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Current Perspectives on Inclusive Education in the Czech Republic

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Current Perspectives on Inclusive Education in the Czech Republic

Abstract

This paper examines the academic literature describing the development of inclusive education programming within the Czech Republic after the Velvet Revolution. Interviews were conducted with special education professionals, who are researching potential benefits of inclusive education. Additionally, observations from an inclusive third grade classroom give further insight into how an inclusive classroom works. Despite some resistance, the Czech Republic is moving in the direction of inclusive education across the country.

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Comments

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Current Perspectives on Inclusive Education in the Czech Republic

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Abstract:

This paper examines the academic literature describing the development of inclusive education programming within the Czech Republic after the Velvet Revolution. Interviews were conducted with special education professionals, who are researching potential benefits of inclusive education. Additionally, observations from an inclusive third grade classroom give further insight into how an inclusive classroom works. Despite some resistance, the Czech Republic is moving in the direction of inclusive education across the country.

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Introduction

The Velvet Revolution in Czech Republic led to a paradigm shift in the special education system in 1989. At this time, the Czech Republic began the process of implementing inclusive education, which mandates the support of all students with a variety of disabilities, which include hearing impairments, visual impairments, physical handicaps, speech impairments, learning disabilities, behavioral issues, intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorders (Czech Republic). Prior to the inclusive education movement, defectology, the study of disabled children, was the predominant school of thought used within the educational system in Czechoslovakia. The theory of defectology separates disabled individuals from the general population, and is highly criticized because it does not include the latest developments in education and medicine (Florian & Becirevic 2011, p. 374). Even though defectology combines disciplines involving the biology of the child, the child's thoughts and behaviors, and the child's social environment, it places too much emphasis on the social exclusion of the disabled child (Florian & Becirevic 2011, p. 374).

Initial educational reform in the Czech Republic, Poland, and Russia did not make many changes regarding the teaching of learning disabled students. Teaching methods continued to be extremely rigid, and successful teachers were evaluated based upon on how much factual information they could impart to the students. In the mid 1990s, disabled students were still stigmatized in Czech society (Graves & Gargiulo 1994, p. 208). Each student with a disability was given a formal medical diagnosis which led to a specific prescription for treatment and how the student should be educated with little to no flexibility. Currently, there are greater efforts

within the Czech education community to promote inclusion of disabled students. Relá Chabová's Non Governmental Organization (NGO) makes inclusion its central mission (Chabová, April 25, 2017).

Inclusion proponents draw upon Bronfenbrenner's ecological model as a way to demonstrate the importance of viewing a disability from a global perspective. Each of my interview subjects recognizes the need for a multilevel approach to educating the disabled child. Bronfenbrenner provides a framework to examine the various individuals and organizations that must be brought together for a global approach (Bronfenbrenner, U. 1994, 38). Bronfenbrenner identifies five systems affecting individual development: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. The microsystem focuses on interpersonal relationships between the developing person and the immediate environment (Bronfenbrenner, U. 1994, 39). The mesosystem describes linkages between the student's settings, such as home and school. The exosystem explores linkages between two or more settings, one of which does not include the individual. The macrosystem includes overall culture, and resources that impact the other systems. Lastly, the chronosystem recognizes that changes may occur over time within the individual person, and his or her environment (Bronfenbrenner, U. 1994, 40).

Currently, children still receive a medical diagnosis for disabilities, but the inclusive classroom allows for more flexibility in how the teacher will educate the child. The change in attitudes towards educating special education students has been an ongoing process since the Velvet Revolution. Little by little, the rigid culture of communism has been breaking down in two important ways. The stigma surrounding disability has been reduced, which has led to greater inclusiveness in the education system. There is greater understanding that all

stakeholders, such as parents and the school administration, must be involved in the education of children. Currently in the Czech Republic, there are laws in place to ensure that disabled people have equal access to an education. The challenge for the future is to change the attitudes of people who believe that disabled students should be separated from non disabled students, and that diversifying the classroom will be beneficial for society.

Context and Literature Review

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994) explains the ecological model of human development in five concrete systems: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem and the chronosystem. These systems vary from the macrosystem, which involves an individual's culture impacting the other systems, and the microsystem, which involves an individual's interaction with his or her immediate environment.

The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education states that there were significant changes to the special education system since the abolishment of communism in 1989. Examples of changes are that people with disabilities have the accessibility to education and mental health services, and parents are more involved in their children's lives. Inclusive education includes individuals with hearing impairment, visual impairment, physical handicap, speech impairment, learning disabilities, behavioral issues, intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorders (Czech Republic).

Florian & Becirevic (2011) discuss how teachers are unaware of issues that concern students from marginalized communities, such as the Roma community. Non Governmental Organizations are working to raise awareness and are helping to advocate for the implementation of inclusive education, such as deinstitutionalization and reducing the number of special schools.

Prior to the Velvet Revolution, defectology framed the way in which learning disabilities were dealt with. Defectology implements the disciplines of psychology, medicine, philosophy, sociology, and political science to educate individuals and their families, and the rehabilitation of disabled individuals. The study of defectology also involves a child's genetic makeup, a child's psychology, and a child's social environment, but this method is not up to date with the current education system and medicine (Florian & Becirevic 2011, p. 374). Prior to the Velvet Revolution, Communist ideology rejected anything against conformity, such as professionals working with handicapped individuals were expected to help handicapped individuals overcome their disabilities.

Graves & Gargiulo (1994) write about how the Czech Republic, Poland, and Russia were evaluated based on educational reform, which is linked closely with each country's economic reform. The authors have concluded that within these three central and eastern European countries, teaching methods were extremely rigid. Teachers focused their efforts on teaching factual information, such as teaching everything by the book. Teachers also had high expectations of their students, and if a student did not meet a teacher's expectations in terms of academics and behavior, these children were immediately sent to special schools. In the Czech Republic, special education is primarily focused on defectology, which glorifies an individual's weaknesses rather than his or her potential. In Czech society, disabled students are still stigmatized from regular society (Graves & Gargiulo 1994, p. 208).

Polyzoi & Černá (2001) state that after WWII, the communist regime in Czechoslovakia exerted tremendous influence on the education system, which resulted in schools being rigid and inflexible. During the Communist era, the education system was run primarily by the Communist

party. After the Velvet Revolution, there were broad changes in the education system. Many reforms to the educational system were proposed as there was recognition of the need for major change, but there was no one who took a leadership role in guiding the schools through the process of change. It was going to take time to work through the immense challenges of instituting both structural and cultural change and to develop a new culture of consultation (Polyzoi & Černá 2011, p. 73).

Šiška (2006) states that during communism, special education students were physically ostracized from society, by placing them in residential homes. In the 1990s, a tremendous shift took place in social services, such as the formation of Non Government Organizations advocating for people with learning disabilities and their families. Even though special education individuals are still institutionalized, it is slowly changing (Šiška 2006, p. 147). Social services in the Czech Republic were required to change when the country joined the European Union in 2004 (Šiška 2006, p. 147).

“The Salamanca Statement (1994) encouraged diversity in Czech classrooms as a major component of inclusive education. More recently, schools have changed to focus to integration of children with disabilities by supporting their skill development in order for them to keep up with their classmates in mainstream settings. The concept of integration is to provide a safety net for special education students who would not otherwise be able to succeed in mainstream schools” (Strnadová & Hájková 2012, p. 308).

The Civil Liberties Union for Europe (2015) states that other European countries have been criticizing the Czech Republic for lacking special education services. The European Court of Human Rights believes that the Czech Republic discriminated against special education Roma

children. “The Czech inclusive education debate intensified after the recent statement of President Milos Zeman, who said that disabled and healthy children should be educated separately” (Struggle Continues 2015).

Methods

I conducted three professional interviews, observed a third grade inclusive classroom, and read and took notes on several special education empirical studies. I interviewed three individuals, two Professors of Education at Charles University, and one woman who works for an NGO advocating for Inclusive Education. I observed and took careful notes on a third grade classroom, and asked the teacher specific questions pertaining to the special education students. In addition to that classroom visit, I had also observed a classroom earlier in the semester in Nové Město pod Smrkem, which was also a valuable reference point.

I conducted my first interview at Charles University with Dr. Lenka Felcmanová, originally for my interview project. I purposely asked questions pertaining to the Czech special education system in the realms of Education and Psychology. I knew I would be not only using this interview for my interview project, but for data in my Independent Study Project (ISP). After collecting this data, I framed my data in my four research questions that I asked the other professor of Education at Charles University, Dr. Pavlina Šumníková, and the woman who works for the NGO, Rela Chabova. During these interviews, I wanted to gain a perspective on the paradigm shift of the special education system since the Velvet Revolution, the biggest issues in special education policy, the identification of students with disabilities, and the biggest

challenges in the field of special education (Appendix A). After asking those four concrete questions, I then asked each interviewee specific questions related to her field of study.

I observed a third grade classroom in Zvole, which is a village in the Czech Republic. This classroom was an inclusive classroom of students with learning disabilities. After observing and taking notes on the class, I asked the teacher a few questions about the learning disabled students in the classroom. I wanted to gain a greater perspective on inclusive education.

Ethics

My research was evenly distributed through interviews, observational data and library research. I made sure that the interviewees allowed me to record the interview before they agreed to be interviewed, and I was also prepared to offer informed consent in case the interviewees enclosed private information. In terms of observing the third grade classroom, I made sure to refrain from photography, and took Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) complaint records of these children, even though this was not an American classroom. HIPAA is a United States law that protects individuals medical care records and personal health information.

In terms of bias, I was especially conscious of my cultural bias as an American student, who not only went through the American education system, but studies Education and Psychology. When asking interviewees questions about the Czech special education system, I tried to refrain from my ethnocentric lens of the United States, since the two systems are entirely different. Even though the United States has more resources for special education students, I tried to look at just the Czech Republic, and how its history of communism affected the progression of the education system.

Analysis and Findings

Changes in Special Education After The Velvet Revolution

Dr. Felcmanová explains how communism affected the shift in the special education system: “Well, from the professional POV, I can say that the biggest shift was from the very organized and strict system to open...If the system changes, usually you go from one extreme to another” (Felcmanová, March 23, 2017). Communism in Czechoslovakia exerted tremendous influence on the education system, which resulted in schools being rigid and inflexible. During the Communist era, the education system was run primarily by the Communist party (Polyzoi & Černá 2001). Dr. Felcmanová also talks about how children with disabilities were separated from the general population during the communist era:

During the communist period, children with very mild special education needs and handicaps were excluded in special schools. Those special schools were physically excluded from the town or city. Usually, castles, or other places that were very confiscated by the former regime. And they were physically isolated from the rest of the society. They had no chance to really get integrated in the society, and very often, the parents were forced to place their handicapped children in these institutions (Felcmanová,)

Dr. Felcmanová talks about how some parents had the stamina to resist this approach from the Communist authorities to send their disabled children to living institutions. Authorities would

tell families that they were “wrong” in not agreeing with the system. Dr. Šumníková’s talks about how disabled adults, such as blind and low vision adults, used to be institutionalized, and they are proud to talk about their experiences today. She claims that they said, “I had to do it, I had to be in these rooms, I had to be in this difficult situation” (Šumníková, April 20, 2017).

Children with disabilities today are happy to be integrated in the classroom, and to have non-disabled friends. Dr. Šumníková talks about how during communism, society believed that blind and low vision children had to go to a special school, and nothing else was acceptable. The system has changed tremendously since then (Šumníková).

Unlike Dr. Šumníková and Dr. Felcmanová, Ms. Chabova focuses on political correctness in the Czech’s post communist society, and Táňa translates her experience:

Since the 90s, she and her husband both worked in an institution for mentally impaired children....So, this trend with political correctness, politically correct naming, is something that is more developed in the Englosax world, and the western world. Here, in our culture, it is still, in the very beginning, and we’re just finding our way, how to speak about these people in political correct ways. They themselves, young people, they are even the ones who say that we are not the people with special needs, we are the people of normal needs as you all have. The need of love, the need of respect, the need of friends. And we just need more support than the average person (Chabova).

Young people in Czech society are starting to develop western ideology, believing people have equal desires than just looking at a person’s weaknesses. Going against what I have learned

previously about communism, Ms. Chabova talks about how when she was growing up, she had special education children as her classmates. Táňa translates:

Although she grew up during communism, she's used to having different people around.

When she was going into kindergarten, there was a blind boy, as her classmate. Then, one of her good friends is a psychologist, who has some problems with her legs, and she also had a classmate with Down Syndrome...This is a matter of a small town. Because she grew up in a small town, it was not normal, if once you had a baby with special health needs, it wasn't normal to send that kid into some institution, it was normal to keep that kid in the family (Chabova).

This made me believe that the communist leaders left small towns and villages alone, and focused their primary control on big cities, such as Prague. Ms. Chabova also talks about the town she came from specifically was a town where they sent people with chronic health issues to, and they would also send these children to institutions located around the former Sudetenland.

Special Education Policies

Dr. Felcmanová hopes to educate the public on the benefits of inclusive education. The Czech government began the process of passing new school legislation a full ten years after the Salamanca Declaration (1994). The new school legislation (Law No. 561/2004 Sb., replaced by Law No. 49/2009 Sb.) mandates equal opportunity for all in the Czech education system which is the first time such legislation has been enacted in the country. In March 2010, the Czech government adopted the National Action Plan for Inclusive Education. (Strnadová & Hájková

2012, p. 308). In terms of the private and public sphere of schools in the Czech Republic, public schools are usually the better option and free of charge. Dr. Felcmanová believes, “the private schools here are parents initiative...But more often it is a parental initiative that the parents are trying to set up some alternative forms of education. They are finding ways, how to secure different approach to their children” (Felcmanová). The private school sector is also a reaction to the baby boom in the Czech Republic after the Velvet Revolution. In contrast to the gifted students private schools, there are private schools that focus primarily on children with special needs. These private schools “are usually more child-centered oriented, because in these schools, these reactional schools, the parents and teachers have some vision and different forms and methods of education, sizes of classes. Both often provide support on the personal level” (Felcmanová). Public schools are more successful because they are able to offer additional support.

In terms of special education policy, parents of special education students can choose whether or not they want to send their children to special schools. Dr. Šumníková believes that it is better for parents to send their children to special schools if their children have multiple disabilities, such as visual and hearing impairment and/or visual and physical impairment (Šumníková). In the United States, there are special schools for learning disabled individuals, but in public schools, there is almost always inclusive education. In Czech society today, professionals who work in separate special education schools do not believe in inclusive education. These professionals are quite conservative, and want to keep their expertise. They believe that integrating disabled children in a regular school environment would be detrimental to the child, and would slow down the other students. Ms. Chabova states, “They want to keep

their expertise, they want to keep their special place. Because that's what they have education for. They were trained in this. Their argument is that these kids with intellectual impairment will be slowing down the other children in the classroom" (Chabova). Even though the Czech Republic does not have a law that protects discrimination against disabled people, they signed an International Law, Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which states, "every person, no matter if it is a child or adult, has the right to choose where he will live, whether he will be educated, and the right for education. In a way, we could say that there is a legislation that covers rights of people with intellectual impairments" (Chabova).

Identification of Special Education Students

Dr. Felcmanová talks about how in the Czech Republic, Individualized Education Plans are implemented when a child's needs are more complex. There is a lower level education plan, which is implemented to help learning disabled children succeed in school. The Individualized Education Plans do not necessarily need to be academically related, such as pertaining to a child's social environment. This particular plan must be evaluated for at least three months by teachers. If this plan is not approved, the child then is sent to an assessment center,

and the assessment center decides whether the child will get an Individual Education Plan, and some other extra aids of school...This plan of educational support and this Individual Education Plan. The Individual Education Plan as I said is usually for children with traditional disabilities, with a physical, sensory or intellectual disability (Felcmanová).

In terms of identifying students with disabilities, Dr. Šumníková states, “We have special education centers for blind, for children with low vision, hearing impairment, mental disabilities, and these centers provide this plan” (Šumníková). Students with disabilities are identified in terms of a medical diagnosis. Adopted from America, social workers in the Czech Republic use the Support Intensity Scale, which demonstrates how much help an individual needs, but this does not cover the educational component of the system. Ms. Chabova claims, “this is used in social services, and used in many NGOs. But it is rather this parallel system works here, exists here, parallel to this official one. They try to lobby for it, so it is more progressive way of treatment can be implemented in Czech Republic” (Chabova).

Challenges in Special Education

Like in the United States, Dr. Šumníková discusses how parental involvement is the biggest issue in her field. Dr. Šumníková claims that parents believe,

Teachers have my children. Children don't work with school, parents don't work with school. Parents do not work with school, and they have a difficult job, and a lot of work...You must, you must, no “I can help you.” Because, families are not complete, a lot of families are divorced. Children are only with mother, and this is a problem...Children are only living with mothers, no fathers. I think that this is a problem. No visual or hearing impairment, but learning disabilities...Well, I think, anxiety, aggressiveness...using phones, internet, during education” (Šumníková).

Ms. Chabova talks about how the biggest challenge in the field of special education is getting to the point of special needs children being separated from other children: “In any field, not even in the field of education. Separated so called ‘normal’ kids, and kids with special needs”

(Chabova). The current president of the Czech Republic recently stated that disabled and healthy children should be educated separated, which continues to spark the Czech inclusive education debate (Struggle Continues 2015)

Opinions on the Future of Special Education from the Perspective of Practitioners

Dr. Felcmanová believes that approximately 85% of students with disabilities would benefit from inclusive education. She also believes that students with severe disabilities who would not be able to function normally in a classroom environment should be placed in special schools. She thinks children with more severe disabilities should have joint activities with neighborhood children, so that other people can still be exposed to those with disabilities (Felcmanová). In terms of students with disabilities, Dr. Šumníková specifically talks about special education centers for individuals with visual impairments. These education centers provide accommodations for individuals with visual impairments.

Ms. Chabova currently works in an NGO that “brings a new perspective on a person, not what a person is incapable of. They look at the person of the point of view, what is this person capable of” (Chabova). Ms. Chabova’s organization helps protect the legal rights of disabled individuals, so they do not get taken advantage of. A tremendous shift took place in the 1990s during the formation of NGOs advocating for people with learning disabilities and their families. Even though some special education individuals are still institutionalized, Ms. Chabova’s NGO along with other NGOs support a positive shift in Czech society (Šiška 2006, p. 147). These

NGOs are all trying to raise the awareness of the implementation of inclusive education (Florian & Becirevic 2011). These NGOs are also trying to go against the Czech Republic's defectology approach of special education, which glorifies an individual's weaknesses rather than his or her potential (Graves & Gargiulo 1994, p. 208).

Inclusive Classroom

My research includes a visit to an inclusive third grade classroom in Zvole, which is a small village in the Czech Republic. When I arrive, the students introduce themselves, and ask me questions about myself in English. Ms. Luhanová informs me that when psychologists observe classrooms, the psychologists give almost the same report for each child, even though each child's diagnosis differs from one another. She also tells me that her class is not integrated with students with serious issues. Ms. Luhanová also informs me that next year, the school will integrate students with more serious issues, such as autism spectrum disorders.

In Ms. Luhanová's class, there is one boy with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia and dysgraphia. A psychologist also diagnosed him with mixed receptive language disorder, but Ms. Luhanová believes that he just has language processing issues. During class, this boy is asked to read a passage aloud, and has trouble reading the passage. When he reads the passage aloud, he appears embarrassed and uneasy. This student seems well aware that he struggles in school more than the other students. Ms. Luhanová informs me that this student does not receive academic accommodations that help him compensate for his learning disabilities.

Ms. Luhanová also tells me that another student in her class is on ADHD medication, but is undiagnosed. During a reading activity, I observe this child staring into space, and he does not look down at his book. Just observing him for a few hours, and based on his interactions with his peers, he seems to lack social skills. For example, he pushes one of his peers, and steals a pair of scissors from one of his classmates. I observe another child who seems to get distracted easily. As the children are asking me questions about myself in English, this child is off to the side, and he looks like he is in a daydream. This child also needs to be redirected after the reading activity, because he is still focused on reading his book. Ms. Luhanová informs me that this child's parents are divorced. His parents have joint custody over him, which means that he is constantly moving back and forth between his mother's home and his father's home. According to Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory of development, the child's microsystem could be affecting his school performance (Bronfenbrenner 1994).

What surprises me the most about the Czech education system is learning about how far the pendulum has swung regarding the structure of the education system today. According to Dr. Felcmanová,

In every town and village and city, the organization of education and content are the same. In every school, you have different approaches and different attitudes, different methods used, and it puts great demands on teachers, and their personalities, attitudes, professional skills (Felcmanová).

In the United States, each state has specific requirements throughout the education system, such as the common core. Even though each school system varies, schools have to follow the same requirements within each state. In the Czech Republic, Dr. Felcmanová's description of the education system leads me to believe that a student could be receiving a completely different education from school to school depending on a variety of factors.

Ms. Luhanová values the quality of student learning and makes sure that her students are having fun. When I visited and observed a kindergarten classroom in Nové Město pod Smrkem, which is another village in the Czech Republic, the children were particularly well-behaved. Ms. Luhanová's class is well-behaved, but they needed to be redirected more times than the kindergarten class in Nové Město pod Smrkem. While I have observed only these two examples, the great difference between the classrooms could possibly reflect the different approaches to teaching and discipline.

Conclusions

Even though there has been a shift in the special education system in the Czech Republic since the Velvet Revolution, there is still not widespread agreement on the value of inclusive education. There are specific laws in the Czech Republic that protect the rights of disabled individuals to have access to education, but there are still negative attitudes towards inclusion of disabled individuals. During communism, disabled individuals were removed from society, and were sent to separate institutions faraway from big cities, such as Prague. The government exerted tremendous pressure on the parents of disabled people to send their children to special

schools. Despite the lasting cultural effect of communism, millennials attitudes are changing towards disabled individuals, especially in the realm of political correctness.

Even though many professionals in the education community are advocating strongly for inclusion, my interviewees believe that if someone is severely handicapped, he or she should be sent to a separate school for disabled people (Šumníková). They also believe that there should be joint neighborhood activities, so the disabled children are integrated in the community (Felcmanová). Interestingly, the teachers who work at these special institutions are opposed to inclusive education, because they believe it will slow down the non disabled students and hinder the disabled students school performance (Chabova). Once disabled students have a medical diagnosis, an Individualized Education Plan can be implemented. A child's home situation can also affect his or her school performance, rather than just his or her disability (Šumníková).

NGOs have also contributed to the positive shift of attitudes towards inclusive education. Learning disabled students within inclusive classrooms in the Czech Republic do not receive accommodations to help them compensate for their learning disabilities. Further research needs to be done to determine whether or not accommodations would enhance their learning. Because many factors can affect an individual's school performance, Czech Republic educators may wish to consider Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory in order to fully understand a global perspective of the disabled individual (Bronfenbrenner 1994). The Czech Republic's special education system has made tremendous strides since the Velvet Revolution, and advocates are making tremendous progress towards a system of inclusive education.

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Appendix A

Interviewee: Dr. Felcmanová

Questions

- 1) Define psychology in your own words. Why is psychology important to you and your field?
- 2) Can you please talk about your career path and how you got to where you are today? What was it like seeing a tremendous shift in the education system since 1989?
- 3) Do you believe students with learning disabilities and physical disabilities should be in separate schools or included in the same school system? Explain your answer.
- 4) What is the difference between educational psychology and school psychology?
- 5) Can you explain the difference between public and private schools? Which do you believe has a better support system for students with learning disabilities and mental health issues--private or public? Why or why not?
- 6) Do students with learning disabilities have a documented form of accommodations to help them succeed in school? If not, how do students with learning disabilities compensate for themselves?

Interviewee: Dr. Šumníková

Questions

- 1) Would you mind commenting on your experience of the changes in the special education field since the Velvet Revolution in 1989?
- 2) What are the biggest issues in current special education policy today?
- 3) Would you mind talking about the process of identifying student disabilities so that they qualify for support? For example, in the United States, students have documented accommodations to help them succeed in school.
- 4) What is the biggest challenge you face in your field and why?
- 5) *Are children with visual impairments more integrated in schools than students with other severe disabilities, such as behavioral issues?*
- 6) Can you talk about special accommodations in place for students with visual impairments?

Interviewee: Relá Chabová

Questions

- 1) Would you mind commenting on your experience of the changes in the special education field since the Velvet Revolution in 1989? What have been some of the most important changes in the special education field in the last 25 years?
- 2) What are the biggest issues in special education policy today? Do you think that there should be new laws to address problems in the special education system today? (explain that policy comes from laws created to help children with learning disabilities and to make sure that schools do not discriminate against them)
- 3) Would you mind talking about the process of identifying student disabilities so that they qualify for support? For example, in the United States, students have documented accommodations to help them succeed in school.
- 4) What is the biggest challenge you face in your field (special education) and why? Are parents aware of what learning disabilities are such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, auditory processing difficulties, executive function disabilities, etc.? (In the U.S. there is still a greater need to educate the public)
- 5) Can you please talk about your organization? I have read the first page, but the rest of your website is in Czech.