Jyväskylän yliopiston julkaisuarkisto
Jyväskylä University Digital Archive

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

This is an electronic reprint of the original article.
This reprint *may differ* from the original in pagination and typographic detail.

Author(s): Isosomppi, Leena; Leivo, Marjaana

Title: Becoming an inclusive teacher at the interface of school and teacher education

Year: 2015

Version:

Please cite the original version:

Isosomppi, L., & Leivo, M. (2015). Becoming an inclusive teacher at the interface of school and teacher education. In 5th ICEEPSY International Conference on Education & Educational Psychology (pp. 686-694). Elsevier BV. Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences, 171. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.178

All material supplied via JYX is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, and duplication or sale of all or part of any of the repository collections is not permitted, except that material may be duplicated by you for your research use or educational purposes in electronic or print form. You must obtain permission for any other use. Electronic or print copies may not be offered, whether for sale or otherwise to anyone who is not an authorised user.

Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

ScienceDirect

Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 171 (2015) 686 – 694

Procedia
Social and Behavioral Sciences

ICEEPSY 2014

Becoming an inclusive teacher at the interface of school and teacher education

Leena Isosomppi*, Marjaana Leivo

*University of Jyväskylä
Kokkola University Consortium Chydenius, PL 567, 67701 Kokkola

Abstract

The aim of this study is to assess how the pedagogical solutions of the inclusive teaching practice in class teachers' adult education programme support the development to become an inclusive teacher. What kind of interpretations do the students make of inclusion and inclusive school? How does the participation in school community with reflective support by teacher education community enhance inclusive professional orientation? The research material consists of qualitative network material written by 22 adult students: teaching practice plans, reflective practice stories and teaching practice feedback. The analytical approach was thematic text analysis. Inclusion was interpreted as pupils' right to study with their peers but also as a professional challenge or ideal. The social exclusion was elicited only in a few stories. The meta-consciousness of developing an inclusive school was sparse. The experiences gained from the school's communities of practice combined with the theoretical and reflective tools offered by teacher education community formed meaningful learning.

© 2015 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).
Peer-review under responsibility of the Organizing Committee of ICEEPSY 2014.

Keywords: teacher education; inclusion; professional development

1. Introduction

The ideologies and politics of inclusive education have been more visibly present during the last few years than before in the international teacher education literature (Engelbrecht 2013; Rouse 2008; Waitoller & Artiles 2013). However, there is not a great deal of research on how the teachers are supported to develop to become inclusive teachers (Rouse 2008). European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education has explored the contents in the teacher education regarding inclusion in the 25 member countries of the European Union. It has produced "the profile of inclusive teachers" which presents the objectives for professional competences regarding inclusive education in the initial teacher education. (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2012, 20–21.) Reinforcing professional competence in inclusion requires experiences in authentic

* Corresponding author: Leena Isosomppi +358408054415, leena.isosomppi@chydenius.fi, Marjaana Leivo +358405588837, marjaana.leivo@chydenius.fi

1877-0428 © 2015 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).
Peer-review under responsibility of the Organizing Committee of ICEEPSY 2014.
doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.178

learning environments, in other words at schools, and reflecting on these experiences as well as connecting the information to the theoretical starting points of inclusive education (Heikkinen & al. 2007; Waitoller & Kozleski 2013).

In Finland there are still only a few schools where all the pupils study in the same groups. During the last few years the practices have been moved towards inclusion with the direction of the national education policy by reducing the number of special needs units and schools. The law which came into force in 2010 concerning the support for school attendance and learning requires that the pupils get support early enough for their learning and receive it flexibly in the general education groups. In practice, the teaching groups for pupils with special educational needs are mainly in the same school buildings with the groups of so-called general education. The differences between the municipalities in the implementation of the law are still great. The curricula of all the teacher education programmes contain pedagogical studies in special needs education but the competences of an inclusive teacher have not been defined in Finnish education policy (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2012, 20 –21).

In this article we will examine the teacher's professional development in the teacher education in connection with the inclusive teaching practice period. The target group of the study is the students of the class teachers' adult education programme who have worked as unqualified teachers before the teacher education. In this teacher education programme, a practical training period which differs from a traditional teaching practice has been developed. During the teaching practice, the starting points and practices for developing an inclusive school are examined and studied in the interaction of the school and of the teacher education.

The inclusive teaching practice

In the inclusive teaching practice the students moved and studied the vision of an inclusive school at the interfaces of two communities; the teacher education and the school. The pedagogical manuscript of the inclusive teaching practice had been created to support participation in the school community, evaluation of inclusive school culture, reflecting on significant learning experiences and cooperative building of knowledge. The teaching practice process in inclusive education lasted about nine weeks. The actual field stage, lasting one week, was carried out in different parts of Finland in the practice environments chosen by the students. The process was started before the actual practice week with a common orientation period. A theoretical study module (figure 1) which deepens the practical knowledge was also part of the practice.

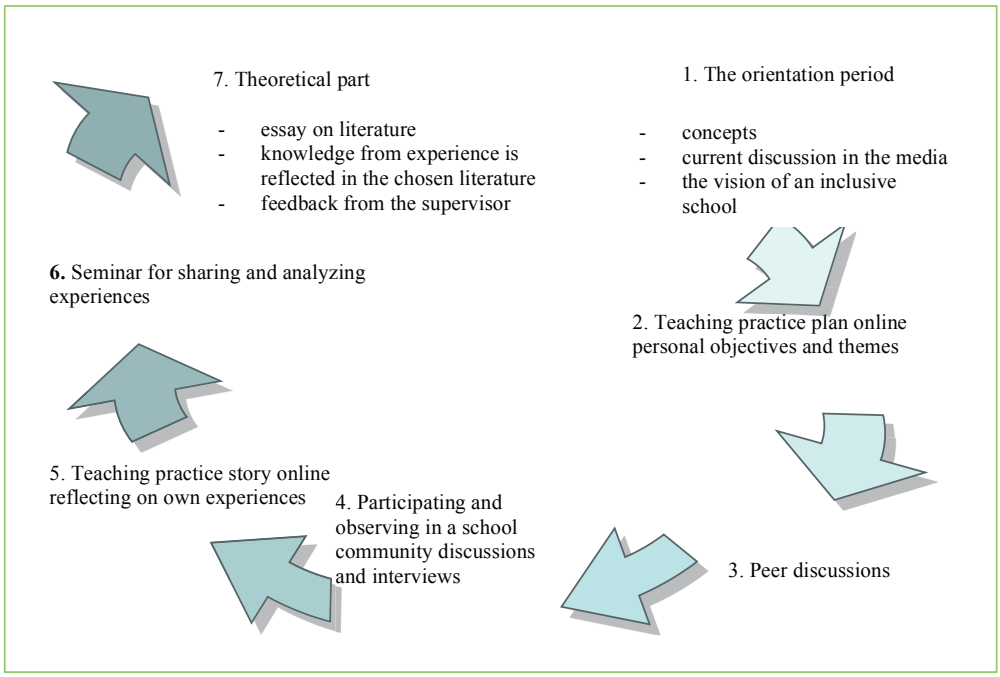

Figure 1. The development of the teaching practice process in inclusive education

The schools were at different stages in developing inclusive culture. The vision of an inclusive school offered a reflective surface for analysing the experiences acquired in different environments. The students observed the operation of a teacher and pupils as well as of the school and discussed with the staff and pupils. As the subjects chosen by the students were a small group

for children with special educational needs at a general education school, an inclusive class and a special needs teacher shared by the school (part-time special needs teacher) working according to the teacher's own professional objectives.

Theoretical starting points – as observers on the periphery of the practice community

Situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998) and the concept of the practice community which it includes give the opportunity to outline the students' position and the nature of learning in the teaching practice for inclusive education. Learning is seen as situational like all other human operations, as a phenomenon bound to the time and place. By participating in the operation of the school community and in the negotiations, the members of the practice community build their identity and gradually strengthen their involvement in the community.

All the students of the adult education programme had experience in teaching and many of the adult students had worked as unqualified special needs teachers before the teacher education. During the inclusive teaching practice, at the final stage of teacher studies, the majority of the students were moving to teaching jobs. The connection of studying and of working life was thus concretely emphasized in the students' situation in life. In connection with their teaching practice the adult students acted as visitors and observers in the margins of the practice community of the teaching practice school (legitimate peripheral participation) (Wenger 1998).

The education philosophy was based on the idea that when the students are participating in the workday of a school community – as observers for even a short time – they will come to learn the significances which are included in its culture. However, situated learning is not internalization of ready models but the constant social negotiation concerning the communal meanings. The students observed discussions and negotiations in the school community, participated in them personally and in addition to this reflected their own thoughts and experiences of the inclusion with the support from their education.

2. Research study tasks

The first objective of the study is to describe and to understand the interpretations of the students of the class teachers' adult education regarding inclusion and the possibilities of implementing an inclusive school in the Finnish context. The second objective is to evaluate how participation in the two practice communities and moving between them supports the development of the student's inclusive orientation. The results are reflected to the European profile of inclusive teacher and to the so-called wider definition of inclusion (Ainscow & Booth 2002; Waitoller & Artiles 2013), which examines inclusion as the developing of a school open to all ”Inclusive education is an approach for all learners, not just an approach for particular groups with particular needs.” (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2012). The wider definition of inclusion helps to perceive not only the inclusions and exclusions which are related to the pupils' ability to learn but also those relating to gender, culture and social status.

3. Research material and analysis of the material

The research material consisted of reflecting on teaching practice stories (n=22) and evaluation feedbacks (n=22) written by the students in the network environment. In the teaching practice stories the students described their significant learning experiences, events or meetings in the practice which had affected their own teacher image and which they believed to affect their acting as the teacher. Secondly, the students told what kind of new ingredients the practice offered for the teacher identity. They had to examine, among other things, preconditions for the success of an inclusive school from the starting points of society, school and their own work as a teacher. Finally, the students evaluated the significance of the inclusive teaching practice within the entire teaching practice of the teacher education. The material was analysed by thematic analysis of the content.

4. Results

4.1. The adult students' interpretations of inclusion and possibilities of an inclusive school

The first objective of the study was to describe and to understand the interpretations of the students of the class teachers' adult education regarding inclusion and the possibilities of implementing an inclusive school in the Finnish context. In the following part we examine the results of this study question by analysing them through different levels of the operation of a school. The implementation and possibilities of an inclusive school were classified in the student material as values and politics at the macro level, as school culture and as pedagogical practices at the school level and as professional challenges and ideals at the individual level.

Inclusion as values and politics

The macro level of inclusion philosophy (social inclusion, equality in the society and the value dimension of the education) was clearly evident in only a few teaching practice stories. This result is supported by the earlier study results (a reference) according to which inclusion is often narrowly understood as only pedagogical and connected to the learning experiences. The fundamental dimension of inclusion (Dyson 1999) which is related to the values and ethics is also easily left aside when attention

is fixed on the implementation dimension of inclusion at especially the school's or the individual teachers' / pupils' level. In this study material the demand for equality in society is not visibly problematized. However, a few students brought out the value perspective and offered critical views on the education policy.

> *To promote inclusive school on the wide scale, a lot of change and education of attitudes are still needed all the way up to the biggest decision-makers. At present, there are many fine words and visions at a national level but implementing them is a different matter. (12)*

The lack of resources directed to the schools was presented in the material either as society's question of value or as an economic problem of a certain municipality. The lack of resources was elicited also as an observation and as a subject of criticism by the teachers of the schools and the students who participated in the teaching practice. A few students were awakened to the significance of regional inequality in implementing inclusion. Some of the students in turn trusted the national system of directing the schools and repeated the education policy's ideal model of a networked school directed by the curriculum. In that case the approach was mainly managerial-organizational, not pondering on the foundations of inclusion philosophy.

> *Now I understand and perceive even myself that the municipalities can have very different priorities. In one municipality the idea may be that by increasing the number of school counsellors many matters are settled whereas in another municipality it was seen that receiving versatile support quickly and flexibly is a better way. There are differences also in it what kind of resources the municipality has in order to arrange support. (4)*

Waitoller and Artiles (2013, 347) criticize the research on the teachers' professional development related to inclusion concerning the fact that the questions about inclusion are not bound to the different school contexts. The definition of success of an inclusive school is dependent on the history of each school and on the development of the operational culture. In order to understand inclusion, a researcher and a teacher should also understand the local forms of social exclusion. Understanding inclusion only as a question of inclusion of the pupils who need support because of difficulties in learning is too narrow a perspective when examined intersectionally. Intersectionality approach which takes simultaneously into consideration the different aspects which are related to social exclusion (socio-economic status, ethnic background, gender) has been sparsely presented in the teacher education literature. (Waitoller & Artiles 2013, 347.)

The intersectionality perspective becomes concrete in the following material example when the student describes meeting with the 9-10-year-old pupils of a small group for children with special educational needs. The inclusive challenges of this school were connected to different cultural and socio-economic starting points of the families and pupils.

> *The proportion of pupil welfare was high in this class. These pupils lacked the motivation for school. Their homes were unable to support them. The conditions at home were challenging for most of them. Emotional difficulties came forth already in my first meeting with the pupils. As one of the boys said – Are you someone from the welfare, or? (--) Even though several child welfare notifications are made by the school, it seems that nothing changes. Some of these children in the small group for children with special educational needs had no actual difficulties in learning at all. (11).*

The student had made observations about the openness of the school's teachers towards the pupils who represent different cultures. However, the practices of inclusive education stopped after the elementary instruction of the first and second grades at the school in question. The student's attention was fixed on a particular small group for children with special educational needs with the focus on the interaction at an individual level and on the teacher's personality and values. About a third of the students referred in their teaching practice stories to the family situation of the pupils and to socio-economic or ethnic background alongside the difficulties in learning.

Inclusion as school culture and as pedagogical practices

The image of an inclusive school emerging from the material covers mainly the four areas of professional competences of the profile of inclusive teachers (a reference): valuing diversity, supporting all the learners, the teachers' collaboration and lifelong personal professional development. Developing an inclusive school was understood in the student material also as developing the whole school's operation which has shared values as a starting point. On one hand inclusion was seen as the teacher's individual attitudinal readiness and as professional competence but at the same time also as operating together with others (for example, the multi-disciplinary networks, simultaneous teaching).

> *The preconditions for an inclusive school are first of all a common goal and commitment, shared set of values which have been recorded in the plan of action of the school. During my own class teacher education and with the teaching practice periods, the thought of the school which is shared by all has been further reinforced. (3)*

The inclusion class opened the window to the renewing school. The school is open, adaptable and, at the same time, both individual and communal. (9)

The vision and characteristics of an inclusive school culture were found rich in the material. However, meta consciousness of the structures and processes or active agencies connected to developing the school, for example of the history or management of the school, came forth very little. A week long teaching practice did not yet tune students to examine the dynamics of developing the school.

The organization of teaching is one of the central themes connected to implementing inclusion in the material. The students described a wide range of methods of flexible teaching arrangements and of differentiation as well as the different pedagogical practices and materials seen by them in the everyday life of the school. The practices and experiences connected to the teachers' cooperation and simultaneous teaching also stimulated many thoughts and comments. Successful cooperation between teachers was seen as a central factor for successfully implementing inclusion. Simultaneous teaching was also seen as a means to maintain the teachers' well-being at work. The significance of the cooperation between teachers and its challenges opened up in a new way to many students or made them reflect upon their earlier conceptions and their experiences of cooperation between teachers. Some of the students were also able to evaluate the significance of implementation from the pupils' perspective because of their background of experience.

The questions of cooperation of home and school were processed only in a few cases and even then primarily through the matter of challenging parents. The roles of homes and pupils in developing an inclusive school are not necessarily directly seen in a daily class room operation and it would require a discussion particularly related to this theme with the teacher during a short practice.

The teaching practice stories contained plenty of observations about the everyday practices of inclusive teaching in the schools. The observations that were significant for the students regarding implementing inclusive teaching were connected to interaction, atmosphere, the feedback received by the pupils, differentiation, structuring of the teaching and potential of club activities. Alongside these general pedagogical solutions, the demand for special needs competence is also presented in the students' teaching practice experiences. Several students followed mainly the special needs teachers' work in the school. However, competence in special needs pedagogy was connected to the class teacher's skills. Inclusion required systematic planning and multichannel teaching and it was seen at school as differentiation in teaching, as versatile teaching materials and as small group spaces. The teacher had enough time to perceive the stage of an individual pupil's thinking.

Inclusion as the teacher's professional challenge and ideal

Inclusion was thought about in the material a great deal also at an individual level: as the teacher's professional challenges and through the image of the ideal inclusive teacher. Competence, managing and the challenges produced by the cooperation between teachers were seen as development needs. The ideal inclusive teacher was described from the perspectives of values, personality and competence. The students' task was to diversely observe the operation of the school during the practice and they also observed the individual teachers' operation and social situations. The teachers' personality and values were seen in their work and especially in interaction with the challenging pupils. The observation task persuaded the students to reflect their own values and ways of working upon the operation of these teachers. The students both observed from a distance and identified with the teachers they observed. This work on identity was continued in the reflection on the practice. The following material examples represent this reflection.

This special needs teacher has worked very comprehensively, with feelings and with the whole personality, even through play and sometimes through roles, but always in a way that the action has pedagogically hit a goal and by respecting and meeting the qualities of each child/pupil. (1)

In this group a pupil could have quite well been in the general education group for the social skills and for the behaviour. The pupil needed support for his learning. However, the class teacher was not ready to receive the pupil yet. (22)

Inclusion became summarized as a pupil's right to learn and to study together with their peers (see European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2012). Inclusion signified respect for the uniqueness of a child and the environment a child was raised in and correctly timed, sufficient and individual support for all the pupils. Inclusive teaching was also connected to removing obstacles to learning and making visible the strengths of an individual pupil.

Inclusion as tension field

The inclusion in a school appeared in the students' material also as a multi-level tension field. The tensions were built up both between the fundamental dimension and the implementation dimension of inclusion (for example the ideals of inclusion vs. lack

of resources) and inside them (an inclusion policy vs. lack of resources or the inclusion of the pupil vs. efficiently supporting the pupil).

The disproportion between the inclusion policy and the resources directed at its implementation was referred to often and at all levels of the operation from the national policy to the individual teacher's experiences. In the material, the conflicts of values related to inclusion permeated all levels of operation from the ethos in society to the school communities and to the individual teachers.

> *Society and also the school for its part exclude children though their own operation. The teacher's own ignorance which causes fear about controlling the class raises resistance to change. (15)*

> *When even the smallest problem arises in Finland, an attempt is made to move the pupil immediately to the special needs education. The purpose of the three-level support model has surely been to reduce such operation. (7)*

The students described how the ideology of the school that is open to all pupils is in principle accepted by everyone but at the same time, a few pupil groups (pupils with emotional and behavioural disorders) were excluded from it. The observations challenged the students to think about their own relationship to a school that is open to all. As the reasons for drawing the line the following were mentioned; the benefit and safety of other pupils and the demands of their parents, the benefit for the pupils who need special needs support or the inadequate resources of the teachers and the school.

There are descriptions in the stories about wavering between the inclusive objectives and organising segregating teaching also in the concrete operation of the school (e.g. Peterson & Hittie 2010). In the teaching practice stories there were several observations of this wavering motion where the direction of change could also be towards segregation. The tensions were also connected to the cooperation inside the schools, where references of conflicts and resistance in regard to developing the operation of the school were also noticed. In addition, the questions about the division of work in the school were examined through inclusion. The cooperation between a teacher and an assistant did not serve the interest of the pupil when the assistant acted too independently. The practice offered plenty to think about concerning the questions of cooperation and division of work between a special needs teacher and class teachers.

4.2. Evaluation of the pedagogical solutions of the inclusive teaching practice

The second objective was to evaluate how participation in the two practice communities, the teacher education and the school, and moving between them supports the development of the student's inclusive orientation. The educational arrangements which are significant for the adult student's professional development were organized in three themes: 1) Reflecting on the periphery of the community and in awakening school environments 2) Interaction as developer of the inclusive philosophy 3) Self-direction and optionality as the motivators of the adult student.

Reflecting on the periphery of the community and in awakening school environments

The significance of the field stage of the teaching practice was connected in the material to the fact that the students could participate and observe in the school environments which were different enough compared to their earlier experiences without the tension and the amount of work had they been teaching. The position on the periphery of the school community (legitimate peripheral participation) where one is not acting in the teacher's role, made possible the observations, reflection and also the critical evaluation of the operation of the school. Practice environments where the solutions based on segregation as well as those that had promoted inclusive school could be identified, tuned students to reflect upon their own feelings, their professionalism and their relationship to the developing of an inclusive school.

The awakening learning experiences were connected to the learners' manifold needs and the starting points as well as to the teachers' attitudes and competence in special needs pedagogy. Becoming acquainted with the experienced special needs teacher's wide job description and the support received from the special needs teacher, the discussions with different members of the community, familiarization with multi-disciplinary cooperation and seeing the pedagogical solutions of inclusive education (for example, simultaneous teaching) were also significant in practice.

During a short practice the experiences regarding the degree of participation were varied, mainly they were positive. A few students were also later employed in the teaching practice school.

> *Because there were no teaching duties in the practice, it was possible to concentrate better on observing and to operate in a slightly different role. Most motivating for me was to see different ways of implementing special needs teaching and inclusive education. The new local experiments and applications are interesting, how the different functioning practices in special needs teaching have been developed and introduced. (18)*

> *My own learning was motivated by the fact that I felt I was part of the working community, even though I was not working. My inquiries were kindly answered and I was also able to ask questions openly in the teachers'*

room. On the other hand, they were also interested in our education there. (16)

The reflective tools that were built in to the teaching practice process supported the development of professional philosophy. Building an inclusive teacher identity was supported by a chance to see a school community which was committed to taking care of all the children's welfare and learning.

In my opinion the rapport between the teachers and the pupils was fantastic. Every pupil became seen and heard. (21)

I hope that I am that kind of class teacher who is open to new thoughts and ready for cooperation with special needs teachers and to implement an inclusive school. (7)

An earlier experience confirmed the students to tie what had been seen and experienced to their own work in the future. The students had at this stage already enough competence in the teacher's work and thus they were able to examine the school community from the starting points of inclusion. Also the reflective tools offered by their education encouraged them in this.

Inclusive philosophy develops through interaction

In the background of the pedagogical solutions of the inclusive teaching practice was the conception of adult learning in different communities as socially structured practices. The adult students' earlier experiences in life formed a central starting point and rich foundation for the matters to be studied. The students experienced the orientation, peer discussions and the cooperative working method of the summarizing seminar as meaningful and reciprocal. Everyone was allowed to recount their own experiences, listen to others, comment and ask questions as well as to share their own skills. The cooperative working opened the central concepts of the practice, supported forming an overall picture of the future teaching practice and helped to set individual objectives. The students' personal relationship to the matters to be studied also deepened.

The students presented their individual plans in the peer discussion groups that they had arranged. The comments and questions from the other students on one hand strengthened the individual setting of objectives, and on the other hand also offered a critical mirror to their own thoughts and operation. The cooperative working supported the student's self-reflection and diversified the professional perspectives of issues that have been dealt with.

The discussion in the peer group was fruitful and I was able to form a deeper understanding of matters that had been discussed such as inclusion in the school and its significance in preventing the social exclusion of a child. (2)

The discussions in the summary seminar helped to raise awareness of the questions of values which are related to the teacher's work. In the seminar the touching personal experiences were present. The majority of the students emphasized that the discussions with the special needs teachers were unfolding the phenomena of education. The class teacher's and the special needs teacher's cooperation and increasing one's own competence in special needs pedagogy were regarded as important. Inclusion was often thought about as an ethical question.

As the end of the seminar we stated that studying and the teaching practice have opened our eyes regarding inclusion. The prejudices have dissipated and now it feels easier to think that many different pupils will come to my class. (5)

The concept of inclusion was understood more positively and more diversely than before. The students identified the process-like character of development of an inclusive school and the significance of the commitment by the whole school community for developing the school. It was found surprising that in spite of the shared basis of regulations for everyone, the municipality-specific practices differed.

Self-direction and optionality motivate the adult student

The pedagogical solutions of the practice were experienced as mainly affirming for the adult student's self-direction, study motivation and learning together (see Knowles 1990; Wenger 1998). Self-direction was connected among other things to the student's freedom to choose different alternatives of content inside the teaching practice framework.

It was possible to study the topics of interest and thus one could also gain perhaps more from it than if the topics had been determined in advance. (20)

The freedom of choice was a really significant boost for motivation! (10)

The choice of the individual themes, contents and teaching practice environments tuned the adult student to professional reflection. The students had to think about their own relationship to the questions associated with special needs education and with inclusion. They also became aware of their own learning needs. After the field stage the written essay served as conceptualizing the teaching practice's practical experiences. The freedom of the choice which was included in the choice of literature and the abundance of alternatives were motivating. The evaluation of the experiences in the field when writing the essay supported the reflection of one's own feelings and professionalism.

The students gave peer feedback to each other when presenting their individual teaching practice plans and their teaching practice experiences in the summary seminar. Peer feedback was described as positive and strengthening the teacher's own professionality. The students received written, individual feedback on their practice stories and essays from the teacher. It was central to the written feedback given by the teacher to evaluate the student's skills in studying and critically examining the assumptions which frame their own thinking and their experiences. It also was important to deepen practical experience knowledge through self-chosen, different lenses of theory (see also Brookfield 1998). The individual and focused feedback was described as a driving force, an empowering and important ingredient in building the professional identity. Also the constructive and critical feedback that was focused on in the written text was experienced as supportive for the student's own reflection.

5. Conclusions

The different professional backgrounds of the students of the class teachers' adult education are a good starting point from the perspective of developing inclusive teacher's professionality, because in this way the understanding of the diversity increases (see European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2012). The experience in life as a teacher is not a guarantee for learning as such. Therefore, room must be allocated in the education for the personal and shared reflecting on the earlier experiences and conceptions that are connected to segregation and inclusion. The theoretical starting points and the tools from the teacher education that support reflection, combined with the experiences that have been acquired from the practice communities of the school, seem to form a meaningful learning environment which is awakening both at the levels of emotions and knowledge. The reflective tools provided by the education are necessary in processing inclusion so that the stereotypes that are connected with inclusion and segregation are not reinforced.

The teaching practice environment which develops the adult student's inclusive teacher's professionality must be different enough in relation to the student's earlier experiences. Thus the choice of practice context in the inclusive teaching practice has a major significance. There are still only a few purely inclusive schools in the Finnish school system. Therefore, in the teacher education it is important to examine inclusion at all the levels of operation and to reflect the vision of an inclusive school against the current reality in education.

As the foundation of new inclusive school culture and teacher's professionality are the teachers' individual competences (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education 2012) as well as also the individual and communal meta-skills to direct cooperative processes, in other words the knowledge and skills in school development. This includes the control of the evaluation tools for the level of inclusion in the school, conveying of inclusion with the principle of permeation to daily operation of the school and to development projects, competence for identification and resistance of segregating practices and demonstrating the commitment to inclusion (see von Gunten & Grünewald-Huber 2006).

References

Booth, T. & Ainscow, M. (2002). *Index for inclusion, developing learning and participation in schools*. Bristol, UK: Centre for Studies on Inclusive education (CSIE).

Dyson, A. (1999). *Inclusion and Inclusions: theories and discourses in inclusive education* (pp. 36-53). In H. Daniels & P. Garner World Yearbook of education 1999: Inclusive education. London: Kogan Page.

Brookfield, S. (1998). Against Naive Romanticism: from celebration to the critical analysis of experience. *Studies in Continuing Education* 20 (2), 127–142.

Engelbrecht, P. (2013). Teacher education for inclusion, international perspectives. *European Journal of Special Needs Education* 28 (2), 115-118.

European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2012). *Profile of Inclusive Teachers*. Odense, Denmark: European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education.

von Gunten, A. & Grünewald, E. (2006) *Bildungsqualität durch Genderkompetenz Training. Assessment und Weiterqualifizierung vor Lehrpersonen an der Pädagogischen Hochschule Bern.* In Eidgenössische Kommission für Frauenfragen "Viel erreicht – viel zu tun", 2, 101-107.

Heikkinen, H. L. T., Jokinen, H. & Tynjälä, P. (2012). *Teacher education and development as lifelong and lifewide learning*. In H. L. T. Heikkinen & P. Tynjälä (Eds.), Peer-Group Mentoring for Teacher Development. (pp. 3-30). Milton Park: Routledge.

Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice. Learning, Meaning and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rouse, M. (2008). Developing Inclusive Practice: A Role for teachers and Teacher Education*? Education in the North,* 16, 1.

Peterson, J. M. & Hittie, M. M. (2010). *Inclusive Teaching. The Journey Towards Effective Schools for All Learners* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson-Merrill.

Waitoller, F. R. & Artiles, A. J. (2013). A Decade of Professional Development Research for Inclusive Education: A Critical Review and Notes for a Research Program. *Review of Educational Research* 83 (3), 319-356.

Waitoller F. R. & Kozleski E. B. (2013). Working in Boundary Practices: Identity development and learning in partnership for inclusive education. *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 31, 35-45.