visually aware are profoundly different, and they are so because the observers bring different knowledge, experience and theories to the seeing: "… the physicist sees an X-ray tube, the child sees a complicated lamp bulb; the microscopist sees a coelenterate mesoglea, his new student sees only a formless, gooey stuff" (Hanson, 1958:17).

Another of Hanson's examples has achieved classical status and is only for this reason worth presenting. Let us assume, he says, that the two astronomers Tycho Brahe (1546–1601) and Johannes Kepler (1571–1630) are admiring the sunrise together. But they do not make the same observation while doing so, since their theoretical background is different. Tycho Brahe employed the

geocentric theory, believing that the sun orbited around the earth. He would therefore see the sun rising and moving across the sky. Kepler subscribed to the heliocentric view, believing that the planets orbit elliptically around the sun. He would therefore see the earth move to such a degree that the sun would come into view. But here we may encounter a problem: Do researchers (and others) fall victim to their own theoretical frameworks and/or their own background knowledge? Can we only see what we have concepts to see? Would Brahe and Kepler ever have been able to discuss their different observations, let alone reach an agreement?

To add further to this problem, let me quote Howard Becker on educational researchers:

> I have not had the experience of observing in elementary and high school classrooms myself, but I have in college classrooms and it takes a tremendous effort of will and imagination to stop seeing the things that are conventionally 'there' to be seen. I have talked to a couple of teams and research people who have sat around in classrooms trying to observe and it is like pulling teeth to get them to see or write anything beyond what 'everyone' knows (cited in Buchmann, 1989: 1–2).

If Becker is right, this is bad news for educational researchers. I do not think the picture is as bleak as all that, but Becker surely has a point. Much of education is commonsensical given that the domain for various reasons is so close to practice. And besides, we have all been raised, and we have all been exposed to a number of teachers and have thus been socialized into our cultural understanding of upbringing, teaching, and education. For this reason alone, it is easy to see what everybody else sees.

While Becker's point may be understood as a reminder that researchers (and perhaps other professionals in the educational realm) should be able to see something more and something different from what everybody else sees, the philosophical implication is somewhat different. The question is, does our theoretical framework *determine* what we are able to see? Again, certain implications need to be pointed out.

1) It is important to make clear that we are faced with the same unclarity concerning the concept of theory as we have met before. What does "theory" in theory-laden mean? Both the strong and the weak version of theory are applicable here, but Hanson mainly seems to have the weak version in mind. If so, "theory" means roughly the same as background knowledge. This view we also find in Popper, when he argues that no research ever

begins with data – it always begins with theory, in the sense of a theme, an idea or a problem.

2) While it is widely agreed that Hanson's thesis is right, there is considerable disagreement about its significance; that is, about how strongly it should be interpreted. The problem arises when theoretical background is said to *determine* our observations rather than just *influence* them (notice the importance of precision here!).
   - If background determines observations, then relativism reigns supreme, as Denis Phillips (1992) puts it. Truth, then, becomes relative to a certain world view or context, and no common ground between the contexts can be found to adjudicate between them – truth is local, and disagreement between contexts becomes impossible. Even worse, it may apply to individual rather than group; in which case we call it subjectivism – the view that truth varies from person to person. It is important to note that variation in beliefs is not the same as relativism. It is unproblematic that people have different beliefs. Relativism or subjectivism says that truth is relative to context or person, and that no common standards exist to help compare the two views with one another. Thus, according to subjectivism, all views are true because they are true in accordance with our subjective standards. The point of doing research thus largely disappears, one might want to argue. So, with this interpretation of Hanson's thesis, researchers indeed see only what they have concepts and theories to see. We are well advised to remember Howard Becker's lament!
   - Expanding on the previous point: Are we then trapped in our own theoretical frameworks, each and every one of us, since no two people can be assumed to have exactly the same knowledge backgrounds? A possible example of someone trapped in his own framework is the Italian explorer Marco Polo (Eco, 1998). Like all Europeans of his time, Polo (1254–1324) firmly believed in the existence of unicorns – white horses with a single horn on their forehead. On one of his travels, Umberto Eco tells us, Marco Polo came to the (now) Indonesian island of Java, and there he saw animals with horns on their forehead. He categorized them as unicorns despite having some misgivings about doing so: they were not quite what he had expected. These animals were greyish brown, not white, they did not have fur but a leathery hide, and they were not elegant but rather big and chunky. What he had seen, of course, was a rhino. But Marco Polo,

argues Eco, could not conceive of the idea that he had seen a new kind of animal. He referred to things he knew and expected to encounter, and adjusted his own categories to make the new observation fit his system of thought. Once again Becker's complaint comes to mind.

- If a theory determines its own facts, then no theory can ever be tested for truth (in the correspondence sense), because the O-terms will not be neutral but rather belong exclusively to one theory. Any testing will show the theory to be correct – you will look for the facts that the theory says are there, and those facts are the only ones you will be able to detect.

3) If all this is true, it is indeed a bleak picture of science. But are we really unable to see or accept evidence that goes against our beliefs? No, Israel Scheffler says, we are not so blinded by our own knowledge:

> It is undeniable that our beliefs greatly influence our perceptions, but neither psychology nor philosophy offers any proof of a pre-established harmony between what we believe and what we see (Scheffler, 1982:151).

The history of science is full of surprised researchers. Surprise, as Scheffler points out, is an epistemically important emotion. It occurs when our observations do not match what we believed or expected to see. Surprise thus indicates that we are not trapped by our frameworks, but are capable of noticing that which is different from or incoherent with our belief systems.

4) O-terms, observations or sets of data are not exclusive to any theory. Rather, they may be used with several theories in order to test, justify or compare them. It is important to have a philosophy that allows comparison of theories against each other. Such uses of O-terms and data are possible, even if one does not accept the empiricist distinction between the observational and the theoretical. One does not have to think that O-terms are totally independent of theory.

Finally, science is full of important pre-theoretical observations and data (Hacking, 1995). Both Röntgen and Fleming happened to notice something that was randomly there: They had no idea what it was, how or why it had occurred – but they both pursued it and made significant discoveries. As Hacking puts it,

> Davy's [physicist Humphrey Davy] noticing the bubble of air over the algae is one of these [counterexamples to Popper]. It was not 'an interpretation in the light of theory', for Davy had initially no theory (Hacking, 1995:155).

This does not mean that Davy's observation was completely theory-free. It was theory-laden, but not with a fully fledged scientific theory, because at that point Davy had no such theory. Nevertheless, it was theory-laden in the weak sense of theory, probably in this particular case a whole arsenal of physical and commonsensical concepts.

A concluding remark

The present text is a brief journey through some of the topics which the philosophy of science deals with. I would like to underscore the brevity of it – the number of possible topics to cover is endless. On the other hand, I also think that the topics covered here are important ones, and that they straddle the notorious quantitative-qualitative divide. No matter what philosophical preferences an educational researcher may have, these topics will be of (some) relevance. It may be that the demands of philosophy seem so strict that one wonders if it is at all possible to claim to know anything. Philosophers problematize everything, they turn views upside down, and they make commonsensical notions dissolve into thin air. They may very well make empirical researchers wonder if research is possible or worthwhile at all. And yes, there is a fine trade-off to be negotiated between the universal, ideal and the practically possible. In the end, if educational researchers do their best to present their claims as accurately as possible and take care to back up their views with evidence and arguments, then no one can expect them to do anything more.

But of course: If this brief journey kindles the reader's interest in philosophy, nothing would be better than that!

References

Achinstein, P. (1968). *Concepts of Science*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Aristotle. (1972). *De Partibus Animalium* I. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Translated by D. M. Balme.

Buchmann, M. (1989). *Breaking from Experience in Teacher Education: When is It Necessary, How is it Possible*? Occasional Paper no. 129. Michigan: Michigan State University, Institute for Research on Teaching.

Carnap, R. (1936). Testability and Meaning. *Philosophy of Science*, 3, 420–468.

Dancy, J. (1994). Introduction to Contemporary Epistemology. Oxford: Blackwell.

Dewey, J. (1929/1990): The Quest for Certainty. In J. A. Boydston (Ed.). *John Dewey, the Later Works, Vol. 4*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Dretske, F. (1990). *An Invitation to Cognitive Science*, Vol. II: Visual Cognition and Action. Cambridge: MA: MIT Press.

Eco, U. (1998). *Serendipities. Language and Lunacy*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace & Co.

Glasersfeld, E. von. (1984). An Introduction to Radical Constructivism. In P. Watzlawick (Ed.). *The Invented Reality. How do We Know What We Believe We Know*? (17–40). New York: W. W. Norton.

Hacking, I. (1975). *The Emergence of Probability*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Hacking, I. (1995). *Representing and Intervening*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Hanson, N. R. (1958). *Patterns of Discovery*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Kirkham, R. (1997). *Theories of Truth*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Lyotard, J-F. (1984). *The Postmodern Condition: a Report on Knowledge*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Newton-Smith, W. W. (1981). *The Rationality of Science*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Phillips, D. C. (1992). *The Social Scientist's Bestiary*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Plato. (1987). *Theaetetus*. London: Penguin Books. Translated by Robin A. H. Waterfield.

Popper, K. R. (1959/1992). *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*. London: Routledge.

Popper, K. R. (1945/2007). *The Open Society and its Enemies, Vol. 1*. London: Routledge.

Rosch, E. (1978). Principles of Categorization. In E. Rosch & B. B. Lloyd (Eds.). *Cognition and Categorization* (pp. 28–48). Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Rousseau, J-J. (1762/1986). *Émile*. London: J. M. Dent.

Scheffler, I. (1974). *The Language of Education*. Springfield, IL: Charles Thomas Publ.

Scheffler, I. (1982). *Science and Subjectivity*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co.

Scheffler, I. (1983). *Conditions of Knowledge*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Suppe, F. (1989). *The Semantic Conception of Theories and Scientific Realism*. Urbana, Champaign: University of Illinois Press.

Vedeler, L. (2000). Observasjonsforskning i pedagogiske fag: en innføring in bruk av metoder [Observational Research in Education: An Introduction to the Use of Methods]. Oslo: Gyldendal akademisk.

3

Evidence-Based Practice and Educational Research

Tone Kvernbekk

Introduction

"Evidence-based" has been a buzzword in contemporary education (and elsewhere) for at least 15 years. The debate about evidence-based practice (hereafter called EBP) is difficult to grasp. It branches off in several directions and is to some extent plagued by unclarity, confusion and misunderstanding. EBP seems to have arisen as a government wish for better research bases to inform policy and practice. This has become known as the "what works" agenda (Simons, 2003).

There are at least three generally interrelated main branches of EBP discussions. The first concerns educational research and what it could and should contribute to a "what works" kind of practice. The second concerns possible implications for the teaching profession, and the third concerns possible implications for educational practice. Until recently, the debate has been rather adversarial: either you are *for* EBP or you are *against* it. It does seem to me that the critics far outnumber the adherents; that is, if we only count educational theorists and not politicians or bureaucrats. I am not sure about teachers.

It is legitimate for governments to wish to improve the results of their country's educational system and be concerned with how desired results can best be achieved. The problems begin to turn up when you look at the broader picture of education, of which EBP forms a part. This broad picture is dominated by a vocabulary consisting of such concepts as learning outcomes, testing, measurement, qualification, effectiveness, accountability, instrumentality, means-ends, causality, employability and predictability (listed here in no particular order). To

Citation of this chapter: Kvernbekk, T. (2013). Evidence-based practice and educational research. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 62–74/pp. 60-72 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org/10.23865/noasp.124

a certain extent, this picture is in keeping with education's traditional self-understanding as a practical, intentional discipline: to bring about changes that are considered desirable and perhaps necessary. Such changes are described in the curriculum and commonly called learning, development, knowledge acquisition or *Bildung*. In recent years, however, the focus on achieving results has taken on unprecedented proportions. Schooling and education are considered successful when predetermined outcomes have been achieved. This view forces education into making excessive requirements regarding assessment, testing, measurement and interventions. The "what works" agenda is generally taken to belong to this picture: to know what works in order to maximize the probability of attaining the goal in question, which means achieving the desired learning outcome in an effective way. The critics claim that the consequence of all of this, when taken together, is a very narrow and highly instrumental conception of education.

I believe that the critics are correct on this point and are giving a timely warning. We should worry about the conception of education that might spring from this picture, which is admittedly very broadly painted. To the extent that EBP contributes to this picture, the criticism is justified. However, it does not follow that we should reject EBP altogether, as some critics argue (e.g. Biesta, 2007). Moreover, it should not be criticized unjustly. In and of itself EBP is neither necessary nor sufficient for today's educational "landscape", and we would do well to remember that education has been criticized for instrumentality long before EBP entered the scene (e.g. Hellesnes, 1975; Peters, 1966; Skjervheim, 1969).

In this article I will look specifically at different views of what educational research can, should and should not contribute to practice, as the debate has been played out over the past years. This is a large and multifaceted debate, and I make no claims to exhaust the subject matter.

What kind of evidence and evidence of what

What does it mean to ask for knowledge that works? And what does it mean for practice to be *based* on evidence? Both questions have been hotly debated. Generally, knowing "what works" is considered to be knowledge of how desired results are best achieved. But what should be the role of educational research in this matter? And what kind of evidence are we talking about?

First, a brief note on the concept of *evidence*: The questions of *who, why* and *what constitutes evidence* are much discussed by critics and advocates of EBP alike (see e.g. Gamson, 2007). The more basic question of what evidence seems

to be missing from the debate, as does the question of the relationship between evidence and that which it is evidence *for*; including claims, beliefs, theories, etc. The nature of the relationship between evidence and belief is of course somewhat contentious, as are most philosophical questions. Nonetheless, the established philosophical understanding basically sees evidence as something that *supports* a belief or *justifies it* (Achinstein, 2001). Evidence thus speaks to the truth value of a belief or theory, either by supporting its truth (positive evidence) or indicating its falsity (negative evidence). This is a highly simplified description of a complex story (see Kvernbekk, 2011a for an overview). In the EBP context, evidence is thought to speak to the effectiveness of a strategy or method of teaching.

We should pause briefly here and ask if there is a difference in principle between supporting claims to truth and claims to effectiveness. Basically, it seems to me that evidence performs the same functions (supports, justifies) in both cases, but there are also differences. When we begin talking about effectiveness, we have inserted a note of normativity into the discussion. Then the framework does not comprise truth claims, but means and ends. We have a goal, and we want to know if certain methods, actions, interventions, etc. are effective ways of attaining the goal or not. This cluster of problems is criticized in different ways. For example, the focus on effectiveness foregrounds the means and therefore diverts attention from the more important issues of the goals themselves (e.g. Biesta, 2007). While this may be true, it does not follow that adoption of EBP entails that talk of goals is precluded, as Biesta argues. One is of course free to deliberate first about goals and then about effective means. On the other hand, Biesta is surely right that many goals and aims are predetermined in great detail and not really up for discussion. However, goals are stated in the curriculum whether you have EBP or not – although EBP may contribute to the current and rather alarming degree of goal specification. The second criticism says that "what works" leads exclusively to concerns of effectiveness and ignores those of appropriateness (e.g. Sanderson, 2003). Again, while this may be true, I see no reason why it should necessarily follow from the adoption of EBP. Deliberations of appropriateness are by no means excluded by definition. Added to this cluster of problems are issues of causality and generality. The first merits an article in its own right, and I shall therefore simply side-step it here, while I will return to the second subsequently.

The function of support generally ascribed to evidence can in principle be performed by facts, experiences, and all sorts of data and reasons of different types (philosophical, psychological, moral, etc.). However, there has been a clear

tendency to give privilege to evidence brought about by randomized controlled trials (RCT). One can think of several reasons for giving such a privileged status. For example, quantitative data may be considered to provide a firmer basis for practice (and policy), since this type of research design allows for stronger, hence better justified, conclusions. This is because trials using control groups yield differential support. They give us reason to believe that a certain hypothesis is true, while at the same time *not* affording equal or better reasons for believing a rival hypothesis (Erwin & Siegel, 1989). That is to say, RCT provides evidence that allows you to choose one hypothesis (belief, theory) over its rivals. Such research designs are vital if you want to draw causal conclusions, and it seems reasonable that this is precisely what you want in a "what works" setting. Take reading instruction as an example. There are many studies that compare the effectiveness of different methods or interventions. For instance, Hatcher *et.al.* (2006) conducted an RCT which indicates that compared with the control group, reading-delayed children who received a certain intervention for two consecutive 10-week periods made significant progress on measurements of letter knowledge, single word reading and phoneme awareness. The study concludes that this program, when delivered systematically over a period of time, is an effective intervention for approximately 75% of children who show reading delays at the end of their first school year, the other 25% did not respond to the intervention.

It is not unreasonable to view David Hargreaves, professor of education at Cambridge University (now retired), as the chief instigator of the EBP debate. Anyone writing about EBP refers to his views. In his now famous (infamous) lecture to the Teacher Training Agency of Great Britain in 1996, he compares education with medicine and argues that teaching is not a research-based profession, that a radical change in the kind of educational research done is needed, and that the organization and funding of research must be changed accordingly. Educational research, Hargreaves insists, should serve to improve practice. This requires research which

> […] (i) demonstrates *conclusively* that if teachers change their practice from x to y there will be a significant and enduring improvement in teaching and learning and (ii) has developed an effective method of convincing teachers of the benefits of, and means to, changing from x to y (Hargreaves, 1996a:5, emphasis added).

This way of thinking, he believes, will quite naturally lead to a dramatic increase in research aimed at providing an evidence base, and most of this will be quantitative evidence gathered through using RCTs. It is a long-standing theme for

Hargreaves that educational research should improve the performativity of teachers with respect to outcomes; outcomes generally perceived as measurable outputs. For this reason, he is a strong advocate of undertaking research on practical issues maintaining that. To gather evidence about what works in what circumstances is the whole point of evidence-based research, he maintains (1996b). Teachers, Hargreaves says, primarily want to know what works – and are only secondarily interested in understanding the *why* of classroom events. It is the job of educational researchers to provide this kind of knowledge to teachers. Too much research is irrelevant to practitioners, he argues. I shall return to the question of how we might understand the idea of *relevance*.

Again, we are encountering a cluster of problems. First, it is important to point out that the privileging of RCT seems to be very real in many countries, including our own, and that this clearly has effects on the kind of educational research that is funded and performed. Second, it is equally important to point out that any views stating that RCT evidence is the only valuable or admissible form of evidence are misguided and trade on an extremely narrow view of the nature of research (see Phillips, 2006a and 2006b for useful discussions). As stated above, the function of evidence can be performed by facts, experiences and other kinds of reasons. The *Journal of Philosophy of Education* devoted an entire issue to the question of which evidence types that can be used in practice, for instance case studies (Elliott & Lukes, 2008), narratives (Griffiths & Mcleod, 2008) and philosophy (Conroy, Davis & Enslin, 2008). Third, while there is a great deal of educational research reported, there is the question of what kinds of educational problems are actually researchable. In some sense, I suppose. However, all issues and problems can be researched in one way or another. But in the present context we are talking about problems that lend themselves to a "what works" framework; that is, to finding an effective, preferably generalizable solution to a problem. As far as I can see, Hargreaves has not discussed this question, and he may be viewed as overly optimistic regarding the contributions that research can make. Martyn Hammersley (1997), on the other hand, argues that many of the problems teachers face are not open to research at all, since only "technical" problems are so open. Teachers' problems, he says, are "practical". Incidentally, this means that Hammersley throws doubt on the idea that teaching can be *based* on research. Unfortunately, he does not explain what he takes the concepts "technical" and "practical" to mean, but we do get a hint as to what "practical" might mean. I shall come back to this idea in the next section, but first we must return to the question of relevance.

It is of course not a bad thing if research turns out to be relevant to practice and can serve to improve it as well. But while there in principle are many different ways in which research can be relevant, Hargreaves seems to have settled for one: The impact of research should be *direct*, and it should show what works in what circumstances. His critics, e.g. Hammersley, take him to mean that research should tell practitioners which is the best technique for dealing with a particular kind of problem. That is to say, research should provide recipes for teachers, and these recipes should be such that following them maximizes the probability of achieving desired outcomes. Considering that Hargreaves wants evidence to show *conclusively* that y leads to better results than x, one might suspect him of wishing for certainty in outcome achievement. John Elliott (2003) attributes to Hargreaves the view that generalizations can be continually improved upon, thus moving in the direction of universal statements which in turn imply a progressive diminution of unpredictability in human affairs. This may well be true of Hargreaves' ambitions for EBP, but not true of EBP. Research is fallible; it does not deal in certainties and can by no means guarantee outcome.

If *direct* impact means that research should tell teachers how to solve a particular problem or guarantee that predetermined outcomes are attained, Hargreaves' views deserve the criticism they have received. Nevertheless, the meaning of *direct* is never fully explained. Some critics take EBP to imply a rule-following form of practice. For instance, Hammersley states that since teaching is practical rather than technical, "[…] it is a matter of making judgements rather than following rules" (1997:147) thus seeing EBP as tantamount to rule-following. The same view is spelled out in more detail by Gert Biesta, who describes (the most extreme) advocates of EBP as "[…] those who think that research will give us 'the truth', that 'the truth' can be translated into rules for action, and that the only thing practitioners need to do is to follow these rules without any further reflection on or consideration of the concrete situation they are in" (2007:11). One should not wonder that both Hammersley and Biesta conclude that EBP should be rejected.

Most writers agree with Hargreaves that it is a good thing for research to be relevant to practice, but they take issue with several aspects of his view, the first being that relevance means direct impact. This impact should rather be *indirect*. Second, in so far as Hargreaves can be taken to mean that *all* educational research should cater directly to practical needs, his view is quite rightly problematized. This would imply a narrowly instrumental view of educational research, and such sub-disciplines as history and philosophy of education would

be deemed irrelevant and become marginalized. We must hold on to the view here that educational research serves multiple functions. Third, there is the problem of generality, which I discuss below.

To sum up: the potential use of research evidence in practice is a matter of hot debate. However, it is also clear that practice should be based on *something*; it cannot be conjured out of thin air. As David Bridges and Michael Watts observe, "[EBP] is calling for practice to be based on *evidence* as opposed perhaps to whim, prejudice or embedded custom" (2008:44).

Uses of evidence

It is time to take a closer look at the word "based" in evidence-based practice. The understanding of this word seems to be literal; it is seen as a basis, a foundation, from which one can *derive* practice. This is obviously the understanding that lies behind Hammersley's and Biesta's interpretations of EBP as unreflective rule-following, and equally obviously the understanding that lies behind Hargreaves' wishes of making a direct impact. I think much of the EBP debate is hampered by this literal understanding of "based"; namely, that if practice is based on evidence, you have a foundation of data that tells you what to do. It is not, however, the understanding of the function of evidence that I have taken to be standard, namely evidence as support of hypotheses. We must distinguish here between evidence and that which it is evidence for; a theory, belief or claim concerning the effectiveness of a given teaching method. It is the method that is supposed to be effective, not the evidence. The evidence would consist of data that justify our belief in the effectiveness of the method. It is important not to conflate the evidence with the belief (claim, theory) it supports. Consider CSI (the popular television crime series) as an example of this point: The evidence consists of shoe prints, a blood spatter pattern on the wall, a partial fingerprint on the knife and a receipt from a gas station. But the hypothesis is that the butler committed the crime. The evidence is that which supports the hypothesis.

So, practice cannot be based directly on evidence. But can it be based directly on research provided knowledge (theory, beliefs) of what works? Biesta and Hammersley, as we have seen, say no, because that would reduce practitioners to more or less mindless rule-followers. It is not clear where the idea that EBP amounts to *rule-following* comes from; I have found no EBP advocate who explicitly subscribes to such a view. The fact that the problem has been raised points to one of the EBP critics' biggest worries; that evidence should replace the

teachers' professional judgment. But not even enthusiastic advocates like Hargreaves advocate for this view; indeed, he claims that evidence should enhance judgment, not replace it.

There is another reason why critics reject the notion of derivation of practice from a foundation of evidence, namely generality. This, incidentally, is also one of the reasons why evidence emanating from RCTs is especially problematic. Such evidence is general. If you were to derive your practice from general evidence, it would force you to treat every pupil alike. Both Helen Simons (2003) and John Elliott (2003), for example, argue that since practice is inevitably particular, the evidence in question should be collected in this context and, hence, be context-bound, not general. Consequently, Elliott suggests that case studies are more appropriate than RCTs.

In my view both these objections to EBP are unsuccessful. Arguing that EBP implies unreflective rule-following is a straw man, since nobody to the best of my knowledge has argued that it is, much less that it would be a good thing. It also mistakes the role of evidence by confounding evidence with that which it is evidence for, in this case the effectiveness of a method or strategy. Nor is it understandable why practitioners should restrict themselves to context-bound knowledge and not avail themselves of general knowledge. The use of general knowledge by no means jeopardizes professional judgment. It is rather the case that use of general knowledge implies judicial adaption of this knowledge to concrete circumstances. There is nothing in EBP that precludes good professional judgment; I am inclined to say that EBP on the contrary makes tough demands on the judgment of practitioners.

I find it necessary to elaborate somewhat on this argument. Many of the writers on EBP opt for an *indirect*, rather than direct, relationship between research and practice. It is, however, not easy to say what *indirect* might mean. Many EBP critics and others take it to mean that research should *inform* practice, but admit that it is hard to specify what this might amount to (e.g. Bridges, Smeyers & Smith, 2008). I think the literal understanding of "based" has blocked from view a more sensible function for evidence in practice, one that fits better with the standard philosophical understanding of evidence. It is an indirect function, one that does not allow you to derive practice from evidence; instead helping you justify your decisions about what to do.

All educational decisions about what to do are decisions made under uncertainty. All human affairs can be said to include some degree of randomness. It may be true that the educational climate today incorporates a wish for teaching

methods that can guarantee the achievement of predetermined outcomes, but Hargreaves wishes in vain for conclusive evidence. The practical problems of the educational field are diverse, unstable, unpredictable and occur in messy, particular contexts (Bridges, Smeyers & Smith, 2008). Nonehtheless, it does not follow that generalized knowledge or even RCT evidence cannot be used. We just need to look closely at the elements involved in making professional judgments, and I will do so by means of an example.

Suppose you are teaching first-graders to read, and toward the end of the school year you observe that some of them are reading-delayed. This observation is the starting point of your practical, professional reasoning about what to do (Kvernbekk, 2011b). You may decide that these children need extra word and text training. When a parent asks you why, you may answer that this is a well-tried remedy for reading-delayed children – in other words, it works. But this is a difficult parent, so he asks you why you think this remedy is going to help his son, who is otherwise a bright boy. At this point in the practitioner's reasoning, there are two aspects that need attention. The first is that this is the place where research evidence comes into the picture. In order to answer the parent's question you may, for example, refer to Hatcher *et.al.*'s study (2006) which indicates that children who received this intervention for two consecutive 10-week periods showed significant progress on measurements of letter knowledge, single word reading and phoneme awareness. This study, which is an RCT, helps you justify your decision about what to do. It does not in any way dictate your decision, but supports its adequacy and correctness. What we see here is that research evidence takes a more indirect role, one that fits the common philosophical understanding of evidence as support. The reasoning does not begin with the evidence; it begins with the observation of something that might be a problem. Evidence enters into the reasoning to back up the decision the practitioner makes about what to do. In short, it *informs* practice.

The second aspect that demands attention here is one that to my mind has received neither adequate nor sufficient attention in the EBP debate: Are there conditions of exception? That is to say, does the study in question apply to the boy in question? Unless the boy's level of reading mastery is correctly assessed, the proposed remedy might not work. This fictitious boy is otherwise bright, so perhaps he is simply bored? Or perhaps his parents' ugly divorce is taking up all his energy? There is an array of possibilities here. Incidentally, we also see the attraction of testing children to identify the problem; if the child is an exception, the remedy might fail because it misses the mark. Indeed, Hatcher *et.al.* explic-

itly state that there are exceptions; 25% of the children did not respond to the intervention. They also provide a description of the predictors that characterize the non-responders and suggest that these account for the non-responsiveness to the intervention (2006:825). We may thus reason that *unless* the children have extremely low scores on word recognition and letter knowledge, they will presumably respond positively to the well-tried remedy you propose. But there is no guarantee. The evidence is not *conclusive*, as Hargreaves would have preferred. And even if these children are not exceptions, learning processes cannot be completely controlled. There might be some unknown, random factor at work which disrupts progress toward reaching the outcome.

We see in this example that even RCT evidence may be used in practice. It does not function as a foundation from which you derive rules for action; rather, it enters into your practical, professional judgment about what to do in a concrete situation. Moreover, it is not the only consideration that enters your judgement – there is the knowledge of the children in question, their parents; there are ethical considerations to be made, and one must take the available resources into consideration. Professional judgment is a configuration of very different types of information, of which research evidence may be one. I have cast evidence in the indirect role of support of a practical decision; no doubt it may play other roles as well.

However, the problems of our fictitious teacher may not be over. So far in my example, I have simply assumed that the evidence is sound. But appealing to (empirical) evidence might give an aura of scientific support that is misleading, perhaps even unfounded, if the quality of the evidence is poor. This is often difficult to judge; it is by no means easy to read statistics or reports and use them adequately. There is also another pitfall lurking here, one that has been sidestepped in the EBP debate, with the exception of Denis Phillips (2007), namely the phenomenon of underdetermination. This thesis says that adoption of a theory or an intervention cannot be based on the consideration of evidence or facts alone: facts underdetermine theory. This means that the same data or evidence might be compatible with more than one theory or teaching strategy, even if the theories (strategies) themselves are incompatible. In our example, we can imagine the father objecting to your decision by pointing out that the results provided by Hatcher *et.al.* would also support an intervention which focused on letter-sound knowledge and phonological awareness. On the classical understanding of underdetermination, there is an assured possibility of having rival theories that fit the same data (see Norton, 2008, for a discussion), and choices between them must therefore be due to other factors, such as values and subjective preferences.

It is also the case that in educational research conclusions tend to be contradicted in other studies; that is to say, we may have both positive and negative evidence on our hands. This situation may be due to the sheer complexity of educational phenomena and problems, the selection of variables and perspectives in one study will capture some part of the phenomenon researched, while another study may employ a different set of variables, concepts and perspectives. Or they may employ the same set and yet yield different results. In such cases, one is left to weigh the evidence as best one can – a complex process indeed, but not impossible. However, this state of affairs leaves practitioners and other users of research evidence the possibility of being very selective in their choice of evidence to justify their views or decisions. Proponents of different sides in virtually any debate can claim that the evidence supports their view, as one simply picks the evidence that best fits one's preconceived views (Phillips, 2007). EBP is thus not problem-free, even if we should find a good place for research evidence, even of the RCT kind, in the professional judgments of educational practitioners.

Conclusion

The above discussion represents but a small sample of the large and multifaceted EBP debate. The debate with its various positions is difficult to grasp entirely, as it branches off in several directions.

I have argued that the debate to some extent is hampered by unclarity and misunderstandings. It seems to me that the very understanding of the concept of evidence itself is poor; perhaps what evidence is has simply been taken for granted. I think that there are two particular misunderstandings concerning evidence at work in the debate. First, there is a tendency to conflate evidence with data. While these two overlap, they may not be the same and they may play different parts both in research and in use of research results. Surely, the term *evidence* also has different meanings, but its basic meaning is that which supports or justifies views, theories, beliefs – and, by extension, teaching strategies or interventions. This function can be performed not only by data, but also by experience, facts, narratives and other reasons. Any attempt to legislate RCT as the only admissible evidence in EBP is illegitimate. Second, there seems to be a conflation between evidence and that which it is evidence for. This may come down to a too literal interpretation of the word "based" – it does indeed suggest evidence as a foundation either on which you base your practice or from which

you derive it. I agree with the EBP critics that this is highly problematic, but it does not follow that EBP should be wholly rejected.

Rather, what follows is that we must find a different, more sensible, function for evidence. This conclusion is based on the presupposition that practice should –in some sense – be based on something. If we reject generalized, research-based knowledge, practice might become hostage to common sense, tradition, prejudice or subjective preferences. I have therefore indicated a more indirect role for evidence where it enters into professional judgments, for instance to justify a decision about taking a particular course of action. As I have suggested, it is not enough to be in possession of good evidence; the important thing is rather how this evidence is put to use in reasoning and action. It is also important to be aware of the rhetorical uses of evidence and how it can be misused to give an aura of certainty where none exists. Stated quite simply, EBP does not work miracles, and it cannot guarantee that the predetermined outcomes will be achieved.

Finally, while EBP does have its good sides, since it is part of a broad picture of a thorough-going (re)instrumentalization of education, we should retain a certain amount of scepticism toward it. We must also be on our guard against an unduly narrow and instrumental conception of educational research. Research has many different purposes and takes many different forms.

References

Achinstein, P. (2001). *The Book of Evidence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Biesta, G. (2007). Why "What Works" Won't Work: Evidence-Based Practice and the Democratic Deficit in Educational Research. *Educational Theory*, 57, 1, 1–22.

Bridges, D. & Watts, M. (2008). Educational Research and Policy: Epistemological Considerations. *Journal of Philosophy of Education,* 42, Supplement 1, 41–62.

Bridges, D., Smeyers, P. & Smith, R. (2008). Educational Research and the Practical Judgment of Policy Makers. *Journal of Philosophy of Education,* 42, Supplement 1, 5–14.

Conroy, J., Davis, R. & Enslin, P. (2008). Philosophy as a Basis for Policy and Practice: What Confidence Can We Have in Philosophical Analysis and Argument? *Journal of Philosophy of Education,* 42, Supplement 1, 165–182.

Elliott, J. (2003). Making Evidence-Based Practice Educational. *British Educational Research Journal*, 27, 5, 555–574.

Elliott, J. & Lukeš, D. (2008). Epistemology as Ethics in Research and Policy: the Use of Case Studies. *Journal of Philosophy of Education,* 42, Supplement 1, 87–120.

Erwin, E. & Siegel, H. (1989). Is Confirmation Differential? *British Journal of Philosophy of Science*, 40, 105–119.

Gamson, D. (2007). Historical Perspectives on Democratic Decision Making in Education: Paradigms, Paradoxes, and Promises. In P. Moss (Ed.). *Evidence and Decision Making. 106th NSSE yearbook* (15–45). Oxford: Blackwell.

Griffiths, M. & Mcleod, G. (2008). Personal Narratives and Policy: Never the Twain? *Journal of Philosophy of Education,* 42, Supplement 1, 121–144.

Hammersley, M. (1997). Educational Research and Teaching: a Response to David Hargreaves' TTA Tecture. *British Educational Research Journal*, 23, 2, 141–161.

Hargreaves, D. (1996a). *Teaching as a Research-Based Profession: Possibilities and Prospects*. Teacher Training Agency Annual Lecture, London.

Hargreaves, D. (1996b). Educational Research and Evidence-Based Educational Practice – a Response to Critics. *Research Intelligence*, No. 58 (Nov. 1996), 12–16.

Hatcher, P. *et.al*. (2006). Efficacy of Small Group Reading Intervention for Readers with Reading-Delay: a Randomised Controlled Trial. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 48, 8, 820–827.

Hellesnes, J. (1975). *Sosialisering og teknokrati* [Socialization and technocracy]. Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag.

Kelly, T. (2006). Evidence. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.). *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/evidence, Retrieved Sept. 6, 2008.

Kvernbekk, T. (2011a). The Concept of Evidence in Evidence-Based Practice. *Educational Theory,* 61, 5, 515–532.

Kvernbekk, T. (2011b). Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) and Toulmin. In F. Zenker (Ed.). *Argumentation: Cognition and Community. Proceedings of the 9th International Conference of the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation (OSSA),* May 18–21, 2011. Windsor, ON (CD ROM), pp.1–12.

Norton, J. (2008). Must Evidence Underdetermine Theory? In D. Carrier & J. Kourany (Eds.). *The Challenge of Social and the Pressure of Practice* (17–44). Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Peters, R. S. (1966). *Ethics and Education*. London: Allen & Unwin.

Phillips, D. C. (2006a). Muddying the Waters: the Many Purposes of Educational Inquiry. In C. Conrad & R. Serlin (Eds.). *The Sage Handbook for Research in Education: Engaging Ideas and Enriching Inquiry* (pp. 7–21). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Phillips, D. C. (2006b). A Guide for the Perplexed: Scientific Educational Research, Methodolatry, and the Gold versus Platinum Standards. *Educational Research Review*, 1, 1, 15–26.

Phillips, D. C. (2007). Adding Complexity: Philosophical Perspectives on the Relationship between Evidence and Policy. In P. Moss (Ed.). *Evidence and Decision making. 106th NSSE Yearbook* (pp.376–402). Oxford: Blackwell.

Sanderson, I. (2003). Is it "What Works" that Matters? Evaluation and Evidence-Based Policy-Making. *Research Papers in Education*, 18, 4, 331–345.

Simons, H. (2003). Evidence-Based Practice: Panacea or Over Promise? *Research Papers in Education,* 18, 4, 303–311.

Skjervheim, H. (1969). Den metavitskaplege problematikken med omsyn til pedagogikken [Philosophical Problems concerning Education]. In H. Skjervheim & L. Tufte (Eds.). *Pedagogikk og samfunn [Education and Society]* (pp. 55–53). Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag.

PART TWO

DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES IN PAST AND FUTURE

4

Doctoral Programmes in Past and Future

Berit H. Johnsen

European higher education has undergone radical changes towards a common university structure during the last twenty years and this process is still ongoing. My cooperation with Western Balkan universities, and especially with the two universities in Tuzla and Sarajevo, started in 1998, a year before the foundation of the Bologna Declaration of Higher Education, which marked the starting point of this change process. The following cooperation within education and special needs education between the University of Oslo and Western Balkan universities took place during and in the continuation of the two projects, SØE 06/02 and WB 04/06. In 2003 all six countries participating in the WB 04/06 cooperation project; Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia and Norway; had become signatories of the Bologna Declaration (Bologna Declaration, 1999; The Official Bologna Process Website July 2007 – June 2010). Information exchange and discussions related to changes in higher education processes therefore became an important issue already in the first project (SØE 06/02). Discussions continued in the next cooperation project, where one of the three main goals and activities focused on sharing knowledge and experience related to the process as stated in the project application:

> The Bologna principles and process of choices and practices of content and structure of higher education are of great relevance for all participating universities, who find themselves on different places in the joint European co-ordination process. To change traditional study structures and limit them in order to fit into a study structure based on three cycles of 3+2+3 years reveals a number of dilemmas and difficult priorities

Citation of this chapter: Johnsen, B. H. (2013). Doctoral programmes in past and future. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 77–79/pp. 75–77 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org/10.23865/noasp.124

> for most university disciplines. So also for regular and special needs education. The objective of Part 3 is therefore to use the possibility that the project workshops give to proceed with sharing of knowledge and experience related to implementation of the Bologna process (WB 06/04).

Thus, the time for information exchange and discussions regarding the on-going Bologna Process of Higher Education was allocated to all the project workshops at the same time as the often difficult changing processes were underway at these universities. The discussions highlighted similarities and differences between the universities in the transforming process of higher education. They also revolved around the history and context of higher education in general, particularly the establishment and conditions for education and special needs education as research and higher education disciplines, including development of doctoral studies within the disciplines.

Doctoral studies represent the highest of the three university degrees, and the authorization to adjudicate doctoral degrees is generally considered to be an acknowledgement of a higher education subject as a research discipline. Special attention is therefore given to the history and conditions for doctoral studies in the two disciplines, education and special needs education. Opportunities and possible difficulties as well as dilemmas in the future development of doctoral studies within the Bologna Process is therefore the topic of the three articles in this second part of the book. However, a thorough understanding of the current conditions and an approximately realistic view of the development in the near future needs to be based on past developments. The developmental history of doctoral degrees in education and special needs education is also fundamental in order to understand similarities and differences between the seven cooperating universities in the two outskirts of Europe to the northwest and the southeast.

Out of the following three articles, one describes and discusses the development of the University of Oslo, paying particular attention to the establishment of the two disciplines education and special needs education (Johnsen, 2013a). The next focuses on the development of universities and doctoral studies in the participating Western Balkan universities, with a sideways glance at the University of Oslo (Johnsen, Rapaić, Wagner and Cvitković, 2013). The two articles are mainly based on text studies. The first of these three articles is, however, based on an interview study of four senior researchers within education and special needs education at the University of Oslo (Johnsen, 2013b). These researchers have been engaged in research and research related tasks throughout the

transaction period from the traditional "free" Dr. Philos degree to the current structured PhD studies in education and special needs education. Their experiences add rich and more extensive information about the development of the two research disciplines during the last half century, supporting and visualising the written material from documents and debates in the two text studies.

References

Johnsen, B. H. (2013a). From Dr. Philos to PhD. Senior Researchers' Experience and Views on Practice and Development within Doctoral Studies over the Last Half Century. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Johnsen, B. H. (2013b). Doctoral Studies at the University of Oslo from 1811 to PhD. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.*). Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Johnsen, B. H., Rapaić, D., Wagner, A.& Cvitković, D. (2013). Doctoral Studies from Yugoslavian Times to the Bologna Process. Short History of Doctoral Studies at the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla and Zagreb –with a Side Glance to Oslo. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.*). Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

SØE 06/02. (2002). *Institutional Competence Building and Cooperation with Two Bosnian Universities: "Special Needs Education towards Inclusion"*. The Cooperation Programme with South-East Europe (CPSEE) 2002–2004.

The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999. THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA. Joint declaration of the European Ministers of Education. http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/Declarations/BOLOGNA_DECLARATION1.pdf.

The official Bologna Process website July 2007 – June 2010. Participating countries and organisations. http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/ .

WB 04/06. (2006). Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building: Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo.

5

From Dr. Philos to PhD

Senior Researchers' Experience and Views on Practice and Development within Doctoral Studies over the Last Half Century[3]

Berit H. Johnsen

Introduction

When the first research fellows were enrolled in the new PhD programme in special needs education in 2002, it was 185 years since the first doctoral defence had taken place at the University of Oslo (UiO) in 1817 (Amundsen, 1962; Johnsen, 2013; http://www.uv.uio.no/forskning/). Currently there are two doctoral degrees at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO, the new PhD and the initial Dr. Philos, which was the sole and unchallenged degree until the 1970s.

The last half century has witnessed the most radical change in the qualification for doctoral-level competence since the first doctoral conferral in Norway. This is due not only to development within higher education in Norway, but also related to the overarching transformation process of doctoral research organisation currently taking place at all European universities in the common Bologna process directed towards the European higher education area (http://ec.europa.eu/education/higher-education/bologna_en.htm). An

Citation of this chapter: Johnsen, B. H. (2013). From Dr. Philos to PhD. Senior researchers' experience and views on practice and development within doctoral studies over the last half century. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 80–95/pp. 78-93 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org/10.23865/noasp.124

3. Special thanks to those who have participated as interview informants and with other kinds of information, discussions and peer review; Edvard Befring, Eva-Signe Falkenberg, Thor Arnfinn Kleven, Solveig Bauge Løland, Reidun Tangen, NN, colleagues in the research group Humanity Studies in Pedagogy (HumStud) at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO, and a number of other informants and peer reviewers working at different faculties and relevant external institutions.

overall intention of this article is to present the case of the University of Oslo as a contribution to the on-going information exchanges and discussions related to the Bologna process within the international project between the Western-Balkan universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla and Zagreb and the University of Oslo representing Norwegian university traditions (WB 04/06). Two articles discuss the Norwegian case, one based on historical text studies and the other based on interviews. A third related article provides a brief overview of the development of special needs education as an independent field of research and higher education within the seven participating universities.

This article contains a presentation and discussion of four senior researchers' experiences and views on the two Norwegian doctoral degrees based on open interviews. However, initially the forthcoming section addresses methodological aspects.

Issues, informants and methodology

Research questions. Three main issues set the focus of the study presented here. 1) How was the qualification for the traditional Dr. Philos degree practiced? 2) How did the development towards a doctoral research education and the recent PhD degree take place? 3) And how do the two different doctoral degrees function today? As mentioned, these issues are explored in a text study presented in this book (Johnsen, 2013). In this article the search for answers has another point of departure, the stories of four selected senior researchers at the Department of Special Needs Education and Department of Educational Research, Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO, who have taken part in this development as doctoral researchers as well as supervisors and discussants for younger scientists. Their experience, knowledge and views on the changing conditions of doctoral research are studied through semi-structured open interviews. Beginning with the traditional Dr. Philos studies as the starting point of this developmental history, the first main issue was elaborated upon through questions about (i) their former education and conditions of employment when they started their doctoral research; (ii) support and cooperation with research colleagues and senior researchers; (iii) and about time factors and financial conditions. The other remaining main issues were examined through questions about (iv) the informants' conception of the development of organised doctoral degrees; (v) and their participation in this development

as pioneers as well as supervisors and discussants; (vi) their observations of similarities and differences between the organised PhD and the free Dr. Philos degree; and (vii) their views about the applicability and future development of the two degrees.

Informants. The four informants were purposely selected in order to a variety of factors in the developmental process through a time span of approximately fifty years[4]. Two men and two women participated in the interviews[5]. They started their doctoral studies in respectively 1965, 1974, 1982 and 1994, and defended their dissertations in 1970, 1989, 1994 and 1999. The time from when they started research planning to their doctoral defence varied from 5 to 20 years. Three of the Dr. Philos studies were individual projects, while one was conducted in cooperation with a colleague from a related research discipline. Thus the informants' experience as doctoral researchers as well as supervisors and opponents and participants in the development of new doctoral organisations covered the desired period of time. This article conveys the developmental story as it is perceived through their told stories.

Methodological rigor. Methodological rigor has been pursued through examination of authenticity and relevance, trustworthiness and transparency. These aspects represent different aspects of validity. In this connection an important question is whether the open questions asked are in accordance with the issues of the study. Are they relevant and authentic? 1) The question of authenticity and relevance was catered for during the first draft of interview questions which were based on my, the researcher's, inside knowledge and experience of the phenomenon as former doctoral researcher, and as supervisor and opponent at doctoral dissertation defences. 2) In addition to my own experience and perception of the phenomenon, literature on the subject was examined. 3) The interviews were implemented one by one during two hours or more (in three of the four cases more than two hours) where the informants had the opportunity to add information in written form. At the same time they were asked to comment on the authenticity and relevance of the ques-

4. In order to illustrate development and variations through the time span covered by the interviews, the two informants who began their doctoral studies early are referred to as early informants when relevant, and the other two as recent informants. All four informants are Dr. Philos. There was no intention to select solely informants with this degree, and it was thus a coincidence that the youngest informant, who had the possibility to choose between degrees, also had the Dr. Philos degree. All interviews took place in the autumn of 2011.

5. Information is not presented in any fixed order related to informants as an effort to secure anonymity related to specific information. However, the mentioned informants have given their permission to thank them by name.

tions, or whether they wanted to add, remove or rephrase questions. 4) The informants were sent the transcript of the interviews for respondent validation or member checking and asked to comment and revise them. This procedure also contributes to transparency. Some additional information was added, which gave the interviews increased depth. 5) Authenticity is also catered for in the presentation of information, as may be seen in the presentation of the informants' story below (the emic perspective), and the researcher's comments, mostly presented afterwards, but in some cases within the presentation and mostly with comparative references to relevant documentation. 6) Trustworthiness was pursued through application of multiple methods or triangulation. Thus the same main issues of this interview study were also posed in the mentioned historical text study presented in this part of the anthology (Johnsen, 2013). As these two studies have focused on the development in Norway, but with the extended intention of conveying the information to cooperating colleagues at the Western Balkan universities mentioned above, a third comparative text study of the development of doctoral studies and degrees has been implemented in cooperation with Western Balkan colleagues. Similarities and variations between the studies situated in Western Balkan and Norwegian universities may give an indication of transferability. In addition, even with large variations between universities, a joint "readability" or ability to interpret and compare the phenomenon amongst the members of the seven universities may indicate so-called naturalistic generalisation or joint recognition of the phenomenon development of doctoral studies. Again, this is an indication of transparency (Creswell, 2007; Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007; Kvale, 1996; Silverman, 2006).

From interviews through analysis to presentation. The implementations of the interviews are briefly discussed above. The procedure involving going from interviews to presentation took place in the following steps: interview – transcription – feedback from informants – sorting and listing of statements – condensation of similar statements into "meaning units" – the meaning units were presented concurrently with the main interview questions and contributed to a detailed and nuanced description of the phenomenon as it is presented in the joint story told by the four selected informants.

Senior researchers' experience, knowledge and views on practice and development within doctoral studies

Studies towards the degree of Dr. Philos

How did the traditional Dr. Philos degree encourage and facilitate research qualification? What was the status of doctoral studies? The first sections serve to set the stage for doctoral research before the development towards a structured research education started. They are followed by discussions of debate and foundation of new doctoral programmes. Responding to the open questions, the informants told their stories about their educational background, what inspired them to start doctoral studies and how they perceived their working conditions and research process.

What were the requirements for doctoral studies? Before starting on their doctoral studies, all four informants had reached an educational level in accordance with the major or second cycle level of the pre-Bologna structure of higher education (See information about pre- and post-Bologna higher education and degree structure in the Appendix). As in most continental European countries, Norwegian higher education was of considerably longer duration before the adoption of the Bologna structure; a combination of two or three research disciplines was required, whereof one discipline, a so-called major subject, was selected for further studies and research in a second cycle study. The major subjects of the informants were within the related disciplines of education, special needs education and psychology. One of the informants had chosen to take a Mag. Art degree (Magistergrad, for further explanation see the Appendix), which consisted of completing a more thorough research work than in mainstream second cycle education. The informant explained that the "Mag. Art degree indicated a wish to continue with further research". This view is in accordance with documented information about the formal intentions with this degree (Collett, 1999; Høstaker, 1996; Johnsen, 2013; Skoie, 2005). When it came to intermediate disciplines, they varied considerably. Two of the informants had psychology as one of their first cycle subjects. The other subjects were music, mathematics, natural sciences, teacher education and special needs education.

What initiated a doctoral study? The informants' working tasks played an important role in their decisions to enter a doctoral study, even though their working conditions were different. The two early informants started in the 1960s and -70s; a period when it was more common than today to apply research assistants. Thus, they were head-hunted as research assistants while they were in the conclud-

ing phase of their major thesis work. This may have contributed to direct their interest towards further research, since it was not unusual that research assistants continued to pursue doctoral studies. However, different barriers obstructed doctoral research, one of which was the large workload required of research assistants. Another was the mentality within "some groups at the research department", as one of the informants stated. They argued that a doctoral degree was unnecessary to pursue an academic career. Still, there were some who started their doctoral research as fast as possible, even though it "… took place almost in secret", as another informant expressed, adding: "The few of us who started doctoral studies did so in addition to our work tasks". A third argument that was presented was that the degree of Mag. Art was equivalent to a doctoral degree since a few internationally outstanding Norwegian researchers' Mag. Art degree had been evaluated as being equivalent to an American PhD[6]. Thus, with references to such examples, it was argued that the Mag. Art degree was sufficient for furthering their careers as researchers. The early informants' story about this low level of interest exemplifies the general mentality towards the doctoral degree, particularly within the social and humanistic sciences, as documented in Johnsen (2013). The two recent doctoral projects were inspired by professional projects and research activities at the time.

Planning doctoral research. Current PhD education programme accepts research fellows on the basis of high quality research plans as discussed in Johnsen (2013). What marked the beginning of a Dr. Philos study?

> I did not even start with a project plan. My choice of research theme was made in connection with other activities

This is how one of the early informants described the beginning of the doctoral studies. However, those who applied for research grants to the Norwegian Arts and Sciences Research Council; NAVF[7] were obliged to submit a research plan. Requirements for such plans seem to have been less rigorous than it is now. One

---

6. One of the informants used as an example that it was well known that later "Peace Professor" Johan Galtung's Mag. Art degree was evaluated as being equivalent to an American PhD. This is confirmed in his published CV (galtung@transcend.org).

7. Up until 1993, several national research funds served different disciplines, such as The Norwegian Arts and Sciences Research Council (Norges allmennvitenskapelige forskningsråd, founded 1949). In 1993 the different funds were merged into The Research Council of Norway (Norges forskningsråd). The Research Council is currently Norway's official body for the development and implementation of national research strategy. The Council is responsible for enhancing Norway's knowledge base and promoting basic and applied research and innovation in order to help meet research needs within society. The Research Council also works actively to encourage international research cooperation. (http://www.forskningsradet.no/en/Vision_and_mandate/ Last updated 25. 02. 2011; *Store norske leksikon*. http://snl.no/Norges_forskningsråd. Last updated 28. 06. 2010).

of the informants told that there had been very short deadline to write this plan, while one of the recent informants said the following:

> Our application to NAVF did not have a sophisticated theoretical basis, but was concrete and detailed concerning methodology. It was a rather complete plan, even in the eyes of current readers.

Two of the informants changed the theme of their research after they had received research grants. In both cases they considered their topic to be implausible for the time being. However, they completed their doctoral studies with the new research theme. In one of the cases, the former study was ready as an unpublished report, and was later applied in other connections.

How were the working conditions during the Dr. Philos study? As mentioned above, the informants were working either within higher education or partly within their profession when they started their doctoral research. The two informants who started as research assistants were head-hunted by professors during their second cycle education and major research study because their competences were needed for teaching and research assistance. The position as research assistants did not imply permanent employment. Both were later employed as university lecturers while still working on their doctoral studies. One of the recent informants worked half-time within higher education and half-time as a professional therapist at an interdisciplinary institution, from where the inspiration for the doctoral research project came. Only one of the informants had a permanent full-time position within higher education. During their career all four became assistant professors or associate professors, and they are currently professors of education or special needs education.

As also mentioned, early doctoral research was more or less done in addition to compulsory work tasks. "It was mainly done in my spare time", said one of them. A system granting so-called sabbaticals or full time research terms for academic staff had not yet been introduced during their doctoral research projects. The overall impression from the interviews was that it was difficult – if not impossible – to make a reliable time line for completing their doctoral studies due to their insecurity concerning work tasks, potential research time and finances. One of the recent researchers based the doctoral thesis on a study commissioned by an external institution. Included in the project agreement was a one-time payment which was large enough to pay for research assistance, diverse minor expenditures and a small number of the research tasks. The study was mainly implemented within the research time, which had now been defined as approximately half of a research position, and with one additional semester

as full time researcher (the other half of a full-time position consists, as a rule, of student-related duties within the Norwegian university system).

Three of the informants applied for and were granted research scholarships from the Norwegian Arts and Sciences Research Council (NAVF). The duration of their research fellowship varied. Thus one researcher was granted a three-year, full-time fellowship, another a fellowship which lasted through the beginning phase of the study, and the third researcher received a half-time fellowship for three years. The three NAVF applicants all received some help and support in their application procedure from a senior researcher, and one informant also cooperated with a colleague. The help consisted of obtaining information about how to apply and, in one case, also of support with the writing.

Did the informants have access to mentors during their doctoral work? No formal supervision is linked to the Dr. Philos degree, and the stories of the four informants illustrate that informal support varied between cases. One informant cooperated with a senior researcher who had given generous support at the beginning of the study, but who soon moved to a distant university. No single senior researcher took over this role. However, the informant gained a foothold in an informal research group where research philosophy and -methodology was on the agenda, and participation in these discussions was very supportive.

Another informant told about a good cooperation with a leading professor throughout the doctoral research process. Good relations and cooperation with colleagues in the educational as well as psychological and sociological research community also created fertile conditions for learning as well as contribution to the development of these disciplines. In addition a large student group were important supporters as trainees and participants in the doctoral research project.

The third informant was helped and supported by a professor within the research discipline as well as by a professor and colleagues from a cooperating research discipline.

The fourth informant received support from a reference group connected to the study, and one of the members in the group was a professor at the informant's workplace. The research department provided assistance with statistical analysis, and a research colleague was of great help with this work.

Development towards doctoral research education and the PhD degree

Even though the informants have Dr. Philos degrees, they are familiar with and have personal experience with the development of structured doctoral

degrees. One of them was the initiator of this new kind of doctoral degree, and all informants have participated in teaching and supervising candidates enrolled in structured doctoral programmes. They are therefore asked about their experience and perception of the development of doctoral research education and, eventually, the adoption of the PhD degree.

The two early informants recalled the background and starting point of the development of a new doctoral structure from the 1960s, and both gave a similar description of the mentality within the educational research community at that time. One informant described the mentality as "scientifically and theoretically unconscious". As late as in the 1970s, the research community was criticized for being "naïve empiricists". However, an increasing number of students started to take notice of this criticism. They became aware of the first movement towards the establishment of a Norwegian structured doctoral degree around 1970. One informant recalled that in autumn of that year, Swedish colleagues informed about a new organisational model inspired by American degrees. Towards the end of the 1970s, one of the early informants was appointed as representative to a committee on behalf of the Faculty of Social Sciences, where the Department of Educational Research was situated at that time. The task was to discuss the development of a structured doctoral degree. Some of the senior researchers were still sceptical and argued "… that it would lead to a lowering of the level of doctoral degrees". Why this scepticism? Some suggested explanations related to doctoral degrees in general were mentioned above (This question is also discussed in Johnsen (2013) in this anthology). The informant recalled that committee members worried that the research candidates would not be allowed sufficient time to do a large research project with the suggested doctoral study regime. Furthermore, the committee did not find any pressure from the Faculty in favour of a new degree and concluded the task without having produced a plan. While the Faculty of Social Sciences remained reluctant, the first organised doctoral degree was introduced at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences in the beginning of the 1980s, to the informant's recollection[8], and their example was soon followed by other faculties.

8. According to historical texts it was launched in 1977. For more information, see the text studies in Johnsen (2013). In the mentioned article suggested reasons why the mathematics and natural sciences faculties were positive to this development are also discussed.

Different higher education institutions and different paths to the PhD

While the "mother of educational sciences", the Department of Educational Research, took shared the reluctance to the emerging transformation of doctoral studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences, the current Department of Special Needs Education, at that time known as the Norwegian Institute for Special Education (NISE), embraced the idea. Why this difference in attitudes? Could it be that the NISE was a young and upcoming higher educational institution with ambitions to develop special needs education into a research discipline? Could a reason be that the head of the NISE during several years had been positive to doctoral studies for many years, as far back as from his own student days? These questions are not examined in any detail in this article. Today the two research communities are collaborative partners at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO. Informants recall that already in 1982–83, the first ideas about developing a structured doctoral degree were discussed internally at the NISE. A draft was delivered to the relevant head of department in the Ministry of Education and Church Affairs in the autumn of 1983, which resulted in their encouragement to continue this development. Further preparations were completed internally at the NISE as well as in cooperation with other university colleges. The work was inspired by organisation of similar programmes at Gothenburg University, Sweden, the Norwegian Agricultural University and the Norwegian School of Sport Sciences. The political aspect of the development was the most challenging. When a model for a structured programme was presented at a meeting in the Ministry of Education and Church Affairs in the autumn of 1985, it garnered the minister's support, and the model was accepted by a Royal Decree of April 18. 1986. Thus, the NISE introduced the first organised doctoral programme in a Norwegian educational research discipline through creating the degree Dr. Scient in Special Needs Education. Several years later when the department was incorporated in the newly established Faculty of Educational Sciences, together with the Department of Educational Research and other educational departments, the organised doctoral degree was changed to Dr. Polit, which had become the first degree for a jointly structured doctoral education programme at the Faculty of Social Sciences. Thus, although the educational departments inhabited a new faculty, they initially borrowed the degree of the Faculty of Social Sciences. Currently the Faculty has a joint structured degree of PhD in education, special needs education and other related fields within education. Through

the process towards the PhD degree a number of revisions of the doctoral programme concerning structure and content have been implemented (see Johnsen, 2013).

Doctoral studies in the developing phase towards the award of a PhD

The two recent informants completed their doctoral studies during the period of debates and development regarding structured doctoral studies. One of them started the doctoral study shortly before the structured doctoral study programme was approved. "Many things have changed since the time I was studying for my doctorate", stated the informant. Referring to personal experience as supervisor and discussant for PhD candidates at different universities both in Norway and abroad, the informant pointed out that the content of the structured doctoral study programme is developing rapidly:

> There are in particular three domains which have been subject to a radical boost in terms of quality, namely philosophy of science, methodology and research ethics or research integrity. These are all areas which doctoral candidates need to be able to master.

Only one of the informants started preparing for a doctoral dissertation after the structured degree was approved, and therefore had the opportunity to choose between pursuing the structured or the free Dr. Philos degree. In answer to my question why the Dr. Philos degree was chosen, the informant pointed to the study project that was already completed and reported. "When the decision was taken to continue the work towards completing a doctoral thesis, there was no felt need for taking part in the methodological education which was an integral component of the structured doctoral study programme." In this way the informant followed the path of some of the colleagues working at the Department of Special Needs Education, who delivered their research theses for evaluation for the Dr. Philos degree. Other colleagues chose to participate in the structured doctoral study programme.

Similarities and differences between the two doctoral degrees

How do the two different doctoral degrees function today, according to the informants? "I do not see any significant differences between the doctoral theses

of these two degrees", stated one of the informants. Another informant supported this view when it came to Dr. Scient and Dr. Philos, but wondered if a slight difference was about to appear between the PhD and former degrees. At any rate, the difference between dissertations within the same type of degree seemed to be larger than between the degrees themselves. However, with regard to the doctoral study process, they found clear differences. One of the informants said:

> I do not understand how anyone is able to complete a doctoral thesis today without having access to the methodological research community. One needs some form of education or help to pursue a doctoral degree, since both science and methodology have progressed so much.

The informant added that scientific terminology had become much more professional and advanced, referring to experience as a doctoral opponent. It was also argued that the level of Norwegian doctoral work was fully comparable to – and in certain scientific niches even higher – than in some other countries.

The informants discussed advantages and weaknesses of the current structured PhD degree. Having access to supervisors was pointed out as an advantage. However, this requires highly skilled supervisors who are able to adapt to the needs of the candidate. The increasing number of research fellowships financing the doctoral study programme marked a positive milestone, as did the increasing number of doctoral candidates. For some candidates their awarded fellowship period has been too short, and this could be a serious limitation. Seminars relevant to the selected doctoral study were also seen as an advantage. However, obligatory courses could also be obstacles if they were not relevant to the candidate's studies. One point of view was that several seminars had proved to be rather abstract, formalistic and philosophic in nature. The opportunity to participate in a research community with other research fellows was applauded. In addition it was recommended that candidates were given responsibility for seminars for students on lower levels. One informant discussed the relatively newly established formal research groups at the Faculty of Educational Sciences (www.uv.uio.no/english/research/about/research-groups) and pointed out that while some of the groups were of high quality, not all passed the mark. The informant had observed the following possible dilemma:

> Some research groups may have a so strong common identity that they push forward their own scientific basic understanding. When this happens, some candidates may feel restricted in relation to their own research ideas. The same imbalance may occur

> between supervisor and candidate. It is an important balance between the research group's dominance and the individual researcher's independence, not least in the methodological area. I am a bit sceptical to the research groups at this point.

Informants also conveyed other ideas and views concerning doctoral studies. One remark concerned the unpretentious informal term "the doctor school". The argument against using this term was that it might give negative and wrong associations and that a PhD study programme should be academically and personally stimulating for the candidate and disciplinary for the academic environment. Another informant wanted to convey the idea that doctoral work had strengthened their personal level of professionalism as a supervisor:

> I have always been solution-oriented, but through my research I have strengthened these skills significantly: resource-oriented, resilience-oriented and empowering supervision.

The informant added some thoughts about future developments related to PhD studies, and stated that certain PhD studies in psychology in other countries currently require that the doctoral candidate complete a one-year internship after having been awarded their PhD degree.

Regarding the formalities surrounding the doctoral degree, one of the informants hoped that the tradition of undertaking a public defence of the doctoral thesis will stay in place in spite of developments in another direction in some countries. "We should not "over-familiarise" this aspect, since completing doctoral research involves doing a great deal of work".

One or two doctoral degrees?

Do we need two doctoral degrees? The informants all agreed that there are many advantages to having two degrees. There was a general understanding and consensus that the organised doctoral degree will be advantageous for future researchers in many ways, and that the PhD has become the most widely used degree. Most of the arguments therefore focused on maintaining the Dr. Philos degree as an alternative. They pointed out that the free Dr. Philos provides opportunities for those who do not have access to an organised doctoral study programme. Amongst them are professionals outside the university community, persons working at the grass roots level and others who are not dependent on research fellowships. , One of the informants added that it is nonetheless important that it takes a long time to phase out an old model.

Conclusion

What does this story tell us about the status and development of the highest research level, the doctoral degree? How does it compile and present new knowledge about the development from the traditional Dr. Philos degree towards doctoral research education and, eventually, the PhD degree? The joint story of four senior researchers within education and special needs education illustrates a multitude of details as to how they experienced and understood the status and development of doctoral degrees and organisation during the last half century. Their story reveals a living picture of practice and appreciation, scepticism and counter argumentation against this development, and they portray the few who early on "secretly pursued a doctoral degree under the radar of the general opinion". The story also shows how new ideas and measures made it more acceptable and practically feasible to carry out doctoral studies. It tells about growing research professionalism and increasing consciousness related to theory, methodology and research ethics, as well as concerns regarding future dilemmas and pitfalls.

This article does not aim to tell the entire story about the status and development of doctoral degrees, but to present one selected dimension of this history. In the larger historical picture this presentation only covers the last fifty years of development. It conveys the phenomenon through the lenses of four certainly very competent and experienced key informants, but with the delimitations of a qualitative interview study. Moreover, it focuses solely on the development of doctoral degrees and organisation in Norway, even though it points to a wider European context and states an explicit intention to share this historical insight with colleagues, specifically project partners at the Western Balkan universities. Thus this article certainly makes a minor contribution in a joint exchange of knowledge and experience during the joint Bologna process regarding development and organisation of doctoral studies. However, the text also aims to contribute to a possible recognition of mentalities, dilemmas and opportunities embedded in local endeavours related to the Bologna process for colleagues at other European universities and beyond.

This is one of three articles in this anthology contributing to the exchange of knowledge and experience regarding the development of doctoral studies within the Bolognas process. In the article *Doctoral Studies at the University of Oslo from 1811 to PhD* (Johnsen, 2013), often referred to here, another perspective is taken, as it presents a historical text study covering the time from the foundation of the first university in Norway till today. A third article, *Doctoral*

Studies from Yugoslavian Times to the Bologna Process. Historical milestones in the establishment of universities, educational and special needs educational sciences and doctoral degrees at the universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb – and Oslo (Johnsen, et. al., 2013), offers a third perspective in an introduction to the history of universities and doctoral studies with specific attention paid to the foundation of rehabilitation and special needs education as a research field.

References

Amundsen, L. (1962). Om doktorgraden ved vårt universitet (On the Doctoral Degree at Our University) Introduction in G. W. Andresen. *Doctores kreert ved Universitetet i Oslo 1817–1961* (Doctors Awarded at the University of Oslo 1817–1961), (pp 1 – 43). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Collett, J. P. (1999). *Historien om Universitetet i Oslo* (The History of the University of Oslo). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Gall, M., Gall, J. & Borg, W. (2007). *Educational Research*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

http://ec.europa.eu/education/higher-education/bologna_en.htm. Last updated 29. May 2012.

https://www.transcend.org/galtung/ 2012 TRANSCEND International.

http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/doctoral-degree/ Last updated August 2011.

http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/doctoral-degree/dr-philos/ Last updated August 2011.

http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/groups/ Last updated June 14, 2011.

Høstaker, R. (1996). Forskarutdanning og dei nye doktorgradane (Research Education and the New Doctoral Degrees). In I. Bleiklie (Ed.). *Kunnskap og makt* (Knowledge and Power), (pp.131 – 151). Oslo: Tano Aschehoug.

Johnsen, B. H. (2013). Doctoral Studies at the University of Oslo from 1811 to PhD. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Research Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Johnsen, B. H., Rapaić, D., Wagner, A. & Cvitković, D. (2013). Doctoral Studies from Yugoslavian Times to the Bologna Process. Historical Milestones in the Establishment of Universities, Educational and Special Needs Educational Sciences and Doctoral Degrees at the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb – and Oslo. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Research Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Kvale. S. (1996). *InterViews. An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication.

Norges forskningsråd. (2010). In *Store norske leksikon*. http://snl.no/Norges_forskningsråd Last updated 28.06.2010.

Norges Forskningsråd. (2002a). *Evaluering av norsk forskerutdanning* (Evaluation of Norwegian Researcher Education). Oslo: The author.

Silverman, D. (2006). *Interpreting Qualitative Data*. London: SAGE publication.
Skoie, H. (2005). *Norsk forskningspolitikk i etterkrigstiden* (Norwegian Post-War Research Policy). Oslo: Cappelen.
WB 04/06. (2006). *Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building: Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo*.

Appendix: Higher education and grade structure before and after the transformation to the common European Bologna system

University education and grade structure before 2003 (Store norske leksikon. http://snl.no/ and more references).

Cand. Mag was a first-cycle degree based on studies in between 7 and 9 semesters, depending upon choice of university disciplines. Cand. Mag education should consist of three different university disciplines.

Major level (hovedfag) or second cycle degree consisted of four additional semesters' continuation of disciplines from the Cand. Mag study. It included a research thesis.

Magister artium (Mag. Art; in Norwegian: Magistergrad) was an old degree, which were standardized to seven years' university education, whereof three years was dedicated to a research theme of free choice

University education and grade structure after 2003 (http://www.nokut.no/en/) The structure of higher education in Norway since 2003 consists of three-year bachelor's degrees (also called a first degree or undergraduate degree), two-year master's degrees and three-year doctoral degrees (post-graduate degrees).

6

Doctoral Studies at the University of Oslo from 1811 to PhD

Berit H. Johnsen

Introduction

Academic degrees from bachelor to doctor have been part of university institutions from the Middle Ages. Norway is a young university nation compared to many other European countries. In 1811 *Universitas Regia Fredericiana* was founded in Christiania, currently Oslo, where the first doctoral degree was defended already in 1817 before the approval of the first University Act (Amundsen, 1962; Anderson, 2004; Collett, 2011a; 2011c; Cox, 2000; http://www.muv.uio.no/uio1811-idag/merkeaar/).

This article provides an outline of the development of the doctoral degree system in education and special needs education from the foundation of the first Norwegian university to the present day. For obvious reasons the historical presentation is intertwined with the development of the university in general and with the establishment and further development of the educational disciplines. Due to the limited article format a full contextual location has yielded to a few glimpses. The point of departure in the following discussions is the presentation of the early doctoral degree followed by the establishment of education as a university discipline and the changing financial situation for possible doctoral candidates. The initial debate on so-called structured doctoral degrees which started in the years after the Second World War marked a historical shift leading to a long-term development towards a new and systematically organised

Citation of this chapter: Johnsen, B. H. (2013). Doctoral studies at the University of Oslo from 1811 to PhD. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 96–116/pp. 94–114 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org/10.23865/noasp.124

doctoral degree structure. The new discipline special needs education served to accelerate this process. Several models of structured doctoral programmes were tried out and revised, resulting in the present PhD degree system. Thus today there are two different doctoral degrees, the structured PhD and the traditional and so-called free Dr. Philos degree. The development leading to the PhD degree took place through increasing debate, legislation and establishment of organisations both domestically and internationally, such as the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) and the international Bologna Process of Higher Education.

A brief documented history of Norwegian doctoral degrees within education and special needs education

"The past is not what it once was"[9], since its history is written and rewritten as answers to different questions at different times. The construction of a historical text evidently represents a reduction of the past, and it bears the mark of the particular perspective of the writer (Clarke, 2012; Johnsen, 2000). This text is based on a study arising from a desire to understand the historical process leading up to the current two doctoral degrees within the educational sciences; the traditional Dr. Philos with its roots in the foundation of the first Norwegian university, and the almost "brand new" and most common PhD. It is a text study of the case of Norwegian doctoral degree structures; their coming into being and further development. The main issues determining the perspective for the study are: 1) How did the qualification for the traditional Dr. Philos degree take place? 2) What characterised the development towards a doctoral programme and, eventually, the PhD degree? 3) How do the two different doctoral degrees function today? As the two research disciplines in focus, education and special needs education, achieved academic status at different times in the historical process, their foundation and development is also an important issue.

This article presents a preliminary historical review based on text studies. It is the first of three articles focusing on doctoral degree organisation within the educational sciences. The second article conveys knowledge, experience and opinions from the point of view of four selected informants, who have experi-

9. This quotation is from the title on one of the most applied study books in historical methodology in Norway: "Fortida er ikke hva den en gang var" (Kjeldstadli, 1999).

ences from the time before, during and after the shift to two doctoral degrees, both as doctoral researchers and as advisers of new generations of doctoral research fellows (Johnsen, 2013b).

The third article relates to the history of higher education and research in Europe. The initiative to this topic stems from the international project between the Western Balkan universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla and Zagreb and the University of Oslo representing Norwegian university traditions (WB 04/06). One main part of this project focused on information exchanges and discussions related to the Bologna process, which took place in on-going meetings twice a year throughout the project period. Thus the third article contains a brief summary of historical milestones regarding the establishment and development of the seven cooperating universities, focusing on the fields of education and special needs education, as well as the process towards the establishment of doctoral degrees (Johnsen et.al, 2013). An important reason for conducting this overview study was to exchange information about each other's academic systems and development of research opportunities.

The history of Norwegian universities and of the University of Oslo in particular has just undergone a renaissance due to the two hundred years anniversary publication of The University of Oslo 1811–2011 in a series of nine volumes (Collett, 2011a: Universitetet i Oslo 1811–2011). However, while the foundation and development of doctoral degrees was mentioned here, it was not thoroughly addressed. A few additional texts have been found from the university's first century, whereas an increasing number of relevant articles, books and official documents are found describing debates and decisions from the second half of the twentieth century up until today. The first volume of the anniversary publications made references to several central sources concerning early university history, which is assumed to shed more light (or not) on debates and decisions regarding the foundation and use of early doctoral degrees. Since these documents have not yet been examined by this author, the article must be viewed as a preliminary history of the topic.

The case of Norway: Early doctoral degree

The history of Norwegian doctoral degrees is a history of many decades with reluctance, conservatism and at times even avoidance amongst academics in relation to this highest degree. In recent decades the slow moving process has been transformed to rapid and accelerating development of doctoral degrees,

accompanied by the introduction of supporting programmes and a major increase in research fellowships. This change has taken place as the number of approved universities has risen from one to eight (http://norgesuniversitetet.no/nettverk/universitet), and international cooperation in research and higher education has increased radically. A major task ahead concerns international coordination of doctoral degrees. This article has been developed as a contribution to this challenge from a Norwegian point of view, since history is an important prerequisite for future development.

Of the two kinds of doctoral degrees, Dr. Philos is the original, introduced in the first University Act of the newly established *Universitas Regia Fredericiana*, currently the University of Oslo (UiO). This was the first modern university in Norway, founded while the country still shared a royal government with Denmark in extremely unstable times of the Napoleonic Wars, famine in Norway, the foundation of the modern Norwegian parliament and, eventually, transfer of the royal sovereignty from Denmark to Sweden. In the new university the first doctoral dissertation was held in 1817, seven years before the first University Act was accredited. How could it happen that a doctoral degree was defended and accepted ahead of any university law? How could it be that the university was founded and had taken the first steps in its development without any basis in law? The most obvious reason is assumed to be that the preparation, foundation and early development of the university took place through a tug of war between different factions, starting with discussions between the Danish-Norwegian kings and Norwegian intellectuals throughout a long period before King Frederic VI accepted the foundation of a Norwegian university in his name. There were also internal controversies between the Norwegian intellectuals as well as struggles between them and the new Swedish-Norwegian King Carl Johan. Several drafts of a university act were presented and revised during these controversies. However, from the inception a financial basis was established, and a number of Norwegian academics, mostly educated in Copenhagen, were appointed professors and members of an academic senate that was to administer the university. Thus the university started its activities very soon after its inception with a pragmatic administration strongly influenced by the traditions of the University of Copenhagen. The first University Act was approved in 1824 by King Carl Johan. However, the relations between the new king and the university were tense, and the question of who should approbate doctoral candidates was an example of this tension. The dispute resulted in a power shift from government to university

in the next University Act of 1845, when this became a matter for the university alone (Amundsen, 1962; Collett, 2011a[10]; 2011b; http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/doctoral-degree/dr-philos/).

In accordance with Danish tradition, doctoral degrees within medicine, theology, law and philosophy were accounted for, the last one being named Doctor Philosophiae and commonly called Dr. Philos, was confirmed in the first Act. The first doctoral dissertations were in medicine; Doctores Medicinae. It was not until 1847 that the first Dr. Philos was accredited. It was in natural sciences, while the first doctoral defence in the humanities took place in 1873. Helga Eng was the first Norwegian Dr. Philos in education in 1912 as well as the third female doctoral candidate (Andresen, 1962; Amundsen, 1962; Dale, 1999). However, the doctoral candidates were few in number, even after the second act was passed in 1845. There may have been several reasons for this scarcity. For example Amundsen (1962) argued that the university gave little encouragement to young researchers. In addition, as a measure to improve low wages, the Norwegian parliament (*Stortinget*) decided that all teaching positions at the university should be changed to professorships for both university lecturers and professors alike. As a consequence the financial difference between higher and lower levels of education was abolished. This was in 1866 (Collett, 2011a). In this situation some senior researchers even stated that the doctoral dissertation had in practice been eliminated. Attempts to change the situation through revisions to laws and regulations were more or less delayed and opposed until a new University Act was passed in 1905. Still the university awarded only one or very few doctoral candidates each year between 1873 and 1910, when the number started to increase (Amundsen, 1962; Collett, 2011a).

Educational disciplines at the university

One of the main tasks of the new university was to educate lecturers for new generations of students. Different epistemological theories were studied, developed and fiercely debated; starting with the renowned Norwegian Professor

10. Collett (2011a) gives a thorough presentation of preliminary debates, the foundation of *Universitas Regia Fredericiana* and the further development of the university, including controversies, debates, legislation and activities. He situates the presentation in the turbulent Nordic context at that time. In conversation with the author of this article, he mentioned that an in-depth study of the history of the Norwegian doctoral degrees has not yet taken place other than on a minor scale.

Niels Treschow, who came from the University of Copenhagen as professor at the newly founded Norwegian university (Collett, 2011a; Dahl, 1965; Johnsen, 2000; Sirevåg, 1986). However, it was not until 1936 that the first Norwegian Department of Educational Research was established at the University of Oslo, with the previously mentioned Dr. Philos Helga Eng as the first professor and Head of Department (Dale, 1999; Norges Forskningsråd, 2002a).

The Department of Special Needs Education was established several decades afterwards in 1961 and developed as an independent college, and later as a university college, the Norwegian Institute for Special Education (NISE). It was merged with UiO in 1990 and took part in the establishment of the new Faculty of Educational Sciences, as one of three research departments, in 1996. Currently education and special needs education is taught in a number of universities and university colleges in Norway (Collett, 1999; http://www.uv.uio.no/isp/om/historie/ 2011; Johnsen, 2001; Slagstad, 2006).

The development of financial support for young researchers

Looking back at the 1840s, the first generation shift of academic staff took place at *Universitas Regia Fredericiana*, as an increasing number of lecturers were required by the growing institution. Emphasis was on recruiting from the university itself. An internal arrangement involving adjunct scholarships was introduced and financed at the university in order to support young and promising talents aiming at an academic career, and the first scholarships were awarded in 1841. According to Vogt (1974) these were as good as the only possibilities for a funded research career until the second half of the twentieth century. However, a small, but increasing number of external, so-called free research grants and private science organisations also funded fellowships and publications. Study trips to other countries funded through official or private legacies were common ways of attaining new knowledge within different disciplines. Several educational and special needs educational pioneers benefited from this opportunity (Collett, 1999; Johnsen, 2000).

After the Second World War the trend in study trips and sabbaticals changed from Europe to the USA and Canada, greatly supported by the post-war Fulbright fellowships. Three large national research funds were also established shortly after the war, whereof NAVF, Norwegian Arts and Sciences Research Council (*Norges allmennvitenskapelige forskningsråd*) awarded fellowships to

researchers within educational sciences and other disciplines[11]. In 1993 the funds, now numbering five, were merged to NFR, the Research Council of Norway (*Norges forskningsråd*), which is the current official body for the development and implementation of national research strategy outside the universities.

An increasing number of research disciplines were introduced throughout the 20th century, especially in its second half, at the same time as several professional studies were implemented within higher education. The Norwegian Institute for Special Education was assigned its first two research scholarships in 1977 in order to strengthen the local counselling skills of graduate students (Statens spesiallærerhøgskole, 1988). This also marked a beginning step towards a doctoral degree. When the University of Oslo celebrated its 200th anniversary in 2011, Norway had seven universities and a number of university colleges. During the same period the number of internally and externally financed research scholarships had increased substantially, including within educational disciplines (Collett, 1999; http://fulbright.state.gov/history; Skoie, 2005; Slagstad, 2006; Vogt, 1974).

Towards structured doctoral degrees – including in educational disciplines

Lack of a research policy, including a research recruitment policy, was seen as a serious problem up to the mid-20th century. The first post-war decade was thus confronted with a serious shortage of qualified researchers for vacant university positions. However, through the introduction of the above mentioned national research councils, steps were taken towards creating an explicit research policy. One of the pioneers in this development, Erling Fjellbirkeland (1982), pointed at two dilemmas regarding which main goals should govern research funding of universities, including doctoral fellowships.

---

11. Up until 1993, several national research funds served different disciplines. The Norwegian Council of Science and Technology Research Council (*Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Forskningsråd*, founded 1946), The Norwegian Arts and Sciences Research Council (*Norges allmennvitenskapelige forskningsråd*, founded 1949), the Agricultural Scientific Research (*Norges landbruksvitenskapelige forskningsråd*, founded 1949), the Norwegian Fisheries Research Council (*Norges fiskeriforskningsråd*, founded 1972) and the Norwegian Council for Applied Social Research (*Norges råd for anvendt samfunnsforskning*, 1987). In 1993 the five funds were merged to The Research Council of Norway (*Norges forskningsråd*). The Research Council is Norway's official body for the development and implementation of a national research strategy. The Council is responsible for enhancing Norway's knowledge base and promoting basic and applied research and innovation in order to help meet research needs within society. The Research Council also works actively to encourage international research cooperation. (http://www.forskningsradet.no/en/Vision_and_mandate/ Last updated 25. 02. 2011; Store norske leksikon. http://snl.no/Norges_forskningsråd. Last updated 28. 06. 2010).

- Should the number of students or society's needs for research determine subsequent content and funding of research?
- Should a small country like Norway do research in all fields or delimit research practices to certain selected fields?

These questions came up frequently in ensuing debates about national research priorities and triggered a renewed debate about the role, organisation and funding of the doctoral degree in the further development of higher education.

The post-war shift of attention from the continental European towards the Anglo-American research community also involved the structure of higher education. In the autumn of 1945 an article in one of the national newspapers presented arguments in favour of changing the university structure in line with British practice. The article was an early sign of change towards so-called organised doctoral structures. Unlike the conventional doctoral degrees, structured doctoral degrees were to contain a programme with relevant courses and supervision in addition to traditional research work. The first higher education institution introducing this new doctoral structure was the Norwegian Institute of Technology, currently the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), in Trondheim in 1975. As a consequence the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences was the first faculty at UiO to launch a structured doctoral degree in 1977 in order to be competitive on the job market (Collett, 1999; Høstaker, 1996; NOU 1988; Skoie, 2005; Vogt, 1973).

Other faculties at UiO were sceptical to organised doctoral degrees. A main argument was that the Anglo-American structure for higher education would lead to considerable cuts in study programmes on all levels and consequently to a lowering of academic standards. In practice, Skoie (2005) argues, doctoral studies had been of little interest, and the small number of doctoral degrees completed before the war were mainly intended for obtaining a promotion to professor status, even though one could also become a professor without having a doctoral degree. The Mag. Art degree with its focus on research was established as a forerunner for doctoral studies, and although few students chose this alternative, a slightly increased level of interest was detected in the 1960ies. However, the late sixties was a time of protest amongst students and young academics related to what has later been called the sixty-eight generation[12]. The

12. In the next article of this book, Johnsen (2013b), a more detailed presentation of the sixty-eight generation and the recurring and strong resistance to the doctoral degree is presented through the voices of four concurrent senior researchers.

doctoral degree became a target of protest for a group of academics in the social sciences, who stated that the degree was an outdated symbol of a self-defined power elite (Collett, 1999; Høstaker, 1996; Johnsen, 2013b; Skoie, 2005).

Protests against doctoral degrees faded out as debate, preparations and introductions of organised doctoral studies spread to new higher education institutions. Amongst these was the Norwegian Institute for Special Education (NISE), where a model of an organised doctoral education programme was developed in 1985 and accepted by a Royal Decree of April 18, 1986. Thus NISE established the first organised doctoral programme in a Norwegian educational research discipline with the degree Dr. Scient in Special Needs Education. Why was this new and rising discipline the first of the educational disciplines to incorporate an organised doctoral degree? Perhaps it was exactly because special needs education was a young and rising discipline. Another reason may have been that the then leader of NISE, Professor Edvard Befring, was amongst the few who conducted research and received a doctoral degree as a young researcher. As rector of NISE he and his staff developed special needs education from a further education programme to a higher education institution through the implementation of the major level or second cycle degree Cand. Ped. Spec. The next step towards a research discipline was to introduce the doctoral degree.

Due to the opposition at the Faculty of Social Sciences, it took a slightly longer period of time before the Department of Educational Research participated in establishing a structured Dr. Polit degree in 1987. This became the official degree of the Faculty of Social Sciences where the department was then situated. As mentioned, NISE was later linked to the University of Oslo in 1990 as a separate section, and then, in 1996, moved into the new Helga Eng's Building at the UiO campus along with the Department of Educational Research, as they were incorporated into the newly established Faculty of Educational Sciences. At this milestone, NISE changed to its current name, Department of Special Needs Education, (Befring, 2011; Collett, 1999; Dalen, 1997; http://www.uv.uio.no/pfi/om/historie/; Johnsen, 2013b; Norges forskningsråd, 2002a; Norges forskningsråd, 2002b; NOU 1988; Skoie, 2005; Statens spesiallærerhøgskole, 1988).

The structured doctoral degrees – a long term development

How was the early development of the newly established structured doctoral degrees? An Official Norwegian Report on higher education and research, NOU

1988:28, which was published shortly after the breakthrough for structured doctoral degrees within social sciences, stated that programmes at the doctoral level which had managed to develop an organisational tradition had showed good results, for example in the natural sciences. However, newly established programmes had not yet managed to develop sufficient course programmes, supervisor competence and adequate levels of funding. The same report stated that educating researchers was a primary task for universities. With this evaluation as a backdrop, cooperation on a joint doctoral degree started between the departments in the newly established Faculty of Educational Sciences and a working committee was appointed. Its main task was to coordinate the two organised doctoral programmes and decide on a joint title for the degree. Arguments in favour of a joint Dr. Ed or Dr. Ped were presented. However, as this was soon after the break with the Faculty of Social Sciences, it seemed that members of the committee from the Department of Educational Research were reluctant to cut the ties with their former faculty. The majority of the committee wanted to keep the Dr. Polit degree as well as joint participation in an obligatory doctoral seminar administered by the Faculty of Social Sciences. In this way the first joint degree for the Faculty of Educational Sciences was "a borrowed degree" from another faculty, the Dr. Polit degree.

As structured doctoral degrees were established, research fellowships were attached to them, and they became the preferred doctoral degree. The requirements for a doctoral candidate in the structured study were high level grades in a relevant Major level or Master study, a high quality research plan and a research fellowship from the university or from external funds (Collett, 1999; Johnsen, 2013b; Norges forskningsråd, 2002b; NOU 1988; Skoie, 2005; http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/doctoral-degree/dr-philos/).

In addition to the structured degree, the original Dr. Philos degree was kept as a free degree consisting of a research dissertation of the same quality as for the Dr. Polit, but without supervision and demands concerning participation in research courses. Currently a small number of candidates are defending their research work for the Dr. Philos degree (http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/doctoral-degree/dr-philos/).

Today the PhD degree or Philosophiae Doctor, is the structured doctoral degree at the Faculty of Educational Sciences (http://www.admin.uio.no/admhb/reglhb/forskning/drphilos/phdforskr.xml). What has characterised the development from the first structured doctoral degrees to the establishment of the PhD? From the time when the first two structured doctoral degrees were

introduced in 1986 and 1987 till the current PhD was accepted, a series of regulations from national to faculty level have led to revisions and standardisations of the degree. Quality, controllability and transparency were three main concerns in the on-going revisions:

- Quality involved quality of supervision and quality of the 30 ECTS credit seminars, equivalent to one study semester, which contribute to support the quality of the research process and final product
- Controllability concerned the development of institutions and tools for quality evaluation of the doctoral education
- Transparency dealt with creating opportunities for comparing academic standards and research quality of organised doctoral degrees between universities and countries.

On a national level three government-appointed committees provided input to further developments of the organised doctoral degrees. The first was the so-called Hernes Committee (1987–88) which suggested increased funding to doctoral research fellowships and an increased emphasis on the development of structured doctoral degrees at all university faculties. The committee also proposed establishment of a joint "Norwegian net" for all universities and university colleges, which was established, currently as Board of the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions. An important task for the board was to formulate common regulations for structured doctoral degrees at all universities (Collett, 1999; http://www.uhr.no/).

The Mjøs Committee (1998–2000) suggested adapting the Bologna Declaration to the Norwegian context with its Anglo-American structural division of 3–2–3 years' time frames for bachelor, master and PhD programmes. The committee also proposed the establishment of an independent national organ monitoring quality in higher education on all three levels, which was established as the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen, NOKUT), (http://www.nokut.no/en/; NOU 2000:14).

The Stjernø Committee (2006–08) focused on quality in research, proposing a funding system rewarding peer-reviewed research publications (NOU 2008:3; White paper no. 30, 2008–09). The proposal was passed, and a national interdisciplinary credit system for publications was established after fierce discussions continuing to this day.

As indicated above, national political pressure applied throughout several decades resulted in the implementation of structured doctoral degrees at all

faculties and universities. Their framework was determined through several political committees, legal texts and appointment of national organs overriding the single universities. One of these organs was the Board of the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions, whose task it is to provide a common interpretation of national frameworks for structured doctoral degrees on behalf of all universities. The other was the independent NOKUT, which has the authority to accredit study programmes and conduct quality control in higher education, including doctoral degrees (http://www.nokut.no/no/). In addition a third institution, the Research Council of Norway, NFR, is responsible for providing universities and other research institutions with additional external resources based on the Council's research strategy (Norges forskningsråd, 2010; http://www.forskningsradet.no/). The University of Oslo (UiO) developed a framework for organised doctoral degrees, which was in continuous revision in accordance with changes in the university legislation, research strategy of the above mentioned institutions and UiO's internal strategies.

As documented above, development of structured doctoral degrees was promoted through a number of decades by a national top-down strategy. However, as is also shown, opinions differed between faculties; some introduced structured degrees ahead of national prescriptions while others were sceptical and reluctant to do so. Thus the development was also initiated from bottom-up or from single higher education institutions and faculties. In this respect the Department of Special Needs Education, UiO, was a pioneer.

Development of doctoral degree in special needs education through a series of regulations

How was the development of the structured doctoral degree in special needs education in particular? The Dr. Scient programme was outlined in three documents; regulations granted by a Royal Decree in 1986, supplementary regulations approved by the regional university college council in1990, and a study programme describing the content and structure in more details. This formalisation and description of the doctoral programme in documents on three levels; overall regulations, supplementary regulations and study programme, came to be common practice for structured doctoral studies. The first group of doctoral research fellows in special needs education was admitted to the programme in 1987. The initial study programme for Dr. Scient was equivalent to two

semesters of studies of a combination of research methodology and the most recent research in special needs education. It was, however, reduced to 2/3 of an academic year at the first programme revision (Statens spesiallærarhøgskole, 1988; 1990; Statens spesiallærarhøgskole, undated; Statens spesiallærarhøgskole, revised, undated).

In the merger with the University of Oslo in 1991, the regulations for the Dr. Scient were revised in view of overall regulations for organised doctoral programmes at UiO. Since the department at that time had status equivalent to a faculty, the regulations were approved by the Academic Senate, which was the highest authority of the university (Institutt for spesialpedagogikk, UiO, 1994/95; Institutt for spesialpedagogikk, UiO, 1995; Institutt for spesialpedagogikk, undated; Universitetet i Oslo, 1992).

The next milestone for the doctoral degree occurred with the establishment of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO, in 1996. A series of regulations were made through a transition period. As mentioned, the degree's being moved from the Faculty of Social Sciences seemed to meet resistance, at least amongst some senior researchers, and may also have contributed to their resistance to developing a new joint doctoral degree and study programme for the brand new faculty. As also mentioned, the new faculty started with the Dr. Polit. degree being 'borrowed' from the Faculty of Social Sciences. The joint practice regarding the structured doctoral degree was from that point based on the same Joint Regulations (Fellesforskrift) already approved for the Dr. Scient degree (Universitetet i Oslo, 1992) with revisions (08.04.1997), but now with the supplementary regulations of the Faculty of Social Sciences. However, each department at the Faculty of Educational Sciences formulated their own study programme. Thus the Department of Special Needs Education revised their former programme in accordance with revised and new supplementary regulations (Collett, 1999; Norges forskningsråd, 2002b; Universitetet i Oslo, 1999).

Even though the study programmes were formulated on the department level, decisions regarding courses and seminars were taken jointly as much as possible. The doctoral programmes at the Faculty of Educational Sciences were steadily revised in accordance with revisions of regulations on the university and faculty level, and after a time all departments agreed on one joint organised doctoral programme for the faculty. Currently, the doctoral study programme is a common matter for the faculty and is administered on the faculty level, including representatives from every department involved (http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/doctoral-degree/).

The Bologna Statement, NOKUT and PhD at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO

In 1999 twenty-nine European ministers signed the so-called Bologna Declaration. In 2003 all six countries participating in the WB 04/06 cooperation project – Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia and Norway – had become signatories. (http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/Participating countries and organisations; BOLOGNA_DECLARATION1.pdf). The intention behind the declaration was to streamline European higher education through developing comparable degrees, common quality assurance, and fair recognition of foreign degrees within the signatory countries. The same system of study credits (ECTS) and the same length of study based on three years' undergraduate- and two years' graduate cycles were important goals. Later on in the Bologna process, a third PhD cycle of three years was added.

As previously mentioned, the so-called Mjøs Committee proposed to adapt the Bologna Declaration to Norwegian higher education. Already in 2003 the independent national organ, NOKUT, was established to monitor quality in higher education on all three levels, bachelor, master and doctoral education (http://www.nokut.no/en/; NOU (2000:14). NOKUT's areas of responsibility were also described in some detail in § 2 in the new Universities and Colleges Act of 1 April 2005, two years after the founding of NOKUT. As an independent organ NOKUT was an intermediary between national policy as expressed in laws and other policy documents, and the individual universities. Thus, as indicated earlier, NOKUT should support, certify and assess educational programmes on all levels, including doctoral programmes.

The Bologna declaration and following incitements from NOKUT led to fast and radical changes and cuts in the course structure of the first two cycles. The length of the organised doctoral programme was, however in accordance with the expected three years stated in the Bologna process. The PhD degree, which had occasionally appeared in Norwegian university debate since the mid-twentieth century, was now constituted as the future degree for all structured doctoral programmes, and already in 2003 UiO presented Regulations for the degree Philosophiae Doctor (Ph.D.). At the same time new similar regulations for all the organised doctoral degrees at the university were passed in a transition period.

At the Faculty of Educational Sciences research fellows were enrolled in a new PhD programme after 2002. The PhD title was a joint title for all organised doctoral programmes at UiO, and supplementary regulations were phased out, except for a certain number of practical topics. The PhD programme was now

based on the joint regulations for UiO and a common study programme for the faculty. By now the time length of study courses was, as mentioned, one semester, which was half the time decided on in the first organised doctoral study programme in special needs education. The degree was now called PhD at the University of Oslo. However, in an additional attachment to the PhD diploma followed a document announcing in which research field the candidate had obtained his or her degree. Thus researchers from the Department of Special Needs Education obtained their PhD degree in special needs education at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO. Subsequently since 2003 several revisions of the joint regulations and study programmes for the organised PhD degree have been implemented in accordance with revisions on the national level.

Similarly while the free Dr. Philos degree has been through a number of revisions, it is still a relevant alternative. To illustrate, a total of twelve Dr. Philos degrees were defended at the Department of Special Needs Education between 1988, when the first doctoral degree was defended and the conclusion of 2011. During the same period sixty-two doctoral dissertations were defended for the degree of Dr. Scient, Dr. Polit or PhD in Special Needs Education (http://www.uv.uio.no/forskning/aktuelt/arrangementer/disputaser/).

Summary and some reflections

How were doctoral studies established and practiced at the University of Oslo? How were they introduced and developed as the two disciplines of education and special needs education were founded at the university? How do the two types of doctoral degrees co-exist? These questions contain the main issues in the historical text study presented in this article. They show a two-hundred-year- old university which started ahead of laws and regulations, but with a certain financial foundation and professor-driven administration. Early in the initial pragmatic phase the first doctoral dissertation took place. The ambitious beginning was, however, soon replaced by the harsh reality of limited resources related to funding as well as qualified lecturers. The history of the first Norwegian doctoral degrees is a history of more than a century with predominantly reluctant, conservative and at times even avoidance-oriented attitudes amongst academics towards this highest degree.

Indeed, even with Niels Treschow, renowned for his epistemological theory, as a leading professor, and with the strong emphasis on education of new generations of academics, education as a university discipline was not established until

1936. However, the possibility of obtaining a Dr. Philos degree in this discipline was present from the outset, as with other university disciplines. In the 1960s when the new Anglo-American inspired structured doctoral degrees were incorporated in the natural sciences, a new wave of scepticism rolled into the humanistic and social sciences, including educational research. At this time the scepticism was also fuelled by the left-wing so-called sixty-eight protests. However, structured doctoral degrees in the educational disciplines were established in 1986 and 1987, with the newest discipline, special needs education, as the pioneer.

This article also documents how a series of national committees, law regulations and establishment of new institutions such as NFR and NOKUT have contributed considerably to a steady increase in the quality and funding of doctoral research, as have the universities and individual research disciplines. Thus, in the case of the Department of Special Needs Education, sixty-two doctoral theses have been defended for the structured degrees, Dr. Scient, Dr. Polit or PhD by the close of 2011. In addition twelve theses have been defended for the free Dr. Philos degree in the same period. These numbers indicate that the combination of a structured degree for the majority of research candidates together with a free doctoral degree giving the opportunity for professionals working outside the universities to gain recognition for their research contributions on a doctoral level is relevant and well-functioning. This view is supported by the four senior researchers interviewed about their experience and views concerning the history and current conditions for the two doctoral degrees in the subsequent article (Johnsen, 2013b).

The rapidly accelerating facilitation of large-scale research on a doctoral level at Norwegian universities has not happened in isolation. On the contrary their participation in the European Bologna Process of Higher Education has led to profound changes in the structure of higher education on all three levels, including doctoral studies. However, we are only in the beginning stages of this process, which has potential for extensive increases in cooperation and exchange of students and researchers. All in all the process may create greater closeness between European universities and European research. This is of specific importance for the collaboration between the West Balkan and Norwegian universities, of which this project is an example (WB 04/06). The third article concerning development of educational sciences at the doctoral level following in this book (Johnsen et al, 2013) provides a brief description and discussion of this development in the universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo.

In light of the vast opportunities for cooperation, it is important to spot errors and omissions as well as contradictions in interpretations of joint principles in the Bologna process. One example of such an omission is that Master-level studies from one university in one country are not necessarily accepted in another participating country. This raises the question of whether the same discrepancy will apply to doctoral degrees. Another serious question concerns whether the increased possibilities for international cooperation will be realised throughout the European continent, or if it will result in a widening of the gap between a small group of so-called elite universities and an increasing number of universities and countries situated in the shadow of joint research development.

In his article on Reform Policy and Change (1996:202), Bleiklie argues that in the larger picture Norwegian universities have faced a double pressure, indicating that major changes are inevitable: On one front the huge increase in student numbers is pushing, and on another front, pressure is mounting from reform policy. Since 1996 the researcher has experienced a rapid and significant increase in demands made on him or her concerning being available for students and at the same time also for producing research-based articles. Meanwhile, the financial landscape has shrunk considerably. The resulting dilemmas are symptomatic for the quickly accumulating complexity and knowledge demands in contemporary society. This retrospective article about the historical development of Norwegian research education "through the voices of historical texts" indicates that major progress has been made concerning research on the doctoral degree level. It relates the long process of ups and downs to a few contextual glimpses through the two hundred years' existence and development of the University of Oslo, revealing several accompanying dilemmas and problems, all of which need to be seriously and extensively addressed.

References

Amundsen, L. (1962). Om doktorgraden ved vårt universitet (On the Doctoral Degree at Our University) Introduction in G. W. Andresen. *Doctores kreert ved Universitetet i Oslo 1817–1961*(Doctors Awarded at the University of Oslo 1817–1961), (pp 1 – 43). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Anderson, R. D. (2004). *European Universities from the Enlightenment to 1914*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Andresen, G. W. (1962). Doctores kreert ved Universitetet 1817 – 1961. En biografi (Doctors Awarded by the University from 1817 to 1961. A Biography) . In in G. W. Andresen. *Doctores kreert ved Universitetet i Oslo 1817–1961*(Doctors Awarded by the University of Oslo 1817–1961), (pp. 45 – 100). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Befring, E. (2011). Milepæler i spesialpedagogikken (Milestones in Special Needs Education). In *Spesialpedagogikk*, 76 (1), 14 – 25.

Bleiklie, I. (1996). Reformpolitikk og endring (Reform Policy and Change). In I. Bleiklie (Ed.). *Kunnskap og makt* (Knowledge and Power), (pp.187 – 205). Oslo: Tano Aschehoug.

Clarke, M. (2012). The Response of the Roman Catholic Church to the Introduction of Vocational Education in Ireland 1930–1942, *History of Education: Journal of the History of Education Society*, 41:4, 477–493.

Collett, J. P. (1999). *Historien om Universitetet i Oslo* (The History of the University of Oslo). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Collett, J. P. (2011a). 1811–1870 *Universitetet i nasjonen* (1811–1870 The University in the Nation). Book 1 in the series Universitetet i Oslo 1811–2011. Oslo: Unipub.

Collett, J. P. (2011b), (Ed.). *Universitetet i Oslo – en historie i bilder* (University of Oslo – a History in Pictures). Oslo: Forum for universitetshistorie – Universitetet i Oslo.

Cox, N. (2000). *Academical Dress in New Zealand. Auckland: Auckland University of Technology: New Zealand.* http://www.academicapparel.com/caps/College-University-History.html

Dahl, H. (1965). *Niels Treschow. En pedagogisk tenker* (Niels Treschow. A Pedagogical Thinker). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Dale, E. L. (1999). *De strategiske pedagoger* (The Strategic Pedagogues). Oslo: Ad Notam Gyldendal.

Dalen, M. (1997). Fra grunnutdanning til doktorgrad (From Basic Education to Doctoral). In S. Haga (Ed.) *Vilkår for eit verdig liv* (Conditions for a Dignified Life), (pp. 123 – 129). Oslo: Redaksjon og bidragsytere.

Danielsen, R. & Hovland, E. (1991). Konsolidering av den nye stat (Consolidation of the New State) In R.Danielsen, S. Dyrvik, T. Grønlie, K. Helle & E. Hovland (Eds.). *Grunntrekk i norsk historie* (Basic Outline of the Norwegian History), (pp. 170 – 181). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Det Kongelige Kunnskapsdepartement. (2009). St.meld.nr.30 (2008–2009) Klima for forskning (Climate for Research). Oslo: The author.

Dyrvik, S. (1991). Foreininga brest (The Union Bursts). In R. Danielsen, S. Dyrvik, T. Grønlie, K. Helle & E. Hovland (Eds.). *Grunntrekk i norsk historie* (Basic Outline of the Norwegian History), (pp. 182 – 190). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Fjellbirkeland, E. (1982). Norsk forskningspolitikk (Norwegian Research policy). In K. D. Jacobsen (Ed.). *Fortid og framtid i velferd og vitenskap* (Past and Future in Welfare and Science), (pp. 27 – 31). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget (first published in 1970).

http://www.admin.uio.no/admhb/reglhb/forskning/drphilos/phdforskr.xml Last verified: 13.09.2011.

http://www.forskningsradet.no/en/Vision and_mandate/ Last updated 25.02.2011.

http://www.forskningsradet.no

http://fulbright.state.gov/history.html. Referred to 25. 02.2012.

http://www.nokut.no/en/Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen (the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education). Referred to 03.03.2012.

http://www.muv.uio.no/uio1811-idag/merkeaar/ 21.11.2007 .
http://norgesuniversitetet.no/nettverk/universitet Referred to 17.03.2012.
http://www.nokut.no/no/Norsk-utdanning/Universitet-og-hogskole/Akkreditering-av-studietilbod/Akkrediterte-studietilbod/ Last updated 15. November 2012.
http://www.nsd.uib.no/polsys/data/forvaltning/enhet/25639/endringshistorie Referred to 05.03.2012.
http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/MDC/BOLOGNA_DECLARATION1.pdf
http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/Standards-and-Guidelines-for-QA.pdf
http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/QF-EHEA-May2005.pdf
http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/pcao/index.htm Participating countries and organisations.
http://www.uhr.no/ Universitets og høgskolerådet (Board of the Norwegian Assosiation of Higher Education Institutions). Referred to 03.03.2012.
http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/doctoral-degree/ Last updated August 2011.
http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/doctoral-degree/dr-philos/ Last updated August 2011.
http://www.uv.uio.no/forskning/aktuelt/arrangementer/disputaser/ Referred to 22.03.2012.
http://www.uv.uio.no/pfi/om/historie/ Last updated August 2011.
http://www.uv.uio.no/isp/om/historie/ Last updated November 2. 2010.
Høstaker, R. (1996). Forskarutdanning og dei nye doktorgradane (Research Education and the New Doctoral Degrees). In I. Bleiklie (Ed.). *Kunnskap og makt* (Knowledge and Power), (pp.131 – 151). Oslo: Tano Aschehoug.
Institutt for spesialpedagogikk, UiO. (1994/95). Nytt reglement for Dr. Scient.-grad ved ISP – Generell informasjon og overgangsordninger. (New Regulations for Dr. Scient. Degree at ISP – General Information and Transitional Arrangements). Oslo10.11.1994/rev. 29.06.1995: The author.
Institutt for spesialpedagogikk, UiO. (1995). Retningslinjer for opptak til Dr. gradsstudiet ved Institutt for spesialpedagogikk (Guidelines for Admission to the PhD Program at Department of Special Needs Education). Oslo 09.11.1995: The author.
Institutt for spesialpedagogikk. (undated). Midlertidig utfyllende bestemmelser for graden Dr. Scient. innen fagområdet spesialpedagogikk ved Universitetet i Oslo (Provisional Guidelines for Degree of Dr. Scient. in the Field of Special Needs Education at the University of Oslo). Author and date not mentioned.
Johnsen, B. H. (2000). *Et historisk perspektiv på ideene om en skole for alle* (An Historical Perspective on Ideas about a School for All). Oslo: Unipub.
Johnsen, B. H. (2001). Special Needs Education as a University Discipline. In B. H. Johnsen & M. D. Skjørten (Eds.). *Education – Special Needs Education. An Introduction* (pp. 133 – 154). Oslo: Unipub.
Johnsen, B. H., Rapaić, D., Wagner, A. & Cvitković, D. (2013). Doctoral Studies from Yugoslavian Times to the Bologna Process. Historical Milestones in the Establishment of Universities, Educational and Special Needs Educational Sciences

and Doctoral Degrees at the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb – and Oslo. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Research Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk

Johnsen, B. H. (2013). From Dr. Philos to PhD. Senior researchers' experience and views on practice and development within doctoral studies the last half century. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Research Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Karl 3 Johan. (2012–02–20). In Store norske leksikon. http://snl.no/Karl_3_Johan Last updated 08.05.2009.

King Carl Johan (2012.02.20). In http://www.kongehuset.no/ Last updated 08.01.2007.

Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet. (2000). NOU (2000:14) Frihet med ansvar (Freedom with Responsibility). The author.

Kultur og vitenskapsdepartementet. (1988). NOU 1988:28. Med viten og vilje (With Knowledge and Intention). Oslo: The author.

Kunnskapsdepartementet. (2008). NOU 2008:3. Sett under ett. Ny struktur i høyere utdanning (Seen as a Whole. New Structure in Higher Education). Oslo: The author.

Kunnskapsdepartementet. (2009). St.meld. nr. 30 (2008–09). Klima for forskning (Climate for Research). Oslo: The author. (White paper no. 30 (2008–09).

Kyvik, S. (2002). Utviklingen av en egen høgskolesektor (Development of a University College Sector). In S. Kyvik (Ed.). *Fra yrkesskole til universitet*? (From vocational school to University?), (pp. 15 – 64). Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.

Norges Forskningsråd. (2010). In *Store norske leksikon*. http://snl.no/Norges_forskningsråd Last updated 28.06.2010.

Norges Forskningsråd. (2002a). *Evaluering av norsk forskerutdanning* (Evaluation of Norwegian Researcher Education). Oslo: The author.

Norges Forskningsråd. (2002b). *Evaluering av norsk pedagogisk forskning. Bakgru*nnsnotat (Evaluation of Norwegian Educational Research. Background Paper). Oslo: The author.

Norges Forskningsråd. (2004). *Norsk pedagogisk forskning. En evaluering av forskning ved utvalgte universiteter og høgskoler* (Norwegian Educational Research. Evaluation of Research at Selected Universities and Colleges). Oslo: The author.

Nyborg. P. (2007). *Universitets- og høgskolesamarbeid i en brytningstid* (University and College Collaboration in a Time of Change). Oslo: Unipub.

Sirevåg. T. (1986). *Niels Treschow. Skolemann med reformprogram – Det frie Norges første kirkestatsråd ved aktstykker opplyst* (Niels Treschow. Scholar with a Reform Program – the Free Norway's first Church Minister: A Document Analysis). Oslo: Selskapet for norsk skolehistorie.

Skoie, H. (2005). N*orsk forskningspolitikk i etterkrigstiden* (Norwegian Post-War Research Policy). Oslo: Cappelen.

Slagstad, R. (2006). *Kunnskapens hus* (The House of Knowledge). Oslo: Pax forlag.

Statens spesiallærerhøgskole. (1988). *Stipendiatordningen ved Spesiallærerhøgskolen* (The Scholarship Arrangement at the Norwegian Institute for Special Education). Rådet for vitenskapelig personale 6.12.1988, sak 70.1988. Hosle: The author.

Statens spesiallærerhøgskole. (1990). *Reglement for graden Doctor Scientiarum (Dr.Scient) med utfyllande reglar ved staten spesiallærarhøgskole* (Regulations for the Degree of Doctor Scientiarum (Dr.Scient) with supplementary regulations for the Norwegian Institute for Special Education). Hosle: The author.

Statens spesiallærerhøgskole. (undated). *Studieplan* (Study Program). Hosle: The author.

Statens spesiallærerhøgskole. (revised, undated). *Studieplan, revidert utgave* (Study Program). Hosle: The author.

The Universities and Colleges Act of 1 April 2005.

Universitetet i Oslo. (1992). *Retningslinjer for iverksetting av nytt regelverk for den organiserte forskerutdanningen og for praktisering av overgangsordninger* (Guidelines for Introduction of New Regulations for Organised Research Training and for Implementation of Transitional Arrangements). Oslo 23.12.1992: The author.

Universitetet i Oslo. (1999). *Studieplan for dr.polit.-studiet i spesialpedagogikk* (Study Program for Dr.Polit. in Special Needs Education). Oslo januar 1999: The author.

Universitetet i Oslo. (2003). *Forskrift for graden Philosophiae Doctor (Ph.D.) ved Universitetet i Oslo* (Regulations for the degree Philosophiae Doctor (Ph.D.) at the University of Oslo). Oslo 02.03.2003: The author.

Vogt, H. (1974). Forskningens status I Norge før 1949 (Research Status in Norway before 1949). In M. S. Mortensen (Ed.). *I forskningens lys* (In Light of Research), (pp. 9 – 18). Oslo: Norges almenvitenskapelige forskningsråd.

WB 04/06. (2006). *Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building: Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo*.

7

Doctoral Studies from Yugoslavian Times to the Bologna Process

Historical Milestones in the Establishment of Universities, Educational and Special Needs Educational Sciences and Doctoral Degrees at the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb – and Oslo

Berit H. Johnsen, Dragan Rapaić, Anna Wagner and Daniela Cvitković

Introduction

The developmental history of the seven universities participating in project WB 04/06 provides an insight into the history of European universities. More specifically, these universities may be seen to represent two European outskirts in the south-east and north-west. These two outskirts share the resent history as Yugoslavian and Nordic welfare societies, with their presumed similarities and differences that have also influenced the development of their higher education systems and research activities. In the joint research plan for these seven universities, one of the important comparative aspects is formulated in the following manner:

> With focus on countries in the West-Balkan region this research project has "regional-internal" comparative analysis between countries with a near history of the same

Citation of this chapter: Johnsen, B. H, Rapaić, D., Wagner, A. & Cvitković, D. (2013). Doctoral studies from Yugoslavian times to the Bologna process. Historical milestones in the establishment of universities, educational and special needs educational sciences and doctoral degrees at the universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb – and Oslo. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 117-144/pp. 115–142 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org./10.23865/noasp.124

education policy and governance as one point of departure, and comparative analysis between two European regions with different social welfare society models, the North-West and South-East outskirts of Europe, as another perspective (Johnsen, 2013a).

This article focuses on a Western Balkan regional-internal comparative perspective when it comes to the development of education and special needs education, previously called defectology[13], as a university discipline and of related doctoral degrees – but with a side glance at the northwest outskirt of Europe represented by the University of Oslo. This is the third of three articles about the development of doctoral studies, where the two former articles focus on the case of the University of Oslo; the former in a historical text study (Johnsen, 2013b) and the latter in an interview study with four senior researchers about their experiences and views concerning this development through the last half century (Johnsen, 2013c). The inspiration and overall intention of these three articles are to provide relevant information that can be applied to further development and cooperation between the seven project universities specifically, and also provide useful information in the wider international development of higher education in general.

The objective of this article is to present a brief overview of the establishment of universities, and of education and special needs education as university disciplines, as well as introduction and development of doctoral degrees within these disciplines. The overview is based on information compiled from texts found in books and on the Internet, mostly from the home pages of the universities in focus. Two doctoral research fellows at the University of Zagreb, the present Dr. Anna Wagner and Dr. Daniela Cvitković, have collected information of their colleagues from the participating Western Balkan universities and translated to English language. Other colleagues from these universities have provided additional information in the process of writing this article. Professor Dragan Rapaić, project coordinator at the University of Belgrade, has along with junior researchers, delivered notes and comments at my request throughout the writing process of this article. The information gathering has focused on questions related to establishment of universities, research disciplines and doctoral

13. The discipline was established as 'special education' in Norway and 'defectology' in the other participating universities, with the exception of the University of Sarajevo, where the collaborative partner is the Faculty of Educational Sciences, and there is no department of special needs education. Today the participating universities have changed this discipline's name. Therefore, for the sake of simplification in this article the discipline is called 'special needs education' when it is discussed generally, whereas current locally applied titles are applied when discussed in relation to individual universities.

degrees, as mentioned above. Special attention has been paid to recent years' development associated with the Bologna process of higher education. From the main author's external perspective, an underlying assumption has been that the development in the Western Balkan countries has evolved from rather similar conditions during Yugoslavian times to greater individual differences between the universities after the division into several nations.

Joining the tradition of European university history, this article takes "the birth of the University of Bologna", Italy, as the point of departure in a short overview of the development of universities in general and in the project countries specifically. The article moves between general university development and the establishment and further growth of education and special needs education as research disciplines. The origins of the doctoral degree, the establishment and development of education and special needs education and development of doctoral degrees in these disciplines are briefly discussed. Finally, the discussion moves to the changes of the two research disciplines in accordance with the Bologna process of higher education.

From Bologna to the establishment of Western Balkan universities

> The institution that we today call the University began to take shape in Bologna at the end of the eleventh century, when masters of Grammar, Rhetoric and Logic began to devote themselves to the law. In the nineteenth century a committee of historians, led by Giosuè Carducci, attributed the birth of the University to the year 1088 (Universita Di Bologna. *Our History*. Home page, http://www.eng.unibo.it).

The university idea that was realised in Bologna had ancient models from what may be characterised as early forms of academia in China and the Arabic world, in the school of Alexandria, the Greek Academia and medieval scholarly monasteries (Kjærgaard & Kristensen, 2003; Simpson, 1983; Ståhle, 1996). The time for university establishments seems to have been ripe, since the idea immediately spread from Bologna and throughout Europe, and universities are now recognised as global institutions.

In the pre-Yugoslavian countries several precursors of what came to be universities were founded as schools within different disciplines. Some of these institutions were established, abolished and re-established in accordance with the perceived interest of differing ruling authorities. Thus, the University of Zagreb was founded in 1669 through a decree by Emperor Leopold I of the

Habsburg family, and it was "re-founded" and strengthened as a university through a new decree in 1874 (Anderson, 2004:232; http://www.unizg.hr). The first University of Sarajevo, Saraybosnasy Hanika, was established in 1531 as an Ottoman Islamic law college. It was reorganized as a modern university in 1949[14]. The precursor of the University of Belgrade goes back to 1808, and the first university act was signed by King Peter I in 1905 (Anderson, 2004:231; http://www.bg.ac.rs/en_index.php). The University of Ljubljana was founded in 1810 under the name Écoles Centrales, but was closed after three years due to a shift of power to the Austrian government. It was permanently founded in 1919 (http://www.uni-lj.si/en/mobility_programmes/contacts.aspx). Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje was founded in 1949 (http://www.ukim.edu.mk/en). The youngest of the participating universities, the University of Tuzla, developed from a college of mining in 1958 and was incorporated as a branch of the University of Sarajevo until it received status as an independent university in 1976 (Halilović, 2012:29).

As shown in a former article in this book (Johnsen, 2013b), the establishment of the University of Oslo took place within a similar historical period and in a somewhat comparable unstable political situation as the cooperating Western Balkan universities. Thus it was established in Christiania, present day Oslo, in 1811. This happened three years before the fall of Napoleon, where his former marshal, Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, who later became Swedish King Carl Johan, demanded Norway from the losing royalty in Denmark. In the meantime the Norwegian bourgeoisie had reinstated and modernised ancient laws to form a national constitution and establish the modern Norwegian Parliament (Stortinget). Thus the early development of current University of Oslo took place under the government of two neighbouring royalties for almost a century before Norway gained its full independence as a modern Nordic state in 1905 (Danielsen et. al., 1991; Johnsen, 2013b).

14. This historical information has been obtained from the homepage of the University of Sarajevo (http://unsa.ba) where a brief historical overview is written in the local language. The overview has been translated, sentence for sentence, to English in Wikipedia's homepage (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Sarajevo). The information is confirmed orally and by e-mail (Sehic). For the sake of historical source criticism, it is worth remarking that Faginović (2005) did not mention the foundation of Saraybosnasy Hanika in 1531 in her Master's thesis about the development of universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) from medieval times. However, this early establishment is currently part of the official history of the University of Sarajevo and is therefore mentioned here.

The origin of doctoral degrees

How did the university degree system develop and gain international recognition? As the number of European universities grew, a system marking different levels of knowledge soon developed. The ascending division in Bachelor and Master followed the pattern from the medieval guilds' division into apprentices and masters. It seems that a division between bachelors and masters, also called doctors or professors, developed during the thirteenth century. However, the underlying meaning of the titles seems to have been arbitrary and different between universities, and they did not reflect commonly understood levels of knowledge in the way they are attempted to be applied today (Kjærgaard & Kristensen, 2003; Simpson, 1983; Ståhle, 1996). Uiblein (1978) describes how the doctoral degree was introduced at the University of Vienna, the first university in the German speaking part of Europe, established in 1365, following the trends of other European universities such as the University of Paris. When the University of Copenhagen was established in 1479, it was influenced by other European universities, and the three titles Bachelor, Master and Doctor, came to represent ascending levels of knowledge. Students from Norway and other neighbouring countries were enrolled in Copenhagen from the founding year onwards, and Norwegian scholars numbered amongst the professors. The doctoral degree system therefore seemed obvious from the establishment of the University of Oslo in 1811, and the first doctoral degree was defended there even before the first university act was passed (Johnsen, 2013b).

As mentioned above, the Western Balkan universities were also inspired by the development of universities in many European countries, not least because Western Balkan students studying at universities in other parts of Europe saw the need for similar institutional developments in their own countries. Thus in the University Law of 1905, the University of Belgrade introduced the doctoral degree at all faculties comprising the university at that time, which were the Faculties of Theology, Philosophy, Law, Medicine and the Faculty of Technical Engineering. The first doctoral thesis was defended in 1907 by Jovan Lončarević (Baralić, 1967; (http://www.uns.ac.rs/sr/novosti_dogadjaji/promocijaDoktora/index 2012.html; confirmed by Rapaić & Stojković).

At the University of Sarajevo the Faculty of Philosophy was established in 1950, from which a great number of doctoral degrees have been defended (confirmed by Sehić). At the University of Tuzla the first doctoral degree was defended in 1962 at the Faculty of Technology, while the Faculty was still a branch of the University of Sarajevo (Halilovic, 2012; confirmed by Dizdarević).

Thus the Western Balkan universities established their own doctoral degrees step by step as they obtained a core group of researchers with doctoral degrees from other and often neighbouring universities. An example of this is the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation, University of Tuzla, where a group of researchers attained their doctoral degrees from the cooperating University of Zagreb before they set up their own doctoral study programme.

Education and special needs education as university disciplines

The focus of this article is on the emergence and subsequent development of education and special needs education as higher education and research disciplines. This section provides a brief description of the introduction of special needs education as a university discipline inspired from different traditions and scholars and having different titles, such as special education, defectology and the current special needs education. Special needs education has emerged as an independent discipline from education, even though it also relates to other research disciplines. Educating new generations of students was a main incentive behind the establishment of universities. The following account therefore starts with the question: Why was education not amongst the initial university disciplines?

If we look to the early development of the University of Oslo as an example, one reason for this lack might have been the strong position of epistemology, the study of knowledge, within philosophy. In addition preparation for elementary education was a matter of theology, as the church was given responsibility for this education from when the first law on the elementary school for all was proclaimed in 1739. The close connection between theology and elementary education was due to the Lutheran State Church in Norway as in the other Nordic countries. Theology and philosophy were amongst the first university disciplines. The strong position of epistemology in the Nordic countries was related to German philosophical debate involving scholars such as Immanuel Kant (1724 –1804) and Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776 –1841) at the University of Königsberg and a number of other philosophers, mostly German and Nordic, who advocated different traditions and trends within the study of knowledge. Niels Treschow (1751–1833), one of the first professors at the University of Oslo (then called Christiania) came from a professorship in philosophy at the University of Copenhagen, where he was renowned for his epistemological line of argumentation. Later several teacher training institutions, called seminars, were established in Norway

throughout the nineteenth century; however, it was not until 1936 that education was introduced as a research discipline at the University of Oslo with Dr. Philos. Helga Eng as its first professor (Johnsen, 1998/2000; 2013b).

How was the early development within Western Balkan universities? Only one of the collaborating universities in the research cooperation project (WB 04/06) was represented with the Faculty of Education, namely the University of Sarajevo. The faculty is the initial collaborative partner with UiO related to development towards educational inclusion[15], while the six other participants are represented by special needs education. As a tentative answer to the question of when education was established as a discipline at university level in the Western Balkan countries, the case of the Faculty of Education, University of Sarajevo, is therefore applied here. With its historical roots reaching back to 1531 and the Ottoman Islamic college of law, philosophy and theology, the establishment of the Faculty of Education as the Pedagogical Academy in 1946 marked a new area in conjunction with several other higher education institutions. In 1949 some of these were gathered in the modernised University of Sarajevo. The Pedagogical Academy remained an independent higher education institution on college level, offering education of elementary and secondary school teachers. However, in 1969 the teacher education programme for secondary schools was transferred to the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Sarajevo. The Pedagogical Academy proceeded with a two years higher education programme for preschool and elementary school teachers. In 1999, after the atrocities in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH), new efforts were made in the field of higher education. The Academy became part of the University of Sarajevo, and the educational programmes were extended to four years. Currently the Academy has changed

15. The international principle of Educational Inclusion, presented in UNESCO's *Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education* (1994) and repeated in the UN's *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (2006) presupposes close and flexible cooperation between education and special needs education in the local school (Johnsen, 2010). Educational inclusion was prioritised by the Pedagogical Academy, current Faculty of Education, when they were asked to decide on topics for cooperation with the international community after the recent atrocities. Thus inclusion was a main topic in the cooperation with the Norwegian Union of Education, where the main author of this article was invited to contribute with a seminar on micro-curricular consequences of the principle of inclusion (Johnsen, 1998). In this way the Faculty of Education, University of Sarajevo, was the initial collaborative partner with the Department of Special Needs Education, UiO. The cooperation was extended to current Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation, University of Tuzla, in the international cooperation project about *Special Needs Education towards Inclusion* (SØE 06/02), and further extended in the research collaboration between seven universities in the project *International Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion* (WB 06/04). Thus the University of Sarajevo is the initial cooperating university with UiO and the Faculty of Education the only project participant representing the research discipline of education.

its name to the Faculty of Education, and the educational structure is adapted to the Bologna structure of higher education with four year Bachelor and one year Master programmes, providing in turn opportunities for pursuing PhD studies at other relevant faculties and universities in a country participating in the Bologna process. As an example, the Master candidate at the Faculty of Education, who is participation with providing information about the faculty in this article, will defend her PhD dissertation at the Faculty of Philosophy (http://unsa.ba, confirmed by Sehić). The example of the University of Sarajevo shows that education was not amongst the original disciplines in the very early history of the University, but became a higher educational discipline even before the establishment of the modern university. This indicates that higher education of teachers was prioritised in the modernisation of the compulsory school as well as in higher education. It remains to examine to what extent this prioritization was also inspired by similar higher education institutions in other parts of Yugoslavia.

When did special needs educational topics become a part of public debate? When and how was it considered as an independent research discipline? In general the very early known history of education of persons with special needs and different kinds of impairments shows a development from scattered efforts to philosophical curiosity to foundations of special schools and other institutions. It allows us glimpses of conditions for persons with impairments from Ancient Greece texts, the Bible and the Koran, to Erasmus of Rotterdam's (1469–1536) carved alphabets and "the less known Spanish Revolution" of successful tutors for deaf pupils (Enerstvedt, 1996; Johnsen, 2001). The fragmentary findings give the impression of ambivalent attitudes, balancing between care, love and interest on the one hand, and on the other hand lack of responsibility, exclusion and an increasing tendency to categorise different kinds of impairments. These distinctions have often (but far from always) coincided with the borders of poverty. The conditions for single persons with disabilities as well as their families and societies have mostly remained in the shadow of history. However, philosophical debates are written on the pages of historical texts. Thus it is documented that the British empirical philosopher John Locke's (1632–1704) focus on the fundamental importance of the senses for understanding and learning inspired philosophers and educators to pose the question: "How is it possible to learn when one of the senses is not functioning?" Paris became the great hotbed for development of different teaching and learning approaches related to visual and hearing impairments and, later, for treatment of insanity or psychosis and severe developmental impairment. From Charles-Michel de l'Epée's pioneer school for the deaf founded in 1770 and Valentin Haüy's

(1745–1822) first known school for the blind in 1784, schools and institutions for different kinds of disabilities were established throughout Europe and on other continents. Theologians, medical doctors and educators were amongst the pioneers. Curing, treating and educating persons with impairments and special needs evolved into a new discipline called by different names, such as sonderpädagogik (special education) and heilpädagogik (curative education) in German speaking areas, special education in several English speaking areas and the Nordic countries and defectology in Russia and Slavic speaking areas (Johnsen, 2001).

According to Knox and Stevens (1993), Russian defectology was concerned with so-called abnormal psychology, learning disabilities and special education. In the early years of the Soviet State, Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934) became associate director of the new Defectology Section at the Faculty of Education at Moscow State University II, directing research towards a cultural-historical foundation. He also organised a research laboratory in 1925–26, which became independent in 1929 and known as the Experimental-Defectological Institute (EDI). After several years in the shadow of political pressure under the Stalin period, Vygotsky's laboratory was re-organised by some of his former students to form the Institute of Defectology in 1943 (Bein et.al, 1993; Johnsen, 1999–2000; 2001; Knox & Stevens, 1993).

The need for professional education and research within this field grew all over Europe, and at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Swiss scholar Heinrich Hanselmann (1885–1960) founded a number of *heilpedagogical* institutes. Hanselmann became the first known professor within this field in 1931. German special education and Hanselmann's work in particular greatly influenced Nordic special needs education, where the first Norwegian professional study started in 1961 and developed into the current Department of Special Needs Education at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO (Johnsen, 2001b). In later decades the works of Vygotsky and his associates, such as Alexander Luria and Alexei Leontiev became known, not least through the application of their studies by the Norwegian scholar Ragnar Rommetveit (1972; 1992; 2008) and his American colleague, James Wertsch (1985) as well as through the English interpretations of Vygotsky's works in six volumes, whereof one volume is a compilation of his defectological texts (Vygotsky, 1993).

French, German and Russian influence also reached the Western Balkan area. The Slavic languages' close relationship with one another contributed to a much easier access to Russian literature than in the Germanic and Latin language based areas of Europe. Defectology became essential in the development of knowledge and skills related to working with disabilities. Research institutes,

departments and faculties of defectology were established in the Slavic speaking countries of Europe and several of their neighbouring countries, and the Western Balkan countries were no exceptions.

When and how was special needs education established as an independent research discipline at the cooperating Western Balkan universities? From where did they seek inspiration and support in further developing this discipline? Were there some common traits between the Western Balkan developments of special needs education as a university discipline? Were there similarities and differences between the development of the discipline in the Western Balkan universities and at the University of Oslo? The following brief review of each project university is based on information from the universities', and faculties' home pages and other information in English in addition to selected excerpts from literature in local languages translated into English and confirmed by colleagues in the WB 06/04 project.

According to Obradović, Milojević and Radulović (2009), education of special educators was first organised in 1926 by the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia[16] in the form of courses in special education. Starting in 1947, the education of special teachers was conducted at the Department of Special Education of the Pedagogical College in Belgrade, and in 1963 the College for Special Pedagogues was opened. In 1967 it was transformed into the College for Defectology, which from 1975 was further developed as the Faculty of Defectology, University of Belgrade. In 2005, pursuant to the Decision of the Commercial Court in Belgrade, the Faculty of Defectology, University of Belgrade, changed its name to the Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation (confirmed by Rapaić & Stojković).

In Croatia the provincial parliament[17] decided to establish a College of Defectology in 1962 in order to create a scientifically based development of professionals. The education programme was to focus on diagnostics, therapy and rehabilitation of persons with difficulties in psychosomatic development. The College became part of the University of Zagreb in 1965, and in 1973 it was transformed

16. The Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918–1939/1943), also called the Kingdom of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, was formed after World War I as a merger of the southern Slavic speaking former parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, covering approximately the same territory as the post-World War II state of Yugoslavia.

17. The Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia was established after the World War II in 1946 and later named the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It consisted of the six republics; Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Serbia, and the two autonomous provinces Vojvodina and Kosovo, each with its own regional parliament. The disintegration of Yugoslavia into several independent states started in 1991.

into the Faculty of Defectology, University of Zagreb, following the procedure in the Academic Council of the university initiated by a university commission in cooperation with the Faculties of Medicine and Philosophy. The Faculty's history is marked by constant transformations following the development of theoretical knowledge of defectology under the influence of related research disciplines such as social sciences, humanities, theology and bio-medicine. In 1998 the name of the Faculty of Defectology was changed to the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences. In 2012 the Faculty celebrated its 50 year anniversary (Faculty of Defectology, 2012; Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, 2009).

As indicated above, the two universities of Belgrade and Zagreb established defectology or special needs education, as a research discipline in the Western Balkan countries. It came to be the University of Zagreb that signed a formal agreement of cooperation with the University of Tuzla in 1996. At that time the university had arranged courses in defectology since 1993. The noted eye surgeon, Professor Dževdet Sarajlić, was an enthusiastic promoter of the establishment of defectology as a university discipline. His counterpart from the University of Zagreb was Professor Ljiljana Igric, specialist in inclusive education and psychotherapy[18]. This was the first cooperative agreement in the field of higher education between the two countries (Salihović, 2008). The Faculty of Defectology at the University of Tuzla later changed its name in accordance with changes at its counterpart in Zagreb and as a sign of contemporary changes in the field of special needs education. From 2004, it has been called the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation (confirmed by Dizadervić).

1993 also marked the beginning of studies in defectology at the Institute of Pedagogy, which was part of the Faculty of Philosophy at the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Macedonia. This was an important milestone in a development which started with part-time studies arranged by the University of Belgrade. A next step was taken in 1996 when studies in defectology were organised in an independent Institute of Defectology at the same faculty. The study programme is currently of four years including alternative specialisations within different areas of disability, and awarding with the title Graduate Defectologist. It qualifies for work in professional teams in regular pre-school and school institutions as well as in health and social-protection institutions. At

18. Professor Sarajlić has participated in two cooperation projects with the Department of Special Needs Education, UiO; in the former project as project coordinator on behalf of the University of Tuzla (SØE 06/02), and during the later project as an active professor emeritus (WB 06/04). Professor Ljiljana Igric is the coordinator on behalf of the University of Zagreb in project WB 06/04.

present the institute is called Institute for Special Education and Rehabilitation (http://www.fzf.ukim.edu.mk/; http://www.mnza.org.mk/).

What does this brief overview tell about the development of the two disciplines of education and special needs education in the participating Western Balkan countries? Concerning the establishment of education as a university discipline, the history of the participating Faculty of Education, University of Sarajevo, was applied as an example. It shows that education was not amongst the initial disciplines at the old university. However, two year higher education programmes for pre-school, elementary and secondary school teachers were established even before the reopening of the University of Sarajevo in its modern form. Thus, the Sarajevo example indicates that schooling was seen as so important that education became a prioritised discipline in the post-World War II development of higher education in Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, since this is only one example, further investigation is necessary in order to draw general conclusions about the place of education within the history of higher education in the Western Balkan countries.

When it comes to special needs education, the subject became relevant when the first courses were started in Belgrade in 1926 under the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and transformed to higher education after World War II in a reunited Yugoslavia. The University of Belgrade came to be the oldest and leading university within defectology along with the University of Zagreb. Many defectologists from other parts of Yugoslavia studied in either of the two universities and in this way prepared the soil for establishment of the discipline as other universities were established and developed. In close cooperation the two universities provided midwifery when new faculties or departments of defectology were established at other universities even after the division of Yugoslavia. The courses offered at the different universities and the specialisations within a broad range of different disabilities indicated that the younger faculties were inspired and supported by the two most experienced universities. The names of the faculties or departments as well as the four year duration of the study programmes were similar in all the Western Balkan universities. However, the change from defectology to using more updated names of the discipline indicated which university had been the main supporting partner; the University of Tuzla chose the same name as in Zagreb and the department in Skopje the same as in Belgrade.

What about similarities and differences between the Western Balkan universities and the University of Oslo? No specific contact seems to have been made between the two parts of Europe concerning special needs education until after the division of Yugoslavia. Early similarities may therefore be seen as common

European trends. Thus the focus on disabilities, difficulties and special needs in education seems to have been introduced in higher education well after education. Another shared characteristic seems to have been that special needs education was connected with and even originated from the educational discipline, and at the same time related to a number of other research disciplines. Further studies may, however, shed light on concrete aspects of interdisciplinary collaborations in the project universities as well as in other European universities. Both the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and Norway started the trend of establishing and developing one national educational institution. The discipline developed from higher education at the college level into a university discipline. Special needs education rapidly became an attractive discipline within other higher education institutions as a one or two year independent study programme or as a part of a study programme within education. While still being an independent university college, the current Department of Special Needs Education gave academic and formal support to a number of universities and university colleges in their local establishment of special needs education, similar to the actions taken by the Universities of Belgrade and Zagreb. When it came to study content, a combination of general and disability specific specialisations was introduced early on in both European areas (Johnsen, 2001b).

It is, however, interesting to observe how much earlier Yugoslavia was to establish education for special educators in Belgrade (1926) than Norway (1961). The establishment of the Norwegian education programme coincided with that of Croatia (1962). An obvious difference mentioned previously are the early names of the discipline; defectology in the Western Balkan universities and special education in Norway. As also mentioned, this may indicate that early dominant influence have come from different sources within the European special needs educational discourse. This indication is interesting and invites to further studies focusing on foreign influence as well as prominent local scholars and research within the universities in both geographical areas. Another relevant and interesting question for further research concerns which other research disciplines had the greatest influence on special needs education and how various related disciplines have participated in the establishment and further development of special needs education within the different universities.

The steps towards a comprehensive research discipline have gone from the college to university level and towards offering the highest level of education, which is the doctoral degree. The overall intention of this article is to examine the development towards doctoral studies, and this is the topic of the next section.

Doctoral studies in the field of defectology and special needs education

How has the doctoral degree been established and organised in the Western Balkan universities? Dr Anna Wagner and Dr Daniela Cvitković[19], University of Zagreb, are amongst the doctoral research fellows participating as young researchers in the WB 04/06 project. They have followed the traditional pre-Bologna doctoral studies and describe the structure in two notes. In addition the WB 04/06 project team at the University of Belgrade under the leadership of Professor Dragan Rapaić has contributed a note on the development at their university. Authorised texts in books and on the Internet have also been consulted.

Generally speaking, traditional doctoral studies at the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Ss Cyril and Methodius, Skopje, Tuzla and Zagreb have had many common features in recent decades or until the beginning of the Bologna process[20] (The Bologna Declaration, 1999). The doctoral study programme leads to the highest degree of education, and it is achieved by defending a doctoral dissertation based on individual scientific research generating new results in a specific field of science. In order to apply for a doctoral dissertation, the candidate must have a Master's degree and at least three scientific publications in the area of research related to the dissertation. The candidate must be author or co-author of the papers published in scientific journals or at scholarly gatherings. The procedure for achieving doctoral level consists of six formal steps:

1. Submitting application and thesis
2. Report on thesis
3. Researching and writing dissertation under the supervision of mentor

---

19. The following description of the process towards being awarded a doctoral degree before the introduction of the Bologna process is based on detailed descriptions and documentation in two notes by Wagner and Cvitković.

20. Wagner and Cvitković base their general descriptions on the following documents handed over by project colleagues at the other Western Balkan universities. The documents are referred to in the order in which they have been presented: • Refined text of Rules of University of Tuzla presented to the conference of Management Board of University in Tuzla 07.02.2003. • Refined text of Rules of University of Tuzla presented to the conference of Management Board of University in Tuzla 21.04.2006. • Law regarding high education based on article 24 paragraph 1 bulletin c) of Tuzla canton Constitution ("Official gazettes of Tuzla-Podrinje canton", no: 7/79. and 3/99.) and proposed by Government of Tuzla Canton, Tuzla Canon Assembly on a meeting 19.7.1997. • Supplement for doctoral studies from our legislative framework regarding higher education. • Official paper of Canton Sarajevo, nr.1/96, 16/97, 2/96, 3/96. • Pravilnik o poslijediplomskom znanstvenom studiju, Zagreb: 2003.

4. Submitting doctoral dissertation for revision
5. Report on doctoral dissertation
6. Defence of dissertation

1) The application is submitted in the form of a thesis or project plan that includes the working title of the dissertation, a draft of the table of contents, research topic, methodology and a few words about the expected contribution to the scientific field. The thesis is delivered to relevant faculty where a commission is suggested and eventually appointed by the University Senate. Members of the committee should have doctoral degrees in the relevant field. The committee assesses the application.
2) Within a certain predetermined time frame the commission reports their assessment of the application with a recommendation to the academic-educational council, which in turn has a certain time frame to accept or reject the application and forward their decision to the University Senate. The applicant then has 15 days' notice for a possible appeal. When accepted the scientific-educational council of the faculty appoints one of the commission members as supervisor for the candidate in the process of completing the dissertation. The supervisor should be an associate professor, professor or professor emeritus with publications within the same field as the candidate.
3) The supervisor supports the doctoral candidate with the research and writing of the dissertation.
4) The candidate submits a complete unbound doctoral dissertation to the scientific-educational council of the faculty. An adjudication commission consisting of three members is proposed for the doctoral dissertation. The faculty council hands over an exemplar of the dissertation to each commission member.
5) The adjudication commission reviews the dissertation and submits a written recommendation on the thesis to the scientific-educational council of the faculty within 6 months. The faculty's scientific-educational council then acts in accordance with the three alternatives; a) accept the dissertation as ready for defence, b) reject the dissertation in its current form, recommending certain changes or c) reject the dissertation completely. Once the scientific-educational council has accepted a dissertation, the faculty council announces the date and time for the dissertation's public defence along with the candidate's full name and the theme of the doctoral dissertation, inviting interested parties to the defence, which should take place within a time frame of one week to three months from its announcement.

6) The president of the commission coordinates the public defence, opening by announcing the candidate's biography to the audience, introducing the candidate's scientific work and expert papers and confirming that the candidate has satisfied all requirements pertaining to the defence of his or her dissertation.

According to Wagner and Cvitković, the above outlined process towards being awarded a doctoral degree applies for the University of Zagreb as well as for the other Western Balkan universities participating in the WB 04/06 project. For the University of Belgrade, as an example, the process is documented in a series of revisions in The Law on University (1992–2002; confirmed by Rapaić & Stojković).

As indicated above, a certain number of doctors and professors are needed in order to be able to supervise and assess doctoral candidates on behalf of an academic scientific discipline at a university. Pioneer doctors within a discipline have, as a rule, defended their dissertation at another faculty or university. In addition some disciplines have started out at the college level and developed into university disciplines. This was the case with the Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo, which was founded as an independent college and developed into a university department (Johnsen, 2001b). The first doctoral degree, Dr Scient in Special Education, was defended in 1989 (Ostad, 1989). Similarly, former Pedagoska Akademija has recently developed into the current Faculty of Education, University of Sarajevo. The number of graduates with doctoral degrees is steadily increasing, but most of them are still defending their doctorate at the Faculty of Philosophy, which has developed a tradition for doctorates within education. According to Matejic-Đuričić, Kašić and Dimić (2005), the first Dr. Scient in Defectology at the University of Belgrade was defended in 1978 when doctoral degrees were awarded to Janković (1978), Nikolić-Simončić (1979) and Pihler (1978). At the University of Tuzla the first doctoral degree in Defectology was defended in 1998 (Salihović, 2008; confirmed by Dizadervić and by Rapaić & Stojković).

Doctoral studies within the Bologna process of higher education

In 1999 twenty-nine European ministers signed the Bologna Declaration, and in 2003 all the six countries participating in the WB 04/06 cooperation project;

Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia and Norway had become signatories. (Bologna Declaration, 1999; The Official Bologna Process Website July 2007 – June 2010). The intention with the declaration was to streamline European higher education through developing comparable degrees, common quality assurance systems and fair recognition of foreign degrees within the signatory countries. The same system of study credits (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System; ECTS) and the same or similar length of study programmes based on three years' undergraduate and two years' graduate cycles were important goals, even though allowances were made it was room for flexible solutions such as four + one year Bachelor and Master cycles, which are practiced at certain universities and university colleges in Norway as well as in the Western Balkan countries. Later on in the Bologna process, a third PhD cycle of three years was added.

One of the main goals in the WB 06/04 project was to share knowledge and experience related to the Bologna Process. This activity was an extension from the earlier project SØE 06/02 between the universities of Tuzla, Sarajevo and Oslo. The argumentation for this project goal was as follows:

> The Bologna principles and process of choices and practices of content and structure of higher education are of great relevance for all participating universities, who find themselves at different places in the joint European co-ordination process. To change traditional study structures and limit them in order to fit into a study structure based on three cycles of 3+2+3 years reveals a number of dilemmas and difficult priorities for most university disciplines. So also for regular and special needs education. The objective (…) is therefore to use the possibility that the project workshops give to proceed with sharing of knowledge and experience related to implementation of the Bologna process (WB 06/04).

The Bologna process was discussed as a special programme item on the workshops, which were held every semester during the project period. In this article focus is on the question if and how the Bologna principles have affected the organisation of doctoral degrees in education and special needs education at the participating universities.

In Norway the Bologna Declaration and subsequent university act together with incitements from the newly established Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) led to fast and radical changes and cuts in course structure regarding the first two cycles of higher education. The length of the already established organised doctoral programme was, however, in accordance with the expected three years. The PhD degree, which had occasionally

appeared in Norwegian university debate since the mid-twentieth century, was now constituted as the future degree for all organised doctoral programmes, and already in 2003 the University of Oslo (UiO) presented Regulations for the PhD degree or Philosophiae Doctor (Johnsen, 2013a). The only main change with the PhD degree was, however, the change of name from a joint Dr Polit degree borrowed from the Faculty of Social Sciences to the PhD degree which is common for all organised doctoral degrees, albeit with an additional title related to the relevant faculty and department. Thus within the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO, there is a PhD in Education and a PhD in Special Needs Education. Obligatory course content and supervision as well as procedures with respect to doctoral defence are the same or somewhat simplified compared to the organised doctoral degrees constituted in the late 1980s. In addition Norwegian universities have kept the traditional so-called free Dr. Philos degree[21] (Johnsen, 2013b).

Two of the participating universities have described the Bologna process related to their doctoral programmes, the University of Zagreb and the University of Belgrade.

At the University of Zagreb the academic year 2007 – 2008 marked the beginning of a new doctoral degree structure in accordance with the Bologna process. The Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences started a new doctoral study programme entitled Prevention Science and Disability Studies as partners of a joint degree including social sciences, biomedicine and healthcare, humanities as well as interdisciplinary fields (Rules concerning Scientific and Artistic Fields, Subfields and Areas, Article 5). The new degree, representing an interdisciplinary network connecting several scientific fields and subfields, is the first of its kind in Croatia. This revision coincides with the following structural changes in the philosophy of educating researchers. Thus the new doctoral degree programme is:

- interdisciplinary
- collaborative, aiming at interchange of instructors and researchers from within Croatia and abroad
- focusing on research partnership with the public sector and non-governmental organisations
- encouraging additional funding of excellent research candidates, candidates with disabilities and other important target groups

21. For more information on Norwegian doctoral degrees, see Johnsen, 2013b and 2013c).

- supporting international development of education and rehabilitation sciences through inviting international candidates and cooperating with other universities.

The doctoral degree programme admits graduates from the following study programmes as prospective applicants; a) the former undergraduate degree programme (four or five year programme), b) the former postgraduate degree programme (old Master's degrees) and c) the new Bologna programme (holders of new Master's degrees). Applicants may be from Croatian and foreign universities. Those applicants who satisfy admission requirements are to have the same rights and obligations regardless of their previous education. The doctoral study can be taken as a full-time or part-time programme, and it is as a rule financed by tuition fees. However, cooperation with a number of official foundations and offices is taking place in order to create and increase the number of research fellowships.

The Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Belgrade, began offering postgraduate studies in 1983 within the five research departments of deaf studies, visual impairment studies, physical disabilities and behaviour difficulties studies and studies of intellectual challenges. Based on the new Master's degrees, procedures for pursuing further research towards a doctoral dissertation were established in accordance with the Law on University (1992–2002; confirmed by Rapaić & Stojković). From this point in time, a completed Master's degree took the place of three published articles, which had previously been a common prerequisite in the Western Balkan universities, as described above. In addition to having completed their Master's degree, the applicant has to deliver a plan for a doctoral research project. This is assessed by a qualified commission, and when the applicant has received a written approval, he or she may enter the doctoral study programme.

In the academic year 2006–07 the first faculties at the University of Belgrade started a new PhD programme in accordance with the Bologna Process of Higher Education, when their draft regarding new programmes had been accepted by all necessary university organs and established by the Law on Higher Education (2005). They were followed by other faculties, and from 2011 new doctoral study programmes exist in all faculties, including the Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation (Doctoral and Specialist Study Programs, 2011; http://www.fasper.bg.ac.rs/o_fakultetu.html.). The PhD programme leads to the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Special Education and Rehabilitation (PhD) with the following goal:

> …to train students who will, upon their completion and public defending of a PhD thesis, be able to independently plan and conduct scientific research in the field of special education and rehabilitation; analyse and present obtained results in accordance with the highest scientific standards; perform horizontal and vertical dissemination of results of scientific research; critically evaluate scientific research of other authors; understand and apply the basic principles of evidence-based rehabilitation in everyday research; understand and hono(u)r ethical postulates in research based on the code of good scientific practice, especially in the field of assessing persons with special needs. PhD students fully master the methodology of scientific work, and conduct scientific research which represents a foundation for writing a PhD thesis. PhD thesis is based on original scientific papers, printed in extenso in international journals, leading national journals, or national journals (minimum one paper published or accepted for publication) (Doctoral and Specialist Study Programs, 2011:24).

A third university has given a brief description of the transition to the Bologna system of higher education. In 2005 the Faculty of Education, University of Sarajevo, changed the structure of education within the boundaries of the Bologna principles to 4 (Bachelor) + 1 (Master) + 3 (PhD) year cycles. As mentioned above, within a few years the Faculty has extended the Bachelor-level cycle from two to four years and developed the Master-level study programme. Currently, according to the Bologna agreement, mobility is granted for Master-level graduates in terms of enrolment in the third cycle at other universities that are partners in the Bologna process, of which universities in the Western Balkan countries are particularly relevant and where the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo, is the most sought (http://unsa.ba, confirmed by Sehic). The Faculty of Education is now about to establish its own doctoral programme.

Summary and conclusion

The collected information[22] draws a picture of the establishment of Western Balkan universities in early modern time and situates them in the turbulence of shifting political regimes, often by occupying forces. Europe, including the North Western as well as the South Eastern Outskirts, was unstable in these pre-democratic times, and those who held military power attempted to seek

22. Due to the main author's, Berit H. Johnsen's, poor reading of Slavic languages and scarce access to available literature within these languages, there is good reason to assume that there are more and richer sources of reliable information available about the topic of this article. Findings should therefore be interpreted as indications.

fulfilment of their dreams of having any kind of a common Europe under their rule. Thus higher education and research have developed in a European historical context of development, downsizing, manipulation and integration.

The summarising of this article is divided into two parts, starting with a regional-internal summary of similarities and differences between the Western Balkan universities supported by the main author's impressions as project leader through two cooperation projects. The second part consists of a brief summary of similarities and differences between the north western and south eastern areas of Europe. This last section concludes with an argument concerning the trustworthiness of the collected information along with suggestions for further studies into the history of development of the two disciplines, education and special needs education in the participating universities as well as in an extended European and international context.

Based on what is found about the participating Western Balkan universities, the development of special needs education seems to have followed similar paths; it was influenced by a defectological tradition, developing a four year professional basic education programme consisting of a combination of general special needs education and specialisations within traditional areas of disability and difficulties. Similarly, further development of the university discipline during later years and currently related to the Bologna process of higher education has led to establishment of Master-level and organised PhD study programmes. The cooperation within the WB 06/04 project supports the impression of similarities and "familiarity" between the universities, since the participants had a more or less joint history of acquaintanceship from before the WB 06/04 project. During the project period, they also participated at other regional-internal conferences and in other connections. During the preparation of the WB 06/04 project, this sense of familiarity also appeared when representatives from the two Bosnian universities in the former SØE 06/02 project suggested extending the cooperation to colleagues at the universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Skopje and Zagreb – across borders of division and recent wars. The impression was that the Western Balkan participants formed a joint undercurrent of professional and human unity across borders.

It is precisely these previous relationships that also demonstrate differences regarding the traditions of these universities. When the project workshops were situated in Belgrade and Zagreb, some of the participants visited "their old university" and the faculty where they had taken all or parts of their education as defectologists in earlier years. Thus the universities of Belgrade and Zagreb

played a leading role in general and also within special needs education during the period of the Yugoslavian state. Later other universities and faculties were established in their modern form, often after having been branches under a leading university. As an example modern higher education and research in Sarajevo started as branches from the University of Belgrade, and later the University of Sarajevo established branches in Tuzla, which became the first and founding faculties for the establishment of the University of Tuzla.

As mentioned in the introduction, an underlying assumption of the main author before starting this study was that the development in the Western Balkan countries has evolved from rather similar conditions during the Yugoslavian era to greater individual differences between the universities after their division into several states. However, the findings indicate the opposite. As summarised, the era of modern universities in Yugoslavia started with centralisation around first one and then two universities, in Belgrade and Zagreb, and slowly, but surely adding more universities. This development continued after the division of Yugoslavia. As a steadily rising number of areas established universities, the structure of the faculties and departments of defectology became rather similar, as documents and the notes of Wagner and Cvitković show. It also seems that the joint European Bologna process has led to even more streamlining in the structure of the three cycles of higher education programmes.

Building up a strong national university and developing the university structure from centralisation to an accelerating decentralisation of independent units seems to have been a general trait in European development of research and higher education, characterising the Western Balkan area as well as Norway. Several other similarities between the two European "outskirts" are mentioned earlier, such as joint relationships with education, additional cross- disciplinary connections, a combination of general special needs education and specialisations within traditional areas of disabilities and difficulties, development from the college level to a full-fledged research discipline at universities with Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes and joint partnership within the Bologna process of higher education.

As mentioned, this article is a result of cooperation between the main author, who is external to the Western Balkan universities, and colleagues from these participating universities; both co-authors and other colleagues from some of the universities who have contributed by answering questions, contributing comments and additional information through e-mail and telephone conversations (see list of informants). The article has also been presented in an open

lecture at the Faculty of Education, University of Sarajevo, in February 2013. As mentioned, the article is based on a joint text study of published books and articles and the universities' home pages as well as notes from colleagues. There is, however, reason to assume that more knowledge exists in texts and personal-professional experience than this article builds on. Moreover, some universities are poorly represented. These shortcomings are challenges to the trustworthiness of the article, and there are therefore good reasons to look at the presented information and discussions as tentative and possible conclusions as indications.

Thus this article poses more questions than answers, such as the following: What is the content of the traditions of special education and defectology? The assumption is that they are not two clearly different static traditions, but dynamic and developing traditions consisting of several sub-traditions.

Even though special education and defectology share a relationship with several other research disciplines, there are a number of questions regarding these relationships. How close have the relationships been over time? How should the relationships be described; as inspirational, as dependency, as competitive or as supportive?

What aspects of special education and defectology traditions have been dominant in the development; knowledge and skills regarding assessment or diagnosis, regarding supportive educational practices, or regarding development of new practices related to specific disabilities and special needs?

When it comes to the local universities, who may be described as outstanding researchers or research groups within the history of defectology and special education? What are their contributions and within what historical and cultural contexts did they work?

The concepts of defectology and special education have been used above due to the historical dimension of the questions. Regarding the current international trend towards social and educational inclusion, an important question is how each participating state and university downsize large institutions and develop high quality special needs educational support in their communities. Are, for example, special needs educators employed in local schools? Do we find research related to cooperation between teachers and special needs educators? Have locally employed teachers and special needs educators developed professional networks? If so, have participating universities developed some kind of cooperation with and support of these networks? The goals of the two cooperation projects, SØE 06/02 and WB 06/04, have been to answer some

questions related to education, special needs education and inclusion. However, at best the projects may be seen as contributions to a beginning joint research cooperation in this direction.

The tentativeness of this article is therefore an important challenge to further cooperation in studying the joint regional-internal as well as the inter-regional history of education and special needs education in Europe and wider international perspective; to learn from the past in order to apply for the future.

References

Anderson, R. D. (2004). *European Universities from the Enlightenment to 1914*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Baralić, D. (1967). *Zbornik zakona i uredaba o Liceju, Velikoj školi i Univerzitetu u Beogradu* (Collection of Laws and Regulations on Lyceum, High School and University in Belgrade*)*. Beograd: Naučna knjiga.

Bein, E. S., Vlasova, T. A., Levina, R. E., Morozova, N. G. & Shif, Zh. I.(1993). Afterword. In R. W. Rieber & A. S. Carton (Eds.). *The Collected Works of L. S. Vygotsky, The Fundamentals of Defectology* (pp. 302 – 314). Volume 2, New York: Plenum Press.

Danielsen, R., Dyrvik, S., Grønlie, T., Helle, K. & Hovland, E. (1991). *Grunntrekk i norsk historie fra vikingtid til våre dager* (Outline of Norwegian History from Viking Times to the Present Day). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Doctoral and Specialist Study Programs. (2011). Belgrade: University of Belgrade. http://www.bg.ac.rs/csrp/obrazovanje/pdf/University%20of%20Belgrade%20PhD%20and%20Specialist%20Catalogue.pdf.

Enerstvedt, R. (1996). *Legacy of the Past*. Oslo: Department of Sociology, University of Oslo.

Faculty of Defectology, University of Zagreb. http://public.carnet.hr/rektorat/engfak/edefekt.html Downloaded 12.12.2012.

Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb. http://www.erf.unizg.hr/indexEng.html Copyright 2009.

Faginović, N. (2005). *Balancing the Different Roles of the University from the Medieval Age to the Knowledge Based Economy. The Case of University of Tuzla*. Oslo: University of Oslo. Master Thesis.

Halilović, E. (2012). *Univerzitet u Tuzli : 35 godina* (The University of Tuzla: 35 Years). Tuzla: Univerzitet u Tuzli (http://www.untz.ba/uploads/file/publikacije/2011–12/Monografija.pdf).

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Sarajevo.

http://unsa.ba Developed and powered by 2009.

http://www.bg.ac.rs/eng/uni/en_istorijat.php. Last upgraded 2011.

http://www.bg.ac.rs/en_index.php. Last upgraded 2012.

http://www.fzf.ukim.edu.mk/index.php/en/departments-on-fzf/dep-of-seah/ 2009–12–04–13–40–55492
http://www.mnza.org.mk/ Most recent update: March 06, 2006
http://www.ukim.edu.mk/en_content.php?meni=10&glavno=10 Copyright 2008.
http://www.unizg.hr/homepage/about-university/history/ Last upgraded 2005.
http://www.uni-lj.si/en/mobility_programmes/contacts.aspx Last upgraded 2012.
http://www.uns.ac.rs/sr/novosti_dogadjaji/promocijaDoktora/index2012.html.
BOLOGNA_DECLARATION1.pdf.

Janković, V. (1978). Oblici korišćenja slobodnog vremena i socijalizacija ličnosti: Doktorska disertacija (*Patterns of spending of free time and socialization of personality: Doctoral dissertation*). Beograd: Defektološki fakultet.

Johnsen, B. H. (2013a). Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion. Joint Research Plan for Cooperation between the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.*). Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Research Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Johnsen, B. H. (2013b). Doctoral Studies at the University of Oslo from 1811 to PhD. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Research Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Johnsen, B. H. (2013c). From Dr. Philos to PhD. Senior researchers' experience and views on practice and development within doctoral studies the last half century. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Research Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Research Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Johnsen, B. H. (2010). Didaktiske muligheter i lys av sårbarhetens politikk. Annerledeshet i utdanning. I J. Kristeva, C. Gardou & E. Engebretsen (Eds.). *Annerledeshet – sårbarhetens politikk*. Oslo: Gyldendal.

Johnsen, B. H. (2001a). Introduction to History of Special Needs Education towards Inclusion. In B. H. Johnsen & M. D. Skjørten (Eds.). *Education – Special Needs Education: An Introduction* (pp.133 – 154). Oslo: Unipub.

Johnsen, B. H. (2001b). Special Needs Education as a University Discipline – the Department of Special Needs Education, UiO. In B. H. Johnsen & M. D. Skjørten (Eds.). Education – Special Needs Education: An Introduction (pp.173 – 186). Oslo: Unipub.

Johnsen, B. H. (1999–2000). Idehistorisk perspektiv på spesialpedagogikk i skolen for alle (Idea-historical Perspective on Special Needs Education in the School for All). In K. Jordheim, (Ed.). *Skolen 1999–2000. Årbok for norsk utdanningshistorie* (The School 1999–2000. Yearbook in Norwegian History of Education): pp. 107–126.

Johnsen, B. H. (1998). *Curricula for the Plurality of Individual Learning Needs. Some Thoughts Concerning Practical Innovation towards an Inclusive School*. Paper presented at "Pedagoska Akademija" in Sarajevo 17. September (18 p.).

Kjærgaard, P. C. & Kristensen, J. E. (2003). Universitetets idehistorie (The History of the University Idea). In H. Fink, P. C. Kjærgaard, H. Kragh & J. E. Kristensen (Eds.).

Universitet og Videnskab (University and Science), (pp.31–143). København: Hans Reitzels Forlag.

Knox, J. E. & Stevens, C. B. (1993). Vygotsky and Soviet Russian Defectology. An Introduction. In R. W. Rieber & A. S. Carton (Eds). *The Collected Works of L. S. Vygotsky, The Fundamentals of Defectology* (pp.1 – 25). Volume 2, New York: Plenum Press.

Matejic-Đuričić, Z., Kašić, Z., & Dimić, N. (Eds.) (2005). *30 godina Defektološkog fakulteta 1975–2005 (30 years of the Faculty of Defectology 1975–2005)*. Beograd: Defektološki fakultet, Centar za izdavačku delatnost.

Nikolić Simončić, C. (1979). *Princip solidarnosti i humanizacija međuljudskih odnosa u udruženom radu s osvrtom na zaštitne radionice: Doktorska disertacija (The principle of solidarity and humanization of interpersonal relationships in associated labor with a view on protective workshops: Doctoral dissertation*. Beograd: Defektološki fakultet.

Obradović, I., Milojević, A. & Radulović, V. (2009). *University of Belgrade: 1808–2008: A biccentinnial of the University of Belgradeb and higher education in Serbia*. Belgrade: University, Službeni glasnik.

Ostad, S. (1989). *Mathematics through the Fingertips*. Hosle: The Norwegian Institute for Special Education (doctoral dissertation).

Pihler, S. (1978). *Privredni kriminalitet i zaštita društvene imovine: Doktorska disertacija (Economic crime and the protection of public property: Doctoral dissertation)*. Beograd: Defektološki fakultet.

Rommetveit, R. (1972). *Språk, tanke og kommunikasjon : ei innføring i språkpsykologi og psykolingvistikk* (Language, Thought and Communication: Introduction to Language Psychology and Psycho-Linguistics). Universitetsforlaget: Oslo.

Rommetveit, R. (1992). Outlines of a Dialogically Based Social-Cognitive Approach to Human Cognition and Communication. In A. H. Wold. (Ed.). *The Dialogical Alternative* (pp. 19–44). Oslo: Scandinavian University Press.

Rommetveit, R. (2008). *Språk, individuell psyke, og kulturelt kollektiv* (Language, Individual Psyche and Cultural Collective). Gyldendal Norsk Forlag: Oslo.

Rules concerning Scientific and Artistic Fields, Subfields and Areas, Article 5. Croatia:The Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia, no. 123/03.

Salihovic, N. (2008). *Monografija 15 godina Edukacijsko-rehabilitacijskog fakulteta Univerziteta u Tuzli*. Edukacijsko-rehabilitacijski fakultet. Tuzla: PrintCom.

Simpson, R. (1983). *How the PhD Came to Britain*. Guildford: Society for Research into Higher Education, university of Guildford.

Ståhle, B. (1996). *Universiteten och forskarna – från stagnation till förnyelse* (the Universities and the Researchers – from Stagnation to Renewal). København: Nordisk ministerråd.

SØE 06/02. (2002). *Institutional Competence Building and Cooperation with Two Bosnian Universities: "Special Needs Education towards Inclusion"*. The Cooperation Programme with South-East Europe (CPSEE) 2002–2004.

The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999. THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA. Joint declaration of the European Ministers of Education. http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/Declarations/BOLOGNA_DECLARATION1.pdf.

The Law on University (1992 – 2002). *Official Herald of the Republic of Serbia* No. 54/92,No. 39/93, No. 44/93, No. 53/93, No. 67/93, No. 48/94, No. 24/96, No. 7/98, No. 21/02. Serbia: The author.

The Law on Higher Education. (2005). Službeni glasnik RS (Official Herald of the Republic of Serbia), No. 76–05.

The official Bologna Process website July 2007 – June 2010. Participating countries and organisations. http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/ .

Uiblein, P. (1978). Zu den Beziehungen der Wiener Universität zu anderen Universitäten im Mittelalter (The Relations of the Vienna University to other Universities in the Middle Ages). In J. Ijsewijn & J. Paquet (Eds.). *The Universities in the Late Middle Ages* (pp. 168 – 189). Leuven: Leuven University Press.

UN. (2006). *The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. New York: United Nations.

UNESCO. (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. Paris: The author.

Universita Di Bologna. Our History. http://www.eng.unibo.it/PortaleEn/University/Our+History/default.htm. Copyright 2004–2012.

Univerzitet u Beogradu, Fakultet za specijalnu edukaciju i rehabilitaciju (FASPER). http://www.fasper.bg.ac.rs/o_fakultetu.html. Copyright 2005–2012.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1993). *Fundamentals of Defectology (Abnormal Psychology and Learning Disabilities)*. Volume 2. The Collected Works of L .S. Vygotsky. R. W. Rieber & A. S. Carton (Eds.). New York : Plenum Press.

WB 04/06. (2006). Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building: Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo.

Wertsch, J. (1985). *Culture, Communication and Cognition: Vygotskian Perspectives*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

References applied in Wagner and Cvitković's presentation of pre-Bologna doctoral program structure

- Refined text of Rules of University of Tuzla brought on the conference of Management Board of University in Tuzla, 07.02.2003.
- Refined text of Rules of University of Tuzla brought on the conference of Management Board of University in Tuzla, 21.04.2006.
- Law regarding high education based on article 24 paragraph 1 bulletin c) of Tuzla canton Constitution ("Official gazettes of Tuzla-podrinje canton", no: 7/79. and 3/99.)

and proposed by Government of Tuzla Canton, Tuzla Canton Assembly on a meeting 19.7.1997.
- Supplement for doctorate study from our legislative frame work regarding high education.
- Official paper of Canton Sarajevo, nr.1/96, 16/97, 2/96, 3/96.
- Pravilnik o poslijediplomskom znanstvenom studiju, Zagreb: 2003.

Informants through email contact on request from the main author for information validation and further additional information during the writing process. In addition to email information there has also been oral information exchange through telephone

- Irena Stojković, assistant professor, Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Belgrade
- Natasa Hanak, , Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Belgrade
- Snežana Ilić, Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Belgrade
- Goran Nedović, associate professor, Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Belgrade
- J. Kovacevic, Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Belgrade
- Irma Sehić, PhD research fellow, University of Sarajevo
- Alma Dizdarević, PhD and assistant professor, University of Tuzla

PART THREE

RESEARCH PROJECT PREPARATION

9

Developing and Writing a Research Plan

Possibilities and Barriers

Berit H. Johnsen

Introduction

"I upphafi skal endirinn skoðast": Begin with the end view. These ancient Viking words of wisdom are highly relevant for modern research. The first and very important task in every study is to prepare and provide structure for a realistic research process. The knowledge embedded in a research plan sets the standard for the research process and product. Administrators of research funds are conscious of this wisdom, and most funds have developed a set of criteria to secure as well as possible that financed studies are realised. Some of these criteria are classical "evergreens" in all kinds of research programmes, while others have been developed within the specific scientific discipline and in accordance with overriding intentions of the financing body at any given time. Thus human right issues and gender equality are examples of principles that have to be included in project planning on behalf of current UN- as well as most Nordic research funds.

When applying for research financing to a Nordic or Norwegian fund or university, it is an advantage for applicants to understand the local language. More information tends to be given in local languages, whereas English versions may be shorter and, depending on the translation accuracy, somewhat unclear. In addition a number of written and unwritten practices may be hard to grasp. Reading former high quality proposals may be of great help in gaining insight

Citation of this chapter: Johnsen, B. H. (2013). Developing and writing a research plan. Possibilities and barriers. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 147–171/pp. 147–171 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org./10.23865/noasp.124

into the changer of research plans. However, research plans written in English are few and difficult to access. Through the years I have observed international Master students in educational disciplines having difficulties sorting out the essentials in preparing and writing a research plan for their PhD fellowship applications. I have also seen international colleagues searching in vain for successful structures and content of project applications. However, some have managed to pass through the needle eye and obtain a research fellowship, as several research plans published in this book show. Nevertheless, there is a need for a broader and more thorough understanding of the possibilities and barriers encountered by international PhD applicants and researchers. I have therefore conducted a small scale study of this issue.

The goal of the study was to explore international applicants' possibilities and barriers when preparing and writing research plans. The focus was mainly on applications for Norwegian funding, but most aspects of the study are assumed to be generalizable to development of research plans in general. After providing a brief account of methodological issues, the following presentation gives a detailed description highlighting main aspects and a variety of nuances concerning planning research. Essential knowledge and experiences of junior and senior researchers are discussed in view of research literature and official guidelines for research funding.

Learning from experience – a qualitative study

What are the general knowledge and skills required for a qualified research plan? And what characterises the tradition of planning and applying for a research project in a Norwegian context? A qualitative study was conducted in order to explore general as well as particular aspects of this phenomenon, applying e-mail questionnaires and individual face to face interviews.

Key informants. The study was conducted with two groups of researchers:

- Senior researchers with experience as informal mentors of applicants to PhD fellowships[23] and as members of reviewer committees on behalf of research funds and universities

23. There is no official practice of mentoring applicants to PhD grants and PhD positions within Norwegian universities. However, several senior researchers consider it part of their informal academic duty to give a certain amount of information and guidance to applicants when contacted. Large scale research projects and research groups may offer information and even preparatory seminars for potential participating research colleagues or PhD applicants. Much of the information in this article is about this kind of support.

- International PhD research fellows with an accepted research plan and fellowship

These informants were assumed to have experience of central importance for the issue at hand. Members of the two groups were purposefully and conveniently selected. Concerning the latter group, the selection was consciously biased, as it was limited to international PhD research fellows who had succeeded in gaining acceptance of their research plan and receiving research grants. Since the number of accepted research plans is higher than the number of available PhD fellowships, to take the Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Oslo (UiO), as an example (http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/), these informants represent only applicants who have enjoyed double success, as their research plans have met the quality criteria for being accepted, and they have been prioritised to receive one of the few research fellowships available. If applicants whose research plans had not been accepted had been amongst the informants of this study, there is reason to believe that the information collected would be more nuanced. The selected senior researchers have experience with applications to research programmes and PhD research fellowships, with supervision of PhD research fellows as well as with holding seats in adjudication committees (Creswell, 2007; Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007; Kvale, 1996; Stake, 1995).

Research instruments. Based on both my experience as a Norwegian-speaking research applicant to Norwegian national and international research funds, and my interaction with international applicants (Gadamer, 1975), I formulated two sets of open questions, which were tried out in a pilot study with feedback from two colleagues. A revised set of questions was sent to 19 senior researchers, whereof eight answered by e-mail and five in interviews. Likewise five international research fellows were contacted, one answered by e-mail and two in interviews.

The international research fellows were asked if, in retrospective, there was any kind of information which they had missed while preparing and writing their research plan, such as information lacking on the English-language home page about applications and admission (http://www.uv.uio.no/english/ research/ doctoral-degree/phd/application/), or from other sources. The joint questions to all the informants were based on the classical content and structure of Norwegian research plans; theme/topic – research problem/question – methodology – progress plan – needed resources – references; and they were asked if there were some typical topics or aspects related to structure and content that seemed to cause

difficulties (shortcomings, misunderstandings, writing style, etc.). If so, they were asked, what are these, and what general ideas or recommendations do you have concerning how to overcome each of the barriers? Both informant groups were asked to recommend literature supporting the quality of research plans. The two groups were also asked to give useful literature references within methodological fields with which they were familiar, such as within quantitative methodologies and statistics, qualitative methodologies, mixed methods and/or text analysis.

Validation. The informants were selected due to their experience with international research plans or as mentors and evaluators of such plans, all representing different backgrounds, experiences and goals. The intention was to gain an understanding of their various perceived experiences and report and discuss these (Creswell, 2007; Stake, 1995). Validation of their statements was crucial and took place in two steps: 1) Immediately after gathering their information through e-mail and informal talks or interviews, their information was transcribed and returned for comments. 2) The second step took place when the first draft of categorised findings was sent to all informants marked with their own initial beside each corresponding statement, and again they were asked to comment on their reported information. I quickly received responses containing suggestions for revisions, additions or removals as well as suggestions related to language improvements. All in all they added to the report's nuances and overall trustworthiness.

Analysis and interpretation: As mentioned, the transcribed texts were categorised in accordance with the open questions concerning the selected topics. This procedure was chosen in order to highlight information and considerations concerning the classical aspects of developing and writing research plans in the Norwegian educational science tradition. Within the frame of these main categories, senior researchers' and research fellows' statements were gathered into joint units of meaning. These units put focus on different aspects of the informants' experiences concerning developing, advising, writing and assessing research plans, including possibilities and obstacles and how to surmount them. In the article each unit of meaning is marked with a number in brackets to show how usual each statement was amongst the informants. In addition to the units of meaning, quotations are presented either as examples or to emphasize certain points (Stake, 1995).

In the discussion following the reported findings, information from Norwegian and other international research application guidelines as well as from relevant methodology texts have been added to the interview findings. Finally

the main parts of a prototypical research plan in educational sciences are discussed, and some aspects regarding the further development of information and support are suggested for international applicants to PhD grants and other research programmes.

Experiences, knowledge and opinions regarding developing and writing a research plan: Findings[24]

As mentioned, my focus was on collecting information from senior researchers and successful project applicants represented by PhD research fellows in the study of the phenomenon "developing and writing a research plan". Special emphasis was placed on revealing barriers and shortcomings in the process as well as ways to overcome them (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007; Kvale, 1996). The findings have been categorised and presented in accordance with the main topics expected of a PhD-level research plan at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO; theme/topic, research problem/-question, methodology, progress plan, needed resources and references. However, the informants also had a number of general comments concerning how to succeed in developing and writing a research plan. The presentation starts with them.

General responses

Writing a research plan is a complex and time consuming task (2). It is also a complicated task to assess the quality of research plans, as pointed out by one of the informants (1). The number of applicants to research grants and positions[25] as well as other research programmes is, as a rule, much higher than available fellowships, and the competition for these fellowships is increasing and tough.

During the last few years it is fair to say that "the needle eye" through which applicants have to crawl in order to get a research fellowship has become steadily narrower (1)

---

24. Many have contributed to this article as informants and peer reviewers. Thank you all: Emad Al-Rozzi, Birgit Brock-Utne, Crina Damşa, Eva-Signe Falkenberg, Greta Björk Gudmundsdottir, Tone Kvernbekk, Solveig Lyster, Solveig Bauge Løland, Anders I. Mørch, Liv-Randi Opdal, Snorre Ostad, Berit Rognhaug, Eva Simonsen, Reidun Tangen, Steinar Theie, Arnfinn M. Vonen and Siri Wormnes.

25. The University of Oslo has a number of PhD research positions distributed among faculties and departments. In addition PhD research fellows with grants from other institutions participate in PhD programmes.

Senior researchers assume that around 10 – 20% of applicants to PhD fellowships manage to write a research plan of acceptable quality (2). Many PhD applicants submit research plans several times before mastering the task (4). All applicants receive a written statement from an assessment committee comprised of a few sentences pointing out quality aspects and opportunities for improvement (1).

Basically there are no great differences between project plans designed by Norwegian and international PhD applicants. Applications may be delivered in Norwegian or English, and some Norwegian applicants also write their applications in English. Problems with writing in English are quite common, but writing English well is important. Low level of mastery of a relevant English research genre usually results in "poor" text with weak and possibly inappropriate vocabulary, or incorrect grammar and syntax. Thus the text may appear naive. There is a great potential for improvement when writing good applications in English. Even when applicants have a good knowledge of English, it is necessary for them to be precise in their use of concepts (2).

Applicants from other cultures than Norwegian academia may not be familiar with requirements and standards. This is a gap that may be time consuming and difficult to bridge. Requirements regarding precision and overview of the field of study are similar as for Master-level students, but are on a higher level for PhD studies (4). Currently no less than two years' Master-level education is accepted for applicants (1). Still they may have insufficient theoretical and methodological knowledge and, as a consequence, too many undocumented statements tend to occur (1). This view is supported and even strengthened by one of the PhD research fellows, a former student at the two years international Master of Philosophy programme in Special Needs Education at UiO. He adds that it would have been preferable to have more academic experience after completing his Master study before starting on his PhD research (1). Another research fellow states that having four years' experience after receiving her Master's degree employed in different research groups has given her a variety of important research experiences (1).

Research fellows reveal a number of differences between their former universities and UiO. Some of these appear in the preparation process; in other cases it may take a long time and specific experience to discover them:

- One informant points out that different universities and countries seem to have different traditions in writing research plans and applications. For instance at her former university research plans and applications are

expected to be shorter. Guidelines are not so general, but more strict and to-the-point; described in a maximum number of words and not pages. In this way they do not allow for as much discussion. Administrative procedures are more emphasised, and (financial) plans expected to be much more detailed. The UiO application tradition appears more flexible and general in nature, allowing applicants the freedom to present and discuss their application information (1).

- One of the research fellows had neither studied nor worked in Norway, and she prepared and wrote her research plan in her former country of employment. She states that she needed information about expectations related to the content of her application as well as administrative aspects:

> Administrative procedures were rather unclear to me. I used UiO's internet information, e-mail, and telephone contact with partners from UiO in a joint international project. On the Net I found links to information on the faculty homepage as well as links to the homepage of UiO centrally. I read all the documents from the Faculty of Educational Sciences concerning expected content of a PhD project, evaluation and quality criteria … I thought the information was comprehensive. All in all it was informative. I also got good information and feedback from UiO concerning the administrative procedure of the application process. It mattered for the result (1).

- Her description is supported by another research fellow, who points out that it is important and valuable to have as much information as possible available on the Internet. She mentions specifically relevant literature lists, information about research ethical aspects and the assessment process of submitted applications. Examples of model proposals would also be valuable (1).

- When preparing the research plan, a number of methodology books have been consulted; however, none of them offer a complete set of advice on how to write a research plan (3). One exception is mentioned, namely Phillips and Rugh's book *How to Get a PhD. A Handbook for Students and Their Supervisors* (2010), (1).
- Ethical standards are more detailed and formalised in Norway than in certain other countries. Consequently, it may come as a surprise to the research fellow the amount of time it takes to formulate letters of consent, post them and wait for answers. For example, the Norwegian Social Science Data Service, NSD, assures that ethical issues regarding informants' privacy are followed. In my home country, says one research fellow, although we do not

have such a committee, we still follow the same research ethical guidelines. He points out that it is easier to recruit informants at home (1).

- There are, of course, some communication difficulties for international researchers in Norway, even if they have a basic mastery of the Norwegian language. Sometimes one finds oneself using non-verbal communication in order to clarify questions in an interview situation. Language problems take a lot of time in all phases of research, even when the research work is written in English (1).
- It is also noted that there are fewer PhD courses offered in English than in Norwegian. Thus international research fellows may have to wait or search for relevant courses at other universities or in other countries. Regarding this aspect, the choice of courses is more limited for them than for Norwegian research fellows. This may affect their efficiency during the research fellow period (1).

According to senior researchers, there are several problems related to research plan quality varying among applicants (1). Many project descriptions are too broad in scope (1). There may be unclear relationships between the research question or topic, theory, design, methods, instruments and analysis (2). While the plan's structure often follows the required parts of a research plan, the level of precision and clarity is too low within some or all of these parts (2). Some research plans have shortcomings in the latter part of the listed items above, as if the candidate were short of time. Thus the time line and reference list may be incomplete; selection of informants and contact with case owners (for example organization) may be suggestions only, as if no informants have been requested and none have given their consent to participate. Thus some plans do not have sufficient feasibility due to inadequate preparation (1).

When a funding organisation announces that research plans have to be in line with their profile, it is very important to study this research profile and come up with content which combines the organisation's priorities and applicant's research interest (1). Research programmes usually have general guidelines, which have to be carefully analysed. It is important to discuss the project in view of these guidelines (1). Assessment of PhD research plans on behalf of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO, is in accordance with the faculty's guidelines. When the faculty has priorities within specific fields of research, they have to be considered in the research plan (1). One research fellow (1) reports that his application is based on former knowledge from his Master study, requirements announced for a PhD position within a specific

research project, and on the formal criteria of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO, (http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/doctoral-degree/phd/application/). Another research fellow finds the UiO criteria for a research plan "alright and general" (1). A third research fellow emphasises that talking with former PhD fellows has been of great help (1). General requirements of a research plan at the PhD level are summed up in this way by one of the senior researchers:

> In order for a research plan to be accepted at the PhD level, it has to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of relevant theory, an overview of existing research and methodological insight. Key concepts need to be clarified. Based on knowledge within these areas, the applicant is expected to be able to describe and discuss existing knowledge within the selected field of research, and also point to lack of knowledge within certain areas, a lack which calls for more research. In this way the applicant constructs a necessary connection between the research question or topic, discussions of existing research within the field, as well as documentation and argumentation for further studies (1).

Senior researches convey a number of **general recommendations** regarding the process of making a quality research plan.

First, the plan needs thorough preparation. Having several years of preparation and a good Master's degree provides a solid general background in order to start the actual writing of a project plan (1). Writing a project plan requires, as a rule, three months of work, even after many years of research experience (1). High quality research plans have a high degree of precision, relevance and references to relevant literature and former research (1). It is important to follow "the rules" of academic writing (1). The research plan should start with stating the theme and a preliminary research problem or question. The importance of theoretical discussions and overview of relevant former research is pointed out by several senior researchers: The plan should proceed to a thorough literature review, a) discussing theoretical positioning of the study and b) present a thorough review of relevant studies from a broad research front and conclude with arguing and formulating a more exact researchable problem or question. This procedure makes it possible to combine empirical and theoretical research questions, out of which a good thesis can develop. The literature review is also important in searching for relevant methodology in order to "answer the question" of the research topic or problem (2). Reading methodological handbooks is important, but not sufficient. Even more important are the discussions of choices related to the research problem or question and methodology, i.e. the inner structure of the plan. A completed research plan must be coherent and

not merely a collection of "this and that" (1). To sum up, a research plan needs to be reasonable and manageable. Applicants are advised to keep in mind how to "sell" their project plan to the sponsors, whether they are applying for a PhD position or other funding institutions and research programmes (1).

A pure innovation project is not suitable as a PhD project. The intention of PhD projects is to do research and generate knowledge. Possible innovation may be an additional aim or further consequence of a project (1).

If available, the senior researchers recommend that potential applicants request competent mentors or peers to review and comment on their research plan before it is submitted. However, senior researchers may only give minor support, since it is crucial for acceptance that the research plan is the applicant's independent work. The key question is whether the plan is comprehensible, realistic, credible, important and interesting (3). One of the research fellows relates that a senior researcher read and gave feedback on the application draft before submission (1). "I advise all potential applicants to have somebody comment on the content and language before submitting", says another research fellow (1). Research fellows had access to one or two former research applications during their work on their own research plan (2).

Regarding research problem or question

A frequently found shortcoming is that the research question or topic is too general and too broad and, likewise, that sub-questions or -topics are not sufficiently delimited. Consequently the research plan is not limited in accordance with the time limits of the fellowship or programme (5). It is crucial that research questions are formulated in such a way that it is possible to find answers (3). "How do we proceed from general to specific research problems?" asks a researcher, adding:" I do not remember a single application where this was not a difficulty; this goes for Norwegian and international PhD applications alike (1). His further statement represents the opinion of most of the senior researchers (1):

> Applicants' difficulty does not concern their choice of theme. They are usually relevant for special needs education. The typical difficulty arises on the way from theme to specific research topic or –question; from the general to a specific research problem. Applicants usually have difficulties with the process of making the research theme or general problem researchable; with the process of operationalization. This is a challenge which occurs in the majority – if not all – first drafts of project plans, and which needs to be in focus when we give advice to applicants: The challenge is to find a "name" for the variables the applicant intends to study.

It is recommended that the research problem or question is presented on the first page of the plan, even at the beginning. It should be followed by a discussion of the relevance and importance of answering the question through further research. It is preferable that the main research problem or question is divided into a maximum number of two or three sub-questions. Each of these sub-questions should be accompanied by a few sentences arguing for the direct connection with the main problem or question. This procedure works well in quantitative as well as qualitative plans (1). Another researcher points out that it is helpful to state the topic as a subject for investigation and to do so in the form of a question. This helps focus the research (1).

Theoretical basis of the selected research area

One research fellow tells that while he learned a lot about excellent and helpful theoretical perspectives as a Master student, he did not learn how to argue and connect theory to his research problem (1).

Senior researchers place great emphasis on the theoretical aspect of research plans. In the review part of a plan, it is important to report on and discuss a broad range of literature related to theory. Having a thorough knowledge within their field of study, applicants will manage to develop specific and researchable problems or questions and operationalized variables (3). One of the most difficult parts of the research plan concerns the presentation of theory in relation to the main topic or question. Some plans are weak on theory. In other plans the theoretical section tends to be presented in a "study book"-like genre, and applicants have not managed to apply the chosen theory to their theme of interest. A central question here is how to "move" from theory to research problem; how the formulation of the research problem is anchored in theory. The discussion of literature also needs to clarify limits and weaknesses in the argumentation for the choice of research topic, requiring the applicant to have spent considerable time searching for and studying relevant theory (5).

In order to achieve applicability and creativity, the plan would gain by having either one or more of the following traits:

- Application of new theory
- Modification of a well-known theory due to novel character of the application context
- Application of theory within a new application context (1)

Should the theoretical discussion contain an account of theory of science? A prominent senior researcher within theory of science does not expect so. "However", she points out, "research fellows seem to perceive that knowledge within theory of science helps to improve their argumentation. This is especially so for those who use the opportunity to relate the obligatory PhD course essay to their own research" (1). She adds that there is even a question if the Faculty of Educational Sciences should support research fellows with an additional course in argumentation.

One of the research fellows mentioned explicitly that he applied cultural-historical theory in his research plan and mentioned literature relevant to his studies (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2005; Rogoff, 1990; 2003; Vygotsky, 1978).

Presentation of former research within the selected area of study

Another important part in the preparation of a research project is to search for and read former relevant studies. Many research plans have too limited reviews or too diffuse connections between reported studies and the actual research topic. They need to contain an updated overview of a broad research front, presenting knowledge about previous studies and the future need for research, and in this way legitimate the chosen research problem (8).

Discussing research methodology

An often mentioned problem is the lack of or unclear relationship between the research problem or question and choice of methodology, and further, between research design, methods, instruments and analysis. Challenges in this area are more or less evenly distributed across chosen methodological approaches, such as quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, etc. Whatever methodology is applied, it is necessary to demonstrate thorough knowledge concerning how to use it. There has to be compliance between the research problem and choice of methodology. It takes hard work to find, argue for and formulate this connection (7). A group of senior researchers recommend that applicants observe how Yin (2009) and others discuss the relationship between different types of questions or intentions and choice of methodology (4).

As mentioned, methodology covers design, method, instruments and analysis. All aspects need to be accounted for. Discussion of chosen method needs to provide necessary and sufficient means to answer research questions (1). A detailed account for data gathering instruments is not always required, espe-

cially if developing instruments, such as an interview guide or questionnaire, is an important part of the planned research activities. In such cases the topics of investigation should be explicitly presented (1). The research plan should also contain an accurate plan for analysis of findings (1).

A research fellow points out that it is important to be well informed through methodological readings, and in this way achieve an idea of different approaches which may be of use in the study (1). Applicants may have applied the same methodology as in their Master studies, or they may have chosen quite another methodology. One informant had used qualitative methodology, then participated in a quantitative study and argued for using mixed methods in her PhD application (3). Research fellows have used and recommended a number of methodology books, including literature focusing on research in countries in the South. The majority of these are referred to below or in the reference list and relate to relevant methodological genres (Befring, 2004; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007; Laws, Harper & Marcus, 2003).

Planned progress and recourses

One research fellow states that even though in principle the calculation of a time plan at the PhD level is the same as at the Master level, it needs to be more detailed, covering a more complicated activity process (1). As mentioned, senior researchers argue that some research plans have shortcomings in the latter part of their presentation. It is as if the candidate has not had enough time to complete the application thoroughly. In many cases the time plan seems to be based on guesswork, or it seems to be part of the plan just in order to fulfil a required set of criteria. This lack of sophistication may in some cases have a boomerang effect, leading to difficulties for researchers who do not manage to follow their written time line (1). Selection of informants and contact with case owners (for example an organization) sometimes appear to be suggestions only, such as if no informants have been requested, or none have given their consent to participate. Such inaccuracies indicate that the plan does not have sufficient feasibility (1). As with the time line, the estimated budget also often looks like guesswork (2).

Presentation: language, logic and structure

Concerning presentation, the importance of "following the rules of writing a research plan" (1) as well as demonstrating a sophisticated knowledge of the English language (1) has already been mentioned. Another piece of advice relates to the literature list: "Do not be sloppy with references" (2).

Viewpoints on specific research methods

Informants were also asked to add more specific comments related to methodologies with which they had direct experience and to recommend possible literature. As the researchers were selected from different traditions within education and special needs education, detailed recommendations were given regarding quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods, as well as text analysis. The following quotation represents a common fundamental view:

> You should not let the method direct you. It is the research questions which should direct which tools of analysis may be possible and relevant (1)

Quantitative methodology. The impression is that those who present plans with quantitative methodology master its usage. Operationalization and discussion of instruments are usually good (1). For example, it should be possible to describe experimental design in details when the research problem is clarified. Quantitative methodology is suitable to analyse large samples. However, it is also applicable in relation to small populations and samples, such as is often the case within special needs education. Handbooks on quantitative methodology also offer readers good advice concerning studies of small samples. Relevant variables should be described and discussed in the plan (4).

Knowledge about statistics needs to cover the variety of statistical means as tools in data analysis. Research plans should have explicit discussions of which statistical methods are assumed to work as tools for analysing expected findings. This requires thorough knowledge about possibilities and limitations (6). The following books were recommended; Befring (2004), Robson (2011) and Gall, Gall & Borg (2007). Gall, Gall and Borg's book has been the most applied book on the international Master of Philosophy programme in special needs education, UiO, through several editions, and is also applied in other programmes.

Qualitative methodology. "Presentations of qualitative methodology often tend to be insufficient", states one of the informants, and points out that methodological discussions must be explicitly related to the research problem (1). Qualitative analysis may have a bottom-up, even a "grounded" perspective, or it may have a set of pre-determined categories as its point of departure; or it may place itself somewhere in between these two outer edges. If categories are predetermined, these should be identifiable within the theory section of the plan. Sometimes they are directly reflected in the research questions. The analysis is the most difficult part of the research report. The plan should accordingly suggest what kind of analysis might be expected (1).

Several books were recommended within qualitative methodology (2): The large Handbook of Qualitative Research edited by Denzin & Lincoln (1994) is considered reputable. Within the grounded theory tradition Corbin and Strauss' basic book (2008) is amongst the major literature (1). So is also Cresswell's introductory book to five genres within qualitative research (1). When it comes to conversation analysis: Harvey, Schegloff and Jefferson's article "A Simplest Systematic for the Organization of Turn-Taking for Conversation" (1974) is a classic (1). A research fellow doing her study on the African continent (1) also recommends Vulliamy, Lewin & Stephens (1990) together with Silverman's classical handbook (2010) and Fangen's Norwegian book on participant observation. Another informant (1) adds Kvale's (1996) book on interviews to the methodological repertoire.

Mixed methods. Large-scale studies do not leave much opportunity for the voice of the individual informant to be noticed, argues one of the informants, pointing out that research focusing on one or few informants, which is usual in qualitative studies, offers this opportunity. Therefore it may be good to start with a broad survey using a quantitative approach, and then pick qualitative cases within the sample, or strengthen qualitative findings with quantitative data (1). The strength of mixed methodology is that such studies may consist of a combination of interview or interaction analysis and questionnaire. It offers a combination of different kinds of analysis, which when combined may strengthen or weaken the findings in a transparent way. Furthermore, qualitative categorisation and quantitative analysis may support each other mutually. Tashakkori & Teddlie's handbook on mixed methods (2003) is recommended. Currently triangulation or multiple methods approach may more easily be accepted in the research community. However, it is noted that different research communities accept different methodological approaches (3).

Text analysis contains several genres such as document analysis, text analysis and discourse analysis. One of the research fellows points out that within text analysis we again find different methodological approaches like interaction analysis, conversation analysis and anthropological analysis. Concerning text analysis, the informants in this study mostly use Norwegian literature (Neumann, 2001; Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974; Svennevig, Sandvik & Vagle, 1995). In addition the Italian researcher and novelist, Eco's, book on the art of writing an academic thesis (2010) is recommended[26] (5).

26. The author of this article has not managed to find an English translation of Eco's book, originally published in Italian, but translated to and published in Norwegian (2010).

Concluding comments

At the close of their interviews, informants usually emphasised certain concerns or ideas. One point was that applicants very seldom are aware of the amount of time it takes to develop a quality project plan (2). Another point was that new technology with the Internet and e-mail makes it easy to gain access to researchers. This, in turn, increases the number of applicants. However, this does not necessarily increase the quality of presented research plans. An increasing number of unqualified applications arrive on the doorsteps of university boards and research programmes. Senior researchers point out that applicants need to know that potential advisers have a very limited amount of time to read application drafts and give feedback; maximum one or two revisions. It is important that international applicants are given the opportunity to find detailed information on the university faculty's and research programme's homepages and that they have access to asking questions during their application process. Two full-time positions are allocated at the faculty level in order to administer matters regarding PhD activities. They have a key role in providing information service to applicants (3).

Two senior researchers referred to a current example from an obligatory midterm evaluation of three international PhD research fellows, which showed an immensely increased level of reflection compared to when they started their studies. This indicates good interaction between university and research fellows during the first half period of their fellowship. However, it is a problem for some PhD applicants from the South that they seem not to have access to sufficient research libraries and a relevant local research community where they can discuss their ideas during their research planning. It is important to support access to literature as well as discussions and reflections in relevant research communities. The informants therefore address the University of Oslo (UiO) as an international university, giving the following recommendation: Norwegian authorities could support a certain number of promising international PhD applicants through sponsoring study visits to our university in order for them to use our facilities and receive a limited amount of mentoring. Thus, six months grants at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO, would be appropriate, according to the informants' experience (2).

Experiences, knowledge and opinions in light research texts – Discussions

The presented information conveys a broad spectre of shared experiences, references and recommendations. The following discussions add to the informants' voices a distribution of knowledge from international and Norwegian guidelines and a selection of methodology literature addressing the development and writing of research plans. What are potential funding sources' written criteria for project descriptions? How detailed are their recommendations and assessment criteria, and how do they comply with the informants' experiences and suggestions? The same questions are directed to selected books on research methodology.

Directions or guidelines for project descriptions from five different research funders are selected. They are from the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO, Norwegian and English text; the Research Council of Norway; the Swedish Research Council; the European Research Council, ERC; and from the United Nation's (1973) *Research Proposals: A Guide for Scientists, Technologists and Research Institutes in Developing Countries*[27]. The texts from the Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO, are of special relevance when Norway is the case. The other texts are related to general applications and applications within educational sciences.

The traditional parts of a research plan; theme/topic, research problem or -question, methodology, progress plan, needed resources and references; are mentioned in the five different guidelines. The UN guide (1973) uses the terms scope and objectives. The guide contains a logically structured introduction to a project plan for a whole range of research and innovation disciplines, containing all parts mentioned above, adding historical background information, and stressing the point that the objectives or problem to be studied should be mentioned and explained in the introductory section. The second part of the guide contains an example of a project plan.

The other guidelines provide brief descriptions of the main parts and the relationship between them. The terms objectives, purpose, aims and goals, and

27. Home pages and documents for the mentioned texts are, in the same order as mentioned in the main text: http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/doctoral-degree/phd/application/, 19.09.2011; http://www.uv.uio.no/forskning/doktorgrad-karriere/forskerutdanning/soknad/,19.09.2011; http://www.forskningsradet.no/en/Researcher_project/1 195592882768, 19.09.2011; http://www.vr.se/inenglish/researchfunding/applyforgrants/callforproposals/opengrant…, 04.06.2011; 2010; ERC, 2010; UN, 1973. Research methodology books are referred to as they are discussed.

research problem are used. The Research Council of Norway points out that the objective should promote scientific renewal and development of disciplines and/or generate new knowledge about issues relevant to society (www.forskningsradet.no). Sections on theory and previous research discussed by the informants are covered with terms such as historical background information (UN, 1973), state of the art (ERC, 2010), other research and previous findings (www.vr.sve) and background status of knowledge (www.forskningsradet.no).

The Faculty of Educational Sciences, UiO, describes as a quality criterion "familiarity with the problem area and documented knowledge of central research within the field". Description of quality criteria are, however, only found in Norwegian guidelines to PhD applicants (Programrådet, undated). However, the guidelines presented in Norwegian and English are clearly different. The Norwegian guidelines have links to two other documents; 1) Two pages containing further information and a list of recommended literature, whereof several are in English (Programrådet, undated); 2) a ten page long guide to project planning and how to write a thesis in Norwegian, comparable to the UN guidelines (1973), (Hovdhaugen, undated). The English guidelines are very short and have no links. This leaves English- speaking applicants with considerably more sparse information if the homepages of the faculty are their only guide to the PhD application. A telephone or e-mail to a relevant administrative employee would perhaps lead them to the list of recommended literature. The three successful PhD applicants participating in this study used the opportunity to contact administrators or colleagues, and one of them was able to read Norwegian. Two of the applicants wrote the application in Norway, while the third did not visit Norway at all during the application process. It seems that the faculty would be able to improve the quality of the English guidelines with rather minor efforts and resources.

Overriding criteria. "Read and follow the instructions in the call for applications of specific research programmes." This sentence is in line with informants' recommendations. Concerning overriding criteria, most application documents prescribe that ethical issues, gender equality and, when relevant, environmental consequences of the planned study, are discussed in the research plan. The selected application documents are rather general. However, some of them stress the importance of reading the "call for papers" and related documents thoroughly when addressing a specific research programme. Different programmes may have different focus. As examples three different research programmes on behalf of Norwegian funding institutions are examined:

- SIU, the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education, has until recently administered the so-called NUFU program, which was a programme for cooperation between universities in the South and in Norway for post-graduate education and research. In addition to the above mentioned overriding criteria, the NUFU programme document (2007–2011) focuses on synergy, sustainability and regional network cooperation (NUFU 2007–2011). Currently the NUFU programme has been replaced by the NORHED programme (The Norwegian Programme for Capacity Building in Higher Education and Research for development), administered by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD). This new program contains similar overriding criteria as the NUFU programme, but with more detailed instructions concerning gender equality and empowerment of women (http://www.norad.no/en/support/norhed).
- RCN, the Research Council of Norway, administers a number of programmes, amongst them the Programme for Practice-Based R&D[28] in Pre-School through Secondary Schools and Teacher Education (2006–2010). Its work programme contains a number of prioritised research areas. In order to succeed, applications needed to be situated within relevant areas.
- RCN also administers the third in a series of collaborative programmes between universities in West Balkan countries and Norway[29]. Much like the former programmes, the current HERD (2010–2013) programme focuses on the following extra overriding criteria, which need to be addressed in an application; synergies, ethnicity or to enhance minority participation, regional co-operation, sustainability and potential environmental benefit.

Length of research plan. Comparing the selected application documents reveals not only several similarities but also differences. Thus, the prescribed length of a research plan differs from between 5–10 pages including literature list (www.uv.uio.english) to the most extensive recommending a maximum of 15 pages excluding ethical issues, tables and index (ERC, 2010).

As discussed and documented, application guidelines and related documents give necessary, but not always sufficient information and perspectives for an application to succeed. As with all texts, they are also subject to the applicant's interpretation. Having a certain amount of familiarity with the local mentality

28. R&D: research and development
29. The cooperating universities of this anthology applied for and succeeded in receiving project financing jointly under the two former programmes, but did not apply for the third and current one (SØE 06/02,2002; WB 04/06, 2006).

of the project funder concerning their current research policies and discourse/s as well as administrative routines may be advantageous, as also mentioned by informants.

Methodological texts. Informants have also argued that methodological knowledge is necessary in order to develop and write a high quality research plan, and several books and articles are recommended, as may be seen in the reference list. In the following a few texts are mentioned specifically.

Two books are particularly suitable as introductory literature for international Master students and PhD applicants. Befring (2004) provides an introduction to research methodology and statistics from the point of view of a very experienced Norwegian professor in special needs education. It contains a chapter on how to write research plans and reports. Similarly, Gall, Gall and Borg's handbook on educational research (2007) gives a thorough introduction to a steadily increasing number of methodologies, as new editions arrive. Part Two is dedicated to planning a research project. These books have been used by international Master students at our Department of Special Needs Education, UiO, for many years, and more often than not occur in reference lists of PhD research plans.

Phillip and Pugh's (2010) main contribution is their easy-going discussion of the emotional ups and downs often experienced during a long-term research process. The book is addressed to Master's degree students, PhD research fellows and supervisors alike. The authors have dedicated two chapters to discussions of equality for research students of so-called non-traditional and ethnic minority groups.

When it comes to PhD studies and senior research project applications, introductory literature is not sufficient. Possessing thorough knowledge and an understanding of the chosen methodology with its possibilities and limitations is necessary. A combination of classic or basic literature and current perspectives on all relevant aspects of the applied methodology, from design to analysis, may contribute to generate new knowledge and new research practices within the scientific discipline. Informants have offered a number of suggestions regarding applicable literature within different research methodological areas. It may be added that Robson (2002), Corbin and Strauss (2008) and Siverman (2006) represent fairly new editions of classical overview and in-depth methodology literature. Stake's short and concise presentation of the art of case study (1995) is "an evergreen". Further, even though it is not entirely new, Alexander's extensive work on culture and pedagogy (2000) is an example of how to apply

a renewed and extended perspective on comparative educational research in an actual large-scale study. The latter book is a reminder of the necessity of examining the state of the art within the relevant field of study.

As much as reading of methodological texts is a necessary part of preparation, additional studies of successful research plans may promote a better understanding of how methodological issues are applied in one's own research plan. Access to a selected number of "model research plans" is therefore recommended.

Some senior researchers state that there is a wide range of quality of research plans amongst international and Norwegian applicants alike. However, they also emphasise that international applicants experience more barriers in their application process as well as during their PhD studies. The more limited access to Norwegian research discourse during application and PhD studies appears in higher threshold to practical, administrative information, less awareness of applied research instruments, as well as difficulties in gaining "initiation" into the generally accepted academic discourse, including familiarity with the steadily emerging flow of concepts. PhD research fellows are mentioned specifically as having limited access to research seminars in English. Neither research fellows not senior researchers pointed to the enrichment that international research fellows represent in the Norwegian research community. It is therefore a question whether or not the local research community makes full use of the specific experience, knowledge and initiatives that international PhD research colleagues from all continents possess.

The majority of international PhD applicants are situated within their local academic culture during the application process. Similarly PhD research fellows and cooperating researchers in international projects stay in their local culture and home country during most of the research process. Some projects deliberately aim at knowledge exchange and joint upgrading within a common international research. One example is the WB 04/06 project. *Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building: Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo* (2006), with its research topic*: Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion*. In this project research meetings have alternated between the participating universities, one each semester. Each meeting consists of a visit to a selected research project school, presentations and discussions of papers related to the joint research project, and a combination of an internal project seminar and an open lecture day of an internationally renowned researcher within an important area of the joint research field. Another example is a current NUFU project *Capacity*

Building in Teacher Education for Children with Disabilities and Special Needs (2007), aiming at upgrading academic staff in accordance with requirements for researchers at the PhD level. The project prepares possible applicants for developing and writing research plans through running PhD seminars about the development of research proposals, academic writing, validity issues, quantitative and qualitative approaches, teaching methods and use of visual media in higher education. Study trips are arranged to UiO with access to its library and academic staff members' advice in the process of developing research plans. Five scholars have been admitted to the PhD programme at the Department of Special Needs Education, UiO; three of them with scholarships from the NUFU project.

The request of senior researchers, reported amongst findings, for a permanent arrangement for promising international PhD applicants in the form of a preparatory fellowship to UiO aiming at developing and writing research plans, with access to library services, seminars and a certain amount of supervision, may be regarded as a continuation of the two projects mentioned above.

Possibilities and barriers in developing and writing a qualified research plan

A main conclusion of the presented information and discussions is that it takes a long time to make a high quality research plan. The road from theme to research topic or question may be long. A wide spectrum of knowledge needs to be acquired and the ability to argue and structure a logical text is necessary. There must be focus on a broad range of relevant theory and insight into the state of the art of the research topic. All relevant aspects of methodology need to be examined in relation to the research topic. A feasible financial plan, including possible technological or other investments as well as a realistic time plan, is necessary. Any prescribed reference system should be used correctly and consistently. Precise and good English language skills are required. Thus in order to produce a qualified research plan, high demands are placed on the applicant as well as on the funding institution.

When it comes to the applicant, work experience after having completed their Master's degree may be preferable, as PhD and senior researchers also argue. However, if one has ambitions to pursue doctoral studies, it is a good idea to start searching for a research theme as soon as possible and follow this up with

a further search for relevant theory, local and international research contributions and methodological advances, as well as keeping an open and reflective mind regarding one's own relevant practice. Applicants preferring to continue with further studies within the topic of their Master's thesis may already have a solid foundation to start developing their application. Several researchers have found their theme of interest in their professional work. Some applicants have a strong interest in trying out new fields of study and methodological challenges. A number of promising Master students are encouraged to apply for research assistant positions or participate in joint research collaborative project applications, either locally or internationally. These are different "windows of opportunities" for research trainees. The responsibility for producing a relevant, high quality research plan rests on their shoulders.

When it comes to funding institutions, it is in their interest to attract qualified research trainees who may contribute to fulfilling the institution's goals and visions.

Developing international research is an important goal of the University of Oslo, which claims in its strategy plan that it will increase its contribution to academic developments on an international scale (Strategy2020; Strategy2020, 2010). It is thus in the interest of the university to remove or reduce any barriers in the information stream and other services that may support applicants to PhD research fellowships or other research cooperation projects for international and Norwegian applicants alike.

References

Alexander, R. (2000). *Culture & Pedagogy. International Comparison in Primary Education*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Befring, E. (2004). *Research Methods, Ethics and Statistics*. Oslo: Unipub – Oslo Academic Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (2005). *Making Human Beings Human: Bioecological Perspectives on Human Development*. California: Saga publications.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication.

Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (1994*). Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA, US: Sage Publications.

Eco, U. (2007). *Kunsten å skrive en akademisk oppgave, hovedoppgave og masteroppgave* (The Art of Writing an Academic Thesis. Original Italian title: Come si fa una tesi di laurea. English publishing not found). Oslo: Idem.

ERC. (2010). *ERC Grant Schemes Guide for Applicants for the Starting Grant 2011 Call*. Version of 8th of November 2010. European Research Council, European Commission, Seventh Framework Programme (http://erc.europa.eu).

Fangen, K. (2010). *Deltagende observasjon* (2. utgave). Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.

Gadamer, H-G. (1975). *Truth and Method*. London: Sheed and Ward.

Gall, M., Gall, J. P. & Borg, W.R. (2007). *Educational Research* (8. edition). New York: Longman Publisher.

HERD 2010–2013. (2010). *Programme in Higher Education, Research and Development in the Western Balkans*. http://www.forskningsradet.no/servlet/Satellite?c=Page&cid=1253954181670&pagename=norglobal

Hovdhaugen, E. (undated). *Å planlegge et prosjekt og å skrive en avhandling. Noen ideer til doktorander, hovedfagsstudenter og veiledere*. Oslo: Universitetet i Oslo, Det historisk-filosofiske fakultet (unpublished).

http://www.forskningsradet.no/en/Researcher_project/1 195592882768, 19.09.2011.

http://www.norad.no/en/support/norhed Published 04/02/2013. Updated 13/03/2013.

http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/

http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/doctoral-degree/phd/application/, 19.09.2011 (www.uv.uio.english).

http://www.uv.uio.no/forskning/doktorgrad-karriere/forskerutdanning/soknad/,19.09.2011.

http://www.vr.se/inenglish/researchfunding/applyforgrants/callforproposals/opengrant…, 04.06.2011 (www.vr.se).

Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: an Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.

Laws, S, Harper, C. & Marcus, R. (2003). *Research for Development: a Practical Guide*. London: Sage Publications.

Neumann, I. B. (2001). *Mening, materialitet, makt: En innføring i diskursanalyse*. Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.

NUFU 2007–2011. (2006) *Programme Document*.http://siu.no/eng/Front-Page/Programme-information/Development-cooperation/NUFU/(view)/3540/(parent)/3531.

NUFU 2007- 2011. (2007). *Capacity Building in Teacher Education for Children with Disabilities and Special Needs*.

Phillips, E. P. & Pugh, D. S. (2010). *How to Get a PhD – a Handbook for Students and Their Supervisors*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Programrådet. (Undated). *Krav til prosjektbeskrivelser ad. Søknad om opptak på doktorprogram*. Oslo: Universitetet I Oslo, Det utdanningsvitenskapeligem fakultet (unpublished).

Robson, Colin. (2011*). Real World Research: a Resource for Users of Social Research Methods in Applied Settings*. Chichester : Wiley-Blackwell.

Rogoff, B. (2003). *The Cultural Nature of Human Development*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in Thinking: Cognitive Development in Social Context*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Sacks, H., Schegloff, E. A. & Jefferson, G. (1974). A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn-Taking for Conversation. In *Language*, Vol. 50, No. 4, Part 1 (Dec., 1974), pp. 696–735.

Silverman, D. (2010*). Doing Qualitative Research, a Practical Handbook* (3. Edition). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Stake, R. (1995). *The Art of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Strategy2020 – UiO aims for top international ranking. http://www.uio.no/english/about/strategy/. Published Jun 10, 2010 – Last modified May 19, 2011.

Strategy 2020, UiO: University of Oslo. (2010). www.uio.no.

Svennevig, J. Sandvik, M. & Vagle, W. (1995). *Tilnærminger til tekst. Modeller for språklig tekstanalyse*. Oslo: Cappelen Akademisk.

SØE 06/02. (2002). *Institutional Competence Building and Cooperation with Two Bosnian Universities: "Special Needs Education towards Inclusion"*. The Cooperation Programme with South-East Europe (CPSEE) 2002–2004.

Tashakkori, A. & Teddlie, C. (Eds). (2003). *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioural Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

The Program for Practice-Based R&D in Pre-school through Secondary Schools and Teacher Education (2006–2010). http://www.forskningsradet.no/servlet/Satellite?c=Page&cid=1224697992300&pagename=praksisfou.

UN. (1973). *Research Proposals: A Guide for Scientists, Technologists and Research Institutes in Developing Countries*. New York: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Vulliamy, G., Lewin, K. M. & Stephens, D. (1990). *Doing Educational Research in Developing Countries: Qualitative Strategies*. Basingstoke (UK): Falmer Press.

Vygotsky, L. in Cole, M. et. al. (1978). *Mind in Society*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press

WB 04/06. (2006*). Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building: Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo*.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Los Angeles: Sage.

PART FOUR

RESEARCH PLANS IN THE JOINT INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE CLASSROOM STUDIES TOWARDS INCLUSION

13

Seven Independent Studies in a Unified Comparative Project

Research Plans within the Joint International Research Project: Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion

Berit H. Johnsen

Introduction

Part Four consists of seven independent research plans and a joint plan for research cooperation. The independent plans have been developed and written by researchers and research groups from the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo. They have all been developed on the basis of a joint research plan, *Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion*, which is also presented in this part (Johnsen, 2013). Some of these plans were developed before the start of the WB 04/06 project and revised in view of the joint comparative project, while other plans were initiated by the joint cooperation project.

The start-up for the seven universities' research plans took place at the first joint project seminar in Sarajevo with a collective brainstorming session based on the joint project plan. Revised drafts were presented and discussed at the next project seminar in Belgrade. Topics from the research process have also been discussed at subsequent seminars. Moreover, all the universities' research plans went through a process of peer reviews and revisions. Accordingly, Tone

Citation of this chapter: Johnsen, B. H. (2013). Seven independent studies in a unified comparative project. Research plans within the joint international research project: Comparative classroom studies towards inclusion. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 175–179/pp. 223–227 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org/10.23865/noasp.124

Kvernbekk, Professor of Education (Educational Philosophy) deserves special thanks for her participation as one of the peer reviewers in this process. Professor Kvernbekk has several years' experience in teaching theory to PhD candidates and other researchers at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Oslo (UiO).

In this book the presentation of each project plan concludes with a brief account of plan-related changes which may have occurred during the research process.

International comparative study within different cultural contexts – diversities, challenges and expanded knowledge generation

As discussed in both the general project description (WB 04/06) and joint research plan, a main challenge – and vital element – of international comparative educational research relates to this project's attempt to provide a body of descriptive and explanatory data demonstrating various practices and procedures in the different contextual cultures of the participating universities (Johnsen, 2013; Phillips, 1999).

Seven universities in six countries have participated in this comparative research project. These countries are located on the north-western and south-eastern outskirts of Europe and share a post-world-war history of having established and maintained welfare societies. However, whereas Norway has developed its welfare model without major interruptions, currently as a prosperous oil and export industrial nation, the Western Balkan countries have experienced rapid major changes in their political systems, national fragmentations, large-scale industrial downturn and war. The new countries have been left facing both economic and social-structural setbacks from which they are attempting to recover. However, they are doing so at different speeds, each emphasizing its unique political and legislative perspectives. This also involves taking different steps in order to meet international standards regarding educational rights and development towards inclusion (UN, 1991; 1994; 2006; UNESCO, 1991; 1994; 2000). It is therefore reasonable to assume that there is contextual diversity among the seven participating universities. A fundamental question in this cooperative research project therefore concerns how to construct valid comparisons, which reflect contextually rooted similarities, distinctions and differences. The challenge lies in these two opposing questions:

- How many aspects of the seven research plans should be obligatory or similar for all participating universities?
- How large differences can there be between the seven studies without losing the possibility to compare?

These two questions are considered in relation to the above mentioned contextual diversity. Variation in predominant research discourses between the participating universities is another important contextual factor since these universities possess expertise within different methodologies. The question of validity, in the sense of whether a reported finding represents the experienced phenomenon to which it refers, is another key factor (Hammersley, 1990 in Silverman, 2006). Moreover, an important argument related to validity is that a strict regime of obligatory or standard procedures applied to different cultural contexts and within various research-methodological traditions and conceptual interpretations, may dissociate reported findings from the experienced phenomena. In other words, it may give a local reader of the concluding comparative report the impression that the presented findings are theoretical constructions having little or no connection with his or her perception of reality.

The chosen solution to this challenge is therefore to design a joint research plan with a high degree of flexibility.

The joint main research question is the following: How does the school teach in accordance with the pupils' different levels of mastery and needs for support in the learning process (recourses, barriers and dilemmas)? Focus is placed on schools' internal activities, on teachers, special needs educators and other professional staff as well as on their interaction with both the individual pupil and all the pupils in the class, also called *the master-apprentice relationship* (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Eight didactical-curricular main aspects (Johnsen, 2007; 2013) have been selected as joint topics for information gathering in order to describe, analyse and discuss research findings. They are:

> The Pupil/s – Assessment – Educational Intentions – Educational Content – Class Organization and Teaching Methods – Communication – Care – Frame Factors/ Context

These collective main aspects construct a joint framework for comparative analysis and discussion regarding the seven classroom studies. Within this framework there is flexibility concerning the different research groups' choice of focal points for the study of teachers' activities related to:

- Number of pupil(s) in focus
- Kind of special need/disability/vulnerability in focus
- Which of the eight main aspects to study in depth and which aspects to remain in the background

The seven universities' research plans show a number of similarities and differences related to 1) the research topic they have chosen to further develop 2) the eight basic didactic-curricular topics and 3) application of methodology and analysis. Key concepts such as "inclusion" have been further interpreted, offering a deeper, broader and more nuanced understanding than in the joint research plan.

Methodological similarities and variations as well as the introduction of new methodological approaches in some of the participating universities are accounted for in more detail in the project's second anthology, while the resulting comparative study and additional articles from each university are reported in the project's third and final book.

References

Johnsen, B. H. (2007). *The Classroom towards Inclusion – Good Examples and Difficult Dilemmas. Report from a series of workshops in Bosnian schools*. Sarajevo: Connectum.

Johnsen, B. H. (2013). Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion. Joint Research Plan for Cooperation between the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning – Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Phillips D. (1999). On comparing. In Robin Alexander, P. Broadfoot & D. Phillips (Eds.). *Learning from Comparing: New Directions in Comparative Education Research*, Vol 1 (pp. 15–20). Oxford: Symposium Books.

Silverman, D. (2006). *Interpreting Qualitative Data*. London: Sage Publications.

UN. (1991). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. New York: United Nations (The author).

UN. (1994). *Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disability*. New York: United Nations.

UN. (2006). *The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. New York: United Nations.

UNESCO. (1991). *Education for all I, II & III. Jomtien, Thailand World Conference on Education for all* (The author).

UNESCO. (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. Paris: (The author).

UNESCO. (2000). *The Dakar Framework for Action*. Paris: (The author).

WB 04/06. *Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building. Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo*. Norwegian Cooperation Program on Research and Higher Education with the Countries on the Western Balkans (CPWB).

14

Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion

Joint Research Plan for Cooperation between the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo

Berit H. Johnsen

Introduction

Research cooperation is the main concern of the joint project conducted by the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo (WB 04/06, 2006). The common research theme deals with development towards the inclusive school. Inclusion is the global policy prescribing development towards a local regular school that welcomes all children with their unique individual characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs; all children with and without special needs and disabilities; a school combating discriminatory attitudes, and offering meaningful and individually adapted education to every pupil within the community of the class (Frederickson & Cline, 2002; Johnsen, 1998/2000; UNESCO, 1994).

Inclusion is one of the key principles in the on-going developmental process of democracy (in all countries). Thus it is directly connected to human rights and equality for every single citizen, as stated in the Convention of the Rights of the Child (UN, 1991), the Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (UN, 1994), the Salamanca Statement and

Citation of this chapter: Johnsen, B. H. (2013). Comparative classroom studies towards inclusion. Joint research plan for cooperation between the universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 180–196/pp. 228–244 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org/10.23865/noasp.124

Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994) and the subsequent UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). Furthermore, from a societal perspective, the principle of inclusion is related to other, more firmly rooted criteria for the democratic welfare society, such as tolerance, communication and dialogue, cooperation, solidarity and care (Askildt, 2004; Befring, 1997; Benhabib, 1994; Buber, 1947; Dewey, 1916/2002; Habermas, 1999; Kristiansen, 2003, L 97; Noddings, 1992; 2003). Regarding the joint arenas of regular and special needs education, the inclusive school principle applies in relation to the coexistence and cooperative learning undertaken by pupils, including those with and those without special educational needs and disabilities. However, in its expanded meaning as applied in UNESCO contexts, inclusive education also comprises educational equality between genders, ethnic and cultural differences, minorities, the economically disadvantaged and all other vulnerable groups (UNESCO, 2000; 2000a). School is a fundamental societal institution with the official responsibility of forming new generations to independent and responsible citizens. Therefore, in light of this important mandate, it is surprising how little attention school has been paid in international research on reconciliation mechanisms and democracy building.

This project is a more systematically focused continuation and extension of a former SØE 06/02 project in cooperation between the Universities of Tuzla, Sarajevo and Oslo; a project with a number of activities aiming towards inclusion, that may be regarded as a pilot project for promoting cooperation in this field between Norway and Bosnia-Herzegovina. (See literature from SØE 06/02: Ćišić et.al. (eds.), 2004; *Defectologija*, 2005; Johnsen (ed.), 2005; Johnsen, 2007; Johnsen, Zecic & Babic et al (eds.), in press; *Naša Škola*, 2005; and related Master theses, articles and chapters about the project (Aðalsteinsdóttir, 2005; Pavlovic, 2005; Pepeljak, Begić & Buljubašić, 2005; Ruud, 2005; Smajic, 2004; Zekic, 2004).

This study focuses more precisely on the following aspects of the former project:

- To investigate the on-going upgrading process of inclusive practices in the regular school
- To investigate further two specific qualities of the inclusive school introduced through innovation activities under the following concepts (Defektologija, 2005; Johnsen, 2005; in press; Naša Škola, 2005):
  - The classroom as a socio-emotional safe haven
  - The creative school for all

- To investigate how regular and special needs teachers and educators (defectologists) cooperate in planning, implementing and assessing individual educational plans related to a class or group
- To continue cooperation within research methodology and theory, focusing on qualitative approaches and action research

Joint objective of comparative classroom studies towards the inclusive school

The objective of the joint classroom studies is to identify and examine teaching and learning activities in regular classes related to development of inclusive practices towards the school for all. The studies mainly focus on ways in which schools implement and develop inclusive practices, the overall research questions being: How does school teach in accordance with pupils' different levels of mastery and needs for support in the learning process? What are the recourses, barriers and dilemmas in schools' development towards achieving inclusion?

Theoretical framework

The project's joint perspective is based on selected theoretical traditions related to content and methodology. Certain common denominators for the study are outlined in the following section.

Study of interaction between regular and special needs education in the development of inclusive practices in school: The project advocates the need for cooperation between regular and special needs education, innovation, and research as well as direct cooperation between the two professions within the regular school and related support services (Frederickson & Cline, 2002; Johnsen, 2001; Naša Škola, 2005; Nilsen, 2002). The principle of inclusion represents a major shift in approaches to teaching, from traditional whole class teaching to celebration of the diversity of pupils' learning resources within the community of the class (Befring, 2001; Booth & Ainscow, 1998; Booth et al, 2000; Eggertsdottir & Marinosson, 2005; Ferguson, 1996; Johnsen, 2001a; 2007). The new approach implies that the usual organisation with one teacher in the classroom is expanded with additional flexible organisational solutions such as co-teaching and educational support teams within the school. The presence of special needs educators as members of the regular school staff is an important factor. Moreover it implies that teachers' attention turns towards the mastery

and abilities of each pupil, and in turn towards the class as an arena for pupils' joint cooperation in the learning process under their professional supervision (Johnsen, 2001; 2007; Naša Škola, 2005).

"Cultural-historical" approach to learning in context: The project adopts a socio-cultural or cultural-historical approach to the study of teaching and learning. The founder of the cultural-historical tradition, Vygotsky (1978), argues that knowing the pupil's level of mastery is necessary but not sufficient. Rather, the educator also needs to discover the pupils' level of potential development, which is found through assessing their problem-solving capabilities under their guidance or in cooperation with more competent peers. Vygotsky states that learning is a social activity based on interaction between learner and environment, that the main mediating tool for learning is communication, and that the optimal quality of learning is determined by the learner's cultural-historical environment. His concept of *the proximal zone of developmen*t is a core concept of this study. Related concepts developed by Vygotsky and post-Vygotskyan scholars, such as *mediation* (Rye, 2001; Wertsch, 1991), *apprenticeship* (Rogoff, 1990; 2003) and *scaffolding* (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Rogoff, 1990; Sehic, Karlsdóttir & Guðmundsdóttir, 2005) are discussed and applied in relation to teaching and learning activities.

Inclusive practices from a didactic-curricular perspective: A set of didactic-curricular concepts (Englund, 1998; Johnsen, 1998/2000) will be used in the classroom studies as thematic sub-questions, directing focus towards main categories of classroom activities. Five topics or aspects; pupil/s, assessment, educational intentions, educational content, methods and classroom organisation, are classical categories with roots back to Plato and ancient Greek tradition. They are also commonplace categories embedded in a shared European educational heritage (Johnsen, 1998/2000). Two new topics, communication and care, have been awarded the same status as the classical concepts in an effort to investigate their role in planning and implementing teaching in accordance with the variety of all pupils' individual and special education needs (Befring, 1997; Johnsen, 2001; Noddings, 1992; 2003). All topics will be analysed in mutual relation to each other and will thus serve as a framework for descriptions, discussions and comparisons of studied classroom activities. The seven topics are related to an eighth main topic, namely frame factors, which directs the attention to the relationship between individual and class curricula on both local and national level: national policy and curriculum, economic and physical factors and a number of different cultural as well as historical aspects that are all elements

creating opportunities and barriers for teaching and learning in the class setting. This eighth topic was introduced to the field by scholars of educational ecology, such as Bronfenbrenner (1979) and Goodlad (1979). In their mutual relationship the eight aspects form a model, which is a modification and further extension of Bjørndal and Lieberg's (1978) *Didactic Relation Model*, a well-known model presented in several versions and studied by Norwegian teachers, special needs educators, educational administrators and researchers as well as participants in the earlier mentioned SØE 06/02 project (Johnsen, 2001; 2007). In current project the eight main topics in the modified and extended didactic-curriculum relation model are applied as joint focal points and as an umbrella or framework for classroom studies, analyses and comparisons (see illustration below).

Classroom studies: This classroom research project focuses on inclusive teaching practices and classroom management through studying educational activities related to the eight didactic-curricular topics or aspects described above. Thus, as an example, the topic 'frame factors' serves to place findings from the educational micro level of a selected class, within the socio-cultural context of the relevant participating country. Thus this study goes beyond former traditions within inclusion studies in which focus has tended to be on either policies or isolated classroom studies as briefly described below.

Figure 1

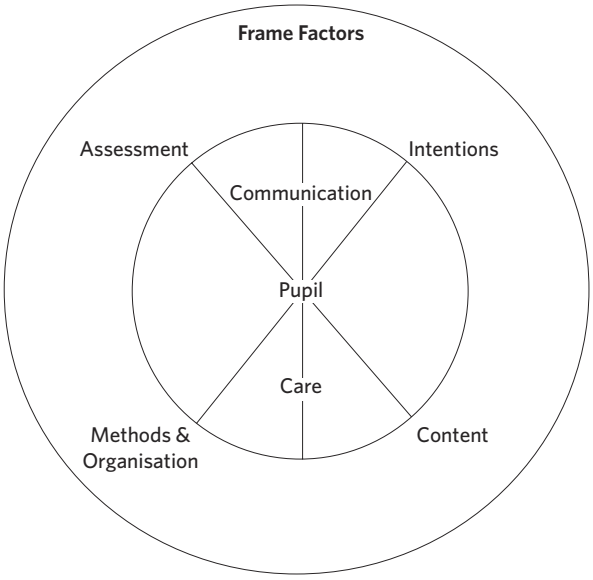

Illustration: The Curriculum Relation Model revised 2006 (Johnsen, 2007).

A considerable amount of the existing literature describes inclusion policies in various countries. These descriptions are surprisingly positive when we keep in mind that large numbers of the world's school-age population do not have access to school, and that children with disabilities tend to be placed at the back of the line whenever there is a lack of official services. On the other hand, there are a number of reports indicating that interesting innovation projects are taking place on the micro level. Fortunately, UNESCO has gathered and distributed a number of these reports for global use (http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-). Additionally, international journals such as *European Journal of Special Needs Education* and *International Journal of Inclusive Education* have inclusion on their agenda. Prescriptions of inclusive practices from schools and classrooms around the world provide inspiration for others contemplating innovation. However, when such descriptions are taken out of their socio-cultural context, they are subject to the problem of 'educational borrowing', a term which will be discussed in more detail below. Pijl, Meijer and Hegarty (1994; 1997) question the usefulness of several reports currently available. Moreover, they recommend that further studies follow theoretical interests and contribute with knowledge regarding the effects of different policies and cultures on inclusive settings, which is the overall purpose of this project.

Methodological approach

Case study design is the main approach utilised in this research project. Case studies have a strong tradition within classroom studies, and qualitative research methodology in general is recommended in special needs education (Ferguson, Ferguson and Taylor, 1992). Kirsti Klette (2003) has led a selection of studies of relevance for this study, focusing on classroom practices. In her study five researchers have gathered information and analysed it from five different regular and special needs educational perspectives. Hjulstad, Kristoffersen and Simonsen (2002) present a case study where communication between kindergarten children who are sign language users, hearing children and staff is analysed via a number of categories of analysis for different aspects of communication. At the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) a research group within educational sciences is developing classroom study methodology based on case studies in the Vygotskyan tradition (Moen, Nilssen & Postholm, 2005; Sehic, Karlsdóttir & Guðmundsdóttir, 2005). This joint classroom research project primarily focuses on good examples, more specifically on investigating

schools' available resources for and ability to develop inclusive practices and on analysing them in relation to the barriers and dilemmas encountered in their socio-cultural settings. Participating universities in this project will develop a series of case studies in purposefully selected schools. Within the above-mentioned framework each university will choose further operationalization of research topics, methods, instruments and informants as well as relevant documents involved.

Comparative classroom studies: As an internationally anchored project one of its theoretical pillars is the field of comparative or international studies. An implicit purpose of this study is therefore to be "…that of reform, learning from other situations with the express intention of borrowing ideas that might enable reform in one's own country context" (Watson, 2001:11). Phillips (1999) offers a number of purposes with comparative educational studies relevant to this project:

- To provide a body of descriptive and explanatory data demonstrating various practices and procedures in a broad context that helps shed light upon them
- To show what is possible by examining alternatives to provision "at home"
- To help foster co-operation and mutual understanding among nations by discussing cultural differences and similarities and offering explanations for them.

Watson (2001) points out that perhaps the greatest challenge in comparative studies is the use of decontextualized data gathered from many countries for policy-making decisions. Problems discussed in comparative and international studies of specific relevance for this study are related to the previously mentioned term *educational borrowing*, comparative classroom research and the problem of making cross-national comparisons. These are all problems highlighting socio-cultural contexts from different angles (Alexander, 2000; Osborne et al, 2003; Phillips & Ochs, 2004; Steiner-Khamsi, 2004).

Comparative and international education methodology has been subjected to criticism and revisions since it started out as more or less "travelling tales" (Crossley & Watson, 2003). Later, it developed as a "cause – effect" discipline inspired by natural science (in line with other mainstream educational research), subsequently moving towards anthropology (Schriewer, 1999; Seeberg, 2003), confronting Euro-centrism, even "Western European- and North American-centrism", in addition to identifying and discussing serious challenges such as those mentioned above. Patricia Broadfoot catches a common understanding

of the purpose of contemporary and future comparative educational studies in the following argument:

> I suggest that the goal of comparative education is to build on systematic studies of common educational issues, needs or practices as these are realised in diverse cultural settings in order to enhance awareness of possibilities, clarify contextual constraints and contribute to the development of a comprehensive socio-cultural perspective (Broadfoot, 1999:26)

The comparative analysis in this project has two perspectives, one with focus on "regional- internal" comparative analysis between countries in the West-Balkan region with their near history of the same educational policy and governance, and a second comparative analysis between two European regions with different social welfare society models, the North-West and South-East outskirts of Europe. This makes the project an interesting methodological example in light of overview studies showing that only a minority of comparative studies (around 30 %) relates to more than one country, of those reported in international journals such as *Comparative Education Review* and *Comparative Education* (Broadfoot, 1999; Halls, 1990; Rust et al., 1999).

Alexander (1999) describes the development of cross-cultural comparisons during the 1990s as two parallel traditions, one largely characterised by quantitative pre-test/post-test sampled studies and the other by more intensive qualitative-ethnographic investigations. Classroom studies belong to the latter of these traditions. School effectiveness studies have gained increasing attention in recent years, as debate related to the so-called PISA project demonstrates (http://www.pisa.no/). We have chosen the concept 'quality study' instead of 'effectiveness study' for our project. Case study is a well-established methodological design within comparative studies as described in the prestigious *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (Berg-Schlosser, 2001). Charles Ragin (1987: 16), an outstanding scholar within the analysis of comparative methodology, argues that "the comparative method is essentially a case-oriented strategy of comparative research". Studies of cases from other countries may allow implicit comparisons, which in turn may lead to critical reflection on policies and practices utilised in ones own country (Buk-Berge 2005), which, as mentioned above, is this project's implicit purpose. Alexander (1999; 2000) has conducted a major cross-cultural comparative study of primary education in five countries on three continents. His search for and choice of main categories for studying, analysing and comparing teaching practices serves as inspiration for this project.

Joint research problem or issue and sub-topics: In accordance with Stake's (1995) chosen terminology in case study methodology, we use the concepts 'issue' instead of research problem or question, and 'topic' instead of sub-questions (Creswell, 1998; Stake, 1995). As previously mentioned, the main issue of this joint research project, stated as a question, is the following: How does the school teach in accordance with their pupils' different levels of mastery and needs for support in their learning process (recourses, barriers and dilemmas)? Focus is directed towards the teacher's (in this text the term "teacher" is used for both the individual classroom teacher and – if available – co-teachers, special needs educators and assistants in the class and the school's internal resource team) activities in the interaction between teacher and pupil, also called the *master-apprenticeship relation* (Lave & Wenger, 1991: 94).The eight main topics or aspects discussed above have been selected as joint topics for information gathering in order to describe, analyse and discuss the issue. They are:

> The Pupil(s) – Assessment – Educational Intentions – Educational Content – Class Organisation and Teaching Methods – Communication – Care – Frame Factors

As stated above, the issue together with the topics construct a joint framework for comparative analysis and discussions of the participating classroom studies. Within this framework there is flexibility concerning choices the research groups have to make in the process of operationalizing and delimiting their concrete study, such as:

- number of pupils participating in the study
- type of special need/disability/vulnerability
- which of the eight topics to study in depth and which to remain in the background

Design, methods, instruments and analysis: As discussed above, case study design – preferably with either a qualitative or combination of a qualitative and quantitative approach, also called mixed methods – is recommended. Data collection methods consisting of a combination of interviews of purposefully selected key informants and/or focus groups, observations, material gathering related to the eight topics, other document analysis and systematic use of field notes, are expected to create a basis for triangulation of information (Creswell, 1998; Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003; Kvale, 1996; Stake, 1995; Silverman, 2000). The words 'recommended' and 'expected' are used here to signalise that each researcher and participating university is expected to select relevant design,

methods, instruments and type of analysis for their operationalized research questions within the joint framework. Considerable time has been allocated to the participating universities in order to develop concrete research plans and exchange information concerning their choice of methods and instruments.

Ethical considerations

A series of ethical considerations and dilemmas are related to both research in general, and classroom research involving possible vulnerable individuals and groups. Relevant procedures will be discussed related to obtaining voluntary access, informed consent and participants' rights to inspection as well as procedures to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of research data (Befring, 2004; Gall, Gall & Borg; 2003; Silverman, 2000). There is a specific ethical dilemma in relation to the problem of identifying special educational needs and labelling pupils in accordance with their difficulties and disabilities (Reindal, 1998). This dilemma applies to choice of terminology and focus as concerns levels of either difficulty or mastery, as well as the choice of analytical categories. These are two of the main problems and dilemmas within special needs education and inclusion discourse, and they will be continuously considered during the research process, most specifically in relation to the reporting of findings.

Research process

This is a joint comparative study with participants from seven different universities in six countries. The plan is that each university will participate with one coordinator, preferably a senior researcher at the doctoral or professor level, and a junior researcher, preferably a doctoral candidate or newly appointed PhD. whose English skills in both an academic and administrative sense are highly developed.

Collaboration will be based on a combination of national studies and joint workshops held each semester and rotating among the participating universities. Each workshop will consist of a joint follow-up of the national studies through presentations and discussions of papers and a seminar hosting internationally outstanding scholars whose work relates to key aspects of the research process. In addition, the hosting university invites on excursion to their selected research school and meetings with key representatives within policy-making,

governance and practicing cooperation between regular and special needs education towards inclusion.

Research process and findings viewed as results: The project aims at continuing and extending the West Balkan – Norwegian/Nordic network towards inclusion through implementing research cooperation and conducting joint workshops. The process will be followed by the production of articles describing and discussing project plans, methodology and findings in peer-reviewed anthologies published in English as well as national reports published in the respective countries' native languages.

Schedule for research activity and goal attainment

2006

Project start-up meetings in each participating university between project coordinator and financial coordinator from UiO and project interpreter: Clarifying budget handling and reporting, administration, communication and project activities

Workshop no 1: Planning the comparative classroom studies

The workshops will ambulate among the project universities, each focusing on the joint research project through 1) seminar with guest lecturer 2) workshop with presentations of research process and discussions 3) excursion to project school 4) coordinator meeting

Workshop no 2: Moving From planning to implementation

2007

Workshop no 3: Focus on methods and instruments in classroom studies

Workshop no 4: Studying the complexity of classroom activities: Didactical – curricular considerations

2008

Workshop no 5: Discussing socio-cultural approach to inclusive classroom practices

Workshop no 6: Considerations in comparative classroom studies

2009

Workshop no 7: Considerations regarding writing comparative research reports

Workshop no 8: Workshop or conference presenting papers from the joint comparative classroom study towards inclusion

References

Aðalsteinsdóttir, K. (2005). Þróun í átt að skóla fyrir alla í Bosniu-Herzegóvínu og Eþíópíu (Development towards the School for All in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Ethiopia). In *Glæður*, 15, 33–38.

Alexander, R. (1999). In R. Alexander, P. Broadfoot & D. Phillips (Eds.). *Learning from Comparing. Contexts, Classrooms and Outcomes* (pp.7–11). Oxford: Symposium Books.

Alexander, R. (2000). *Culture & Pedagogy. International Comparison in Primary Education*. Oxford: Blackwel Publishing.

Askildt, A. (2004). *Opplæring av funksjonshemma i eit historisk perspektiv (Education of Persons with Disability in a Historical Perspective*). Oslo: Det utdanningsvitenskapelige fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo. PhD thesis.

Befring, E. (1997). *Oppvekst og Læring (Growth and Learning.)*. Oslo: Samlaget.

Befring, E. (2001). The Enrichment Perspective – A Special Educational Approach to an Inclusive School. In B. H. Johnsen & M. D. Skjørten (Eds.). *Education – Special Needs Education. An Introduction* (pp. 49–64). Oslo: Unipub.

Befring, E. (2004). *Research Methods, Ethics and Statistics*. Oslo: Unipub.

Benhabib, S. (1994). *Autonomi och gemenskap – Kommunikativ etik, feminism och postmodernism (Situating the Self – Gender, Community and Postmodernism in Contemporary Ethics*).Göteborg: Daidalos.

Berg-Schlosser, D. (2001). Comparative Studies: Method and Design. In N. Smelter & P. Baltes (Eds). *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (pp. 2427–2433). Vol.4. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Bjørndal, B. & Lieberg, S. (1978). *Nye veier i didaktikken*? (New Directions in Didactics?). Oslo: Aschehoug.

Booth, T. et.al. (2000). *Index for Inclusion. Developing Learning and Participation in Schools*. Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education.

Booth, T. & Ainscow, M. (1998). *From Them to Us. An International Study of Inclusion in Education*. London: Routledge.

Broadfoot, P. (1999). Not so Much a Context, More a Way of Life? Comparative Education in the 1990s. In R. Alexander, P. Broadfoot & D. Phillips (Eds.). *Learning from Comparing. Contexts, Classrooms and Outcomes* (pp. 21–33). Oxford: Symposium Books.

Buk-Berge, E. (2005). Komparativ og internasjonal pedagogikk i dag (Comparative and International Education Today). *Nordisk Pedagogikk*, 25/3, 273–283.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The Ecology of Human Development*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1996). *The Culture of Education*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Buber, M. (1947). *Between Man and Man*. London: The Fontana Library.

Cole, M. (1996). *Cultural Psychology – A Once and Future Discipline*. USA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Crossley, M. & Watson, K. (2003). *Comparative and International Research in Education*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Ćišić, F. et.al. (2004). *Socioemocionalni rast i razvoj strategija učenja*. Tuzla: University of Tuzla.

Defectologija (2005). vanredni broj (The journal *Defectology*, special number) Tuzla: The University of Tuzla.

Defectologija (2005a). (The journal *Defectology*) Tuzla: The University of Tuzla.

Dewey, J. (1916/2002). *Demokrati och utbildning (Democracy and Education)*. Göteborg: Daidalos.

Eggertsdottir, R. & Marinosson, G. (Eds.). (2005). *Pathways to Inclusion*. Reykjavik: Haskolautgafan.

Englund, T. (1986). *Curriculum as a Political Problem*. Uppsala: Uppsala Studies in education 25, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis/ Studentliterature/Chartwell-Bratt.

Englund, T. (1998). Teaching as an Offer of (Discursive?) Meaning. In B. B. Gundem & S. Hopmann (Eds.). *Didactic and/or Curriculum – An International Dialogue* (pp. 215–226). New York: Peter Lang.

Englund, T. (2002). Om Dewey och Demokrati och utbildning (About Dewey and Democracy and Education). Introduction to J. Dewey. (1916/2002). *Demokrati och utbildning (Democracy and Education)* (pp. 11–32). Göteborg: Daidalos.

European Journal of Special Needs Education.

Ferguson, D. (2001*). Designing Personalized Learning for Every Student*. Alexandria: Association for supervision and curriculum development.

Ferguson, P., Ferguson, D. & Taylor, S. (1992). *Interpreting Disability: A Qualitative Reader*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Frederickson, N. & Cline, T. (2002). *Special Education Needs, Inclusion and Diversity*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Gall, M., Gall, J. & Borg, W. (2003). *Educational Research*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Goodlad, J. I. (1979). *Curriculum Inquiry*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Grue-Sørensen, K. (1971). Nogle overvejelser vedrørende komparativ pædagogik (Some Reflections concerning Comparative Education). In K. Grue-Sørensen, P. Rand & U. Dahlløf (Eds.). *Komparativ pedagogikk (Comparative Education*) (pp.7–19). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Habermas, J. (1999). *Kraften i det gode argument (The Power of the Good Argument)*. Oslo: Ad Notam Gyldendal.

Halls W. D. (1990): Trends and Issues in Comparative Education. In W. Halls (Ed.). *Comparative Education: Contemporary Issues and Trends* (pp. 21 – 65). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers/UNESCO.

Hjulstad, O., Kristoffersen, A. E. & Simonsen, E. (2002). *Kommunikative praksiser i barnehagen (Communicative Practices in Kindergarten)*. Skådalen publication series no 17. Oslo: Skådalen kompetansesenter.

http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.

http://www.pisa.no/

International Journal of Inclusive Education.

Johnsen, B. H. (1998/2002). *Et historisk perspektiv på ideene om en skole for alle (An Historical Perspective on Ideas about a School forAll*). Oslo: Unipub.

Johnsen, B. H. (2001). Curricula for the Plurality of Individual Learning Needs. In B. H. Johnsen & M. D. Skjørten (Eds.). *Education – Special Needs Education. An Introduction* (pp. 225–303). Oslo: Unipub.

Johnsen, B. H. (2001a). Introduction to the History of Special Needs Education towards Inclusion – A Norwegian and European Context. In B. H. Johnsen & M. D. Skjørten (Eds.). *Education – Special Needs Education. An Introduction* (pp. 133 – 154). Oslo: Unipub.

Johnsen, B. H. (2005). Socio-Emotional Growth and Development. In B: H. (Ed.). *Socio-Emotional Growth and Development of Learning Strategies* (pp. 3 – 40). Oslo: Unipub – Oslo Academic Press.

Johnsen, B. H., Zecic, S. & Babic, M. et al. (Eds.). (In press). Untitled concluding project anthology, SØE 06/02.

Johnsen, B. H. (2007). The Classroom towards Inclusion – Good Examples and Difficult Dilemmas. Report from a series of workshops in Bosnian schools. Sarajevo: Connectum.

Klette, K. (Ed.). (2003). *Klasserommets praksisformer etter Reform 97 (Classroom Practices after Reform 97)*. Oslo: Universitetet i Oslo / Norges Forskningsråd.

Kristiansen, A. (2003). *Tillit og tillitsrelasjoner i en undervisningssammenhang (Trust and Trust Relations in Educational Context)*. Oslo: Det utdanningsvitenskapelige fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo.

Kvale. S. (1996). *InterViews. An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication.

Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning – Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lassen, L. (2005). Five Challenges in Empowering Teachers. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Socio-Emotional Growth and Development of Learning Strategies* (pp. 229 – 246). Oslo: Unipub – Oslo Academic Press.

Meijer, C. J.W. & Pijl, S. J. (1994). Framework, Methods and Procedures. In C. J. W. Meijer, S. J. Pijl & S. Hegarty (Eds.). *New Perspectives in Special Education* (pp. 1–8). London: Routledge.

Moen, T., Nilssen, V. & Postholm, M. B. (Eds.) (2005). *Kvalitative forskere i teori og praksis (Qualitative Researchers in Theory and Practice*). Trondheim: Tapir akademisk forlag.

Naša Škola. (2005). vanredni broj (The journal *Our School*, special number). Sarajevo.

Naša Škola. (In press). (The journal *Our School*). Sarajevo.

Nilsen, S. (2002). *Intensjoner og retningslinjer for videreutdanningsstudier i tilpasset opplæring (Intentions and Instructions for Further Higher Education in "Individually Adapted Education")*. Oslo: Universitetet i Oslo.

Noddings, N. (1992). *The Challenge to Care in Schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Noddings, N. (2003). *Happiness and Education*. USA: Cambridge Press.

Osborn, M. et al. (2003). *A World of difference? Comparing Learners across Europe*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Pavlovic, T.(2005). *Communication between Teacher and Pupils in the Classroom*. Master theses. Oslo: University of Oslo.

Pepeljak, S., Begić, A. & Buljubašić, F. (2005). Put ka inkluzivnoj školi (The Road to an Inclusive School. Tuzla: Simin Han.

Phillips D. (1999). On comparing. In Robin Alexander, P. Broadfoot & D. Phillips (Eds.). *Learning from Comparing: New Directions in Comparative Education Research*, Vol 1 (pp. 15 – 20). Oxford: Symposium Books.

Phillips D. & Ochs K. (Eds). (2004). *Educational Policy Borrowing: Historical Perspectives*. Oxford: Symposium Books.

Pijl, S. J., Meijer, C. J. W. & Hegarty, S. (1997). Introduction. In S. J. Pijl, J. W. Meijer & S. Hegarty (Eds.). *Inclusive education. A Global agenda* (1–7). London: Routledge.

Ragin, C. (1987). *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Reindal, S. (1998*). Disability, Personal Autonomy and the Subject – a Dilemma in Special Needs Education*? Oslo, University of Oslo, Department of Special Needs Education. Dr. Scient thesis.

Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in Thinking. Cognitive Development in Social Context*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rogoff, B. (2003). *The Cultural Nature of Human Development*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rommetveit, R. (1972). *Språk, tanke og kommunikasjon (Language, Thought and Communication*). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Ruud, M. (2005, March 11). Fruktbart samarbeid om inkluderende skole (Beneficial Cooperation regarding the Inclusive School). *Utdanning* no.7, 22 – 24.

Rust, V., Soumare, A., Pescador, O. & Shibuya, M. (1999). Research Strategies in Comparative Education. *Comparative Education Review*, 43, 87–109.

Rye, H. (2001). Helping Children and Families with Special Needs. A Resource Oriented Approach. In B. H. Johnsen & M. D. Skjørten (Eds.). *Education – Special Needs Education. An Introduction* (pp. 65–130). Oslo: Unipub.

Rye, H. (2004). Psychosocial development and Quality of Interaction – Psihosocijani razvoj i kvalitet interakcije. In F. Ćišić (Ed.). *Socioemocionalni rast i razvoj strategija učenja* (pp. 51 – 62). Tuzla: University of Tuzla.

Rye, H. (2005). The Foundation of an Optimal Psychosocial Development. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Socio-Emotional Growth and Development of Learning Strategies* (pp. 215–228). Oslo: Unipub – Oslo Academic Press.

Schriewer, J. (1999). Coping with Complexity in Comparative Methodology: Issues of Social Causation and Process of Macro-Historical Globalisation. In R. Alexander, P. Broadfoot & D. Phillips (Eds.). *Learning from Comparing. Contexts, Classrooms and Outcomes* (pp. 33–72). Oxford: Symposium Books.

Seeberg, M. L. (2003). *Dealing with Difference: Two Classrooms, Two Countries*. Oslo: Norwegian social Research/NOVA rapport 18/03.

Sehic, M., Karlsdóttir, R. & Guðmundsdóttir, S. (2005). Socio-Cultural Foundation of Inclusion in Norwegian Schools. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Socio-Emotional Growth and Development of Learning Strategies* (pp. 309–322). Oslo: Unipub – Oslo Academic Press.

Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE publication.

Simonsen, E. (1998/2000). *Vitenskap og profesjonskamp (Science and the Claim for Professional Jurisdiction*). Oslo: Unipub.

Slagstad, R. (1998). *De nasjonale strateger (The National Strategists*). Oslo: Pax forlag.

Smajic, M. (2004). *Adjusting the Curriculum to Individual Needs. A single Case Study and Innovation Project*. Master thesis. Oslo: Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo.

Stake, R. (1995). *The Art of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Steiner-Khamsi G. (Ed.). (2004). *The Global Policy of Educational Borrowing and Lending*. New York: College Press.

SØE 06/02. *Institutional Competence Building and Cooperation with Two Bosnian Universities: "Special Needs Education towards Inclusion"*. Cooperation Programme with South-East Europe (CPSEE).

The Curriculum for the 10-Year Compulsory School in Norway (L 97). (1999). Norway: The Royal Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs (The author).

UN. (1991). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. New York: United Nations (The author).

UN. (1994). *Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities*. New York: United Nations.

UN. (2006). *The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. New York: United Nations.

UNESCO. (1991). *Education for all I, II & III*. Jomtien, Thailand World Conference on Education for all (The author).

UNESCO. (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. Paris: (The author).

UNESCO. (2000). *The Dakar Framework for Action*. Paris: (The author).

UNESCO. (2000a) *World Education Forum – Final Report*. Dakar/Paris (The author).

UNICEF. (2000). *Education for All – No Excuses*. New York (The author).

Vygotsky, L. S. (1987–1999). *The Collected Works of L. S. Vygotsky*. Volume 1–6. New York: Plenum Press.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). In M. Cole et al (Eds.). *Mind in Society*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

WB 04/06. (2006). *Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building: Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo*.

Wertch, J. V. (1991). *Voices of the Mind. A Sociocultural Approach to Mediated Action*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Wertsch, J. V. (1998). *Mind as Action*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Watson, K. (Ed.). (2001). *Doing Comparative Education Research*. Oxford: Symposium Books.

Zekic, I. (2004). Assessing Language Awareness. *Translating and Adapting a Norwegian Screening Test for Pre-Readers and Beginning Readers in Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Master thesis. Oslo: Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo.

A Study of the Implementation of a Legal Framework for Supporting Children with Disabilities in Regular School

Dragan Rapaić, Goran Nedović, Irena Stojković and Snežana Ilić

Introduction

Serbia has a long tradition of providing special education for children with special needs and disabilities. According to the Department for Improvement of Education and Upbringing (*Guidelines for Upbringing and Education of Children with Disabilities and Learning Difficulties*, 2007), there are in Serbia 48 primary (8 grades) and 25 secondary (4 grades) special schools for children with disabilities divided into the following categories: 54 schools for children with intellectual challenges; 12 for children who are deaf or hard of hearing; 3 for children who are blind or visually impaired; 3 for children with psychosocial difficulties and 1 for children with motor disabilities. Organizationally speaking, these secondary and primary schools usually function within the same framework. The total number of pupils who attend these schools is 7.431. At the same time, in 88 (82 primary and 6 secondary) regular schools, there are 3.715 children with disabilities in special classes. In addition, the Department

Citation of this chapter: Rapaić, D., Nedović, G., Irena Stojković, I. & Ilić, S. (2013). A study of the implementation of a legal framework for supporting children with disabilities in regular school. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 197–206/pp. 245–254 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org/10.23865/noasp.124

for Improvement of Education and Upbringing reported 18.032 children attending regular primary school classes and having visual, hearing and/or physical impairments, cerebral palsy, intellectual challenges, autism, reading and writing difficulties, mathematics difficulties, motor disabilities, emotional difficulties, hyperactivity or other challenges.

A recent extensive research project conducted by Golubovic at al. (2005) provides us with a detailed description of a regular school system which is – at least when judged on the basis of the physical presence of children with special needs- partly open to their presence. Researchers have evidence that children with special needs and disabilities, especially children with speech disorders, behavioural and/or emotional difficulties and learning difficulties, are currently attending regular schools. However, when we move from the surface to a more in-depth study of the teaching and learning context of these reported children with special needs, we note many problems which prevent further development towards practicing inclusion and thus providing "a school for all". These problems include legislation that is not put into practice, lack of knowledge regarding individual curricula development, lack of coordination between ordinary and individualized teaching, and firm restraint when it comes to reporting children's knowledge according to general numerical standards. It also concerns a lack of coordinated and comprehensive training of teachers in skills needed for teaching tailored to individual pupil needs, lack of material resources and encouragement for teachers participating in inclusive programmes. In addition, the problem is a matter of limited knowledge about the abilities of children with special needs as well as about successful models of their inclusion, leading to teachers and parents forming negative attitudes towards inclusive education (Jablan & Hanak, 2007; Rapaić, 2001; Todorović, Vuković & Hanak, 2003).

Among the visible developments towards implementing inclusive education in Serbia are:

- The existence of schools (mainly primary schools) with classes for children with special needs (mainly children with learning difficulties). Although children attending these classes are separated from other children attending regular curriculum classes, they at least share the same surroundings, namely the same school attended by children in their neighbourhood.
- According to the Law on the Foundations of the System of Education of the Republic of Serbia (2003, 2009), schools are obliged to accept children with special needs and all children have the right to regular education (at least on paper).

- There are two experimental inclusive schools (one in Belgrade and one in Subotica) with extensive preparation of all stakeholders preceding admission of children with special needs.
- The first democratic government founded a department within the Ministry of Education and Sports which aimed at building a strategy of inclusive education. The Department for the Improvement of Education and Upbringing is working on a final proposal for a "Strategy of Upbringing and Education of Children with Disabilities and Learning Difficulties".
- The program catalogue for further and in-service education for teachers (2006/2007) includes two certified programmes devoted exclusively to the promotion of inclusive education.

The role of comparative classroom research towards inclusion in supporting transformation of regular schools into schools open to inclusive practices

Our contribution to this this research cooperation deals with investigating the following phenomena:

1) the organizational specifics in teaching a child with disabilities
2) communication and support between the teacher and child with disabilities, focusing on children with disabilities as receivers in the inclusive education process.

Findings will be discussed in a micro context related to teachers' attitudes, competences, and recourses as well as the specifics of the selected children. It will also be discussed in a macro context, including curriculum and total school resources in the process towards inclusion.

In our part of the international research project "Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion" (Johnsen, 2013), we have decided to investigate the following topics:

- Frame factor: Inclusion in Serbian legislation
- Pupil: Individual educational curriculum (existing, achieving and support)
- Teacher: Individual educational curriculum (making, implementing and competences)
- Communication: Contextual communication (focus pupil, teacher, other pupils in activities)
- Contents: Mother tongue / first language (reading, writing, reading comprehension).

We strongly believe these are fundamental aspects in the consideration of inclusive education initiatives in Serbia.

General goals and specific research questions

The processing of a legal framework includes the possibility of bringing about inclusive education in our country, and we aim to study the way legislation is enforced in relation to individual educational curriculum implementation. Is it possible to make and implement an individual educational curriculum in a particular school in a particular class, attended by a child with disabilities? In which way is the teaching of a particular subject adapted to a child's needs and abilities concerning objectives, content and tasks?

Research questions

1. In which way do legal regulations support inclusive education in Serbia? We assume that the question of inclusion is regulated in every country from different legal aspects and levels. However, there are differences regarding how to interpret the concept of inclusive education, and various solutions are suggested. When laws related to education and social protection are discussed, one should be aware of differences in legal standards given that they are related to the overall societal development taking place in every single country. These differences are especially emphasized with respect to standards in European Union countries and candidate members. Legislative adaptation in countries that are candidate members is a very long process that involves achieving the same values as the ones existing in the European Union, not only in the field of legislation, but concerning more detailed standards as well.

The documents we are going to analyse are: Law on the Foundations of the System of Education (2003; 2009), Regulation of Additional Educational, Medical and Social Support for the Child and Pupil (2010), the Disability Anti-Discrimination Law (2006) and the Elementary School Law (1992).

We aim to answer the following questions:

- Where does inclusion appear in national legislation?
- How does national legislation define children with special needs and disabilities?
- When it comes to inclusion, what is the legally guaranteed scope for children with disabilities?
- How (in)consistent are particular laws on this topic?

2. The pupil: Individual educational curriculum (existing, achieving and support) Related to the Law on the Foundations of the System of Education (2003, 2009), the possibility to enrol children with disabilities in regular schools is anticipated, as it is quite obvious that these pupils are not able to master a regular educational curriculum; therefore, the possibility of individual curriculum creation through legal means is anticipated. However, we do not have a clear insight into how and in which way these curricula related to actual pupils are to be adapted. This is a novelty in Serbian legislation, and it is difficult to assume that teachers are able to practice it without some form of additional help. This conclusion is an outcome of teachers' lack of competence for working with children with disabilities, especially with designing and implementing individual educational curricula. Moreover, if these curricula come into existence, it will be important to gain insight into the affected children's achievements and mastering of these curricula as well. Therefore, while closely considering these questions, we will also focus on the actual support that children with disabilities receive in regular schools. It is necessary to gain more detailed insight into this topic, as we find it very important for the process of achieving educational inclusion. The goal is to obtain crucial data in answer to the following research questions:

- Do teachers adapt different aspects of teaching to a child in accordance with his/her abilities and needs?
- Has the curriculum content been designed to coordinate with the child's abilities, interests and needs?
- What degree of differentiation does a child need in the following areas?
  - Content
  - Methods
  - Objectives
- Do teachers have a plan (long-term, short-term)?
- Is the curriculum of a particular subject open and flexible?
- Is the content based on an actual level of the child's achievement?
- Is there any correlation between functional and academic content?
- Is there any thematic planning?
- Is there any connection between the various curriculum topics?
- Have individual educational curricula been satisfactorily implemented?

3. Teacher: Individual education curriculum (planning and implementing and professional competence building). The goal of this study is to obtain detailed insight into the teacher-pupil relationship as it pertains to planning and

implementing an individual curriculum, exploring which planned curricular components lead to successful practices. An important component is assessment of pupils' capacity for learning and levels of mastery as a baseline for revision and further development individual curricula. As a consequence of assessment the next step in the study and competence building is assumed to be the formulation of expected achievements over time, followed by actually revising other components of the curriculum and defining the mode of implementing and evaluating it. Affiliated research questions:

- What are the teacher's resources for adapting his/her teaching to the child's individual needs?
- Is individual adaptation practiced for each child or just for children with disabilities? (We assume that all children may have certain differences demanding individual teaching adaptation.)
- How much special needs educational support and cooperation do they receive from teams of school experts?
- How much do they rely on other teaching colleagues?
- Do they use any specialized literature?
- Do they consult experts of a particular disability in order to better understand a child's abilities and constraints?
- How do they implement newly acquired information, support and advice?
- Are there supportive teacher-parent-expert services?
- Who coordinates the child's support services, and how is this done?
- Is there any teaching assistant on staff to help children with special needs?

4. Communication: Contextual communication (focus pupil, teacher and other pupils involved in activities). Contextual communication is of great importance for pupils with disabilities who attend regular schools. The success of pupils depends on the communication they share with their teacher and fellow pupils. In addition, the communication between pupils is crucial for the acceptance and social wellbeing of pupils with disabilities in the school environment. Relevant research questions are thus:

- How many times does a teacher refer to a disabled pupil during a classroom session?
- How many times does a disabled child refer to a teacher during a classroom session?
- Does the child cooperate with other pupils in group work?
- Does the teacher show positive feelings towards pupils?

- How much does a teacher check (if at all) whether the pupil understands information conveyed by him/her?

5. Contents: Mother tongue/first language (reading, writing and reading comprehension). We believe that the assessment of a pupil's first language ability is important in many ways, as it forms the basis for communication and enables educators to make a good prediction of how well the pupil will perform in other school subjects. Delimiting the study's focus to one school subject is also a reason for selecting the subject mother tongue, consisting of reading, writing and reading comprehension skills (including recitation and prose) for examination. The following research questions are posed:

- Is the pupil able to read?
- Quality of the pupil's reading: average, below or above average for his/her grade level?
- Is the reading speed average, below or above average for his/her grade level?
- Is the pupil able to write?
- Is the quality of letters and words average, below or above average for his/her grade level?
- Is the writing speed average, below or above average for his/her grade level?
- Is the pupil able to recite/interpret texts?
- Is the quality of interpretation average, below or above average for his/her grade level?
- Which marks has the pupil attained in the subject Serbian language/mother tongue?

Methodology

Data collection procedure

The analysis of the legal framework and legislation related to inclusive education will be completed through document analysis of laws concerning inclusion of children with disabilities. The inclusion process will be examined in a regular primary school through a study of a child having some form of disability in a regular class. The development of an individual educational curriculum and adaptation of a school subject will be analysed simultaneously. The following participants in the inclusion process will be involved in the study: a child, a teacher, parents and an expert school service team (which include educators and/or psychologists and when possible special needs educators).

Methods and instruments in data collection

In order to obtain answers to the research questions concerning how the individual educational curriculum is realised (if at all), the technique of conducting open, semi structured interviews will be applied. Interviews concerning resources will be conducted with a teacher. In addition, observation via camera monitoring and video taping of communication between teacher and pupil will be used in order to collect important data on the realization of the individual educational curriculum.

Data analysis

We will use qualitative text analysis to analyse data concerning the legal framework and legislation concerning inclusive education (including the curriculum of one particular school subject and individual education). Other qualitative methods will be applied in the analysis of data obtained through semi structured interviews. We will also analyse data obtained through monitoring video materials. Observation data will be subsequently analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Particular variables are to be defined, and their frequencies and interrelations assessed.

Relevant research ethical issues

Relevant research ethical issues concern pupils, parents and teachers participating in the study. The privacy of pupils will be protected throughout the research project, which also includes the processing of data filmed in a class as well as presentation of results. This means that all pupils in a class – and not just one pupil with a disability – will be monitored and filmed. The name and surname of the selected pupil with disabilities will neither be published nor used in public or in any other form.

Ethical issues concerning parents refer to obtaining their permission to monitor and videotape their children, and for this purpose, we will ask them to sign a written consent form in which 1) the research conditions are clearly defined and 2) the manner in which the research results will be used is clearly outlined.

References

Catalogue of Programs for Additional and Continuous Education for Teachers. (2006/2007). Serbia: Ministry of Education and Sport.

Disability Anti-Discrimination Law. (2006). Official Herald of the Republic of Serbia, No. 33/06 (The author).

Elementary School Law. (1992). Official Herald of the Republic of Serbia, No. 50/92 (The author).

Golubovic, S. (Ed.). (2005). Smetnje u razvoju kod dece mladjeg školskog uzrasta. [Disabilities in young school-aged children]. Belgrade: Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation.

Guidelines for Upbringing and Education of Children with Disabilities and Learning Difficulties. (2007). Belgrade: Department for Improvement of Education and Upbringing.

Jablan, B., Hanak, N. (2007). Servisna funkcija specijalne škole u redovnom sistemu obrazovanja dece oštećenog vida. [Service function of special schools in regular school system in education of poorly sighted children] In D. Radovanović (Ed.): *Nove tendencije u specijalnoj edukaciji i rehabilitaciji*. (pp.773–778). Beograd: Fakultet za specijalnu edukaciju i rehabilitaciju.

Johnsen, B. H. (2013). Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion. Joint Research Plan for Cooperation between the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Law on the Foundations of the System of Education. (2003). Official Herald of the Republic of Serbia, No. 62/03 (The author).

Law on the Foundations of the System of Education. (2009). Official Herald of the Republic of Serbia, No. 72/09 (The author).

Rapaić, D. (2001). Bringing up and Educating Children with Disabilities. *Defectology School Journa*l, 2–3, 1–22.

Regulation of Additional Educational, Medical and Social Support for the Child and Pupil. (2010). Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia (The author).

Todorović, T., Vuković, D. & Hanak N. (2003). *Attitudes of Pre-School and School Teachers toward Inclusion of Children with Developmental Disorders in the Regular School System*. Paper presented at the scientific meeting "Dani defektologa", Vrnjačka Banja.

Modifications to the initial project plan undertaken during the research process of the Belgrade University research group

Dragan Rapaić

During the research process we have undertaken some modifications of our initial plan related to research questions and research methods.

First, concerning the research questions, we decided to put less emphasis on the academic achievements of children with disabilities in regular schools than initially planned. This decision was made since the main focus of our research was a pilot program of cooperation between a regular school and a special school in the process of achieving inclusive education. Due to this change, we decided to complete a thorough investigation of the teaching and learning process in a relatively small number of inclusive classrooms instead of measuring the academic achievement of a larger number of pupils. We assumed that this would be more useful for creating suggestions to the further development of inclusive education.

Another modification of the initial research plan relates to data collection. Instead of videotaping and coding video material, we collected observational data on the teaching and learning process and used written observation reports in the coding. The reason for this modification was that certain educational authorities were reluctant to allow videotaping. Variables of interaction that were the focus of the observation were developed during the study. In the initial plan, these variables were defined broadly. During pilot observations, we gained further insight into which aspects of the interaction are important and salient in relation to our research questions. Based on this findings, we have selected coding schemes from existing literature (Klette et al., 2005, Wehmeyer et al., 2003), which we will modify and adjust to our research questions related to the teaching and learning process in inclusive classrooms.

References

Klette, K.et al. (2005). *Koder til bruk i videoanalyse*. Pedagogisk forskningsinstitutt og Institutt for lærerutdanning og skoleutvikling, Universitetet i Oslo.

Wehmeyer, M. L. (2003). *Theory in Self-Determination: Foundations for Educational Practice*. USA: Charles C. Thomas Publisher.

A Study of the Process towards Inclusion Related to Slovenian Pupils with Hard of Hearing or Functional Deafness

Damjana Kogovšek, Stanislav Košir and Martina Ozbič

Introduction

The denial of one single truth is one of the basic postulates of the postmodern era. While modernists sought objective truth, the objective of the postmodernists was studying the shift from the explanatory towards pluralistic approaches to discourse, trying to identify the multitude of small things which influence the opportunities of individuals with special needs. The postmodern era has seen the rise of general moral standards, such as the ethics surrounding caregiving and justice. While we have so far been aiming at discovering the truth, postmodernists are striving to achieve best practice. Consequently, the paradigm of the educational system in general and schooling for children with special needs in particular has changed due to the raised awareness and respect for the rights of every human being.

In this connection education of the deaf and hearing impaired population has significantly changed. This is a particularly deprived group with special needs, one encountering many barriers related to acquisition of knowledge, obtaining a professional education as well as employment opportunities due to

Citation of this chapter: Kogovšek, D., Košir, S. & Ozbič, M. (2013). A study of the process towards inclusion related to Slovenian pupils with hard of hearing or functional deafness. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 207–215/pp. 255–263 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org/10.23865/noasp.124

their communication challenges. At the same time, this is a very heterogeneous group when it comes to differences in their degree of hearing remains, the age at which their hearing started to deteriorate and their primary and secondary social environments. These factors contribute to enhancing or inhibiting these individuals in their communicative development and, consequently, in public recognition of their civil rights.

Following international principles of human rights as stated in UN and UNESCO documents, the school system in Slovenia has been significantly changed, and we have started to incorporate with the so- called school for all or inclusive education. According to UNESCO (2008), inclusive education is an on-going process aiming at offering quality education for all while simultaneously respecting diversity and the different needs and abilities, characteristics and learning expectations of pupils and communities, eliminating all forms of discrimination.

Persons with special needs on different levels and with different types of impairments are currently integrated in the ordinary school system. Moreover, various programmes which have been introduced are expected to be adapted to these different needs, and further systemic professional assistance, the possibility of adapting teaching-learning organisation and internal differentiation during lessons are also assumed to be provided.

Studies related to pupils with hard of hearing and functional deafness in the uniform school

Schmidt & Čagran (1998) refer to research showing positive impact of the school environment related to empathy and loyalty. Although differences are observed between emotional and social integration of individual pupils who are deaf, the process of integrating of these pupils seems to be effective. Compensatory therapeutic programmes and programmes adapted to their individual disabilities contribute largely to these pupils' positive performance. Moreover, the integration into mainstream schools does not indicate negative impact on their hearing peers. However, research results are contradictory when it comes to the social situation of pupils who are deaf. Peršolja (1997) establishes that there are no differences between hearing and deaf pupils in their social inclusion in the classroom community. Further, no differences are observed between either genders or lower and higher primary school levels. However, on higher levels trends have been reported regarding the weaker social inclusion of pupils who are deaf compared with their hearing peers. On the other hand Kuhar (1996)

reports that the social status of deaf pupils in the classroom is close to average, as 17% of the pupils participating in the study are considered to be "very much liked", whereas 43% of them are "isolated" from or "disliked" by peers.

Schmidt (1997) considers the attitudes of teachers toward the integration of children with special needs as an important element of their successful inclusion in the mainstream primary school. She identifies important factors contributing to successful inclusion:

- presence of special education teacher in school
- assistance of parents and special education teachers
- volume of knowledge
- forms of school work
- emotional and academic characteristics of children with special needs
- communication of children with special needs
- social status of children with special needs

Individual satisfaction with self-realisation, communication and social networks as well as professional possibilities may give indications of the efficiency of the social care system. These personality aspects are in development during adolescence, and the study therefore focuses on education on the secondary level.

Research questions and objectives

How does a pupil with hard of hearing or functional deafness feel? How does he or she actively participate in the classroom? What knowledge does he or she possess? Does he or she communicate verbally and/or non-verbally? To what extent is his nearest environment; family, peers, and teachers, ready to respond to the communication challenges with which the deaf pupil is confronted? Are there specific characteristics of the socialisation and self-concept of individuals with hard of hearing or functional deafness?

The objective of the research is to explore and analyse the guidelines for facilitation for social acceptance of for pupils with hard of hearing or functional deafness, and the practical implementation of the guidelines. This includes the status of the deaf individual in a regular school, communication and knowledge, readiness of the local environment to offer support as well as didactic and technological equipment applied at school. The research will cover and compare two educational arenas for pupils with hearing or functional deafness, namely the regular class and the special education class.

Hypotheses or research topics

H1: Didactic and technical equipment in regular classes and in special classes for the deaf and hard of hearing are the same.

H2: Verbal and non-verbal communication in regular classes and in special education classes are similar.

H3: Socio-metric status of pupils with hard of hearing and functional deafness is equally distributed in regular classes and special education classes.

H4: Parents are equally satisfied with work in regular classes and special education classes.

H5: Pupils with hard of hearing and functional deafness are equally satisfied in regular classes and in special education classes.

H6: Parents believe that pupils are equally satisfied in regular classes and in special education classes.

H7: Teachers in regular classes and in special education classes are equally satisfied with their competence to work with pupils with hard of hearing and functional deafness.

H8: The principles of bilingual teaching receive equal attention in both regular and special education classes.

H9: Communication is equally adapted in regular classes and in special education classes.

H10: Pupils with hard of hearing impairment and functional deafness have proportionally an equal number of hearing and deaf friends in regular classes and in special education classes.

H11: A positive self-concept of the pupil with hearing and functional deafness is equally distributed in regular classes and in special education classes.

H12: Risk factors for health and socialization are the same in regular classes and in special education classes.

Methodology

This is a cross-sectional study using qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Sample. Part of the responses will be obtained by examining legislation and analysing information in existing studies of the population of children with hearing impairment and functional deafness. Concrete questions will be posed to a selected group of 15–25 deaf pupils attending secondary school in classes together with hearing peers, and to a group of 15–25 pupils attending classes of only pupils with hard of hearing and functional deafness. The respondents

constituting the sample will be pupils, their parents, teachers and peers of different age groups on the secondary school level.

Variables

1. Organised and self-organised social concern.
    - School system:
    - Relevant legislation regulating the education of children with hard of hearing and functional deafness from the point of view of achieving the changed doctrine goals
        - Organising pupils with hard of hearing and functional deafness in different kinds of programmes
        - Level of competences of teachers and other education experts instructing persons with hard of hearing and functional deafness
    - Support system providing assistance to persons with hearing impairment and functional deafness
    - Knowledge of the deaf person compared to prescribed curriculum in the field of maths and Slovene oral language
    - Didactic and technical school equipment
2. Communication
    - Verbal and non-verbal communication of the person with hard of hearing or functional deafness and their environment
    - Verbal and non-verbal communication of the deaf person with another deaf person
3. Socialization
    - Satisfaction of the person with hard of hearing or functional deafness
    - Satisfaction and assessment of the environment regarding the inclusion of the person with hard of hearing or functional deafness
    - Self-concept of the person with hard of hearing or functional deafness
    - Status of the hearing-impaired person in the classroom
    - Basic risk factors for health and socialization

Research methods and tools. Individual variables will be assessed by qualitative text analysis of existing records and legislation, by administering questionnaires and checklists as well as testing and analysing video shots. For this purpose existing scales and questionnaires which have been used in similar studies will be applied, or new ones will be compiled solely for the purpose of this study.

The school system:

- Data will be acquired through analysis of current legislation, determining the right to education for children with hard of hearing and functional deafness in light of general principles of children's rights
- Assessment of inclusion of pupils with hard of hearing and functional deafness in different types of programmes will be made from social records
- Assessment of level of competence of special educators and other relevant experts educating persons with hard of hearing impairment and functional deafness will be made through analysis of regulations and the current situation.

The support system for the deaf:

- Description will be acquired through analysis of regulations and current situation.
- Knowledge status of pupils with hard of hearing and functional deafness in mathematics and Slovene language compared to expected status in curriculum:
- Description will be obtained on the basis of testing learning results and compare them with learning tasks prescribed in the curriculum

Didactic and technical school equipment:

- Assessment will be made on the basis of questionnaires

Communication:

- Verbal and non-verbal communication of pupils with hard of hearing or functional deafness and their surrounding environment:
  - Analysis of verbal and non-verbal communication in the classroom will be made by analysing video shots and checklists
  - Analysis of verbal and non-verbal communication in everyday life will be made by conducting interviews and circulating questionnaires
- Verbal and non-verbal communication between persons who are functionally deaf:
  - Analysis of verbal and non-verbal communication in everyday life will be made by conducting interviews and circulating questionnaires
  - Analysis of verbal and non-verbal communication in the classroom will be made by analysing video shots and checklists

Socialisation:

- A questionnaire will be constructed in order to explore experiences of pupils with hard of hearing or functional deafness concerning self-concept, general satisfaction and satisfaction with inclusion efforts in regular classrooms
- A socio-metric questionnaire will be applied to explore the status of hearing impaired pupils in the classroom as well as basic risk factors concerning health and socialisation for these pupils

Timetable of the Project

2006: Formulation of research plan

2007: Training for implementation of qualitative analyses in the school environment
Examination of the systemic framework for education of persons with hard of hearing or functional deafness
Preparation of tools for communication analysis, knowledge status and socialisation along with self-concept
Pilot study

2008: Revision of research instruments
Data collection, testing and conducting surveys
Data processing and preparation of final report
Phase reports

2009: Final report

Connection with the WB 04/06 project

Since this research project is part of the larger WB 04/06 project (Johnsen, 2013), it will overlap with this project and provide answers to questions common to participating universities, mainly as regards the communication of individuals with hard of hearing or functional deafness. Our focus is on the communication taking place in the surrounding environment. Focus is also on educational objectives and content related to this same group of pupils.

References

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication.

Gall, M., Gall, J. P. & Borg, W. R. (2003). *Educational Research* (7. edition). New York: Longman Publisher.

Johnsen, B. H. (2013). Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion. Joint Research Plan for Cooperation between the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Project Preparations. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Kogovšek, D. (2003). *Health and Well-Being of Deaf Adolescents in Slovenia: the Basic Risk Factors for Health and Socialization for the Deaf Adolescents in Slovenia*: Abstracts of papers and posters / 6th European Congress Mental Health and Deafness, 21. – 24. 05. 2003 Bad Ischl; Austria. – Bad Ischl: ESMHD, 2003. – Str. 42.

Kogovšek, D. (2002). Integracija in z njo povezana vloga osebe z motnjo sluha v razredu z vidika avditivne in govorne akustike: Reforma vzgojno izobraževalnega sistema za otroke s posebnimi potrebami – integracija, inkluzija gluhih in naglušnih oseb / Zveza društev gluhih in naglušnih Slovenije. – Ljubljana: *Zveza društev gluhih in naglušnih Slovenije*, 2002. – Str. 110–113.

Kogovšek, D. (2000). Integracija oseb z motnjami sluha: Družbena skrb za vzgojo, izobraževanje in socialno varstvo oseb s posebnimi potrebami – deset let kasneje / [uredila Karl Destovnik, Jan Ulaga]. – Ljubljana: *Društvo defektologov Slovenije*, 2000. – 4 str.

Kogovšek, D. (2004). Izguba sluha in obdobje mladostništva: Defektologica slovenica. – ISSN 1318–1076. – #Letn. #12, #št. #3 (december 2004), str. 7–25.

Kogovšek, D., Košir, S. & Tomori, M.(2003). *Izguba sluha in obdobje mladostništva: magistrsko delo*, Ljubljana: 206 str.: graf. prikazi, tabele , 30 cm.

Košir, S. (2000). Analiza uspešnosti gluhih učencev v redni OŠ ob organizirani podpori: projekt: Ocena otrokovega razvoja v pogojih prilagojenega izvajanja programa vrtca in redne šole za gluhe in naglušne: Družbena skrb za vzgojo, izobraževanje in socialno varstvo oseb s posebnimi potrebami – deset let kasneje / [uredila Karl Destovnik, Jan Ulaga]. – Ljubljana: *Društvo defektologov Slovenije*, 2000. – Str. 323–331.

Košir, S.(1997). Bilingvizem pri izobraževanju gluhih v Sloveniji: Pravica gluhih do znanja / [uredniki Marija Mihelčič … [et al.]. – Ljubljana: *Zavod za gluhe in naglušne*, 1997. -ISBN 961–90560–0–0. – Str. 106–110.

Košir, S. &Breitinger, M. (1998). Mathematische Strategien der tauben Schüler bei der Addition – Ergebnisse einer Untersuchung: *Hörgeschädigten-Pädagogik*. – ISSN 0342–4898.- #Let. #52, #št. #6 (1998), str. 360–368.

Košir, S. (1996). Učinki dvojezičnega usposabljanja gluhih na njihovo komunikacijo: *Defektologica slov*enica. – ISSN 1318–1076. -#Let. #4, #št. #3 (december 1996), str. 22–31.

Kuhar.D. (1996) Integrirani, a osamljeni? *Defektologica Slovenica* Vol 4, No 3 december, str. 60.

Ozbič, M. (1998).*Kohlearni implant in (re)habilitacija med zvokom, govorom in jezikom: Zbornik referatov 1. slovenskega posveta o rehabilitaciji oseb s kohlearnim implantom*, Maribor 16. in 17. oktober 1998 / [uredila Dravska tiskarna, Center za sluh in govor Maribor. – Maribor: Center za sluh in govor, 1998. – Str. 36–51.

Ozbič, M. (2005). Primerjalna analiza statusa oseb z motnjo sluha: manjšinski, deficitarni ali priseljeniški?: *Defektologica slovenica*. – ISSN 1318–1076. -#Letn. #13, #št. #3 (december 2005), str. 43–53.

Ozbič, M. (2006). *Razmišljanje o PV: Zbornik referatov 3. slovenskega posveta o rehabilitaciji oseb s polževim vsadkom, Maribor – Slovenija*, 10.-11.november 2006 / [organizator] Center za sluh in govor Maribor. Maribor: Center za sluh in govor, 2006. – ISBN 961–91901–0–6. – Str. 151–152.

Peršolja. P. (1997) Socialni položaj integriranih učencev s slušno motnjo v slišečem razredu. *Defektologica Slovenica* Vol 5, No1, april str.52.

Schmidt M. & Čagran B. (1998). Kako poteka vzgojno izobraževalna integracija otrok z motnjo sluha v osnovno šolo: evalvacija in spremljanje modela integracije. *Defektologica Slovenica*. Vol 6, No 2, september str.16.

Schmidt. M. (1997). Vpliv stališč učiteljev na vzgojno – izobraževalno integracijo. *Defektologica Slovenica* Vol 5, No 3 december, str 18.

Schmidt. M. (2006). Zaznavanje integracije/inkluzije v osnovni šoli. *Sodobna pedagogika*, letnik 57, posebna izdaja, 320 – 337.

Stake, R. (1995). *The Art of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2008). *Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future*. International 48th Conference on Education. http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/ICE48/English/index.html

Changes in the research plan during implementation

Damjana Kogovšek

No major changes were made to the research plan. However, due to periods with personal health problems, the researchers took turns assuming the responsibility for the project.

Supporting Pupils with Language and Speech Difficulties in Regular Primary Schools

Comparative Research and Intervention in the Classroom towards Inclusion

Sadeta Zečić, Irma Čehić, Selma Džemidžić Kristiansen and Selmir Hadžić

Introduction

In Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) reforms in education are currently being implemented at all levels; in pre-school, primary, secondary and higher education. Since 2004, a new curriculum has been followed that extends regular education from eight to nine years (Law on Primary Education, Sarajevo Canton, 2004). Both the OSCE Mission and entity ministries of education in BiH are developing new programmes for pupils from grades four to nine. Concurrent to these reform processes, the principle of inclusion as an international social and educational movement has been introduced to the schools of BiH. However, achieving inclusion is a complex process that requires making changes in educational institutions at every level.

In BiH the principle of inclusion has not been systematically introduced for numerous socially justified reasons, one of them being that the educational

Citation of this chapter: Zečić, S., Čehić, I., Džemidžić Kristiansen, S. & Hadžić, S. (2013). Supporting pupils with language and speech difficulties in regular primary schools. Comparative research and intervention in the classroom towards inclusion. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 216–229/pp. 264–277 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org/10.23865/noasp.124

system in BiH is extremely fragmented.[30] The consequence of this fragmentation is that there are a certain number of well-educated schools prepared for inclusion and others that are completely unprepared. Nevertheless, Article 1 in the Law on Primary Education for Sarajevo Canton related to general provisions (2004) provides for the possibility of enrolling every child in their local school. The result of this provision is that there are a lot of children meeting various challenges and disabilities in regular primary schools.

Further, Article 72 of the Law (2004) clearly specifies that schools need to form expert teams that include both a speech therapist and special needs educator. However, these legal intentions have not been implemented for financial and material reasons Teachers working in schools have different education and training, depending on whether their school has been lucky enough to participate in projects providing knowledge and skills concerning children with challenges and disabilities as well as methods of working with them.

We all know that children's capacities, interests and abilities vary, and all children have the right to attend their local school together with their friends. The process towards achieving inclusive education is on-going and complicated. It needs to provide several and different solutions for pupils, teachers and parents in addition to the educational system in the entire country. Unfortunately, while the resources in regular schools supporting the inclusion process remain at the same level, both teachers and school pedagogues are carrying a heavier educational burden than before.

In Sarajevo Canton there are two special education schools that are willing and ready to participate in the process of inclusion on any level by providing support, education and training for teachers and parents, development of individual educational plans and programmes (IEP), contributing to expert teams, pupil observation and counselling. Some steps have already been made in this direction, and both schools have provided support in the planning and implementation of solutions for pupils with special needs in regular schools and pre-schools. There are also a certain number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) supporting persons with special needs. While these efforts are quite helpful, they also present some dilemmas and confusion for teachers, parents and experts, since the Ministry of Education does not involve these

30. It consists of 14 Ministries of Education, 12 Ministries of Education, two entity-level ministries in Republika Srpska and the Federation BiH, which covers 10 cantonal Ministries, Department for Education in the District Brčko and the Ministry of Civil Affairs at the state level with competences concerning education for an estimated population of 3,8 million people.

institutions as formal partners, and only a few of these NGOs are working in accordance with the intentions of inclusion. Contemporary humanistic inclinations in civilisation and culture aim at creating "possibilities for the capabilities and potentials of every individual to develop in such a way that every individual in society may become a useful member of that society within the limits of her/his abilities" (Nikotić-Simončić, 1994, in Zečić-Jeina, 2006). Currently, in the era of improving relations and respect for human rights, conditions are being created for more intensive development and implementation of the idea of inclusion in the mainstream of "normalised" or ordinary social life. Unusual or special needs present society with a challenge to respect the uniqueness of every individual and assure their belonging to the community. In our educational system, assessment of psycho-physical abilities of pupils before starting school is still done according to old standard rules and administered by medical doctors. This tradition applies to all children who enrol in a first grade of primary school, who after a long-term observation of the school's pedagogue may be forwarded to an expert commission for a so-called categorization. Alternatively, if parents have worries they may also take their child to this commission for assessment, or they may enrol their daughter or son in an alternative educational institution, which in their opinion is more appropriate. Assessment procedures within the school have been through some changes according to this new law (2004), so that pupils now receive a descriptive evaluation report on their levels of accomplishment in the first three grades. Based on these first school years the educational staff carries out an official assessment concerning pupils who according to their performances may seem to have special educational needs and might therefore be transferred to a special education school. In grades four to nine the evaluation is still based on the traditional educational application of quantification without strict standards of knowledge. Individual qualitative and quantitative assessments are based on teachers' assessment of the pupil's level of knowledge within individual school subjects or subject areas. It is necessary to establish some defined standards of knowledge in future education policy in order to simplify assessment procedures of pupils' level of accomplishment.

Throughout the entire education process, attention should be paid to sensitizing inclusive attitudes towards all eight curricular aspects pointed out by Johnsen (2001; 2013). They are: pupil/s, assessment – evaluation, communication, care, educational intentions, content, methods and organisation, and frame factors or the context of learning in the school. If properly implemented, this

will provide us with a vision and evaluation of possible achievements of pupils, as well as information about which educational means will be supportive of further learning. When respecting the differences and different levels of learning possibilities, we also respect weaknesses and difficulties of pupils with special needs within the regular education system.

During recent decades, the number of pupils having evident language and speech difficulties has increased. This phenomenon has been a subject of interest among several authors, such as Meitus-Weinberg (1983), Bernstein (1988) and Bishop and Mogford (1994). Research conducted in BiH by Salihović (2005), Zečić (1998) and Zečić, Mrkonjić, Duranović and Matošević (2007) indicate that we also have a large number of children with language and speech difficulties. This research project focuses on these children.

Purpose and planned project activities

The focus of this study is on teaching pupils with language and speech difficulties enrolled in regular school. Two schools have been purposely selected as case schools; one which has taken part in several projects, including a long-term project on individually adapted education and development of inclusive practices (Johnsen, 2007; Pribanić, 2001; Smajić & Ibralić, 2004; SØE 06/02; Zečić, Babić, Čaušević, Džemidžić, Meštrić, & Hrga, in press), and another school currently participating in a special needs education upgrading project for the first time. The project's purpose is to study different kinds of support existing among teachers, parents, peers and local institutions with regard to children with special needs, focusing on pupils with language and speech difficulties. This is a research and innovation project consisting of a baseline study followed by intervention and, finally, a study of post-intervention changes. The following four aspects are targeted in the three phases of the study:

1. Pupils with language and speech difficulties in the two regular schools: Assessment, follow-up, professional special needs- and regular educational support and evaluation
2. Teachers: Comparison of teachers' education in both schools; readiness and capacity to support pupils with language and speech difficulties in the two regular schools

3. Parents and local community: Preparedness and education/training of parents and local community for cooperation with school, teachers and pupils towards the realisation of inclusion in their school
4. Peers: Readiness of pupils to help classmates with learning tasks

Planned activities in the first phase; baseline study:

- To identify children with special needs, particularly children with language and speech difficulties in both case schools: Since the above mentioned ordinary assessment which is completed before starting school, is not sufficient to obtain a realistic picture of possible target pupils, it is first necessary to observe the pupils in the classroom and then make individual special needs educational assessments of language and speech capabilities of those pupils who are observed having possible difficulties.
- To get information about and access to the parents, teachers and local community of these pupils in the two classes participating in the study
- To observe and assess attitudes and practices of teachers and parents related to pupils with language and speech difficulties in the class
- To compare the two schools: We assume that in the school where teachers have been previously trained, there should be more efficient cooperation and a certain number of more successful results than in the other school.

Planned activities in the second phase; intervention:

- To provide special needs education/logopedy support for the targeted pupils through employing various suitable methods and approaches in order to help them overcome language and speech difficulties
- To raise the competency level through upgrading the teaching staff, increasing their knowledge and skills in supporting pupils who have language and speech problems
- To inform parents and advise them how to help their children and encourage them to increase their communication with teachers
- To inform local institutions about the project, including its purpose and activities

Planned activities in the third phase; post-intervention study:

- Activities and level of mastery of all groups; pupils with language and speech difficulties, their classmates/peers, teachers, parents and local community, are observed, assessed, analysed and compared with findings in baseline studies.

Methodology

As mentioned above, this is a case study that includes two schools representing two cases. They have the typical traits as partners in a case study, since they have been purposefully selected because they are as different as possible within the area, or "population" of schools, in the Canton of Sarajevo. The study also shares characteristics with a research and innovation project, consisting of pre- and post-studies, and an intermediate intervention or innovation project. The combined case and intervention study design may also be seen as an action research project with a circle of actions; starting with selecting a focus of study (teaching children with language and speech difficulties in regular schools), collecting data in order to describe and analyse the cases (the baseline study), introducing a specific educational activity or action (the innovation project), describing, analysing and reflecting on the changes of the cases (post-intervention study), possibly continuing the circle by repeating or adding to the new activity, etc. in a spiral-formed process. An additional characteristic of action research in this study is that researchers and participants – teachers, parents, pupils and peers – are involved in the cyclical nature of actions and reflections together with the partly external research and innovation team. In this way the study has an insider's perspective of the phenomenon in focus of the study (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007). The research and innovation group consists of a Master of Education, a Master of Special Needs Education and two logopeds (speech therapists) whereof the senior researcher is a professor in logopedy.

Another important aspect of this research design is the three levels of comparison; 1) between the two different cases 2) between pre- and post-innovation, and 3) with studies of inclusive practices in six other universities in five European countries (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007; Johnsen, 2013).

The study contains a combination of qualitative and quantitative elements; mixed methods. The qualitative part is based on multiple sources of information providing the researcher with the possibility to discover the methods, mechanisms and strategies needed in order to change and improve support provided to children with speech and language difficulties. Multiple sources of information are also used, since single source in isolation are not assumed to be trusted in providing comprehensive information (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 1990).

The phenomenon in focus of the study, teaching pupils with language and speech difficulties in regular school, involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter, studying the phenomenon in its natural settings, the case schools, and attempting to make sense of or interpret it in terms of the

meaning people bring to them (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007; Creswell, 2007). Analysis will take into consideration several different characteristics of the participants, such as the different local context where the schools are situated, gender of pupils, socio-economic status of parents as well as qualification and training of teachers. A similar research approach was conducted with 13- year-olds on their education at the UNESCO Institute in Hamburg by using the so-called *transversal approach*, where

in a longitudinal approach, certain events are followed during a period of time. This is what we are doing in our research project by following the progress of pupils with language and speech difficulties through different time phases. In the UNESCO research project mentioned above, similar tests were applied using similar measuring instruments, and pupils from comparable schools were examined in the same time frame between 1965 and 1970 (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Hitchcock & Hughes, 2001; Mandić, 2004; Mužić, 1963).

The selected cases: We envisage carrying out our research work in two purposefully selected regular primary schools. As mentioned, the criterion for selecting these two schools is that they are very different and therefore, when combined, they are expected to reveal a larger spectre of nuances than if only one of them had been selected.

Primary School A is in Sarajevo. It is a city school where several projects have been implemented, and teachers have participated in previous innovation projects towards inclusion, as documented above.

Primary School B is a suburban school with a very large number of pupils, which has not had the opportunity to take part either in innovation projects towards inclusion or any other projects.

The second grade classes from both schools have been selected because this is assumed to be the optimal period for assessing pupils' language and speech difficulties. Through observations made in the classrooms followed by the use of selected instruments for assessing linguistic competencies and abilities, it has been established whom of the pupils in the classes have special educational needs due to language and speech difficulties. Six pupils were found. These actions have already been taken in preparation for further study.

Research and intervention activities consist of the following steps

- Screening of the situation in the schools

- Survey regarding the pupils:
  - What are their interests, needs and abilities?
  - What is their current level of achievement?
  - Are the pupils active partners?
  - Is there any cooperation (partnership) among parents, teachers and pupil in addressing the special needs of pupils?
  - Are pupils monitored in all contexts?
  - How does a pupil see her/himself?
  - How do the others in the class and community see the pupil?
  - To what extent do the children feel safe and accepted, and how may this be detected?
  - Which learning strategies do pupils apply?
  - What is the level of content that pupils manage to learn?
  - Are there any individual plans and programmes for pupils with special needs?
- Survey for teachers containing questions concerning school openness, teacher education, their proposals for further in-service education and other activities, cooperation with parents and the local community.
  - Are pupils comprehended as being active partners?
  - How well do teachers know their pupils?
  - What are the teachers' resources in adapting their teaching to the individual needs of pupils?
  - What is the involvement of professional services (team work) in school?
  - Who provides support and cooperation with the research & innovation team and parents?
  - How is care and support of children addressed?
  - How does a teacher harmonise "protection" and "support" with individual pupil needs?
  - Are there individual plans for pupils with special needs?
  - Are there any technical means for the improvement and advancement of communication?
- Survey for parents of the selected classes on similar issues; inclusion, their vision of success for pupils with disabilities and their proposals concerning how to support such pupils. Survey of a sociological character concerning opinions of pupils, creativity, ideas on how to support their classmates, and work in peer-support groups (Džemidžić, 2007).

- Speech therapist observations of teaching, classes, teaching preparation, approaches to and communication with pupils, activating pupils with language and speech problems; teacher's questionnaire (open ended – closed). With the participation of the classroom teacher and their approval, the speech therapists implement class testing of linguistic modalities. The speech therapists also implement assessment and identification of the six above mentioned pupils with language and speech difficulties, who will be monitored and educated throughout the longitudinal project.

Research instruments and materials

Bjelica and Posokohova's (2000) evaluation program is applied to assess the pupils with assumed language and speech difficulties. Abilities, interests and capacities are systematically assessed with focus on the following aspects: spontaneous conversation – naming of pictures – picture-creation of sentence – discrimination of similar phonemes – rewriting text – completing the word – completing the sentence – dictation – procedures of assessment.

Technical support in research and innovation consists of dictaphones for recording pupils' reading and speech patterns; cameras for recording different teaching-learning sequences, working premises, classrooms, laboratories, family environment of pupils, public performances of pupils, workshops, etc., as well as speech therapy devices for the training of articulation, stuttering and other speech modalities.

Didactic materials include textbooks, teaching hand-outs, pictures, cards, recordings of proper speech patterns, cassettes or CDs containing correct speech patterns, dictation of poems, songs, etc.

Instruments for the continuous monitoring of the teachers' work consist of an evidence list for analysis of follow-up segments/activities (Bjelica & Posokohova, 2000):

– feelings of teacher – emotions
– ways of commenting with pupils
– what kind of communication s/he has with pupils
– how many communication skills s/he uses at work
– how s/he conveys information
– how s/he obtains information from pupils
– how harmonious are verbal and non-verbal communication

Teacher training is a very important segment of the innovation part of our project.

Timetable for implementation of the baseline study

Month	School	Teachers	Pupils	Year
II	B	survey	observ.	2007
III	A	survey	observ.	2007

IV in both schools survey for parents of II graders 2007

After conducting classroom observations and identifying the pupils with language and speech difficulties, the plan is to make an analytical report of the existing conditions in these schools and classes. This report will provide us with more systematic information about the six identified pupils with language and speech problems in both case schools, which will in turn create a further dynamic for our work. After having conducted a survey among teachers from both schools, it will be possible to make a comparison of the level of education of the teaching staff in both schools, and innovation workshops can be planned. Information obtained from parent surveys may also contain indicators of different school and classroom conditions, which may in turn influence the preparation and scope of the innovation project.

It is well-known that cooperation between teachers and special needs educators is among the most important indicators for achieving successful inclusion (Zečić, Babić, Čaušević, Džemidžić, Meštrić, & Hrga, in press). Therefore, special needs educators and teachers are amongst the members of the expert team of this research and innovation project, as are parents of pupils with special needs. In this sense, we are planning at least two workshops for parents as part of the project. We will also organise workshops for all the parents from the classes in which the children with special educational needs are pupils. These workshops are planned to be training sessions that will support parents to develop their children's self-esteem and self-confidence, recognise their needs and provide adequate responses to their concerns. A special form of cooperation and partnership with parents consists of follow-up on the progress of children by creating a portfolio for every child. Using the method of content analysis, we are going to determine whether there is a significant difference in the organisation and content of portfolios of children with and without special needs. Regarding each class, two portfolios will be randomly selected in order to compare them with portfolios of the pupils with speech and language difficulties. The role of educational and psychological services in working with children with language and speech difficulties and their parents will also be examined s in order to establish how to improve and enrich this cooperation.

Before the second joint international project workshop in Belgrade in spring 2007 (WB 04/06), the plan is to have decided a number of indicators for screening the situation in schools and selected cases from classes. In the second semester of the school year, we plan to implement the following steps and prepare for professional work with pupils selected for our project.

Timetable for further baseline studies and beginning of innovation

Month	School	Teacher activities	Pupil activities	Year
IX and X	A and B	workshop	work w/ speech therapist	2007
XI and XII	meeting in Sar.	worksh. I. E.	SNE* in class	2007

*SNE: special needs educator, defectologist

In this part of the first project year, there will be one workshop in each school with teachers organised in the area of planning how to work with pupils with special educational needs and cooperate with parents. In the following two months, meetings of the teachers from grades one to three in both schools will be organised in School A in order to coordinate the preparation of individual educational programmes and prepare for actually working with the selected pupils. Pupils in both schools will be visited by a speech therapist that will both start working with them and provide training for their parents and classroom teachers related to their relevant language and speech development. A speech therapist or special needs educator/defectologist will teach children with language and speech difficulties for one hour each week in both schools. The speech therapist will start by providing needed didactical materials as well as screening for certain details related to pupils and teachers.

During 2008 the speech therapist will continue this work as well as systematically cooperate with teachers, provide support planning the methodology needed for working with dyslexia and dysgraphia or any other language and speech-related impediments with pupils in both schools. This teacher training will continue in cooperation between the two case schools and the Educational Centre in Sarajevo[31].

Post-intervention studies are planned from the beginning of 2009 in order to analyse different segments which have been monitored during the intervention and innovation period. Our plan is to apply the same or equivalent methods

31. The Educational Centre in Sarajevo has participated with the Faculty of Education, University of Sarajevo, in this project. The Educational Centre was established by the Italian government in cooperation with the Institute for Education of Children with Special Needs, Mjedenica, as a resource centre.

and instruments as in the baseline studies with possible additional activities related to new aspects which may be revealed over the course of the project. Focus will again centre on the following assumed changes:

- Concerning pupils: Achievements, success-results, changes in relation to a number of operationalized aspects – communication with teacher, peers and parents, as well as self-esteem and attitudes towards school and teaching
- Concerning teachers: Mastery of new teaching programmes –altered and increased confidence towards work – increased self-esteem and social contacts – communication on several levels and in different ways – changes in care for children – increased positive cooperation with parents: partnership

The eight curricular/didactic main aspects mentioned above (Johnsen, 2001; 2007; 2013) guide the choices of focal points throughout the project, providing grounds for the international comparative analysis of inclusive practices (Johnsen, 2013). In this study the main aspects care and communication are given special attention. Care is understood as something which is reciprocal. Hence focus is on resource-based care for pupils and parents, and on parents' care for their own as well as other children. Focus is also on the care practiced on institutional level, such as how the schools provide care for teachers, pupils and parents. On a more general or principle level attention is also directed towards the care which is implicit in the schools' development of new lines of thought, such as how the principle of inclusion is developed and transferred to practices. Communication is seen as a related central aspect in the project. Care and communication are, as noted above, in focus in all three parts of the project, baseline studies, innovation and post-intervention studies. They are central to the interactional analysis of the study's main participants: teacher – pupil, pupil – teacher, parent – teacher, pupil- teacher – parent, etc.

As mentioned, comparison is an important part of the analysis and will continuously take place throughout the project. A comparative analysis will be performed between the two case schools and between baseline and post-innovation findings. Related to the international comparison, relevant aspects of our project will be included in the international comparison between the seven project universities (WB 04/06). The joint goal is to explore the existence and development of inclusive practices in various European countries and regions.

References

Arksey, H. & Knight, P. (1999). *Interviewing for Social Sciences. An Introductory Resource with Examples*. London: SAGE Publications.

Bernstein, L. E. (1988). *The Vocaly Impaired*. 500V872 RC 423 V63 1988. for Library of Congress.

Bishop, D. & Mogford, K. (1994). *Language Development in Exceptional Circumstances*. USA: Hillsdale.

Bjelica, J. & Posokhova, I. (2000). *Dijagnostički komplet za ispitivanje sposobnosti govora, jezika, čitanja i pisanja u djece*. Ostvarenje d.o.o Donji Vukojevac.

Bogdan, C. R. & Biklen, K. S. (1998); *Qualitative Research for Education. An Introduction to Theory and Methods*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Džemidžić, S. (2007). *Cooperation among Pupils in the Classroom. Pupils Voice about Cooperative Learning in a Purposefully Selected Primary School in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Master theses. Oslo: Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo.

Gall, M., Gall, J. & Borg, W. (2007). *Educational Research*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Hitchcock, G. & Hughes, D. (2001). *Research and the Teacher – A Qualitative Introduction to School Based Research*. London: Routledge.

Johnsen, B. H. (2001). Curricula for the Plurality of Individual Learning Needs. In B. H. Johnsen & M. D. Skjørten (Eds.). *Education – Special Needs Education. An Introduction* (pp. 255–304). Oslo: Unipub.

Johnsen, B. H. (2007). *Razred u pravcu inkluzije -The Classroom towards Inclusion – Dialogue about Good Examples and difficult Dilemmas in Development of Inclusive Practices*. Sarajevo: Connectum.

Johnsen, B. H. (2013). *Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion. Joint Research Plan for Cooperation between the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Mandić P. (2004). *Metodologija naučnog rada* (Methodology of scientific work). Sarajevo: Akademija nauka i umjetnosti Republike Srpske, S.

Meitus, I. & Weinberg, B. (1983). *Diagnosis in Speech-Language Pathology*. Baltimore: University Park Press.

Mužić, V. (1963). *Metodologija pedagoškog istraživanja* (Methodology of Pedagogical Research). Beograd.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*. Newbury Park: SAGE Publication.

Pribanić, Lj. (2001). Rana komunikacija i usvajanje jezik u prelingvalnono gluhog djeteta (Early Communication and Language Adoption in Pre-lingual Deaf Children). *Dijete i društvo* (Child and Society) no 3, pp.271–291.

Salihovic, N. (2005). *Poremećaji tečnosti govora* (Difficulties in Speech Fluency). Tuzla: Univerzitet u Tuzli.

Smajić, M. & Ibralić, F. (2004). Edukacijska procjena i intervencija u inkluzivnoj sredini (Educational Assessment and Intervention in Inclusive Settings). *Defektologija*, br.11.

SØE 06/02. Institutional Competence Building and Cooperation with Two Bosnian Universities: "Special Needs Education towards Inclusion". Cooperation Programme with South-East Europe (CPSEE).

WB 04/06. *Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building. Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo*. Norwegian Cooperation Program on Research and Higher Education with the countries on the Western Balkans (CPWB).

Zakon o osnovnom odgoju i obrazovanju (Law on Primary Education). (2004). Sarajevo Canton.

Zečić, S. (1998). *O potrebi uvođenja sadržaja specijalne pedagogije u programe redovne edukacije nastavnika. Kandidatkinja je bila predavač u ime*. UNESCO-a te kao predsjednica radne grupe za projekat "Posebne potrebe u učionici" Međunarodna konferencija, Sarajevo, 15.-17.4. 1998.

Zečić, S. & Jeina, Z. (2006). *Nastavnik u inkluzivnom okruženju* (Teacher in Inclusive Environment). Fojnica-Sarajevo.

Zečić.S., Mrkonjić, Z., Duranović, M. & Matošević, B., (2007). Specifičnosti automatizovanih govornih sekvenci kod osoba sa afazijom. *Defektologija*, 13 (1). Tuzla.

Zečić, S., Babić, M., Čaušević, M., Džemidžić, S., Meštrić, S. & Hrga, G. (in press). Classroom Studies and Innovation towards Inclusion. In B. H. Johnsen, S. Zečić & M. Babić (Eds.). *Special Needs Education towards the School for All and Inclusion – Specijalno obrazovanje prema školiza za sve i inkluzija*. Ch. 5.

Comments regarding modifications to the initial project plan

Sadeta Zečić and Selma Džemidžić Kristiansen

Project activities described in the main project plan have been modified in accordance with the two project schools' needs for mediation by the research team in order to support inclusive practices in thematic workshops and other kinds of consultations with teachers and parents. Thus, action research[32] has played a more prominent role than described in the project plan as a consequence of concrete consultation needs in different situations, especially in the case school, which had not taken part in innovation projects before joining this particular one. More in-service education and workshops about inclusive education have been arranged in this school.

32. According to Gall, Gall & Borg (2007) action research in education is a form of applied research whose main purpose is improvement of an educational professional practice. Action research done for personal purposes is generally intended to promote greater self-knowledge and personal fulfilment in addition to raising professional awareness among other practitioners.

Provision of Education and Rehabilitation Support of Children with Special Needs in Regular Classrooms

Nevzeta Salihović, Alma Dizdarević and Melika Smajić

Introduction

This study attempts to explore how to develop individually adapted education for pupils with special needs in a regular school through cooperation between special educators, regular teachers and school administration.

Several studies conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), (Hatibović, 2002; Ibralić, 2002; Muminović, 2000; OSCE, 2001; Salihovic, 2001; Smajić, 2004) show that schools, especially at the primary level, are attended by an increasing number of children who for different reasons cannot cope with the acquisition of what they are taught. The rise in the numbers of these children is calculated to be around 4% from 1997 (UNDP, 2003). Special education needs originate from complex interactions of personal and environmental factors, and in each generation we meet individuals showing developmental traits that differ in pace, level and quality of the developmental path expected by school and more or less followed by the majority of pupils. Children generally differ in interests, learning styles and the amount of time found necessary for learning. These and other differences, such as trauma, fear, sleeplessness or physical, sensory and developmental difficulties, require different approaches and amount

Citation of this chapter: Salihović, N., Dizdarević, A. & Smajić, M. (2013). Provision of education and rehabilitation support of children with special needs in regular classrooms. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 230–245/pp. 289-304 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org/10.23865/noasp.124

of support. When taking into consideration children living in poverty, children from ethnic and language minorities as well as emotionally, socially and culturally deprived children, we may agree that these children are frequently marginalised within the education system and society in general. Each child with special needs has different learning abilities, needs and interests. Therefore the teaching process must be individualised, respecting and celebrating diversity of individual characteristics, abilities, needs and interests, and the needs of all children attending their local school together with their peers must be addressed (Johnsen, 2001; Smajić, 2004). With the aim of adjusting teaching and learning content to the potential of the pupil, it is necessary to familiarise oneself with the characteristics of the child as well as her or his current level of accomplishment. Moreover, it is important to ensure that the individual pupil's potentials are optimally used. According to national and international principles each child has the right to attend regular primary school (Okvirni zakon, 2003; UNESCO, 1991; 1994).

Contextual and theoretical background of the study

Traditionally, children with disabilities and special needs have attended special institutions and schools. Institutionalisation tended to violate elementary rights, marginalising the institutional inhabitants socially, which may have resulted in less efficient learning. In her PhD. Study Ibralić (2002) has analysed different models for treating persons with disabilities in BiH. Her findings indicate that a medical approach is still dominant. In other words, the focus is on defects, and the person with developmental difficulties is viewed as a problem. All attention is directed to the "difficulty" and "disability", and social activity is directed to alleviate the consequences of a disorder. Children are referred to "special" schools, separated from their families from early childhood, isolated from their surrounding environment and alienated from society. Consequently, they have limited possibilities to establish social contacts and learn to interact with other children.

Ibralić (2002) argues that implementing a social model in education and rehabilitation will improve the social status of children with special needs. Many countries are striving towards the termination of special educational institutions and acceptance of children with special needs as equal members of society. This is in keeping with current international principles regarding human rights. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991) states that each child has the

right to live in the circle of the family as well as the right to receive education, support and stimulation. Furthermore, the World Declaration regarding Education (UNESCO, 1991) and the Salamanca Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994) explicitly insist on education for all children in the least restrictive environment possible and in conditions in which their needs will be met. New terminology has also been developed during recent decades. For example, the UK Warnock Report (1978, in Barton & Oliver, 1997) decided to reject the term handicap and instead apply the term 'special educational needs', and at the same time shifting the focus away from the child to the need for providing adequate support for the child. Hand in hand with changing terminology, it seems that society's attitudes towards children with special needs are changing from segregation and labelling towards an understanding of the importance of providing support in order to develop all children without exception optimally towards complete and independent citizens.

Having ratified the above mentioned UN and UNESCO documents, BiH has still not managed to realize completely all the basic conditions that they prescribe. The school system is making slow progress toward becoming a school for all, welcoming all children with and without special needs, and inclusion. Today, inclusion in BiH is partially organized by statute, meaning that primary schools are not adequately prepared to serve children with special needs. Although the Frame Statute regarding primary and secondary education in BiH (PSBH no. 59/03, 2003) has ascertained the possibility for equal participation of all children, cantonal statutes are not regulated, especially when it comes to schools' obligations to support children with special needs. Until now, these children have not received appropriate attention in all courses and activities in school, and there is insufficient cooperation between school and parents. There is very limited or no early detection of children with special needs in BiH, and there are no teams for follow-up providing support in form of early stimulation. Further, there is a lack of advanced individualised support and development of inclusive practices. Although inclusion as a principle is regulated by the above mentioned statute, questions regarding how to provide special needs education and appropriate collaboration between special needs educators or defectologists, teachers and school administration in regular classes have remained unanswered. Unfortunately, very few signs may be found regarding implementation of the principle of inclusion in teacher education, which is still carried out in a traditional fashion, through lecturing and with relatively few practical exercises and new, flexible and creative teaching methods adapted to different individual needs.

The process of identification and support for children with special needs still is not officially regulated. Although certain changes are being implemented in the education of teachers and special needs educators as well as in some schools in Tuzla, Sarajevo and other cantons of BiH, they are still partial and unsystematic (Ibralić, in press; Johnsen, 2007; Pepeljak, Hasić, Buljubašić & Smajić, in press; Salihović & Hatibović, in press; Smajić, 2004).

So, in spite of the slight improvements mentioned above, the regular school is currently not easily accessible for children with special needs. The reasons for this are many, such as lack of proper legislation, unpreparedness of the schools and teaching staff to offer adequate support, absence of expert staff, and no or little adaptation of school curricula and school buildings. Another reason may be the lack of connections between school, parents and local community. Regarded in their entirety, these conditions prevent schools from making effective efforts in addressing the individual needs of all children. However, individual curricula are in focus as regards special education, and they are one of the important factors that have contributed to the successful inclusion and increased success for children with special needs in regular school (Johnsen, 2001; 2013; Smajić, 2004). Positive interaction between teacher and pupil is another core issue. Rye (2001; 2005) discusses eight basic principles of resource-based communication and mediation promoting adequate contact with all pupils, and specifically with vulnerable pupils. No one teacher, no matter how experienced or talented, can possess all the knowledge, skills and attitude necessary for planning and practicing individually adapted education for the multitude of pupils with different educational needs.

Having pupils with special educational needs in the classroom means that special educational knowledge and skills are required. Professional special needs educators, or defectologists are necessary partners in the regular school for all, and team work and cooperation between them is a crucial requirement for success (Ferguson et al, 1998). In BiH and Tuzla canton the term "special needs" has not yet been clearly described in public documents, and it is applied mostly with a focus on children with different disabilities: mental or physical disability, sensory impairments, multiple impairments, psychosocial or language and speech difficulties (Official paper of Tuzla Canton no.7/04).

Stančić (1985) offers a description of special needs, arguing that children and youth with special educational or (re) habilitation needs are those who, for the purpose of optimal development of their intellectual and psycho-social abilities, essentially need specially adapted and individualized conditions and treatments.

The advantage of this description or definition is that the term "developmental difficulty" is avoided, and that focus is turned towards possibilities of alleviating the primary difficulty. Thus, the purpose of the concept special needs is to direct attention to the needs of pupils, asking questions such as: What are the needs of this individual child, and what kind of support has the school to offer in order to meet these needs?

Learning means operating within the framework of what Vygotsky (1978) terms the *zone of proximal development*. He describes this zone as the distance between actual developmental level determined by the ability to independent problem-solving and level of potential development determined by the ability to solve problems under the supervision of an adult or in collaboration with more capable peers. The zone of proximal development relates to functions that are still not mature but are in the process of maturation; functions that may be mastered tomorrow, but are developing within social interaction today (Vygotsky, 1978). This line of argument supports the view that teacher, classmates and educational adaptation are crucial for learning. Accordingly traditional assessment of what the pupil masters independently only presents one aspect of educational assessment. The entire spectre of influential factors related to the teaching-learning process in the classroom needs to be considered as a basis for development and revision of individual as well as class plans and programmes or curricula. Tharp and Galimore (1991) argue that teaching happens when help or assistance is given on the level or point in the zone of proximal development, on which performing a certain activity or learning task depends upon assistance.

This study is a systematic follow-up of a former international project focusing on developing individual and class curricula as a key practice of inclusion (SØE 06/02). This is an independent Bosnian study, and at the same time a contribution to a second international project entitled *Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion* (Johnsen, 2013; WB 06/04).

Research topic

As argued, educational issues related to children with special needs in BiH are serious and different from one another. This study is therefore based on the following two presumptions:

- In regular classrooms one encounters children who do not cope with acquisition of traditional teaching content due to various special needs

- Children with special needs learn and develop effectively in regular settings when provided with adequate special educational support focused on their potentials.

Consequently, we suggest that planning and providing adequate support through identification of level of mastery and learning possibilities, individual education programmes, appropriate instruction and individualised assessment, represent significant steps in addressing relevant education of children with special needs in the inclusive classroom. Thus, the main goal of this research project is to explore how a school develops individually adapted education for pupils with special needs in cooperation between special needs educators, regular teachers and school administration.

Sub goals or focus areas for exploration:

1. Contextual assessment of characteristics of pupil and learning environment, playing and living inside and outside school in order to develop a profile of the pupil in the learning process
2. Development of systematic suggestions for the adaptation of an individual curriculum or plan in order to meet the pupil's needs on the basis of information collected through contextual assessment
3. Development of individual educational and/or rehabilitation program
4. Implementation of individual educational and/or rehabilitation program
5. Evaluation of the program

Thus, learning-teaching interactions related to a small number of pupils with different special needs within regular classes are investigated in this study.

Methodology; design-methods-instruments

Research design

This is an action research project with qualitative elements. The linking of the terms "action" and "research" highlights the essential features of this approach; we are trying out ideas in practice as a means of increasing knowledge about the research topic and/or improving practice.

Action research involves action (or change) and research (or understanding). Rapoport (1970) argues that the aim of action research is to contribute to understanding and solving practical dilemmas of the participants involved in the research as well as clarifying dilemmas that may appear in the research field. One

may say that action research takes place in a process that improves and shapes itself, while the understanding of a phenomenon grows. The process is cyclical, intending to increase understanding. Action research is usually participatory. The methodology is based on the assumption that changes most easily occur for those whose changes are directly involved in the process of changing, which in our case are selected teachers, special needs educators and school administration. Actual real-life situations in school are in focus of action research. Control of variables is not an issue here, but rather the issue is to explore the different aspects of the complex and continuous flow of changes in the real-life process (Dick, 1995; Armstrong & Moore, 2004). In this study, action research will provide an opportunity to 1) systematically analyse and reflect on teaching-learning processes 2) explore and test new ideas, methods, and materials 3) assess how effective the approaches have proved to be 4) share feedback with fellow team members and 5) make decisions about new approaches related to pupils, learning process, curriculum adjustment, instruction, and assessment plans.

A qualitative research approach is explorative or descriptive, assumes the value of context and searches for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon in focus of the study. According to Gall, Gall and Borg (2003), a main characteristic of qualitative research is its focus on the intensive study of specific instances that are cases of a phenomenon. The phenomenon in focus of this study is the process of providing support to children with special needs attending regular primary school.

Purposeful selection of a regular school

Preliminary studies have already been implemented in order to select one school as arena for the research. At first, we gained access to one school which seemed to fulfil our purposes for selection. However, when the school decided to withdraw from the research cooperation, we set out finding another, which is now ready to participate in our project. The selected school is a regular primary school with 841 pupils at the beginning of the study. The school meets the following criteria for selection:

- It has a large number of pupils
- It does not have a developed system of support for children with special needs at the beginning of the project
- The school director and administration are ready for cooperation
- It is an urban school

- None of the staff have been educated for working with children with special needs
- It has welcomed children with different special needs in several classes

Within the school the classes have been purposely selected in order to work with six different categories of special needs. The selection criteria are:

- Pupils of both genders
- Pupils who the teacher and project researcher assess and find to have difficulties in overcoming applied curriculum
- Classes with pupils with different special educational needs due to the categories intellectual difficulties – language and speech disorders – psychosocial / behavioural difficulties – visual or hearing impairment – mobility disabilities – chronic disease/s

The study includes pupils from first to eight grade of both genders. The selection of pupils and classes has been conducted in cooperation with class teachers, director and pedagogue. All 841 pupils participated in assessment with the following outcome regarding special needs:

- 32 pupils with intellectual difficulties
- 94 pupils with language and speech disorders
- 3 pupils with hearing impairment
- 1 pupil with behavioural disorder
- 3 pupils with mobility disorders and chronic diseases
- 36 pupils with visual impairment

The plan is to select one or two pupils from each category of special needs depending on parents' consent to their children's participation in the project on the following aspects:

- agreement to further assessment of the child
- agreement regarding development of individual educational and rehabilitation programmes
- interest concerning their child's progress

In addition to the selected pupils, parents, teachers and other relevant educators will be informants in this study.

One school, six cases and eight researchers

Through the preparatory assessment shown above, pupils with special educational needs are divided into six categories in accordance with suggested reasons for their difficulties in meeting traditional educational requirements. Each category constitutes a case. The further study will be implemented by colleagues with professional and research experience within each category or case. Each case is planned to follow a similar process through action research. Differences between the case studies relate to differences in assessment, planning and implementing within each special needs educational category.

Cases and researches

Case 1. Pupils with intellectual difficulties. Researchers PhD Fata Ibralić, Docent and M.A. Alma Dizdarević, Teaching Assistant

Case 2. Pupil with language and speech difficulties. Researches: PhD. Nevzeta Salihović, Professor and PhD. Mirela Duranović, Docent

Case 3. Pupil with hearing difficulties. Researcher PhD Husnija Hasanbegović, Docent

Case 4. Pupil with socio-emotional difficulties. Researcher PhD. Behija Čišić, Associate Professor

Case 5. Pupil with mobility disorders and chronic disease. Researcher PhD. Ajša Mahmutagić, Docent.

Case 6. Pupil with visual impairment. Researcher PhD. Dževdet Sarajlić, Professor.

Main activities

Each case is represented by one pupil in the research school who has been purposefully selected or appropriately sampled on grounds of a series of criteria. For Case 1, however, two pupils have been selected.

The next step is to implement further in-depth assessment related to level of mastery and educational resources in accordance with the different categories of special needs[33]. Data will be collected by contextual assessment through observation of the pupil in a regular class setting and by document analysis, including the pupil's works, drawings, teacher's assessment and tests of the

33. See list of planned assessment approaches and tests under References

pupils with scales, tests and check-lists as well as interviews with informants. The information will be gathered in a so-called pupil's profile of individual and environmental characteristics as well as with educational proposals regarding adjustment of curriculum, teaching methods and assessment, as well as rehabilitation proposals depending on particular needs. This will be carried out in cooperation between researcher, teachers and parents.

An individually adapted education plan will be developed based on gathered information. Educational objectives will be decided based on the analysis of the gathered data relevant to the pupils' needs and interests. The total range of needs; educational, social, occupational, physical, psychological and recreational; will be considered

The individual education plan will be implemented. Continuous observations of the needs and interests of the pupil in focus will be administered through team work involving teacher, pedagogue, parent, educator-rehabilitator, and other experts if needed. The voice of the pupil will be in the centre of attention. Continuous revision will take place focusing on potential objectives necessary for curriculum adaptation and for development of a support program in accordance with particular special needs.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the individual program will be carried out. A final assessment will be performed at the end of the school year, applying the same scales, tests, checklists and other procedures that were used at the beginning of the research project, as well as by analysing the pupils' achievements in academic and other developmental domains. This information will serve as basis for a descriptive analysis of the results of this research project, and. In addition it may also serve to suggest future goals concerning:

- how to improve research work in this field
- how to improve the provision of support for children with special educational needs in regular classrooms
- how to create efficient inclusive schools

Preliminary time schedule

January 2007	February – Jun 2007	September – October 2007	November 2007	December 2007 – Jun 2008	September 2008 –…
Assessment	Research – Treatment, support	Evaluation	Assessment	Research – Treatment, support	Evaluation

Ethical considerations

A number of ethical issues may occur at various points in an educational research process, such as in data collection, in the field related to analysis and especially regarding dissemination of qualitative reports (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003). In this research two ethical issues have been addressed already in the preparatory phase:

- Obtaining informed consent: A formal letter with information about the research project has been formulated and addressed to the school authorities of the primary school requesting their written consent to participation
- Maintenance of privacy and confidentiality: All information about the selected pupils in the cases and their family, as well as about the school has been guaranteed strict confidentiality. Any information related to any individual may only be released with parental and school permission.

Connection between the Tuzla study and the joint comparative classroom studies towards inclusion (WB 04/06)

This study contributes to our joint international comparative study through exploring, describing and discussing six cases related to pupils with special needs in regular classes in a regular school. This research project focuses on all eight didactic-curricular main aspects for comparative analysis presented in the joint project plan (Johnsen, 2012; WB 04/06).

References

Armstrong, F. & Moore, M. (2004). *Action Research for Inclusive Education. Changing Places, Changing Practices, Changing Minds*. London: Routledge Falmer.

Barton, L. & Oliver, M. (1997). *Disability Studies: Past, Present and Future*. Leeds: The Disability Press.

Dick, B. (1995). *Session 5 – The change process and action research*. St Lucia: Bob Dick.

http://www Action Research and Evaluation On-Line

Ferguson, D. L., Gudjonsdottir, H., Droege, C., Meyer, G., Lester, J. & Ralph, G. (1998). *Designing Classroom Curriculum for Personalized Learning*. Oregon: University of Oregon.

Gall, M. D., Gall, J. P & Borg, W. R. (2003). *Educational Research. An Introduction*. Boston MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Hatibović, Ć. (2002). *Kongruencija latentne structure stavova prema odgojno-obrazovnoj integraciji djece s teškoćama u razvoju*. Tuzla: Univerzitet u Tuzli. Defektološki fakultet. Doktorska disertacija. (Concord latent structure of attitudes towards the education integration of children with disabilities. Tuzla: University of Tuzla. Faculty of education and rehabilitation. Doctoral dissertation).

Ibralić, F. (2002). Adaptivno ponašanje osoba s mentalnom retardacijom. Tuzla: Univerzitet u Tuzli, Defektološki fakultet. Doktorska disertacija. (Adaptive behavior of persons with mental retardation. Tuzla: University of Tuzla. Faculty of education and rehabilitation. Doctoral dissertation).

Ibralić, F. (in press). Socio-Emotional Growth and Development of Learning Strategies. In In B. H. Johnsen, S. Zečić & M. Babić (Eds.). *Special Needs Education towards the School for All and Inclusion – Specijalno obrazovanje prema školiza za sve i inkluzija*.

Johnsen, B. H. (2001). Curricula for the Plurality of Individual Learning Needs. In B. H. Johnsen & M. D. Skjørten (Eds.). *Education – Special Needs Education. An Introduction* (pp.255–304). Oslo: Unipub.

Johnsen, B. H. (2007). Razred u pravcu inkluzije -The Classroom towards Inclusion – Dialogue about Good Examples and difficult Dilemmas in Development of Inclusive Practices.Sarajevo: Connectum.

Johnsen, B. H. (2013). Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion. Joint Research Plan for Cooperation between the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Muminović, H. (2000). Mogućnosti efikasnijeg učenja u nastavi. DES. Sarajevo. (Possibilities of more effective learning in the classroom. DES. Sarajevo).

Okvirni Zakon o osnovnom i srednjem obrazovanju u Bosni i Hercegovini. (2003). PSBiH. 59/03. Sarajevo. (The Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. (2003). PA. 59/03. Sarajevo).

OSCE. (2001). Izvještaj o provedenom istraživanju o broju djece i učenika sa posebnim potrebama u predškolskom i osnovnom odgoju i obrazovanju, te stavovima nastavnog osoblja, pedagoga i roditelja o uvođenju inkluzije u obrazovni sistem u Bosni i Hercegovini. Mission to Bosnia and Herezegovina. (A report on conducted research on the number of children and pupils with special needs in preschool and primary education, and attitudes of teachers, educators and parents about the introduction of inclusion in the educational system in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mission to Bosnia and Herezegovina).

Pepeljak, S, Hasić, O, Buljubašić, F & Meliha & Smajić, M. (in press) The Inclusive School – A Model of Modern Work in School. In B. H. Johnsen, S. Zečić & M. Babić (Eds.). *Special Needs Education towards the School for All and Inclusion – Specijalno obrazovanje prema školiza za sve i inkluzija*.

Pravilnik o procjeni sposobnosti i određivanju podrške djeci i mladim s posebnim potrebama. (2004). Službene novine Tuzlanskog kantona br.7/04. (Regulations on assessment of ability and determination of support for children and youth with special needs. (2004). Official Gazette of Canton br.7/04).

Rapoport, R. N. (1970). Three Dilemmas in Action Research. In *Human Relations*, 23:4; pp. 499–513.

Rye, H. (2001). Helping Children and Families with Special Needs: A Resource Oriented Approach. In Johnsen, B. H. & Skjørten, M. D. (Eds.). *Education-Special Needs Education. An Introduction* (pp. 65–130). Oslo: Unipub.

Rye, H. (2005). The Foundation of an Optimal Psychosocial Development. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Socio-Emotional Growth and Development of Learning Strategies* (pp. 215–228). Oslo: Unipub–Oslo Academic Press.

Salihović, N. (2001). Prevalence of Stuttering of Preschool-Age Children and Adolescents. In *Defectologica Slovenica*, 9 (2) 7–14.

Salihović, N. & Hatibović, Ć. (in press). Estimation of Language Abilities, Reading and Writing. In B. H. Johnsen, S. Zečić & M. Babić (Eds.). *Special Needs Education towards the School for All and Inclusion – Specijalno obrazovanje prema školiza za sve i inkluzija*.

Smajić, M. (2004). *Adjusting the Curriculum to Individual Needs. A Single Case Study and Innovation Project*. Oslo: Department of Special Needs Education. University of Oslo. Master thesis.

Stančić, V. (1985). Problemi integracije slijepih u radnu i životnu sredinu. In *Defektologija* 21.1. 85–93. (Problems of integration of the blinds in the labor and the environment. In Defektologija 21.1. 85–93).

SØE 06/02. *Institutional Competence Building and Cooperation with Two Bosnian Universities: "Special Needs Education towards Inclusion"*. Cooperation Programme with South-East Europe (CPSEE).

Tharp, R. & Gallimore, R. (1991). *The Instructional Conversation: Teaching and Learning as Social Activity*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

UN. (1991). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. New York.

UNDP. (2003). *Izvještaj o humanom razvoju BiH*. (Human Development Report Bosnia and Herzegovina).

UNESCO. (1991). *Education for all I, II and III*. Jomitien: Thailand World Conference on Education for All.

UNESCO. (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. Paris.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society. The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. London: Haward University Press.

WB 04/06. *Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building. Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo*. Norwegian Cooperation Program on Research and Higher Education with the Countries on the Western Balkans (CPWB).

References to assessment instruments and literature related to specific research plans for the six cases

Assessment instruments

Barrage, N. (1980). *Diagnostic Assessment Procedure (DAP) for Efficiency in Visual Functioning and Observation. Checklist for Visual-Motor Coordination Observation and Graphic Plastic Development*. New York: American Foundation for the Blind.

Bjelica, J. & Posokhova, I. (2001). *Dijagnostički komplet za ispitivanje sposobnosti govora, jezika, čitanja i pisanja u djece*. Lekenik: Ostvarenje. (The diagnostic kit for testing the ability of speech, language, reading and writing in children. Lekenik: Ostvarenje).

Brown, L.L. & Hammill, D.D. (1990). *Behavior Rating Profile: An Ecological Approach to Behavioral Assessmen*t. Austin: Pro-ed, Inc.

Frostig, M. (1973). *Test de development de la perception visuelle*. Paris edition.

Igrić, Lj. & Fulgosi-Masnjak, R. (1991). *AAMD Skala adaptivnog ponašanja*. Priručnik: Zagreb: Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Fakultet za defektologiju. (AAMD adaptive behavior scale. Manual: Zagreb: University of Zagreb, Faculty of Special Education and rehabilitation).

Jewett, E. (2005). *Ekspresivna skala bosanskog jezika*. (Expressive scale of the Bosnian language).

Matanović-Mamužić, M. (1982). *Teškoće u čitanju i pisanju*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga. (Difficulties in reading and writing. Zagreb: Školska knjiga).

Novosel, M. & Mavrin-Cavor, L. J. (1985). *Acadia test razvojnih sposobnosti*. Primjenjena psihologija, 1–2. (Acadia test of developmental abilities. Applied Psychology, 1–2).

Ozaretski, N. I. (1971). *Les teste moteurs d Ozaretski*. Manual d instructions. Issy-les-Moulineaux, est ablisse ments d'aplications psychotehniques E. A. P.

Roongpraiwan, R., Ruangdaraganon, N., Visudhiphan, P. & Santikul, K. (2002). Prevalence and clinical characteristics of dyslexia in primary school students. In *Journal of the Medical Association of Thailand = Chotmaihet Thangphaet* 85, Suppl 4 (5): 1097–103.

Salihović, N. & Junuzović-Žunić, L. (2006). *Test artikulacije*. Tuzla: Tuzla Edukacijsko-rehabilitacijski fakultet, Univerziteta u Tuzli. (Test of articulation. Tuzla. Tuzla Faculty of education and rehabilitation).

Stančić, V. (1991). *Ispitivanje stavova i vrijednosti u djece niže osnovnoškolske dobi. Skala za ispitivanje stavova i vrijednosti*. Priručnik. Zagreb: Fakultet za defektologiju Sveučilišta u Zagrebu. (Examination of attitudes and values in children below primary school age. Manual. Zagreb: Faculty of Special Education, University of Zagreb).

Stančić, V. (1994). *Ispitivanje socijalnog razvoja djece niže osnovnoškolske dobi*. Priručnik za upotrebu DR-2 testa. Zagreb: Fakultet za defektologiju Sveučilišta u Zagrebu. (Testing of social development of children below primary school age. User's Manual DR-2 test. Zagreb: Faculty of Special Education, University of Zagreb).

Žunić-Pavlović, V.(2005). Instrument *za rano otkrivanje djece s faktorima rizika i poremećaje u ponašanju*. Beograd: Fakultet za specijalnu edukaciju i rehabilitaciju. (Instrument for early detection of children with risk factors and behavioral problems. Belgrade: Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation).

Literature related to specific research plans for the six cases

Augar, J. (1993). *Early Help: Better Future*. Reading: British Dyslexia Association.

Baumer, B. H. (1996). *How to Teach Your Dyslexic Child to Read, A Proven Method for Parents and Teachers*. New York: Citadel Press, Kensington Publishing Corp.

Block, F. K.(1993). Services in the Schools. In *ASHA*, 35, 36–54.

Brestovci, B., & Selci, M. (1978). *Disleksija i disortografija s logopedskog aspekta*. Beograd: Savez društava defektologa Jugoslavije. (Dyslexia and disortografija with aspects of speech pathology. Belgrade: Association of Yugoslav Societies of special education teachers).

Brinton B. (1990). A Model for Collaborative Service Delivery for Students with Language-Learning Disorders in the Public Schools. In *ASHA*, 33 (suppl. 5) 44–50.

Cronin, E. M. (1997). *Helping Your Dyslexic Child. A Step-by-Step Program for Helping Your Child Improve Reading, Writing, Spelling, Comprehension, and Self-Esteem*. USA: Prima Publishing.

Crowe, K. (2002). Cued Phonology: A Proposed Bridge for Deaf Students' Development of Proficient Word Reading. Proceedings of the 2002 Speech Pathology Australia National Conference, *Journal from the Centre*, 145–52.

Davis, R. D. & Braun, E. M. (2001). *Dar disleksije, Zašto neki od najpametnijih ljudi ne znaju čitati i kako mogu naučiti*. Zagreb: Alinea. The gift of dyslexia, Why do some of the smartest people do not know how I can read and learn. Zagreb: Alinea.

Dennison, P. E. & Dennison, G. E. (1989). *Brain Gym Teacher's Edition Revised*. Ventura, California: Edu-Kinesthetics, Inc.

Dickman, E., Sherman, G. & Lyon, G. R. (1994). *Definition of Dyslexia Adopted by ODS Research Committee and National Institutes of Health*. Perspectives. The Orton Dyslexia Society.

Duranović, M. (2003). Prevalenca poremećaja govora, čitanja i pisanja u gradskim i prigradskim školama. In *Naša škola* (24): 49–55. (The prevalence of speech, reading and writing skills in urban and suburban schools).

Galić-Jušić, I. (2006). Terapija disleksije. http://www.hud.hr/w-tekstovi/w-terapija.html (Therapy of dyslexia).

Heilman, A. W., Blair, T. R. & Rupley, W. H. (1986). *Principles and Practices of Teaching Reading*. 6 ed. Columbus, Toronto: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company – A Bell & Howell Company.

Lyster, S. (2005). Language, Reading and Self-Esteem. In B. H. Johnsen (ed.). *Socio-Emotional Growth and Development of Learning Strategies* (pp. 399 – 412). Oslo: Unipub – Oslo Academic Press.

Miles, T.R. & Miles, E. (2004). *Disleksija*. Jastrebarsko: Naklada Slap.

Nielsen, G. S. & Irvall, B. (2004). *Smjernice za knjižnične službe i usluge za osobe s disleksijom*. Zagreb: Hrvatsko knjižničarsko društvo. Guidelines for library services and services for people with dyslexia. Zagreb: Croatian Library Association.

Salihović, N., Hatibović, Ć., Junuzović, L. & Čišić, F. (2005). Influence of Bilingualism and Socio- Emotional Stress on Speech, Language, Reading and Writing Acquisition. A Case Study. . In B. H. Johnsen (ed.). *Socio-Emotional Growth and Development of Learning Strategies* (pp. 365 – 398). Oslo: Unipub – Oslo Academic Press.

Posokhova, I. (2000). *Kako pomoći djetetu s teškoćama u čitanju i pisanju*. Lekenik: Ostvarenje. (How to help children with difficulties in reading and writing. Lekenik: Ostvarenje).

Tronbacke, B. I. (2005). *Smjernice za građu laganu za čitanje*. Zagreb: Hrvtasko knjižničko društvo. (Guidelines for easy material to read. Zagreb: Hrvtasko knjižničko društvo).

Vladisavljević, S. (1991). *Disleksija i disgrafija*, Logopedija IV. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva. (Dyslexia and dysgraphia, speech pathology IV).

Young, P. & Tyre, C. (1983). *Dyslexia or Illiteracy? Realizing the Right to Read*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Changes in the research plan during implementation

Alma Dizdarević and Nevzeta Salihović in May 2011

As mentioned in the main text, the research team gained access to a school as research arena. However, soon after the identification of children with special needs for each category of disability took place, the cooperation was suspended. It turned out that the school administration and teaching staff did not accept one of the objectives of the study, which was to give selected teachers in-service training in how to develop individually adapted education plans for pupils with special needs through initiating collaboration with the special needs educators working on the research team. We then turned to a second regular school in an urban setting. While this school was slightly smaller, the teaching staff, including its director, educator and classroom teachers, was willing to cooperate with us in the realization of the research. Parents of the children assessed and selected for the study were also willing to cooperate with the special needs educators during the research period. However, when it came to signing the individual education plans, parents of one of the selected pupils withdrew from the project. Another child with special needs within the same category was then selected with the written consent of his parents.

Supporting Inclusion of Children with Special Needs

A Study of Classroom Assistants and Mobile Team of Special Needs Educators in Regular Schools

Ljiljana Igrić and Daniela Cvitković

Introduction

For more than 25 years, children with special needs have had the legal right to educational integration in Croatia. Still, around 4.000 children, which comprise 10% of the total number of primary school pupils, cannot be successfully integrated into the regular school system because no specific support has been provided to their schools and families. The term *special needs* applies to any pupil who has learning difficulties considerably more serious than their peers and is therefore in need of specific kinds of educational support. The Croatian National Educational Standard distinguishes between the following groups of impairments and special educational needs: visual impairment – hearing impairment – speech impairment – motor impairment and chronic illnesses – intellectual disabilities – attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) – specific learning difficulties – emotional and behavioural difficulties – autistic spectrum disorder (Igrić,2007). There is a lack of special educational expertise in assessment and education responding to these difficulties and impairments, which is especially noticeable in schools in Croatia. For example, in the case of Zagreb, there is one psychologist per 3.000 pupils and one special needs teacher

Citation of this chapter: Igrić, L. & Cvitković, D. (2013). Supporting inclusion of children with special needs. A study of classroom assistants and mobile team of special needs educators in regular schools. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 246–256/pp. 305–315 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org./10.23865/noasp.124

per more than 2.000 pupils. Children with special needs and their families face a number of challenges, such as not understanding the needs of their child and not being familiar with their legal right to education under the same conditions as all other children. Finally, children with special needs and their families are often excluded by their extended families and society.

Assessment of special educational needs is often implemented late, such as in third or fourth grade. Until then, the child may be apprehended as being lazy, irresponsible or naughty in school and at home. Even when the children's difficulties become known, parents and teachers do not know how to help them. This results in underachievement in school, which in turn often leads to emotional and behavioural difficulties (Kavale & Forness, 1995, in Mishna & Muskat, 2004). Therefore, providing support for pupils with special needs as well as their teachers and school is necessary.

Basic preconditions for equal access to the educational system are listed in the National Strategy of Equal Policy for Persons with Disabilities from 2003 to 2006 (2003), which have been included within the Croatian National Educational Standard – CNES (Igrić, 2007). The CNES states that high level of competency in school is one of the most important preconditions for inclusion, and that educational rehabilitation support by mobile teams of experts and classroom assistants is imperative for its success. There are no systematic records in Croatia of past experience or effectiveness of this new kind of support through mobile expert teams and classroom assistants. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out a scientific evaluation of existing practices in order to develop national standards for this kind of special needs educational practice. The goal of this research project is to implement this evaluation. This study is also part of a larger collaborative project entitled Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion (Johnsen, 2013), which is the main section of an international research cooperation project (WB 04/06).

Specifically speaking, in our Croatian project, focus is on the role of the assistant, who is viewed from different aspects indicating the success of integration and inclusion. Pupils' academic achievement is one aspect, since underachievement of pupils with special educational needs has been noticed. A common cause of their underachievement is assumed to be inadequate teaching methods, or in other words, insufficient support in learning. Teachers play a major role in integration, especially in respect to their readiness to accept children with special needs and find the most relevant methods for their up-bringing and education (Kiš Glavaš, 1999; Levin, 1992; Villa & Thousand, 1992).

An even more important aspect is the child's self-evaluation and self-esteem, the latter contributing to individual satisfaction and quality of life. As regards schoolchildren, their academic self-concept is especially important. Several research findings have shown that children who see themselves as more successful are more motivated for success and more persistent in doing their work (Bogiano, Main & Katz,1988 and Harter, 1988 in Vasta, Haith & Miller,1998.). Children with special needs are found to have lower self-concept than their classmates (Chapman, 1998; Grolnick & Ryan, 1990 and Rogers & Saklofske, 1985, in Dyson, 1996).

One of the most important indicators of success of integration is peer acceptance. Indeed, pupils tell us that it is the most important element for them (Goodlad, 1998). Making friends and playmates, however, depends on more than whether children like each other's behaviour or not. Development of friendship is also affected by factors such as how the surrounding environment is structured to provide opportunities for social interaction, whether or not there is encouragement to interact with peers and share common activities, and whether or not different settings provide a continuity of relationships across settings and time (Searcy,1994; Searcy & Meadows,1994). Our social and environmental structures may therefore either enhance or limit the opportunities children have to develop and maintain relationships.

International as well as Croatian studies show that children with special needs are less accepted than their peers (Harper, 1999; Waddell, 1984; Zic & Igrić, 2001). These results indicate that peers more seldom choose to spend time together with children with special educational needs than other children, either for sitting and learning together or for company.

Purpose of the study

In this study it is assumed that support by an assistant will lead to better school achievement, better self-concept, especially regarding academic skills, and better peer acceptance and interaction. The study focuses on two main topics:

Analysing the performance of classroom assistants and evaluating their effect on integration of pupils with special needs in regular classrooms.

Comparing educational, psychological and social effects of new kinds of support to pupils with special needs under former conditions without any assistant.

Methodology

In this study both quantitative and qualitative analysis will be used.

In the quantitative section, the following instruments will be applied to measure pupils' psychosocial wellbeing as well as academic mastery and possibilities:

- Perceptual and intellectual abilities, knowledge
- ACADIA test (Atkinston, Johnston & Lindsay, 1972; Croatian adaptation, Novosel & Marvin-Cavor, 1985)
- PMZ test (Levandovski & Igrić,1990)
- Croatian adaptation of BRP-2 Rating Profile II, BRP-2 (Brown & Hammill, 1990; Croatian adaptation, Žic, 2000)
- Profil samopercepcije za djecu (Brajša-Žganec, Raboteg-Šarić & Franc, 2000; Croatian adaptation of Self-Perception Profile for Children (SPPC) (Harter, 1985).

In the qualitative section, the class will be observed and video recorded. This part of the study starts and ends with interviews with children with special needs, teachers and assistants. The focus will be on questions regarding two main aspects – pupil and communication – through the following topics:

- How have pupils requested that their needs be addressed?
- Are pupils active partners?
- Can the teacher describe/define pupil's mastering of the teaching material in the zone of proximal development?
- How is the pupil seen by others?
- What kind of resources does the teacher use when adapting his/her teaching to the individual needs of the child?
- What is the active participation of the pupil like, both in and outside the classroom?
- What is the participation of professional (psych-pedagogy) service like in the process of inclusion?
- Is there coordination between systems of support (assistants, mobile team)?
- How is care incorporated into the system (how is it conducted, how is it evaluated…)?
- In what way and how much do teacher – assistant, assistant – pupils… communicate?
- In which way do teachers check pupils' understanding?

- Is there any specific aspect of communication with children with disabilities in comparison to children without disabilities? How can we explain communication between a child having a disability and a child without any disability?
- Does the teacher adapt different aspects of the teaching according to the abilities and needs of pupils?

Location of project implementation – the case

A fourth grade in a regular school has been selected for this study starting at the beginning of the school year 2007/08. The class consists of pupils with special needs and their peers as well as classroom teachers and assistants. In the preparation period during 2006–07 leading up to this project plan, the selected school was described as consisting of a total number of 643 pupils. The number of teachers was 15 at the lower grade level (1–4) and 26 at the higher grade level (5–8).

12 children in the school have individual education programmes.
3 children are waiting for individual education programmes.
9 children are taught in accordance with an individualized approach
3 children are waiting to be taught with an individualized approach
46 pupils have some kind of learning difficulty, but their level of mastery and educational needs have not been formally assessed.

Project activities

The implementation of the study has been planned to consist of the following participants and activities:

The mobile expert team is a team of professionals providing all necessary support to schools for the education of children with special needs. Members of the expert team include 1) one academic coordinator from the school in which educational integration is implemented. The best option is a professional employed at school. 2) Two external experts, with specialisations in different but relevant areas, such as special needs educational professionals with a specialisation in educational inclusion, intellectual disabilities, learning difficulties, visual and speech impairment as well as a social pedagogue or psychologist.

The coordinator for educational inclusion is the key person in school who determines the special educational needs of pupils and develops an action plan

together with members of the mobile team. The coordinator also prepares the necessary documentation and organises work with pupils with special needs (teacher, assistant and experts).

The support of the mobile expert team consists of offering professional help to teachers through guidance and workshops focusing on a series of topics relevant to integration and inclusion:

- familiarization with characteristics of certain special educational needs
- development of an individual education programme
- evaluation and assessment of pupils
- didactic–methodical support to teaching
- the process of pupil observation
- collaboration with parents
- working with assistants

Guidance is conducted once a week for 2 hours by one member of the mobile expert team. In the selected partner school, we expect a total of 80 hours over a 10-month period. The mobile expert team provides support to professional associates in school and assistants through supervision.

The classroom assistant represents a new kind of support focusing on the integration of children with special needs in the regular school. The assistant works directly with a pupil in the classroom during teaching and provides support to:

- the pupil with special needs, concerning the pupil's participation in the learning in class and overcoming socio-psychological barriers
- the teacher and other professionals, participating in creating goals, mutually making individual educational plans, implementing planned activities with teachers and other professionals by directly working with pupils, giving feedback, etc.
- developing a curriculum in accordance with the pupil's capabilities
- the school through team work, participating in school life, and sharing knowledge about school regulations

The mobile expert team selects assistants, taking into account their personality traits and levels of competence. Each assistant receives training organised by the school coordinator. An assistant works in a partner school during 10 months, 20 hours per week for a total of 800 hours per year.

Supervision is a modern method of developing professional skills and helping professionals in the field of education and up-bringing. It will be conducted

once a month in the form of group supervision for members of the mobile expert team, and individual supervision for assistants.

Collaboration with teachers. During the project, teachers will receive continuous support from the mobile expert team and assistants. They will be aided in their preparation of teaching through receiving advice, participating in workshops and collaborating with assistants, enabling them to integrate pupils with special needs into all activities with their peers, and in this way develop inclusive practices.

The mobile expert team offers advice to assistants who are working directly with pupils.

Dynamics of project activities – timeline

First year:

- Selecting the actual grade four class which will be the arena of study
- Identifying pupils with special educational needs in this class
- Determining capabilities and characteristics of pupils and their initial level of knowledge and skills
- Selecting classroom assistants and determining their initial training
- Determining criteria and assessment methods of pupils and assistants
- Preparing instruments for assessment of pupils in classroom and assistants
- Determining methods of observation and providing further training to researchers in order to conduct qualitative research

Second year:

- Developing an individual education plan (IEP) for each pupil with special educational needs
- Classroom assistants begin working in the class
- The mobile expert team starts giving workshops and advice
- Work of assistants is monitored and supervised
- Pupil behaviour and work of classroom assistant are observed as regards their relationship with pupils with special educational needs as well as with other pupils
- Class functioning with and without presence of assistant is observed

Third year:

- Analysing and interpreting results

Connection between the Croatian study and the joint comparative classroom studies towards inclusion (WB 04/06)

This study contributes to our joint international comparative study through describing and discussing an example of the new conditions in the Croatian regular classroom that includes an assistant for pupils with special needs. The effects of introducing classroom assistants for pupils with special needs will be investigated. The study will produce quantitative and qualitative data about the new situation in one regular school and class having integrated pupils with special needs. The main topics of this research are those regarding the individual pupil, especially the pupil with special needs, and communication between all individuals in the class.

Relevant ethical research ethical questions

The first and fundamental principle is to consider the welfare of the subjects participating in the study. A main ethical task is to secure privacy for all participants. Research based on naturalistic observations of subjects in their everyday settings raises particular ethical concerns regarding privacy and psychological wellbeing (Breakwell, Hammond & Fife-Schaw, 2003). All participants will be requested for their permission to implement the study, including the children in the selected class and their parents. Names of the participants will be kept anonymous, and they will be informed that the use of video will be limited to the purposes of observation and analysis only. The participants will also be informed about the purpose of the investigation and their role in it. In short, we are seeking informed consent from all participants.

We have already been granted permission to implement the study from the Ministry of Science and also from the principal of the school in which this research will be conducted.

Information about the findings of the study will be presented to participants. The researchers will be in contact with the participants during the entire research process and answer questions that participants may have.

References

Atkinson, J. S., Johnston, E. E. & Lindsay, A. (1972). *Acadia Test of Developmental Abilities*. Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada: University of Acadia.

Brajša-Žganec, A., Raboteg-Šarić Z. & Franc, R. (2000). Dimenzije samopoimanja djece u odnosu na opaženu socijalnu podršku iz različitih izvora. *Društvena istraživanja, Zagreb*, 6 (50) 897–912.

Breakwell, G. M., Hammond, S. & Fife-Schaw, C. (2003). *Research Methods in Psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Brown, L. & Hammill. D. D. (1990). *Behavior Rating Profile, Examiner's Manual*. Austin, Texas: Pro-ed.

Chapman, A. (1998). Preschool to grade 4: Nonfiction. In *School Library Journal*, 44, 9, 94–96.

Dyson, L. L. (1996). The Experiences of Families of Children with Learning Disabilities: Parental Stress, Family Functioning, and Sibling Self-Concept. In *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 29, 281–288.

Goodlad, J. I. (1998). Schools for all seasons. In *Phi Delta Kappan*, Vol. 79 , 9, 670–672.

Harper, L. (1999). The Instructional Assistants Program: A Potential Entry Point for Behavior Analysis in Education. In *Education & Treatment of Children*, 22, 4, 447–470.

Harter, S. (1985). Manual for the Self-Perception Profile for the Children. Denver: University of Denver.

Igrić, Lj. (2007). Hrvatski nacionalni obrazovni standard (HNOS) I djeca s posebnim obrazovnim potrbama. (Croatian National Educational Standard (CNES) and Children with Special Educational Needs). In *Dijete i društvo*, 9, 1,113–122.

Johnsen, B. H. (2013). Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion. Joint Research Plan for Cooperation between the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.). *Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Kiš Glavaš, L. (1999). *Procjena stava učitelja prema integraicji djece usporenog kognitivnog razvoja* (Change of Attitudes of Teacher towards Integration of Children with Delayed Cognitive Development). Edukacijsko rehabilitacijski fakultet. Doctoral dissertation.

Levandovski, D. & Igrić, Lj. (1990*). Izbor perceptivno motoričkih zadataka za utvrđivanje sposobnosti za učenje* (PMZ) (PRIJEVOD). Zagreb: Fakultet za defektologiju Sveučilišta u Zagrebu.

Levin, I. (1992). Understanding the Concept of Family. In *Family Relations*. 41, 3, 348–351.

Mishna, F. & Muskat, B. (2004). "I'm Not the Only One!" Group Therapy with Older Children and Adolescents Who Have Learning Disabilities. In International Journal of Group Therapy, 54, 4, 455–476.

Nacionalna strategija jedinstvene politike za osobe s invaliditetom od 2003 do 2006 godine (National Strategy of Equal Policy for Persons with Disabilities from 2003 to 2006). (2003). Zagreb: Vlada Republike Hrvatske.

Novosel, M. I. & Marvin-Cavor, Lj. (1985). Acadia test razvoja sposobnosti. *Primijenjena psihologija*, 1–2, 103–108.

Searcy, S. (1994). Building Friendships Together: From School to Home. In *Preventing School Failure*, 39, 1, 26–31.

Searcy, S., & Meadows, N. (1994). The Impact of Social Structures on Friendship development for Children with Behavior Disorders. In Education and Treatment of Children, 17, 3, 255-66.

Vasta, R., Haith, M. M. & Miller, S.A. (1998). Dječja psihologija Naklada slap, Jastrebarsko.

Villa, R. A. & Thousand, J. S. (1992). How one District Integrated Special and General education. In *Educational Leadership*. 50, 2, 39–42.

Waddell, K. J. (1984). Self-Concept and Social Adaptation of Hyperactive Children in Adolescence. In *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*. 13, 1, 50–56.

WB 04/06. *Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building. Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo. Norwegian Cooperation Program on Research and Higher Education with the Countries on the Western Balkans* (CPWB).

Žic, A. (2000). *Osobna i socijalna adaptacija učenika usporenog kognitivnog razvoja u ekološkim sustavima: obitelj, škola, vršnjaci*. Doktorska disertacija, Edukacijsko – rehabilitacijski fakultet, Sveučilišta u Zagrebu.

Zic, A. & Igric, Lj. (2001). Self Assessments of Relationships with Peers in Children with Intellectual Disability. In Journal of Intellectual Disability Research. Vol 45, 3, 202–211.

Changes made to research design during implementation

Ljiljana Igrić

- The purpose of the study has remained unchanged: To determine effective forms of supporting the educational inclusion process via the engagement of 1) mobile expert teams (MET); 2) cooperation between MET, teachers and teacher assistants; 3) through teacher assistants' classroom-related activity. The goal is to develop national standards for providing support to the educational inclusion process.
- Data acquisition methodology was changed and instruments for acquiring data related to differences between initial and final testing/sampling were not applied. Data was collected through the following methods: 1) observation (because it is flexible enough to incorporate an entire range of behaviours of the target student, including all the relevant details) 2) video recordings 3) focus group interviews with students and 4) semi-structured interviews with the target student's teacher and mother.

- The data analysis method was changed (original design included qualitative and quantitative data analysis). Qualitative data analysis was predominant (using NVivo 8) because it is based on data collection and processing methods which are flexible and sensitive to the social context in which data is produced. Quantitative data analysis was performed on behaviour categories obtained through qualitative analysis.
- During the project, workshops proved to be of great benefit, as they enabled us to acquire new understandings that helped us further develop our research methods and implement suggested improvements based on peer review.

References

NVivo. (2008). QSR International Pty Ltd. ABN 47 006 357 213 (The author).

21

A Classroom Study of Inclusive Practices

Berit H. Johnsen

Introduction

This is a single case study of inclusive practices in a purposefully selected class of a regular elementary school in Norway. The study is a contribution to a larger cooperative project entitled *Comparative Classroom Studies towards the Inclusive School* (WB 04/06), comprising studies of developments made towards achieving inclusive schools within seven universities in six countries of the south-eastern and north-western regions of Europe.

Research topic and context

Studying inclusive practices means to explore and analyse educational practices in view of the normative principle of inclusion. In this work inclusion is seen as the global policy prescribing development towards achieving a local, regular school that welcomes all children with their unique individual characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs; all children with and without special needs and disabilities; a school combating discriminatory attitudes and offering meaningful and individually adapted education to every pupil within the community of the class (Frederickson & Cline, 2002; Johnsen, 1998/2000; 2007; 2013; UNESCO, 1994; WB 04/06).

The following section offers an argument for the international relevance of studying inclusive practices, my professional interest in the topic, and the theoretical foundation of this particular study of inclusive practices.

Citation of this chapter: Johnsen, B. H. (2013). A classroom study of inclusive practices. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.), *Research project preparation within education and special needs education* (pp. 257–272/pp. 316–331 in print edition). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. https://doi.org/10.23865/noasp.124

An increasing amount of innovative projects and studies related to the principle of education for all and inclusion have been implemented on the international arena over recent decades[34]. However, to change from the deep-rooted tradition of the competitive whole class teaching approach to inclusive practices based on the plurality of differences in the pupil group represents a major turn in professional knowledge, skills and attitudes for the regular teacher, special needs educator and other stakeholders in the school. Thus, it is fair to say that no country has reached fully inclusive schooling practices, and that the development towards inclusion is in its beginning phase in a continuous struggle for dominance amongst a multitude of different and even contradictory educational trends.

Since I started my career as the first adviser in special needs education outside the capital of Iceland in 1979, it has been my aim to open the regular school to literally all neighbourhood children and develop flexible education of increasing quality which is meaningful and adapted to all pupils in the community of the class. Several years' of innovative work together with 23 regular schools and the implementation of the first Icelandic part-time higher education programme in special needs education for practicing teachers (Johnsen, 1985; Nám í sérkennslufræðum, 1986) had strengthened my curiosity regarding how educational ideas and traditions influence professional choices and priorities in planning and implementing the teaching; whether the ideas are old or new, conscious or tacit, in the mind of the educator. My doctoral studies therefore led me to the history of educational ideas in order to shed light on "the prehistory" and the soil which created the development of the principle of individually adapted education (Johnsen, 1998/2000). In my current position at the International Section of the Department of Special Needs Education at the University of Oslo, I am engaged in projects with universities in countries on several continents. This work has extended my former Nordic experience considerably and offered "global glimpses" into this huge, many-sided and culturally-bound turning process towards achieving education for all and inclusion. Special needs education as in-service education for practicing professionals has been one of the main activities in a former cooperation project with the universities of Tuzla and Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina (SØE 06/02), and development of a sustainable Master-level study program has been successfully completed through projects with Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia (NUFU 35/2002). This study follows the

34. UNESCO's homepage contains some information, discussions and practical guidelines towards Inclusive Education (http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.)

same perspective towards inclusion as the above mentioned projects, building on the scientific, innovative and cultural knowledge generated from them. However, focus in the Norwegian contribution of this project is sharpened and delimited to a single case study whose arena is a selected Norwegian regular school class.

This study is theoretically situated in the meeting place between didactic-curricular and culture-historic approaches to teaching and learning as described in the joint research plan (Johnsen, 2013; WB 04/06). From a didactic-curricular point of view, the Vygotskyan tradition spells out the necessary interplay between former traditional theories of learning and theories of teaching, didactics and curriculum. Didactics and later also curricular theories have deep-rooted traditions for detailed discussions of the most commonplace aspects of teaching, such as aims and goals, content, methods, classroom organisation and assessment (Gundem & Hopmann, 1998; Johnsen, 1998/2000; Klafki, 1997; 1998). It seems that up till now the two major traditions, didactic-curricular and culture-historic theories, have developed their own discourses more or less isolated from each other. This study builds on the assumption that integration and further joint development of aspects of the two traditions relevant to individual and classroom education will strengthen and extend the theoretical foundation for empirical research in the field. Revisiting and comparing relevant aspects of the two traditions therefore represent a crucial challenge to which this study may offer a contribution.

In Stake's (1995) terminology, this is an *instrumental case study*, because there is an implicit assumption that the study is instrumental to a generation of understanding beyond the particular case to inclusive practices in other schools in Norway as well as globally. However, in order to do this, findings from the actual classroom study have to be related to the local as well as national and international/historical context. The concept 'frame factors' is applied in order to grasp contextual aspects. The study area 'contextual frame factors' has obtained its theoretical and empirical foundation from so-called ecology or "macro-micro" studies within modern didactic-curricular tradition as well as from culture-historic traditions. Thus, the two classical texts, Goodlad's (1979) North-American "ecological" Curriculum Inquiry and Bronfenbrenner's more sociological Ecology of Human Development (1979), with his experience from the USA and the Soviet Union[35], were published in the same year. Bronfen-

35. Goodlad (1979:47) compares Bronfenbrenner's 'total ecology of the child's life' with his application of the concept 'the total curriculum'.

brenner (1979) was familiar with Vygotsky's texts (1978; 1987–1999) as well as early interpretations of his texts in the USA related to the crucial role of the culture-historic context of the learning human being. Vygotsky's argument is that the possibilities of learning are framed by "the tools and the talks" of the environment within which the learner is situated. Today, this accentuation of the contextual background of communication, interpretation, learning and other human activities unites scholars across a number of research disciplines and traditions, such as theory of science (Burke, 1994; Fay, 1996), anthropology (Geertz, 1973; Rogoff, 1990; 2003), literature theory (Bakthin, 1986; Derrida, 1998; Vygotsky, 1971), research methodology (Creswell, 1998; Stake, 1995) and education (Bruner, 1996; Cole, 1996; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rommetveit, 1972; Wertsch, 1991; 1998). The process in this study of selecting 'what' context and deciding 'how' to apply contextual findings in the discussion of the case – and further in comparative discussions between the single cases in this WB 04/06 cooperation project (Alexander, 2000; Alexander, Broadfoot & Phillips, 1999) – will be based on a cross-disciplinary approach.

Primary research question, focus areas and structure of the study

The phenomenon at the centre of this study is 'inclusive practices'. The primary research question is: How does the school teach in accordance with the pupils' different levels of mastery and needs for support in the learning process (recourses, barriers and dilemmas)? Focus is on the teacher's[36] activities in the interaction between teacher – pupil – pupils, also called *the master-apprenticeship relation* (Lave & Wenger, 1991). This primary research question, or issue[37], directs the attention to the complexity of the phenomenon. Eight main areas have been selected in order to give direction to data gathering and to structure description, analysis and discussion. Seven of the main areas are: The pupil/s – assessment – educational intentions – educational content – Class organisation and teaching methods – communication – care. The selection of main areas is based on the following arguments:

36. In this text the term *teacher* is used both for the individual teacher in the class, other teachers, special needs educators, etc. participating in teaching in the case class, and – if available – also the internal resource team.

37. The concept 'issue' is taken from Stake's (1995) discussion of case study methodology, where he applies 'issue' or 'primary research question' as a conceptual structure in order to grasp the uniqueness and complexity of the case in study, as well as the embeddedness and interaction of the case with its contexts.

1. They offer a structure to, and thus a clarification of, the complexity of the phenomenon regular and special needs educational practices in the regular class of the school for all, within which the search for and investigation of inclusive practices takes place
2. They direct attention towards different aspects of educational practice/s
3. The seven main areas together are well suited to grasp flexibility, individual adaptation and celebration of the plurality of learning abilities and needs for educational support that are necessary parts of inclusive practice
4. The selected structure paves the way for analysis of interrelationships between the different aspects in this complex issue
5. Five of the seven main areas (The pupil/s – assessment – educational intentions – educational content – class organisation and teaching methods) are historical and international didactic/curricular commonplaces and thus recognisable and well suited as joint arenas for international educational comparison.

These arguments are based on a number of historic, international and Norwegian research contributions. Argument no 5 about international recognition of the selected commonplaces is based on historic educational texts and modern American, European and Nordic discourse (Billig, 1996; Bjørndal, 1980; Bjørndal & Lieberg, 1975; 1978; Comenius in Myhre, 1968; Grundtvig in Bugge, 1965; 1968a; 1968b; Goodlad, 1079; Herrik, 1950 in Taba, 1962; Johnsen, 1998/2000; Klafki, 1997; Hopmann, 1997; Platon in Lee, 1974; Francke in Kramer, 1885; Reid, 1992; Schwab, 1978; 1986; Tyler, 1949; Wetherell & Potter, 1992). Arguments no 1 – 4 relate to the methodological aspect of case study design, which is to grasp the complexity of the phenomenon with clarity and structure that facilitates description, analysis, discussions and comparison. The main areas function as bridges between the issue or primary research question and the concrete phenomenon to be studied. The arguments for the selection of the main areas are based on earlier research contributions within the history of educational ideas (Johnsen, 1998/2000) and within classroom studies and innovation (Johnsen, 2007; Smajić, 2004).

The five classic or commonplace main areas mentioned above stem from traditional whole class education with its historical roots from the beginning of the European non-payment school movement (Bjørndal & Lieberg, 1978; Johnsen, 1998/2000). In this study, the focus is turned towards flexibility and adaptations in accordance with individual diversity as well as on the assumed tension between individual and class education in accordance with the primary

research question. This focus on sensitivity towards the individual uniqueness of the single pupil has historical roots in the tutoring tradition, running parallel to and even further back than the non-payment school movement, whereas the focus on specific educational needs and teaching methodologies is based on special needs education knowledge (Johnsen, 1998/2000). Two new main areas have been added to the five commonplace areas, namely 'communication' and 'care'. They are assumed to grasp aspects of teaching and learning that are crucial from an inclusive special needs education perspective. Communication was placed at the core of education by Vygotsky. His line of arguments has been followed up within regular as well as special needs education traditions (Bruner, 1996; Englund, 1997; Feuerstein, 1991; Freire, 1972; Johnsen, 2001; Rommetveit, 1972; Rye, 2001; Vygotsky, 1978). Befring (1996; 1997) has consolidated 'care' as a basic concept in modern special needs education. From the field of regular education, Nel Noddings (1992; 2003) challenges the school to place care at the frontline of teaching (Johnsen, 2001a; 2007). These two concepts have met a growing interest amongst international Master students in special needs education, as they have placed care and communication in the forefront of their studies (Andenet, 2005; Belew, 2005; Pavlovic, 2005; Teshome, 2004).

As discussed above, description and analysis of the context of the phenomenon in focus, inclusive practices, are accounted for through focusing on the didactic-curricular area 'contextual frame factors' on local, national and international level. In this study, the following frame factors with additional sub-factors are expected to be found: Legislation and policy – economy – professional quality – physical frame factors – social and cultural frame factors (Johnsen, 2001a; 2007). They are assumed to be joint frame factors for all research contributions in the WB 04/06 collaborative project, as they are common objects of contextual education studies due to their relevance. However, a joint selection of frame factors will be decided upon as a result of thorough discussions amongst all project researchers. In this specific study, a small number of sub-factors will be developed in order to give direction to the study. However, it is also expected that new main and sub- factors will emerge through the study process, whereas some of the pre-determined ones may prove to be less relevant (Alexander, Broadfoot & Phillips, 1999; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Goodlad, 1979; Johnsen, 1998/2000)[38].

38. For a further account of the eight main areas, see the joint research plan (Johnsen, 2013) and Johnsen (2001a; 2007).

Although the eight main focus areas are areas of study and not criteria of inclusive practices, assumptions about crucial aspects that need to be consciously addressed in the development of inclusive practices are implicit in the selection of them. Thus,1) the main area of focus, the pupil/s is central, indicating that knowledge about the pupil/s is of core importance for inclusive practice; 2) the four classical didactic aspects, educational assessment, intentions, content and method & organisation, point out that deliberate professional decisions regarding each aspect in the concrete planning and implementation of an educational unit are necessary; 3) the areas 'communication' and 'care' demonstrate that professional-human communication and care for the pupil/s are necessary factors in order to make a teaching plan function as a learning plan; 4) and 'frame factors' represent a bridge between the classroom studies on micro level, and the positioning of them through contextual studies also referring to macro level.

Research methodology

This study of the phenomenon inclusive practices has a single case design with a mainly qualitative approach combined with minor quantitative additions. The arena of study has been carefully selected through a process of selecting an approximately prototype Norwegian municipality, and asking the local educational office to select one school, class and classroom teacher, and to secure the consent and willingness of the school to participate in the study. The process of gaining access to the school has already been accomplished, and I have visited the school and class 6 times in order for the informants and myself to become acquainted with each other. I have also been invited to a regular parents meeting by the classroom teacher, where I introduced the study. All parents have received a written introduction of the study, and a letter seeking their consent to administer the study in their children's class. All parents have subsequently given their written consent.

Two main data collection methods will supplement each other in this study; class observation and interview of the classroom teacher and other relevant informants. Approximately one day each month will be used to the main information gathering throughout the elementary grades (from project start and until the end of grade seven). The class observation is implemented as participating observation, where I act as observing researcher and, when convenient, also as teacher assistant. At the end of the school day, the classroom teacher and

I will have two hours to conduct an open interview or dialogue consisting of sharing information about one or more of the seven didactic-curricular main topics described earlier as well as activities and happenings taking place during the preceding school day in addition to the time period since my last visit. This qualitative approach invites to additional methods of information gathering, such as text- and document analysis, use of video as well as oral, written and other forms of statements from the pupils other relevant informants (Creswell, 1998; Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003; Kvale, 1996; Stake, 1995; Silverman, 2000).

Preliminary time schedule

As mentioned above, the study is planned to proceed over a number of years, optimally through the elementary level until the class changes school in the transition to the lower secondary level. Thus, this is a longitudinal study. Data gathering and an initial analysis of the part of the study related to the WB 04/06 project will be concluded with a preliminary text ready for delivery to the autumn workshop 2008 in accordance with the joint project plan.

Relationship between this study and the joint WB 04/06 project; Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion

This study contributes with mainly qualitative data describing and analysing inclusive practices in a Norwegian regular class consisting of pupils with different individual needs, where some needs are documented to be of a kind that entitles the school to receive extra resources for the class. The analysis is based on the prime research question focusing attention on the complexity and dilemmas related to how the school teaches in accordance with the pupils' different levels of mastery and needs for support in the learning process. Thus, data gathering will focus on the concrete teaching and learning situations and process in the selected class, and the teacher's reflections on these same situations and process. Resources, barriers and dilemmas, priorities and lack of attentions related to practices that may be characterised as inclusive will be observed in the class and reflected upon in the open interview afterwards. In order to grasp the teaching and learning situations in their complexity, the study applies all the eight didactic-curricular main areas discussed above.

Thus, on the micro or classroom level, the study is expected to contribute to the joint project with the following topics:

- Qualitative examples of inclusive practices, shedding light on the examples from the perspective of the seven discussed main focus areas
- Qualitative examples of educational practices analysing and discussing resources and barriers, actual and potential priorities in view of the seven mentioned main focus areas
- Qualitative examples illustrating and discussing dilemmas between individually adapted practices and whole class practices through the seven mentioned main focus areas
- Development of criteria of inclusive practices

As previously discussed, the findings of this study will be analysed specifically in view of local and national cultural-historic contexts through data related to frame factors such as:

- education law and policy, curricular priorities on the national, municipal, school, classroom and individual level
- financial possibilities and barriers
- physical frame factors such as the school building, class-/group rooms, common spaces, school compound and nearby surroundings
- professional resources within the school, the municipality and national resource network
- cultural aspects such as the schools', parents' and pupils' attitudes to the school and education

Focus on the cultural context of the study is an attempt to overcome the perhaps most serious challenge in comparative studies, which is use of de-contextualised data gathered from many countries for policy decisions and other types of so-called "educational borrowing". Problems discussed in comparative and international studies of specific relevance to this study and for our joint comparative project are all problems highlighting the socio-cultural context from different angles (Alexander, 2000; Alexander, Broadfoot & Phillips, 1999; Fay, 1996; Osborne et al, 2003; Phillips & Ochs, 2004).

Research ethical considerations

A number of ethical considerations are connected to the study related to obtaining voluntary access to informants, informed consent and participant's rights to inspection, as well as procedures to ensure privacy and confidentiality of research data (Befring, 2004; Gall, Gall & Borg; 2003; Silverman, 2000). In addition, there are ethical aspects related to doing studies and writing texts about vulnerable individuals and groups, such as when disabilities, difficulties and special needs are in focus (Reindal, 1998).

A compulsory ethical principle is the right of the participants to be informed about their possible role in a study and the duty to apply information only from informants who have given their informed consent for participation. In this study, access to the case school and classroom teacher has been requested from the municipal school office in order to avoid the direct pressure that may be felt if the request comes directly from the researcher. Both the headmaster and classroom teacher were informed about the topic of the study from the municipal office, and they were given further oral information about the content and methods of the study at their first meeting with me, the researcher. As mentioned, a letter containing information was prepared for parents and delivered together with a short oral introduction and ensuing dialogue between the parents and me at the parent meeting. As one of the approaches in this study is to gather data about individual pupils, the project has been registered in the Norwegian Data Inspectorate (http://www.datatilsynet.no).

Another compulsory ethical principle is the right of the participants to remain anonymous. A series of measures are being implemented in order to secure this: All names of the municipality, school, teachers and other professionals and of pupils will be fictive in the report. However, as this is a single case study, there is a dilemma between the municipality, school and parents' right to receive information about findings and how easy it is for members in a small community where everybody more or less knows each other, to believe that they will be able to recognise any individual or that they will be recognised by others from the presentation.

A third ethical topic specifically related to possible vulnerable individuals and groups lies in the dilemma between the importance of identifying special education needs in order to offer adequate education on the one hand, and labelling pupils in accordance with difficulties and disabilities on the other. The dilemma is related to choice of terminology, choice of focus, such as concerning a certain difficulty or level of mastery and choice of analytical categories.

References

Alexander, R. (2000). *Culture & Pedagogy. International Comparison in Primary Education*. Oxford: Blackwel Publishing.

Alexander, R., Broadfoot, P. & Phillips, D. (Eds.), (1999). *Learning from Comparing. New Directions in Comparative Educational Research*. Oxford: Symposium Books.

Andenet H.G. (2005). *Positive Teacher-Pupil Interaction and Challenging Behaviours in elementary Classrooms*. Master thesis. Oslo: Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo.

Bakhtin, M. (1986). *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Befring, E. (2004). *Research Methods, Ethics and Statistics*. Oslo: Unipub.

Belew A. E. (2005). *Care and the Influence of Frame Factors in the Classroom*. Oslo: Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo.

Billig, M. (1996). *Arguing and Thinking. A Rhetorical Approach to Social Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bjørndal, B. (1980). *Om vekselvirkningen mellom didaktisk teori og undervisning (On the Interaction between Didactic Theory and Teaching)*. Report from Miljølæreprosjektet no. 24. Oslo: Pedagogisk forskningsinstitutt, Universitetet i Oslo.

Bjørndal, B. & Lieberg, S. (1975a). *Innføring i økopedagogikk (Introduction to the Education of Ecology)*. Oslo: Aschehoug.

Bjørndal, B. & Lieberg, S. (1975b). *Utvelging av faginnhold (Selecting Content)*. Report from Miljølæreprosjektet no. 13. Oslo: Pedagogisk forskningsinstitutt.

Bjørndal, B. & Lieberg, S. (1978). *Nye veier i didaktikken*? (New Directions in Didactics?). Oslo: Aschehoug.

Broadfoot, P. (1999). Not so Much a Context, More a Way of Life? Comparative Education in the 1990s. In R. Alexander, P. Broadfoot & D. Phillips (Eds.). Learning from Comparing. Contexts, Classrooms and Outcomes (pp. 21–33). Oxford: Symposium Books.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The Ecology of Human Development*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1996). *Utdanningskultur og læring (The Culture of Education*). Oslo: Ad Notam Gyldendal.

Bugge, K. E. (1965). *Skolen for livet (School for Life)*. København.

Bugge, K. E. (Ed.), (1968a). *Grundtvigs skoleverden i tekster og udkast (Grundtvig's School in Texts and Sketches)*. Volume 1. København.

Bugge, K. E. (Ed.), (1968b). *Grundtvigs skoleverden i tekster og udkast (Grundtvig's School in Texts and Sketches)*. Volume 2. København.

Burke, P. (1994). *History and social theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Cole, M. (1996). *Cultural Psychology*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Derrida, J. (1998). *Monolingualism of the Other or the Prosthesis of Origin*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Englund, T. (1997). Towards a Communicative Rationality – Beyond (the Metaphors of) Didactics and Curriculum Theory. In B. Karseth, S. Gudmundsdottir & S. Hopmann (Eds.). *Didaktikk: tradisjon og fornyelse. Festskrift til Bjørg Brandtzæg Gundem (Didactic: Tradition and Renewal. Homage Volume to Bjørg Brandtzæg Gundem)*, (pp. 22–34). Oslo: Pedagogisk Forskningsinstitutt, Universitetet i Oslo.

Fay, B. (1996). *Contemporary Philosophy of Social Science*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers.

Feuerstein, R., Klein, P. & Tannenbaum, A. (1991). *Mediated Learning Experience (MLE): Theoretical, Psychological and Learning Implications*. London: Freund Publishing House ltd.

Frederickson, N. & Cline, T. (2002). *Special Education Needs, Inclusion and Diversity*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagocy of the Oppressed*. UK: Penguine Books.

Gall, M., Gall, J. & Borg, W. (2003). *Educational Research*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic books.

Goodlad, J. I. (1979). *Curriculum Inquiry*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Gundem, B. B. & Hopmann, S. (1998). Conclusion – Didaktik Meets Curriculum. In B. B. Gundem, & S. Hopmann (Eds.). *Didaktik and/or Curriculum. An International Dialogue* (pp. 331 – 354). New York: Peter Lang.

Hopmann, S. (1997). Wolfgang Klafki och den tyska didaktiken (Wolfgang Klafki and German Didactic). In M. Uljens (Ed.). *Didaktik* (pp. 198 – 214). Lund: Studentlitteratur.

http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.

http://www.datatilsynet.no

Johnsen, Berit. (1985). *Utvikling av læreplan for grunnutdanning i spesialpedagogikk for lærere på Øst-Island (Development of Basic Higher Education in Special Needs Education for Practicing Teachers in East-Iceland*). Oslo: Pedagogisk forskningsinstitutt, Universitetet i Oslo.

Johnsen, B. H. (1998/2002). *Et historisk perspektiv på ideene om en skole for alle (An Historical Perspective on Ideas about a School for All*). Oslo: Unipub.

Johnsen, B. H. (2001a). Curricula for the Plurality of Individual Learning Needs. In B. H. Johnsen & M. D. Skjørten (Eds.). *Education – Special Needs Education. An Introduction* (pp. 225–303). Oslo: Unipub.

Johnsen, B. H. (2001b). Introduction to the History of Special Needs Education towards Inclusion – A Norwegian and European Context. In B. H. Johnsen & M. D. Skjørten (Eds.). *Education – Special Needs Education. An Introduction* (pp. 133 – 154). Oslo: Unipub.

Johnsen, B. H. (2007). *The Classroom towards Inclusion – Good Examples and Difficult Dilemmas. Report from a series of workshops in Bosnian schools*. Sarajevo: Connectum.

Johnsen, B. H. (2013). Comparative Classroom Studies towards Inclusion. Joint Research Plan for Cooperation between the Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje,

Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo. In B. H. Johnsen (Ed.*). Project Preparation. Introduction to Theory of Science, Project Planning and Plans*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.

Klafki, W. (1997). Kritisk-konstruktiv didaktik. (Critical- Constructive Didactic) In M. Uljens (Ed.). *Didaktikk (Didactic)*, (pp. 215–228). Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Klafki, W. (1998). Characteristics of Critical-Constructive Didaktik. In B. B. Gundem, & S. Hopmann (Eds.). *Didaktik and/or Curriculum. An International Dialogue* (pp. 307 – 330). New York: Peter Lang.

Kramer, D. G. (1885). *A. H. Francke's Pädagogische Schriiften*.(*A. H.Francke's Educational Texts.)* Langensalza: Hermann Beyer & Söhne.

Kvale. S. (1996). *InterViews. An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication.

Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning – Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Myhre, R. (Ed.), (1968). *Store pedagoger i egne skrifter. II. Humanisme, reformasjon, realisme (Renounced Educational Scholars in their own Texts. II. Humanism, Reformation, Realism)*. Oslo: Fabritius & sønners forlag.

Nám í sérkennslufræðum fyrir starfandi kennara á Austurlandi (Higher Education in Special Education for Practicing Teachers). (1986). Reyðarfirði-Reykjavík: Fræðslustjóri Austurlandsumdæmis & Kennaraháskóli Íslands.

NUFU 35/2002. *"Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Competence Building in Special Needs Education towards Inclusion" – Ethiopia – Uganda – Norway*.

Osborn, M. et al. (2003). *A World of difference? Comparing Learners across Europe*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Pavlovic, T. (2005). *Communication between Teacher and Pupils in the Classroom*. Master thesis. Oslo: Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo.

Phillips D. & Ochs K. (Eds.). (2004). *Educational Policy Borrowing: Historical Perspectives*. Oxford: Symposium Books.

Platon in Lee, Desmond (Ed.). (1974). *The Republic*. Middlesex: Penguin books.

Reid, W. (1992). *The Pursuit of Curriculum, Schooling and the Public Interest*. Norwood: Ablex publishing corporation.

Reindal, S. (1998*). Disability, Personal Autonomy and the Subject – a Dilemma in Special Needs Education*? Dr. Scient thesis. Oslo: University of Oslo, Department of Special Needs Education.

Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in Thinking. Cognitive Development in Social Context*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rogoff, B. (2003). *The Cultural Nature of Human Development*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rommetveit, R. (1972). *Språk, tanke og kommunikasjon (Language, Thought and Communication)*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Schwab, J. J. (1978). The Practical. Translation into Curriculum. In I Westbury & N. Wilkof (Eds.). *Joseph J. Schwab. Science, Curriculum, and Liberal Education. Selected Essays* (pp. 365–383). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Schwab, J. J. (1983/1986). The practical 4: Something for curriculum professors to Do. In B. B. Gundem (Ed.) *Om læreplanpraksis og læreplanteor (On Curriculum Practice and Curriculum Theory)*, (pp. 201–231). Kompendium 3. Oslo: Pedagogisk forskningsinstitutt, Universitetet i Oslo.

Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE publication.

Smajic, M. (2004). *Adjusting the Curriculum to Individual Needs. A single Case Study and Innovation Project*. Master thesis. Oslo: Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo.

Stake, R. (1995). *The Art of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

SØE 06/02. *Institutional Competence Building and Cooperation with Two Bosnian Universities: "Special Needs Education towards Inclusion"*. Cooperation Programme with South-East Europe (CPSEE).

Taba, H. (1962). *Curriculum Development. Theory and Practice*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

Teshome K. T. (2004). *Care and Support in the Classroom. The Case of Three Teachers in their Classrooms in an Elementary School in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*. Master thesis. Oslo: Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo.

Tyler, R. W. (1949). *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

UNESCO. (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. Paris (The author).

Vygotsky, L. (1971). *The Psychology of Art*. Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). In M. Cole et al (Eds.). *Mind in Society*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1987–1999). The Collected Works of L. S. Vygotsky. Volume 1–6. New York: Plenum Press.

WB 04/06. *Development towards the Inclusive School: Practices – Research – Capacity Building. Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb & Oslo*. Norwegian Cooperation Program on Research and Higher Education with the countries on the Western Balkans (CPWB).

Wertch, J. V. (1991). *Voices of the Mind. A Sociocultural Approach to Mediated Action*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Wertsch, J. V. (1998). *Mind as Action*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Wetherell, M. & Potter, J. (1992). *Mapping the Language of Racism. Discourse and the Legitimation of Exploration*. New York: Harvester- Wheatsheaf.

Changes in relation to research plan

Berit H. Johnsen

Two serious challenges have arisen, one in the preparatory phase concerning gaining access to a school, class and teacher, and the other dealing with lack of time and research assistance during the study and process of reporting.

A long process of gaining access. The search for a suitable school as research arena began a couple of years before the international project started. Formal request regarding permission to conduct research in school was sent to the educational office of a municipality located nearby the university. It was immediately accepted, and the educational office contacted the headmaster of a relevant school. On my first contact with the headmaster, he asked me to please not "use his school", since they had hosted many researchers and needed a rest. This excuse was accepted, and the next school was contacted in the same way. This headmaster was very positive to the study, but when he held a brief meeting with the relevant classroom teachers, they were not interested. In the third school, the headmaster, deputy headmaster and relevant teachers were all positive and eager to participate. They were proud of their school, as the teaching staff had a high level of education, and they were very satisfied with their generous classroom organisation model. We cooperated throughout a spring semester. However, when I returned the following autumn to start the classroom studies, the school had experienced a serious budget cut, and several of the teachers were transferred to other schools. Unfortunately, the remaining teaching staff did not have the extra energy to cooperate with a researcher. Now I changed my plan slightly and started looking for a new and statistically prototypical Norwegian municipality. Fortunately, I found one with a resourceful educational officer who acted as a gatekeeper, knowing as she did all the schools, headmasters and teachers. She picked out a classroom teacher with several years of experience, a solid educational background and high level of professional self-confidence, working in a highly relevant school and class. Since this time, the selected class has been the arena of a longitudinal research project involving three different classroom teachers.

Lack of time and research assistance. Due to lack of sufficient staff, large amount of lecturing and other student-related work took much of my time away from the research project. A planned position of an assistant researcher was not realised, limiting my available research time even more. The many details in the administration of the comparative research project also took a great deal of

time, which was, however, expected from former experiences as coordinator of international projects. These factors have contributed to delaying the comparative cooperation process as well as the national research project which, in spite of these many delays, will be completed in a foreseeable future.

Contributors

Irma Čehić has a Master of Education and is a research assistant at the Faculty of Education and PhD research fellow at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina. She is a researcher on the Sarajevo team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Daniela Cvitković has a PhD and is Junior Researcher at the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb, Croatia. She was an administrative coordinator and researcher on the Zagreb team in parts of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Alma Dizdarević is Dr Scient in Social Sciences with specialisation in Intellectual Disabilities, and Assistant Professor at the Department of Education and Rehabilitation, University of Tuzla, Bosnia – Herzegovina. She is an administrative coordinator and researcher on the Tuzla team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Selmir Hadžić is a Speech and Language Pathologist from the University of Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and works at the special school and service centre Mjedenica in Sarajevo. He is a researcher on the Sarajevo team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Ljiljana Igrić is Full Professor and Head of the Doctoral Degree Programme in Disability Studies at the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb, Croatia. She is also an adjunct faculty member at York University, Toronto, and President of the Inclusion Support Centre IDEM. She is an academic coordinator and senior researcher on the Zagreb team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Snežana Ilić is a PhD research fellow in Special Education and Rehabilitation and Professor Assistant at the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation with specialisation in physical disabilities, University of Belgrade, Serbia. She is a researcher on the Belgrade team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Ana Wagner Jakab is Dr Scient in Education and Rehabilitation and Assistant Professor at the Department of Inclusive Education and Rehabilitation at the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb, Croatia. She was an administrative coordinator and researcher in the beginning period of the Zagreb team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Berit H. Johnsen is Dr Scient in Special Needs Education and Associate Professor at the Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo, Norway, where she is a member of the research group Humanity Studies in Pedagogy (HumStud). She is the senior researcher representing UiO and head of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Damjana Kogovšek is Dr Scient in Special Needs Education and Assistant Researcher at the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. She is a researcher on the Ljubljana team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Stanislav Košir is Dr Scient in Special Needs Education and Assistant Professor at the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. He is an academic coordinator and senior researcher on the Ljubljana team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Selma Džemidžić Kristiansen is a Pedagogue from the University of Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and has a Master of Philosophy in Special Needs Education from the University of Oslo, Norway. She works as a Pedagogue at the project school Džemaludin Čaušević and functions as an administrative coordinator and researcher on the Sarajevo team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Tone Kvernbekk is Dr Polit in Education and Professor at the Department for Educational Research, University of Oslo, Norway, where she is member of the research group Humanity Studies in Pedagogy (HumStud). She specializes in philosophy of science, applied to various problems and topics in educational theorizing. She was a guest lecturer in the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Goran Nedovic is Dr Scient in Special Education and Rehabilitation and Full Professor at the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation with specialisation in motor disabilities, University of Belgrade, Serbia. He is a researcher on the Belgrade team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Martina Ozbič is Dr Scient in Special Needs Education and Associate Professor at the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. She is a researcher on the Ljubljana team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Dragan Rapaić is Dr Scient in Special Education and Rehabilitation and Full Professor at the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation with specialisation in motor disabilities, University of Belgrade, Serbia. He is an academic coordinator and senior researcher on the Belgrade team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Nevzeta Salihović is Dr Scient in Social Sciences with specialisation in Speech and Language Pathology and Associate Professor at the Department of Speech and Language Pathology and Audiology, University of Tuzla, Bosnia – Herzegovina. She is an academic coordinator and senior researcher on the Tuzla team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Melika Smajić is a special needs educator with a specialisation in Intellectual Disabilities from the University of Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina and a Master of Philosophy in Special Needs Education from the University of Oslo, Norway. She was an administrative coordinator and researcher on the Tuzla team in the first part of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Irena Stojković has a PhD in psychology and is Assistant Professor of Developmental Psychology at the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Belgrade, Serbia. She is a researcher on the Belgrade team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.

Sadeta Zečić is Prof. Dr. in Special Pedagogy and Speech Pathology. She is temporarily employed at the Faculty of Education, University of Sarajevo, and Head of Faculty of Defectology, University of Herzegovina and Professor on the postgraduate study of Inclusion, University of Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina. She is an academic coordinator and senior researcher on the Sarajevo team of the international research cooperation project WB 04/06.