INCLUSIVE QUALITY EDUCATION: REQUIREMENTS FOR EMERGING PROFESSIONAL ROLES

Educación inclusiva de calidad: requisitos para roles profesionales emergentes

Magdalena KOHOUT-DIAZ
University of Bordeaux. France.
magdalena.kohout-diaz@u-bordeaux.fr; https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3838-1470

ABSTRACT

This article examines the multifaceted dimensions of inclusive education, elucidating the ethical and professional challenges it presents in the context of the ongoing ideological discourses surrounding educational matters. It presents a critical definition of inclusive education and examines the manner in which this approach, endorsed by international organisations such as UNESCO, is redefining pedagogical practices and the interactions between those involved in the systems. It emphasises the necessity for all stakeholders to play an active role in educational relations as part of the essential transitions in school and education systems towards models that are more open to diversity. The inclusive approach is not merely a matter of physical integration; rather, it seeks to transform education systems in a fundamental manner, ensuring the active and equitable participation of all, irrespective of cultural or socio-economic background or disability.

In order to contextualise the discussion, the article provides a brief historical overview of the evolution of inclusive approaches in education. It also identifies and analyses the persistent misunderstandings surrounding the concept of inclusiveness, and their deleterious effects on the implementation of truly fair practices. This text then proceeds to analyse the significance of the educational managers-teachers-learners relationship and its influence on the perception of belonging, the provision of support and, more generally, the creation of an inclusive climate. The text goes on to examine the conditions and ethical implications associated with the goal of social justice and the ethic of care, addressing challenges such as techno-pedagogical or neuroscientific reductionism and the misuse of digital and new technologies.

The innovative aspect of this work is its transformative and humanist approach to education, which is centred on diversity and requires collaboration between educators, decision-makers, and multi-category communities. This approach is based on the recognition of each individual's uniqueness and the construction of active and responsible citizenship and democratic participation of as many people as possible. The principal findings indicate that inclusive practices have a beneficial effect on student engagement and well-being. This evidence demonstrates the potential of such methods to foster more equitable and effective educational environments.

Keywords: inclusive education; integration; pedagogy; social justice; diversity; professionalism; ethics.

RESUMEN

Este artículo examina las diversas dimensiones de la educación inclusiva y dilucida los retos éticos y profesionales que plantea en el contexto de los actuales discursos ideológicos en torno a la educación. Presenta una definición crítica de la educación inclusiva y examina la manera en que este enfoque, respaldado por organizaciones internacionales como la Unesco, está transformando las prácticas pedagógicas y las interacciones de los implicados en los sistemas educativos. Hacen hincapié en la necesidad de que todas las partes interesadas desempeñen un papel activo en las relaciones educativas como parte de la transición de los sistemas escolares y educativos hacia modelos más abiertos a la diversidad. El enfoque inclusivo no se limita a la integración física, sino que pretende transformar los sistemas educativos de manera fundamental, garantizando la participación y equitativa de todos, independientemente de su origen cultural, socioeconómico o de su discapacidad.

Para contextualizar el debate, el artículo ofrece una breve visión histórica de la evolución de los enfoques integradores en la educación. También se identifican y analizan los persistentes malentendidos que rodean al concepto de inclusividad y sus efectos deletéreos en la aplicación de prácticas verdaderamente justas. A continuación, el texto analiza la importancia de la relación entre los gestores educativos, los profesores y los alumnos, y su influencia en la percepción de pertenencia, la prestación de apoyo y, de forma más general, la creación de un clima inclusivo. A continuación, el texto examina las condiciones y las implicaciones éticas asociadas al objetivo

de justicia social y a la ética del cuidado, abordando retos como el reduccionismo tecno-pedagógico o neurocientífico y el mal uso de las tecnologías digitales y nuevas.

El aspecto innovador de este trabajo es su enfoque transformador y humanista de la educación, centrado en la diversidad y que requiere la colaboración entre educadores, responsables políticos y comunidades multi categoría. Este enfoque se basa en el reconocimiento de la singularidad de cada individuo y en la construcción de una ciudadanía activa y responsable, así como en la participación democrática del mayor número posible de personas. Las principales conclusiones indican que las prácticas inclusivas tienen un efecto beneficioso en el compromiso y el bienestar de los alumnos. Estas pruebas demuestran el potencial de tales métodos para fomentar entornos educativos más equitativos y eficaces.

Palabras clave: educación inclusiva; integración; pedagogía; justicia social; diversidad; profesionalidad; ética.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. *Framing the issue: why ethical reflection is decisive for inclusive education in emerging professionalities?*

Inclusive education has become a fundamental tenet of contemporary educational policy. It responds to the necessity of providing education for all children, without exception, irrespective of their disabilities, cultural background or socio-economic context (UNESCO, 2015). This approach extends beyond mere physical integration (or co-presence) of all pupils in conventional (non-specialised) school environments. It entails a genuine commitment to adapting pedagogical and organisational practices to ensure active participation of all in the educational process. For over two decades, the concept of inclusive education has asserted that its objective is not merely to remove obstacles to learning and discrimination against vulnerable groups, but also to foster autonomy and responsibility as part of the education of future democratic citizens who are active and open to diversity (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; UNESCO, 2017). For several decades, it has advocated the ideal and principle of the educability as a value guiding public education policies (Noonan & Reese, 1984).

However, in order to fully comprehend the substantial impact of inclusive approaches on educational relationships, it is imperative to elucidate the numerous misconceptions to which these approaches are susceptible in the present era (Kohout-Diaz, 2018) and to ascertain the precise meaning of inclusive quality of education. Inclusive education is a socioconstructivist approach to child development, social interactions and learning, as well as the evolution of educational practices. It requires a profound transformation of all practices and significant changes to educational models, methods and structures. In essence, if the concept of inclusive education is fully grasped, it calls for a radical rethink of the entire education system.

This article aims to elucidate the concept of inclusive education, addressing the misunderstandings surrounding it, the ethical requirements that guide its deployment, and the contemporary challenges it faces. It does so by situating the concept in relation to the ideological struggles with which it is associated and by emphasising the imperative of a truly equitable and participatory education system. In particular, it seeks to demonstrate that an inclusive approach necessitates a comprehensive re-evaluation of educational relationships, with a renewed emphasis on the ethical actions and interactions that define an inclusive professional style for teachers and educators.

2. INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AT THE CROSSROADS OF IDEOLOGICAL DEBATES: CAN COMMON GROUND BE FOUND?

2.1. *Inclusive education unpacked: finding clarity in complexity…*

Inclusive education can be defined as a process of addressing the specific needs of all students with the aim of facilitating their active participation in school life and the removal of barriers to learning and participation for all of them (Booth & Ainscow, 2002). This definition is precise and reflects the current understanding of the concept. In 2015, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation identified inclusive education as one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4, which emphasises the importance of accessible, quality education for all, with the aim of fostering overall social development worldwide (UNESCO, 2017). In essence, since the 1990s, the concept of inclusive education has evolved beyond the mere integration of excluded or marginalised pupils, or the deployment of teaching strategies and digital tools. It espouses an ideal of human development, namely the entitlement of all individuals to participate in a democratic society. This entails the right to education and freedom of thought and expression, which are indispensable prerequisites for future active citizenship. In this sense, it represents an education based on the reiteration of fundamental values, such as the capacity to coexist and to collaborate. This, therefore, constitutes an invitation to engage in moral and political practice, necessitating ongoing deliberation on social diversity (Biesta, 2010b). This approach suggests that teaching should be regarded as an art form, rather than as an applied, so-called bureaucratic science. The latter is supported by evidence that is presented as scientific evidence of what is supposedly effective (Harari, 2024; Biesta, 2024). The freedom of thought and expression inherent in human beings makes the relationship between teacher and student, and between teaching and learning, complex and tenuous. This highlights the crucial function of the speaking subject and their desire to learn/know in the process of educational interaction.

The inclusive approach to education, as set forth in international texts, calls into question the dominant paradigm based on so-called neuro- or techno-scientific evidence. It calls for a more humanistic and holistic understanding of educational processes. It is an ideal that has the potential to develop students' moral autonomy,

with the aim of enabling them to act as active and responsible members of society. This can be achieved by providing them with an education of ethical quality (Higgins, 2011). The approach is distinguished by its emphasis on student participation in all aspects of school life, as well as by its commitment to adapting curricula, pedagogy and the overall environment in depth to meet the individual needs and to focus on creating spaces for dialogue where students can take an active part in communication and the exchange of ideas as they are, without having to imitate some ideological standards (Norwich & Mittler, 2000; Burbules, 2006). This position, which represents a rigorous definition of inclusive education, is, upon closer examination, highly ambitious and demanding. It necessitates a redefinition of the professional roles of educators, teachers, and other supervisory and support personnel, whose mission is to facilitate the co-construction of knowledge through mutual and dialogical participation (Säfström, 2011). The objective outlined here situates inclusive education as the top of a historical development in pedagogical ideas and visions of childhood. This historical development is outlined below.

2.2. *Inclusive education: a paradox between progress and tradition?*

The concept of inclusive education represents the apogee of a sustained process of pedagogical innovation and the evolution of educational systems (Chatenoud et al., 2018). Significant alterations have been implemented in educational policies in accordance with evolving conceptualisations of child development. The segregation of what was termed "abnormal" childhood was subjected to rigorous and scientific scrutiny in numerous countries across the globe during the 1980s and 1990s (see, for instance, Kliewer & Drake, 1998). The category of children who were previously described as lazy, abnormal, or retarded was replaced by the category of children who were said to be educable but simply maladjusted to the educational system or process. This shift in categorisation was accompanied by the implementation of specific educational approaches, which were designed to address the unique needs of these children and to combat the discrimination they faced. Consequently, inclusive education is founded upon a paradoxical historical trajectory. In the early stages of the educational system's development, children who were deemed uneducable were excluded from the formal educational process. Subsequently, they were deemed to possess the capacity to receive an education in a specialised setting. Ultimately, they were considered eligible for education within the conventional educational framework (integration), which was progressively deemed discriminatory in light of the new inclusive universal approach. The paradox lies in the fact that adapting to their needs, once considered integrative, is now seen as discriminatory.

During the 2000s, the logic of integration became increasingly prominent, with the gradual dissemination of an educational approach centred on special educational needs, situations of disability and, subsequently, abilities. This approach sought to move away from the so-called fixist, naturalising and reifying visions that are typical

of discrimination (Terzi, 2005). The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines disability in terms of three key factors: incapacity, impairment and disadvantage (Wood, 1980). This final aspect emphasises the socially constructed and situational nature of disability. Concurrently, in 1978 in Great Britain, the necessity to consider special educational needs was conceptualised in a research report on discrimination against pupils with difficulties and/or disabilities in/by schools (Warnock, 1978). Approaches based on special educational needs proliferated globally and became widely accepted, with an integrative objective (the pupil is in the ordinary system and must adapt to it) and then an inclusive one (the pupil is in the so-called ordinary system, which must adapt to the needs of each pupil). In practice, the categorisation of school, educational and child populations is a fundamental aspect of the inclusive approach.

The nomenclature adopted will have a significant impact on the political, institutional and practical consequences that arise. In this way, L. S. Vygotsky's (1978) so-called "defective" approach can be seen as a paradoxical legacy from which the inclusive approach to education springs. The humanist and educational impetus of defectology, the science of defects founded and popularised from Vygotsky's work, is limited in its essence by the impossibility of moving from "defect" to "specificity" or "diversity"". Nevertheless, it is Vygotsky's perspectives on child development that provide the essential basis for a socioconstructivist approach to learning, placing respect for children's development at the core of educational concerns (Smagorinsky, 2012). The notion that learning is an active process through which students actively construct their understanding is a concept that lends support to inclusive practices, whereby every student is encouraged to participate in a meaningful manner in the learning process.

The educational relationship should not be reduced to the simple transmission of knowledge; rather, it should be viewed as a process of emancipation (Biesta, 2010a). This emancipatory process is based on the recognition of human vulnerability and irreducible freedom and diversity. Consequently, teachers have an ethical responsibility to support each student in their unique and singular journey (Fulford, 2016). In this way, inclusive practices serve as pivotal instruments for establishing educational communities where diversity is not merely tolerated, but rather esteemed, thereby facilitating the cultivation of democratic citizens (Knight Abowitz, 2000).

3. THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: BRIDGING DIVERSITY AND LEARNING

3.1. *Teacher-student relationships as the core of inclusion: differentiation, adaptation, and cooperation*

At the core of the ecology of human development, learning is significantly shaped by social interactions and the environmental context in which learners develop (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). It is not sufficient for teachers to merely facilitate

learning; they must also provide a caring relational framework that respects and supports the diversity of students' experiences, thereby fostering a sense of belonging for all. The role of social interaction posits that children's cognitive development is inextricably linked to their interactions with adults (Vygotsky, 1978). In their role as reference figures, teachers bear a particular responsibility to foster a culture of equity and social justice (Knight Abowitz, 2000). What methods can be employed to achieve this, and which practices should be implemented, and what professional attitudes should be adopted?

Carol Ann Tomlinson is a leading figure in the field of differentiated teaching, which involves adapting teaching methods to the individual needs of pupils. By providing adaptable, personalised instructions and programmes, teachers can more effectively address the diverse needs of students in an inclusive classroom, particularly those with special educational needs:

> Teachers in differentiated classes use time flexibly, call upon a range of instructional strategies, and become partners with their students so that both what is learned, and the learning environment are shaped to support the learner and learning. They do not force-fit learners into a standard mold; these teachers are students of their students. They are diagnosticians, prescribing the best possible instruction based on both their content knowledge and their emerging understanding of students' progress in mastering critical content. These teachers are also artists who use the tools of their craft to address students' needs. They do not aspire to standardized, mass-produced lessons because they recognize that students are individuals and require a personal fit. Their goal is student learning and satisfaction in learning, not curriculum coverage. (Tomlinson, 2014, p. 4).

This passage serves to illustrate the merits of differentiated teaching as a holistic approach that is centred on the individual. The text places great emphasis on the value of flexible, personalised teaching, whereby the teacher assumes the role of a facilitator, attuned to the evolving needs of each learner. In contrast to standardised assessment methods and practices, the teacher prioritises the art of teaching, recognising the uniqueness and the individual needs, rhythms and abilities. Adapting to different learning rhythms and styles, rather than adhering to a fixed programme, is essential. The approach must be continuously adjusted in accordance with each student's progress, with the aim of co-constructing learning. In accordance with the socioconstructivist model of learning, educators must continually observe, analyse and understand their students' needs and progress in order to adjust their teaching strategies. This approach requires that educators adopt a creative approach to ensure that students find meaning and pleasure in their educational journey.

To exemplify this assertion, we will present a concise case study (Le Bec, 2024). This is a secondary school in France where Ms X, a dedicated and innovative French teacher, has successfully implemented differentiated teaching in her class. At the beginning of each academic year, she initiates a comprehensive assessment process with the objective of acquiring further insight into the interests and learning styles of her students. Based on this information, she modifies her teaching methods

in order to align them with the diverse needs of the students in her class. Ms X's approach to differentiated teaching involves the creation of a range of activities, each exhibiting a varying level of complexity. To illustrate, during a research project on literary classics, some students work on basic topics using predefined sources, while others tackle more complex issues and are encouraged to identify additional resources independently. This ensures that each student is adequately stimulated and engaged with the material at a pace that is appropriate for them and prevents them from being placed in situations that impede and discourage them. To assist students experiencing difficulties with reading, Ms X employs audio versions of texts and text-to-speech applications for writing tasks. Moreover, she incorporates peer tutoring, pairing advanced students with those who require additional assistance, thereby fostering a collaborative learning environment in which students can learn from one another.

Moreover, Ms X utilises digital technology to personalise learning experiences. The use of tablets and educational applications allows students to work at their own pace, while classroom management tools facilitate the monitoring of progress and the identification of areas requiring individual support.

The effectiveness of Ms X's approach has been irrefutably demonstrated for pupils, parents and teaching colleagues. Pupils in her class exhibit elevated levels of engagement, autonomy, and academic achievement. The inclusive environment that she has fostered has been demonstrated to improve learning outcomes, while also ensuring that all students feel valued and supported. This example demonstrates the significance of flexible and personalised teaching methods, as well as the pivotal role of the teacher as a facilitator, who is attentive to the evolving needs of each learner. By adopting a socio-constructivist approach to learning, Ms X maintains a constant observation and analysis of her strategies, adapting them where necessary to ensure that all pupils find meaning and enjoyment in their educational journey.

3.2. *Leveraging diversity: navigating the complexities of reasonable accommodations*

It is imperative that other practices, such as reasonable accommodation, are implemented in order to guarantee that students with special needs are able to engage in school activities on an equal footing with their peers (Sailor, 2017). Such accommodations include the adaptation of teaching resources, the provision of technological aids and the adjustment of assessments, with a view to ensuring respect for the principle of equity in education. Furthermore, reforming teacher training to ensure that teachers are adequately prepared to respond to diverse needs through practical experience in inclusive environments and a comprehensive understanding of differentiated teaching is essential. Implementing a multi-level support system (MTSS) enables the adaptation of teaching to align with different needs and facilitates targeted interventions. Peer learning is also of great importance in the promotion of academic and social development. Furthermore, the allocation of support to

groups rather than individuals has the additional benefit of reducing stigmatisation. Ultimately, pedagogical practices that are supported by collaboration between general and special education teachers have the potential to significantly enhance learning outcomes. This is achieved by fostering collective pedagogical development and facilitating ongoing and mutual co-training. Similarly, cooperative learning is another approach that encourages students to work together, thereby reinforcing both social and academic skills of students. This approach fosters positive inter-dependence, whereby the success of each member is linked to that of the group, thereby encouraging the active and complementary involvement of all in the service of the common project. By promoting interaction, cooperative learning enhances critical thinking and teamwork, thus making it a powerful strategy for creating an engaging and supportive classroom environment. As the authors emphasise with reference to socioconstructivist approaches, "*cooperation does not occur by accident; it must be intentionally designed and managed*" (Johnson & Johnson, 1999, p. 78). In such an educational climate, diversity of cultural and learning backgrounds is not only tolerated but even valued. This is evidenced by the view that such diversity represents a resource to enrich everyone's learning (Banks, 2009). This contrasts with the view that diversity is a flaw or a problem. An inclusive approach necessitates a complete reversal of perspective, whereby the teacher assumes an inclusive teaching style that is receptive to diversity.

4. ETHICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE INCLUSIVE PROCESS: SHAPING PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

4.1. *Social justice and the ethics of care: foundations for inclusive education*

The principle of equity of access to education (accessibility) represents a fundamental aspect of the inclusive process, reflecting a tenet of distributive justice. This principle stipulates that social inequalities can only be justified if they confer benefits upon the most disadvantaged. As previously discussed, this perspective gives rise to epistemological tensions and ethical dilemmas. In particular, it prompts the question of whether the principle of inclusivity entails the allocation of additional resources to those who are marginalised and stigmatised, on the basis of attributing deficiencies or needs to them (compensation), or whether it is founded on the principle of equality (the same for all). If the latter perspective of equal opportunities in a school for all is adopted, it is only by envisaging adapted, differentiated and personalised help for all that the inclusive principle can be satisfied. The issue is not one of providing additional resources to those who are perceived to have fewer resources, but rather of allocating resources to meet the needs of all individuals, once their specific needs have been identified. It is imperative that the commitment to guaranteeing "equal opportunities" for all be informed by an understanding of the specific contexts of educational demand. Education is an act of social justice, the

objective of which is to surmount the structural impediments that preclude equal access to education (Rawls, 1971). Such a perspective must extend beyond the mere redistribution of resources to encompass the recognition of cultural identities and differences (Fraser, 2003). The objective is to facilitate the active participation of all students in the educational community, thereby fostering an environment that emulates the engagement of citizens in democratic processes.

The overarching significance of interpersonal dynamics and the provision of tailored attention to the requirements of each individual establishes a distinctive professional approach that extends beyond the mere transfer of knowledge. One might posit that it is this empathic commitment (Gilligan, 1982) that plays a foundational role, delineating a genuine ethic of care. Tronto (1993) emphasises that care is not solely confined to individual attention, but rather encompasses the collective responsibility of fostering an environment where all individuals feel supported and valued. The ethic of care thus necessitates a comprehensive re-evaluation of educational practices, wherein the individual's role as a speaking subject is recognised as a pivotal aspect of an inclusive educational approach. Theories of care posit an empirical approach, wherein qualitative research and concrete professional experience converge in efficacious and discerning action on a case-by-case basis. These approaches provide solutions by restoring the dignity of innovation and invention outside the standard norms established a priori, including those of positive discrimination and over-compensation for supposed deficiencies, in accordance with their primary vocation. Such perspectives highlight the primacy of local, clinical (concrete) experience and the role of casuistry. This re-centring establishes a position that is both subjectively and ethically justifiable, even if it is ambitious. It is a position that acknowledges the fundamental unknowability of the real, which cannot be fully absorbed, and which does not pre-exist our elaboration.

4.2. *Recognising singularities: understanding the "other" in an inclusive framework*

The objective is to draw attention to the dearth of scientific and political consideration accorded to these imperceptible and disregarded practices within the educational systems. These are activities that are often undervalued and even de-emphasised by prevailing norms and dominant practices. The care perspective posits that patience, adaptability, and responsiveness are fundamental principles of educational action. Similarly, it advocates for a transformation of the school environment to establish spaces where needs can be articulated, acknowledged, and considered with due regard for the vulnerability inherent to each individual. It serves to remind us of our shared condition.

> Vulnerability and dependence are not exclusive to a particular group or demographic; rather, they are inherent to the human condition. While those who are economically privileged may be able to mitigate the impact of these factors or even deny their existence, vulnerability and dependence are intrinsic to the human experience. (Molinier, Laugier & Paperman, 2009, p. 93)

The focus on interdependence and the care/solicitude relationship as the basis for defining needs is a key feature of the inclusive ethics and practices. The approach is based on a new anthropology of vulnerability, which is founded on the ethical primacy of the relationship with the alterity of the other. This approach challenges the tendency towards unity, which is a source of violence (Levinas, 2003).

> The solution, or rather the response, that Levinas proposes to the problematic tension between identity and alterity, will not reside in an articulation of the differences susceptible to prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping, inequity or other forms of violence, but in indicating that there is something different to the other (and that is not reducible to the qualities of the other) and that the subject (or self) cannot be indifferent to this alterity of the other. The most profound alterity of the other is situated not in his/her perceptible difference, but in the non-in-difference that the self discovers regarding the other, who-ever that other may be. This alterity as the non-in-difference that underlies all difference restores to humans the full sense of their humanity (Wolff, 2011, p. 114)

It is a fundamental truth that we all depend on others. This *"attention to others, and to the way in which they are caught up with us in connections"* can be understood as *"one of the current paths towards an ethics of the ordinary, concrete and non-normative"* (Molinier, Laugier & Paperman, 2009, p. 172, p.186). This approach prevents exclusion in concrete terms and constitutes a fundamental characteristic of the inclusive style.

It is of the utmost importance that these "alterities of others", these distinctive singularities, are not denied (Honneth, 1995). This is a fundamental ethical dimension of the inclusive process, which is particularly relevant in educational settings. Each pupil must be recognised in their singularity, and cultural, social and personal particularities must be acknowledged as a constitutive and enriching part of the institutional framework (Taylor, 1994). Such an education values each learner not only for their academic abilities, but also for their unique and novel qualities. This helps to build an educational community based on diversity and openness to the immeasurable otherness of others.

To illustrate the practical applications of these ethical principles, one might consider the example of a secondary school that has successfully implemented an inclusive education model (Le Bec, 2024). The school has implemented differentiated instruction strategies to address the specific requirements of each student, irrespective of their background or abilities. Educators utilise a plethora of pedagogical techniques and technological resources to construct an adaptive learning environment. Regular workshops and training sessions are conducted with the objective of equipping educators with the requisite skills to apply these principles in their daily teaching practices. Furthermore, the school cultivates a collaborative culture, wherein teachers, parents, and students collectively strive to guarantee that each child receives the requisite support. This practical application of ethical principles in an inclusive setting exemplifies the effective translation of theory into practice, thereby promoting a more equitable and supportive educational environment.

5. TACKLING TODAY'S CHALLENGES IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

5.1. *Bridging policy and practice: the challenge of implementation*

It is evident that public policy plays a pivotal role in the advancement of inclusive education. In the early 2000s, pioneering scholars such as Booth and Ainscow (2002) underscored the significance of a supranational and national legislative framework to facilitate transitions at all levels of educational systems in each specific context.

> Inclusion is said to be 'the keystone'19 of Government education policy. However, many teachers argue that they have to work hard to minimise the excluding pressures from policies, which in encouraging competition between schools can lead to a narrow view of the achievement of students. Many barriers to learning and participation reside within contexts over which schools have little control. The most powerful barriers to achievement remain those associated with poverty and the stresses it produces. Nevertheless, schools can and do change. They can radically affect the educational experiences of students and staff by developing cultures in which everyone is respected and where policies and practices support all students to be engaged in learning, to participate with others and to achieve highly (Booth & Ainscow, 2002, p. 11).

Nevertheless, these inclusive transformations encounter a technocratic and depoliticised vision that, on occasion, impedes restructuring:

> Teacher education policy discourses position teachers as agents of social control whose work is to preserve the status quo and to legitimize the current structures of domination. This positioning is accomplished through the technocratization of teacher knowledge and depoliticization of diversity and equity in teacher preparation. The significance of this analysis lies in establishing connections between the technocratization of teaching pursued by the recent wave of teacher education policy discourses and the maintenance of inequality that teacher education redesign is expected to support (Aydarova, 2021, p. 670).

One of the principal contemporary challenges therefore resides in the manner in which policies are implemented within a context of mounting fascination with neuroscience in support of technicist approaches. The matter at hand is not merely a technical and scientific issue; rather, it is of a profoundly political, societal, and civic character. The issue pertains to the misapplication of scientific and technological principles. It is therefore essential to consider not only the implementation of pedagogical strategies and techniques, but also the necessity of rethinking educational management and promoting inclusive leadership that values diversity and is open to the multiplicity of educational experiences. This is a matter that warrants consideration at the level of educational policy.

The growth in the number of activities related to the advancement of inclusive educational practices at the international, national, and local levels is a noteworthy phenomenon. Nevertheless, there are instances where the implementation of these processes is described as challenging in practice (see, for instance, Corbion, 2020,

in the context of France). The tenuous equilibrium between, on the one hand, the enduring high normativity of the educational process (even when it is described as "inclusive") and, on the other, the constantly evolving circumstances associated with specific and occasionally disparate educational requirements is particularly challenging for teachers. It is noteworthy that, despite over five decades of research and pedagogical experimentation that have yielded tangible outcomes in addressing learning difficulties among students, work on the professional competencies required to facilitate accessible learning remains a significant challenge.

It is likely that the most significant innovation can be identified through an epistemological approach that places a greater emphasis on the complexities of concrete situations. This stands in contrast to the apparent efficacy of rhetorical trends and the financial performance of continuously increasing budgetary reductions, which are often presented as social progress. An inclusive approach that is genuinely effective must consider the complex and unique situations of students. This necessitates the integration of students' personal histories, the institutions in which they reside, and the professional cultures that shape the practices of the various stakeholders in the education sector (Ravet, 2011). It can be postulated that the commencement of this process with local educational managers, teachers and educators is of paramount importance.

5.2. *Rediscovering humanism in inclusive leadership: navigating complex ethical terrain*

The role of the educational leader is at the heart of the creation of an inclusive educational culture. The literature on inclusive leadership indicates that management practices that are both attentive to diversity and open to dialogue are of significant importance. Inclusive leadership must not only manage teachers' skills, but also foster school environments where diversity is respected, and power relations are subjected to constant scrutiny and analysis (Riehl, 2000). In the context of the rise of social networks and the accompanying phenomenon of heightened narcissism, the question of the "common" in education has assumed a pivotal importance. Inclusive education must reconsider its conceptualisation of diversity. Rather than perceiving it as a technical matter concerning strategies and tools for adaptation, it should be regarded as an ethical commitment to a common educational culture of diversity, while respecting individual specificities reflected in needs or training pathways.

The inclusive process thus gives rise to intricate questions concerning the manner in which teachers and managers interpret and implement international, national and local legislative requirements, extending beyond the purely technical and organisational aspects. These questions pertain not only to pedagogical practices but also to the categories, values, and objectives that inform their interpretation of each situation. Inclusive education can either serve to reinforce the commercialisation of education as an instrument of social control (Aydarova, 2021) or, conversely,

represent a subversive, humanist movement that reinvents democracy through education (Ball, 2003).

This humanist model challenges the prevailing trend of attempting to eliminate subjectivity in favour of a technocratic and neoliberal approach. Inclusive management is predicated on a humanist perspective, with the objective of cultivating universal and democratic citizenship through an education in diversity. However, in the context of the development of a neoliberal discourse on education, the notion of inclusive education also functions as an invitation to organisations to contribute proactively to enhancing productivity while demonstrating respect for the criteria of professional, social, and personal well-being. Despite the fact that inclusive policies are based on the concepts of active, universal and democratic citizenship, driven by principles of justice and the fight against all forms of discrimination, the organisations and institutions that lead public action in this area are guided by paradoxical principles and tools. These ultimately promote performance evaluation, ranking, competition and the quest for excellence, which leads to a fragmentation of power in a post-disciplinary framework (De Gaulejac & Hanique, 2015). Concurrently, they favour a "meritocratic conception of accessibility" (Ebersold, 2015, p. 64), as relayed by education managers. This lack of clarity and sincerity is evident in the fact that these institutions claim to uphold inclusive values while simultaneously reinforcing a system that perpetuates inequalities and competition. The contradiction arises from the fact that these institutions utilise inclusive rhetoric to disguise practices that frequently result in the exclusion and marginalisation of specific social groups.

Such organisational and managerial practices give rise to inequalities and serve to perpetuate discourses, which may be likened to the notion of a "for all" (universal) approach characteristic of totalitarianism. It is therefore imperative to rearticulate the inclusive ideal with a citizenship that is concrete, equitable, participatory and respectful of diversity and the singularity of each person. The objective of providing education for all can only be achieved through the provision of education for each and every individual.

5.3. *Technology: enabling inclusion or reinforcing barriers?*

Educational technologies are assuming an increasingly prominent role in the facilitation of inclusive processes. Those promoted by Universal Design for Learning (UDL) serve as an illustrative example. They offer a multitude of opportunities to enhance access to education, particularly through personalised learning and distance access. The utilisation of tools such as voice recognition software, e-learning platforms and adaptive learning applications enables a more flexible interaction with educational content. To illustrate, the utilisation of technologies such as tablets and computers with personalisation tools can assist individuals in developing a more nuanced comprehension of and engagement with information.

However, these technologies also present challenges, and not solely in regard to the digital divide. It is evident that not all pupils have equal access to these tools, which have the potential to reproduce or accentuate existing socio-cultural and economic inequalities (Selwyn, 2016). A further issue that requires attention is the interpretation of liminal situations.

Although there appears to be a consensus on the necessity to consider diversity, particularly within the context of education (Lantheaume, 2011), the question of what precisely is meant by diversity remains unanswered. Should the focus be on educational, psychological or neurobiological factors? An in-depth analysis of educational adaptations based on neuroimaging is required to account for neurodiversity, as claimed by the autistic community (neuro-education, neuro-pedagogy, Trocmé-Fabre, 1987). The number of people identifying as neurodivergent is growing rapidly. The term "neurodivergent" is used to describe anyone who is not considered to be part of the "neurological norm". If this significant development is not properly analysed, it could have very negative repercussions on education systems. It could result in the definition of a "neurological norm" without any ethical analysis being carried out and could oppose the rise of technocratic recovery of the phenomenon.

Additionally, there is a notable expansion in the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as Lalillo (an adaptive learning tool) (Kem, 2022), which provide solutions to potential difficulties, whether or not they are linked to a disability or disorder. This self-assessment and competency-based learning approach is not incompatible with an inclusive approach to diversity. The proposed response is a differentiated pedagogy and education that takes full account of the diversity of profiles, offering highly individualised pathways. UDL, which is based on neuroscience, enables individual learning differences to be considered. Upon initial examination, it would appear that its universal applicability aligns seamlessly with the tenets of education for democratic citizenship. Nevertheless, this is not the case. The neuro-pedagogical sense of universality, as indicated by the phrase "for all", does not necessarily correspond to the civic sense of "for everyone". It would be erroneous to assume that the presumed universality is the result of a concerted effort to take account of individual singularities and an analysis of specific learning styles.

In practice, this vision fails to develop a global reflection on the educational aims and values that engage subjectivity, including critical thinking, reflection, freedom of speech, and argumentation. Such an approach is inherently constrained in its capacity to account for situations in a nuanced manner. By reducing situations to a set of predefined typical cases, this approach is unable to adequately consider the specific contextual nuances that may influence the outcome.

A correlation has been identified between educational differentiation based on neurodiversity (neuropedagogy developed from neuroimaging) and the application of artificial intelligence in the field of education. As the Director of AI at Pearson elucidates, the development of a personal virtual tutor for a fee and a single digital

platform comprising e-books, online courses, and teaching materials for hire, a kind of "Netflix of education," is already underway (Marinova et al., 2017). The consideration of diversity in relation to neurobiological properties precludes the consideration of its other meaning, namely, the interpretation of subjective histories and cultures. These meanings are mutually exclusive and thus incommensurable. On occasion, educational policies are aligned with neoliberal and neuro-digital objectives. In other instances, these policies are oriented towards the advancement of freedom of expression and the establishment of democratic and open citizenship.

This duality gives rise to considerable confusion among educators, policymakers, and students alike. On the one hand, the drive for technological efficiency and neurodiversity-based differentiation appears to offer the prospect of a personalised, high-tech educational experience. Conversely, the traditional tenets of humanistic education, which prioritise subjective experiences and cultural histories, appear to be marginalised. This discrepancy in theoretical frameworks may result in disparate educational methodologies and ambiguity regarding the genuine objectives of inclusive education. Such circumstances give rise to questions regarding the veracity and efficacy of initiatives ostensibly designed to cultivate an equitable educational milieu.

5.4. *Beyond universalism: professionals as interpreters of diversity misunderstandings*

The concept of universality, as it pertains to citizenship, does not entail the homogenisation, which could potentially give rise to totalitarianism. Instead, it is about recognising the inherent diversity of individuals and communities while upholding an inclusive and democratic understanding of citizenship. The rationale behind personalising educational pathways is not to adhere to a vague, universalised educational template based on the pseudo-scientific doctrine of biological neurodiversity. What would an "a-subjective neuro-citizen" be? Inclusive education is predicated on an ethic of the subjective act of speaking, which serves to inaugurate democratic expression and social participation for all.

One might be inclined to revert to the practices of previous generations and allow traditional educational models to persist in the contemporary environment. Nevertheless, this reductionist approach gives rise to the institutional violence that numerous individuals within global education systems (Harber, 2002) have experienced. This represents a failure to account for changes in knowledge (horizontal) and cultures (mobility and intermingling; Appadurai, 1996). Conversely, when all individuals perceive that they are being treated equitably, that their distinctiveness is esteemed, and that they have a voice in the decision-making process, they will experience a sense of belonging. This is not exclusive to the student body; it also pertains to educators and other stakeholders in the field of education.

Inclusive education, therefore, traverses three discourses that are challenging to articulate, delineating the contours of a profound malaise. The traditional teacher (or also the specialised teacher) is seen as a figure who exercises discriminatory

and segregating power, while the concept of universal biotechnological science is viewed as de-subjectivised, a-signifying, a-cultural and an-historical (this is seen as a return to hygienism in education, Hughes, 2020). Cliffe and Solvason (2022) posit that the aforementioned factors render it challenging to situate or anchor one's desire to learn and one's speech. Furthermore, they posit that the role of the teacher has evolved to encompass three key functions: that of a subject, an interpreter of diversity, and a builder of a shared global citizenship through the act of speaking.

It is therefore essential to address the confused and paradoxical development of public policies on education by firmly anchoring the inclusive process in a democratic humanism that is not only free of intolerance but also critical of the homogenising discourse generated by the excesses of the unbridled race for productivity and the reign of unbridled enjoyment. In practical terms, inclusive education policies must respect a number of essential guiding principles. These include an equitable approach to people, based on their distinctive specificities rather than on stereotypes linked to classifications; an appreciation of the unique nature of each situation, linked to their infinite diversity (differences remain a factor of exclusion today); acceptance of mistakes, different points of view and constructive criticism; a focus on the individual; concern for common goals rather than exclusive personal interests; acceptance of personal risk-taking; and sharing responsibilities with trust and care. Despite the familiarity of these principles, they frequently remain mere rhetorical consensus rather than the tangible foundation for enduringly inclusive professional conduct.

6. CONCLUSION

Inclusive education is a complex and multifaceted concept that extends beyond a mere gesture of welcoming pupils into the educational system. It encompasses a range of approaches and strategies that aim to create an inclusive and accessible learning environment for all students. It represents a transformative vision that necessitates a reassessment of professional practices, interpersonal relationships, and educational policies. The integration of social justice and the ethic of care into the framework of inclusive education facilitates the establishment of an educational environment that is conducive to the optimal development of all students, irrespective of their disabilities or background.

The contemporary era is characterised by a number of challenges, including the growing prevalence of new technologies and the advent of artificial intelligence. These developments highlight the necessity for a collective commitment to guarantee the provision of equal opportunities. It is of the utmost importance that educators, decision-makers, and the broader educational community work together to establish learning environments that actively embrace diversity as a source of richness and strength. As Jellab (2021) notes, addressing the needs of students with diverse educational requirements is not merely about offering additional resources;

rather, it requires a fundamental rethinking and reshaping of institutional practices to foster true inclusion.

As UNESCO (2005) asserts, inclusive education is a process of transformation that entails the adaptation of schools and other learning institutions to accommodate the needs of all children (p. 14). This statement serves to emphasise the global commitment to inclusivity and provides a concrete illustration of the principles previously discussed. When implemented authentically, inclusive education has the potential to foster the development of democratic, autonomous, and responsible citizens who are active and engaged because they possess a sense of confidence in themselves and in others. Furthermore, it can contribute to the development of a more equitable and respectful society.

To achieve these ambitious goals, it is essential to persist in questioning educational practices, engage in constructive dialogue, and promote inclusive leadership models that encourage equality and solidarity. This continuous effort to innovate and adapt will ensure that inclusive education remains a dynamic and effective approach in addressing the diverse needs of all students.

REFERENCES

Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization* (Vol. 1). University of Minnesota Press.

Aydarova, E. (2021). Building a one-dimensional teacher: Technocratic transformations in teacher education policy discourses. *Educational Studies*, *57*(6), 670-689. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131946.2021.1969934

Ball, S. J. (2003). The teacher's soul and the terrors of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy*, *18*(2), 215-228. https://doi.org/10.1080/0268093022000043065

Banks, J. A. (2009). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives* (7th ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

Biesta, G. (2024). Teaching and teacher education in the age of evidence: The case for artistry: An interview with Gert Biesta by Philip Winter. *Educação, Sociedade & Culturas*, *67*, 1-18. https://doi.org/10.24840/esc.vi67.778

Biesta, G. J. (2010a). A new logic of emancipation: the methodology of Jacques Rancière. *Educational Theory*, *60*, 39-59. https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1741-5446.2009.00345.X

Biesta, G. J. (2010b). Why 'what works' still won't work: From evidence-based education to value-based education. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, *29*, 491-503. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-5446.2006.00241.x

Booth, T., & Ainscow, M. (2002). *Index for inclusion: Developing learning and participation in schools*. Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.

Burbules, N. C. (2006). *Dialogue in teaching: Theory and practice*. Teachers College Press.

Chatenoud, C., Ramel, S., Trépanier, N. S., Gombert, A., & Paré, M. (2018). De l'éducation inclusive à une communauté éducative pour tous. *Revue des sciences de l'éducation*, *44*(1), 3-11. https://doi.org/10.7202/1054155AR

Cliffe, J., & Solvason, C. (2022). The Messiness of Ethics in Education. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, *20*, 101–117. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10805-021-09402-8

Corbion, S. (2020). *L'école inclusive Entre idéalisme et réalité*. https://doi.org/10.3917/eres.corbio.2020.01.

De Gaulejac, V., & Hanique, I. (2015). *La dynamique de l'évaluation à l'école : enjeux, pratiques, perspectives*. PUF.

Ebersold, S. (2015). *L'inclusion scolaire des élèves handicapés : une question de justice sociale*. L'Harmattan.

Fraser, N. (2003). *Redistribution or recognition? A philosophical exchange*. Verso.

Fulford, A. (2016). The reconstruction of personal experience in education. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, *50*(2), 264-278. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9752.12188

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Harvard University Press.

Harari, Y. N. (2024). *Nexus: A brief history of information networks from the Stone Age to AI*. Signal.

Harber, C. (2002). Schooling as Violence: An exploratory overview. *Educational Review*, *54*(1), 7–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131910120110839

Higgins, C. (2011). *The good life of teaching: An ethics of professional practice*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Honneth, A. (1995). *The struggle for recognition: The moral grammar of social conflicts*. MIT Press.

Hughes, C. (2020). Addressing violence in education: From policy to practice. *Prospects*, *48*, 23–38. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-019-09445-1

Jellab, A. (2021). Les élèves à besoins éducatifs particuliers à l'épreuve de l'égalité des chances ou ce que la "marge" pourrait faire à la "norme" : vers une inclusion réciproque au sein des EPLE ? *La Nouvelle Revue de l'Éducation et de la Société Inclusives*, 221-239. https://doi.org/10.3917/nresi.089.0221.

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1999). *Learning together and alone: Cooperative, competitive, and individualistic learning* (5th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

Kem, D. (2022). Personalised and adaptive learning: Emerging learning platforms in the era of digital and smart learning. *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research, 5*(2), 385-391. https://doi.org/10.47191/ijsshr/v5-i2-02

Kliewer, C., & Drake, S. (1998). Disability, eugenics and the current ideology of segregation: A modern moral tale. *Disability & Society*, *13*(1), 95-111. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599826939

Knight Abowitz, K. (2000). Democratic communities and the moral imagination in a postmodern era. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, *19*(3), 275-295. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005222813352

Kohout-Diaz, M. (2018). *Tous à l'école ! Bonheurs, malentendus et paradoxes de l'éducation inclusive*. Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux.

Lantheaume, F. (2011). La prise en compte de la diversité : émergence d'un nouveau cadre normatif ? *Les dossiers des sciences de l'éducation*, *26*(2011), 117-132. https://doi.org/10.4000/dse.1120

Le Bec, M. (2024). Une tentative de mise en œuvre d'un dispositif inclusif dans le second degré. *La nouvelle revue-Éducation et société inclusives*, *100*(3), 139-152. https://doi.org/10.3917/nresi.100.0139.

Levinas, E. (2003). *Humanism of the Other* (N. Poller, Trans.). University of Illinois Press. (Original work published 1973).

Marinova, D., de Ruyter, K., Huang, M. H., Meuter, M. L., & Challagalla, G. (2017). Getting smart: Learning from technology-empowered frontline interactions. *Journal of Service Research, 20*(1), 29-42. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670516679

Molinier, P., Laugier, S., & Paperman, P. (2009). *Qu'est-ce que le care ? Souci des autres, sensibilité, responsabilité.* Payot & Rivages.

Noonan, M. J., & Reese, R. M. (1984). Educability: Public Policy and the Role of Research. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, *9*, 15-8. https://doi.org/10.1177/154079698400900102

Norwich, B., & Mittler, P. (2000). Including pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools: Classroom teachers' views. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *15*(2), 155-170. https://doi.org/10.1080/088562500361477

Ravet, J. (2011). Inclusive/exclusive? Contradictory perspectives on autism and inclusion: The case for an integrative position. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *15*(6), 667-682. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603110903334370

Rawls, J. (1971). *A theory of justice.* Harvard University Press.

Riehl, C. J. (2000). The principal's role in creating inclusive schools for diverse students: A review of normative, empirical, and critical literature on the practice of educational administration. *Review of Educational Research*, *70*(1), 55-81. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543070001055

Säfström, C. A. (2011). The politics of education as an art of interruption. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, *30*(2), 199-214. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11217-011-9210-x

Sailor, W. (2017). Equity as a basis for inclusive educational systems change. *Australasian Journal of Special and Inclusive Education*, *41*(1), 65-81. https://doi.org/10.1017/jse.2017.10

Selwyn, N. (2016). *Is technology good for education?* Polity Press.

Smagorinsky, P. (2012). "Every individual has his own insanity": Applying Vygotsky's work on defectology to the question of mental health as an issue of inclusion. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, *1*(2), 67-77. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2012.01.001

Taylor, C. (1994). *Multiculturalism: Examining the politics of recognition.* Princeton University Press.

Terzi, L. (2005). Beyond the dilemma of difference: The capability approach to disability and special educational needs. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, *39*(3), 443-459. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9752.2005.00447.x

Tomlinson, C. A. (2014). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners.* ASCD.

Trocmé-Fabre, H. (1987). *J'apprends, donc je suis : introduction à la neuropédagogie.* Editions Eyrolles.

Tronto, J. C. (1993). *Moral boundaries: A political argument for an ethic of care.* Routledge.

UNESCO (2005). *Guidelines for inclusion: Ensuring access to education for all.* UNESCO Publishing.

UNESCO (2015). *Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all.* In World Education Forum 2015, Incheon, Republic of Korea. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

UNESCO (2017). *A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education.* UNESCO Publishing.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* Harvard University Press.

Warnock, H. M. (1978). *Special educational needs: Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Handicapped Children and Young People.* Her Majesty's Stationery Office. https://education-uk.org/documents/warnock/warnock1978.html

Wolff, E. (2011). Political responsibility for a globalised world: after Levinas' humanism. transcript Verlag. https://doi.org/10.1515/transcript.9783839416945

Wood, P. (1980). *International classification of impairments, disabilities, and handicaps.* World Health Organization. https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/41003