



The significance of pedagogical investigations, diagnoses and psychometric tests in inclusive education: comparative studies from Sweden and Germany

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Symposium continued from 04 SES 13 C

Time: 2017-08-25

15:30-17:00

Room: W6.21

Chair/Discussant: Bjørn Hamre/ Tim Corcoran

Contribution

The significance of pedagogical investigations, diagnoses and psychometric tests in inclusive education: comparative studies from Sweden and Germany

The similarities and differences between the Swedish and German education systems arguably make a comparison between these two countries in the context of inclusive education a promising field of research. This is even more significant when it comes to the assessment of special educational needs (SEN), where a comparative approach may contribute to a deeper understanding about the relation between inclusive approaches and categorisation processes in education. The concept of SEN in Sweden is based on the student's risk to miss the learning objectives of regular school. In contrast, Germany applies a multiple concept of SEN, which could be based on the students' failure in school and/or a disability. While in Sweden, SEN are assessed by a "pupil welfare team" consisting of special educators, headmaster and various experts, in Germany the assessment process is carried out by a special education teacher and the class teacher. The countries also differ in who takes the final decision of a SEN statement for a student. In Sweden it is made by the headmaster, where as in Germany it is the school supervising authority. Being aware of these differences between the two countries, questions about the significance of medical diagnoses and psychometric tests in pedagogical investigations arise. With this background, the contribution to the symposium consolidates and contextualises the results of research studies on the assessment of special educational needs in the Swedish county of Scania and the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia. In both countries, five cases with varying geographical and social environment were selected. Study 1 analyses the content of 50 assessments

which led to an SEN statement. Study 2 draws on interviews with pedagogical investigators and decision makers from the two countries. The focus is lies on the SEN categorisation processes, the allocation of resources and future education. The findings from this research contribute to the discussion on whether inclusive education can be based on a de-categorised special education, or if it promotes medical diagnoses and psychometrical tests.

References

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