Translating inclusion for students with visual impairment and special educational needs in French-speaking Belgian school organizations

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ABSTRACT

The policy implementation of “reasonable adjustments”, a recent education inclusion policy that requires regular school and school governance to accommodate students with special needs, places the responsibility on several key actors, who become important gatekeepers in the process of enabling educational access (Charlier et al., 2019) to regular schooling and opportunities to students with special educational needs (Verhoeven & Dubois-Shaik, 2021). This paper tries to reveal through discursive policy and narrative analysis (Czarniawska, 2004), how the inclusion policy is translated (Callon, 1984; Dubois & Vrancken, 2015) for including a student with visual impairment in a regular secondary school (Willems, 2017). These sensitive negotiations take place in what we identify in this paper as a soft policy (Lawn, 2006).

Keywords: Inclusion policy, Special educational needs, blindness, translation

INTRODUCTION

The context of inclusion policy and special needs

This paper addresses the translation (Callon, 1986; Dubois & Kuty, 2019; Freeman & Sturdy, 2014) of inclusion policy, for students with special needs, in public school organizations in the Belgian French-speaking school system. We argue that a host of actors from different educational institutions have become important "gatekeepers" (Hoenig, 2015; Timmerman et al., 2011) for access to regular schooling and work for atypical students, such as those with special needs[1]. Access to regular schooling and qualifications are passports that enable young people to embark upon a school and professional career[2]. However, schooling for vulnerable school populations and qualifying exams are more difficult to access because of a lack of appropriate adjustments to accommodate special needs. To give an example, students with blindness are even today, despite the acquisition of the right to schooling and vocational training, still faced with "many obstacles in achieving integration into the 'mainstream' school and work environment" (Weygand, 2010, p. 375). According to the EQLA (Belgian Association for visually impaired), in Belgium and other industrialized countries, 1 out of 1000 people is blind and 1 out of 100 is visually impaired (WHO, 2021). According to Eqla (2022) concerns, visual impairment[3] is a concept that is sometimes difficult to understand, as each person's vision is different. Similarly, the association underlines in its missive, the visible signs are particular: some carry the message of disability, while others do not at all. The conflation of blind and visually impaired people is detrimental to both because of the behaviors, problems, and needs early different, even opposite.

Moreover, Willem (2017) explains, for the blind, as for any other person with a disability, this attribution of disability fuels their stigmatization and discrimination (Chanrion, 2006). Models have evolved from an *individual or medical model* to a *social or environmental model* of disability or special needs. In the individual or medical model, a host of researchers (Albert, 2004; Ravaud, 1999; Rioux and Sirinelli, 1997; Riedmatten, 2002) explain that it is the disabled individual who is held responsible for his or her lack of autonomy because he or she is considered as having a problem. He or she is considered abnormal and dependent on health professionals and is seen as a patient. "As the problem is primarily a medical one, the solution tends to be a cure and/or rehabilitation, the latter, in some cases, requiring segregation into special institutions" (Albert, 2004, p. 2). According to the social or environmental model, as Willem (2017) elaborates in his exposition of blind persons in regular schooling, it is environmental and social barriers that exclude persons with disabilities from equal participation in society (Barnes, 1996, Barton, 2005). From a structural point of view, it is primarily government and economic policies and institutions (such as schools) that oppress people with disabilities daily (Michailakis, 2003).

In many countries, "diversity discourses" have brought greater recognition to previously excluded groups. Paradoxically, this discourse is emerging in the wake of neo-liberal policies, the main features of which are "competition, accountability, and responsibility mechanisms" (Bélanger, 2010). Thus, although this shift in the vision of disability provoked throughout Europe a mobilization of actors (Detraux, 2008; Callon, 1984) to introduce more participatory models of society, we argue that educational actors who translate these new models are confronted with a host of systemic obstacles. Charlier et al. (2019) reason that "accessibility" is the provisional outcome of a secular evolution that has combined a desire for democratization with an expansion of schooling. At the same time, this extension questions the functioning of the institution and calls for a profound renewal of its principles (Charlier et al., 2019). We would go further and argue that a renewal of the principles of institutions is shaped through actors' concrete and very local translation (Callon, 1984) of accessibility policies. According to how they understand disability or special needs, actors (school directors, teachers, public administrators, policy-makers, etc.) negotiate access and interests of different stakeholders, are limited or not in their space of action, and thus contribute to shaping equality or inequality.

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[1] A special need is a need resulting from a particularity, a disorder, a permanent or semi-permanent situation of a psychological, mental, physical, psycho-affective nature which hinders the learning project and requires, within the school, additional support to enable the pupil to pursue his or her school career in a regular and harmonious manner in ordinary basic or secondary education (7/12/2017 - Decree on the reception, support and retention in ordinary basic and secondary education of pupils with special needs, FWB)

[2] Various studies have identified in the group of "young people without employment", sub-groups that are particularly vulnerable (40% higher chance), such as people with illnesses or disabilities (Midelet, 2015). Midelet (2015) points out that these sub-groups find themselves confronted with repeated periods of unemployment or precarious employment throughout their lives due to a lack of qualification, and therefore experience low quality of life and financial difficulties.

[3] A person's vision is defined according to two parameters Visual acuity: allows one to distinguish details, shapes and colors. It is important for reading or recognizing facial features. To evaluate a person's vision, optometry scales are used, which are measured in tenths. The visual field is the angle of view of the person, also called peripheral perception. It allows the vision of movements and of the penumbra. The visual field is ideally 180 degrees. A blind person has a visual acuity of 1/20th or less or a visual field of 10 degrees or less. It should be noted that recognition standards are not the same in all countries. Some people with blindness nevertheless retain residual sight. Thus, they will be able to perceive light (natural or artificial) while others will be plunged into complete darkness.

The recent policy change has introduced inclusive approaches into the Belgian French-speaking (FWB) schooling system and is required to be implemented in all school-related organizations (FWB, 2019; Schyns, 2018). Inclusion proposes a profound transformation of the culture and organization of schools, acting upon institutional and social relationships that structure the school treatment of heterogeneous populations (Tremblay, 2012; Verhoeven & Dubois-Shaik, 2021; Armstrong et al. 2011; Plaisance & Gardou, 2001). Although inclusion is recommended by international law and research as an approach that reduces inequalities and allows better integration of all students, we argue that it remains a *soft* policy (Lawn, 2009), depending on specific school systems translating it according to their systemic conditions (Verhoeven & Dubois-Shaik, 2021). A law of 2018 on "reasonable adjustments" was passed in Belgium on an inclusive approach, where appropriate measures need to be taken to enable a person with specific needs to access, participate and progress in their school career unless these represent a disproportionate burden for the institution. The Education Ministry of the Wallonia Bruxelles Federation (FWB, 2018) formulated some general and specific recommendations for teachers in including students with educational special needs by introducing "reasonable adjustments" in classroom practice, such as for example taking into account the diagnosis announced by the parents; taking the trouble to understand the specific learning need by documenting it; developing a communication plan between the school and the home/therapists; developing a communication plan between teachers on the needs of the student; keeping in mind that the goal of all adjustments is to make the student increasingly independent and responsible for his learning; explaining, with the student's consent, the meaning of the academic adjustments to the rest of the class; being patient, tolerant and benevolent in the face of slowness, tiredness and specific difficulties encountered by the student; building on the student's strengths and highlighting them; giving priority to all learning channels: visual, auditory and kinesthetic. Other recommendations are issued concerning course materials and notes, assessments, homework, and to sanctions (Schyns, 2018).

This requires schools to reconsider their practices; their position in the orientation of atypical students in schooling systems, and the inequalities that can be offset by schooling, evaluation, and orientation practices. In other words, the implementation of an inclusive policy is likely to be hampered or shadowed by differentiating mechanisms likened to forms of institutional discrimination (Verhoeven & Dubois-Shaik, 2021). This concept refers to the existence of social norms and institutional functioning which lead to the systematic disadvantage (although not necessarily intentional) of a given social group (Bataille, 1999). These operations can be institutional (organizational, regulatory, orientation, class formation, etc.) and cognitive (categorizations operated by professionals, referring to a certain "way of building" the target audiences) (Shaik & Dupriez, 2013). Thus, the implementation process of inclusive policy in a specific organizational context such as in regular schools is a significant step towards the rethinking of practices. This paper proposes to analyze translation processes of inclusion policy in A) policy and research discourse and B) in an empirical study based on local school actors' discourse about the inclusion of a student with visual impairment in a regular secondary school.

THE EVOLUTION OF INCLUSION POLICY AND RIGHTS: A DISCURSIVE POLICY ANALYSIS

Differentiation, Inclusion, and Inequalities: discourse in research

Over the last decade, in the wake of major international surveys (such as PISA), much work in educational research has discussed how inequalities as well as social and ethnic segregation were more pronounced in 'differentiated' (early and closed) education systems (Felouzis et al., 2012). These findings are confirmed in many European countries (Jacobs & Rea, 2011; Liasidou, 2008). Conversely, "inclusive" systems would rather contribute to the reduction of social and ethnic inequalities (Mons, 2007; Shaik & Dupriez, 2013). For example, a significant number of in situ studies also show that the formation of low-level homogeneous classes is accompanied by lower teacher expectations, less effective working time, and a less ambitious translation of the curriculum, which ultimately has repercussions on school results and classroom climate (Shaik & Dupriez, 2013).

Faced with such observations, since the early 2000s, several education researchers and the mobilization of parents of children with special needs have put forward proposals for an ambitious "inclusive" education model throughout several European countries, as in Belgium (Detraux, 2008). Whereas the integration of children with "special needs" has hitherto referred to simple technical and administrative arrangements enabling them to follow the common school curriculum with targeted pedagogical support, the model of inclusive education is intended to be much more transformative. It is no longer up to the "different" pupil to come to terms with a system, whose cultural and pedagogical presuppositions are ultimately unquestioned. Inclusion requires an in-depth transformation of school culture and organization, while not neglecting to act on the institutional and social relationships that structure the educational treatment of "heterogeneous" groups (Armstrong et al. 2011; Plaisance & Gardou, 2001).

Inclusive rhetoric and norms

These scientific debates of the last twenty years seem to be finding an echo at the level of European governance and the political orientations advocated therein. We would argue that these European recommendations for the inclusion of diversity are an exemplary form of what is known as "soft governance" (Lawn, 2006; Grek et al., 2009). This type of regulation, of a purely incentive nature, is essentially part of a process of constructing public problems that derive its legitimacy from reference to the "evidence" of standardized databases produced at the European level (Verhoeven & Dubois-Shaik, 2021; Jacobs & Rea, 2004), such as the PISA studies. As it is open to flexible and ad hoc implementation by member countries, it relies on the mobilization of local actors for its concrete translation (Lawn, 2006; Shaik, 2014). The European recommendations on educational inclusion do not impose any structural measures and invoke the necessary "coordination" between different actors (families, local community, learners, civil society, etc.). The implementation of this inclusive rhetoric thus remains dependent on the networks of actors and local structures where its translation will take place (Verhoeven & Dubois-Shaik, 2021). Moreover, the "soft governance" approach to the translation of inclusion policy is highly dependent on the way that «disability» and «special needs» have evolved historically as concepts and rights in roughly the last thirty years. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is adopted in 2006 (UN, 2006). This convention defines a person with a disability as follows:

> *"A person who has a long-term disability (physical, mental, intellectual or psychological) that affects his or her ability to function and their interaction with various barriers that may prevent them from reaching their full potential, and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others".*

This convention reflects a paradigm shift in the understanding of disability. It is the first time that a convention defines the rights of children with special needs to participate equally in society and have the rights to be taught in the same structures. Disability is no longer defined by the person in what he or she is (abnormal, deficient, backward) but by the interaction with an environment that imposes barriers that cause exclusion and inequality (Lucas, 2019). Article 24 of the Convention calls for inclusive education and explicitly uses the term 'reasonable adjustments, a term taken into the Belgian education policy decree of 2018. Although today, the corrected decree for the inclusion of students with special needs[4] (FWB, 2019), provides for the creation of adapted pedagogies and no longer promotes classes with adapted pedagogies, it can be seen that in most schools, these adapted pedagogies are still organized in special classes, which constitute a kind of additional segregation within Special Education. As Lucas (2019) explains, the dual purpose of this decree highlights the extent to which the legislature is torn between the desire to organize an inclusive school and the concern to provide each pupil with the most appropriate accommodation or adjustments. As we will discuss through the case study presented in this paper (Willem, 2017), this is the major difficulty faced by the educational teams, who will always have to find where to place the cursor between these two injunctions in tension (Lucas, 2019).

Local translation: Maintaining differentiated structures and introducing "reasonable adjustments"

Within the French-speaking Belgian educational context (CFB), 'reasonable adjustments' follow the pattern of the

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[4] The decree provides for the creation of Special Education classes or facilities within the buildings of an ordinary school. These inclusive classes concern pupils enrolled in Type 2 Education, with or without autism, or Type 3 Education for pupils with autism. The primary objective for pupils participating in this type of project is social and relational inclusion with a view to acquiring a variety of learning experiences in an ordinary school environment. In 2018-2019, 11 experiments of inclusive classes have been conducted in FWB (10 in Basic Education, only one in Secondary Education). The decree of 2 May 2019 and circular 7190 provide a clear legal framework for these measures so as to encourage their implementation.

"regulatory caution" inherent in this soft policy, leaving the existing educational structures (special needs schooling, regular schooling) intact while leaving the field open to local dynamics. In CFB, the adoption of this inclusive rhetoric (FWB, 2004) has not prevented the maintenance of differentiated educational structures. Indeed, the school system has historically been built on important lines of differentiation (philosophical, social, and pedagogical) (Dupriez & Draelants 2004). This characteristic has been only slightly affected by the policies of pedagogical centralization developed over the past 15 years. The former separate structures for children with "special" needs (special education streams) still exist[5]. Legislation has merely affirmed the need for greater "collaboration" between ordinary and special education. However, this injunction puts professionals under pressure, in the absence of a truly inclusive shared culture. Thus, a qualitative study of actors' practices in this field conducted by Verhoeven and Dubois-Shaik (2021) between 2012 and 2014 showed that the measures deployed for implementing the decree of 5 February 2009 (FWB, 2009) on the integration[6] of pupils with special needs into the mainstream, were essentially limited to occasional support from a variety of experts (cultural mediators, teachers trained in "French as a second language", psychologists, speech therapists, etc.) in ordinary classes. Far from deploying a fully inclusive approach, they targeted their action on the child or children designated as "with specific needs", by providing direct support in the classroom, by extracting them from it for a few hours a week, or by offering them a few hours of therapeutic learning techniques. In addition, conflicts of territory and legitimacy may arise between teachers who see themselves as insufficiently trained, and outside professionals who feel they are struggling, with very limited resources, to introduce a more inclusive logic of action at the very heart of the ordinary system, while being inserted 'into someone else's classroom'. The 'reasonable adjustments' decree of 2018 goes one step further (see Circular 6831, FWB 2018). It requires ordinary schools to host/enroll students with special needs, adopting what is called 'reasonable adjustments*, provided* that their situation does not make it essential for them to be taken care of by Special Education. We argue that this imposes a *proportionality clause* on educational actors, putting the decision-making into their judgment of what is proportional to the students and the school's wider interests. Consequently, we would call this soft policy implementation a "compensatory approach".

AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The translation of inclusion policy in four steps

Based on Callon's theory of translation (1984), policy discourse is an open field of interpretations and negotiations to make sense of a given situation. We would therefore propose that the policy process of inclusion takes place in local concrete situations (Crozier & Friedberg, 1981) that are always "uncertain and disputable" (Callon, 1984, p. 3), involving the intervening actors, who will 'develop contradictory arguments and points of view which lead them to propose different versions of the social and natural worlds' (Callon, 1984, p.3). An empirical-conceptual account proposed by Callon describes the process of defining a *concrete problem* – here the inclusion of a blind student in a regular secondary school. Callon (1984) outlines four "moments" (or steps) that mark out the process: *problematization*, *interessement, enrolment,* and *mobilization* (Dubois & Vrancken, 2015).

Problematization, according to Dubois & Vrancken (2015) means articulating problems. In our paper, the problem that various actors are articulating is the inclusion of a blind student into a regular secondary school in French-speaking Belgium (Willem, 2017). The school director is faced with parents' desire to enroll their son Thomas (anonymized), into his secondary school. He faces the problem of how to organize the schooling, to involve actors who are willing to include the blind student in their classroom, and how to adjust the school practices to enable an inclusion "as full as possible". The teachers who will host Thomas in their classrooms are faced with the problems of adapting and changing their previous ways of working, questioning and choosing appropriate pedagogies, conceiving abilities and interactions, and of evaluating learning. Little by little, they articulate daily problems of adjusting and of including, redefining constantly what blindness means to them, and what inclusion means to them in their class world. In this sense, problematization can help us uncover the challenges and complexities these actors face in trying to include students with special needs, taking into consideration the recent law of "reasonable adjustments", although this policy was in its pre-stage during the study. How do these teams articulate their decision-making and practice, and how do they make sense of the policy of inclusion? And in what way do they 'include' a blind student in their school, and how do they solve what they consider as problematic?

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[5] Within special schools, moreover, according to various classifications given to special needs, 8 different types of special classes are organized.

[6] Integration as opposed to 'inclusion' permits students who are enrolled in special needs schools to take part to some extent (not fully) in a regular school with whom there is a collaboration.

As Dubois & Vrancken (2015) point out, although *problematization* is the first step in the translation process, this step is not enough by itself. Indeed, "each entity enlisted by the *problematization* can submit to being integrated into the initial plan, or inversely, refuse the transaction by defining its identity, its goals, projects, orientations, motivations, or interests in another manner" (Callon, 1984, p. 204, in Dubois & Vrancken, 2015, p. 15). The school director jointly with the teachers who will host the blind student in their classrooms, as well as actors who are part of the educational team, will create a set of new practices, using special devices for enabling the student to read, write and learn, but also participate in outings, etc. These reasons make up the *interessement* "devices". *Interessement* is the second step in the process of translating the concept of inclusion and reasonable adjustments into "visible" practices: "if successful, [it] confirms (more or less completely) the validity of the problematization and the alliance it implies" (Callon, 1986, p. 206, in Dubois & Vrancken, 2015, p.15).

However, as with *problematization*, *interessement* is not enough by itself to account for the entire translation process (Dubois & Vrancken, 2015). "Enrolment designates the device by which a set of interrelated roles is defined and attributed to actors who accept them. Intersegment achieves enrolment if it is successful" (Callon, 1984, p. 206). The concept of *enrolment* (the third step in the translation process) describes how the actors actively involve themselves or not in the set of aims and goals they have negotiated amongst themselves in the educational team. As will be described, firstly, actors in school struggle more or less to enroll in the inclusion of Thomas, and we see two groups of opposing actors, one of whom is favorable to inclusion and the other who is not.

The last and fourth step of the translation process as described by Callon (1984) is the *mobilization* of allies, which in our first case means that teachers and the school directors manage to extend and promote their experience to convince other actors, such as the teachers who were initially against the inclusion project in question, or parents, students, policy-makers and other schools to engage in inclusive practices.

These four steps of translation can help in showing how actors are engaging or not in the process of inclusive education in their specific environment, using a set of devices. What this paper can raise are questions about the way 'equal treatment' is critically contextualized by actors in their daily practices. It also points to organizational limits that actors face in wanting to create a greater opportunity for the student in question or wanting to implement 'inclusion'.

METHODS

For this paper, we have done a secondary analysis (discourse analysis) (Czarniawska, 2004) of a case study on blind students' inclusion into regular schooling, which was undertaken in 2016 by Willem (2017) under the supervision of the author of this paper. The present research was therefore conducted by a professional teacher, pursuing a master's degree complementary in Educational Sciences, within his secondary school, where he practices teaching. The primary motivation of Willem (2017) for the use of semi-structured interviews is the search for the meaning of the choice made by teachers in a particular work experience: to participate or not to participate in the educational inclusion of a blind person. The second is to understand their attitudes in an extraordinary context (Savoie-Zajc, 2003, p. 299). In this dynamic where "one is trying to express his or her thoughts and the other wants to understand them better" (Savoie-Zajc, 2003, p. 299), the researcher tries to learn from the teachers, and the latter, for their part, try to organize and structure their thinking. This method allows "direct access to the experience of individuals", delivering "richly detailed and descriptive" verbatims and facilitating the understanding of the other's point of view (Savoie-Zajc, 2003, p. 312). The interview guide used is identical for teachers and the one for the school directors also included questions more specific to the implementation of the blind student inclusion project. The primary researcher conducting the study also interviewed Thomas, the blind student in question. His interview however was not directly cited as it was considered confidential (parents' wish), but rather was conducted by the researcher to gain the viewpoint of the student throughout this research, allowing the teachers and director interviews to be triangulated. The questionnaires are structured around eight main themes. The data collected through this scheme can help to gain a better understanding of the context of the inclusion of the blind pupil in school and, above all, to identify, through reflective discourse, a whole series of elements: the school context, the social representations of blindness, the inclusion project (imagining, planning, aims, content, a reflection of the educational team, strategies, identification of material and human needs, challenges and doubts of actors involved), inclusive or non-inclusive attitudes, the place occupied of the blind student, place of the parents and external accompaniment.

Although the original researcher (Willem, 2017) used the method of thematic analysis, as recommended by Braun & Clarke (2006), who use an analysis grid, based on discursive elements from the testimonies, constituted to identify cross-cutting themes for this case study, in this paper, for the secondary analysis, we apply the different phases of a translation process as described by Callon (1984) to understand how inclusion policy is negotiated by actors in a specific context and understanding of inclusion.

THE TRANSLATION OF INCLUSIVE POLICY FOR A BLIND STUDENT IN A BELGIAN CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

Case-study school and research participants

As Willem (2017) explains in his study, the secondary school in which the case study is based provides general education in the Catholic network of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation in Belgium. The mixed school is therefore mainly based on Catholic values of "openness", "respect for others", and "tolerance" as well as on "surpassing oneself". At the time of the research, the school has a total of 92 teachers and 1141 students, including 168 in the fifth year, who entered in 2010 at the same time as Thomas, who is at the center of this research. To date, he remains the first and only pupil with a disability in this school, where the vast majority of students come from a high socio-economic background (Willem, 2017).

The student, whom we have named Thomas, had almost total blindness since early childhood (Willem, 2017). He passed his six years of primary school without difficulty, the first degree in a communal establishment, then in a Catholic free network[7] establishment. Although the latter also provides secondary education, his parents chose to continue his schooling in another mainstream school in the region because they mainly wanted their fourth child to be able to attend the same school as the three older children. Moreover, of the two secondary schools, the one chosen seemed more open to the inclusion project. They then contacted the management of this new school in 2012 to prepare for Thomas' return to the first year of high school. He has until today, in fifth grade, always passed without difficulty in all subjects. Thomas has been accompanied throughout his schooling by two ONA[8] (Association for blind persons) special educators, one in primary and the other in secondary. Both were resource persons and relays for the school and the

Table 1. **Actors**

"Inclusive Teachers"				
Number	**Sex**	**Age**	**Experience**	**Link to student**
Tea.i 01	Masculine	33 years old	12 years (teach)	Class teacher and French teacher in 1st and 2nd years
Tea.i 02	Masculine	33 years	10 years (teach)	Class teacher and Mathematics teacher in 5th year
Tea.i 03	Feminine	31 years old	8 years (teach)	Latin teacher in 2nd year/ history teacher in 4th year/ coordinator of 4th years
"Non-inclusive teachers"				
Number	**Sex**	**Age**	**Experience**	**Link to student**
Tea.ni 01	Masculine	33 years old	10 years (teach)	
Tea.ni 02	Feminine	38 years old	13 years (teach)	
Tea.ni 03	Feminine	39 years old	16 years (teach)	Coordinator of 5th years
School director				
Number	**Sex**	**Age**	**Experience**	**Link to Student**
Dir. 01	Masculine	53 years old	12 years (direct)	Director to have enrolled Thomas since his 1st year into this secondary school

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[7] In the Belgian French-speaking governance, there are three networks or pillars, the Catholic free network, the provincial network and the communal network. All three networks have separate education systems with different set of values, although responding to a federal curricular programme. Parents are free to choose in a quasi-market model to which network they want their child to attend school in (REF).

[8] Association "Office Nationale pour les Aveugles"/National Office for Blind Persons; today changed to "eqla"

family. Thomas is at the time of the study well on his way, despite some health problems independent of his blindness, to access his last year of secondary school before continuing, according to his project, to study physiotherapy in a specialized school of higher education (Willem, 2017). Three teachers who taught Thomas (Tea.i) were interviewed using a semi-structured interview grid, as well as three other teachers who did not host Thomas in their classes (Tea.ni). All the interviews were conducted with teachers to whom the school management had once proposed to the General Assembly to teach Thomas. Parallel to these interviews, the director of the inclusive school (Dir.) was also interviewed about his thoughts on the same inclusion project to be able to conduct, through their speeches, a cross-analysis of the representations and attitudes of the director and his educational team.

TRANSLATION OF INCLUSION IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN FOUR STEPS

Problematization of including a blind student

The first step in the translation process outlined by Callon (1984) is *Problematization,* which means articulating problems (Dubois & Vrancken, 2015). In our paper, the problem that the interviewees are articulating is the inclusion of blind students into their regular secondary school in French-speaking Belgium (Willem, 2017). For this step of the translation process, we look into social representations (Willem, 2017; Weygand, 2010) of the interviewed actors about blindness, but also how they speak about school and social values, and pedagogical values. The following excerpts and sections are parts of Willem's (2017) analysis of social representations of actors.

School vision and values

What we can observe is that the viewpoints of the school director and the teachers on what *pedagogy* and *teaching* mean at this school will have a profound effect on how they will problematize Thomas' inclusion into their classrooms. From the perspective of Dir. 01, this school is above all embedded in a Jesuit College, where Ignatian thought is at the heart of the pedagogy implemented. "*Welcome, trust and responsibility*" is at the heart of its philosophy, the school project outlining "*that we are ready to welcome, but with the limits that are ours, students with special needs or with reduced mobility*" (Willem, 2017, p. 16). Dir.01 requires his teachers to go beyond the school hours in their work and speaks about how it is fundamental to know the student, and that it is mainly the relationship that will define the learning and teaching interaction (Willem, 2017, p. 9). This vision is supported by Tea.i 01, who explains that it takes a lot of time, especially as a teacher, to get to know his students, to listen to them, to encourage them, to remind them of the rules and what is expected of them in terms of work and respect. He is used to having expectations from students, but without putting pressure on them. What we will be able to observe is that the value placed upon encouragement to participate in projects (green classes, sports days, etc.) and school life is something that will benefit Thomas, according to the actors, such as Tea.i 01, to feel comfortable at this school and to be truly 'included'. What we can observe generally amongst all actors interviewed is a vision of the school as being a place where welcome of diversity is considered a general philosophy, but being aware that the school population comes in general from a more socio-economically well-off background. We would argue that this global vision of the school will contribute to the way they problematize the inclusion of Thomas in their school. Tea.i 03 speaks about how "*generally the students with lower educational results are pushed up by students with better results*" and that "*they benefit from the high level of learning of the class*".

The perception of blindness and learning

When teachers are asked what the term "blind student" means to them today, they generally describe it as "*a person who cannot see and is of school age, who is in school*"

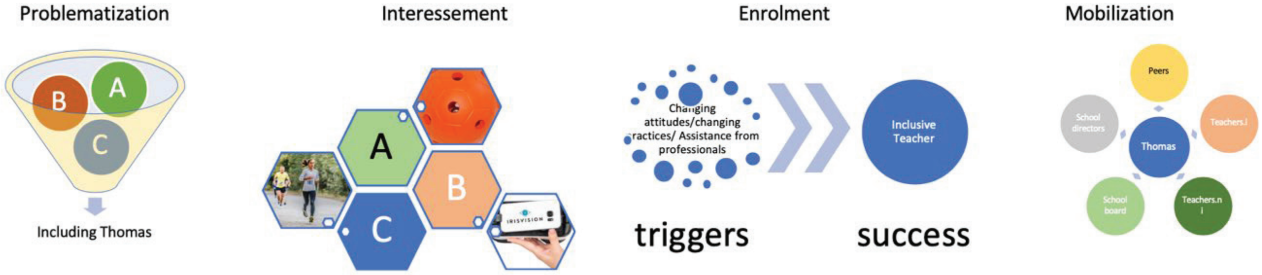

Fig. 1. Translating "including Thomas in regular school"

(Table 1, Tea.i 01; Willem, 2017, p. 74). It is a student who, like others, has intrinsic characteristics. If some people have health concerns, family difficulties, learning disabilities, and are blind, its "particularity" (Table 1, Tea.i 01; Willem, 2017) is to have one less sense than sighted people. Some people think of blindness as "a black screen" (Table 1, Tea.ni 01; Willem, 2017). But, according to the teachers interviewed, it would not call into question the intellectual capacities of the blind person. If they imagine some difficulties of abstraction, mainly in scientific subjects, they think that the blind person would have "a greater capacity of memorization and even a finer, more intuitive perception" (Table 1, Tea.ni 02) because he or she would be forced to retain, for example, all the information enabling him or her to orient himself or herself constantly, people's voices, the smell of things, etc. (Table 1, Tea.ni 02; Willem, 2017, p.167), "forced by nature to develop something else ... full of other skills" (Table 1, Tea.ni 02; Willem, 2017). Teachers would like to believe that, like any situation, blindness can also offer its benefits.

Actors who see blindness as an obstacle, for learning Thomas will face preconceived difficulties, whereas, for actors who see blindness as a fact but not a hindrance to learning, Thomas provides a positive opportunity for learning diverse and adapted pedagogy. For instance, the teachers who will agree to teach Thomas in their classrooms have a different perception of blindness than the non-inclusive teachers in Thomas' school. The *inclusive* teachers speak about how wrong perceptions can narrow the way a blind person can be seen, and that within a school, the blindness itself is not hindering the student from having normal learning. Teacher Tea.i.01 contrasts other children who do not have any visible handicaps but who have learning difficulties, whereas Thomas does not present any learning difficulties, once given the right tools to work with. For him, there are no other differences in terms of abilities, skills, conceptualization, memorization, and comprehension. Initially, Tea.i. 02, sees blindness as a constraint in terms of abilities (apart from the ability to see), movement, activities or autonomy, and also in interacting with people around him, and in terms of career opportunities:

"I think Thomas is still ... a very clever kid, and if he hadn't had that handicap, I think he could have been very bright... Well, he is very bright, that's not what I mean. But he could have chosen the options he wanted and the job he wanted when he was older, that's what I mean" (Willem, 2017, p. 86).

Some nuance in the way blindness is perceived as requiring special needs is introduced by Tea.i 03, who now, since having taught Thomas, sees a blind student as "*yet another in the multitude of students one can have, in one's classroom, so I'm going to say, I'm going have an idea of him of a student with special needs in the same way as a student with dyslexia, an attention deficit disorder or that sort of thing*" (Willem, 2017, p.118). This teacher imagines that the blind person is capable of continuing education. It is a person who is like any other person except that he or she has one senseless. We can observe how several teachers evolve in their perception of blindness and abilities through the experience with Thomas; they alter their perception in favor of inclusion but insist on the importance of assistance from outside actors, such as the ONA.

Interessement

Participation and devices

Although the inclusion of a blind pupil in the school is regarded as a major change for all actors interviewed, it does not seem, however, in Thomas's project, to disrupt the school life of the establishment, whether in the allocation of classes or the organization of school activities. Adjustments, in this case involving various objects and devices (Dubois & Vrancken, 2015), to be made to allow Thomas to participate were not considered disproportionate to the schools' functioning. And the fact that Thomas could participate in almost all school activities, in and outside of school seemed something vital for most actors interviewed. The school director and one teacher speak about how *"we had planned to move Thomas' class to the ground floor. Then, we had come to the conclusion that no, that we did not have to punish.... ...in the end, maybe it was also to stigmatize Thomas, you know? So, we thought, "No way! He needs to learn how to live with the rules of the college*" (Table 1, Dir. 01) (Willem, 2017, p. 27). "*Thomas did everything we did! Cycling... and even football! We had a ball with a bell in it so Thomas could hear where the ball was. We went into the caves, Thomas followed. You know, he had also participated in "I'm running for my shape" [...] Thomas was able to participate in everything without any problems"* (Table 1, Tea.i 01) (Willem, 2017, p. 56).

However, pedagogical adjustments were seen as difficulties for some teachers. For example, Tea.i. 02 notes several difficulties, linked to the management of a heterogeneous group of pupils with very different levels and needs, which are not limited to blindness. However, he considers that sight impairment jeopardizes the educational success of the pupil with visual impairment, at least in mathematics, at the higher secondary level. As the subject matter was increasingly abstract and complex to synthesize (tables, graphs, etc.), this teacher was forced, in collaboration with the special educator at ONA, to select, from among the objectives of the programme, those that were "accessible" for Thomas, even if it meant dropping entire chapters of the course because "*he doesn't necessarily have the image and therefore, well, he doesn't have access to many things*" (p. 88), "*he's still much slower*" (Willem, 2017, p. 83) to do mathematical exercises with his IRIS[9]. To follow Thomas' reasoning, this teacher has to look directly at his computer and it is not easy to correct. He is rarely at the same level as the others because, "*necessarily, he does not follow like everyone else*" (Willem, 2017, p. 87). This particularity also complicates the management of the class group. According to Tea.i 02, because it is necessary to adapt its objectives, course materials, his way of teaching and evaluating, inclusive education represents for teachers "an additional investment, so it is clear that there are some teachers who find it more difficult to invest even more [than they already do for the school]" (Willem, 2017, p.108).

Benefits to various stakeholders

However, despite additional work for them, all the teachers found that the project of inclusion of a blind person in school is beneficial for everyone, it is "*an extremely enriching human experience*" (Table 1, Tea.ni 01; Willem, 2017, p.148) First of all, they imagine that it is beneficial to the blind pupil, who then has the opportunity to build himself "*like any another adolescent*" (Table 1, Tea.ni 01) (Willem, 2017, p. 153) by experimenting together with the same "*classical curriculum*" (Table 1, Tea.ni 02) (Willem, 2017, p. 164), with all the activities and projects that it involves. This would give him access to higher education, which would in turn allow him to take an active place in society by practicing the profession he wishes, without becoming a burden on the community. In fact, Thomas, at the end of his 5th year in this secondary school, expresses a wish to become a physiotherapist, a choice favored by his teachers.

It would also, according to these teachers, be an "enriching" experience for all the sighted peers, because being in contact with a different daily would help each of them, by "opening their eyes" (Table 1, Tea.ni 02) (Willem, 2017, p. 168) to a hitherto unknown reality, to "become a responsible citizen, invested in a society" (Table 1, Tea.ni 01) (Willem, 2017, p. 141) which is "democratic, supportive, pluralist and open to other cultures", (FWB, 1997, Art. 6, p. 4). The educational inclusion of a blind person is seen as being positive for teachers themselves, who, by diversifying their educational and pedagogical practices, consolidate their professional identity. Finally, on a more personal level, it allows everyone to "relativize" and reconsider the notions of "difficulties", "chances" and "aptitudes" (Table 1, Tea.i 03) (Willem, 2017, p. 123).

Enrolment

We observe that not all teachers spontaneously offer to welcome Thomas into their classrooms. Tea.ni 01 and Tea.ni 02 are willing to include Thomas in their class only if the school director particularly asks them to do so. These attitudes help to understand the choice of teachers to actively participate or not in Thomas' inclusive education. Indeed, if they initially positively represent themselves as Dir. 01, Tea.i 01, Tea.i 03, Tea.ni 02, and Tea.ni 03, they will adopt an attitude of openness conducive to the success of the project (Willem, 2017). Conversely, if teachers' social representation of blindness gives rise to too much fear, they will adopt a negative attitude characterizing resistance to change (Willem, 2017). Tea.ni 01 expresses, for example, that the only concern that dissuades him from teaching Thomas, is to "get outside his comfort zone" (Table 1, Tea.i 01) (Willem, 2017, p. 151) by agreeing to adapt his professional habits, which "he may not be up to" (Table 1, Tea.i 01) (Willem, 2017, p. 151).

It is very clear from all the interviews analyzed that communication plays a central role in the success of Thomas' project. Teachers want to be able to communicate easily with the parents of the student and his or her special educator. Most important, however, would be the exchanges of teachers among themselves and with the school management. They exchange good information, they express their opinions, they reassure each other, etc.: *"...I had heard about Thomas before from my various colleagues who were his professors. And I also asked my colleagues who had it last year to find out how we were going to do it"* (Table 1, Tea.i. 02) (Willem, 2017, p. 86)*; "There are colleagues who say, "But this is the best experience I have ever had in teaching. I'm signing back in tomorrow to do it"* (Table 1, Tea.ni. 01) (Willem, 2017, p. 148). The opinions and attitudes of the various stakeholders in the inclusive education project would therefore seem, as illustrated above, to depend on those of their entourage (Willem, 2017). This is reinforced by the strong educational and pedagogical identity of the institution, as described by Dir. 01, Tea.i 01, Tea.ni 01 and Tea.ni 03 (Willem, 2017).

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[9] IRIS is a remotely connected, wearable visual assistive device for people with low vision. (irisvision.com)

Mobilization in favor of inclusion

What we can observe is that deciding to enroll Thomas at their school, multiple actors expressed a change in the way they view visual impairment, abilities, and participation, as much for Thomas as well as for them as teachers. Teachers speak about the possibility offered to them to break the routine and "get out of their comfort zone" (Table 1, Tea.i 01), to strengthen their professional identity by broadening their educational and pedagogical practices. And if there is also agreement on the logistical and pragmatic-practical difficulties related to the inclusion of a blind pupil in a regular classroom, they are however very divided as to the level of involvement of the different actors and the needs necessary for the success of such a project. Differences of opinion can be observed between, on the one hand, the "inclusive" professors who therefore taught Thomas and, on the other hand, the "non-inclusive" professors who observed his inclusion. The former, believe that collaboration with help from outside the school, such as the ONA educator, is "indispensable", while the latter believe that it is "an asset" that the school could do without. Inclusive teachers, however, do not imagine that the educational inclusion of blind students can currently be successful without the help of a specialized person who, under his or her training and experience, is the reference resource person for the adaptation of documents and material, in addition to being a neutral relay contact between the student, his or her classmates, teachers, and parents (Willem, 2017). However, all agree that the blind pupil is centrally involved in the success of his or her inclusion in school. He must be "courageous" (Table 1, Tea.ni 03) (Willem, 2017, p. 210) to adapt, within the limits that are his, to the educational and pedagogical requirements of the establishment because he is a pupil like any other. However, any educational problem or "additional difficulty" (Table 1, Dir. 01) (Willem, 2017, p. 31) related to a learning disability, for example, would call into question the feasibility of its inclusion in mainstream education. The latter would indeed depend essentially on the educational success of the blind pupil and, to a lesser extent, on the understanding and willingness of teachers to work harder for him or her. Dir. 01, Tea.i 02 and Tea.ni 01 even speak of "volunteering" because they are not trained for it and because the workload and working conditions are not adapted to the more particular attention, they have to devote to one student out of the twenty-five to thirty who make up the class group.

It should be noted that the management, for its part, does not seem to worry about the adaptations and the level of involvement of each one as long as the parents' feedback is positive, he has total confidence in his educational team and their collaboration with the ONA special educator (Willem, 2017). He states that Thomas' success in inclusive education is a "pride" (Table 1, Dir. 01) (Willem, 2017, p. 32) for the school. In addition to responding to a major educational precept of benevolent welcome, this project is also a "good advertisement" for the school, especially since it has not received any additional means for its successful implementation. In this case, the success of Thomas' inclusion project motivated the members of the College Organizing Committee to modify their School Project by adding a paragraph concerning the reception of "pupils with special needs" (Table 1, Dir. 01) (Willem, 2017, p. 40).

As Willem explains (2017), finally, the majority of those questioned are highly critical of the Ministry of the Walloon-Brussels Federation, which promotes the educational inclusion of children with disabilities but which does not give schools the necessary means to achieve this under good conditions. On the one hand, the management would like additional financial resources and, on the other hand, the teachers would like better initial training as well as adapted working conditions: fewer pupils per class, adapted materials, etc. These teachers advocate partnerships with specialized institutions to include blind people in mainstream education. Only one of them is skeptical of systematic school inclusion because, to be successful, it should remain 'marginal' (Tea.ni 02, p. 193). All others agree that, in the current context, schools would not be able to accommodate more than two- or three-blind students.

DISCUSSING TRANSLATION OF INCLUSION POLICY

What we can draw from these cases of translation (Callon, 1984) of inclusion policy into organizational practice, is that the way that inclusion is problematized is the offset of how these projects will be tackled and "solved" by actors, who are directly or indirectly involved. Although, as discussed, social representation models about special needs have evolved (Albert, 2004; Ravaud, 1999; Rioux, 1997; Riedmatten, 2002), we can see that in the case of Thomas, many of his teachers start with the perception that visual impairment is a problem, and that it will hinder Thomas in the way he can progress in learning and social participation. A very important change will happen through the stages of interessement and enrolment; actors have to find concrete solutions through devices or intermediaries for creating inclusion for Thomas, whether it be through introducing auditive devices (ball with bell) or communication and identification devices (IRIS) or deciding ultimately that Thomas should not be "disabled" by "different treatment". We can see a shift from understanding Thomas' visual impairment as *his* problem, to that of *the school* and how "it deals with it". In this way, the actual inclusive practice has enabled this shift. However, mobilization is a very key step in the realization of inclusion in Thomas' case, because teachers are engaging in teaching and changing their teaching practices, but they agree to do so with the help of other professionals without whom this adaptation is not possible, faced with the concrete situation in their classrooms. In this way, inclusion practice is seen clearly as a collaborative practice. It is also seen as a limited practice, due to the lack of adequate training received as teachers, lack of financial and human resources, and lack of the capacity to include more students with special needs in one classroom, due to the attention it requires.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS: INCLUSIVE PRACTICE, A STEP TOWARD REDUCING INSTITUTIONAL DISCRIMINATION

An important conclusion we can draw from this analysis of translation is that the actual inclusive practice of students with special needs is a significant factor in reducing differentiating mechanisms likened to forms of institutional discrimination (Verhoeven & Dubois-Shaik, 2021), such as institutional disadvantages (organizational, regulatory, orientation, class formation, etc.) and cognitive (categorizations operated by professionals, referring to a certain "way of building" the target audiences) (Shaik & Dupriez, 2013). Thomas' teachers have managed to change their attitudes toward visual impairment and managed to adapt their practices to allow Thomas to be a "normal student" "like any other". Moreover, overall, most benefits were recorded for multiple actors, including Thomas and his peers, his parents, his teachers, and the school. Not only are their social representations of blindness (Weygand, 2010) altered through actual in situ experience with a visually impaired student, but moreover by actually having to adapt their practices, they can reflect upon their pedagogical choices that may or may not contribute to excluding Thomas in socio-relational terms and terms of learning acquisition. Thus, the concrete implementation process of inclusive policy in a specific organizational context in regular schools is a significant step toward reducing inequalities for students with special needs (Black-Hawkins, 2014; Feuilladieu, 2019).

However, actors are hesitant about how they would fare if there were more students with special needs such as Thomas in their classrooms. They feel that they would not be able to cope and that the capacity is not given to host many students with such needs, which requires a lot of adjustments. We would argue that this will have an impact on the proportionality clause of the inclusion policy of 'reasonable adjustments. It raises the question of how to improve equality and inclusive practices if structural limitations continue to exist. Inadequate teacher training is one such limitation, which although now education governance foresees a profound transformation of initial teacher training in 2022, nonetheless the institutional separation persists (special needs education with special teachers vs regular schools with regular classroom teachers). Does education policy need to dare to abolish separate structures altogether? And how to increase the capacity in regular schooling, without running the risk of creating separate classes, or teachers being overburdened and unqualified? Moreover, there is a severe teacher shortage in French-speaking Belgium in the offset (Carlo et al., 2013). All these factors may play a significant role when it will come to choosing whether a school is able or not to host a child with special needs, such as Thomas. What we can conclude from this case is that this soft policy implementation 'compensatory approach' puts a lot of "bottom-up" pressure and necessitates goodwill from local actors, who have to compensate through accommodation or adjustments what structures are not able to provide; an inclusive education for all in regular school systems. Although actors in schools agree on making this change and engaging in the inclusive practice, they need to be supported both financially, as well as on the level of adequate training, reflexive pedagogical and organizational research, professional support and collaboration and in terms of sufficient human resources to be able to rise to the challenge.

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