Logadottir, H. (2011). From theory to practice – learning and participation in inclusive

classrooms.

Abstract

The paper discusses aspects of my research into inclusive practices and experiences, its

theoretical framework, and methodology. The main task of this research is to study the

relationship between teachers' interpretation of inclusion, their practice in the classroom and

students' experience, achievement and participation in classrooms that aim at becoming

inclusive. The purpose is to understand better what inclusion involves, how it can appear in

practice and consequently how it can be successfully developed in the communities of schools.

The discourse about inclusion has moved from whether or not it is morally right and viable to

how and what it means to be included and what features of inclusion are meaningful to students

(Allen, J. and Slee, R. 2008). The research question is; How do teachers that claim to favor

inclusion within the schools' learning communities, interpret inclusion and how is it reflected in

their practice in the classroom and in students' experiences of being included and in their

learning outcomes? We need to understand better how students understand their situation within

their learning communities, before we can begin to describe the rules of the game or their actions

in more general terms (Bjarnason, D. 2003). Through my selected theories I will try to

understand how the actors (students, teachers and other staff), recognize, produce and reproduce

social actions, and how and/or if they come to share an inter-subjective understanding of

inclusion and what it is to be included (Schwandt, T.A. 2007). I will also try to understand what

a student's achievement means both regarding learning and participation. The theoretical

framework is located within the fields of socio-cultural theory, social constructionism, and

poststructuralistic approaches. Vygotsky's social constructivism (his field in pedagogy, educational theory, and the socio-cultural context of learning) is also useful to look at students' learning outcomes and participation as the theory emphasizes the socially situated nature of learning by linking the social world to individual development (Stringer, P. 2009).