

Strategies of inclusive education

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Abstract: This article presents some theoretical and practical factors related to strategies of inclusive education. The research indicated the possibility for the integration of children with cognitive disabilities into regular schools, in order to eliminate their segregation in special schools. The most important method for this process of integration is team-work and collaboration between institutions.

Key-Words: Cognitive disabilities. Strategies. Inclusive education. Regular schools. Segregation

Estratégias da educação inclusiva

Resumo: Este artigo apresenta alguns fatores teóricos e práticos relacionados às estratégias da educação inclusiva. A pesquisa indicou a possibilidade de integração de crianças com deficiências cognitivas em escolas regulares, de modo a evitar sua segregação em escolas especiais. O método mais importante nesse processo de integração é o trabalho em equipe e a colaboração entre instituições.

Palavras-chave: Deficiências cognitivas. Estratégias. Educação inclusiva. Escolas regulares. Segregação

Current theories on mental deficiency

The definitions of mental deficiency have a great scientific and extra-scientific importance keeping in view the aspects which come out of their recognition and application. Therefore some specialists have even stated that the definitions of mental deficiency can be responsible for the fate of thousands of individuals every year since this phenomenon aims also to the welfare of society in general.

Mental deficiency represents a complex of greatly heterogeneous manifestations that are due to psychological particularities as seen on a background of norms validated by human life and activities. Mental deficiency is characterized by a significant reduction of the psychic capacities of the individual. This process leads to important disorders of the individual's reactions and mechanisms used to adjust to the surrounding environment

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and to the existing social context. That is how the individual is placed in a situation of incapacity and inferiority in relation with other individuals within the society he himself is part of. Classifications in mental deficiency are diverse and have given birth to a system and also to new terms, which are meant to suit notions corresponding to different criteria. The main classification criteria of mental deficiency are the following: the degree of the deficiency; aetiology; the clinical aspect; the educational aspect.

The essential notions that made possible the appearance, the definition and the classification of mental deficiency are: Classical notions: J.S. Kounin (“rigidity”), A.R. Luria (“pathologic inertia”), R. Zazzo (the phenomenon of “heterochronia”), B. Inhelder (“psychogenetic viscosity”), R. Ziegler (“the specific aspect of motivation”), R. Fau (“the fragility of personality”). Current notions: L.S. Vîgotsky, R. Feuerstein, J.L. Paour, H.J. Grossman, R. Luckasson.

L.S. Vîgotsky characterizes the personality of the mentally deficient by using the following elements: the fragility of the acquisition within already covered activities, ample drawbacks towards behaviours specific to anterior stages and the limited character of developmental perspectives during the next stage. Vîgotsky defines the proximate area of development as being the distance between the actual level of development, namely the child’s ability to independently solve a problem-situation and the potential level of intellectual performance expressed by the competence and the results obtained by the child under the guidance of an advised adult.

R Feuerstein’s theory is based upon the concept of cognitive adaptability and that of mediated learning. The cognitive adaptability describes the individual’s capacity to reshape acquired knowledge according to problem-situations occurring in different contexts. Moreover, the measurement and evaluation of cognitive adaptability indicate the latent intellectual potential, namely the one that is not used by subjects. The mediated learning is explained as an interaction which takes place between a still developing person (intellect) and a competent adult who acts as a go-between the child and the external environment. That is how, through selection, transformation and systematization of information and knowledge, the latter is mediated in order to lead to the discovery of efficient cognitive instruments. (SZAMOSKOZI, 1997).

J.L. Paour supports an integrative way of dealing with mental retardation and mental deficiency. He starts from the pattern of cognitive psychology and from the

positive results obtained by some researchers in relation to the stimulation and facilitation of cognitive functioning. These results are based on Feuerstein's theory of mediated learning, which aims to the adaptability of cognitive structures through the programme of instrumental amelioration. (PREDA, 2000).

From a clinical point of view, H.J. Grossman can be considered the most important theoretician of mental deficiency. Even as far back as 1973 Grossman claimed that mental deficiency refers to a below -average intellectual functioning which coexists with problems of adjustment occurring during the individual's process of development. (MACLEAN, 1997).

In 1992 *American Journal on Mental Retardation* presented the definition given by R. Luckasson, who believes that mental deficiency is an incapacity springing from the individual's interaction with the surrounding environment.

The educational potential of the formative psychodiagnosis

The forefathers of the "formative diagnosis" movement were: L.S. Vîgotsky and J. Piaget. Of all current theories regarding the intellectual potential, the Theory of Multiple Brain Capacities (H. Gardner) and the Triarchic Theory of Brain Capacity (R. Sternberg) will make up the subject of this chapter.

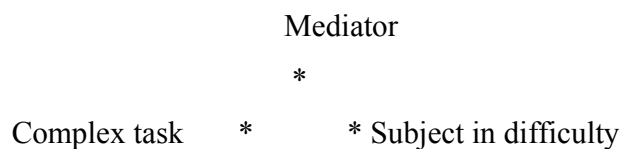
In Gardner's view, brain capacity (intelligence) is multi-dimensional and designates the individual's ability to solve problems and to create products that can be rendered valuable by a certain human culture at a certain point in time. The cognitive capacity of human mind is described by a structure of abilities, or mental practices called "brain capacities" which are grouped in eight categories: linguistic/verbal, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, musical-rhythmical, naturalist, intrapersonal and interpersonal.

R. Sternberg elaborates the triarchic theory of intelligence, which explains brain capacity. As a complex phenomenon including three sub-theories: the contextual sub-theory, the componential sub-theory and the experiential one.

One of the most important present-day views on formative psycho-diagnosis belongs to R. Feuerstein, and it is called Learning Potential Assessment Device-LPAD. In this case, the process of mediation is based on a principle also known to the diagnosed

subjects, namely the desire to do everything possible so as to help them surpass the misfortunes they are going through. This first-step type of “mediation” is then replaced with interventions meant to give a proper understanding of the subject. Moreover, mediation changes the children’s attitude towards the task and helps them focus on the problem, the target and the approach in a gradual way. Even more, mediation favours the discovery and the elaboration of concepts and the use of strategies by which subjects become aware of their own evolution.

By definition, the mediator supports the subjects’ attitude without replacing them. Mediation can be seen as an interactive system where the three poles are at an equal distance one from the other.



The dynamic assessment of the learning potential overturns the traditional rules of evaluation. The psychologist acts in order to increase the subjects’ chances of success, by guiding their actions, by supporting them in difficult situations and by allowing them to elaborate notions, concepts or procedures that they lack. The main difference from traditional assessment is that here each progress (even the least significant) is considered a positive sign of a possible amelioration. With traditional tests, the slightest failure affects negatively even the previous accomplishments.

Modern theories of learning

Learning is a complex and dynamic phenomenon, which has become an object of research for specialists in various fields: psychology, pedagogy, biology etc.

The theories of learning (based on a theoretical and scientific background) are coherent visions on the way learning functions. They are meant both to explain and to inform, while defining and describing what learning is, what its instrumental-operative mechanisms and dynamic processes are, by way of starting and supporting the act of learning.

The cognitive theories explain the process of learning as being an inner one and impossible to know directly. Researches have been centred on bringing forth the internal

factors involved in learning, such as: cognitive processes, motivational-emotional processes, creativity.

The metacognitive theories of learning have led to a modification of the views concerning the development of brain capacity through a redefinition of the roles played by schools and educational staff in the process of child learning. Metacognition refers thus both to the actions by which a person becomes aware of his/her cognitive activity, that is a mnemonic and learning activity, and to the self-regulating mechanisms which consist of cognitive control: rules, methods and the individual's own strategies of memorizing, understanding and solving problems. Therefore, metacognition is a cognitive means of control and administration of a cognitive activity. Metacognition contains metacognitive experiences and metacognitive knowledge.

Strategies of activating the learning potential in mentally deficient individuals

Making instruction more active represents a fundamental quality of the educational process but also a necessity imposed by the new theoretical and practical orientations of a modern and efficient pedagogy. The activation of teaching sets the psychological foundation of modern Didactics. This marks the leap from “intuitive instruction”, based on imitation and routine and where the student is a passive participant, to “active instruction”, which stimulates the operational thinking of the student and his/her capacity to fully participate to the process of acquiring habits, strategies, knowledge and attitudes. Pedagogically speaking, all these can be projected at the level of lesson planning, school syllabi and schoolbooks.

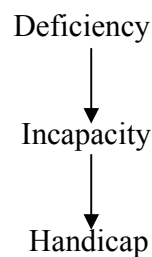
The actual possibilities of getting the students involved in the educational process are not the same for each stage of instruction. That is why the activation of education requires some necessary conditions or specifications. (IONESCU; RADU, 1995).

The concept of integration-inclusion

Integrated-inclusive education emerged as a natural reaction of the society to the need of providing the necessary context and conditions required by the specific type of education of the individuals with special needs. According to the education principles promoted by international institutions, all disabled individuals have the same rights as the

other people of a similar age, regardless of their sex, language, religion, political opinions, national or social origin, financial status, or any other special characteristic of these individuals or their families. Moreover, they have the right to medical, psychological and functional treatment, to medical and social rehabilitation, to schooling and professional education and reorientation, to counselling, assistance and help in finding capacities they possess, and to facilitate their social integration or reintegration.

The World Health Organization (1980) proposes a distinct approach of the three terms: deficiency-incapacity-handicap.



The notion of deficiency signifies the absence, loss or deterioration of a structure or of a function (anatomical, physiological or psychological). The deficiency can be the result of a disease, of an accident but also of unsuitable conditions existing during an individual's growth and development.

Incapacity designates a number of functional limitations caused by physical, intellectual or sensorial dysfunction, by health failures, by environmental circumstances or by mental illnesses. All these can be either permanent or temporary, either reversible or irreversible, either progressive or regressive.

The concept of handicap describes the social disadvantages, that is the loss or the diminution of an individual's chances to actively take part in the life of a community at an equal level with all the other members of that community.

The concept of *special education needs* was launched in 1978, in Great Britain, by the Warnock Report, which constituted the foundation of special education reform in Great Britain. This concept was adopted by UNESCO terminology in the 1990's as a normal consequence of the new orientation towards special education for children but also for the community.

The term designates the educational necessities added to the more general objectives of the education system. These necessities describe both an instruction

adjusted to the special particularities of the individuals (each characteristic of a deficiency) and a specific intervention translated in a proper rehabilitation (VRĂȘMAȘ, 2001, p. 27). Without an adequate approach of these special necessities one cannot speak about giving these individuals an equal chance to participate and integrate in a school environment or in society. The notion of *special education needs* was also sanctioned by the Law of Education (84/1995), by later amendments to it and by the “Regulation of Special Education”.

Segregated education represents the way to project, organize and carry on the specially adjusted education for children with SEN as compared to the other children who are considered normal.

Integrated education can be seen as a sum of actions meant to integrate children with SEN within the mass education system in order to help them develop normally and harmoniously.

Inclusive education aims to continuously adapt instruction to the special needs of children. This type of education eliminates obstacles in learning and offers full participation in the process of instruction to all that bound to be excluded, simply by adopting an approach meant to provide the necessary information to all children.

The general frame of researching

The starting point of the research is a very well known reality, namely the fact that disabled children are to be found in all societies. However, at both a national and international level there is a current tendency of trying to give these children equal opportunities in life by integrating-including them in the mass education system as opposed to the previous policy of putting them in special schools.

The experiment was structured and carried out starting from the general assumption that the learning potential in children with minor mental deficiency, pseudo-mental deficiency and border-line intelligence, who are integrated in the mass education system, can be made more active through mediated learning (Personalized Intervention Programme).

This research took place in the period: September 2001-July 2003 and it included two research samples of children with cognitive-intellectual disabilities.

The experimental sample comprised 83 little school children with cognitive-intellectual disabilities and who were integrated to the mass education system. The subjects were integrated in the following schools, all located in Sibiu: Elementary School N. 2, Elementary School N. 5, Elementary School N. 8, Elementary School N. 9, Elementary School No.20 and Elementary School N. 21.

The control sample comprised 35 little school children with cognitive-intellectual disabilities, all attending Special School N. 1 of Sibiu.

The research as such had three distinct fundamental stages: the stage of initial assessment, the stage of the intervention programme and the stage of result assessment

The stage of initial assessment

The stage of testing the children from the two samples by way of the WISC-R Intelligence Test and of the Formative Psycho-diagnosis Test – Two-tailed Forms proved to be extremely useful for the complex psychological understanding of the analyzed subject.

After the initial assessment through the WISC-R Intelligence Test the following categories of subjects were identified:

The sample of pupils of the Elementary School N. 2 comprises 12 subjects out of whom 4 have minor mental deficiency, 5 have border-line intelligence and 3 have pseudo-mental deficiency.

The sample of pupils of the Elementary School N. 5 comprises 9 subjects out of whom 2 have minor mental deficiency, 5 have border-line intelligence and 2 have pseudo-mental deficiency.

The sample of pupils of the Elementary School N. 8 comprises 14 subjects out of whom 4 have minor mental deficiency, 3 have border-line intelligence and 7 have pseudo-mental deficiency.

The sample of pupils of the Elementary School N. 9 comprises 19 subjects out of whom 9 have minor mental deficiency, 5 have border-line intelligence and 5 have pseudo-mental deficiency.

The sample of pupils of the Elementary School N. 20 comprises 11 subjects out of whom 4 have minor mental deficiency, 2 have border-line intelligence and 5 have pseudo-mental deficiency.

The sample of pupils of the Elementary School N. 21 comprises 18 subjects out of whom 7 have minor mental deficiency, 6 have border-line intelligence and 5 have pseudo-mental deficiency.

The sample of pupils of the Special School N. 1 comprises 35 subjects out of whom 10 have minor mental deficiency and 25 have border-line intelligence.

The results of the three categories of subjects – MMD, BLI, PMD – on the Formative Psycho-diagnosis Test – Two-tailed Forms, point out that subjects of each category are characterized by learning potential and cognitive adaptability.

A comparison of the subjects' results – MMD, BLI, PMD – on the Formative Psycho-diagnosis Test – Two-tailed Forms, proves that there is a possibility of activating both the learning potential and the intellectual potential of children with cognitive-intellectual disabilities.

During the post-test stage of the Formative Psycho-diagnosis Test – Two-tailed Forms the results of the subjects with pseudo-mental deficiency were three-four times better than in the pre-test stage, those of the subjects with border-line intelligence were almost two times better, while those of the subjects with minor mental deficiency were more reduced.

After the formation-instruction stage the subjects with pseudo-mental deficiency can elaborate clear procedural rules regarding the right way to combine the structural elements of the target-image. A part of the subjects with border-line intelligence can do the same thing. On the other hand, the subjects with minor mental deficiency are able to devise some declarative judgments necessary for correctly solving the tasks but only few of these judgments can be translated into palpable procedural rules.

Actually, the results obtained by the students integrated in the mass education schools and those coming from special schools on the Formative Psycho-diagnosis Test – Two-tailed Forms (both in pre- and post-test stages) are in many ways similar. The test allowed for a separation of three categories of children with different learning and intellectual potentials: children with minor mental deficiency (MMD), children with

border-line intelligence (BLI) and children with pseudo-mental deficiency and with a psychometric intelligence quotient of 65-85.

The results of the two categories of subjects: MMD and BLI on the Formative Psycho-diagnosis Test (Two-tailed Forms) in the post-test stage are the evidence that even children in special schools are characterized by learning potential and cognitive adaptability. The subjects with border-line intelligence have two times better results than in the pre-test stage, while those of the subjects with minor mental deficiency are more reduced from a cognitive point of view.

The stage of the intervention programme

The second most important stage of the research was the intervention programme. The programme was made up of several sub-stages, such as: formative courses on “Integrated-inclusive education” for all teachers who also instruct children with SEN, the Personalized Intervention Programme and the curricular adaptation.

Formative courses addressed to all teachers who instruct children with SEN, on the theme: “Integrated-inclusive education”

Several specialists in the fields of psycho-pedagogy and integration-inclusion together with the Teachers’ House and the Sibiu County School Inspectorate organized formative courses for all the teachers who had children with educational special needs in their classes. This step was of crucial importance to our research, since the teacher is usually the key-agent of the instruction process. Moreover, going from the general to the particular, this process was going to be aimed at both accomplishing the curricular standards of performance stipulated in the National Curriculum and at integrating students with educational special needs in the mass education system.

These courses were initially attended by the teachers of the 6 schools that were part of the programme and in case some other teachers had expressed their interest, some more courses on integration-inclusion would have been organized. This actually happened and, in the end, more than 100 teachers of the schools in Sibiu and the surrounding areas benefited from these courses over a period of 6 months (January-June 2003).

In the period November-December 2003 a formative course was organized both for the headmasters of the schools in the programme and for other headmasters who expressed their concern for the issue of integration-inclusion.

During the 20 hours of instruction, the teachers acquired information about:

- a) basic theoretical concepts: deficiency, incapacity, handicap, integrated-inclusive education, children with disabilities;
- b) the issue of integrated-inclusive education in other European countries (playing video tapes which presented strategies of integrating children with various types of deficiencies: psychical, physical, of sight, of hearing and mixed types);
- c) the legislation regarding the integration of children with special education needs at a national and international level;
- d) concrete ways of fulfilling the process of instruction-education in classes including students with educational special needs. This process would be carried out step by step, as follows:
 - i. adjusting the school syllabi for subjects such as: Romanian Language and Literature, Mathematics and Natural Sciences;
 - ii. outlining the learning units;
 - iii. the making of the personalized intervention programme;
 - iv. other adaptation methods parallel with school curricula.

Once the courses were covered, the teaching staff has initiated a new instructive-educational programme for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) integrated into the mass-schooling system.

The most difficult step was to elaborate the personalized intervention programme and to implement it over a period of 6 months, to evaluate and, according to the results, to apply a psycho-pedagogical strategy adapted to the demands and needs of the integrated pupils.

The personalized intervention programme

While elaborating the personalized intervention programme for each subject all components have been covered and adapted, as follows:

- a) learning objectives;
- b) intervention and learning strategies for each of the targeted objectives;
- c) evaluation strategies for the acquired habits and for interventions;
- d) the continual mechanism for revising the intervention programme and for the decision-making with regard to the continuation of the programme.

Curricular adaptation

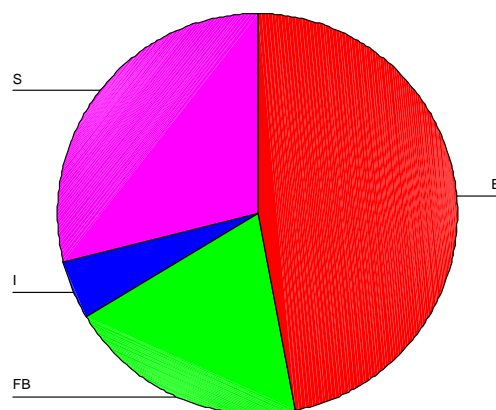
For the implementation of the personalized intervention programme it was necessary to elaborate an adaptation scheme for each subject separately. This scheme was structured on 12 dimensions (contents; procedural, material, temporal resources; instruction methods; psychic processes involved in the learning; psycho-pedagogical strategies concerning recuperation, correction and development of deficient cognitive functions; educational methods for the maintenance and stimulation of the non-intellectual factors of school performance; evaluation; performance definers; curricular standards of performance; physical and psychological environment), out of which the ones needing adaptation have been selected, according to the psycho-individual peculiarities of the pupils.

The stage of results assessment

In the aftermath of implementing the intervention programme over a school-year period, the pupils pertaining to the experimental cross section have got the following results in the Final Evaluation Tests: out of a total of 83 subjects, 75 have overcome their initial situation of losing the school year in both disciplines of study; 4 pupils obtained “insufficient” ratings in Romanian Language and Literature, and 7 pupils obtained “insufficient” rating in Mathematics; 3 pupils did not make any progress after undergoing the personalized intervention programme, having obtained “insufficient” ratings in both evaluation tests.

The general hypothesis is confirmed by the results obtained by the subjects from the experimental cross section in the Final Evaluation Tests. In what follows we have a global presentation of the results in the Final Evaluation Tests in Romanian Language and Literature, and Mathematics, respectively.

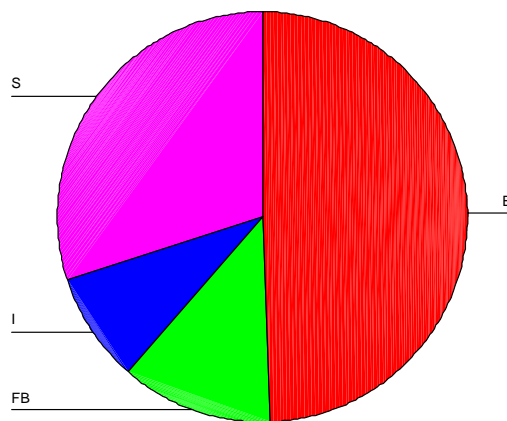
Results – Roman Language and Literature



	Frecventa	Procent	Procent valid	Procent cumulat
B	39	47.0	47.0	47.0
FB	16	19.3	19.3	66.3
I	4	4.8	4.8	71.1
S	24	28.9	28.9	100.0
Total	83	100.0	100.0	

In the aftermath of the application of the cumulative evaluation in Romanian Language and Literature, the results obtained by the pupils in the experimental cross section are as follows: out of a sum total of 83 pupils, 16 obtained “very good” ratings, 39 obtained “good” ratings, 24 obtained “sufficient” and 4 “insufficient”, the latter being unable to overcome the situation of losing the school-year.

Results - Mathematics



	Frecventa	Procent	Procent valid	Procent cumulat
B	41	49.4	49.4	49.4
FB	10	12.0	12.0	61.4
I	7	8.4	8.4	69.9
S	25	30.1	30.1	100.0
Total	83	100.0	100.0	

In the aftermath of the application of the cumulative evaluation in Mathematics, the results obtained by the pupils in the experimental cross section are as follows: out of a sum total of 83 pupils, 10 obtained “very good” ratings, 41 obtained “good”, 25 obtained

“sufficient” and 7 “insufficient”, the latter being unable to overcome their situation of losing the school-year.

The results obtained by the three categories of subjects included in the research in the Final Evaluation Tests in Romanian Language and Literature and Mathematics, respectively, confirm our specific hypotheses, that is, that the learning potential which can be activated differs among the three categories of subjects: MMD (Minor Mental Deficiency), BLI (Border-Line Intelligence), PMD (Pseudo Mental Deficiency) .

Pupils with Minor Mental Deficiency obtained the following results in the Final Evaluation Tests:

- a) in Romanian Language and Literature: 10% obtained “very good” ratings, 23% “good” ratings, 60% „sufficient” ratings, and 7% “insufficient” ratings.
- b) in Mathematics: 10% obtained “very good” ratings, 17% “good” ratings, 53% “sufficient” ratings, and 20% “insufficient” ratings.

Pupils with Border Line Intelligence obtained the following results in the Final Evaluation Tests:

- a) in Romanian Language and Literature: 8% obtained “very good” ratings, 69% “good” ratings, 15% “sufficient” ratings, 8% “insufficient” ratings;
- b) in Mathematics: 65% obtained “good” ratings, 31% “sufficient” ratings, and 4% “insufficient” ratings.

Pupils with Pseudo Mental Deficiency obtained the following results in the Final Evaluation Tests:

- a) Romanian Language and Literature: 41% obtained “very good” ratings, 52% “good” ratings, and 7% “sufficient” ratings;
- b) Mathematics: 26% obtained “very good” ratings, 70% “good” ratings, and 4% “sufficient” ratings.

These results prove that pupils with MMD manage to a very high degree to pass, more than half of them obtaining “sufficient” ratings in both disciplines. Unlike these, pupils with BLI and those with PMD obtain higher scores in the same evaluation tests. More than half of them obtained “good” ratings and a significant number of them got “very good”.

Out of the 4 pupils who did not pass the Romanian Language and Literature test, 2 are with MMD and 2 with BLI. Out of the 7 pupils who did not pass the Mathematics test, 6 are with MMD and one is with BLI.

The pupils with the best results are the ones with PMD. Most of them obtained “good” and “very good” ratings, and only 2 got “sufficient” in Romanian Language and Literature and one got the same in Mathematics.

The tests used for evaluating the performance of the pupils in special education schools differs from that used in the mass-schooling system due to different school curricula covered in the two schooling systems. The comparative analysis of the learning contents reveals the complexity of the subject matter covered in the mass schooling system, which makes it impossible to evaluate the same contents in both cross sections.

The evaluation tests applied to the control cross section contain reference objectives and contents specific to special education curricula.

The results of the cumulative evaluation tests obtained by pupils in special education school are as follows:

- a) In Romanian Language and Literature 2 subjects obtained “very good” ratings, 14 obtained “good”, and 19 “sufficient” ratings;
- b) In Mathematics 2 subjects obtained “very good” ratings, 12 obtained “good”, and 21 “sufficient” ratings.

Comparing the results obtained in the Final Evaluation Tests by the pupils in the experimental cross section to the ones obtained by those in the control cross section reveals significantly higher scores for the pupils integrated into the mass schooling system due to the accomplished intervention programme, as compared to the results obtained by the pupils in the special education school, to whom were applied evaluation tests in concordance with the curriculum they covered, that is, much easier tests.

The results obtained by the pupils integrated into the mass schooling system prove on the one hand the options in activating the learning and intellectual potential, and the usefulness and efficiency of the intervention programme, on the other hand.

The correlation tables’ analysis established that there is a very strong correlation between the results obtained in the WISC-R Intelligence Test and the Final Evaluation Tests in both Romanian Language and Literature, and Mathematics.

A strong correlation was also established between the results obtained in the Formative Psycho-diagnosis Test and the Final Evaluation Tests in both Romanian Language and Literature, and Mathematics.

This correlation confirms the hypotheses we have advanced in our research, that is, that the intellectual and learning potential of children with cognitive-intellectual disabilities can be activated by integration into the mass schooling system.

Table of correlation indexes between the Formative Psycho-diagnosis Test-Two-tailed Forms and the Final Evaluation Tests in Romanian Language and Literature and Mathematics

Corelatii esantion experimental

		POTENTIA	EV_R	EV_M
POTENTIA	Pearson Correlation	1,000	,316**	,351**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,	,004	,001
	N	83	83	83
EV_R	Pearson Correlation	,316**	1,000	,702**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,004	,	,000
	N	83	83	83
EV_M	Pearson Correlation	,351**	,702**	1,000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,001	,000	,
	N	83	83	83

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table of correlation indexes between the WISC-R Intelligence Test and the Final Evaluation Tests in Romanian Language and Literature and Mathematics

Corelatii esantionul experimental

		WISCQIV	WISCQIP	WISCQIT	EV_R	EV_M
WISCQIV	Pearson Correlation	1,000	,153	,764**	,315**	,305**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,	,168	,000	,004	,005
	N	83	83	83	83	83
WISCQIP	Pearson Correlation	,153	1,000	,583**	,300**	,468**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,168	,	,000	,006	,000
	N	83	83	83	83	83
WISCQIT	Pearson Correlation	,764**	,583**	1,000	,467**	,542**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,	,000	,000
	N	83	83	83	83	83
EV_R	Pearson Correlation	,315**	,300**	,467**	1,000	,702**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,004	,006	,000	,	,000
	N	83	83	83	83	83
EV_M	Pearson Correlation	,305**	,468**	,542**	,702**	1,000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,005	,000	,000	,000	,
	N	83	83	83	83	83

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Conclusions

In the light of the analysis and processing of the data obtained during the research, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- a) The cognitive-intellectual potential of children with cognitive-intellectual disabilities is stimulated by integration into the mass schooling system; this idea is backed up by the results obtained by pupils with Special Education Needs (SEN) integrated into the mass schooling system;
- b) the psycho-pedagogical intervention undergone by the pupils with SEN integrated into the 6 mass schools in Sibiu has resulted into a significant learning progress for a number of 75 pupils out of the total of 83 included in the research, which proves their integration is possible, thus avoiding the segregation that comes with attending a special education school, the basic condition being the involvement of the intervention team members, among which the form teacher has a central role.
- c) the adaptation of the instructive-educational process on various levels has created the opportunity for the pupils in the experimental cross section to obtain better ratings in the Final Evaluation Tests

than what had been anticipated in previous hypotheses, as follows: the majority of pupils with PMD obtain “good” and “very good” ratings in the final evaluation. Pupils with BLI obtain “good” and “sufficient” ratings in the final evaluation, except for two pupils who did not pass the Romanian Language and Literature final, and for one who did not pass the Mathematics final; the pupils with MMD obtain results that allow them to pass the final evaluations pupils with MMD are a special case: their final evaluation proves difficulties in assimilating mathematical contents, over 20% of these pupils being unable to fare better than “insufficient”. If the personalized intervention programme yields no results in the future, these pupils are going to be educationally re-oriented;

- d) in spite of the fact that pupils in special education schools are exposed to a much more simplified version of the mass schooling curriculum, their results in the final evaluation do not rate significantly higher than those of pupils in the experimental group. the intellectual potential, flawed as it is, is not valorised in special education schools; for instance, the comparative study analysis revealed that in first-grade Mathematics, in the mass schooling system pupils acquire the computing algorithms for addition and subtraction within the 0-100 range, always using practical things as aids, whereas in the special education schools pupils work within the 0-6, 10 at the most, range.

The results of the pupils in the experimental group within the cumulative evaluation focusing on the assessment of school performance in the Romanian Language and Literature and Mathematics, respectively, prove that integration of pupils with PMD, with BLI and with MMD is possible, if the instructive –educational process is adapted to their needs.

Mention should be made that while the research took place, there were no support teachers, either in the schools in the city of Sibiu, or in the ones across Sibiu County. In the aftermath of the research done, starting with the 2003-2004 school year, the Sibiu County School Inspectorate has created 10 (itinerant) support-teacher positions, the number of which can rise if necessary.

In order to continue and extend this process of integrated-inclusive education in the schools from the city of Sbiu, as well as in the ones across Sibiu County, we suggest the implementation off a strategic programme in integrated-inclusive education, a programme that could also compete for the fund allowances necessary for such a complex enterprise.

Inclusion of pupils with SEN into normal school institutions is a last-minute request from the international organisations, aiming towards equal education opportunities for all pupils.

The achieved results confirm the success of the integration programme, which allows us to affirm that this paper could offer factual intervention solutions addressing pupils with MMD, BLI, and PMD, by the implementation of the Personalized Intervention Programme (PIP).

Strategic programme for integrated-inclusive education in Sibiu country

Purpose of the programme:

Raising the quality of life for disabled children and for their families by school- and social integration. Creating an inclusive school model in which all pupils to be valued and respected. Elaborating a national strategy for the integration of disabled children into normal kindergartens and schools.

Objectives:

- a) Inclusion of the children with Special Education Needs in normal kindergartens and schools in Sibiu County. Implementation of an intervention system containing recuperation-rehabilitation and integration-inclusion services;
- b) training of normal school managers in view of an education for change and for diversity;
- c) training of teaching staff in normal schools for the accomplishment of the integrated-inclusive education;
- d) briefing and counselling of the parents of children with SEN and of the parents of non-disabled children;
- e) changing the society's mentality and attitude towards disabled persons;

f) creation of a database necessary for disseminating information.

Importance and complexity of the programme

The integrated-inclusive education programme has the following working partners: Sibiu County School Inspectorate, Sibiu Teachers' House (TH), and the Faculty of Sciences – the Psychology and Special Psycho-pedagogy Departments within the “Lucian Blaga” University in Sibiu; The THs are independent entities, having as purpose the improvement of the teaching staff within the education system and via methodologists can continue the training of the teaching staff for the special education module, which can disseminate the information elaborated within the programme, and can also continue the work initiated by the programme. The changes achieved at the level of the normal school, the new methods used in working with integrated disabled children, and the elaborated strategies will constitute the forte of these schools.

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