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Organizing Differentiated Teaching in the Conditions of Inclusive Education

Abstract

The article attempts to define the essence of inclusive teaching and indicate the need to implement it in schools to respond to the need to build an open society. The article outlines a historical sketch of the assumptions of inclusive teaching, which became one of the foundations of its crystallization. It identifies the problem of differentiated teaching in an inclusive classroom, where the emphasis should be on creating an appropriate educational environment, organizing the teaching process, and modifying programs to achieve educational success for children with various special educational needs. The attempt to define the essence of student assessment in the adopted concept of differentiated teaching also seems necessary, as it gives teachers personalized information about their students' educational progress. Enables ongoing changes in their teaching strategies to stimulate students' independence when acquiring knowledge, skills and competencies.

Keywords: inclusion, educational needs, stimulating independence

Introduction

The urgent need to reform modern schools confronts them with two main tasks. One of them is to assist students in understanding the increasingly com-

plex realities of unstable life, the so-called new "principles of social, economic and cultural order". In this regard, schools must undertake upbringing and educational activities that will support students' mental – immanent change, updated to the ideals and goals prevailing in the world. It is the responsibility of a modern school to educate a new person who will be a wise and responsible citizen, leading his life (private and professional) according to his desires, expectations, and opportunities and thoroughly enjoying his rights. He wants to live in an open world devoid of borders and any restrictions that could constitute the basis for his possible exclusion (Szymański, 2012).

However, the second important task that a modern school should focus on is to educate a person who will be compassionate, sensitive and capable of acting in solidarity with others. Open to man's otherness, his uniqueness, treating these qualities as valuable and distinguishing him. It is the responsibility of modern education to develop a system that helps overcome social and educational exclusion, increasing educational opportunities for all students by providing them with conditions for developing their potential. They must be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and social competencies necessary to create an inclusive society here, now, and in the future (Bąbka).

It seems that fulfilling these tasks will be possible only by changing the way of seeing the modern school and its mission related to the need to make fundamental changes related to changing the way of seeing teaching subjects (students), changing the approach to programs, methods and teaching style, as well as changing the quality of work of teachers – entities of partnership relations with students (Mielczarek). In this sense, inclusive education implemented in mass (general) schools responds to the need for these changes. It creates conditions for learning (personalized educational requirements, individualization of teaching methods, a fair grading system that takes into account the student's work contribution and involvement, subjective, partnership-based treatment of the subjects of their educational and upbringing activities by teachers) that provide every student – as a full participant in the education process. They will enable full personal development and inclusion in social life to the best of their abilities, being an educational system focused on expanding access to education, promoting full participation in the education system and the possibility of realizing the potential of all students in particular, those with special educational needs (Miłkowska).

A student with special educational needs – as a subject of inclusive education

In this context, the concept of ***"special educational needs"*** (SEN) was first used by the British philosopher and educator Mary Warnock in a report on the

state of education in Great Britain *"Special Educational Needs"* (1978), in which she proposed a shift to a more functional language of social understanding of needs students who have been diagnosed with symptoms that make it difficult or impossible to function in terms of motor, sensory, cognitive, communication, mental or emotional-social aspects. It is worth noting that *"special educational needs"* refers to children and young people from the age of three and up to completion of education. However, in the case of children up to three years of age, they are referred to as *"special developmental needs"*.

The 1990s were crucial for changes in the education of students with SEN, during which international solutions were adopted aimed at social integration in education. In particular, in 1994, the World Conference entitled *Education of People with Special Needs* (Spain, Salamanca) presented the socio-social concept of inclusion. Conference participants (representatives of 92 countries, without the participation of the Polish organization) agreed based on the statement that the proposed changes should concern a comprehensive educational policy dedicated to all students without exception, not only those with SEN. They agreed on the issue of equal opportunities for access to various forms of education, as well as high-quality educational offers addressed to everyone and taking into account students' unique talents (and not only their weaknesses). The *"Framework for Action"* program adopted at the conference emphasized that public schools should admit all children despite physical, intellectual, emotional, linguistic and other deficits. For this reason, inclusive education has been included on the list of priorities of the European Union's educational policy and justified by the issuance of many key normative documents specifying the directions of its development at every stage of education.

At this point, it must be emphasized that inclusive education is not a new concept, as the presented content might suggest. It is not an experiment whose consequences may be dangerous to some extent. The idea of inclusive education, although not expressis verbis, was born many years ago in the minds of world-famous educators. For example, R. Steiner (1861–1925), M. Montessori (1870–1952), and J. Korczak (1877–1942), who in their scientific achievements emphasized not only the need to develop the development drive of every student – without exception but also the need for dedicated assistance to each student in achieving their full potential in all areas of life. They pointed out the possibilities of implementation through the organization of the educational environment and the use of appropriate and diverse educational methods and techniques while emphasizing the significant role of teachers – "environment creators" – people who extract resources from their students.

Moreover, the need to develop students' independent thinking is satisfied by them acquiring (discovering) knowledge in action or the need to shape students in an expansive, comprehensive environment (class peers, et cetera).

Therefore, inclusive education has not been discovered in recent years. It appears as an evolutionary package of views that have crystallized over the years into its current form, developed and verified in direct action – in work with students (Mittler, 2000).

Unfortunately, in 1994, the Polish government did not respond to the appeal made by the UN education agency calling on the international community to support the creation of the concept of schools with inclusive teaching, combined with the need to introduce practical and strategic changes in this area, as a result of the *World Conference on Education for Persons with Special Needs* mentioned above. The concept related to the need to reform Polish schools implementing the ideas of inclusive education during the period of systemic transformation in Poland was wholly underestimated and omitted. Upon Poland's accession to the structures of the European Union (2004) and under pressure to introduce reforms in the education system, the Polish government was obliged to introduce the concept of inclusive education according to which Polish schools should be organized. For over 20 years, there have been tentative attempts in this area. Conferences are organized, discussion panels are created, and scientific research is conducted, such as *Analysis of school practice and characteristics of a school effectively implementing inclusive education in practice* (Gajdzica Z., Skotnicka B., Pawlik S., Bełza-Gajdzica M., Trojanowska M., Prysak D., Mrózek S. (2021), et cetera, which, in addition to good practices, indicate the shortcomings and limitations that hinder the reform of education in this area, which include, for example, lack of education of teachers, lack of support from specialists (psychologists, pedagogues, speech therapists, therapists, and others), poor technical equipment of the school (lack of specialist workshops, e.g. for sensory integration, lack of teaching aids), lack of practical cooperation with parents, et cetera. (see also) *Statistical report Inclusive Education in Poland* (2021) by Maciej Mroczek commissioned by the Centre for Education Development and the Ministry of Education and Science.

It seems that the common denominator of the sluggishness that delays the implementation of the need to introduce inclusive education in Polish schools is the failure to adopt state budget priorities that should include funds to finance the improvement of educational services necessary to enable the inclusion of all children, regardless of their differences or difficulties, in the mainstream of an open society.

It is a well-known fact that creating schools with inclusive education is a costly concept. However, at this point, we cannot forget about the "profits" that inclusive education brings. The "profitability" of this project translates not only into immeasurable effects contributing to the creation of an open society. It also has a strictly financial dimension. The logic of this thesis goes as follows: inclusive education contributes to a significant extent to improving the quality

of education, which translates into acquiring knowledge, skills and social competencies that positively contribute to improving the quality of life of every person, without exception (the Ministry of National Education has committed to making a comprehensive change in the field of inclusive education, giving 2026 as a binding date).

Theoretical principles of inclusive education (teaching and learning)

Hence, inclusion in education is seen as helping in the holistic development of each student. According to the assumptions of inclusive pedagogy, no restrictions may disqualify a student in the education and upbringing process, mainly a student at risk of exclusion and marginalization. In this sense, inclusion has become a paradigm of "non-segregated" education, particularly emphasizing the student's subjectivity (following the ideas of personalistic pedagogy from which it draws), his right to self-fulfilment and autonomy in developing his or her potential (Leszczyński, 2021).

That is why positive psychology plays a vital role in implementing the assumptions of inclusive education, emphasizing the human potential and ability to act, not only on deficiencies and limitations. In his studies, Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934) drew attention to the need to create an education system that organically combines teaching children with special needs with teaching children with typical development. The scientist emphasized: *"Despite all its advantages, a school for children with special needs has the main drawback: it confines its pupil to a narrow circle of the school complex. At the same time, creating a detached and closed world in which everything is adapted to the child's defects. It focuses his attention on a bodily defect and does not introduce him to an open society. It develops skills that ultimately lead to even more excellent isolation. These mistakes hinder the child's educational process and hamper his development potential."* (Воспитание, 1981, p. 21). According to L. Vygotsky, the main task of raising a child with developmental disorders is to include him in social life and compensate for his disorders. His developmental disorders are related to both biological factors that negatively affect his development and social barriers that strengthen them, becoming the reason for his exclusion.

Therefore, inclusive education has been the subject of heated discussions in contemporary pedagogy in recent years, primarily due to research on the search for the optimal teaching model for children with SEN. For example, Ukrainian scientists and their foreign colleagues have developed theoretical and methodological principles for developing inclusion in education. In particular, an essential scientific achievement in this respect has been the research on the philoso-

phy of inclusive education and the methodology of its modelling (W. Kremiń, A. Kołupajewa, T. Sak, N. Sofij, N. Semago, M. Semenowycz, M. Białas et al.); conceptual approach and implementation of inclusive education (W. Bondar, L. Budiak, L. Danyłenko, N. Kolomiński, A. Kołupajewa, P. Prydatczenko, Yu. Rybaczuk, N. Slobodianiuk, A. Wasyluk, H. Kit et al.). In their studies, scientists draw attention to important aspects of the organization of teaching students with SEN in public schools, including general education, correction development and compensatory adaptation (L. Sawczuk, A. Szewcow et al.); differentiated teaching in an inclusive classroom (O. Taranchenko, Yu. Najda, et cetera); psychological and pedagogical assistance and support for students with SEN (S. Myronowa, T. Zubareva, S. Kondratieva, L. Oltaszewska); individual assessment of educational achievements of students with SEN (T. Sak et al.).

Designing strategies and tactics for teaching students with diverse special educational needs has been a significant problem for many years. According to Alla Kolupaeva and Ludmiła Sawchuk, inclusive education involves creating an educational environment in a mass primary school that would meet the needs and capabilities of each child, regardless of the peculiarities of his or her psychophysical development. It is intended to be a flexible teaching system based on an individual teaching plan with medical, social, and psychological-pedagogical support. It provides students with SEN with conditions not only for teacher-led work but also for education through independent action and experience. Hence, teachers and teaching assistants should create a diverse and balanced learning environment where teacher intervention in students' structured learning activities is undertaken when needed. In this respect, actions taken by teaching staff should be limited to providing students with space for learning using self-regulation and self-determination when organizing thought processes and using strategies conducive to learning in individual conditions and working in pairs and teams (Колупаєва, 2010).

When analyzing the possibility of promoting quality in inclusive teaching, several key factors should be emphasized (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2009):

— *Including students in the education system applies to a broader group than only those with recognized special educational needs.* This process should include all students at risk of exclusion through loss of access to educational services and, consequently, loss of opportunities related to school education.

— *All students must be actively involved in the teaching process,* which must be understandable to them. Promoting positive attitudes among the people involved in the education process is also essential. The attitude of parents and teachers towards the education of students who have a wide range of needs is determined mainly by their personal experiences. Considering this fact,

appropriate solutions and strategies should be introduced to develop appropriate attitudes among these people. Effective strategies include ensuring that teachers are appropriately trained so that they are ready to take responsibility for their students, regardless of their individual needs, and supporting the involvement of students and their parents when making decisions regarding the educational process.

It is also worth noting that the priority here is developing students' ability to acquire new skills (and not just mastering a specific section of subject knowledge) and developing a personalized approach to the learning process, according to which each student (supported by teachers and family) sets specific educational goals for himself, creates an appropriate list of them, reviews them regularly and, with the help of others, develops an individual learning course.

— *Development of an Individual Teaching Plan* that will guarantee students the maximum amount of independence, ensuring students' involvement in expanding their own educational goals, as well as a specific type of approach to the teaching process aimed at meeting the various needs of all students (without unnecessary categorization), is in line with the principles of inclusive education.

— *Teaching is based on cooperation with others*. The teacher develops a team system of activities involving students, their parents, other teachers, supporting staff, and appropriate team members of specialists from various fields. In particular, students can help each other in multiple ways by flexibly and well-thought-out, dividing them into proper "intrinsically differentiated" groups. Also, an individualized approach to the needs of each student during the lesson takes into account the diversity of their needs. This approach involves setting appropriately structured goals, using alternative learning paths, maintaining the flexibility of the teaching process and allowing for various variants of dividing students into groups.

— *Effective teaching methods* based on the appropriate selection of goals, considering alternative learning paths, flexible teaching techniques, and a transparent system of providing students with feedback.

— *An assessment system that supports learning* does not stigmatize students or result in negative consequences for students. Assessment should take a holistic perspective in measuring student progress; this perspective considers content mastery and the learning process's behavioural, social and emotional aspects and clearly defines its following stages.

Moreover, according to U. Bronfenbrenner (1979), the microsystem is fundamental for the development of every person, and the primary role is played by the family, peer group, and school class. The first school experiences should shape the area of self-awareness, self-regulation, and students' motivation for activities undertaken in the learning process and in planning their educational

career. Hence, K. Reich, in his monograph *"Inklusive Didaktik. Bausteine für eine inclusive Schule"* (Eng. *Inclusive teaching. Components of an inclusive school*), lists ten (10) elements that constitute the foundation of the microsystem for the proper functioning of an inclusive school. Especially:

1. Teachers working in well-cooperating teams, presenting an attitude of openness towards diversity;
2. The school guarantees equal educational opportunities, regardless of students' origin, gender or learning difficulties, and cooperates with the students' family home;
3. Curricula will enable each student to develop competencies and achieve individual achievements, taking into account their educational interests and cognitive abilities;
4. Full-day care at school, ensuring healthy nutrition, exercise and rest for students, enabling constructive learning in an inspiring environment;
5. Creating a friendly learning environment by defining the goals that the student is to achieve, providing feedback helpful in planning further learning, and effectively managing lesson time;
6. Supporting students with SEN, assuming that all students need individual support;
7. Differentiated assessment, combining teaching with formative assessment, supporting student development, taking into account elements of self-assessment;
8. Properly planned school architecture, free of barriers, with meeting places for students, quiet study corners and consultation rooms;
9. A school open to the outside world, cooperating with the district, for which students are involved;
10. Support from experts, use of external evaluation, attitude towards change and continuous development.

The point is that an inclusive school cares about the effectiveness of organizational and teaching processes, the student with the quality of his relationships and bonds with peers, and his well-being. The fundamental dimension of this institution should be perception, which is broadly understood perception and feelings related to its social and educational climate. Such a school is the most effective tool that guarantees solidarity, cooperation, mutual respect and understanding between children with SEN and their non-disabled peers. Interpersonal relationships are the basis for developing a person's personality and how he thinks, acts, and perceives himself and the world.

Overall, research evidence has shown that inclusive education improves the learning outcomes of students with SEN; provides role models in the form of peers appropriate to their age category; provides learning opportunities in a realistic/natural environment; helps develop communication, social and academic

skills; ensures equal access to education; allows one to increase self-esteem; expands the possibilities of making new friends.

Each classroom in which children with SEN learn is, in its essence, a great challenge, mobilizing the school and teachers to make pedagogical programs and technologies more flexible, stimulating the development of teachers' competencies and promoting an atmosphere that will allow for a better response to the needs of all children. Such a climate would encourage teachers to view students with learning difficulties not as a problem but as a stimulus through which they can improve and develop their teaching methods.

It should be noted that implementing inclusion in Ukrainian primary schools revealed the need to ease the cooperation of educators working in inclusive classes (teacher, teaching assistant, correctional educator, special education teacher and other professionals). Firstly, this applies to teachers and teaching assistants who provide socio-pedagogical support to students with SEN and carry out educational, upbringing, and social-adaptive activities. Appropriate ones need special training and a willingness to cooperate among themselves and with other specialists to provide high-quality educational services (provided in the education system). An essential condition is experience in working with children with special educational needs, including in an inclusive educational environment.

Differentiated instruction: Justifying the approach

The tendency to move from a segregation model towards an integration and inclusive model takes on the character of differentiated education. First, it is worth noting that in inclusive pedagogy, differentiated teaching is treated as a conceptual approach based on the specific organization of the educational process. Differentiated learning is a flexible opportunity to adapt teaching to the abilities and level of each student.

The concept of education, in this case, is oriented towards the needs of children. It assumes the organization of classes in such a way that the learning process takes place through modelling, guidance, intensive practical learning and the teacher's provision of conditions for planned and effective action, assistance with a gradual decrease in its intensity (to stimulate the development of students' independence). This concept is also significantly influenced by L. Vygotsky's theory, in which the leading role is assigned to the social component of teaching. In this sense, the teacher's tasks should be limited to creating sufficient motivating situations conducive to solving students' problems (educational, personality, psychological, et cetera) (Калініченко, 2013).

Research by scientists J. Renzulli, J. Leppien, T. Hayes, S. Kaplan et al. has proven that using a child-centred approach is highly effective in working with

students who differ from the conventional "norm" and is one of the critical factors in increasing their educational success. Appropriately differentiated teaching, in this case, involves creating an educational environment and organizing the learning process to ensure that children with different educational needs successfully acquire knowledge, skills and competencies. Additional (individualized) learning support is also crucial in this process, and it is possible through modelling teaching strategies and their personalized modification and adaptation, which teachers should use in their educational activities. Personalized modification transforms the nature of the presented educational material by changing its content or the conceptual complexity of a given teaching task. For example, they shorten the learning materials, modify the curriculum or goals and tasks acceptable for a specific child, correct tasks, and determine the content to be mastered. In contrast, personalized adaptation changes the nature of the educational material presented without changing its content or the conceptual complexity of a given task. In particular, the following types of adaptations can be used:

— adaptation of the environment (increasing the lighting intensity in classrooms where children with visual impairments stay; reducing the noise level in the classroom where a child with hearing impairment studies, equipping him with a hearing aid; creating a separate block of rooms in the school for primary school students);
— adaptation of teaching approaches (using tasks of varying degrees of complexity, extending the time for completion, changing the pace of classes, alternating types of activities);
— adaptation of materials (adaptation of textbooks, combination of texts and graphics, pictograms, visual and other materials, use of printed texts with different font sizes, hint cards, et cetera).

Undoubtedly, preparing alternative materials is an additional burden for the teacher. However, the positive effects of this approach will be felt not only by children with special educational needs. All students in the classroom will benefit from diversifying the presentation of educational materials.

Educational programs in general schools are becoming more and more accessible to children with SEN through modifications. At the same time, it involves various forms of organizing the educational process and helps teachers take into account differences between students, in particular:

— various interests (based on the child's inclinations, interests and desire to master a specific topic or develop practical skills);
— their level of preparation (due to adapting the pace of learning and the level of difficulty of educational materials);
— individual learning styles (by organizing many different types of activities so that students have the opportunity to receive and absorb knowledge in different ways) (Таранченко, Найда, 2012).

Therefore, the following approaches to differentiating teaching in an inclusive classroom are distinguished:

1. Adaptation of the content, process and result of educational activities;
2. Modification of requirements to the degree of completion of tasks by students during the lesson (adjusting the number of tasks to be completed in a given time, varying the degree of difficulty of tasks, reducing the scope of texts to be read or the material to be mastered);
3. Using specific forms, methods and tools for organizing classes and isolating factors ensuring differentiated teaching, namely: focusing on the main concepts, ideas and skills in each school subject; taking into account individual differences of students; combining teaching and assessment, et cetera.

Differentiated teaching can, therefore, be talked about as an approach that demonstrates the teacher's acceptance of the diversity of the student body (different levels of students' primary and current knowledge, their preparation, educational interests and individual learning styles); the teacher's ability to organize the process of educating students with different learning abilities in the same classroom; encouraging students to achieve higher academic results (providing support and assistance where necessary). Teachers using differentiated teaching in their practice act as their coaches or mentors. Therefore, they transfer some responsibility for their learning to students, which the children can accept and gradually help expand.

There are several misconceptions about differentiated instruction. The most common ones are as follows:

— students will not be well prepared for the final assessment (testing, examination);
— due to the differentiation of teaching, the teacher causes an uneven load on individual students;
— students will not be able to compete in real life;
— there is only one way to differentiate teaching.

It should be emphasized, however, that differentiated teaching does not involve implementing a strictly defined methodological procedure. However, it is a way that allows a departure from the usual routine practice, giving the teacher many opportunities to experiment with the material to obtain students' best possible educational achievements. Therefore, the teacher's task is to develop his or her way of differentiated teaching, considering the individual teaching style, the goals of the core curriculum, and the school's capabilities and resources.

As a pedagogical approach, differentiated learning can become an efficient basis for organizing lessons because it is based on a thorough theoretical and empirical base and considers the importance of the socio-cultural dimension in teaching.

Considerable attention should be paid to the mobile grouping of children, which stimulates the development of positive communication skills. Differentiated teaching allows the organization of individual- and teamwork on authentic tasks. It is also essential for teachers to understand that when deciding to teach "weak students", they have to work with them more and explain more in more detail than is usually the case when working frontally with the whole class.

Differentiation of content, process, and product (final results)

When planning differentiated instruction, consider:
— content (what students should learn and how they will receive information);
— process (types of educational activities carried out by students in order to understand and master the content);
— products (something that allows students to consolidate, apply, deepen and improve acquired knowledge, skills, habits (projects, specific activities and their results, et cetera);
— educational environment (how work is done in the lesson, what is the atmosphere).
Let us consider separate aspects of differentiated instruction.
Access to teaching materials through their content is essential for students with SEN. Content accessibility is considered an essential element of differentiation. Diversification at the content level considers goals, tasks, and expected results planned to be achieved (educational, developmental, social). The balance between goals and tasks determines the level of content differentiation. Access to content is considered as a critical requirement. Changes can often be observed in how students access information (concepts, generalizations, attitudes, skills, actions, et cetera). Tasks are often arranged as a sequence of steps of increasing complexity, resulting in a continuum of tasks designed to develop specific skills. For students at different levels, the task menu is varied to facilitate the transition from one stage of learning to another.
Teaching is aimed at using concepts. Concepts should be broad in scope to be understood and applied. Teachers should focus on the concepts and skills their students are mastering. The teaching content is to contain analogous concepts for all students. However, their complexity level (volume, breadth, degree of generalization, et cetera) must be differentiated depending on different children's capabilities.
It is worth mentioning here that it is worth providing students with as many different examples as possible to master the educational material comprehensively. While keeping the primary content unchanged, the teacher can change the degree of complexity of the educational material (by specifying or general-

izing, simplifying or complicating). For students with physical or cognitive disabilities, various examples are significant for understanding the material being taught. Numerous examples may also benefit other students who will receive different approaches to the presented educational material.

Today, a wide range of tools for presenting digital educational content allows teachers to manipulate size, colour contrast, and other characteristics to create examples on numerous media in various formats. It is important to avoid focusing students' attention on long-winded facts and details but instead focus on working with generalized concepts. In this way, teachers isolate the most essential content components.

As students learn new content, they should engage in social interactions and begin to collaborate. Teachers can initially discuss the main ideas of the content with the whole class, and then students can work in small groups or pairs. Creating groups should be a dynamic process, changing depending on the content, type of activity and assessment results. For practical work in the classroom, teachers should approach the organization and selection of teaching methods reliably.

When looking for the best work methods, it is worth the teacher's scepticism towards any assurances about the universality of a given method. He should then ask himself the following questions: Who will benefit from a particular helpful method? What lesson goals can it be used to achieve? Does it promote a given group of students' learning efficiency and mastery of a specific part of the material? Therefore, he should consider working methods to select them adequately for the lesson, as well as for the needs of students and his personality (Szczepkowska, 2020).

It is important to emphasize that a personalized learning environment meets the needs related to individual differences and can also place demands on each student that slightly exceed what he or she believes he or she can do or achieve.

In this respect, appropriate (differentiated) assessment of students is also essential. In inclusive teaching, the teacher should ensure flexible methods of assessing students. It may be either a formal or informal assessment. It is essential to include an initial measurement of the difficulties faced by a student with SEN, his or her contribution to work and the increase in knowledge, skills and competencies, indicating his or her developmental progress in the scope of the material learned. Differential assessment gives teachers personalized information about a student's educational progress (or lack thereof), which gives them feedback on the effectiveness of their work. It is also crucial that continuous assessment is conducted. It collects information about students, their knowledge, skills, strengths, and weaknesses. Thanks to this data, teachers can adapt educational processes to the needs of their students instead of expecting them to accept ineffective methods of transmitting knowledge. The most significant advantage of differentiated assessment (as diagnosis) is the ability to pro-

vide feedback to students. In this method, such comments are detailed and personalized, considering their predispositions and needs. It is a more effective, more friendly way of motivating students to continue learning because it focuses on their achievements (and not knowledge gaps) while monitoring the specific stage of acquired knowledge, skills and competencies achieved by a given student, with an indication of the next ones (Szczepkowska, 2020).

In differentiated learning, students are active researchers. Each task given to students should be interesting, exciting and accessible for conscious assimilation of the material and development of appropriate skills and abilities. At the same time, the child should feel that a given task is a challenge. Tasks should be differentiated so that different students can demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. Some students may have difficulty writing long texts or speaking in front of the class. However, they could successfully present their knowledge differently, e.g. by preparing a presentation or speaking in a small group. Various opportunities must be available to (as far as possible) a wider group of students and not just to a selected few.

In the learning process, teachers and students collaborate and constantly use assessment and its results to work together further. Teachers learn a lot about their students when assessments occur frequently and in different ways. Teachers can also observe and test changes in students' thinking to establish connections between prior knowledge and what has been recently learned. Learning also improves when students are encouraged to think about their learning, review their learning experiences, and apply what they have learned in everyday practice.

We will distinguish functions for checking and assessing students' educational achievements, including:

— *diagnostic* (involves determining the level of achievement of a student (class, group), determining readiness to learn new material, which will enable the teacher to use diverse material and teaching resources to complete tasks; prevent possible complications);

— *educational* (involves improving the learning of new material, its acquisition, reproduction, application, explanation and deepening of knowledge, its systematization, and improvement of skills and habits);

— *diagnostic and corrective* (involves finding out the causes of difficulties occurring in a specific student during learning, adapting corrections in the activities of the student and teacher aimed at meeting the students' needs);

— *stimulating and motivational* (aimed at developing the desire to improve one's results, shaping positive motivation to learn through a sense of competence, seeing the connection between activities and achievements, interest in the subject, positive emotions related to learning, perceiving the classroom environment as conducive to learning);

— *developmental and educational* (involves developing the ability to work independently and focused, promotes the development of diligence, perseverance, activity, mutual help and other personality traits).

In an inclusive class, it is beneficial to introduce a portfolio that the student will select independently. It will enable the teacher to solve some essential corrective tasks. Working on a portfolio will help maximize each child's opportunities. From the beginning of learning, the child will be provided with the basis for self-reflection on educational activities, i.e., responsibility and independence in learning and participation in the qualitative assessment of the results of one's learning. The child will develop the ability to analyze his interests, inclinations, and needs and correlate them with available opportunities.

Considering the low ability of a child with SEN to adequately assess his or her physical condition and intellectual capabilities, as well as significantly higher or lower self-esteem than the norm, this factor favours the development of positive personality traits. Researchers have proven that the independent selection of materials for a portfolio creates a situation of success that increases self-esteem and faith in one's abilities; it also develops cognitive interests and readiness to acquire knowledge independently.

Well, teachers who practice differentiated teaching can organize various educational activities to understand better and acquire knowledge; create unique conditions for children to receive new information; interpret students' characteristics and determine their learning needs and interests; and assess students' level of preparation through various measures. First of all, teachers should change the methods of checking students' skills and knowledge and propose alternatives in choosing the product of the activity or the form and way of presenting the results by students. It is essential that teachers constantly improve their pedagogical tools and that students acceptably implement the curriculum (in an atmosphere of support and encouragement to achieve better results).

Implementing a differentiated approach to teaching focused on the needs of students is extremely promising. After all, not all students have the same level of education, which is why inclusive pedagogy is constantly looking for the optimal model of tools that will allow as many students as possible to achieve high results.

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Organizacja zróżnicowanego nauczania w warunkach edukacji inkluzyjnej

Streszczenie

Artykuł jest próbą zdefiniowania istoty nauczania inkluzyjnego oraz wskazania konieczności jego implementowania do szkół jako odpowiedzi na potrzebę budowania społeczeństwa otwartego. W artykule zarysowano szkic historyczny założeń nauczania inkluzyjnego, które stały się jednym z fundamentów jego skrystalizowania. Określono w nim problem zróżnicowanego nauczania w klasie inkluzyjnej, gdzie nacisk położony jest na znaczenie tworzenia odpowiedniego środowiska edukacyjnego, organizacji procesu nauczania, modyfikacji programów w celu osiągnięcia sukcesu edukacyjnego przez dzieci z różnymi specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi. Nie bez znaczenia wydaje się także podjęta próba określenia istoty oceniania uczniów w przyjętej koncepcji nauczania zróżnicowanego, dającej nauczycielom spersonalizowaną informację o postępach edukacyjnych swoich uczniów i umożliwiającą bieżącą zmianę strategii ich nauczania w celu większego stymulowania samodzielności uczniów podczas zdobywania wiedzy, umiejętności i kompetencji.

Słowa kluczowe: inkluzja, potrzeby edukacyjne, stymulowanie samodzielności.