MODULE 4
**EMBRACING THE DIFFERENCES: PEDAGOGIC APPROACHES TO DIVERSITY,
HETEROGENEITY AND SPECIAL NEEDS**

4.1 INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY: APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES

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Co-funded by the
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Introduction

What is the CONTESSA course?

The CONTESSA course is one of the results of the "Contemporary Teaching Skills for South Asia" project co-funded by the Erasmus+ Program of the European Union. Its aim is to be a contribution to establishing successful teacher education programs for primary teachers, particularly in Cambodia and Sri Lanka, which will create a long-lasting positive impact on the overall educational systems.

It is increasingly important for successful educators to stay up-to-date with contemporary skills and methods to use inside and outside of the classroom. The CONTESSA course therefore offers five carefully selected modules, each of which contain three focuses aimed at the development of contemporary teaching skills. The modules and their focuses are as follows:

Module 1. Building Blocks of Primary Education
1. Twenty-First Century Teaching and Learning
2. Lesson Planning and Methodological Skills: Concepts, Tools and Application
3. Designing Learning Environments

Module 2. Excellence in Teaching: Profession-Specific Competences of Primary School Teachers
1. Teaching Comprehension: Roles, Tasks and Functions
2. Assessing Learning Results
3. Pedagogical Professionalization

Module 3: Learner-Centered Primary Education: Enhancing Co-Created Learning Processes
1. Individual Development and Problem-Solving Skills
2. Lifeworld-References and Future Prospect
3. Self-Determination, Empowerment and Self-Efficacy

Module 4: Embracing the Differences: Pedagogic Approaches to Diversity, Heterogeneity, Special Needs
1. Inclusive Pedagogy: Approaches and Strategies
2. Teaching and Learning in Diversity: Preparation, Realization, Assessment
3. Diversity-Sensitive Classroom Management

Module 5: Digital Teaching and Learning
1. E-Pedagogy and Digitally Enhanced Learning Environments
2. Digital Media and Technology: Tools and Formats for Educational Purposes
3. Online-Based Lesson Preparation and Conduction

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to implement newly acquired contemporary teaching skills, engage all students in classroom activities and learn new ways to help students reach their full potential.

Who is the CONTESSA course for?

The "Contemporary Teaching Skills for South Asia" project aims at promoting contemporary teaching skills for pre-service and in-service teachers working in primary schools. The following document is specifically adapted for pre-service teachers.

Furthermore, the CONTESSA course is available for anyone interested in staying up-to-date with contemporary teaching skills.

This is the English version of the CONTESSA course. Material is also available in Khmer, Sinhala and Tamil.

What is the structure of the CONTESSA course?

As mentioned before, the CONTESSA course consists of five modules, each worth the equivalent of 3 ECTS. Ideally, the modules are all used together since individual modules refer to other modules, but they are also designed in a way that each one can be used on its own.

Each module contains three thematic focuses and documents are available for each focus. This makes a total of 15 documents available in the CONTESSA course. Each document contains a theoretical introduction to the focus, followed by practice exercises based on the theory. **STEP 1 – THEORY –** is meant as a revision of what has been read in the theoretical introduction. Practice exercises check the comprehension of the text to make sure that the underlying theory has been understood. **STEP 2 – EXPERIENCE –** offers examples of real teachers and how they practically implement the theory explained in the theoretical introduction. These examples are again connected to practice exercises which are meant to allow for the application of the previously learned theoretical knowledge. **STEP 3 – (SELF-)REFLECTION –** includes reflection questions based on each focus. **STEP 4 – PRACTICE –** is the final STEP where a teaching project is created based on what has been seen before in STEPs 1 and 2.

The practice exercises in STEPs 1 and 2 can be directly completed in this document. STEPs 3 and 4 are part of a separate portfolio document which has to be created by each individual. A template for this portfolio is available as a separate document.

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1 APPROACHES TO INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY

The fundamental principle of the inclusive school is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resources and partnerships with their communities. (UNESCO, 1994)

Different dimensions of **diversity** exist in our society and thus also in our schools. In order to meet the diverse needs of children, teachers need to provide relevant learning opportunities and set realistic and challenging experiences that meet these needs. Skin color, ethnicity, physical and mental disabilities, gender and age are only a few social categorizations, which, in everyday (school) life, might lead to inequality or discrimination. In order to overcome unequal practices in the school system, everyone involved, including teachers and students, has to actively acknowledge each other's differences, constantly question ideas of normality and practice a respectful way of interacting. (Stainback & Smith, 2005)
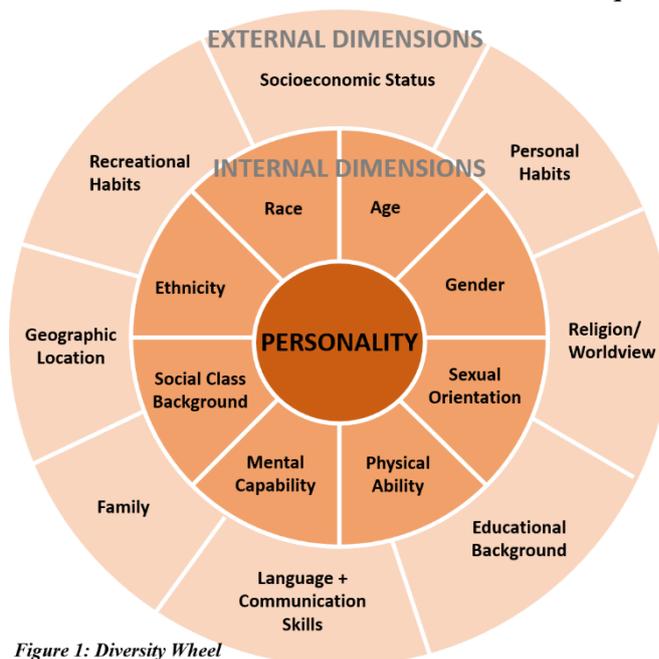
Figure 1: Diversity Wheel

Diversity: Differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area. (NCATE, 2008, p. 3)

Diversity Wheel [6]
The categories from the internal

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[6] Adapted from Gardenswartz & Rowe (n.d., online).

1.1 Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Every child may face challenges at some point in their learning experience. It is the teacher's task to support and encourage their students in overcoming these challenges. However, for special educational needs (SEN) students, this means they need additional or different forms of support than other children at their age or in their class. SEN is thus a term describing varying learning difficulties or disabilities which make learning more difficult for some children.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) names the following categories of special educational needs: "an intellectual disability, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious emotional disturbance […], an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, an other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities" (Section 300.8 (a) (1)). The similarity in all these disabilities is that they affect a child's academic performance resulting in the need for additional or different forms of educational support.

- Intellectual disability "is a generalized disorder appearing before adulthood, characterized by significantly impaired cognitive functioning and deficits in two or more adaptive behaviors (such as self-help, communication, or interpersonal skills)" (Boundless.com Textbooks *Learning Disabilities and Special Education*, n.d., online).

- Hearing impairment refers to students whose hearing is either permanently or erratically impaired. When a child is deaf, this impairment is so severe that the child is unable to process "linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification" (IDEA, Section 300.8 (c) (3)).

dimensions are inherent, which is why they can either not be changed at all or only with difficulty. The categories from the external dimensions can be changed by the individual him-/herself or by interacting with his/her environment.

- Speech/language impairment refers to students who have a communication disorder (e.g., stuttering, voice impairment). (IDEA, 300.8 (c) (11))

- Visual Impairment (including blindness) refers to students whose sight is significantly limited. (IDEA, 300.8 (c) (13))

- An example of an emotional disturbance is the attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), which "is characterized by difficulty with focusing, paying attention, and controlling impulses. Children with ADHD may have trouble sitting in their seat and focusing on the material presented, or their distractions may keep them from fully learning and understanding the lessons" (Boundless.com *Learning Disabilities and Special Education*, n.d., online).

- Orthopedic impairment refers to students who have a severe bone-, joint-, or muscle-related disability that negatively affects their educational performance. (IDEA, 300.8 (c) (8))

- Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by limitations in language and social skills. […] Language difficulties related to ASD will sometimes make it hard for the child to interact with teachers and peers or themselves in the classroom. Deficits in social skills can interfere with the development of appropriate peer relationships, and repetitive behaviors can be obsessive and interfere with a child's daily activities. Although many children with ASD display normal intelligence, they may require special support due to other symptoms of the disorder. (Boundless.com *Learning Disabilities and Special Education*, n.d., online)

- Examples of specific learning disabilities:
  Dyslexia is characterized by difficulty with learning to read or write fluently and with accurate comprehension, despite normal intelligence. This includes difficulty with phonological awareness, phonological decoding, processing speed, auditory short-term memory, and/or language skills or verbal comprehension. Dyslexia is the most

recognized of reading disorders; however not all reading disorders are linked to dyslexia. (Boundless.com *Learning Disabilities and Special Education*, n.d., online)

The term "dysgraphia" is often used as an overarching term for all disorders of written expression. Individuals with dysgraphia typically show multiple writing-related deficiencies, such as grammatical and punctuation errors within sentences, poor paragraph organization, multiple spelling errors, and excessively poor penmanship. (Boundless.com *Specific Learning Disorder*, n.d., online)

Dyscalculia is a form of math-related disability that involves difficulties with learning math-related concepts - such as quantity, place value, and time -, memorizing math-related facts, organizing numbers, and understanding how problems are organized on the page. Dyscalculics are often referred to as having poor "number sense." (Boundless.com *Specific Learning Disorder*, n.d., online)

- Traumatic brain injury refers to students who have suffered an injury to the brain, which has caused a "total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both" (IDEA, 300.8 (c) (12)).

- Other health impairments refers to impairments which affect "strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli" (IDEA, 300.8 (c) (9)).

- Deaf-blindness is a combination of hearing and visual impairments, "the combination of which causes […] severe communication and other developmental […] needs" (IDEA, 300.8 (c) (2)).

- Multiple disabilities is the combination of multiple impairments, which, due to their combination, affect the child's academic performance. (IDEA, 300.8 (c) (7))
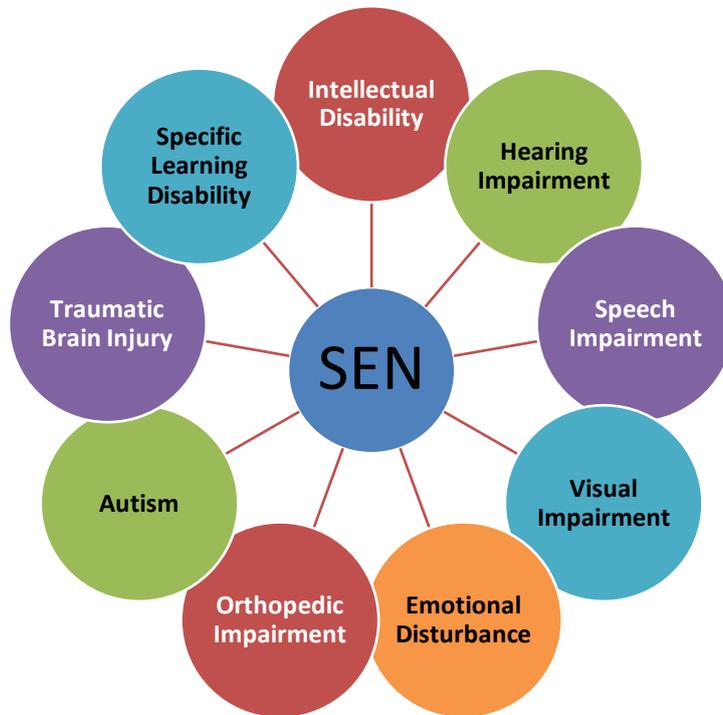
Figure 2: Categories of SEN

1.2   Special Education Schools, Integration and Inclusion

For decades, special education - education for children with physical and learning disabilities and special needs - has been controversially debated, particularly on whether SEN students should be placed in common (inclusive) or separate (special education) classes. In the past, experts have argued for the division into 'regular' schools for the 'mainstream' students and 'special' schools for students with varied forms of special needs, where each group would benefit from teaching tailored to their needs. However, the segregating quality of this system, where students who do not fit into mainstream categories are separated from their peers, was acknowledged. As a result, educational systems tried to partly integrate students with special needs into mainstream schools/classes whenever the special needs students' abilities was deemed sufficient enough for such an integration. Nonetheless, this approach implies the notion that there is a 'normal' majority into which a deviant minority has to be (re)incorporated. (Sharma & Dunay, 2018; Prengel, 2013; Moore,

Gilbreath, & Maiuri, 1998) Inclusive pedagogy goes beyond this simple integration of an apparent minority into the general majority. It acknowledges that there are differences in each individual, who have their diverse and special needs, but, at the same time, the inclusive school refuses to sort and label individuals into predefined categories: "Inclusive education is about embracing everyone and making a commitment to provide each student in the community, each citizen in a democracy, with the inalienable right to belong." (Falvey & Givner, 2005, p. 5) This right to belong includes valuing each individual's strengths as well as their needs and "assumes that living and learning together benefits everyone, not just children who are labeled as having a difference" (Falvey & Givner, 2005, p. 5). It therefore

> requires a shift in teaching and learning from an approach that works for most learners existing alongside something 'additional' or 'different' for those (some) who experience difficulties, towards one that involves the development of a rich learning community characterised by learning opportunities that are sufficiently made available for everyone, so that all learners are able to participate in classroom life. (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011, p. 814)

This aspect, called **normalization,** enables SEN students to learn as many socially acceptable behaviors as possible, enabled by the imperative change which societal systems have to go through in order for the individual to develop such skills and habits. At the same time, normalization calls for society's acceptance of the person with the disability in his/her uniqueness. Normalization thus highlights that inclusion depends on both society and people with disabilities. (Wolfensberger, 1977)

However, inclusion is no longer reduced to education for children with physical and learning disabilities and special needs (Sanger, 2020). It is a social claim that asks society to change in a way to identify, reduce and,

Normalization: Utilization of means which are as culturally normative as possible, in order to establish and/or maintain personal behaviors and characteristics which are as culturally normative as possible. (Wolfensberger, 1977, p. 28)

eventually, eliminate discrimination against every kind of person, at institutional, educational, social and economic levels, in order to enable equal possibilities for everyone (Tichá et. al, 2018). Schools, as institutions representing a country, serve as models who mirror society's values of either including everyone or differentiating, sorting and segregating its members (Falvey & Givner, 2005). The inclusive school follows the first approach where it acknowledges that everyone can learn, supports every student in this learning, and thus ensures that everyone succeeds. For this to happen, the inclusive school relies on the cooperation and collaboration of everyone involved. This means that support should not focus on specific settings such as special classes or even special schools, but children should learn together in one setting which offers assistance to everyone who might need it (Falvey & Givner, 2005).

The German educationist **Annedore Prengel** (2013) bases the inclusive school on four basic characteristics:

- Inclusive school means that all children, regardless of their individual needs, attend one school together during the years of their primary education, and if possible, also afterwards.
- Inclusive school means that teachers, special education teachers and other educational specialists cooperate in multi-professional teams in order to teach, educate, support and care for their students.
- Inclusive school means that individualized teaching is offered to every student in order to enhance their performance at all levels and all individual abilities and interests. The educational offers are customized to each student's prerequisites with the help of, among others, educational material. The differentiation of students, as, for example, to offer individual support for some, can be justified as long as its decision is reflected upon and as long as the togetherness of the class community can still be guaranteed.
- Inclusive school means that in the everyday school life every child is sufficiently respected, every child is visibly cherished as part of the

Annedore Prengel (born 1944) is a German educationist whose main teaching and research focus lies, among others, in inclusive education.

community, and every child finds support in the classroom in the form of a psychological parent.

(p. 16f.)
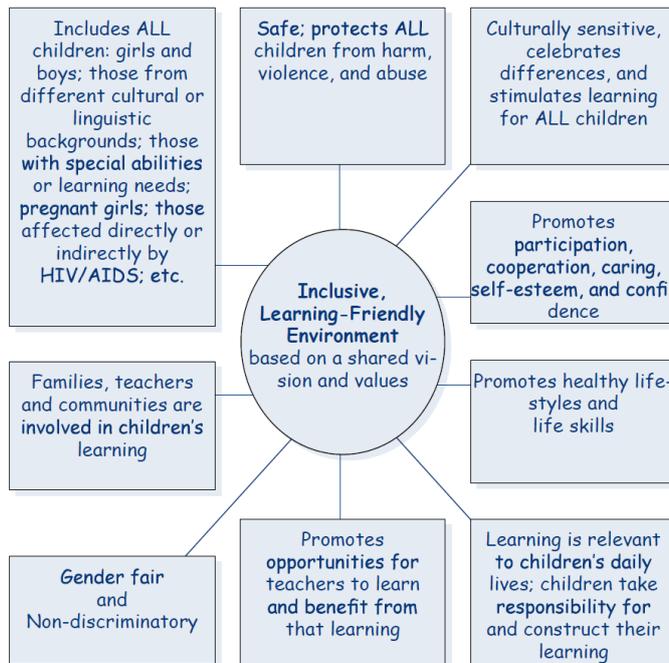
Figure 3: Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environment[1]

The success of the inclusive school is supported by several studies which show the academic improvement of students with mild disabilities who are being taught in inclusive settings. For children with more severe disabilities, the academic improvement is minor, but their social progress is significant. Simultaneously, children without disabilities do not experience any academic disadvantage but develop positive attitudes toward their special needs classmates. (Prengel, 2013; Moore, Gilbreath & Maiuri, 1998)

1.3   Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

This approach offers an approach on how to create an inclusive classroom starting with the design of the curriculum. **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** encourages educators to provide: (1) multiple means

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) means that, rather than

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[1] Taken from UNESCO/Booklet One (2015, p. 11). CC BY-SA 3.0 IGO.

of engagement – the 'Why' of learning; (2) multiple means of representation – the 'What' of learning; and (3) multiple means of action and expression – the 'How' of learning. […] Rather than waiting to learn that a specific student needs additional or specialized support, the UDL approach encourages educators to plan their curriculum and pedagogy to anticipate broad diversity in student learning needs and proclivities. A UDL approach focuses less on the narrow accommodation of specific disabilities or identities, and more on a holistic approach to boosting everyone's learning. […] There is compelling evidence that taking this holistic, UDL approach to student learning and integrating multiple modes of instruction enhances learning for all. Far from expecting professors to tailor lessons to each individual student and their perceived 'learning styles', new research emphasizes the importance of exposing all students to diverse formats and learning processes. Students may believe they learn best by listening or by using visual aids, but evidence suggests most students do not have a single 'learning style' and in fact learn best when exposed to a range of modalities and representations.[2]

Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory (1983/2011) states that every human being is born with different but equal intelligences, which he classifies into **eight types**. It is important to note though that he challenges the traditionally understood meaning of 'intelligence' as "the ability […] to think abstractly as measured by objective criteria (such as tests)" (Merriam-Webster, n.d., online). His understanding of intelligences corresponds to concepts generally understood as 'abilities' or 'aptitudes' of individuals. Every human has different forms of these abilities and further develops them throughout their lives. Furthermore, education is more effective if the strengths of each learner are identified and developed. The proposed development process looks at the strengths of each single learner instead of focusing on the exceptional talents of only

designing for the average student, you design [teaching and learning] for potential students who have broad ranges with respect to ability, disability, age, reading level, learning style, native language, race, and ethnicity. (Burgstahler, n.d., online)

A verbal/ linguistic learner likes to read, write, and tell stories and is good at memorizing information.
A logical/ mathematical learner likes to work numbers and is good at problem-solving and logical processes.
A visual/spatial learner likes to draw and play with machines

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[2] Taken from Sanger (2020, p. 34ff.). CC BY 4.0. Changes made to all CC BY texts used in this document are indicated in italics or square brackets.

some. (Gouws & Dicker, 2011) The teacher should know about each student's capacities and try to "teach and assess in ways that bring [them] out" (Gardner, 1983/2011, p. xvi). Translated into the inclusive school, this would mean the acceptance of each individual's strengths and its promotion, which can in turn be used to support other students. Simultaneously, teachers should use different ways of presenting learning contents to not only reach a maximum of students but also to "convey what it *means* to understand something well" (Gardner, 1983/2011, p. xvi), an approach promoted by UDL.

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994) also acknowledges that "every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs". However, it especially concentrates on the inclusion of children with special educational needs in regular school settings, which in turn have to accommodate for the diverse needs of its students. Only by including every single child, discriminatory attitudes can be reduced, and a welcoming community can be created which accepts all its members and offers the same standard of education for everyone. In line with the learner-centered approach, the statement further develops that it is not the child who has to adhere to normative ideas of learning pace and process, but it is the learning which has to be adapted in a way that it serves a broad variety of learners:

> A child-centered pedagogy is beneficial to all students, and, as a consequence, to society as a whole. Experience has demonstrated that it can substantially reduce the drop-out and repetition that are so much a part of many education systems while ensuring high average levels of achievement. A child-centered pedagogy can help to avoid the waste of resources and the shattering of hopes that is all too frequently a consequence of poor-quality instruction and a 'one size fits all' mentality towards education. Child-centered schools are, moreover, the

and is good at puzzles and reading maps and charts.
A bodily/ kinaesthetic learner likes to move around and is good at sports, dance, and acting.
A musical/ rhythmic learner likes to sing and play an instrument and is good at remembering melodies and noticing pitches and rhythms.
An interpersonal learner likes to have many friends and is good at understanding people, leading others, and mediating conflicts.
An intrapersonal learner likes to work alone, understands him-/herself well, and is an original thinker.
A naturalistic learner likes to be outside and is good at preservation, conservation, and organizing a living area. (Gardner, Jewler, & Barefoot, 2011, p. 67)

training ground for people-oriented society that respects both the differences and the dignity of all human beings. (UNESCO, 1994)

2   THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA

A 2018 report by All Children Reading – Asia (ACR-Asia) has concluded that Cambodia has made efforts to introduce inclusive schools. However, "segregated and integrated educational settings remain the preferred option and are provided by many NGOs" (p. 31) as well as by the government. Additionally, the students with disabilities in inclusive schools do not receive the necessary support they need in order to succeed; neither do the teachers have the essential "training on how to modify their curriculum to support students with different learning needs" (p. 31). Even though the Cambodian government has committed to the establishment of an inclusive education system, "the current curriculum is not designed in a way that is easily adaptable" (p. 31) and the government's intentions on how to realize the establishment of the inclusive education system has not been laid out clearly or in detail. The report therefore concludes that Cambodia has laid out the groundwork for inclusive education but still has a long way to fully implement it in all schools.

3   THE SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

A study conducted by Muttiah, Drager and O'Connor (2016) entitled "Special Education in Sri Lanka: A Snapshot of Three Provinces" found that most children who were identified to have special needs in the Western, Northern and Southern provinces were being taught in special units. While the term 'inclusive schools' is used for these settings, in reality it is the integration of special needs students in a mainstream school, where they "spent 100% of their day with other children with

disabilities away from their typically developing peers" (online). These special units mostly do not differentiate between age or ability, and often do not have the necessary support for individual children and their diverse needs. The problem is, on the one hand, the lack of training for teachers, and on the other, the lack of qualified teachers in general.

Special needs children in private schools are mostly able to attend an inclusive class where they are supported by a 'shadow teacher', who supports them in their academic achievements. However, public schools do not have the resources for such a teacher, and students in inclusive classes therefore purely rely on the class's general teacher.

The study concludes that even though Sri Lanka has developed in the field of special education, there is still an improvement of services necessary in order for every child to benefit from the education system. The study also highlights that even though it only investigated the situation in three of the nine provinces, the results there were consistent in a way that allows for the assumption that the situation in the rest of the country is similar.

4 STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY

4.1 Learn About Your Students

For different reasons, it is helpful to learn about your students. First of all, it will help you acknowledge their capacities and thus enable you to strengthen their abilities and support them with possible difficulties (UNESCO/Booklet Four, 2015). Secondly, "inclusive pedagogy research tells us that students do appreciate having their individual identities and lived experiences acknowledged by [teachers]" (Sanger, 2020, p. 37). This in turn will make them feel included and "signals to students that you are aware of their diverse backgrounds and that you are looking forward to working with them to succeed in your class" (Sanger, 2020, p. 38).

4.2 Foster Positive Self-Efficacy

Before they will fully participate in learning, children need to believe that they can learn. Children are developing their self-esteem and their identity as they grow, and adults have a strong role to play in this growth. Children can be damaged when their sex, ethnic backgrounds, or abilities are not valued, or they are used to make them feel inferior. (UNESCO/Booklet Four, 2015, p. 10f.)

An inclusive school stipulates that all students can and will successfully learn. However, students' **self-efficacy** ➡ might leave them doubtful about their success and thus limit them in developing their full potential. It is the teacher's role to support them in becoming more self-confident and raise awareness of their own success, i.e. that they are able to master tasks and find solutions themselves. In the inclusive school, students

> take pride in themselves and their achievements. They learn how to learn independently both inside and outside of school. For example, they can learn how to ask good questions. They learn to understand and apply what they learn in school to their everyday lives, such as in their play and in their home. They also learn to interact actively and happily with their classmates and teachers. (UNESCO/Booklet One, 2015, p. 14)

Consider the following examples to foster positive self-efficacy in your students:

- Avoid sorting students into 'ability groups'.
- Ease the pressure of competition and grades in the class.
- Give students responsibility for their own work by letting them set their own goals and monitor/evaluate these goals themselves.
- Give students concrete and descriptive feedback for their academic growth.

(Sanger, 2020; Moore, Gilbreath, & Maiuri, 1998)

Self-efficacy: Beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. (Bandura, 1997, p. 3)

➡ See also Module 3, Focus 3 "Self-Determination, Empowerment and Self-Efficacy"

- Make students and their contributions feel valued in their uniqueness. (UNESCO/Booklet Four, 2015)

- Comment on students' participation and contribution in a positive way. "For example, the negative comment, 'Look at how many answers you got wrong!' could be changed to 'Look at how many answers you got right! Let's find a way for you to get even more of them right next time. What helped you to remember the answers to the ones you got right?'" (UNESCO/Booklet Four, 2015, p. 10)

- "Make sure you tell each child at least one thing that they can do well." (UNESCO/Booklet Four, 2015, p. 14)

4.3   Consider Cultural Differences and Local Traditions

Inclusive schools embrace diversity and celebrate differences. For children who may speak another language or are from a different culture, we need to put special emphasis on the following.

- Work with parents and community members to modify class lessons and materials to represent the diverse cultures and languages of the community. This will help ensure that the community will find the materials authentic and useful, and it will encourage them to send their children to school. […]

- Use local stories, oral histories, legends, songs, and poems in developing class lessons.

- For children who do not speak the language of instruction in your classroom, work with bilingual teachers or others who speak the child's language (even family and community members) to develop an appropriate language-training curriculum for the classroom.

- Use concrete examples from the local area that are meaningful to boys and girls as well as children with diverse backgrounds and abilities.[3]

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[3] Taken from UNESCO/Booklet Three (2015, p. 36) + Booklet Four (2015, p. 61). CC BY-SA 3.0 IGO.

4.4 Choose Meaningful Activities

An activity is considered meaningful in this context when the learner views it as useful or beneficial to their learning process. The teacher can create meaningful activities by keeping in mind the cultural background of the learner as well as the possible personal real-life benefit of school to them. The reason why the teacher needs to keep cultural differences in mind is that they may influence the students' view of meaningfulness in regard to certain activities. Cultural backgrounds can differ, and it is crucial for an educator to be aware of students who are not familiar with the school system and its culture. This means that some activities or exercises are suitable for some learners and not suitable for others. In order to make activities meaningful, it is important to adapt them to real life situations and circumstances. This will help the learner to see the importance of what they are learning, thereby making studying more meaningful to them. (Vosniadou, 2001) These activities will also contribute to the students' understanding of what is being taught and it will foster their analytical thinking (Sileo, Prater, Luckner, Rhine, & Rude, 1998).

The following ideas might be helpful when planning meaningful activities:

- Pair a skill with an exercise that is meaningful to the learner e.g., have the students present a speech or participate in a debate to improve their speaking skills or introduce a newspaper for the class and encourage the students to write articles to improve their writing. (Vosniadou, 2001)

- Invite scientists or experts to give lectures about real (work) life experiences to further promote the students' understanding of the connection between school and work. (Collins, Brown, & Newman, 1989)

- Role Playing; Simulations to infuse the learning process with authenticity and promote analytical thinking. (Sileo et al., 1998)

4.5 Be a Model of Diversity

In speaking about contents and offering activities, include examples which highlight diversity. Do not only use male pronouns or characters from a certain ethnical or geographical background. Break out of gender stereotypes by connecting activities such as cooking or taking care of children with male characters. At the same time, address inequal practices, either as seen in learning material or in the children's actual reality. Students should be made aware of these inequalities and reflect upon them in order to be able to change certain attitudes. (Sanger, 2020)

When working with learning material, consider the following aspects:

- Check the illustrations. Look for stereotypes, that is, images or ideas about people that are widely held and accepted though they may not necessarily be true (such as men as 'breadwinners' and women as 'child care providers'). In the illustrations, are people of one cultural group or men the dominant characters? Who is doing what? Are children with disabilities passive watchers, or are they involved, such as playing ball with others? Do they look enthusiastic?

- Check the story line. How are problems presented, conceived, and resolved in the story? Does the story line encourage passive acceptance or active resistance by 'minority' characters (such as tribal peoples or persons with disabilities)? Are the successes of girls and women based on their own initiative and intelligence, or are they due to their 'good looks'? Could the same story be told if the actions or roles given to men and women in the story were reversed?

- Look at lifestyles. If the illustrations and text attempt to depict another culture, do they simplify or offer genuine insights into other lifestyles?

- Look at relationships. Who has the power? Who makes decisions? Do women function in essentially supportive yet subordinate roles?

- Note the heroes. Are the heroes usually from a specific cultural group? Are persons with disabilities ever heroes? Are women ever the heroes? Are poor persons ever heroes?

- Consider effects on child's self image. Are there any suggestions that might limit any child's aspirations? This might affect children's perceptions of themselves. What happens to a girl's self-image when she reads that boys perform all of the brave and important deeds but girls [do not]?[4]

4.6   Include Students' Families

One of our most important responsibilities as teachers is to open lines of communication to families and other members of the community. Children learn better when their parents and other family members are interested in, and involved with, the school and with education. When we involve families in learning, we increase the potential for learning in our classrooms, and we create support for our teaching in many ways. Consequently, making contact with our children's families and important community members is vitally important in creating inclusive, learning-friendly environments. […]

There are many effective ways to begin communicating with families. Below is a list of some of them. Try a method that you like the best, and are most comfortable in doing, and then go on to try the others.

- Hold meetings with family and community groups where you introduce yourself, describe your goals for teaching and for children's learning, the value of diversity in an inclusive, learning-friendly classroom, and

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[4] Taken from UNESCO/Booklet 4 (2015, p. 30ff.). CC BY-SA 3.0 IGO.

discuss the ways in which families and community members can participate in your classroom activities.

- Once or twice a year, schedule informal discussions with parents to assess their children's learning. Show them examples of their children's work. Stress each child's talents and positive achievements, and talk about how each child can learn even better if she or he overcomes certain obstacles.

- Send your students' work home to show parents how well their children are doing. Ask them for their opinions about their children's work, and what do they think their children should learn next.

- Encourage children to talk about what they learn at home and use this information in your lessons. Also talk with the parents about how what their children are learning in class relates to their life at home. In other words, show how their classroom knowledge can be used, or is being used, at home.

- Conduct community field visits or ask children to interview parents or grandparents about their own childhood years in the community, and then have the children write stories or essays about "Community Life in the Past."

- Encourage family members to participate in classroom activities and invite community experts to share their knowledge with your class.[5]

5   KEY POINTS

✓ Every society is characterized by diversity in the form of different skin colors, languages, gender, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or physical and mental abilities of its members. This diversity is also reflected in schools.

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[5] Taken from UNESCO/Booklet Two (2015, p. 11f.). CC BY-SA 3.0 IGO.

- ✓ The inclusive school accepts and values all children and their individual strengths and accommodates for each child's individual needs.

- ✓ The inclusive school does not sort or label individuals into predefined categories.

- ✓ The inclusive school acknowledges that everyone can learn, supports every student in this learning, and thus ensures that everyone succeeds.

- ✓ Children with special educational needs (SEN), in the form of dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, ADHD or ASD, among others, might need additional or different forms of support than other children their age or in their class.

- ✓ The Universal Design of Learning (UDL) approach encourages educators to plan their curriculum and pedagogy to anticipate broad diversity in their students' learning needs.

- ✓ Multiple means of engagement, representation and expression are meant to reach a maximum of students.

- ✓ By learning about one's students, teachers know how to strengthen their capacities and support them with possible difficulties.

- ✓ By fostering positive self-efficacy, teachers can support students in acknowledging their individual strengths.

- ✓ Teachers should consider cultural differences and local traditions represented in their classroom.

- ✓ Teachers should choose activities which are meaningful for individual students.

- ✓ Teachers should be models of diversity themselves.

- ✓ In the inclusive setting, students' families should be included in the learning process.

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MODULE 4
EMBRACING THE DIFFERENCES: PEDAGOGIC APPROACHES TO
DIVERSITY, HETEROGENEITY AND SPECIAL NEEDS
4.1 INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY: APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

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STEP 1 PRACTICE EXERCISES

A Drag and drop the following characteristics into the appropriate category of the *Diversity Wheel*:

Socioeconomic Status – Gender – Social Class Background – Educational Background – Mental Capability – Personal Habits – Recreational Habits – Sexual Orientation – Geographic Location – Ethnicity – Family – Race – Age – Religion/Worldview – Language + Communication Skills – Physical Ability

B Answer the following multiple-choice questions. There can be MULTIPLE correct answers:

1. What is the difference between the internal and external dimension of the *Diversity Wheel*?

   a) There is no difference.

   b) The categories from the internal dimension are inherent and can thus not be changed at all or only with difficulty. The categories from the external dimensions can be changed by the individual him-/herself or by interacting with his/her environment.

   c) The categories from the internal dimension can be changed by the individual him-/herself or by interacting with his/her environment. The categories from the external dimensions are inherent and can thus not be changed at all or only with difficulty.

MODULE 4
EMBRACING THE DIFFERENCES: PEDAGOGIC APPROACHES TO DIVERSITY, HETEROGENEITY AND SPECIAL NEEDS
4.1 INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY: APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES

Co-funded by the
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2. What is the inclusive school's approach to diversity?

   a) The inclusive school celebrates differences as an integral part of our society.

   b) The inclusive school supports the diverse needs of all its students.

   c) The inclusive school promotes diversity by considering cultural differences and local traditions.

C   Drag and drop the following characteristics into the appropriate category in the chart below:

Difficulty with grammar and punctuation within a sentence[1] – Poor paragraph organization[2] – Difficulty with social skills[3] – Language difficulties[4] – Difficulty with organizing numbers[5] – Difficulty with phonological decoding[6] – Multiple spelling errors[7] – Difficulty with paying attention[8] – Difficulty with controlling impulses[9] – Difficulty with processing speed[10] – Difficulties with learning math-related concepts such as quantity, place value, and time[11] – Difficulty with auditory short-term memory[12] – Excessively poor penmanship[13] – Difficulty with language skills[14] – Difficulty with memorizing math-related facts[15] – Difficulty with verbal comprehension[16] – Difficulty with focusing[17] – Difficulty with understanding how problems are organized on a page[18] – Repetitive behaviors[19]

Dyslexia	Dysgraphia	Dyscalculia	ADHD	ASD

D   Drag and drop the following characteristics into the appropriate category in the chart below. Characteristics can be assigned to MULTIPLE categories:

No sorting or labelling of individuals into predefined categories[1] – Sorting and labelling of individuals into predefined categories[2] – Segregation between 'regular' students and SEN students[3] – SEN students can participate in 'regular' classes if their abilities allow for it[4] – One learning environment for all students offering assistance to everyone who might need it[5] – Acceptance that every individual is different with unique strengths and needs[6] – Focus on students' weaknesses[7] – A deviant minority is (re)incorporated into a 'normal' majority[8] – Learning together is beneficial for everyone[9] – Children with similar problems should learn together[10] – Everyone works together to create one learning environment which offers learning opportunities for everyone[11] – Acknowledges that everyone can learn[12] – SEN students are excluded from attending general schools[13] – Every child is respected and cherished as part of the (learning) community[14]

Special (separated) schools	Integration	Inclusion

E   Indicate if the following statements favor special (separated) schools, integration or inclusion:

	In every society across the world, there will always be some children with special needs. These children have particular problems which prevent them from learning and developing like other children of their age. Therefore, these children need different forms of support in response to their problems, which can be best achieved by grouping children with similar problems together. To still ensure that these children can interact with their peers who do not have the same learning problems, children with special educational needs should not be taught in separate special schools but in separate special classes. In case the abilities of these children allow for it, they can then have the opportunity to participate in regular classes at their school.
	Every child has different learning needs and may face challenges at some point in their learning experience. Such challenges can point to ways in which teaching can be improved, which lead to better learning conditions for all children. It is not the child who is the problem but the education system. Every child is an individual with particular strengths and needs. Teachers need to be flexible to react to the strengths and needs of every child in their class.
	In every society across the world there will always be some children with special needs. These children have particular problems which prevent them from learning and developing like other children of their age. Therefore, these children need different forms of support in response to their problems, which can be best achieved by grouping children with similar problems together. Separate special schools are the best places to meet the special needs of these children. Teachers need extra training to be able to teach these children.[7]

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[7] Adapted from Disability Action Council Cambodia (n.d., p. 24).

F   Indicate which picture represents special (separated) schools, integration and inclusion:
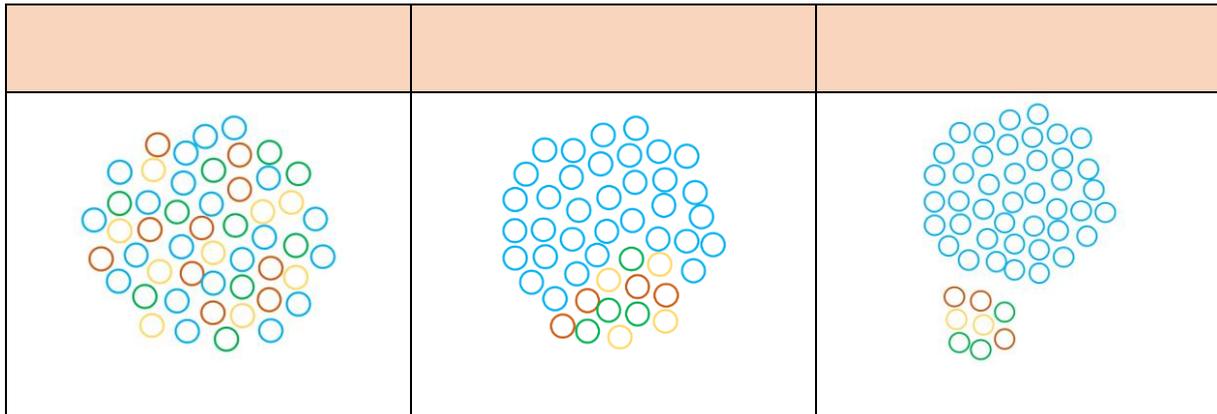
G   Fill in the blanks with suitable words from the box:

be a model of diversity	learn about your students	choose meaningful activities
including students' families		raise positive self-efficacy

1.   It is helpful to _____ in order to be able to acknowledge their strengths and needs.

2.   It is important to _____ so that students are aware of their capacities and can thus master tasks and find solutions themselves.

3.   It is important to _____ so that students see the importance of why they are learning.

4.   The teacher should _____ by including examples coming from a wide variety of differences.

5.   By _____, we signal that everyone in the child's life is interested and involved in his/her learning.

H Drag and drop the following criteria into the appropriate category in the chart below:

Are the roles of boys and girls balanced (such as doctor, teacher, field worker, trader)?[1] – Are the roles of different ethnicities balanced (such as doctor, teacher, field worker, trader)?[2] – Are the types of activities for boys and girls equal (such as sporting activities, reading, talking, working)?[3] – Do both boys and girls have similar behaviors (such as active, helping, strong, productive)?[4] – Do girls and boys equally take the role of leader?[5] – Do different ethnicities equally take the role of leader?[6] – Are girls and boys solving problems in the texts?[7] – Are different ethnicities solving problems in the texts?[8] – Are girls and boys working together in a way appropriate to the culture?[9] – Are the topics interesting to both girls and boys?[10] – Are the topics interesting to children from different ethnicities?[11] – Is there a gender balance in stories about animals?[12] – Is there an ethnicity balance in stories about animals?[13] – Are women described in history, literature and art?[14] – Are different ethnicities described in history, literature and art?[15] – Does the language include girls (or are terms, such as 'he' or 'his', usually used)?[16] – Is the language appropriate for use in the local community (such as objects or actions which can readily be recognized)?[17] – Does the language encourage different ethnicities to be interested in the text?[18] – Are the words not discriminating against ethnic minorites?[19]

| Ethnicity	Gender

References

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STEP 1 PRACTICE EXERCISES - SOLUTIONS

A   Drag and drop the following characteristics into the appropriate category of the *Diversity Wheel*:

Socioeconomic Status – Gender – Social Class Background – Educational Background – Mental Capability – Personal Habits – Recreational Habits – Sexual Orientation – Geographic Location – Ethnicity – Family – Race – Age – Religion/Worldview – Language + Communication Skills – Physical Ability

B   Answer the following multiple-choice questions. There can be MULTIPLE correct answers:

1. What is the difference between the internal and external dimension of the *Diversity Wheel*?

    a) There is no difference.

    b) The categories from the internal dimension are inherent and can thus not be changed at all or only with difficulty. The categories from the external dimensions can be changed by the individual him-/herself or by interacting with his/her environment.

    c) The categories from the internal dimension can be changed by the individual him-/herself or by interacting with his/her environment. The categories from the external dimensions are inherent and can thus not be changed at all or only with difficulty.

2. What is the inclusive school's approach to diversity?

   a) The inclusive school celebrates differences as an integral part of our society.

   b) The inclusive school supports the diverse needs of all its students.

   c) The inclusive school promotes diversity by considering cultural differences and local traditions.

C   Drag and drop the following characteristics into the appropriate category in the chart below:

Difficulty with grammar and punctuation within a sentence[1] – Poor paragraph organization[2] – Difficulty with social skills[3] – Language difficulties[4] – Difficulty with organizing numbers[5] – Difficulty with phonological decoding[6] – Multiple spelling errors[7] – Difficulty with paying attention[8] – Difficulty with controlling impulses[9] – Difficulty with processing speed[10] – Difficulties with learning math-related concepts such as quantity, place value, and time[11] – Difficulty with auditory short-term memory[12] – Excessively poor penmanship[13] – Difficulty with language skills[14] – Difficulty with memorizing math-related facts[15] – Difficulty with verbal comprehension[16] – Difficulty with focusing[17] – Difficulty with understanding how problems are organized on a page[18] – Repetitive behaviors[19]

Dyslexia	Dysgraphia	Dyscalculia	ADHD	ASD
6	1	5	8	3
10	2	11	9	4
12	7	15	17	19
16	13	18		
14				

D   Drag and drop the following characteristics into the appropriate category in the chart below. Characteristics can be assigned to MULTIPLE categories:

No sorting or labelling of individuals into predefined categories[1] – Sorting and labelling of individuals into predefined categories[2] – Segregation between 'regular' students and SEN students[3] – SEN students can participate in 'regular' classes if their abilities allow for it[4] – One learning environment for all students offering assistance to everyone who might need it[5] – Acceptance that every individual is different with unique strengths and needs[6] – Focus on students' weaknesses[7] – A deviant minority is (re)incorporated into a 'normal' majority[8] – Learning together is beneficial for everyone[9] – Children with similar problems should learn together[10] – Everyone works together to create one learning environment which offers learning opportunities for everyone[11] – Acknowledges that everyone can learn[12] – SEN students are excluded from attending general schools[13] – Every child is respected and cherished as part of the (learning) community[14]

Special (separated) schools	Integration	Inclusion
2	2	1
3	3	5
7	4	6
10	7	9
13	8	11
	10	12
		14

E   Indicate if the following statements favor special (separated) schools, integration or inclusion:

Integration	In every society across the world, there will always be some children with special needs. These children have particular problems which prevent them from learning and developing like other children of their age. Therefore, these children need different forms of support in response to their problems, which can be best achieved by grouping children with similar problems together. To still ensure that these children can interact with their peers who do not have the same learning problems, children with special educational needs should not be taught in separate special schools but in separate special classes. In case the abilities of these children allow for it, they can then have the opportunity to participate in regular classes at their school.
Inclusion	Every child has different learning needs and may face challenges at some point in their learning experience. Such challenges can point to ways in which teaching can be improved, which lead to better learning conditions for all children. It is not the child who is the problem but the education system. Every child is an individual with particular strengths and needs. Teachers need to be flexible to react to the strengths and needs of every child in their class.
Special (separated) schools	In every society across the world there will always be some children with special needs. These children have particular problems which prevent them from learning and developing like other children of their age. Therefore, these children need different forms of support in response to their problems, which can be best achieved by grouping children with similar problems together. Separate special schools are the best places to meet the special needs of these children. Teachers need extra training to be able to teach these children.[7]

F   Indicate which picture represents special (separated) schools, integration and inclusion:

Inclusion	Integration	Special (separated) schools
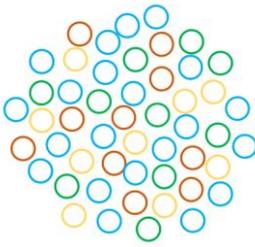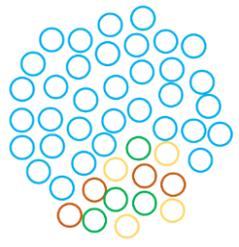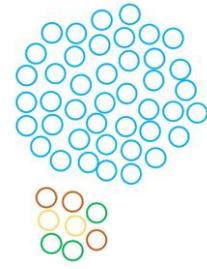
G   Fill in the blanks with suitable words from the box:

be a model of diversity   learn about your students   choose meaningful activities
including students' families   raise positive self-efficacy

1. It is helpful to <u>learn about your students</u> in order to be able to acknowledge their strengths and needs.

2. It is important to <u>raise positive self-efficacy</u> so that students are aware of their capacities and can thus master tasks and find solutions themselves.

3. It is important to <u>choose meaningful activities</u> so that students see the importance of why they are learning.

4. The teacher should <u>be a model of diversity</u> by including examples coming from a wide variety of differences.

5. By <u>including students' families</u>, we signal that everyone in the child's life is interested and involved in his/her learning.

H Drag and drop the following criteria into the appropriate category in the chart below:

Are the roles of boys and girls balanced (such as doctor, teacher, field worker, trader)?[1] – Are the roles of different ethnicities balanced (such as doctor, teacher, field worker, trader)?[2] – Are the types of activities for boys and girls equal (such as sporting activities, reading, talking, working)?[3] – Do both boys and girls have similar behaviors (such as active, helping, strong, productive)?[4] – Do girls and boys equally take the role of leader?[5] – Do different ethnicities equally take the role of leader?[6] – Are girls and boys solving problems in the texts?[7] – Are different ethnicities solving problems in the texts?[8] – Are girls and boys working together in a way appropriate to the culture?[9] – Are the topics interesting to both girls and boys?[10] – Are the topics interesting to children from different ethnicities?[11] – Is there a gender balance in stories about animals?[12] – Is there an ethnicity balance in stories about animals?[13] – Are women described in history, literature and art?[14] – Are different ethnicities described in history, literature and art?[15] – Does the language include girls (or are terms, such as 'he' or 'his', usually used)?[16] – Is the language appropriate for use in the local community (such as objects or actions which can readily be recognized)?[17] – Does the language encourage different ethnicities to be interested in the text?[18] – Are the words not discriminating against ethnic minorities?[19]

Ethnicity	Gender
2	1
6	3
8	4
9	5
11	7
13	10
15	12
17	14
18	16
19	

STEP 2 PRACTICE EXERCISES

A   Read the following case studies and fill in the table below:

Case Study 1

Chan is 7 years old. He is very good at math and drawing but he has difficulty with reading and writing. He writes some letters back to front and his spelling contains a lot of mistakes.

When Chan's teacher notices that he has difficulties with writing, for example, she asks him what he finds difficult and what is easy for him. She also talks to Chan's parents and other teachers to maximally support Chan in his learning process. Chan's teacher always highlights Chan's positive contributions instead of always concentrating on his deficiencies. She praises him when he does some writing well and explains what exactly he has done well. Chan's teacher offers support and different strategies for areas he still needs more help with. In addition, Chan's teacher encourages him to set his own goals for his work and monitor his own progress so that he develops an understanding of his strengths and needs.

Case Study 2

Nguyen Thi Hong is 7 years old and lives with his parents in Svay Pak in the northern outskirts of Phnom Penh. His family is Vietnamese, but they have lived in Cambodia for 3 generations. At home his parents speak mainly Vietnamese, although Thi Hong does speak Khmer. In school Thi Hong is miserable. All he has to do is open his mouth and the other children make fun of his accent and his poor ability to speak Khmer. They do not play with him and the older boys pick fights with him too. Additionally, it is hard for him to keep up with his lessons.

Thi Hong's teacher is aware of his difficulties and has started raising awareness of different cultures and ethnicities in his class. He has started using examples which include a variety of cultural backgrounds. Additionally, he has asked Thi Hong and his classmates to tell the whole class about what they learn at home. This knowledge brought into the classroom by the children helps Thi Hong's teacher to better understand his students and to involve meaningful contents in his teaching. He has also invited Thi Hong's parents to speak about their culture and ethnicity in class.

Case Study 3

Anvi was born with a clubfoot and her right hand is weak. She is in grade 2 at school in Sri Lanka. She had always wanted to go to the school like her peers, but at first some students teased Anvi.

Anvi's teacher served as role model right from the beginning. She did not tolerate teasing towards Anvi. Instead, she talked to her students about differences in each and everyone. She explained that Anvi's clubfoot and weak right hand were no reason why she could not learn like anyone else, but that she needed different support than the other students. She also

highlighted that everyone should help Anvi when necessary. To make the other students understand how it is for Anvi, her teacher has introduced role playing where children take on different roles of those who come from different backgrounds and have different abilities.[8]

	Difficulty	Cause of Difficulty	Pedagogical Support
Chan			
Thi Hong			
Anvi			

B   Listen to this teacher talk about how she teaches in an inclusive learning environment (Audio File 4.1.1; audio transcription can be found in the appendix of this document). Answer the following questions:

1. How does the teacher consider cultural differences and local traditions?

2. How does the teacher learn about her students?

C   Watch this teacher talk about teaching in a diverse classroom. (Video File 4.1.1; audio transcriptions can be found in the appendix of this document). Answer the following multiple-choice questions. There can be MULTIPLE correct answers:

1. How does this teacher support students with learning disabilities?
    a) She follows up on all activities.
    b) She does not offer additional support to students with learning disabilities.
    c) She reports to the principal about their classroom progress.

2. What kind of strategies does she use to support each individual student with their varying needs and strengths?

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[8] Adapted from Disability Action Council Cambodia (n.d., p. 6)

a) She encourages every student.

b) She tries to motivate every student.

c) She identifies each student's learning needs.

References

Disability Action Council Cambodia. (n.d.). *Children with Special Needs in the Classroom: In-Service Teacher Training Course*.

STEP 2 PRACTICE EXERCISES – SOLUTIONS

A   Read the following case studies and fill in the table below:

Case Study 1

Chan is 7 years old. He is very good at math and drawing but he has difficulty with reading and writing. He writes some letters back to front and his spelling contains a lot of mistakes.

When Chan's teacher notices that he has difficulties with writing, for example, she asks him what he finds difficult and what is easy for him. She also talks to Chan's parents and other teachers to maximally support Chan in his learning process. Chan's teacher always highlights Chan's positive contributions instead of always concentrating on his deficiencies. She praises him when he does some writing well and explains what exactly he has done well. Chan's teacher offers support and different strategies for areas he still needs more help with. In addition, Chan's teacher encourages him to set his own goals for his work and monitor his own progress so that he develops an understanding of his strengths and needs.

Case Study 2

Nguyen Thi Hong is 7 years old and lives with his parents in Svay Pak in the northern outskirts of Phnom Penh. His family is Vietnamese, but they have lived in Cambodia for 3 generations. At home his parents speak mainly Vietnamese, although Thi Hong does speak Khmer. In school Thi Hong is miserable. All he has to do is open his mouth and the other children make fun of his accent and his poor ability to speak Khmer. They do not play with him and the older boys pick fights with him too. Additionally, it is hard for him to keep up with his lessons.

Thi Hong's teacher is aware of his difficulties and has started raising awareness of different cultures and ethnicities in his class. He has started using examples which include a variety of cultural backgrounds. Additionally, he has asked Thi Hong and his classmates to tell the whole class about what they learn at home. This knowledge brought into the classroom by the children helps Thi Hong's teacher to better understand his students and to involve meaningful contents in his teaching. He has also invited Thi Hong's parents to speak about their culture and ethnicity in class.

Case Study 3

Anvi was born with a clubfoot and her right hand is weak. She is in grade 2 at school in Sri Lanka. She had always wanted to go to the school like her peers, but at first some students teased Anvi.

Anvi's teacher served as role model right from the beginning. She did not tolerate teasing towards Anvi. Instead, she talked to her students about differences in each and everyone. She explained that Anvi's clubfoot and weak right hand were no reason why she could not learn like anyone else, but that she needed different support than the other students. She also

highlighted that everyone should help Anvi when necessary. To make the other students understand how it is for Anvi, her teacher has introduced role playing where children take on different roles of those who come from different backgrounds and have different abilities.[8]

	Difficulty	Cause of Difficulty	Pedagogical Support
Chan	**reading and writing**	**dyslexia or dysgraphia**	**asking him to reflect on his difficulties, involving parents and other teachers, highlighting positive contributions, giving constructive feedback, supporting him in setting his own goals**
Thi Hong	**keeping up with lessons and being accepted by his peers**	**different ethnicity and mother tongue than peers**	**raising awareness for different ethnicities and cultures in class, started using examples which include a variety of cultural backgrounds, including stories about what the children learn at home, inviting people to talk about their culture and ethnicity**
Anvi	**difficulty writing with her right hand**	**clubfoot and weak right hand**	**not tolerating any teasing from other students, encouraging other students to help her, highlighting that she can learn like all the other children but simply needs different form of support, roleplaying**

B Listen to this teacher talk about how she teaches in an inclusive learning environment (Audio File 5.1.1; audio transcription can be found in the appendix of this document). Answer the following questions:

1. How does the teacher consider cultural differences and local traditions?

*   Children are invited to talk about the different holidays they celebrate at home. It helps them bring out their strengths and points of view and become confident in a diverse environment.

2. How does the teacher learn about her students?

*   At the beginning of the year, the children write about their background and their interests on a get-to-know-me sheet. There they also have the opportunity to ask the teacher anything they want to know about her.

C Watch this teacher talk about teaching in a diverse classroom. (Video File 4.1.1; audio transcriptions can be found in the appendix of this document). Answer the following multiple-choice questions. There can be MULTIPLE correct answers:

1. How does this teacher support students with learning disabilities?
    a) She follows up on all activities.
    b) She does not offer additional support to students with learning disabilities.
    c) She reports to the principal about their classroom progress.

2. What kind of strategies does she use to support each individual student with their varying needs and strengths?
    a) She encourages every student.
    b) She tries to motivate every student.
    c) She identifies each student's learning needs.

References

Disability Action Council Cambodia (n.d.). *Children with Special Needs in the Classroom: In-Service Teacher Training Course*.

STEP 3 PORTFOLIO TASK – SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Write essay answers to each of the following self-reflection questions. Each essay answer should be approximately 300-500 words long and answered in a coherent text with full sentences. THESE ESSAY ANSWERS GO INTO YOUR PERSONAL PORTFOLIO!

1. Which values do you personally believe and to what extent do your attitudes influence your view of students and colleagues?

2. Have your perspectives regarding needs-based pedagogy, diversity and inclusion changed after having read the theoretical introduction?

3. What are the most important characteristics of an inclusive education to you?

4. Which arguments would you give for placing SEN children in an inclusive class? What are, in your opinion, the challenges or risks that have to be considered?

STEP 4 PORTFOLIO TASK – TEACHING PROJECT

Create your own personal teaching project. With reference to the class and your topic chosen in Module 1.1, develop approaches, considerations and measures for your educational concept in order to enable participants with different requirements, strengths and impairments to learn effectively. This portfolio task should be approximately 800-1000 words long. THE TEACHING PROJECT GOES INTO YOUR PERSONAL PORTFOLIO!

APPENDIX

Transcript: Audio File 4.1.1

Teacher: For an example now, during the Christmas holidays we were talking about the holidays that are celebrated during this period. Now I shouldn't say Christmas holidays because we, the things the kids came out with were many. Like some kids celebrate Christmas, whereas some during December celebrate Hanukah and then some were talking about Bowing Day and Japanese kids were saying about an event called Omisoka. And then African kids were involved in Kwanzaa. Well there is a kid who lived in Africa, she is not African. But then the things they adapt to it. The comprehensive understanding of the events or the celebrations is enormous. I mean it surprised me to know the things that these little kids would know, and it helps them to basically bring out their strength and their point of view and it helps them to be confident in a diverse environment.

Interviewer: How do you deal with diversity in your classroom? Can you tell your own experience?

Teacher: Yes, so at the beginning of the year something that I always do with the kids is I give them a sheet just to understand their background and to know what they are interested about, so like a get-to-know-me kind of a sheet, we do. I did that at the beginning of the year, mainly for understand students and also give them an opportunity to ask me any questions that they wanted to know about me. So that was my first step towards understanding diversity and how I was dealing with it.

Transcript: Video File 4.1.1

Teacher A: I take care of slower learners because the ability of students is not always the same. Some students are fast learners. Especially with the students who have learning disabilities I follow up on all activities. Especially with children with emotional problems, I do report to the principal about their classroom progress.

Interviewer: As you've said, students have different abilities and different learning speed. How do you deal with that? What kind of methods do you use?

Teacher A: The first step is to encourage and motivate them. And to identify their learning needs and to support them with their needs.

Successful educators take diversity and individual needs into consideration when planning their teaching and ensure equal opportunities and inclusion for every student. Regardless of their personal or socio-economic life circumstances, all students need and are entitled to have a safe and productive learning environment. In this module, you will explore how diversity affects the classroom and receive practical tips for promoting an inclusive environment to enable all learners to acquire skills for their future lives.

Enjoy!