

Teacher Training Course

Inclusive Assessment



Improvement through Research Schools. Inclusive classrooms – a multidimensional approach (128735-CP-1-2006-1-BE-COMENIUS-C21)



Definition

According to European Agency for Development in Special Education Needs:

Assessment means” the way teachers and other people involved in a pupil’s education systematically collect and then use information about that pupil’s level of achievement and/ or development in different areas of their educational experience (academic, behaviour and social)“.

Watkins, 2007,p.14



Policies

- ✓ Since Declaration of Salamanca a significant group of countries in Europe and America seem to have similar educational policy that can be considered as having a potential impact upon assessment and inclusive education.
- ✓ There are departments for controlling performance of pupils, programmes and schools and pupil assessment information is made available for public in general.
- ✓ Pupils with disabilities are entitled to access national assessment in a way that is appropriate for them i.e. assessment must be appropriately modified.



Practices and Policies

Assessment policy and assessment practices don't seem synchronised.

Standardised tests focus on low level, de-contextualised facts, *provide* a fragmented view of learners and they are frequently incorrectly used to present a whole picture of a learner.

According to Goodwin (1997) “ assessment and inclusion are naturally connected and equity in schooling relies on appropriate assessment”



Practices and Policies

Key principles that must underpin assessment policies:

- ✓ Assessment should be based upon standards for learning;
- ✓ Performance of understanding to be assessed should be represented in “authentic” and appropriate ways;
- ✓ Assessment should be embedded within curriculum and teaching;
- ✓ Assessment should aim to provide multiple forms of evidence about pupil’s learning;



Practices and Policies

Key principles that must underpin assessment policies:

- ✓ Educational standards should be evaluated, but not by imposing standardisation;
- ✓ The people who carry out assessments (i.e teachers) should be the people who design, judge and then report on assessment outcomes;
- ✓ “ Innovators” and the best practice should be used to inform the policy and lead the assessment system.



Practices

Teachers and Psychologists

Psychologists have developed standardised objective tests but usually they are not available to the classroom teacher and are carried out in a “clinic type” situation away from the classroom.

Goodrum, Hackling and Rennie (2001) suggest that diagnostic evidence is rarely employed for informing teachers how to plan learning.



Practices

Teachers and Psychologists

Kleinert (2002) presented some Key questions to bear in mind for an inclusive assessment:

- ✓ How do teachers meet the responsibilities of assessing pupils with specific needs in programmes aligned with standards and assessment requirements of official legislation?
- ✓ How do teachers ensure that all pupils with disabilities achieve in the general education curriculum to the best extent possible?
- ✓ How do teachers decide which pupils need alternate assessments?
- ✓ How do teachers design effective alternate assessment?



Practices

Parents, teachers and pupils

According to Falvey and Hammeken both parents , teachers and pupils can be involved in assessment process. If this happens, their entitled views and inputs can be enriched, so that, assessment can be more effective.

The role of parents can however be controversial, because on the one hand they are a valuable source of information for pupil assessment, but on the other hand they may have pre-conceived ideas about what assessment is or should be .



Practices

Teachers training

In what refers to teachers their training, both in specific needs teaching and in special assessment techniques appears to be a crucial aspect for developing teacher attitudes and skills that support successful inclusion”.

✓Kemp & Carter, 2005

Key areas for further development in the use of inclusive assessment are:

- ✓ Improved teacher training in conducting assessment;
- ✓ linking alternative assessment to curricula and teaching programmes;
- ✓ linking assessment to Individual Education Plans.



PROBLEM

How could we characterise the implementation of INCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT, in different regions from different countries of Europe in 2009?



Inclusive assessment practices in some European Countries

Based in the IRIS project team, we collected ONE narrative description about the implementation of INCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT (IA), FOR EACH PARTNER in different regions from different countries of Europe:

- **Portugal: Alentejo;**
- **Spain: Cataluña;**
- **Belgium: Brussels;**
- **Austria: Graz;**
- **United Kingdom: Tiverton.**

Each narrative was organised in three main sections: 1) Main concept of IA, 2) Practical strategies to assess and 3) the Process of assessment in each of the regions.



Data Analysis

Concept and Process of Inclusive Assessment

All the countries point out the access to assessment services (provided by special education teachers , psychologists and other staff).

All the participants pointed to an inclusive conception of the assessment process.

The procedures to improve the assessment process have specific characteristics', in accordance to the legislation and the administrative rules of the countries.

The intention to make inclusive assessment based in team work is eminent in all the countries.



Data Analysis

Approach to assessment

In all the participant countries, when a student presents special needs, teachers, family or other professionals can alert him/her to the assessment team, from the preschool level.

In the countries involved in this work there is a global network between schools – community – families to identify and raise awareness of children with SEN

And, that type of procedure can have specific characteristics', in accordance with the legislation, the administrative rules and the cultural values of the countries, but the main idea of global network to alert and identify, suggested an inclusive approach to assessment in these countries.



Data Analysis

Process, stages and strategies

A variety of stages, methods and strategies were used for identifying the child as eligible for special services, planning instruction, and measuring progress. That presupposes:

Initial Assessment

- **To locate those children/youngsters and technical resources to prepare assessment.**

Diagnosis and/or Characterization of Functionality

- **To determine the nature of the child's difficulties, the severity of the problem, and become the basis for determining eligibility for special education services. This process is conducted by members of a multidisciplinary team in all the countries involved in the study.**

Assessment for Intervention (Planning of programs-IEP)

In all the countries involved were considered: *program monitoring* and *program evaluation* with specific criteria (in accordance with national policies of evaluation).



CONCLUSIONS

Information collected in Portugal, Spain, Austria, Belgium and United Kingdom is in accordance with the recent proposals from the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education – EADSE - (Watkins, 2007).

Inclusive Assessment, with all the national diversity in terms of resources, administration rules, legislation and cultural values is an intention and a practice.



CONCLUSIONS

As European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education proposes assessment of pupils who are thought to have SEN, could involve:

- ✓ **Identification linked to an official decision to 'recognise' a pupil as having educational needs that require additional resources to support his learning;**
- ✓ **Informing learning programmes, where assessment is focused upon highlighting pupil's strengths and weaknesses in different areas of his educational experience. Such information is often used in a formative way – ex. Individual Education Plans (IEPs)– rather than as a baseline assessment.**



CONCLUSIONS

Nowadays educators are calling for new assessment practices to be used to support pupil learning, guide educational improvement and enhance equity for all pupils, a social inclusion as Lloyd proposed in 2006.

Educators work on the improvement of such new practices in 2009, however, inclusive assessment implies collaborative work, multidimensional assessment and an ecological approach to education based on family-school-community,

we need to continue working in key areas for further development in the use of inclusive assessment:

- improve teacher education and training in the field of **Inclusive Assessment**,
- linking alternative assessment to **Curricula and Teaching programmes**,
- linking assessment to **Individual Education Plans**,
- improve teacher competences in **Team Work**.

