

**TEACHERS' BELIEFS, VALUES AND TEACHING PRACTICES AND CULTURE
OF INCLUSION IN CLASSROOMS: A HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGICAL
STUDY**

BY

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DECLARATION

It is hereby declared that this dissertation is my own work to the best of my knowledge and does not contain any material written or published, anywhere, by another author except where clearly mentioned with acknowledgement and proper reference. This work in entirety or in parts has never been submitted to any educational institution to obtain any qualification. The author also declares that the reproduction or publication of this work by Charles University Prague will not infringe, in any case, the authors' rights.

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Abstract

Implementation of inclusive education involves changes in educational policy and practice through the incorporation of inclusive values in the belief systems of the major partners and leaders in the school settings. A review of the literature indicates that sustainable change and development is more likely when the stakeholders hold such values and incorporate them in their practices to create a culture of inclusion. Inclusive cultures have relevance for everyone in the school and cannot be limited to a specific group of students creating yet another ghetto within the mainstream school and leading to exclusion in the name of inclusion. Despite the importance of the beliefs, values and practices of the teachers in relation to the culture of inclusion, the relation of beliefs to inclusive cultures had not been studied in the Czech Republic. Some studies did investigate teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of children with disabilities in the mainstream schools but none of the studies investigated the beliefs, values and practices in relation to the culture of inclusion. This study was designed to investigate the views of teachers practicing inclusion. The teachers were asked to reflect and describe their beliefs, values and teaching practices that contributed to creating cultures of inclusion in their classrooms. The study used a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological design, with interviews and observations as data generation instruments. The analysis used a constant comparative method. The study found that teachers' belief in equality and respect, trust, cooperation and rejection of competition among students and acceptance of diversity were major valued constructs that contributed to creating a culture of inclusion in classroom contexts. The study also found that a balanced use of a variety of pedagogic approaches, with an emphasis on constructivist and inductive pedagogies; and a careful use of differentiation in activities, learning materials, goals and assessment were helpful in creating the cultures of inclusion in classroom contexts.

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Chapter 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION: CONTEXTUALIZATION AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Inclusive education is interpreted differently in different contexts. The overall interpretation of inclusive education in the Czech Republic appears to be focused on educating children with special needs in mainstream schools (Strnadova & Topinkova, 2010). After expressing an overarching principled commitment of all citizens' right of equal access to education without discrimination, in section 16 the Czech Education Act 2004 concentrates on the education of children with special needs and gifted children. Article 1 of section 16 defines children with special educational needs as follows:

"A child, pupil or student having special educational needs shall be a disabled person, or a person disadvantaged in terms of health condition or social position" (Act No. 561/2004, Section 16).

The Act establishes the rights of students with special educational needs to get education that suits their educational needs in form, methods and content. While support measures for students with disabilities were further elaborated through the Czech government decree 73/2005 (as cited at <http://czechkid.eu/si1540.html>¹), which included the use of special pedagogic and psychological services, aids and teacher assistants, special learning materials in addition to regular subjects and any other arrangements under individual education plan; it is interesting to note that the 'socially disadvantaged child' was not defined until the year

¹ Czechkid. *Inclusive education: Who, what, how and why?* Retrieved from: <http://czechkid.eu/si1540.html>. Accessed on: 19/07/2012.

2010. The definition was incorporated in the relevant legislation in 2011 (Strakova, Simonova & Polechova, 2011).

The Czech Republic has a long tradition of a highly differentiated education system” (Strakova et al., 2011, p. 3). Initial efforts of integrating students with disabilities into mainstream education were made during mid 20th century by individual parents and parents’ groups without any legislative support (Vítková, 2003). However, officially, the mainstreaming of individual cases of students with disabilities started only after the school legislation 2004 (Law No. 561/2004). The number of integrated students has increased every year since 2004 (Strnadova & Hajkova, 2012); but the special education provision still exists and caters for the majority of students with mild, moderate and severe disabilities (Siska & Novosad, 2010).

Studies report that the integrative interpretation and approach towards inclusion in the Czech Republic has won inclusive education more opponents than supporters. Janebová and Habart (2011) have reported that parents of the ‘normal’ children are opposing inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in the mainstream schools pleading that it would hinder the educational development of their children. Authors also reported teachers’ concerns about including children with special needs into mainstream schools. The opposition of parents and teachers have made the Czech Government withdraw their efforts “to support students’ diversity within mainstream schools and the decrease of appreciation for schools’ efforts to support inclusion” (Strnadova & Hajkova, 2012, p.308). The authors carried on to mention that as a result the schools are not showing interest in being officially designated as inclusive schools as it might hurt their reputation. The situation made Siska and Novosad (2010) emphasize on making inclusion an ‘overarching policy’ by outlining timeline to transform the special schools into resource centres and to provide comprehensive support system to the students with disabilities.

Country report for the Czech Republic *Teacher Education for Inclusion* (Strnadova & Topinkova, 2010) interestingly revealed yet another facet. According to the report the teachers possessed required pedagogic knowledge and were aware of the teaching methods necessary for diverse teaching. The authors pointed out that understanding inclusive education as integrative education limited the scope of inclusive education; therefore, the majority of teachers needed proper understanding and orientation of inclusive education. Report was, however quiet about the understanding, beliefs and values teachers successfully practicing inclusion in their classrooms. The report also did not mention the impact of cultures of inclusion upon teaching practices and teachers' beliefs.

The researcher had always been interested in exploring the beliefs and values of teachers because of their potential for creating a culture of inclusion. Such exploration, especially the beliefs and values of teachers' practicing inclusion, can be very informative and can help in understanding the factors behind successful development of inclusive cultures in schools. An extensive search of literature about teachers' beliefs about inclusive education and inclusive culture in the Czech context was made. Studies exploring the views and perspectives of teachers practicing inclusion were given special attention. The effort yielded only a small amount of literature that partially addressed the issues of teachers' perspectives about inclusive education. The important titles included: Hajkova, Kvetonova and Strnadová (2010); Hajkova and Strnadová (2010a); Květoňová and Prouzová (2010); Strnadová (2010); Hajkova and Strnadová (2010b); Vítková (2003). The literature on inclusive teaching practices included titles such as Hajkova (2005); Hajkova and Strnadova (2010c) and Lechta (2010).

Inclusive practice was exhaustively and extensively explored in the mentioned papers and books, including constructivist pedagogies and various classroom management strategies and approaches. Lechta (2010) and Hajkova and Strnadova (2010c) also discussed inclusion in a

broader framework, however, the main focus of all the authors was on special needs children. A detailed discussion of teachers' beliefs, values and teaching practices in relation to cultures of inclusion in school settings was found lacking throughout the literature on inclusive education; despite the fact that inclusive culture is the driving force behind inclusive education and is related to the beliefs, values and practices of the stakeholders that include teachers, students and management within the school and parents and local community outside the schools.

Different reports, cited above, show glimpses of negative attitudes of parents and teachers towards inclusive education but studies focusing on success stories, exploring the views of teachers practicing inclusion in such a challenging environment are almost nonexistent. The views of teachers practising inclusion, their understanding of inclusion, their beliefs and values and their practices in relation with cultures of inclusion in classrooms and in schools can be informative, inspiring and encouraging for those teachers who reportedly know how to do but are somehow hesitant. "Men catch fire from the spirit of others", Longinus said centuries ago (Longinus, 2006) and the researcher believes that, if explored accurately, the spirit of those who are practising inclusion will enlighten the spirits of others.

If "development is change in accordance with a coherent set of values...and is determined by the extent to which these values are put into action" (Booth, 2010, p. 10), then certainly there was no account of development of inclusive education available in the Czech context. If "it is the thoughts, words, deeds and hearts of members of the school community that create or stifle change" (Carrington & Robinson, 2004, p.142) then only a few efforts so far have been made to know what are the beliefs, thoughts and values of those who made the change possible in such a challenging environment. There was and is a great need to explore their beliefs and practices and sing for these unsung heroes.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Studies of successful inclusion can provide insights into the experiences, beliefs and values that contributed to creating inclusion in a specific context and setting (Ainscow & Miles, 2008; Booth, 2010). Studies have indicated relationship between teachers' implementation and active experience of inclusion and positive attitudes (Florian & Rouse, 2010; Puri & Abraham, 2004; Rouse, 2010). Teachers' views and experiences are of vital importance because "differences in teacher belief constructs are related to differences in instructional practices – a relationship which holds for instructional interactions with both individual students and the whole class, and which predicts instructional practices for students both with and without disabilities" (Jordan and Stanovich, 2003, p.89). Despite their importance, the views of teachers practicing inclusion in their classrooms and schools have not been extensively and exhaustively studied so far in the Czech Republic. Their views about values, beliefs and practices that contribute to the realization of cultures of inclusion in classrooms can be a reference point for other teachers working in a similar context and position.

1.2.1 Research Questions

The study was designed to find out the views of primary school teachers who, despite all challenges, are practicing inclusion in their classrooms. The study focused on participant teachers' values, beliefs and teaching practices as factors in the creation of a culture of inclusion in the classrooms. Teachers were asked to offer their views on the beliefs, values and teaching practices that they think contributed to creating the culture of inclusion in classroom context. The main study question that directed this study was:

How do teachers create the culture of inclusion in the primary school classroom context in the Czech Republic?

The main question was further supported and elaborated by two sub-questions. The first sub-question was:

What beliefs and values do the teachers think contribute to creating cultures of inclusion in classroom contexts?

The second sub-question that directed this study was:

What teaching practices do the teachers think contribute to creating cultures of inclusion in the classroom contexts?

Before providing further details about the study, the researcher deems it appropriate to provide working definitions of certain terminology to make the reader clear about what is meant by their use in this study.

1.3 DEFINITIONS

- **Inclusive Education:** The researcher's approach towards inclusion in this study was broad-based and entailed acceptance and celebration of difference. Inclusive education was viewed as a process of including all children in learning and play in the schools of their catchment area, with a focus on equity/equality of value and rights, mutual respect, participation, cooperation and achievement for all. (Ainscow & Miles, 2008; Ainscow & Sandhil, 2010; Booth, Ainscow & Kingston, 2006; Booth, 2010; Operti, Brady & Duncombe, 2009).
- **Inclusive Culture in classrooms:** In this study, 'inclusive culture' connoted the existence and expression of inclusive values in the beliefs and practices of stakeholders in classroom settings.
- **Teaching Practice:** In this study 'teaching practice' referred to pedagogic decisions and strategies, organization and execution of different learning activities, creation and administration of learning materials and classroom management.

- **Inclusive Teaching Practices:** Inclusive teaching practices were understood as teaching practices that reflect inclusive values. Such practices might follow varied pedagogic approaches and classroom management configurations.
- **Belief:** this study used Alston (1986) and Swain (1981) explanation of ‘justified belief’ to define the construct. Reliable indicator theory of both the mentioned scholars defined belief as a construct that is grounded in a perceptual experience or an ostensible memory or an already justified belief.

Value: This study used the construct ‘value’ as “one’s judgement of what is important in life” (Oxford online dictionary, 2012).²

1.4 THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to find out the views and experiences of the participant teachers’ about the beliefs, values and teaching practices that contributed to creating a culture of inclusion in their classroom contexts. Teachers were asked to reflect on their experiences to describe the valued constructs and practices that made their classrooms inclusive. This study was based on the assumption that teaching and learning do not occur in a vacuum and that education is value laden (Booth et al., 2006; Booth, 2010). Therefore, the views of those who have made inclusion happen in their classrooms are of significant value and may provide inspiration for those who have pedagogical knowledge but lack initiative.

1.5 BENEFICIARIES OF THE STUDY

The study is expected to help teachers both in service and the student teachers in better understanding inclusion and inclusive cultures. The participant teachers have hopefully benefitted by being a part of the process. The participant teachers would further be benefitted

² Value. Oxforddictionaries.com. Oxford University Press 2012. Retrieved on 17 July 2012, from http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/value?q=values#value__2

as the study abstract and findings will be shared with them. The researcher has learnt a lot during the process and is the major beneficiary. In short the study is expected to add a fresh understanding of inclusion and inclusive culture in the Czech context.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research design and methodology of the study will be discussed in detail in third chapter of the study. This section is intended to provide an overview to help the reader contextualize the study. The paradigm worked from in this study was hermeneutic phenomenology following the traditions of Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer; the approach was interpretive / qualitative; the methodology was hermeneutic phenomenological; the research methods for data generation, data analysis and data presentation were informed by the research questions, research paradigm and research methodology and the outcomes were interpretive and descriptive.

1.6.1 Sampling

The study used purposeful criteria sampling (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2009; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011) to select the participants of the study. Five Teachers who were making inclusion happen within their classrooms were selected with the recommendations of the supervisor and a seasoned researcher in the field of inclusive education in the Czech Republic and also by visiting schools and talking to the head teachers and teachers.

1.6.2 Data Generation Methods

Interviews were used as the main data generation instrument as is the tradition in hermeneutic phenomenological studies (Cohen, Kahn & Steeves, 2000). The interviews were semi-structured, qualitative and were administered by using interview guide. The interviews were electronically audio- recorded. The three out of five participant teachers who could not speak English were interviewed with the help of an interpreter. All data was transcribed verbatim.

In the case of those teachers who gave responses in the Czech language, the interpreter version of responses was transcribed verbatim.

The study also used direct observations and non participant observations. The direct observations were made during the school visits to understand the culture and ethos of teachers' work place. The field notes collected during direct observations were both descriptive and interpretive and were jotted down separately. The non participant observations were made by visiting the classrooms of two participant teachers. Both direct and non-participant observations were structured and directed by pre-defined criteria that will be discussed in detail in chapter three. The classroom observation and school visits helped understand the context and provided rich secondary data. Researcher also kept reflective journal to make different kind of notes (Laverty, 2003; Willis, 2007). The journal however, was not made part of data and was used only in understanding data.

1.6.3 Data Analysis and Data Presentation

The data analysis was done by using 'constant comparative method' of Strauss and Corbin (as cited in Cohen et al., 2011; Punch, 2009; Robson, 2011). The analysis was inductive. The analysis was done using open coding and axial coding (Cohen et al., 2011; Punch, 2009; Robson, 2011); and was based on study questions by drawing "together all relevant data for the exact issue of concern to the researcher" (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 552). The strategy was used to preserve the coherence of the presentation. All data (interview transcripts, field notes, observation notes) and researcher's reflective journal were read and re read to locate references that indicated to the phenomenon in question 1 and question 2 of the study. The analysis started with the familiarization and immersion process and ended with the generation of themes in the form of thick descriptions.

1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher kept an honest and professional disposition throughout the study. The participant teachers were informed of their rights and were provided a brief about the study before obtaining a written consent for interviews. The permissions for observation and site visits were also acquired in advance from the concerned authorities. Three basic ethical principles of “non-maleficence, beneficence and human dignity” (Cohen, et. al., 2011, p. 75) were given due consideration throughout the research process. The role of the researcher was of an active participant and the researcher described his pre-understanding clearly in the chapter 4 before describing the findings according to the hermeneutic phenomenological tradition.

1.8 QUALITY ASSURANCE

Trustworthiness and credibility of the study was ensured using reflective journal, methodological triangulation, data verification through member checks, peer review, independent reader check, adequate engagement with data collection and data analysis and rich and thick description. The consistency was ensured using clear description of all the processes and procedures of the study, hence providing an audit trail.

1.9 SUMMARY

This chapter provided an overview of the whole study to set the context. The subsequent chapters would elaborate the contents of this chapter further.

Chapter 2

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with an exposition of researcher's position in the debates of inclusive education to set a proper context for the subsequent discussions in the study and continues by providing a brief historical overview of inclusive education in international and in the Czech context; a brief description of the relationships between culture and education; cultures of inclusion and education; and teachers' beliefs and values and teaching practices. The chapter also offers a comprehensive literature review and the details of the theoretical framework based on Bourdieu's theory of action (1998).

2.2 SELF QUESTIONING AND POSITIONING IN THE DEBATES OF INCLUSION

It is a difficult task to look for and recognize inclusion in schools and classrooms because of the competing definitions and criteria for inclusion in education (Dyson, Farrell, Polat, Hutcheson & Gallannaugh, 2004; Kauffman, 2008; Lindsay, 2003; Lindsay, 2007; Nind, Benjamin, Sheehy, Collins & Hall, 2004; Nind & Wearmouth, 2006). Scholars are divided on inclusive education definition (Erton & Savage, 2012). Allan & Slee (2008) reported that the most of the scholars in the field of inclusive education admitted questioning their own position before and during the research process because of different interpretations of inclusion and exclusion. The conceptual differences have resulted in a situation where inclusion is still a 'distant concept in the minds of most significant partners' (Pather, 2007, 627); and rightly so, because if there is no agreement on what is looked for does look like or should look like, consensus cannot be built on what is effective in creating it or sustaining it as such. Because "the operational definition of inclusion is problematic" (Erton & Savage, 2012, p.224) there are problems in deciding the effectiveness of inclusion and in deciding about practices that create inclusive cultures in schools and in classrooms.

While designing the study, the researcher also questioned his position. The entire professional career of the researcher as non-formal literacy project manager and also a teacher has made him see inclusion in broader terms. The researcher belongs to a country, where, apart from a very little privileged class, basic quality education is a dream for the majority of the children; where every other child is disadvantaged, let alone the children with disabilities or other so called marginalized groups. Therefore, the researcher believes that unless inclusive education has something to offer to everyone, it will not work and will soon be a neglected ideology (Thomas & Loxley, 2007). Talking from one specific group's perspective therefore, has always seemed to the researcher as drawing a circle and shutting others out- an approach that "solidifies differences in ways that are counterproductive" (Sapon-Shevin, 2007, p. xvi).

Consequently, the researcher's approach towards inclusion in this study was broad-based. Inclusive education was viewed, alongside the framework of *Education for All* (EFA), as a process of including all children in learning and play in the schools of their catchment area, with a focus on equity/equality of value and rights, mutual respect, participation, cooperation and achievement for all (Ainscow & Miles, 2008; Ainscow & Sandhil, 2010; Booth et al., 2006; Booth, 2010; Opertti et al., 2009). Inclusive education was viewed as "an entirely different way of conceptualizing educational practice" (Sapon-Shevin, 2007, p. xvi). This understanding of inclusion is also in line with the evolving conceptualization of inclusive education internationally.

2.3 A BRIEF HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

A significant shift from special to inclusive education can be witnessed globally both in the countries of the North and the South. Although in some countries inclusive education is still perceived as an approach to cater the needs of children with disabilities within general education settings, internationally "it is increasingly seen more broadly as a reform that

supports and welcomes diversity among all learners” (Ainscow & Sandil, 2010, p. 401). This approach towards inclusion presumes that the aim of inclusion in education is the elimination of social and educational exclusion. It is based on the belief that education is a basic human right and provides the basis for a just society. Approaching inclusion from the rights perspective, extending the social justice dialogue, makes it possible to view diversity as a concept and not as categories of difference (Fisher, 2007).

This understanding of inclusive education is, however, not reached overnight. It has followed a long path starting from the ‘Normalization’ in early 1960’s in Scandinavia and later in the USA. Normalisation was an approach to “making available to the mentally retarded and other disabled individuals the patterns and conditions of everyday life which are as close as possible to the norms and patterns of mainstream society” (Nirje, 1969, p. 181). Another shift in the approaches and policies was witnessed during 1970’s up to 1980’s as a result of humanitarian and civil rights movements in the countries of the North that resulted in driving the policies of various governments towards integration (Swart & Pettipher, 2005). The children with mild disabilities and special needs, who could prove their readiness, were put in ‘normal’ schools as a result of this movement with an expectation that they would adjust in these schools without providing any extra support (Acedo, Ferrer & Pamies, 2009). Integration aimed “to maximise the social interactions between the ‘disabled’ and the ‘non-disabled’” (Swart & Pettipher, 2005, p. 7). Integration was however, limited to physical placement, never seeking changes in school culture and teaching practices.

While integration was mainly focused on physical placement, inclusion on the contrary went well beyond placement and a marked shift in the concepts and values of both could be seen. Inclusion involved “process of changing values, attitudes, policies and practices within a school setting and beyond” (Polat & Kisanji, 2009, p.4). Inclusion also accompanied with a marked shift in understanding the disability away from a deficit model that identified the

source of difficulties within the child to a social model that insisted in removing barriers to learning and an attitudinal change within the school culture and in the broader society. This approach towards education was first acknowledged at the ‘World Conference on Special Needs Education in Salamanca’, Spain (UNESCO, 1994). Salamanca declaration reaffirmed the right to education for every child, as stated in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UN, 1948), *Convention on the Rights of the Children* (UN, 1989), and ‘World Conference on Education for All’ (UN, 1990), with a special focus on education of children with special needs and disabilities. Although the Salamanca declaration focused on children with special needs it also asserted its commitment to the educational “right for all regardless of individual differences” (UNESCO, 1994, p. vii). The aims and ideals of Salamanca declaration were reiterated at many international conferences and conventions including the *Dakar Framework for Action* (UNESCO, 2000), *Millennium Development Goals* (UN, 2000), and *Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UN, 2006). Much lately, Salamanca statement is being interpreted broadly alongside the framework of *Education for All*, with an insistence not only in access but also in equality, quality and achievement for all.

This evolving conceptualization of inclusive education .. may prove to be highly relevant for a re-positioned EFA agenda, allowing for a broader understanding of how the concepts of equality, equity and quality interact. (Opertti et al., 2009, p. 211)

2.4 A BRIEF HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The history of inclusive education is not very old in the Czech Republic. The Czech government incorporated inclusive education in national legislation through *The Education Act* (2004). The Czech Education Act expresses an overarching principled commitment of all citizens’ right of equal access to education without discrimination. However when it comes to

inclusive education it is mainly concentrated on children with special educational needs. As already discussed in detail in Chapter 1, section 1.1, the 'socially disadvantaged child' was not defined until the year 2010. The definition was incorporated in the relevant legislation in 2011 (Strakova et al., 2011). "So far, schools have been entitled to ask for higher funding for disabled students but not for socially disadvantaged students" (Strakova et al., 2011, p. 4). Strakova et al. (2011) carried on to mention that requests for personal assistants and extra resources always exceeded than the actual resources allocated for the purpose. The schools therefore find it difficult to provide adequate and comprehensive support to the individual students with disabilities.

While *The Education Act* (2004), despite the conceptual complications, provided a promising start towards the realization of inclusive education, the situation overall is not that promising. The country suffers from its historical legacy of segregation that is deeply rooted in the collective conscious of the society and is not limited to education and schooling. Giving the historical background of Czech society's attitudes towards persons with disabilities, Novak (2002) reported that during the soviet era the persons with disabilities were segregated, isolated and concentrated in social welfare institutions and the "majority of healthy population actually did not meet their disabled fellow-citizens at all" (p.2).

Such practices of institutionalization of persons with disabilities continue, especially in the case of persons with intellectual disabilities (Siska & Beadle- Brown, 2011; Vann & Siska, 2006). The segregation of children on the basis of disability right from the kindergarten up to the higher levels of education also reminds the socialist educational philosophy rooted in defectology. Strakova et al. (2011) also confirmed that there had not been any considerable change in the overall attitudes of the society towards persons with disabilities. According to the authors, the "Czech society perceives the differentiation of educational pathways as appropriate and desirable" (Strakova et al., 2011, p. 3). The Ministry of Education's

measures, in the form of white paper (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports 'MEYS', 2001), to eliminate multiple track system at lower secondary level were strongly opposed by general public. Authors also reported low educational opportunities for Roma students and their segregation into special settings right from the beginning, at kindergarten level. According to an estimate 40 to 70 % of the Roma students get educated outside mainstream schools with reduced curricula-- a fact that singularly determines their place and fate in the society (Strakova et al., 2011, p. 3).

Against this difficult social and historical backdrop, the government's efforts to implement inclusive education are praiseworthy. One such instance is the recent national project *Inclusive Education Support Centres –IESC*, funded by the Czech Government and *European Social Fund* (ESF). The project was launched in 2009-2010 for three years to test and define the conditions for inclusive education in basic schools in the Czech Republic. Meanwhile, *The national action plan for inclusive education* (MEYS, 2010), *National Action Plan for Creating Equal Opportunities for People with Disabilities* (Government of the Czech Republic, 2010), and *Models of inclusive practice in mainstream school project* (Somatopedická společnost, 2011) are also under way and are sources of hope for a better future of inclusive education in the country. *Czech Society for Professionals* (<http://www.cosiv.cz/>) working in the field of inclusive education is another ray of hope for the betterment of inclusive education in the country.

2.5 CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Cultures are “moving mosaics of beliefs, values, understandings, attitudes, norms, symbols, rituals and ceremonies, preferred behaviours, styles and stances and power structures” (Day et al. in Swart & Pettipher, 2006, p. 107). Booth believes that “cultures are relatively permanent ways of life which create, and are constructed by, communities of people” (2010, P.10). Cultures sustain their existence by transference of values to the posterity through

formal and informal education (Bourdieu, 1977). According to Bourdieu, formal education involves transference of a whole range of cultural behaviour, from everyday life manners to linguistic capability, accent, tastes, fashion, etc. “It is through cultures that change is sustained but also resisted, [therefore] unless cultural change is addressed within schools or other institutions the possibilities for educational development are severely limited” (Booth, 2010, p.11).

2.6 CULTURES OF INCLUSION IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Cultures of inclusion or inclusive cultures are cultures that reflect the core values of inclusion such as equality of value and rights for all, mutual respect and acceptance of diversity, participation and collaboration of all stakeholders and compassion and care (Allan & Slee, 2008; Booth, 2010). In school settings, the incorporation of the mentioned values into the policy, practice and organizational structure results in culture that is inclusive in nature (Ainscow & Miles, 2008). For a sustainable change the process needs continuous incorporation and expression of inclusive values in all the three aspects of school life (Booth et al., 2006). This understanding of the inclusive culture deems the dynamic process of enculturation as a spiralling movement where each complete turn helps achieving a more refined form of culture.

It is nevertheless a fact that values operate through human agency. Values and beliefs constitute the perspectives of social actors and are visible in practice and interaction (Bourdieu, 1998; Gadamer, 2004). Therefore, any attempt to make the school or classroom cultures inclusive can only be successful when the significant partners will have a belief in inclusive values. Without such beliefs, any change in policy, practice and organizational structure would be superficial (Ainscow & Miles, 2008; Ainscow & Sandhil, 2010). This understanding demands to look at the teachers’ beliefs, values, and teaching practices that contribute to the creation of inclusive cultures in classroom contexts.

2.7 TEACHERS' BELIEFS AND VALUES AND TEACHING PRACTICES

Practice reflects beliefs (Bourdieu, 1998). The extent the teachers believe in inclusion would reflect in their teaching practices that in turn would create a culture of inclusion (Ainscow & Miles, 2008; Jordan & Stanovich, 2003; Jordan & Stanovich, 2004; Stanovich & Jordan, 1998). The extent the culture is inclusive would influence teachers to further strive for improvement in teaching practices and to create yet a more refined form of inclusion (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2001; Booth, Rustemier & Smith, 2003). At the classroom level, the reciprocal relationship of the teachers' beliefs and values and teaching practices in the production and reproduction of inclusive cultures is shown in the figure 2.1 below:

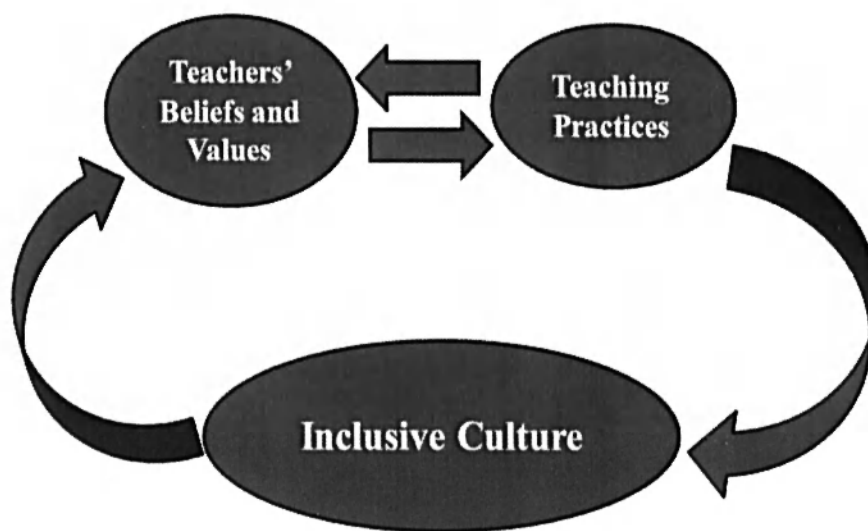


Figure 2.1- Relationship between Teachers' Beliefs, Values, Teaching Practices and Inclusive Culture

The investigation into the creation or existence of inclusivity in classroom culture, therefore, requires a focus on teachers' beliefs and values and teaching practices (Jordan & Stanovich, 2003; Stanovich & Jordan, 1998).

2.8 TEACHERS' BELIEFS, VALUES AND TEACHING PRACTICES -A LITERATURE REVIEW

2.8.1 Teachers' Beliefs and Values and Inclusive Culture

According to Broko and Whitcomb (2007), beliefs and values represent tendencies of an individual to act in a specific way and make predictable patterns of action. Booth (2010) believes that values “are fundamental guides and prompts to action. They spur us forward, give us a sense of direction and define a destination. We cannot know that we are doing or have done the right thing without understanding the relationship between our actions and our values” (Booth, 2010, p.4).

Kinsella and Senior (2008), in their research on developing inclusive schools concluded that teachers “in inclusive schools have to construct the meaning of inclusion for themselves as part of an overall cultural transformation of their school” (p. 660). The researchers also mentioned that a culture of inclusion depend on the meaning that the teachers give to the concept of inclusion and also the ways they put such understanding into practice.

Carrington and Robinson, (2004) case study of inclusive school development highlighted the need “to address professional development on two levels: reculturing of the school to reflect inclusive beliefs and values; and enhancement of teacher skills and knowledge to better address the learning needs of all students” (p. 141).

Studies have indicated relationship between teachers' implementation and active experience of inclusion and positive perspectives (Florian & Rouse, 2010; Florian, Young & Rouse, 2010; Puri & Abraham, 2004). Stanovich and Jordan (1998), Jordan and Stanovich (2003) analyzed the relationship between teachers' beliefs about inclusion and the quality of their teaching methods in two different studies. The researchers reported that “differences in teacher belief constructs are related to differences in instructional practices – a relationship

which holds for instructional interactions with both individual students and the whole class, and which predicts instructional practices for students both with and without disabilities” (Jordan & Stanovich, 2003, p.89).

Dyson, Howes and Roberts (2002) reviewed international literature about the effectiveness of school actions to promote inclusion and indicated the relationship between teachers’ commitment to the inclusive values and teaching practices as the most important factor in the realization of inclusion in schools. The schools having an inclusive culture were also found to have a consensus around inclusive values. The reviewers also noted staff collaboration, joint problem solving and cooperative learning and teaching as indicators of inclusive culture in schools.

Hajkova and Strnadova (2010c) identified that pupils’ attitudes towards their disabled peers correlate with their teacher’s attitudes towards such children. If the teacher showed a respectful attitude and positive dispositions toward children with disabilities, it was more likely that the children would accept and respect the difference.

2.8.2 Teaching Practices and Inclusive Culture

Teachers incorporate inclusive values into teaching practices to create an inclusive culture (Ainscow, 2007). Inclusion in practice depends on teachers’ belief in and commitment to the inclusive values and inclusive ideals, knowledge and understanding of inclusion and consistent physical and human support (Knowles, 2011; Horne & Timmons, 2009).

Inclusion has shifted the emphasis of teaching practice from the frontal, didactic, teacher led methods to more socially mediated, student centred, constructivist cooperative learning (Brown, 2010). Teaching practice also shows a remarkable shift from intuitive to reflective practice and teachers reflect more in diverse classrooms (McGregor, 2011; Savage, 2010; Thomas & Grigg, 2011). Research also indicates that the teachers are becoming more

attentive and responsive to discovering multiple intelligences in their students (Gardner, 2011). There is also growing evidence that differentiation in all aspects of classroom practice such as instruction, curriculum, management and assessment is useful to address individual needs and to personalize learning (Tomlinson, 2001; Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010; Westwood, 2003; Westwood & Arnold, 2004). Teaching practices in inclusive classrooms also show consideration of diversity and equality of value for all students (Hullena & Hullena, 2010; Savage, 2010; van Kraayenoord, 200; van Kraayenoord, 2007); and are non-competitive and democratic in nature (Fielding, 2001; Fielding, 2004; Fielding, 2012).

Shevlin, Kearns, Ranaghan, Twomey, Smith and Winter (2009) studied teachers' perceptions and attitudes about school practices and reported that experience of success with inclusion was the most important factor in changing teachers' attitudes and perceptions about inclusion. The study also highlighted the importance of support services for effective inclusion of children with special needs, effectiveness of team teaching, cooperative configurations and use of differentiation.

Sheehy, Rix, Collins, Hall, Nind and Wearmouth (2009) reviewed studies on the whole class subject based pedagogies. The reviewers identified five interrelated factors that support and foster academic and social inclusion, such as: 1) teachers' understanding of the aims of the program and the subject; 2) use of constructivist, interactive approaches; 3) recognition of barriers to learning; 4) use of scaffolding; 5) and contextualization of the learning in the form of real life or learner relevant problem.

Meijer (2003), Meijer (2005) reviewed research studies on inclusive classroom practices and reported several factors that make classroom practices inclusive. These factors included use of cooperative teaching, cooperative learning, collaborative problem solving, heterogeneous grouping and effective teaching.

Ainscow, Booth and Dyson (2004) concluded that the development of inclusive practice involved social learning processes. The study pointed out the need for developing a common language among practitioners to discuss practice related issues emerging in the observation of classrooms by colleague teachers. The researchers also noted that the pace of the classroom activities did not allow for much reflection and the teaching was mostly an intuitive practice involving the use of teachers' tacit knowledge.

The review of literature on teaching practices illustrates that constructivist, interactive, experiential and reflective pedagogies are useful in creating the cultures of inclusion in classroom contexts.

2.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Pierre Bourdieu's theory of action (1998) based on his concepts of 'habitus', 'capital' and 'field' portrays the society as consisting of mutually existent relationships. "Bourdieu's theory avoids dualism or one-sidedness and incorporates both the structuration of actions and thinking by objective conditions of existence and agency that results in the differentiation of social structures" (Fuchs, 2003, p.390). The change happens through reflective processes that a habitus is capable of as a result of differentiation in social processes (Fuchs, 2003). This is a theory of complexity of social processes and changes and offers a theoretical space to analyze complex social structures such as inclusion and exclusion (Klibthong, 2012). Bourdieu put his own theory to research processes of reproduction and transference of cultural arbitrariness in education systems (Grenfell, 2007). Bourdieu's lenses of 'habitus', 'capital' and 'field' suit research field of inclusion (Klibthong, 2012) and are used in this study to discuss the interrelatedness between teachers' beliefs, values, teaching practices and cultures of inclusion in classroom contexts.

2.9.1 Habitus

Bourdieu conceptualized habitus as a “subjective but not individual system of internalized structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 86). In other words the construct stands for consciousness that includes master dispositions, the patterns and processes of thought and perception, conceptions, beliefs and values internalized and accumulated as a result of encounters with economic, social and cultural processes in the objective realms (Steinmetz, 2011). Habitus is different than mere preferences. While preferences remain hidden, the habitus, although embodied, always goes public, always performs, declares its position and takes sides, and is visible in practice and therefore predictable (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008). Habitus contributes to the social reproduction by using the capitals it has accumulated during the internalization processes. However, this reproduction remains within the limits and orientations imposed by the fields that a habitus belongs. In simple words a person reproduces what she gets from her immediate and distant environment and within the conditions that her immediate and distant environment impose on her and also according to the expectations of her immediate and distant environment. A person continues to reproduce the same social reality until unless she breaks the prison of the field by reflecting on her thoughts and by being creative. The human agency to choose an alternative path develops because of the differentiation in social processes. Habitus is both the ‘structured structure’ and the ‘structuring structure’ (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 170). Bourdieu believed that the complexity of the social processes offers alternative paths to the habitus to act and react in complex and different ways through reflection.

Neither practice is a mechanical result of social conditions, nor is there a fully free, creative individual will that is independent of social conditions (Fuchs, 2003, p.390). [therefore] the creative human being

is not a pure object of social structures, he has relative freedom of action due to creativity and self-consciousness. (Fuchs, 2003, p.394)

The concept of habitus can help us understand the ways teachers conduct their practice, make particular decisions and the ways their beliefs, values and understanding influence their decisions (Grenfell, 2007). It can also help in understanding the relationships in a classroom, the actions and reactions of those involved and how such relationships help or restrain the realization of cultures of inclusion (Klibthong, 2012).

2.9.2 Capital

Capitals are of four types, the economic (monetary capital and commodities), the social (social origin and social relationships), the cultural (knowledge, skills, educational qualifications) and the symbolic (honour and prestige) (Bourdieu, 1998; Emirbayer & Johnson, 2007; Fuchs, 2003). Bourdieu conceptualized these forms of capital as “inextricably interlinked” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 180) and rejected to reduce all aspects of social life to the economic processes (Fuchs, 2003). For the purpose of this study, cultural capital is focused.

Cultural capital refers to the cultural assets such as education, skills, language, tastes etc. Cultural capital has three subtypes that are: ‘embodied’, ‘objectified’ and ‘institutionalized’ (Bourdieu, 1990a, 1990b, Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) and have critical significance for inclusive education (Klibthong, 2012). Embodied cultural capital comprises the properties of one’s habitus, acquired from the family through the “socialization of culture and traditions over time” (Klibthong, 2012, p. 73) and forms the way of thinking or character of an individual. A person can utilize his personal traits (embodied cultural capital) to make social connections (social capital) that may in turn generate monetary benefits (economic capital) and if her efforts get recognized at any level she may earn honour and prestige (symbolic capital). This is just one example of the complex workings of the capitals. The capitals can be

utilized in infinite ways for infinite productions (Grenfell, 2011; Fuchs, 2003). Objectified cultural capital denotes possession of physical objects such as works of art that can be converted into economic capital and symbolic capital (Steinmetz, 2011). Institutional cultural capital entails the possession of institutionally achieved and recognized qualifications and credentials (Bourdieu, 1990).

The capitals “govern the nature of relationships and situated wellbeing that exist in the inclusive classroom” (Klibthong, 2012). Capitals with their complex interdependency form critical elements of inclusive practice and determine both teachers’ and students’ agency, their preparedness and readiness and their interest with regards to classroom learning. Proper understanding and utilization of students’ capitals can help teachers build on that and authenticate learning.

2.9.3 Field

Bourdieu’s concept of ‘field’ is a spatial metaphor (Klibthong, 2012). It is a network of relations among objective positions (Bourdieu, 1998). Bourdieu’s field is a structured social space (Fuchs, 2003) a social arena with its own rules and legitimate opinions (Steinmetz, 2011; Klibthong, 2012) where actors interact, manoeuvre and struggle by using their capitals to occupy the dominant positions within the field (Grenfell, 2007) and to get hold of capitals valued in a specific field (Klibthong, 2012). According to King, “a field can be any structure of social relations” (2005, p. 223). Different fields in the modern social world are a result of differentiation in social activities and operate with relative independence (Bourdieu, 1998). However, fields also intersect horizontally and vertically converting the whole society into a web of interconnected spaces (Grenfell, 2007). The degree of freedom of an actor depends on habitus and position in a particular field.

Application of this understanding to classroom practice is that the teachers and students create or enter into an existing web of relations (Klibthong, 2012). They all come loaded with different capitals and distinct habitus. Their interactions with each other and their beliefs and values shape the field and in turn are shaped by the field. Every single move by any actor involved in the classroom practice is a move of change. As the actors always struggle in the field for the capitals that are valued, the classroom field can be made inclusive by making the inclusive constructs such as equity/equality, mutual respect, participation, and cooperation as valued capitals. Being leaders of classroom practice, the teachers' beliefs and values are critical in this regard.

2.10 SUMMARY

This study is perhaps unique in the sense that studies focusing teachers' beliefs, values and teaching practices in relation with inclusive culture in classroom context are nonexistent in the Czech Republic according to the literature at the researcher's disposal. The relevance of teachers' beliefs, values and teaching practices to the creation of inclusive cultures is argued in this chapter in detail and hopefully provides a clear rationale for the selection of the topic for this study. The chapter also offered a detailed literature review and precise historical background of inclusive education in both international and the Czech context to contextualize the study.

Chapter 3

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will discuss the research design in detail, including the paradigm, the approach, the methodology and the methods used in this study.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A paradigm is our world view (Cohen et al., 2011; Punch, 2009). The paradigm worked from in this research was hermeneutic phenomenology following the interpretations of Martin Heidegger (1996) and Hans-Georg Gadamer (2004). The paradigm was selected because:

- The hermeneutic phenomenology supports reflective inquiries; and as the study was designed to get reflective views and opinions of teachers about beliefs, values and teaching experiences of their classroom teaching practices the paradigm suited the study.
- The choice of Heideggerian-Gadamerian hermeneutic phenomenology was supporting the theoretical framework, based on Bourdieu's theory of action (1998), at the philosophical level. All the three philosophers believed in the indissolubility of 'Being' and rejected the dualism of objective/subjective. The researcher also shared these beliefs.

According to the ontological hermeneutics of Heidegger and Gadamer, consciousness is but a 'formation of historically lived experience' and therefore, is not separate from the world. Consequently, the world and the people are 'indissolubly related' in historical, cultural and social contexts. Thus "understanding is a basic form of human existence in that understanding is not a way we know the world, but rather the way we are" (Lavery, 2003, p.8). Epistemologically, the relationship between the knower and what can be known is contextual, historically situated, and dialogic. Methodologically, there is "an

insistence on the limited role of method and the priority of understanding as a dialogic, practical, situated activity” (Jeff, 2009) through hermeneutic cycle and fusion of horizons.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

Robson (2011), Punch (2009) mentioned that the interpretive qualitative research approach supports exploration and interpretation of culturally/historically situated realities. The researcher decided to use the qualitative interpretive approach due to its support for a holistic view of reality, inductive nature of analysis and descriptive and interpretive form of data presentation (Punch, 2009; Robson, 2011; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2008).

3.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Laverty (2003) argued that a “methodology is not a correct method to follow, but a creative approach to understanding, using whatever approaches are responsive to particular questions and subject matter” (p.16). The hermeneutic phenomenology is not only philosophical paradigm but also a methodology that can guide through the process of research (Willis, 2007). It was selected due to its suitability for studies aimed at describing and interpreting the meaning as held by the participants. By deciding for the hermeneutic phenomenology as a methodology, the researcher made sure to use specific methods that allowed the maximum opportunity for reflection, insight and openness to the experience (Holroyd, 2007). The choice of hermeneutic phenomenology also made it obvious to the researcher that the research needed to follow from and reflect the underlying philosophy, throughout the research process (Holroyd, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008; Laverty, 2003).

Before discussing the research methods in detail, I would like to briefly describe two important notions in Heideggerian-Gadamerian hermeneutic phenomenology that would recur throughout the study- the *hermeneutic circle* and the *fusion of horizons*.

3.4.1 HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE

The notion of *Hermeneutic Circle* occurs in hermeneutics both ontologically and methodologically. Methodological interpretation of hermeneutic circle implies a methodological condition or process of understanding where understanding the meaning of the whole and understanding the meaning of the parts of the text are always inter-related and inter-dependent. (Schwandt, 2007). See figure 3.1

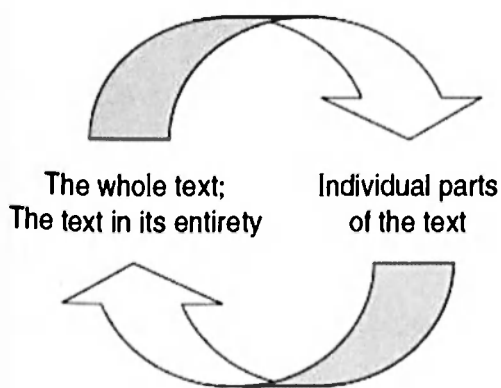


Figure 3.1 *The Hermeneutic Circle as Method of Interpretation* (Schwandt, 2007, p.134)

The ontological interpretations of the notion offered by Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer are that:

the circularity of interpretation is not simply a methodological principle but an essential feature of all knowledge and understanding.

The hermeneutic circle thus signifies the universality of hermeneutics—interpretation is a ubiquitous and inescapable feature of all human efforts to understand. (Schwandt, 2007, p.135)

Therefore, any effort to interpret, to understand always occurs in a context of previously achieved understandings, interpretations based on cultural traditions, and belief systems. In this sense every human being always belongs to history on the one end and on the other to the particular objects that at time one wish to interpret. This interpretation is aptly portrayed by Gallagher (as cited in Schwandt, 2007, p. 106) in the figure 3.2:

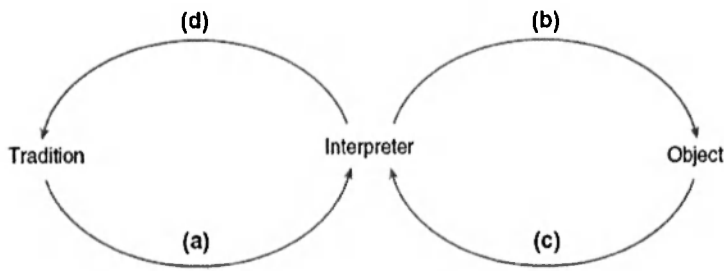


Figure 3.2 The Hermeneutic Circle in Philosophical Hermeneutics (Gallagher as cited in Schwandt, 2007, p. 106)

3.4.2 FUSION OF HORIZONS

Gadamer (2004) believed that understanding is historically effected/effective consciousness. In other words understanding or interpretation occurs always from and within a horizon. The horizon is historically situated epistemic limit that makes perspective possible. “Just as the literal horizon delimits one’s visual field, the epistemic horizon frames one’s situation in terms of what lies behind (that is, tradition, history), around (that is, present culture and society), and before (that is, expectations directed at the future)” (Barthold, 2012). In Gadamer’s own words a “horizon is. . . something into which we move and that moves with us. Horizons change for a person who is moving” (2004, p. 304). The research is an effort to be on move and transform one’s horizon.

3.5 RESEARCH METHODS

Qualitative research involves the use of a variety of instruments/methods to generate data around the specific research questions (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006). However, hermeneutic phenomenological studies mainly concentrate on data generation instruments/methods that make the dialogue possible between the participants and the researcher. This accounts for the selection of interviews as a main instrument for data generation in this study. The study also used direct observations and non participant observations as secondary sources of data generation. The researcher also used reflective journal to keep a record of his reflections after each interview and observation (Laverty, 2003; Schwandt, 2007).

3.5.1 PILOT STUDY

In order to determine the overall feasibility of the research project and to test the interview guide, a limited pilot study with one teacher was conducted as recommended by Cohen et al. (2011) and Robson (2011). The interview continued for one hour and fifteen minutes. It was conducted in English and was electronically recorded. The following lessons were learnt from the pilot study:

- The interview place should be confirmed in advance and should be noise free;
- The interview guide was found over structured and lengthy leaving less room for conversation and detailed replies. The guide was modified in the light of experience.

3.5.2 Sampling

A sample is a systematic and strategic choice of a group of people... that qualifies the criteria for participation in a specific study (Cohen et al., 2011; Robson; 2011). The study selected the participants purposefully considering the aims and design of the study, by using Criterion sampling (Gall et al., 2009; Cohen et al., 2011) - a kind of purposeful sampling. Criterion sampling involves selecting participants on the basis of predetermined criteria of importance (Robson, 2011). In the light of the aims of the study, the following criteria were set for participant selection:

- The participant teachers should be practicing inclusion in their classrooms.
- The participant teachers should be primary teachers.
- The participant teachers should have at least three years of teaching experience.
- The participant teachers should be working in a basic school, preferably an inclusive school, in primary section, preferably as class teacher and less preferably as subject teacher. It was assumed that as the class teachers have a longer and continued contact

and relatively more time with the children, they could be more influential in creating the culture of inclusion in the classrooms- hence would provide data rich information.

- The participant teachers should be able to converse in English because the study was conducted using English language.

However, as the study progressed and the teachers were contacted, it was realized that the criteria needed revision. It was difficult to find experienced teachers who could converse in English and have been practicing inclusion in their classrooms. The criteria, therefore, was revised to include teachers who fulfilled the rest of the criteria but could not converse in English. A population of five teachers was selected to participate in the study, through consultation and recommendations of the research supervisor, the English/Czech language interpreter who herself was a seasoned researcher in the field of inclusive education and by talking to head teacher and teachers. Two out of the five selected teachers could converse in English and were teaching in an inclusive school setting. The services of the volunteer interpreter (already mentioned) were acquired to conduct interviews with the Czech speaking teachers who were working in schools that were not officially designated as inclusive schools. The referees however, reported that the teachers were practicing inclusion and the subsequent school visits and interviews also confirmed the referees' statements. A description of participant teachers is as follows in table 3.1:

Sr. No	School Type	Position at School	Status/Level	Years of Experience
1	Basic School	Primary Teacher/Class Teacher	Class Teacher / Class 4	17
2	Basic School	Primary Teacher/Class Teacher (same school as teacher 3)	Class Teacher / Class 2	13
3	Basic School	Primary Teacher/Class Teacher (same school as teacher 2)	Class Teacher / Class 1	12
4	Inclusive Basic School	Primary English Teacher/Educational advisor	Subject teacher for English at primary and secondary level	16
5	Inclusive Basic School	Primary, English Teacher	Subject teacher for English at primary and secondary level	12

Table: 3.1 : Description of Teachers/Schools

3.5.3 Interviews

A dialogue is not merely a matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one’s own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we were.

(Gadamer as cited in Lake, 2006, p. 85).

The final model of understanding Gadamer arrived at was that of conversation. Kvale and Brinkmann (2008) have also pointed towards such sharing of views by using the term *interview* for the interviews. The researcher also used the interviews to engage with other horizons (Gadamer, 2004). As recommended by Kvale and Brinkmann (2008), and Gibson and Brown (2009), the study used in-depth semi-structured interview because it is “communicatively rich mode of exchange in which the gestural aspects of the discourse are visible to the participants” (Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 94). Another clear advantage of interviews is that the data can be recorded using audio devices. Also data generated by using other methods, such as observation, field notes and reflective journals can be utilized during and after the interview process as a resource to enrich the discussion and analysis (Gibson & Brown, 2009). Five such interviews in one to one settings were conducted to generate primary data. Information about the duration and time of the interviews is as follows:

Participant	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Teacher 4	Teacher 5
Duration	81 minutes	76 minutes	70 minutes	66 minutes	60 minutes
Month	May 2012	June 2012	June 2012	June 2012	June 2012

Table 3.2: Interview Month and Duration

The interviews were made using interview guide that contained six main questions based on the literature study. (The interview guide is attached as Appendix A). Straightforward and open questions using simple language were asked that invited the participants to offer their views in detail. This strategy helped keeping a focused, relaxed and conversational tone

throughout the interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008). The sequence of questions in the interview guide followed the flow of natural conversational. Follow up questions and prompts were used when needed (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008). The researcher made sure that the participants were well informed about the aim of the study, the duration of interview, the overall structure of the interview and had enough time to think and respond properly. The participants were given a brief about the study a few days before the interview (Copy attached as Appendix B) and were also given an opportunity to ask questions before, during or after the interview. The interviews were electronically audio- recorded. Two Interviews were transcribed verbatim. In three interviews, where the participants answered the interview questions in Czech language, the interpreter's version of answers to the interview questions was transcribed verbatim.

The interviews were conducted at work places of the participants by mutual agreement. Kvale and Brinkmann (2008) recommend the use of interviewees' work place for their ease during the interview process. A written consent, duly signed by the participants, to participate in the research process was obtained before conducting the interviews. The participants were informed about their rights before the interview (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008). The details of such rights and the issues of anonymity will be discussed in the ethical considerations section of this chapter.

While there are many advantages of the interview, some disadvantages of this method were also observed. One such disadvantage personally faced by the researcher was that the researcher had to travel distant places to conduct interviews that incurred extra costs, not covered by the study budget. Gibson and Brown (2009) have mentioned this disadvantage.

3.5.4 Observation and Field Notes

“In the hermeneutics phenomenological method ... observations are necessary to construct a field text, providing important context and source of insight for the narrative data” (Cohen et al., 2000, p.64). This study also made use of direct observations (Robson, 2011) and non participant observations (Robson, 2011, Punch, 2009) to construct a field text, to understand the context and to provide supporting insights into the primary data. A formal permission for observations was part of the study brief provided to the teachers with the written consent form. Two schools were visited along with other colleagues and the permissions for visits were administered by the Department of special Education, Charles University Prague. The other two schools were contacted through interpreter who confirmed partial or complete school visits, classroom observation as well as interview timings with three teachers on behalf of the researcher.

Direct observations enabled the observer to collect field notes and understand the settings and the context of interviews, during the complete or partial school visits. The observations were noted chronologically by the date, time and place on each entry. Direct observations were guided by two major questions:

- How does it feel like being there?
- How does the school reflect the inclusive ethos?

Non Participant observations (Punch, 2009; Robson, 2011) were made by observing classroom practice of teacher 1 and teacher 5 for 70 minutes and for 35 minutes respectively and by using an observation guide adapted from Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011). The observations were selective and structured and were focused on particular questions and predefined areas of interest (Robson, 2011, Punch, 2009). The major areas of focus during the non participant classroom observation were as follows:

- Overall ethos of the classroom;
- Participation of students in the classroom activities;
- Students' attitudes towards each other and towards teacher and vice versa;
- Students equal access to learning materials and physical facilities within classroom;
- Collaboration/ group work among children during the lessons.

The field notes and observations were noted and coded separately from the observers' comments (Cohen et al., 2011), around the predefined areas of interest. Further notes were taken "as soon after the observation as possible" to prevent events being forgotten (Krathwohl, 2009, p. 272). The observation notes and comments were later used during the analysis process as secondary data. The observations also helped triangulation of the data and enhanced rigor of the study.

While observation is an instrument that provides the researcher an opportunity to access and understand the context, the researcher faced problems because of his unfamiliarity with the Czech language. The observer had to rely mainly on non verbal cues such as gestures, facial expressions, body language and overall ethos as felt during the observations. Despite the disadvantages, the observations proved a useful instrument, yielded rich supporting data and helped getting familiarized with the context.

3.5.5 Reflective Journal

The hermeneutics phenomenology stresses upon reflection throughout the research process and recommends maintaining a reflective journal (Schwandt, 2007; Willis, 2007). Reflective journal is commonly used to record different reflections that help analyzing the primary data. The reflective journal in this study had the following types of entries and served the following purposes: a) Theoretical notes that were interpretive in nature and served as initial attempts of meaning making right after the observations and interviews ; b) Personal notes

consisted of personal reactions to different situations, experiences, theoretical and practical decisions about research work; c) Methodological notes consisted of reflections about the choice and use of methodology (Neuman, 2007).

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis in qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological studies is based on the interpretive principle of hermeneutic circle and denotes a process of moving from the parts of experience to the whole of experience in a repetitive back and forth fashion to achieve the depth of engagement and understanding of texts (Laverty, 2003; Schwandt, 2007; Willis, 2007). Kvale and Brinkmann (2008) suggested that this spiralling movement ends when the interpreter or researcher arrives at sensible meanings without inner contradictions. The goal of data analysis was “a thick description that accurately captures and communicates the meaning of the lived experience” (Cohen et al., 2000, p.72). “In ... hermeneutic phenomenology, data can include the researcher’s personal reflections on the topic ” (Laverty, 2003, p. 18), however, this study used researcher’s reflective journal only to understand the context of data entries. Reflective journal was not made part of the data.

The analysis was based on study questions by drawing “together all relevant data for the exact issue of concern to the researcher” (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 552). The strategy was used to preserve the coherence of the presentation. According to Cohen et al. (2011) the strategy “returns the reader to the driving concerns of the research, thereby ‘closing the loop’ on the research questions” (p. 552). All data (interview transcripts, field notes, observation notes) and researcher’s reflective journal were read and re read to locate references that pointed to the phenomenon in question 1 and question 2 of the study. The analysis was inductive and the reiterative process of hermeneutic circle was ensured using *Constant Comparative Method* of Strauss and Corbin (as cited in Robson, 2011). Open and Axial coding were used to systemize the analysis. Constant comparative method is commonly associated with grounded

theory where the aim of the study is theory generation. However, it can also be used in hermeneutic phenomenological studies due to its reiterative characteristics. The analysis started with the familiarization and immersion process and ended with the generation of themes.

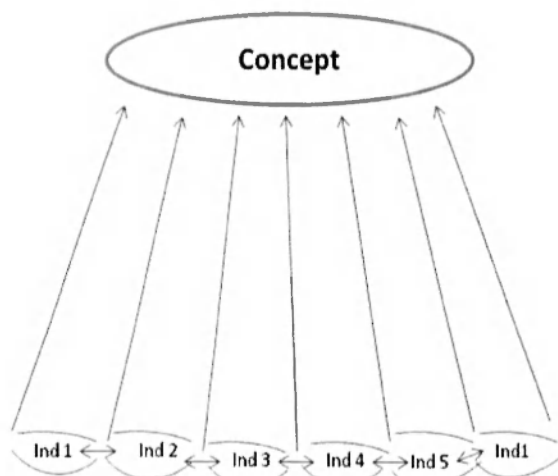
3.6.1 Familiarization and Immersion

Considerable time was spent in transcribing and familiarizing with the data. The process started with the data generation and continued in a reiterative way throughout the study (Willis, 2007). By the time, the data analysis stage was reached; the researcher already had developed a preliminary understanding of the data.

Before starting the analysis transcripts along with related classroom observations, field notes and entries of researcher's reflective journal were separated for each teacher. All data related to an individual teacher was put together. Five sets of data were prepared and labelled as T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5.

3.6.2 Open Coding

Each set of data was taken one by one and was split into paragraphs (units of analysis). Each unit of analysis was read and re read to find indicators with regards to question one and question two of the study. Tentative labels were given to different indicators such as indicator 1, 2 and so on. All indicators across the data were transferred to an excel sheet with relevant extracts from data and were read and re read to find connections among different indicators. The 'concept- indicator model' (Punch, 2009) was used to establish connections. Two sets of concepts were generated relating to two study questions. Each concept had various indicators underneath as shown in figure 3.3 below:



*Figure 3.3: Concept-Indicator Model
Adapted from (Punch, 2009)*

3.6.3 Axial Coding

The axial coding was done to put axis through the data (Punch, 2009). The two sets of concepts that emerged in the process of open coding were taken separately. Concepts in each set were compared and analysed to find convergence in the concepts. The concepts were connected using the coding principle of “seeing things as different aspects (or dimensions or properties) of a common category” (Punch, 2009, p.187). Each set of concepts collapsed into themes, linked to study questions. The analysis yielded two sets of themes. The first set of themes contained thick descriptions of teachers’ beliefs and values that teachers believed create a culture of inclusion in their classrooms. The second set of themes contained thick descriptions of teaching practices that teachers believed create a culture of inclusion in their classrooms. Figure 3.4 below explains the axial coding operation:

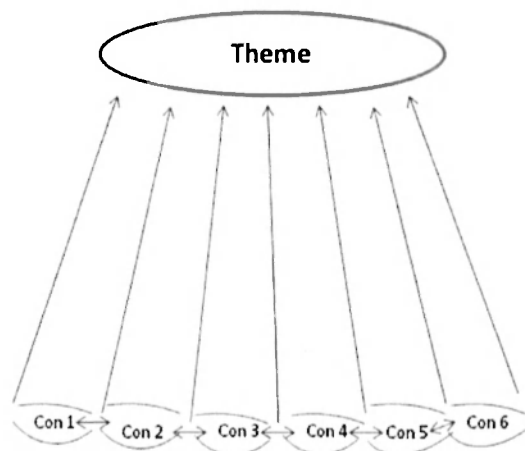


Figure 3.4: Concepts to Themes Adapted from (Punch, 2009)

3.6.4 Interpretation

After making sure that sufficient engagement with data was achieved and the themes were induced, the researcher started interpreting the findings. The findings were interpreted by using literature on the topic and Bourdieu's (1998) theory of action. The interpretation of the findings constitutes the final written account of this research study.

3.7 QUALITY ASSURANCE

Every researcher seeks to produce trustworthy, credible and consistent knowledge in an ethical fashion (Cohen et al., 2011). However, various conceptualizations of these notions exist within the interpretive qualitative traditions and it is quite possible that what is considered a serious limitation in one tradition might be a huge benefit in another. Role of researcher is one such example. For instance a phenomenological inquiry expects the researcher to corner her pre-understanding, on the contrary, a hermeneutic phenomenological inquiry expects the researcher to not only bring such pre-understanding forward but to use it throughout the research process (Laverty, 2003; Schwandt, 2007; Willis, 2007). In the same way, in a hermeneutic phenomenological study, the trustworthiness and credibility of a study depends on the rigour and reflexivity applied in conducting the study and on the clear description of the process. Lincoln and Guba (as cited in Laverty, 2003) "described the goal

of credibility as demonstrating that the inquiry was conducted in a manner to ensure the topic was accurately identified and described. The use of in-depth description of complexities of experiences and interactions needs to be embedded in the data and the final text” (p.23).The reproducibility of hermeneutic phenomenological studies is always considered limited given the philosophical framework such studies work in (Laverty, 2003; Willis, 2007; Schwandt, 2007; Cohen et al., 2000). As time is considered singularly effective variable in the change of horizons, a fresh understanding and interpretation is recommended in this philosophical paradigm. However, the consistency in terms of reproducibility as well as trustworthiness and credibility of this study were assured by taking following steps:

- **Reflective Journal:** The researcher maintained reflective journal to keep track of his own reflections and understanding; an honest approach and disposition was maintained throughout the study at all levels and stages.
- **Triangulation:** The study made use of methodological triangulation by using multiple methods to generate data such as: In depth interviews for the generation of primary data; classroom non participant observations and direct observations during school visits to generate secondary data. Researcher also used reflective journal to contextualize data generated through the mentioned instruments.
- **Data verification/Member Checks:** The study used member checks after induction of concepts and themes for the purposes of data validation. The research participants were sent the themes along with extracts from the data via email and were given adequate time to go through the themes and provide their feedback. In this way the researcher also maintained contact with the participants over a period of time.
- **Peer Review:** After removing all identifiable information of the participants the research themes along with transcriptions and interview guide were shared with a peer

to validate the analysis process and findings. The process also helped ascertain the coherence and relevance of the themes in relation to the study questions.

- **Independent Reader Check:** After removing all identifiable information of the participants the transcripts, themes and interview guide were also shared via email with two PhD scholars followed by Skype conversation sessions. Both the independent readers expressed overall satisfaction about the relevance of the themes with the transcribed data and the interview guide. They also offered their expert suggestions in a few instances that were accepted with gratitude and were incorporated in the study.
- **Adequate Engagement with Data Collection and Data Analysis:** Adequate time was spent in generating, transcribing and analysis of data. Details have already been mentioned in this chapter.
- **Audit Trail:** Detailed account of procedures, important decisions and selection and use of different instruments in executing the research is provided in this chapter and in the preceding chapters.
- **Rich, Thick Descriptions:** Rich and thick description and interpretation of data can be found in the subsequent chapters.

3.8 THE ROLE OF RESEARCHER

In hermeneutic phenomenology the researcher is an active part of the research process. The preconceptions and pre-understanding of the researcher are considered a necessary condition in the process of inquiry and in the occurrence of knowledge and are not set aside (Cohen et al., 2000; Holroyd, 2007; Laverly, 2003; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008; Willis, 2007). Researcher shared the hermeneutic belief that one cannot get rid of one's historicity and that one always looks at something from somewhere- a particular perspective / horizon, without

which no seeing is possible. That is to say that perspective is not only a permanent condition of knowledge but also the only way of its occurrence. The understanding is thus temporal and contextual and an open and honest disposition is what makes knowledge possible and is the only thing a researcher can assure. The researcher, therefore, kept a reflective, honest and open disposition throughout the study.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical guidelines provide a framework to guard against harmful effects of a research study. Ethical guidelines also help define the rights and responsibilities of all involved in the research process (Cohen et al., 2011; Punch, 2009). The professional integrity was maintained, by providing the participants a brief about the study containing the aims, objectives, expected duration and procedures of the study (Cohen et al., 2011) (Please refer to Appendix B). The brief also contained the approximate duration of the interviews, the possibility of classroom observations. The brief also had information about any potential risks / costs and benefits of the study to the participants. Participants' rights were clearly mentioned in the brief as well. It was made clear that the participants had a right: to refuse participation at any time; not to answer any question if they wished so; of access to the transcribed data at any stage of the research; to know the outcomes of the study; and of anonymity. They were also furnished with the email and phone contacts of the researcher and the supervisor in case of any further input, issues or complaints. The participants read and consented to the content of the brief by duly signing the informed consent form. All the mentioned steps were taken in line with the APA Ethics Code as mentioned in Swenson (2007).

The research proposal was approved by the Special Education department Charles University Prague. The study did not use any identifiable indicators throughout the process to ensure anonymity of the participants and the schools (Punch, 2009; Cohen et al., 2011). Except the

supervisor of the study who was provided a copy of the data, no one else had access to identifiable data. Data was saved and kept in a password protected personal computer. Possible limitations of the researcher or the study were clearly mentioned in the last chapter of this study. The researcher's role in the research has been discussed in detail before and was in line with the ethical values of the research paradigm. Three further ethical principles of "non-maleficance, beneficence and human dignity" (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 75) were also given due consideration throughout the research process. All possible efforts were made to make the study beneficial for the participants and the humanity in general. The procedural details of such efforts have been discussed throughout this chapter.

3.10 MODIFICATION OF STUDY QUESTION

The sub question 1 of the study was modified as per the recommendations of supervisor to maintain clarity of purpose and coherence of study design. The previous version of sub question 1 was:

How do teachers define inclusive culture?

The modified version is the one already presented in the chapter 1 of the study. The modification was supported by the questions included in the interview guide and was approved by the supervisor.

3.11 SUMMARY

This chapter provided detailed information about the overall study design, including information about research paradigm, the research approach, the methodology and the specific methods used in the study. The chapter entailed record of methodological decisions made during the course of the study. The chapter also provided a clear view of researcher's philosophical beliefs underpinning the whole process of research. The subsequent chapters will focus on the findings, discussion of the findings and conclusions of the study.

Chapter 4

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will present and discuss the findings of the study. The researcher will first describe his pre-understanding of the issues that could be of interest with regards to this study. The workplaces (schools) where the participants of this study work will also be briefly described to provide a context to the participant teachers' discourses. The chapter will then continue with the presentation of the major themes of the study focused around the two sub questions of the study.

Question 1: What beliefs and values do teachers think contribute to creating cultures of inclusion in the classroom contexts?

Question 2: What teaching practices do teachers think contribute to creating cultures of inclusion in the classroom contexts?

4.2 PRE-UNDERSTANDING OF THE RESEARCHER

The hermeneutic phenomenological tradition of inquiry stresses the importance of researcher bringing his pre understanding, his horizon and his perspective forth that made seeing things possible for him. The whole written description of the study, the study itself with the choice of topic, the questions and the theoretical and methodological frameworks all indicate a particular mind at work and constitute a unique perspective- the researcher's perspective.

The researcher believes in the indissolubility of consciousness and that the subjective exists through the objective and hence is inseparable from it. The core of being is unity and consciousness is a historically lived and understood experience- thus understanding is Being. Application of this belief to the research means that the researcher cannot imagine thinking and acting without a perspective. He expects the same from the participants of this research study, and this is what makes the core of this study. This research followed from this belief

and was based on the assumption that no human activity is without perspective (that itself is a condition of flux instead of a rigid and finished product); and hence education is value laden. The culture of inclusion is but a set of certain values that when put into practice create an environment that reciprocates among and reflects the values that it is based on. If the stakeholders in the classroom practice do not believe in the values that create such culture the culture cannot exist and resultantly inclusion cannot happen. Without such culture, even if the students with disabilities or disadvantage are placed and integrated in mainstream schools, it cannot be called inclusion. Moreover, the culture has relevance for everyone in the school and cannot and should not be limited to a specific group of students. Any such effort would create yet another ghetto within the mainstream school leading to exclusion in the name of inclusion. Thus this researcher believes that inclusive education is the expression of and belief in certain values in practice and policy at all levels. For a further look into the researcher's thinking process, the reader is requested to have another look on section 2.2 and 3.8 of this written account.

4.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOLS

This section provides important details about the schools of the participants of this study. The policy and overall ethos of the schools might have been an important influence in shaping teachers' *habitus*, i.e., their beliefs about and their understanding of inclusion and inclusive culture and might have influenced their *field*, i.e., teaching practices and relationships within the classroom context. The implications of such influences will be discussed in the 'discussion' section. The information about schools is based on two sources, the notes collected during the school visits (direct observations), the interviews with the teachers and informal conversations with teachers or head teacher. The direct observation was guided by two questions:

- What does it feel like being in this school?

- How does the school reflect an inclusive ethos?

4.3.1 School 1 (Teacher 1)

School 1 is a basic school in the Czech Republic. Teacher 1 works in this school. The school is not officially designated as an inclusive school. The school provides education to a range of students including those with disabilities.

During the school visit it was noticed that the school building was spacious. The school displayed students' work in the galleries and pathways mentioning positive comments and personal details of students. The students were curious about the observer in a friendly way. Children came to shake hands and tried to socialize with the observer asking his name and the country he was from. Students tried to make use of their English speaking skills to know more about the observer. Students offered help to the observer at the vending machine. General cleanliness was observed in the school. A self regulated discipline during the break time was also observed. The school's policy has given pupils the right of access to information and the right to express their opinions in matters relating to their education. The school celebrated different occasions important in students' life. The school was also reported making use of peer activities to address issues such as bullying, family problems, offering cigarettes and addictive substances. Peers were motivated to effectively use free time to help a friend. The school's *Environmental Education, Training and Awareness* programme provided knowledge and skills to understand human relationships with the environment and environmental issues from a local and global perspective. The overall impression of the school was *open and friendly*.

4.3.2 School 2 (Teachers 2 and 3)

School 2 is a basic school in the Czech Republic. Teachers 2 and 3 work in this school. The school is not an officially designated inclusive school. The school provides education to a range of students including those with disabilities.

The school was bright and spacious with happy faces around. During the school visit, the researcher had a chance to attend the session where students presented their research work. This was part of the school initiative *Students as Researchers*. The students' choice of topic, handling and presentation of their research were remarkable. The school had students' work displayed in the galleries and pathways. The students' work was also printed in the calendar form and was of professional quality. The researcher was informed by the second head teacher and the head teacher that school promotes all types of abilities, ranging from excellence in mathematics to arts and social sciences. The school uses cooperative learning and student centred pedagogies as a school policy. Initiatives such as students as leaders in the learning and students as researchers were marked achievements of the school. At the time of the visit, the school was running different projects involving students, teachers and parents to eliminate authoritarian approaches towards teaching and to include students in the decision making processes and provide them space to express their opinions freely and constructively. The researcher was also informed that the school invited students to contribute in making rules for the school and for the classroom learning. The school also involved students in the preparation of learning materials used in cooperative learning. The overall impression of the school was *democratic and cooperative*.

4.3.3 School 3 (Teacher 4)

School 3 is a basic school in the Czech Republic. Teacher 4 works in this school. The school is an officially designated inclusive school. The school provides education to a range of students including those with disabilities.

The school was visited along with some other colleagues. The school has a modern big building and spacious playgrounds and swimming pool. The students escorted and assisted the researcher for the school tour. During the tour, it was noticed that the school had a multi ethnic population; students from different ethnic origins and countries were studying in the school. The same diversity was displayed on the walls of galleries and pathways where student made sketches, painting and pictures were displayed, showing life in different countries and societies of the world. The students' were friendly, welcoming and helping. The school had different tracking systems within the school. Gifted students were separated from their peers after a competitive examination to sit in a different class after the lower secondary. The classrooms were organized as suitable for didactic teaching- desks in rows. Two classrooms were visited and classroom sessions were attended for 20 minutes each. The teaching activity in both the classrooms was found following traditional model of teaching. However, the breadth of the observation does not allow suggesting that the overall teaching was only didactic and traditional and that it was the same in all classrooms in the school. The overall impression of the school was *diverse and competitive*.

4.3.4 School 4 (Teacher 5)

School 4 is a basic school in the Czech Republic. Teacher 5 works in this school. The school is an officially designated inclusive school. The school provides education to a range of students including those with disabilities.

The school was visited twice; the first time along with some other colleagues and the second time individually to conduct an interview with the teacher. The observations mentioned here are based on field notes collected during the first visit; as well as some impressions from the second visit. The school is situated in two buildings, one a huge old building and the other a new one. The old building was visited during the school visit. The galleries and pathways were decorated with a mix of student made and commercially made and bought artefacts and pictures. The students were friendly but not curious. The teachers were polite. One classroom was also observed for 20 minutes during school visit. The teaching was found to be traditional and didactic; however, during the observation of the teacher 5's classroom in the same school, teaching practice was found as a mix of different pedagogic approaches and strategies including cooperative, reflective and didactic approaches. The school worked with different track systems and the gifted students were separated after a competitive examination from their peers and were provided instruction in separate classrooms. The school also used a lot of competitive activities such as quiz competitions, sports and arts competitions. The overall impression of the school was competitive.

4.4 THEMES OF THE STUDY

This section presents the themes of the study. The themes are divided into two parts after the two sub-questions of the study. The researcher has tried to present the participants' responses and observation notes to the maximum possible extent.

4.4.1 Question 1: Beliefs and Values

The themes included in this section represent participant teachers' views about the values and beliefs that they think contributed to the inclusivity of their classrooms. The values and beliefs presented in this section do not represent a set of objective values, although, the readers may positively relate to certain aspects of the themes as useful in their own contexts.

Before presenting the themes the researcher wishes to present a quote from a teacher's interview transcript that alone tells the whole saga.

I think that the first thing is the personality of the teacher - his points of view, how he feels- the things that are important, may be for his thought and he brings the same to the classroom. (Teacher 4)

Theme 1:

Equality and Respect

the treatment of the student to be a real personality - the same level as the teacher is . It does not mean being friends together or something like this, but to feel the God in the second person. (Teacher 4)

The statement provides the gist of two fundamental values in inclusive education- equality and respect. Equality stands for treating everyone as having the same value and worth and does not mean treating everyone as same or in the same manner. Respect is an openness of mind in understanding and valuing the similarities and differences in others and a positive way of treating the otherness in others. The aforementioned expression of Teacher 4 combined both at a higher spiritual level. Teacher 1 expressed the same views in a different way: "I respect in them [students] as an equal partner" (Teacher.1). Another teacher extended the orbit of both the values from teacher-student relationship to the relationships at a whole class level: "The teacher should take all students as equal partners, both between themselves and with the teacher" (Teacher.3). The same teacher further elaborated on what she meant by treating the students as equal partners as: "not thinking of students as inferior and not manifesting himself or herself as somebody in power" (Teacher.3). What she appeared to mean by this statement was that a teacher should not behave in an authoritarian fashion with students. That is to say that the students do not only have equal worth among

themselves and with the teachers as equal partners but they also have equal rights and freedom to express their views and opinions and take part in decisions that affect their lives. Such understanding of equality and mutual respect could not be achieved in the presence of traditional concepts of childhood that considered a child as either a naive, incomplete being or a mischievous miscreant that needed to be sorted out through schooling. The understanding of rights and mutual respect showed that teachers have shunned the age old conceptualization of childhood and have incorporated new understanding based on changed values. Such is the way this understanding finally finds expression:

You can say the same thing with a little bit different voice and it may mean completely something else. So when I really feel my respect in my communication to the student, I think it is the basic thing.

(Teacher 4)

During the observation of the classroom practice of teacher 1 and teacher 5, the researcher noticed that students were involved in the learning process and every student was given equal opportunity to contribute in the discussions. The teachers showed respect for every input made by the children. As a result, the students seemed to have a sense of belonging and a sense of self worth. It was noticed that students were confident that their opinions would be taken seriously as teacher 5 also pointed out during the interview that "I think, to support children to be creative, we need to listen to them so they suggest what they want to do". It was quite evident that the teachers had set the *field* well for the students to follow suit:

"Children will respect one another among the whole class the same way I behave to them"

(Teacher 4).

Theme 2:

Trust

The second important value that teachers reported as an important factor in the realization of cultures of inclusion in the classrooms was the absence of fear and the presence of trust in teacher.

“They should trust me and believe me that I know what I want to achieve with them”
(Teacher 4).

Teacher 1 added that

“It is the absence of fear. They must not fear. If they fear they will not have any achievement”.

Trust is correlated with confidence and self efficacy beliefs and in interpersonal dimension with trustworthiness of someone. The fear of teacher’s authority and the fear of failure, the fear in interpersonal communication, the fear to express one’s opinion, the fear of rejection and other facets of fear were seen as the absence of trust either in the self or in the others; and were reported by teachers as harmful for the students’ sense of belonging to the school and their readiness and interest in learning. On the contrary, the possible outcomes of the presence of trust and the absence of fear were elaborately discussed as:

The children must not be afraid between themselves or in front of the teacher, so that they can solve a problem, a task, for that they have to be able to talk among themselves. They must not be afraid to ask and express their opinion or stay quiet if they want this, be able to defend it, but also be able to compromise, to admit other person’s opinion.

(Teacher 3)

Teachers were of the view that trust in teacher and in their own abilities enabled students to communicate with teachers and other adults and to inform them about their problems and issues of concern; that when addressed in time and in a satisfactory way developed more trust. “When you are fair, they then try to be fair. When they trust me it makes the things easier” (Teacher 4). Teacher 3 argued that trust was a fundamental value to transform the classroom into a cohesive learning community:

They must be able to ask the adult help if needed as well and be able to express what is problem. The teacher should be able to make classroom cohesive society so that everybody is included. (Teacher 3)

Clarity in the communication and empathy/care with and among the students were also pointed out as important factors in developing trust between the teacher and the students.

I like when it is clear between me and the student; they should know really my aims, they should understand the whole process and they should trust me and believe me. Communication from heart to heart, it is not about oral communication only...because I don't think the words mean always the same. (Teacher 4)

Teacher without empathy is not a good teacher. I think people without empathy should not be teachers. It is not an immediate task. You have to try to get to know the children. (Teacher 5)

I am able to feel the sorrow of something bad happening to a child and also my students may feel the same. (Teacher 3)

Theme 3:

Cooperation/Rejection of Competition

Another unanimously agreed upon and reported value that contributed in the realization of the cultures of inclusion in the classrooms of the participant teachers was the development of cooperation among students and the rejection of competition. Teachers vehemently opposed any competition among students. During the classroom observation Teacher 1 reported that “the children are competitive, because there is an element of perceived need of competition with a friend or a classmate; and society is competitive”. During the interview, however, she confirmed her commitment to reject competition at all levels and told the researcher that as a teacher she had sensitized her students to keep a check on competitive behaviours and discuss it in the class when a competitive behaviour is noticed.

I don't insert any competitive activities. If there is a sign of competitive behaviour then there is a discussion between me and the children whether it is ok; Sometimes, I start the discussion and sometimes the kids when they observe competitive behaviour.

(Teacher 1)

Teachers 2 and 3 also reported putting a curb on competition among students and supporting sharing and cooperation instead. “We don't use competition. We don't use competition as a school. Within the school and within the classroom there is no competition” (Teacher 2).

Teachers believed that every child should experience success and that every child was capable of being successful according to her particular capabilities. “We really work on that every child experiences a success and we really look at showing each child can be successful”

(Teacher 2).

During the classroom observation, a competitive activity organized by the Teacher 5 was observed among two teams of students. During the interview Teacher 5 explained that she strictly believed that there must not be any competition among students at individual level, because she did not want losers and winners in her class. However, she said “I make some competition rather in a bigger group; then may be one group wins, one group loses”. According to her such a competition did not affect the individual self-esteem and self efficacy beliefs of the students. Teacher 4, however, rejected the idea of competition at any level. According to her, the only competition justified and permissible was a competition with one’s own self. She was of the view that she did not believe in comparing “the children one to another but to compare the person to his own abilities, to his own progress, to his own level of understanding” (Teacher 4). According to her, the competition was harmful for the friendship that she valued the most among her students. “I think for me, the friendship is very important in the class and I want to support it” (Teacher 4).

Theme 4

Acceptance for diversity with a capability perspective

Inclusion I understand as an idea for acceptance for the child by the classroom and the teacher in which the special label of the child disappears. (Teacher 2)

The acceptance of difference and diversity by the teacher and the students alike was pointed out by teachers as an important value to create a culture of inclusion in the classroom contexts. “For me, the definition is that we are making no differences with anybody” (Teacher 5). Acceptance of diversity was further linked with acceptance and utilization of multiple intelligences and capabilities of every individual student. The teachers’ discourses

were focused on different strengths and abilities of the students rather than on their disabilities. Students' strengths were viewed as a starting point in the process of learning.

I try to find out what are they successful at. So the acknowledgement of their strengths, something they can do well, this is something that really pushes them; my goal is to get everybody to his or her maximum. (Teacher 1)

We are looking for what students know and not for what they don't know. (Teacher 3)

Teachers reported that the belief in the capabilities of every student resulted in high expectations for all children; a belief that made the special label disappear and helped identify each student as a complete human being:

It is not that I know that I have these two dyslexia children and as I enter the classroom I give these two children the different task, it is only after I see the problem; because sometimes the kids who are diagnosed would manage, so I will let them do with the whole classroom. When I see the problem with the child, I have this stuff prepared and I would give it to help them. So it is not the prescribed that is important. (Teacher 1)

During the observation of the classroom practice of the teacher 1 the researcher noticed that the student of Asian origin and two other students diagnosed as having dyslexia were treated with equal respect by the teacher. They were confidently contributing in the discussion going on in the classroom on the topic "what is happening in the nature". They were made part of the groups where they contributed in the group learning. The teacher also kept an eye for these children to see if they needed her help. The other children in the classroom also seemed

to have an acceptance for difference, and no negative activity was aimed at the mentioned students during the observation.

Such acceptance of diversity and acknowledgement of different capabilities finds expression in celebrating and prizing every talent as teacher 3 rightly pointed out:

"If somebody is good at playing piano, the whole class will go visit to see the success of that child" (Teacher 3).

4.4.2 Question 2: Teaching Practices

Most of the teachers expressed their opinions that particular strategies and practices depended on the need of a particular student or group of students and the teacher's preference and understanding of what was needed in a specific context and at a particular time. However, some approaches and practices were identified that contributed to developing cultures of inclusion in classroom contexts.

I think that special strategies are difficult to say because when you will have opinions or views like this then anything you will do, you do with a respect for second person, it is the way you are talking to the person. It is the way how you organize the examination; it is the way how you judge the results. (Teacher 4)

The researcher found that such approaches and practices fall into three groups representing the three main areas of classroom practice: a) democratic classroom management; b) student centred teaching and learning in the classroom; c) fair assessment.

Theme 1: Democratic Classroom management

"We are trying to get the children in-charge." (Teacher 2)

This statement alone speaks volumes about the general approach towards students and the cultures of inclusion in the classroom contexts. When describing their practices that contributed to creating the cultures of inclusion in their respective classrooms, most of the teachers pointed out the fact that students should be included and involved in making decisions and rules about their learning and behaviour in the classrooms to develop a sense of ownership of the school and the learning process. Some of the activities and practices that were used to involve students in decision making processes, to share responsibilities and leadership with them, included seminars at classroom level and across grades, community circles and open discussions within whole class or within specific groups to decide about rules of behaviour and work. For example Teacher 2 reported using special seminars at school level or discussions within the classroom inviting students to discuss and to make decisions about rules of work and behaviour. Teacher 3 described using community circles and open discussions in the whole class to make rules of behaviour, to engage students in decision making process and to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility. (See Appendix C for some extracts from Teachers' interview transcripts on the topic)

The idea of distributed leadership and responsibility recurred especially in the discourses of Teachers 2 and 3 and to a certain extent in the discourse of Teacher 1. However, during the classroom observation, the classroom of teacher 1 also reflected the same ethos. The students were involved and very passionate about the classroom activities. They seemed to have developed a sense of ownership towards the classroom and the school. The whole atmosphere was charged with positive values of trust and a sense of belonging. The management of classroom as a shared responsibility reflected a confidence in the children as responsible and complete persons having worth and rights.

Theme 2: Student-centred Teaching Practices

Various teaching approaches and practices such as reflective learning, reflective teaching, individual attention and a balanced use of personalization/ differentiation were reported as helpful in the promotion of inclusive values mentioned previously; however, the ones that were referred to by most of the teachers included cooperative learning and cooperative teaching and inductive teaching models. Teachers were also conscious about the importance of understanding and using child's previous knowledge and interest (the matured psychological functions) and also the range of their subjective capabilities (the maturing psychological functions) as a starting point in learning.

Teachers emphasized on using the strategies and approaches in a diversified way and according to the needs of the students. The observation of the classrooms of teachers 1 and 5 also confirmed the use of varied pedagogic approaches resulting in increased involvement of students in the learning process. Both the teachers used an assortment of cooperative grouping as well as teacher led and inductive activities. The inductive teaching of Teacher 1 can be seen in the following description from her interview transcript:

The whole learning in my classroom is one big discussion, posing the questions and seeking the answers and this is extremely important. I am not instructing the children how to do the task; rather it is the children who instruct me. This is my general attitude how I include every child in the learning process. (Teacher 1)

The diversification in teaching approaches and strategies was used to ensure students' engagement in the learning process.

"I engage by changing different methods, the methods that are amusing to them and in which methods children are interested" (Teacher 2).

There was a realization that all children do not learn the same way. Children learn differently and therefore the teaching practices should be diversified to address the diversity of the learning styles:

Some of the children learn more by listening; some of the children learn more by their own action, some by speaking, by moving and by being visible. But I trust that nature is so clever that gives to the children the abilities they will need and what they were born for.

(Teacher 4)

(For related extracts from the interview transcripts refer to Appendix D)

Teachers' discourses also reflected the importance of knowing the students' prior level of knowledge and interest and their subjective range of capabilities in enhancing the participation and inclusion of all children in the learning process and achievement. The following simple but shining example of such understanding describes the gist of all such discourses:

If I would give an inappropriate task to the child then we are running the risk that the children will ridicule the child that didn't achieve anything. (Teacher 3)

This statement tells the story of the formation of teacher's *habitus*- the story of the decisions and considerations in the past that resulted in this understanding. The statement tells that the teacher was concerned about the students' success, self-esteem and sense of security that could be at stake as a result of one wrong move or decision by the teacher. It also shows that the teacher knew that an appropriate task is the one that sets such goals that are achievable with considerable effort and guidance. The teacher was well aware of the fact that to give such a task she needed to know the capabilities of the student and for this purpose she might

have to consult others such as parents, other teachers and the specialists in case a child had any impairment or a different pedagogic or psychological need. A retrospective reference to these processes can be seen in the following two statements:

In my classroom there have been diagnosed children with behaviour problem and ADHD, I knew about it before the girl entered the first grade, so I met the parents before the school year started and we discussed together. So, I had maximum information how it worked, how was the situation in kindergarten and at home. (Teacher 2)

We look at their own experience and build on their own experience and we are trying hard to start from what the children know and to start from the real situations that are around them. (Teacher 2)

The above statements also indicate a fusion of the social constructionist approach of working within the child's zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) and the social constructivist experiential learning approach of John Dewey (1938). Teacher 5 also referred to the same fact as: "Information about them is very very important to include in learning. If I don't know interests and abilities how can I teach them" (Teacher 5). The activities and practices that were found helping to ascertain the students' level of prior knowledge and interest (the matured psychological functions) and the range of their subjective capabilities included community circles, open discussions/ mind mapping, students' reflections/ comments/ feedback and teacher's reflective practices. Some instances from the interview transcripts showing the use of these practices can be seen as attached in the Appendix E.

Cooperation among students in all areas of learning especially in creating the learning materials for each other within classroom and across grades was also reported as an important practice in creating cohesive community and maximizing participation of all students in the

classroom learning. (See Appendix F for teachers' views about Cooperation among students for different purposes)

Teachers reported using heterogeneous groups to include students of varied levels of preparedness and interests and also to engage students having different learning styles. "In groups different learning styles correspond with each other and they learn better" (Teacher 5). Cooperative activities and different types of grouping arrangements were also used to make students realize that difference is the foundation of creation:

We use diversity for group work and we connect all the children including children with diagnosed problems; also we work with all of the children so that they know why the child has a different aid, why sometime the child can have other work and also we educate children with child to child interaction. (Teacher 2)

Cooperative learning activities were also used to develop friendships, care for each other and a sense of community among students: "Sometime I simply let them work together on the basis of their friendship, because I think for me, the friendship is very important in the class and I want to support it" (Teacher 4). "In a group children themselves realize who needs help" (Teacher 3).

Teachers also made use of differentiation and personalization, however, a caution was noticed in teachers' views about differentiation and teachers seemed to suggest that the use of differentiation of materials, tasks, goals and strategies must be based on authentic pedagogic need and should not follow from the medically defined categories and labels. Most of the teachers described that they usually prepared an activity, task or goal keeping in mind all the students in the class. They pointed out that they used differentiated task/activity/goal only when a student could not manage individually or within a group. Such student could be a

diagnosed student or any other student. In other words “it is not the prescribed that is important” (Teacher 1). (See Appendix G for some more extracts from teachers’ interviews)

Cooperation among teachers was identified as another helpful practice in creating cultures of inclusion at the school level. It was also pointed out that cooperation among teachers can also help understanding the strengths and weaknesses of teaching practices in the classrooms and can be used to improve classroom practice. Cooperation among teachers was also identified as an important factor in the inclusion and achievement of children with learning difficulties and gifted children in the classroom learning process. Teachers reported sharing of information, joint working on learning materials and visiting each others’ classrooms for evaluative purposes. (See Appendix H for some extracts from teachers’ interviews)

Teacher 4, however, emphasized that the affective and moral support that teachers could extend to each other in the realization of inclusion in the schools and classrooms:

It is important to share the materials, but what is more important is to share the support, because the work with the children at the school is a difficult process and when you are just on your own you can become lost, you can become disappointed, you can be down sometimes because it is very very demanding. (Teacher 4)

Theme 3- Fair Assessment

Fair/differentiated and ongoing assessments (formative) were pointed out as important factors for the development of sense of security, confidence and trust among students. A fair assessment was also said to develop the respect for the teacher.

“When you are fair, they then try to be fair. When they trust me it makes the things easier” (Teacher 4).

Teacher 1 reported ongoing assessment to achieve the mentioned ends. She also stated that she differentiated among children on the basis of their starting point in their learning that was different for each individual case because of different family backgrounds and also because of other social and cultural influences.

“My criterion is always different for different students with different abilities” (Teacher 1).

Teacher 5 pointed out that marks and assessment should be used as suggestions for further improvement and not to declare or confirm some inborn cleverness or dumbness.

“Marks just show him some limits in some parts and what to do with that and not something that he is not clever but it is sometimes very complicated because parents sometime want children to bring just A”.

“I show him that to make a mistake is not something bad, a mistake is something you have to work with” (Teacher 5).

Teacher 4 simply rejected the idea of comparing children with each other. According to her any comparison or competition was against the inclusive values of equality of worth and therefore should be avoided. From her view point, achievement is not a comparable phenomenon. Achievement and success could only be measured against one's own starting point and progress. That was the only way of understanding, accepting and celebrating the diversity of talents and capabilities, the nature had endowed to different human beings. That was the only way of doing justice.

the way of judging their tasks or the outcome from the point of view from their own person approach and of their own person progress in their study, so not to compare the children one to another but to compare the person to his own abilities, to his own progress, to his

own level of understanding, let's say a week ago a month ago.

(Teacher 4)

They know that I really don't have the same measure for all of them; I simply differ. (Teacher 4)

And finally the assessment should be used to appreciate the progress of a student against her own starting point because such is the way of doing justice with their efforts as Teacher 4 said:

“to appreciate that they were trying is the justice to them” (Teacher 4).

4.5 SUMMARY

This chapter presented themes of the study centred on two sub-questions of this study. The ensuing chapter will discuss the themes in detail.

Chapter 5

This chapter constitutes the final written account of the study and is intended to discuss the themes of the study, to present the conclusions, to highlight the possible limitations of the study and to make recommendations for future studies and necessary actions.

This study was aimed at investigating the values, beliefs and practices that the participant teachers believed contribute to creating the cultures of inclusion in classroom contexts. The study therefore had no intentions to explore the sources and factors that help form the particular values and beliefs of the teachers. However, the study also investigated school culture as a possible influencing factor in the formation of values and beliefs.

5.1 DISCUSSION

5.1.1 Teachers' Beliefs and Values and the Cultures of their Respective Schools- The Nature of Relationship

Habitus or consciousness, apart from biological and genetic inputs, entails different kinds of accumulated *capitals* that are a result of continuous interactions and encounters with one's immediate and distant environment. The immediate environment includes the family, the workplace and all close relations. The distant environment includes social class or group and the society at large. Both immediate and distant environments constitute the *fields* (Bourdieu, 1977, 1998; Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008; Fuchs, 2003; Steinmetz, 2011). During the accumulation of different kinds of capitals a person also learns those objectives the world around her makes possible for her and not to yearn for what could not be available to her. In other words, the social conditions or the objective world produce dispositions that are compatible with the social order (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008). Divergences from the standards prevalent in the family, workplace, social class and/or society are commonly dealt with resistance, and the social agent or the person responsible may face exclusion from the

familial, communal and social circles. However, the complexity of the social processes in advanced societies often offers alternative paths to the individual habitus to act and react in complex and different ways through reflection; and to develop norms, beliefs and values that might be quite contrary to the ones favoured by the mainstream society. The more a society is diversified the more are the chances for the development of individual habitus that might have the capacity to reflect and change the social order by finding out an alternative path. The strength and liveliness of a society thus lies in its capacity to allow such liberties of thought and reflection (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986, 1998).

This explanation of Bourdieu's theory of action shows that school or work places can play an important role in the formation of participant teachers' habitus. It is quite possible that the teachers' practice may reflect the values and beliefs that are part of school culture and are adopted as a school's policy. A closer look at the discourses of Teachers 2 and 3 indicates the influence of the *cultural field* of the school on their beliefs and values and teaching practices. School 2 where these teachers worked is not an officially designated inclusive school; however, the school practices cooperative learning and teaching as a school policy. The discourses of Teachers 2 and 3 were concentrated on constructs such as collaboration, cooperation, rejection of competition, democratic liberties and rights and cooperative configurations in practice. This led to inclusion being seen as cooperation and collaboration and acceptance for diversity. The most prominent element of the resultant culture in the classrooms of Teachers 2 and 3 was therefore cooperation. The values and beliefs of Teachers 2 and 3 seemed influenced by the culture and policy of the school. It is likely that the said teachers' incorporated the beliefs and values of cooperation/collaboration and democratic acceptance for diversity into their habitus by being a part of the school culture.

School 1 where Teacher 1 worked was also not officially designated as inclusive school. However, the researcher's impression about the school during the school visit was that the

school had an aura of friendliness and openness. The same aura was reflected in Teacher 1's classroom. However, during the interview the Teacher 1 revealed the fact that she actually started practising inclusive education long before even it was made part of the national education curriculum in 2004. Her practice was considered exemplary within the school and she had won awards for her teaching both within and outside the country. Teacher 1 also mentioned helping other teachers in the school in their practices. It seems that in School 1, Teacher 1 was the agent of change, playing an important role in changing the overall cultural field of the school. However, how she accumulated the capitals –the values and beliefs that helped her lead the change did not come up in this study. She appears to be a perfect subject of a case study as an agent of change.

School 3 was an officially designated inclusive school. However, the school was found running a separate track for so called gifted students who were separated after a competitive examination. The school also organized competitive activities among students. Such practices are not commonly considered as inclusive practices (Ainscow and Miles, 2008; Ainscow and Sandhil, 2010; Booth et al., 2006, Booth, 2010). Teacher 4 who worked in this school contrarily rejected outrightly the idea of comparing students with each other and twin track system in the school. She believed that the only comparison justified was the competition with one's own self. She seemed to believe in an idea of progress that was contrary to the beliefs prevalent in the culture of her workplace. However, her beliefs and values regarding the acceptance of diversity were also shared by her immediate field- the culture of her workplace. In this case the formation of the habitus of Teacher 4 seemed both influenced by the school culture and also by her personal background. The field she created in her classroom appears to be far more inclusive in nature than the field of the school culture.

School 4, where Teacher 5 worked was also officially designated as inclusive school. However, during the school visit this school was also found running different tracks for so

called gifted students. The school was also found encouraging competition among students. The views and teaching practices of Teacher 5 showed a mix of acceptance and divergence from the overall school culture. The habitus of Teacher 5 appeared to be influenced by both the cultural field within the school and her personal background; because some of her beliefs, values and elements of practice were far more inclusive than the overall cultural field within the school.

The above discussion illustrates three kinds of relationships between the individual habitus of participant teachers and cultural fields at school level, such as: a) the individual habitus might be influenced by the cultural field of the school and may reflect the values and beliefs prevalent in the school culture; b) the individual habitus might be formed outside the cultural field of the school and may influence the cultural field of the school in revolutionary fashion, hence effecting changes in the whole school culture; c) the individual habitus may share certain beliefs and values prevalent in the cultural field of school, but may diverge in some instances and may follow the values and beliefs accumulated outside the school cultural field. Such habitus might not be able to effect change in the cultural field of school, however, the classroom cultural field can be influenced and orchestrated by the beliefs and values of the habitus.

5.1.2 Teachers' Habitus: Teachers' Beliefs and Values and the Culture of Inclusion in Classrooms

The concept of habitus can help us to understand the ways teachers conduct their practice, and also the ways their beliefs, values and understanding influence their decisions (Grenfell, 2007). It can also help in understanding the relationships in a classroom, the actions and reactions of those involved and how such relationships help or restrain the realization of a culture of inclusion (Klibthong, 2012).

As mentioned previously the analysis of the study has outlined four fundamental beliefs and values that the participant teachers think contributed in creating the culture of inclusion in their classrooms. The reflection of the same fundamental values was also evident in teaching practices in the analysis. For instance, the teachers' belief in the equality of worth and value and equal respect of/from all students found expression in their democratic classroom management, shared and distributed leadership, and inductive and student centred pedagogies. Their belief in trust was reflected in their efforts of personalization of learning, encouragement of cooperative activities and rejection of competition and comparison among students. The acceptance of diversity with a capability perspective was fused into the teaching practice of the participant teachers that made the special label of a student disappear and helped the teachers identify each student as a complete human being, resulting in high expectations for all children. The belief in cooperation and the rejection of competition among students made the teachers design learning activities in ways that curb competition and increase cooperation and friendship among students. Different kinds of grouping as well as sensitization of students against competition were also identified in the analysis that seemed to follow from this particular belief. Thus, the data analysis clearly pointed out a relationship between the teachers' values and beliefs and their teaching practices. (Bourdieu, 1977, 1998). These findings are in line with the conclusions of Jordan and Stanovich (2003), and Stanovich and Jordan (1998) about the relationship between teachers' views about inclusion and the quality of their teaching methods in two different studies. The researchers reported that "differences in teacher belief constructs are related to differences in instructional practices – a relationship which holds for instructional interactions with both individual students and the whole class, and which predicts instructional practices for students both with and without disabilities" (Jordan & Stanovich, 2003, p.89).

Although the present study do not provide enough evidence for the fact, however, it appears logical to infer that the isolated instances of inclusion at classroom level that do not appear to be supported by the overall culture or the policy of the school, were a result of the teachers' personal commitment and positive and successful experiences of inclusion. For instance, in the previous section it has been discussed that Teacher 1 started practising inclusion long before the inclusive education was accepted officially in the Czech Republic and certainly in a school that is still not an officially designated inclusive school. Teachers 4 and 5 were practising inclusion in their classrooms in ways that were far ahead and different than the overall culture of their schools. These teachers' commitment and continued practice might be a result of their active and positive experiences of inclusion. Studies show a link between teachers' successful experience of inclusion and their commitment to the inclusive ideals. A study of the teachers' attitudes and perceptions in the Irish context yielded the same results. The researchers reported that the experience of success with inclusion was the most important factor in changing teachers' attitudes and perceptions about inclusion (Shevlin et al., 2009). Other researchers (Florian & Rouse, 2010, Florian et al., 2010, Puri & Abraham, 2004) have also reported relationships between teachers' implementation and active experience of inclusion and positive perspectives. Dyson et al. (2002) reviewed the international literature which also indicated the relationship between teachers' commitment to the inclusive values and their teaching practices. It seems justified to infer that successful inclusive experiences may also have influenced positively Teachers 1, 4 and 5's commitment with inclusive education.

Kinsella and Senior (2008) concluded in their research on 'developing inclusive schools' that "teachers in inclusive schools have to construct the meaning of inclusion for themselves as part of an overall cultural transformation of their school" (p. 660). The researchers also mentioned that a culture of inclusion depends on the meaning that the teachers give to the

concept of inclusion and also the ways they put such understanding into practice. Reports and literature related to the Czech teachers' understanding about inclusive education refer to the fact that the inclusive education is mainly understood as educating special needs children in integrated settings (Strnadova & Topinkova, 2010; Strakova et al., 2011; Strnadova & Hajkova, 2012). However, the understanding of inclusion and inclusive culture of the most of the participants of this study is in marked contrast with the previously reported understanding of inclusion among teachers in the Czech Republic. The meaning that the participant teachers of this study have given to the concept of inclusion and inclusive culture are broader, rights based and encompass every learner in the classroom. The teachers insistence in looking at the child as a complete personality, and identifying strengths and vision of success and achievement for every student according to his/her capabilities are signifiers of an understanding of inclusion that includes but is not limited to a specific group of students. The analysis also pointed out that the meaning of inclusion inscribed in the habitus of the participant teachers of this study also reflected in the cultural fields in their classrooms and in the exploration and utilization of the different capitals of their students in the teaching practices.

5.1.3 Setting the Field: Teacher's Beliefs and Values and Classroom Management

The field is a spatial term used by Bourdieu and denotes a web of relations among objective positions (Bourdieu, 1998; Fuchs, 2003). The teachers and students create or enter into an existing web of relations (Klibthong, 2012). They all come loaded with different capitals that form their distinct habitus. Their interactions with each other and their beliefs and values shape the field and in turn are shaped by the field. As the actors always struggle in the field for the valued capitals (Fuchs, 2003; Grenfell, 2007), the classroom field can be made inclusive by making the inclusive constructs such as equity/equality, mutual respect and trust and participation and cooperation valuable for the students.

The researcher remembers from his own past experiences as a teacher, that the first matter of concern to him after entering the classroom was to set the rules of engagement and behaviour. Once the rules of work and behaviour were decided and the field was set, the learning and teaching became easier. The challenges in this regard that the researcher faced during his teaching practice and that almost all the participant teachers also pointed out were: a) what fundamentals should the rules of engagement and behaviour be based upon; b) how such rules should be decided; c) and by whom? The questions are of utmost importance and are directly related to one's understanding of the purposes of education and learning in the school. A minimalistic and reductionist understanding of education that limits education and learning to matters of economic gains would most likely base the rules of engagement and behaviour on the values that are cherished in corporate and business life of the society, for instance the value of competition- where the justification is based on the ends and not the means (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2006a, 2006b; Ainscow, Dyson & Kerr, 2006). On the contrary a broader vision of life and purposes of education- one that views life as a result of differentiation in social processes and does not limit the success to the economic achievement in life (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986, 1998) would certainly find some different values to base the rules of engagement and behaviour upon.

Teachers' discourses and the consequent analysis offered a clear picture of the fundamental values that provided basis for rules of engagement and behaviour in the participant teachers' classrooms. Teachers pointed out the following four fundamental values to set the field: 1) equality and respect; 2) trust; 3) cooperation and rejection of competition; and 4) acceptance of diversity with a capability perspective. The choice of such values as fundamentals for the rules of engagement and behaviour indicated the teachers' vision of the purposes of education. The analysis also showed that the rules of engagement and behaviour based on these fundamental values were democratic and were made with mutual consultations between

teacher and students; or through open discussions and deliberations; or by reaching at a consensus. It was also clear that in all the instances, with varying degrees of autonomy and freedom, the students were made part of the process. The field set with their cooperation and collaboration was lively and active and reflected the same values in students' as well as in teacher's actions. Literature on classroom management, student engagement and active participation (Edwards & Watts, 2010; Gay, 2010; Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Myers & Sugai, 2008) and literature on democratic education (Fielding, 2001, 2004, 2012) also indicates that the participation and involvement of students in matters concerning their learning and in making the rules of behaviour results in increased engagement and ownership of the learning and school and affects learning outcomes.

The analysis also indicated teachers' cooperation in creating the inclusive field across grades and within classrooms. Teachers collaborated with each other to facilitate and include the gifted children as well as children with learning difficulties. Sharing of learning materials, visiting and monitoring each others' classrooms, open discussions and affective and moral support were identified as important aspects of cooperation among teachers that contributed to creating cultures of inclusion in classrooms. These findings are in line with the conclusions of Ainscow et al. (2004). The pointed out the need for developing a common language among practitioners to discuss practice related issues emerging in the observation of classrooms by colleague teachers. Meijer (2003), and Meijer (2005) reviews of literature also pointed out cooperation among teachers helpful in creating cultures of inclusion in schools.

5.1.4 Capitals: Teaching Practices and the Culture of Inclusion

The capitals denote the characteristics of an individual and are accumulated through interactions with one's immediate and distant environment. The ways teachers make use of their own capitals and those of their students determine the inclusivity of their teaching

practices. Capitals govern practice (Klibthong, 2012). The exploration of students' different capitals includes the investigation of their personal and academic backgrounds, their values and beliefs, their levels of readiness and interest, their strengths and their weaknesses, their preferred or un-preferred learning styles, and the range of their capabilities. The exploration of different capitals of students depends on the teacher's different capitals, for instance his understanding and beliefs about education and his professional expertise. The utilization of different capitals of the students also entails the use of a teacher's different capitals such as teacher's values and beliefs, her understanding of the process and objectives of education, her pedagogic knowledge and professional expertise, her lively and friendly disposition, etc. Capitals, therefore, with their complex interdependency form elements of practice and determine both teachers' and students' agency, their preparedness and readiness level and their interest with regards to classroom learning (Klibthong, 2012). Proper understanding and utilization of students' capitals can help teachers build on it and authenticate learning. The analysis showed that the teachers explored and utilized different capitals of their students to increase participation and achievement of all learners in the learning process.

It was evident in the analysis that teachers were aware of the fact that children come from different social and economic backgrounds and have accumulated different capitals that form their distinct habitus. Analysis also showed that teachers explored students' cultural capitals, by using different strategies such as mind mapping, open discussions, reflective feedback, and reflection on the teachers' part. These strategies helped teachers understand the students' cultural capitals or students' level of readiness and their interest and the range of their capabilities with regards to different learning tasks and helped creating the culture of inclusion in their classrooms. Shabani, Khatib and Ebadi (2010) mentioned that the use of afore-mentioned strategies help identify a child's previous knowledge and also the proximal range of development to make the learning targeted and effective. Teachers' exploration of

different capitals of students also correlates with Gardner's (2011) conclusions that the teachers are becoming more attentive and responsive to discovering multiple intelligences in their students. Exploration of different capitals of students also indicate that teaching practices are showing a remarkable shift from intuitive to reflective practice and that the teachers reflect more in diverse classrooms (McGregor, 2011; Savage, 2010; Thomas & Grigg, 2011). A particular focus on the exploration of *embodied cultural capital* of the students was also identified in the analysis of some of the teachers' comments. Teachers reported making efforts to consult parents and other professionals to explore influences that formed the ways of thinking or character of a particular student.

The analysis also indicated that teachers not only explored but also utilized different capitals of their students for different ends. Teachers used different pedagogic approaches, especially the social constructivist and interactive approaches such as cooperative learning and teaching and inductive teaching. Teachers also made use of experiential learning as well as frontal, didactic teaching. Different kinds of formations and groupings were also used such as whole class frontal teaching, peering and heterogeneous and expert grouping to engage and utilize different capitals.

According to Brown (2010) inclusion has shifted the emphasis of teaching practice from the frontal, didactic, teacher led methods to more socially mediated, student centred, constructivist cooperative learning. The analysis, however, showed that although teachers used experiential, cooperative and inductive pedagogic approaches, they did not discard the efficacy of frontal and didactic pedagogy entirely. The participants of this study emphasized on the balanced use of different pedagogic approaches. None of the teachers reported using only one pedagogic approach based on the understanding that diversity of learners and learning styles demanded diversified teaching practices. These findings are, nevertheless, in line with the systematic reviews of inclusive classroom pedagogies conducted by Meijer

(2003), Meijer (2005), Ainscow et al. (2004) Sheehy et al. (2009). All the mentioned reviewers concluded that constructivist and interactive pedagogies and use of effective teaching that includes all the afore-mentioned pedagogic approaches, groupings and formations used by the participant teachers, can help inclusion happen within classrooms.

Analysis also revealed that teachers based differentiation and personalization of learning materials, learning process, assessment and learning goals on different capitals of the students. In case of gifted as well as less able students the previous cultural capitals were explored and utilized to provide differentiated learning experience. However, as is evident in the analysis, teachers were cautious in the use of differentiation and personalization to avoid possible exclusionary effects. Tomlinson (2001), Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010), Westwood, (2003), and Westwood and Arnold (2004) all advocate the use of differentiation in all the mentioned areas of classroom practice. However, these staunch advocates of differentiation and personalization have also recommended remaining cautious in the application of personalization. The findings of this study corresponded well with the views of the mentioned scholars that an individual pedagogic/psychological or social need that can be met within a group or whole class formation should not be differentiated and personalized because such practices may end in exclusion. The only area where the participants of this study reported the use of differentiation without any caution was the differentiation in assessment. The analysis pointed out teachers' recommendations to use fair/differentiated and formative assessment to avoid comparison among different abilities and capabilities of different students. Teacher 4 particularly insisted that achievement is not a comparable phenomenon, therefore, achievement and success should only be measured against one's own starting point and progress. The teachers appeared to believe that the only way of understanding, accepting and celebrating the diversity of talents and capabilities that the nature had endowed to

different human beings was to test them against their own starting point and their progress thereof.

The teachers' capitals and the classroom cultural field made it possible for the teachers to explore and utilize students' capitals as a starting point in the process of learning (Steinmetz, 2011); and made the special label disappear, helping identify each student as a complete human being (Ainscow & Miles, 2008; Booth, 2010). Such valuing and utilization of students' capitals consequently resulted in high expectations for all students (Klibthong, 2012).

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

The discussion of relationship between the teachers' beliefs and values and the cultures of their respective schools support the following three conclusions:

- a) That the culture at school level may influence the teachers' beliefs and values. As a result the cultures of their respective classrooms may reflect the same values;
- b) That an individual teacher's commitment and belief in inclusive values may also effect change in the whole school culture and lead to the teacher becoming an agent of change;
- c) That the individual teacher's commitment and belief in inclusive values may not effect change in the school culture, but may create a culture of inclusion in her respective classroom. This also implies that inclusive cultures may exist in isolated classrooms of schools that may not have a culture of inclusion at school level.

The discussion of teachers' beliefs and values and the cultures of inclusion in classrooms support the following conclusions:

- d) That the teachers' belief in the values of equality and respect, trust, cooperation/rejection of competition and acceptance of diversity contributes to creating cultures of inclusion in classrooms;
- e) That the teachers' beliefs in such values also find expression in their teaching practices;
- f) That the teachers' understanding of inclusive education as rights and values based education for all, encompasses every learner in the classroom and not just learners with special educational needs and thus contributes to creating cultures of inclusion in classroom contexts;
- g) That the successful experiences of inclusion may positively influence teachers' commitment to the inclusive ideals.

The discussion of teacher's beliefs and values and classroom management support the following conclusions:

- h) That the teacher's decisions in managing the classroom on the basis of equality and respect, cooperation, trust and acceptance of diversity make students' participation possible in the decision making processes, which in turn affect students' engagement and ownership of the process positively and contribute to creating cultures of inclusion in classroom contexts.
- i) That the cooperation among teachers, by joint working on learning materials, by sharing learning materials, by visiting and monitoring practice in each others' classrooms and by extending moral support to each other contribute to creating cultures of inclusion in classroom contexts.

The discussion on teaching practices and culture of inclusion leads to the following conclusions:

- j) That the teachers recommend using diverse pedagogic approaches in a balanced way to engage students with different levels of readiness and interest to create the culture of inclusion in classrooms. The constructivist and interactive pedagogies such as cooperative and inductive teaching and learning and experiential learning along with different kinds of group formations such as peer groups and heterogeneous groups support inclusion and engagement of different learning styles and different levels/areas of readiness and interest. However, the frontal and didactic teaching approaches may also play an important role in making classrooms inclusive and therefore should not be discarded outrightly.
- k) That in order to create the culture of inclusion in classrooms, teachers consider it important to explore and utilize students' level of readiness and interest and the possible range of their capabilities. The strategies and activities that reportedly help in this regard include mind mapping, open discussions, reflective feedback from the students, reflection on the teachers' part, meeting with parents and collaboration with other teachers and professionals.
- l) That differentiation and personalization in learning materials, learning process and learning goals should be used in a balanced way and only in cases where individual pedagogic/psychological or social needs and goals cannot be met within a group or whole class formation.
- m) That the differentiated and formative assessments provide an opportunity to both students and teachers to view achievement, success and progress with respect to a learner's particular starting point and abilities and help overcoming low self esteem and negative self efficacy beliefs among students; hence contribute to including learners of varied abilities in the learning process with satisfaction and achievement.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above described conclusions the study makes the following recommendations:

- a) More studies should be designed to explore the beliefs and values of teachers practicing inclusion in their schools and classrooms. The findings of such studies should be published and disseminated among school teachers to make them believe that inclusive education is doable.
- b) Studies focusing on teachers' understanding of inclusion should also be designed to find out the understanding of the construct among larger populations of teachers. In this regard survey studies followed by case studies could be a useful strategy. The case studies should focus on the views of teachers who understand inclusion in broader terms and believe in a cultural change rather than mere integration of a specific group of learners in the mainstream settings.
- c) The study also recommends incorporation of the broader meaning of inclusive education in the teacher education curriculum to make teachers believe and understand that special needs education is not the sole reference point for inclusive education and that inclusion includes all children with and without disabilities or so called special needs.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

During the execution of the study, the researcher faced the following limitations that hindered researcher's learning and that might have impacted the outcomes for the study:

- The study used the services of interpreter to conduct interviews with three participants who could not speak English. The data generated was also transcribed by using the interpreter's responses to the interview questions. This might be a limitation given the nature and design of the study.

- The researcher's unfamiliarity with the Czech language and culture also posed problems in understanding conversations during classroom observations and school visits. The observer had to rely mainly on non verbal cues such as gestures, facial expressions, body language and overall ethos as felt during the observations. Had it not been the case, the researcher might have had learned more during the process. The researcher would therefore like to repeat the study in an English speaking context or in his own country/language.
- The sampling of the study was based partially on the recommendations of different people that might have a particular understanding of inclusion and might have referred to schools and teachers that correspond well with their understanding of inclusion. Following such recommendations might affect the findings of the study.

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Appendix A

Interview Guide

1. What do inclusion/ inclusive culture mean to you?
2. Do teacher's views and beliefs count in creating an inclusive culture? What personal qualities a teacher needs to create an inclusive culture in his classroom?
3. How do you make sure that students feel secure, respected and welcomed in the classroom?
4. How do you make sure that students feel ownership of the space, learning process, and learning outcomes?
5. What do you do to create a cohesive learning community in the classroom?
6. How do you make sure that every student in the class is participating and achieving his/her maximum?

Appendix B

Research Participant Information and Consent Form

Researcher: Sheikh Jamal Abdul Nasir

You are invited to take part in this research project. This consent form contains information about the research project. Its purpose is to explain to you as openly and clearly as possible all the procedures involved in this project so that you can make a fully informed decision whether you are going to participate.

Please feel free to ask questions about any information in the document. Once you understand what the project is about and if you agree to take part in it, you are requested to please sign the Consent Form. By signing the Consent Form, you indicate that you understand the information and that you give your consent to participate in the research project. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep as a record.

The purpose of the study:

The goal of the proposed study is, to identify and describe the beliefs and values and various approaches and strategies teachers find helpful in the realization of inclusion in classrooms in Czech context.

What kind of information will be expected from you?

- You will be asked to describe your understanding/ beliefs about inclusive education.
- How do you create an inclusive learning environment in your classrooms?
- How do you use curriculum, instruction, and class management to ensure participation and achievement of all students including students with special needs?

Any examples from your practice would be interesting to note.

Procedures

Participation in this project will involve attending a one to one interview with the researcher on the decided date to discuss the mentioned issues. The interview session will be conducted in English, will take approximately two hours and will be held at an agreed venue and agreed date/ time. Only in case of unforeseen circumstances, there might be an additional round of interview. You may also be requested for the observation of your classroom practice.

The topics to be discussed in the interview will include:

- Teachers understanding / beliefs about inclusive culture
- Inclusive Practice and Learning Environment
- Instruction and Curriculum

- Classroom Management

The interview session will be audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis. You will have the right to see transcribed data anytime if you wish so.

Possible Benefits

The findings of this research are expected to suggest ways, approaches and strategies that Czech teachers find helpful in the realization of inclusion in classrooms. It is also believed that the proposed research study would be of equal benefit for both the participant teachers and the researcher; and both will learn a lot by sharing and reflecting on values and beliefs and classroom practice. You will not receive any monetary compensation for your participation in this study.

Possible Risks:

Participation is voluntary and confidential, but should you feel concerned you may withdraw your consent and end your participation at any stage of the project.

Cost:

There will be no cost to you if you participate in this study.

Privacy, Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information

Your anonymity will be maintained during data analysis and publication/presentation of results by any or all of the following means: (1) You will be assigned a pseudo name as original names will not be recorded. (2) The researchers will save the data file and/or any video or audio recordings by your pseudo name. (3) Only members of the research group (researcher, supervisor of the research study and translator, in case the participants cannot speak English) will view collected data in detail. However, after the initial translation the translator will have no access to the data. (4) Any recordings or files will be stored in a secured location accessed only by the researcher and research supervisor. The study might publish the results in academic journals.

Results of Research

The results of the research will be shared with you by inviting you to the presentation of the research study.

Participation is Voluntary

Your participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to take part you are not obliged to. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise that warrant doing so. Refusal to participate or withdrawal of your consent or

discontinued participation in the study will not result in any penalty. If you decide to withdraw from this project, please notify the researcher well in time.

Complaints

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about your rights as a research participant, then you may contact the supervisor of the research study:

PhDr. Jana Stará, Ph.D

Faculty of Education- Katedra primární pedagogiky ,

Room: 219 ([R] M. D. Rettigové 4, Praha 1)

Telephone: 221900 187

E-mail:jana.stara @pedf.cuni.cz

Further Information, Queries or Any Problems

If you require further information, wish to withdraw your participation or if you have any problems concerning this project, you can contact the researcher at:

Sheikh Jamal Abdul Nasir

Kolej 17, Listopadu, Patkova 3,

Praha 8.

Mobile: 00447404089414

Email: ja.nasir@hotmail.com

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Consent Declaration

I understand the nature of this study and agree to participate. I received a copy of this form. I give the principal investigator and his/her associates permission to present this work in written and/or oral form for teaching or presentation to advance the knowledge about inclusive education without further permission from me provided that my name or identity is not disclosed.

Participant's Name (printed)

Signature Date

Appendix C

Democratic Classroom Management

“Children actually decide about the rules of behaviour and work. This can be done in special seminar or within the classroom so that they are very involved in what happens in the classroom. The decisions are more based on consensus, for instance the decision about rules, they are all made by discussion and consensus and not voting” (Teacher 2).

“Each morning we have a community circle. If there is a need of a child or a need of a teacher to solve something we may bring it to the community circle, including the behaviour problems and if there is a problem then community circle would deal with the topic without really pointing at somebody”(Teacher 3).

“When a child comes late in the classroom, opens the door and goes to his /her place in the class without anything saying and he will disrupt the education, so we sit in the circle and children will give the suggestions whether it was ok and how it should like or look like and then someone goes outside and tries to show how it should like and the others criticize and they will say what was good and what was not good” (Teacher 3).

“The teacher’s table is put aside, I don’t use it as a place for me. I stay all the time part of the classroom, I do not stay somewhere deflected from the main agenda going on in the class” (Teacher 3).

Appendix D

Making Use of Pedagogic Approaches in a Diversified Way

“Sometime I simply let them work together on the basis of their friendship, because I think for me, the friendship is very important in the class and I want to support it” (Teacher 4).

“I think the day as a whole, and several days as a whole because I make sure there are cooperative activities and there are activities that are more individual..... For instance yesterday I had cooperative activities in Czech language and it would not be a good idea to have cooperative activities in Czech language so I decided to give them in mathematics. I am trying to make it varied and not uniformed” (Teacher 1).

“Instead of the whole class activity when someone is not engaged I may repeat in groups and they have to participate because it is too small and they can see each other participating” (Teacher 1).

"Anytime I see a difficulty of any child, I immediately change the process" (Teacher 1).

Appendix E

Student's Level of Prior Knowledge and Interest and the Range of Their Subjective Capabilities

“At the beginning of each new topic we are starting, there are various forms of how to know the children. For instance it can be discussion within the classroom, the teacher led discussion, or creating mind maps, mind maps within the whole classroom or mind maps within the group, or free writing on the topic just at the start to get to know what children know. So by that actually teacher explores and gets the information” (Teacher 2).

“In a weekly plan, there is a self evaluation form, actually on the back side, for instance ‘I can multiply—yes or no’ so this is a self evaluation form for the child, so that the child knows. For all children these are the same questions if they don’t have individual plan.....So the teacher knows to what extent he or she managed the topic. Then the teacher compares the level of achievement given on that form for each child. Some children may have tendency to under-evaluate themselves and some are just the opposite, so then we talk about the evaluation to help them create the true self image”(Teacher 2).

“I can draw some insight from reflection from within the group work and also when children are working independently that where they are” (Teacher 2).

“I gain lots of information from reflection” (Teacher 2).

“After the activities they discuss why they did the activities just the way they did it” (Teacher 1).

“I take the notebooks from each student and as I go through them, I learn how I should set the lesson for the next day, so I am always learning from the feedback of children” (Teacher 1).

“When I finish the lesson I always make the notes, how did I feel about the lesson, what was important for me and what I think is needed for the next time. So then I have to look once more on the notes and then I can see all that this didn’t work with these three boys so I have to focus somehow on them” (Teacher 4).

“I should ask them all the time their feedback whether they understand , whether it is possible for them to do that, whether they are able to manage. Then I have again listen to them what they say and then talk to them” (Teacher 4).

Appendix F

Cooperation among Students

“Children create materials for other children. I activate both ends of the classroom. I assign tasks for the children who are ahead of the class to create materials for others. We do it even across grades. It actually originated from the need of a teacher of second grade. She had a very talented pupil in her classroom and she just didn’t know what to do with the child. This child had a brother in fourth grade and he was also quite talented so they decided that the boy in 4th grade will make materials for his brother in 2nd grade. Then the whole class of 4th grade decided to avail the opportunity. They said why we cannot prepare materials for the other students. So actually the starting point was the need of a teacher. But it was children’s initiative” (Teacher 1).

“Cooperation at different levels. At first cooperation between me and children, ways to get know the children, what are they like; and cooperation between them, it means pair work, group work and things like this, or if someone is missing they can borrow him exercise books or things like this; also it is important cooperation with parents, it means effective communication with them, with some kind of communicator, or by email and finally it is very important to have communicate with parent, child and me [where] everyone is present” (Teacher 5).

“My feeling is that peer are the most effective and whole class is the least effective in most of the cases” (Teacher 1).

"The children work at specific tasks, so first they start in pairs then the groups would become bigger of four or five. So the first level is that they work on the same task at the same level. They work on the task and check it mutually for exercising the task, then there are more demanding work like more complex where they can divide roles.. and some of them can

work on simple things like cutting and pasting pieces and some on more abstract things”

(Teacher 3).

“Groups are created by me and they are always heterogeneous with different level of abilities.

But there can be expert groups and also according to what I want to go through. Teacher creates the group, it may be homogeneous, sometime can be done by chance or by desire of the student. So they sit in heterogeneous group as a basis but this can change as per teacher’s needs” (Teacher 2).

“I connect children from 4th class with my 9th class when I for example want to encourage the 9th class to learn the difficult part of the grammar; then I let them explain it to the children who are five years younger, and they all try to do their best because they don’t want to just sit next to the child and feel embarrassed that they are not able to explain something to the child” (Teacher 4).

Appendix G

Differentiation

“It is not that I know that I have these two dyslexia children and as I enter the classroom I give these two children the different task, it is only after I see the problem; because sometimes the kids who are diagnosed would manage, so I will let them do with the whole classroom. When I see the problem with the child, I have this stuff prepared and I would give it to help them. So it is not the prescribed that is important” (Teacher 1).

“I simply do some extra work and I bring it to the class and I see then who needs it or who does not need it, because in the group when they share their opinion and they talk together, progress might be faster and higher than when I simply take them separately and give the special learning material designed only for them” (Teacher 4).

“I create the special working sheets for these children who I want to practice more. This is not only for children with special needs but also for children who are staying behind” (Teacher 1).

“I am preparing the lesson as a whole, for all and then I look how the integrated students fit. So I plan for whole classroom and not for integrated children only” (Teacher 2).

“First I set a plan for whole week and then I plan each lesson. So first I plan for whole week and then I work at different potentials /abilities of the integrated children so that they could fit in the lesson” (Teacher 2).

“I am teaching them from the first grade and according to their past achievements I differentiate” (Teacher 2).

“I have a girl who has usually different tasks because she could not get through the first grade or her level is too low for getting through, so she mostly works individually on her task on a low level and sometime she can join a group to contribute in the group work by filling in the colour in the parts or so” (Teacher.3).

“We use different materials; we have a library from which we borrow the books. It also depends on what we are doing; it depends which child and what we are working on, and whom we are working with, so it is different and it is both” (Teacher 2).

“I prepare some special working lists or how to call it working papers for the children with learning difficulties or for the children they are too fast and they need something more....but sometimes, I simply do some extra work and I bring it to the class and I see then who needs it or who does not need it.... Because English is about communication, I can't imagine how it works in mathematics for” (Teacher 4).

Appendix II

Cooperation among Teachers

“We cooperate to share information about the classroom practice if there is any problem in the classroom, joint working on materials used in the same grade, creating and sharing materials, seminars created around a theme which are called seminars for learning, to visit each others’ lesson. There is a team of teachers circulating and visiting each other’s” (Teacher 2).

“We share the worksheets, the materials. There are two parallel classrooms in first grade so we mutually prepare the worksheets, also across the grades some work sheets are going to be given to the first grade teachers for the next year, we prepare together the seminars called ‘We manage together’, we have team work of student and teachers and also within ourselves mutually and we talk to each other and we comment what we see” (Teacher 3).