

Sameer Kumar, Jason H. Eickhoff

[„Actually I am different.“
Subjective constructions of
ethnic identity in a migration
context and new ways in
psychological acculturation
research]

Hochschule Trier

Outsourcing: When and how should it be done?

Sameer Kumar, Jason H. Eickhoff von Sameer Kumar, Jason H. Eickhoff

Abstract [English]

"in the german educational system, a tiered, hierarchical school structure separates pupils according to a principle of 'homogeneity of achievement'. special education as a discipline legitimizes the referral of elementary pupils to separate special schools for so-called learning disabled pupils. these practices of categorization and referral are exemplary for the process of separation in the german school system. the number of pupils with special education needs schooled in separate special schools is exceedingly high in international comparison: over 50% of these students attend schools for the 'learning disabled'. learning disability is a category which, differing from other disabilities, is defined by a combination of medical, psychological, and educational theories. generally, the students referred to schools for the 'learning disabled' receive little support in the general school system and thus their difficulties in learning persist. how are otherness and abnormality constructed by the discipline and profession of special education (sonderpädagogik)? utilizing a methodology informed by the sociology of knowledge and foucauldian discourse analysis, i demonstrate how the construction of individuals relates to the theory and definition of learning disability. further, i explore how the schooling practices designed for students with 'learning disability' depend on the professional strategies of special education and its disciplinary knowledge. the concept of 'learning disabled' pupils and the practices implementing the discourse of 'separation' prove to be legitimacy rationalisations of a historically classist and corporatist educational system. less educated individuals are produced by institutional design through early separation and an hierarchical, multi-tiered school system that is permeable only in one direction. the group of 'learning disabled' has been and is still defined in relation to average learning and achievement; the label merely describes a (negative) variation from the 'normal'. the content of the category 'learning disabled' and thus of its members, far from being defined substantively, varies historically according to the learning and achievement standards of the school system, thereby giving the special education teachers and experts the authority to define learning disability in accordance with their own strategies and group interests." (author's abstract)

Keywords: Ethnic identity, acculturation orientations, domain specificity