



Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy
NUMBER 16/2017

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Educational Integration From A Different Perspective

ABSTRACT: Grażyna Dryżałowska, *Educational Integration From A Different Perspective*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, No. 16, Poznań 2017. Pp. 29-55. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X

Educational integration has changed the social situation of persons with disabilities, triggering a sequence of new factors delimiting its' dimensions. Getting to know their mutual relations and determinants seems significant for determining the current standing of people with disabilities and broader social contexts in the area where causes of making inaccurate and, in consequence, fake activities for the sake of their social integration are located.

KEY WORDS: educational integration, social integration, persons with disabilities, effectiveness of integration activities, education, inclusion.

Introduction

Educational integration and popularisation of this idea (preceded by numerous discussions and disputes), its' conceptual and theoretical growth and, eventually, practical implementation, have refuted the long-nourished conviction about the validity of segregation-based and protective strategies in the education of people with disabilities. Educational integration has offered evidence that the

most efficient path to social integration of people with disabilities is joint education of children without disabilities and children with disabilities. However, this does not entail that hitherto effects, after almost forty years of implementing integration-based forms of education in our country, satisfy all parties: theoreticians, researchers, practitioners or, finally, the group of people with disabilities and their families.

The attempts at solidifying the validity of this concept bore fruit in the form of numerous research projects, whose results provide arguments in favour, yet also against this form of education, in particular in reference to people with more severe disabilities.

Studies on the efficiency of integrated education, both in Poland and abroad, usually encompass two dimensions: the dimension of school (cognitive) accomplishments of students with disabilities in selected forms of integrated education (at school, in an integrated class or a mainstream class) and the position occupied by the pupil in the class structure (Lipińska-Lokś, 2011, Barłóg, 2008). These areas are relatively rarely supplemented by a diagnosis of emotional functioning of students with disabilities at school and in adult life.

Therefore, studies devoted to the efficiency of educational integration refer primarily to the evaluation of the degree of acceptance of students with disabilities by the school community, i.e. teachers, students without disabilities and their parents, or evaluation of learning outcomes of students with disabilities in the integrated and special system (Barłóg, 2008, Firkowska-Mankiewicz, 1993, G. Szumski, 2011).

The results of these studies are usually ambiguous; therefore, it is impossible to corroborate/ refute the validity of integrated education for social integration of students who make use of such educational solutions. The cause is quite obvious, resulting from the research methodology used in such studies. This methodology usually refers to selected groups of people with disabilities, various areas of their functioning, stages of upbringing, education and forms of education, either- integrated or special. The knowledge accumulated in these studies, extensive yet divided, does not facili-

tate a diagnosis of mechanisms of social integration in the contemporary reality.

Studies on the significance of integrated forms of school education for social integration of people with disabilities in adult life are still an exception (Firkowska-Mankiewicz, 1993, Dryżałowska, 2015).

The goal of integration in a modern society is, on the one hand, mutual dependence of relatively independent sub-systems: their unification and limitation of the degrees of freedom and, on the other, independence of an element with respect to the whole. Therefore, the significance of elements in an integrated system depends on or is determined by the level of its' independence, i.e. autonomy.

"Joining and coordinating autonomous units, whilst observing their autonomy is possible," according to Beck (1993) "only through a new integration mechanism. The function of such mechanism may be taken over by individual biography, own life, as it is the only fixed line combining diversified proposals and social roles, affiliations limited in time, involvement within different groups and situations. [...] Therefore, an individual creates a collection of various partial and time-restricted models of behaviour, identities and systems of socio-cultural orientation, which correspond to currently «visited» social segments. Own biography is a place of integration of such partial identities" (Krzychała, 2007, p. 117).

The contemporary model of social integration poses new questions about rehabilitation, methods of treating children and youth with disabilities and competence necessary for the new challenges faced by the integrated forms of education. This is a very important perspective when pondering about pedagogical models of supporting students in integrated forms of education and the potential and necessary modelling/ change of criteria of social selection; this was the perspective was assumed in the title of this study. The author of the study makes an attempt at tracing changes which have taken place, in a more or less direct manner, and which still occur under the impact of the idea of joint education and which are significant for the standing and social allocation of people with disabilities. Tracing such changes will, hopefully, cast some new light also on

these areas of integrated education that are still accused of their adaptive nature and criticised for outcomes which seem to be more postulated than actual, as well as will allow for identification of factors justifying such opinions.

What Changes Has Integrated Education Brought About? Assumed and Accomplished Effects of Integrated Education

People with disabilities have always been a part of school community, but it is only the educational integration, initiated officially in 1989 by establishment of the first integrated kindergarten in Warsaw (Łysek 2002, Popławska, Sierpińska, 2001) that has validated their presence in mainstream education and has brought hitherto unknown changes in the history of supporting development and education of people with disabilities.

Educational integration has changed the social situation of persons with disabilities, triggering a sequence of new factors delimiting its' dimensions. Getting to know their mutual relations and determinants seems significant for ascertaining the current standing of people with disabilities and broader social contexts in the area where causes of making inaccurate and, in consequence, fake activities for the sake of their social integration are located.

Nowadays, the system of integrated forms of education encompasses 174,338 students in various ages and with various types of disabilities (status as of 19.09.2015).

- In kindergartens, out of the total number of 12,363,000 children, there were 123,630 of children with disabilities (1%); 191 special kindergarten units were attended by 3,200 children with disabilities.
- In primary schools, there were 63,000 pupils with special educational needs in total, including 39,500 in integrated education units (2.2% in special education divisions, 37.1% in inte-

grated education divisions and 60.7% in mainstream schools) and 23,600 in special schools.

- In middle schools, there were 47,200 pupils with special educational needs in total, including 22,100 in integrated schools (3.1% in special education divisions, 31.8% in integrated education divisions and 65.2% in mainstream schools) and 25,100 in special schools (53.2% of all pupils with special educational needs).
- In upper secondary schools: there were 26,500 pupils with special educational needs in total, including 8,900 in integrated schools (2.0% in special education divisions, 20.7% in integrated educational divisions and 77.4% in mainstream schools), including 39.6% in general high schools and 35.0% in basic vocational schools and 26,500 in special education vocational schools 12,900 (48.9%) and in vocational training schools 11,000 (41.7%);
- In secondary technical schools: there were 3,000 pupils with special educational needs in total, including 2,141 in integrated schools (0.8% in special education divisions, 8.4% in integrated education divisions and 90.8% in mainstream schools) and 808 in special education secondary technical schools.
- In post-secondary schools: there were 475 pupils with special educational needs in total, including 80 in integrated schools (10.5% in special education divisions, 25.0% in integrated education divisions and 64.5% in mainstream schools) and 339 pupils in special schools (source: Central Statistical Office, status as of 19.09.2015).

According to the data above, apart from vocational education, the number of pupils with various types of disabilities in the segregated system of education is comparable to the number of pupils educated in integrated forms of education with respect to other stages of education. The open education system is therefore a common form of educating pupils with special educational needs.

The above-quoted numbers confirm changes that are the merit of integrated forms of education.

1. From hidden integration, through optional integrated education between 1991 and 1993, up to the right to joint education in 1999.
2. From ignoring educational needs of pupils with disabilities in hidden integration to the obligation of satisfying them.
3. From early diagnosis centres and support for the development of children with intellectual disabilities to the Early Development Support programme for all children diagnosed with disabilities or threatened with disabilities.
4. From administrative decisions on the educational path based on the type and degree of disability to the possibility of choosing an educational milieu by a pupil or his/ her legal guardians (least limiting/ most stimulating).
5. From discriminating terms (handicapped pupil) to non-discriminating ones (pupil with special educational needs).

In effect, there was a justified expectation that the integrated education system would make the chances of pupils with disabilities for participation in the life of the school community realistic: that it would allow for their integration with the school community, but also prepare them for participation in important areas of social life after the completion of education. Changes in the system of education bore fruit in further transformations. Only some of them are going to be signalled in this article, as the list would be very extensive and incomplete.

- Nowadays, over a half of children with disabilities have a real possibility that is legally guaranteed to be educated in the family and to be brought up in the local community.
- A pupil or a pupil's parents decide about the course of education and its' location.
- A disabled pupil has the possibility of participating, during every stage of development, in an environment of fully-able peers and becoming acquainted with principles determining allocation and social prestige in a social environment.
- Such pupil may accept and perform a socially valuable role – the role of a pupil and peer in mainstream education (greatly

important in school socialisation), which shapes personal and social identity and helps acquire competence for participation in social life.

- A disabled person has an opportunity to attain education on a level comparable to peers without disabilities.
- This offers a possibility of triggering a process of emancipation from own disability.

These changes are undoubtedly reassuring and the idea of educational integration translates to real changes in the social situation of people with disabilities during school education.

For the mainstream forms of education, this entails the task of keeping pupils with special educational needs as long as possible in integrated forms of education. Results of studies and observations show that mainstream and integrated schools deal pretty well with levelling the educational opportunities of pupils: keeping them in the role of pupils - learners. Great support and assistance in this respect is offered by the basic Act of the Ministry of National Education of 7 September 1991 on the System of Education (Journal of Laws [Dz. U.] of 2004, No. 256, item 2572 as amended) and subsequent regulations of the Minister of National Education on the conditions of organising education, upbringing and care for children and youth with disabilities, socially inadequate and threatened with social inadequacy. The above-mentioned regulations also include international documents ratified by Poland, important with respect to levelling educational opportunities for people with disabilities, e.g. the standards of Education for All (2000), the Salamanca Statement (1994) and guidelines for activities in the area of special educational needs adopted by the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality (UNESCO, 1994) and the Charter of Rights for People with Disabilities (2012). Not all of the adopted solutions turn out to be beneficial for pupils with special needs, but this is a problem of a slightly different nature.

Integrated education facilities deal much worse with supporting pupils with disabilities in the role of peers. The majority of studies devoted to this problem shows a low level or absence of any inte-

gration of pupils with disabilities with the environment of peers, primarily in informal relations, in particular on the level of primary and middle school education. Isolation, feeling of exclusion, marginalisation are the most frequently signalled experiences of pupils with disabilities in relations with their peers (Lipińska-Lokś 2011, Barłóg 2008, Dryżałowska, 2015).

Integrated education as a method and, simultaneously, a goal does not fulfil its' tasks in this respect and is not conducive to social integration of fully-able and disabled participants of joint education, in spite of assumptions and psychological justifications.

What Has Remained Unchanged? Feigned Activities and Their Ostensible Effects

It seems that the process of popularising joint education and its' practical implementation has not only not revoked the traditional division into fully-able and disabled pupils (even though they are now called pupils with special needs), but has even managed to solidify them. Calling pupils with disabilities pupils with special needs once again focused attention on specific problems and specialist assistance as the basic conditions enabling their education in mainstream schools.

"The focus on specific needs may be treated," according to Szumski (2010, p. 16) "as the basic cause of deficiencies of the integrated education." Persistent recognition of special needs as the most important aspect has limited joint education to institutional integration and has eventually determined the weakness of integrated education in counteracting exclusion and marginalisation of pupils with disabilities in the process of school education. Finally, it also determined the mock nature of activities undertaken in this respect. Support and levelling of educational opportunities of pupils with disabilities without sufficient care for transforming the stances of the school community (teachers, fully-able peers and their parents) from negative ones to acceptance for their "distinctness"

and functional differences has also contributed to the migration of pupils with disabilities from integrated forms of education to special education.

The thematic report entitled "Realizacja ścieżek edukacyjnych" ("Pursuing Educational Paths") (2014) does not instil the readers with optimism. 32% of pupils with special educational needs changed the form of education from a mainstream school (40%) or integrated school (60%) to a special school at least once. Most frequently, decisions of this type result from intensification of school failures in both roles (pupil and peer) in a degree exceeding the pupil's and his/ her parent's psychical resistance, as well as absence of proper care and support, i.e. failure to observe guidelines specified in the decision on the need of special education or in consequence of absence or excess of activities levelling educational opportunities of pupils with disabilities. After supplementing such information with decisions of headmasters pertaining to the educational fate of this group of pupils, the problem becomes more complex. 4% of headmasters of mainstream schools refused to accept children with special educational needs to their facilities; among them, 20% with respect to integrated forms of education and 8% to special forms of education; analogously, 30% of headmasters of mainstream schools, 40% of integration schools and 23% of special schools recommended a change of school. Furthermore, according to the "Final Report: Survey of the Impact of Direction and Level of Education on Professional Activity of People with Disabilities", "a half of representatives of educational facilities believe that persons with disabilities should be taught in special schools and every fourth claims that persons with disabilities are not fit for standard schools at all, because they are not able to function in them. On average, every fourth surveyed representative from the environment of educational institutions is convinced that people with disabilities are only exposed to stress at school. A similar percentage of representatives consistently believe that in the educational process, they should be treated preferentially" ("Final Report" - "Raport końcowy"), 2014, p. 12/13).

Pupils that are most willingly accepted to integrated forms of education (according to headmasters' declarations) are pupils with light intellectual disability (63%), hearing impaired (42%), visually impaired (40%), with hearing organ damages (38%), autistic pupils and pupils suffering from Asperger's Syndrome (30%). Special schools being the best educational environment for pupils with intellectual disability in a moderate and significant degree were indicated by 67% of surveyed headmasters; for hearing impaired pupils - 56% and for blind pupils - 57%. This means that segregation is still present in the integrated system of teaching children and youth with disabilities. The type and the degree of disability still conditions the consent for education jointly with fully-able pupils. According to such data, mainstream schools and integration schools are open to the teaching of these pupils with disabilities whose differences in school functioning are within the standard range (the individual diversity of pupils); schools refuse to accept pupils that require activities that go beyond the standard, are inconsistent with or exceed the habits and competences of teachers.

Dispersed and fragmentary data referring to the efficiency of integrated forms of education collected in studies focused on diagnosis of various areas of life of people with disabilities are insufficient arguments for venturing a valid statement that educational integration in Poland has failed; however, they provide a sufficient basis for pondering on arguments justifying such evaluation.

A pupil (or his/her parents) has a right to choose a school and the school has a right to refuse to accept the pupil due to the lack of possibility of satisfying his/ her special educational needs. In effect, such pupils pursue education inconsistently with their own or their parent's expectations. It is difficult to assess the degree in which such experiences and decisions are significant in the biography of such pupils.

A similar difficulty refers to the recognition of strategies undertaken by some teachers and school headmasters, which are used to discourage these pupils, whose parents decided that they should continue education in integrated forms of education, being con-

vinced that “inclusive integration (i.e. integration that assumes that every child with disabilities is a fully-able member of the school) is the only key to the society, getting to know people and establishing friendships.” In other cases, they resulted from a deep conviction that a special school “is the gravest exclusion, a ghetto” and that it would “waste a child” (Szwed, 2012, p. 76).

The data presented above, pertaining to the migration of pupils with disabilities from integrated education facilities to special schools, confirm the existence of such practices. Negative experiences resulting from them, combined with resistance and sensitivity of parents and their children, sooner or later result in the “(in)adequate” pupils being eventually cured of integration. This constitutes clear evidence for the ostensible nature of activities undertaken in this respect. In the integrated system of education, events of this type should not take place at all and, all the more, they should have no social permission or acceptance. Meanwhile, as shown by the numbers quoted above, they are not an exception.

A parent has a right to choose a school for their child and the school is liable for the effects of the child’s education, adjusting the educational offer to his/ her needs; in reality, the situation is reverse. A pupil has to meet the educational standards, internalise the core curriculum and keep up with fully-able peers. This also entails the obligation of the state to create better schools, which would be prepared for work with a strongly diverse population of fully-able pupils and pupils with disabilities, open to individual differences with properly trained teachers at every stage of education. All teachers should possess competence that allows them to undertake activities that are adequate for special needs of pupils with disabilities and to satisfy them efficiently.

Omissions, in particular with respect to the last issue, are quite serious. It is enough to mention that a great part of future teachers, in the course of the entire period of higher studies, does not have the possibility of becoming acquainted with even basic problems of development, functioning and limitations of children and youth with various types and degrees of disability who have been, at least

formally, participants of mainstream education “on equal rights” for almost forty years. Deficiencies in these respect will continue to trigger the practice of discouraging the “inadequate” ones and reproducing non-standard factors of internal school selection (e.g. with respect to the type or the degree of disability – vide the example of headmasters provided above).

The freedom of choosing a school by parents or pupils also creates conditions for the activation of the auto-selection factor. The choice of special education is not always justified by the child’s welfare. Sometimes, it results from the convenience of parents or a conviction that there (in a mainstream or integrated education school) the child is going to learn, as far as possible, independence, self-determination, self-service and relatively independent life.

Over a half of pupils with disabilities attend special schools. It is also worth noting that the percentage of pupils choosing this path of education grows on subsequent stages of education. Therefore, some of them have never “fought for true inclusion in the society and best education” (Szwed, 2012, p. 70) and some have given up fighting. Nevertheless, it is difficult to state unequivocally that solely the mainstream school bear liability for this fact. The cause is the absence of studies in this respect. Therefore, there is no reliable diagnosis of the causes of such situation.

Resignation from further education together with fully-able pupils is, however, an additional argument for the superficial integration activities and mock integration of the school community with disabled participants of the process of education. It is coupled with complete resignation from further education. Most often, the cause of such decision is lack of faith in the sense of further education to improve own situation, loss of zeal for further education, fear of school, health condition, or, less frequently, completion of the planned path of education and commencement of employment.

This is a failure of both pupils and institutions. The system has failed due to the fact that the form of education which, by assumption, was meant to level the opportunities for social integration, has solidified social integration as an unconditional effect of joint educa-

tion. The opportunity does not entail accomplishment of the goal. Therefore, the question arises whether the system has met these liabilities that allow for the use of integrated education for social integration of people with disabilities or whether it has clearly defined the concept of social integration, its' understanding and diverse dimensions of social activities and engagement confirming the validity of such education. In the author's opinion, this is not the case. As justly noted by A. Krause (2017, p. 11), "nowadays, one cannot speak about special pedagogy with integration regularities universal for all types of disabilities. They always have to be examined with respect to the special nature of a given disability." Thence, it is necessary to set up partial goals every time, leading to the attainment of the level of social integration possible for a given individual. The problem was already signalled in 2004 in an article entitled "Integracja edukacyjna a integracja społeczna" ("Educational Integration Vs. Social Integration") [in:] (ed.) G. Dryżałowska, H. Żuraw: Integracja społeczna osób niepełnosprawnych (Social Integration of People With Disabilities).

What Should Be Changed? Social Position of People with Disabilities in the Modern World

Experiences to-date show a significant discrepancy between the outcomes assumed in the concept of integrated education and the outcomes accomplished in pedagogical practice. Results of numerous studies in this area show incorrect social relations between fully-able pupils and pupils with disabilities. Isolation, rejection, marginalisation, discrimination, lack of feeling of affiliation to a class group are the main experiences of pupils with disabilities in the course of school education (Lipińska-Lokś 2011, Barłóg 2008, Dryżałowska 2015). It seems that they refute the idea of joint education and dangerously threaten its' continuation, especially nowadays when enthusiasm for the idea of integrated education is gradually decreasing and the requirements related to fitness, beauty,

functionality are growing and result in the fact that disability is and will continue to be perceived as a negative phenomenon with a series of connotations triggered by it and attributed to people suffering from such disability and when the fear of people who are different is constantly on the rise.

“Integration is a beautiful idea indeed, but it should remain in the sphere of theory. The situation was quite good in kindergarten. (...) In the primary school, the idea of inclusion in the society has become completely disenchanted. I saw the absolute fiction of integration. Even in a good school, in a good class, children are not friends with one another. I understood that there is simply no integration, because people have a tendency to segregation,” says the mother of a pupil with intellectual disability (Szwed, 2012, p. 77-80).

Another one notices the problem from a different perspective: “Every parent is afraid of the loneliness of their child, but you have to remember that rejection does not only affect people with disabilities, but everybody who is somehow different. ... We have to be aware that our child is different and that this is the mainstream school” (op. cit. p. 81).

Based on the data and statements presented above, it is quite difficult to show the degree in which popularisation of forms of integrated education is a significant factor of changes in the social situation of people with disabilities in the modern world, also after the completion of education in adult life. This question remains open. We are not aware of the significance of a covert school programme for social integration of people with disabilities, the impact on school experiences and the triggered adjustment mechanisms with respect to own disability in the physical, mental and social sphere, counteracting rejection or social isolation.

Dispersed data and various methodologies applied in collecting such data, as well as references to specific years and groups of people with disabilities are a serious obstacle in formulating clearly-cut opinions.

The structure of education of persons with disabilities and the changes that it has undergone is known. Since 1998, the level of

education of people with disabilities has been systematically growing. The percentage of people with lowest education has significantly changed. In 1988, over two-thirds of people with disabilities had primary education at most; nowadays, this index is almost two times higher. However, the percentage of people with disabilities with higher education is growing much slower than the same index in the group of fully-able people; on the other hand, the difference in education of fully-able people and people with disabilities on the secondary level is slowly eliminated. The structure of education of people with disabilities aged 26 and older in relation to the population in general is as follows:

- Higher education: **6%** (16%)
- Post-secondary and secondary vocational education: **19%** (23%)
- General secondary education: **8%** (10%)
- Basic vocational education: **30%** (26%)
- Middle school, primary, incomplete primary and no education: **38%** (24%)

x% people with disabilities (x%) Poles in general.

Source: Survey financed from the State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled People (based on the data of the Central Statistical Office - Labour Force Survey in Poland, 2nd quarter of 2009).

Simultaneously, there is no data about the number of people who commence education in a given year, the number of graduates at individual stages of education and the number of people who passed the examination confirming professional qualifications; this does not allow for assessment of the efficiency of forms of education and stages of education for social integration of people with disabilities. The available fragmentary data does not offer a full picture of the actual situation. For example, in the 2013/2014 school year, 448 persons with special educational needs completed mainstream technical schools and special schools (along with supplementary schools); 302 people with special educational needs took the matriculation exam and 153 received the matriculation certificate; in 2013/2014, there were 226 graduates of post-secondary schools;

44.7% took the examination confirming professional qualifications and only 10% passed it (Central Statistical Office). Based on such data, it is only possible to confirm efficiency of such education with respect to a change in the level of education. The nature of this change is, unquestionably, beneficial.

Education, in numerous studies tackling this issue (B. Kołaczek 2002, M. Garbat, 2007, B. Gąciarz, E. Giermanowska, 2009), is emphasised as one of the factors determining the situation of people with disabilities in various areas of social life. The strongest connection occurs between the level of education and professional activity and it shows that the higher the level of education of people with disabilities, the better their chances at the labour market.

This relation is illustrated by the employment index with respect to the level of education for people with disabilities and the population in total (data for people aged 15 and older).

- Total: **13.3%** (50.4%)
- Higher education: **27.0%** (78.4%)
- Secondary vocational education: **16.9%** (63.3%)
- General secondary education: **14.1%** (41.1%)
- Basic vocational education: **17.4%** (58.6%)
- Middle school and lower education: **6.0%** (17.2%)

 x% people with disabilities (x%) Poles in general.

Source: Survey financed from the State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled People (based on the data of the Central Statistical Office - Labour Force Survey in Poland, 2nd quarter of 2009).

Nevertheless, detailed analyses showing the relation between education and professional and economic activity are no longer so unequivocal, even though it follows from the data above that people with disabilities with higher education are the most numerous group of professionally active people. Nevertheless, a question appears about the type and the degree of diagnosed disability, the time of its' appearance, the place of employment and the position held along with its' adequacy for the attained qualifications of this

group of people with disabilities. Without taking such data into account, it is impossible to claim that the level of education is a determining factor for their employment. It may be assumed with greater probability that this is a group with minor functional restrictions, better health condition and higher social competence. The basis for such interpretation is the fact that 70.3% of people with disabilities with higher education are not present on the labour market, even though they completed a specific study major. They have a profession and a diploma confirming it, but they did not commence work. The problem is whether this is their own decision or not.

Assessments of integrated education outcomes are not always honest. Sometimes, it is hard to provide an answer to the following questions: should all persons with disabilities be integrated/ have to be integrated on the same level? Is social integration, in its' general understanding, available to everybody? It is commonly known that this is not the truth, but it is hard to concede to it, even though everybody experiences rejection and reluctance in various social milieus in spite of being fully-able. The criteria of social selection, along with competence for accepting and performing various roles and tasks incorporated in them are decisive. In reference to people with disabilities, ignoring this fact is a hypocrisy that damages the idea of integration. Disability is still, in spite of slowly occurring changes in the social perception of people affected by it, the basic criterion for social selection and allocation of people with disabilities, in particular in close interpersonal relations, even though attempts are made at hiding this inconvenient fact by political correctness and optimistic presentation of indices about professional activity, level of unemployment and education of people with disabilities.

Since 2007, there has been a gradual increase in the professional activity index of people with disabilities up to 27.5% in 2012; its' value remained on a stable level oscillating around 27% between 2013 and 2014. In spite of its' drop down to 25.9% in 2015, in 2016 it rose and reached the value of 26.8%. Nevertheless, for people with

disabilities aged 16 and older the situation at the labour market in 2016 was as follows: professional activity index reached 16.3%, employment index was at 14.6% and the level of unemployment at 10.9%. Thus, only 14.6% of people with disabilities found employment according to such data. This is a worrying phenomenon, refuting the claim about the equality of people with disabilities in this area of life that is of major importance for every person and that determines independence and confirms the embracing of adult life obligations. The other indices presented above confirm this statement even when one refers to the more optimistic data of the Central Statistical Office from the third quarter of 2011.

According to them, out of 3.4 million people with a legally diagnosed disability, 2.1 million were in a working age, but only 465,000 were actually working, i.e. 27.3%, whereas in the EU, the level of employment of people with disabilities amounted to approx. 50%. Even though the above-mentioned report formulates a number of conclusions resulting from a thorough statistical analysis of collected information, yet the variables included in it do not fully present the actual impact/ the significance of the level of education on the efficiency of integrated education with respect to the inclusion of this group of people in socially valuable areas of social life after the completion of education, in adult life. In contrast, they emphasise the flaws of solutions activating employment of people with disabilities.

The report features an interesting conclusion: "the study has shown that people pursuing the path of mainstream education stand greater chance for performing work in the profession that they have acquired than persons learning primarily in special schools. The latter group more often chooses work at the protected labour market" (p. 18). Contesting the justness of this conclusion would require examination of the social structure of people who participate in integrated and special forms of education; nevertheless, this statement, without taking into account the above-mentioned variables and the so-called SES, is not only on a high level of generality, but it also fails to picture the factors that deter-

mine it. G. Szumski (2014) draws attention to it when referring to the results of Polish researchers and foreign scientists (Parys, Olszewski, 2003, Dyson, 2001, Warnock, 2005, Eckhart et al. 2011, Mykleburst, Batevik, 2009) and indicates verified mechanisms of social selection ensuring better places for children brought up in families with higher socio-economic status and quite a strong relation between the SES of a family and the place of the child's education. It follows from his analyses of the problem that 40% of pupils with high and only 20% of pupils with low SES go to integrated classes, whereas almost 50% of pupils from the environment with low SES and approx. 25% with high SES attend special schools (Szumski, 2012). This tendency draws attention to the SES of the family environment of pupils with disabilities also in the aspect of educational inequalities, which may be its' consequence: it may cause them, reinforce or weaken them and, in effect, shape the pupils' situation on the labour market and determine their social allocation.

R. Dolata (2008) devoted a lot of attention to educational inequalities (defined as a correlation between the assigned status of a pupil and his/ her school accomplishments) related to the socio-economic status of the pupil's family of origin. The analysis of two studies conducted by him corroborated the statement that "on the level of education systems, we can observe a positive correlation between the level of social segregation and the intensity of educational inequalities" (p. 149). In this context, in reference to various forms of education of pupils with disabilities, a question arises about the significance of assigned status, related to the position of the child's family in the social structure, and the actual access, course and outcomes of the child's education. In consequence, this is an indirect question whether the present-day, three-path system of educating pupils with disabilities is a system of equal opportunities and what kind of significance does it have for the social allocation in adult life.

The basic function of a school is selection (cf. Parson's structural and functional theory, 1969). Therefore, the task of the school is to

diversify pupils in a manner allowing for rational allocation of human resources in a social structure.

School accomplishments are the basis of selective decisions and the school, performing a selective function, co-creates the social identity of an individual (Dolata, 2008).

The question is: what is the social identity that pupils with special educational needs attain (taught in integrated and special forms of education) and what is the identity that they enter the adult life with? Does the selected path of education equip them with competence that is necessary for designing their own biography and does it prepare them for planning their own life? There is also another, even more important question: are school accomplishments of pupils with disabilities important for their social allocation on principles equal with fully-able members of the society? Do they trigger emancipation mechanisms with respect to own disability and mitigate its' oppressiveness? Do they become, for persons with disabilities, a basis for getting "liberated" from restrictions caused by it for the sake of building oneself as a person whose personal traits determine who she/ he is and her/ his attitude to oneself and to others?

Procuring answers to these questions calls for thorough analyses and reliable evaluation of the situation of people with disabilities in the course of education, on the labour market, in family life, manners of spending leisure time, or, finally, comparative studies on identity and quality of life of persons from integrated and segregated forms of education (in both dimensions: objective and subjective) and, on their basis, assessment of integrated education as a method and efficiency of activities undertaken as part of it to accomplish the designated objective, i.e. social integration of fully-able people and people with disabilities in the course of and after completion of education, in adult life.

The problem gains significance when one takes into account the division (as a result of popularisation of integrated forms of education) of the environment of people with disabilities according to yet another criterion, valid since recently, (based on the type and the degree of disability), into the "normal" group who pursued inte-

grated forms of education and the “special” group, often with more severe degree of disability or suffering from multiple and grave disabilities. Such a division of the environment of people with disabilities changes the social situation of both groups. It creates new social problems and, in consequence, new challenges for designing assistance models counteracting social marginalisation and discrimination of people with disabilities, also in their own environment, i.e. in the community of people with disabilities.

The studies of M. Skura (2016) confirm this fact. The results of performed analyses show that the respondents (motor organ impairment) in contacts with *other* people adopt the common opinions and approaches. Therefore, they are not independent and are not ready to be open towards another person without interceding on how the environment assesses and treats them (...); encumbered with psycho-social difficulties resulting from experiencing own disability, they do not consider the possibility of accepting liability for *other* people.” They also do not consider the possibility of accepting liability for other people with disabilities, with the same and different type of disability (Skura, 2016, p. 172).

Integrated education has turned out to be more helpless with respect to the criteria of social selection and allocation of people with disabilities than it had been assumed. Discrimination against people with disabilities, in spite of great efforts of various groups and significant financial outlays in the last decades, it still a dominant experience of people with disabilities and social integration, before the popularisation of integrated education and nowadays, is completely unavailable for many people with disabilities. This also includes people who were educated in integrated or mainstream schools. Many of them are absent from or are unwillingly accepted even in partial segments of the society, also in their own reference groups, even though the true meaning of social integration is expressed in aiming for social inclusion of people with disabilities outside of the area of school.

“The ability of opening to the *otherness* of people, the desire to establish dialogue and solve dilemmas pertaining to the presence

of a different person are also an indispensable part of social self-awareness of a person" and, according to Skura (p. 172) "an important factor of their self-determination. The approval for the presence of a different person and personal engagement in the encounter is related to the experiencing of relations with people who appear next to us, in our common social space."

In the context of the statement above, the cause of the persevering discrimination and absence of common approval for co-participation of people with disabilities in various segments of social life is social self-awareness, insufficient capacity of fully-able and disabled members of society of opening to the *otherness* of people and their acceptance. This is not only the "merit" of integrated education. It is rather the result of excessive optimism accompanying the popularisation of integrated forms of education and a conviction that integrated education reduces the diversity of participants of common education, causes their "unification and limits the degrees of freedom", but also changes, in the integrated social system, the common significance of disability and people suffering from it, as well as increases the level of their "independence", the capacity to design their own biography and take responsibility for own life, prepares them for choosing diverse proposals of participation and accepting valuable social roles, affiliating in various social groups and acknowledging the significance gained in them. Until it has been straightforwardly admitted that some people with disabilities will never accomplish this and some will be capable of it only in a limited degree, accusations of ostensible activities and mock effects will continue to be formulated against integrated education.

Which Changes Are Necessary? Assistance in Personal and Social Aspects

Nevertheless, the expected changes do not depend only on what is happening at school; the social context and the multitude of factors modelling living conditions and the functioning of each person

are equally important for the attainment or a change of hitherto social identity, e.g. from a handicapped person to a person with a disability, the capacity of undertaking negotiations in social relations, disclosing own subjectivity and demanding a right to respect it. They are significant for the course of the process and the accomplished level of social integration. Adult life takes place outside of school. Maturity is not determined by capableness; therefore, disability cannot be its' negation. Accordingly, disability cannot justify a refusal to accept a person for a job position, cannot justify negation of the right to independent life, having a family, determining own life or choosing a living environment. It cannot form an obstacle in social integration and acceptance of its' potential, and diversified levels, delimited by the type and the degree of disability.

According to Speck (2005, p. 91) efficient social integration of people with disabilities calls for "stimulation of the entire society (fully-able and disabled people) in the direction of active readiness for integration." Activities in which social integration is a clear educational purpose, i.e. assistance in personal and social aspect, are necessary.

In the first case, according to Speck (2005), the aim is to educate people who live in agreement with themselves and accept themselves. This means personal and social integration at the same time, as these are mutually conditioned sides of the same pedagogical task. "The adequacy of social integration results from the experience of personal integration (...); one is socially integrated when one is in a state of inner balance. Analogously, the degree in which one feels certain and strong, the potential and the chances in the process of social participation grow."

It may be assumed that integrated education has correctly fulfilled this task at least with respect to its' disabled graduates. The second aspect consists in "purposeful formation of supportive social contacts, stances and readiness of fully-able people to integrate socially with people with disabilities" (p. 400). It is possible to perceive them as the potential for changing the criteria of social selection and "popularisation of approval for co-existence of fully-able

and disabled people” (Krause, 2010, p. 154). Here, common education has turned out to be insufficient. Neglect of assistance activities (primarily in the social aspect), in the process of popularising integrated forms of education of pupils with disabilities, is the direct cause of negative evaluation of integrated education (as a method) and accusations formulated against the accomplished, rather postulated than real, outcomes (goals) of common education of fully-able and disabled pupils for their social integration.

Thus, changes are necessary, but there is little chance that they will be implemented by schools because, as Speck (2005) claims, the sense of institutionally organised social integration will be bestowed only when it aims for social inclusion of people with disabilities outside of the school realm, e.g. via peer integration, professional integration and integration within local communities. These are the natural social inclusion processes. They result from stances, i.e. actual hierarchies of values that are socially accepted and preferred and they determine the significance that a community has in education, play and work for fully-able and disabled members of society. Thus, the integrated educational objective must have the same significance for both communities (fully-able and disabled), translating to their actual approach.

Education as support for social integration, purposeful formation of supportive social contacts, attitudes and readiness of fully-able people to socially integrate with persons with disabilities is still absent in our country, apart from media messages and social advertising campaigns. However, such campaigns have little significance for counteracting exclusion of persons with disabilities from various areas of social life and for affirming their presence in diverse areas of social space. Nevertheless, A. Ostrowska (2015, p. 286) claims that even “ostensible acceptance”, in line with F. Davis’ normalisation theory, leads to subsequent stages of normalisation of disabilities, which is conducive to their fuller social integration and the present-day social discourse based on equality, even it is a result of expected correctness, is a stage on the path to social inclusion, equal participation of people with disabilities in the

mainstream social life. In the approach of O. Speck (2005), it is a stage identical to the formation of inclusive society. The activities postulated by Speck form a part of the global citizenship education: formation of respect for others and a feeling of affiliation in a global community (UNESCO, 2014). Therefore, the global citizenship education stands a chance of renegotiating the criteria of social integration of people with disabilities.

Conclusion

In social pedagogy, the concept of global citizenship education is commonly applied, yet in special pedagogy, it is limited to inclusive education. This is the situation in our country, where inclusive education is perceived and implemented as an “extended” form of integrated education, enabling for the teaching of pupils with disabilities in every mainstream facility and levelling their educational chances by individual therapeutic programmes, whereas the formation of inclusive society is still absent.

An objective assessment of efficiency of integrated education with respect to social integration exclusively from one perspective, i.e. assessment of outcomes accomplished by graduates of this form of education, without the formation of social readiness for their integration is not possible. Triggering the “lift” of integrated education requires formulation of efficient mechanisms for incorporating them in the school community, due to the fact that the hitherto ones turn out to be insufficient or ineffective. This is the task to be fulfilled by the forms of integrated education, because “true” life starts at school.

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