Essentials of disability studies for special educators

Lecture 1

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Aims and objects

- Disability studies and education: two options for juxtaposing
- Criteria (ideas) and procedures (institutions) of educational system in the context of disability studies
- Functionalism,
- *three further approaches, humanist, radical, and reflexive, will be discussed next time*

Disability studies

An example of new type for producing knowledge:

Transforming previous object of study to the subject (participative and interactionist researchers)

Involving studies into social movements in favour of implementing better standards of Human Rights

Highlighting dilemmas and conflicts, provoking reflexivity among various actors, integrating them in teams

Disability studies among *Studies*

Disability studies

The founding basis for research and collaboration in CSD Hyderabad rests in the premise that research in the social sciences and law is by definition a participatory endeavor that draws on a mutually enabling relationship between the researcher and the people whose lives are the subject of research.

Artist : NIVEDITA JADHAV
Courtesy : ASMITA RESOURCE CENTRE FOR WOMEN

Homework: watch Night on Earth, Paris and compare two construction, ethnic minority and disability

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-xpFztWDPA
- Questions and handlings will be put in Materials to classes

Education as an agent of segregation or anti-oppressive practice

- ***Educationalisation*** as an element of colonisation and the instrument of obedience

- ***Deschooling society*** or transforming schools into agents of changes
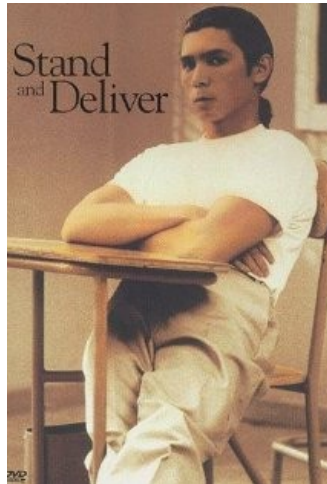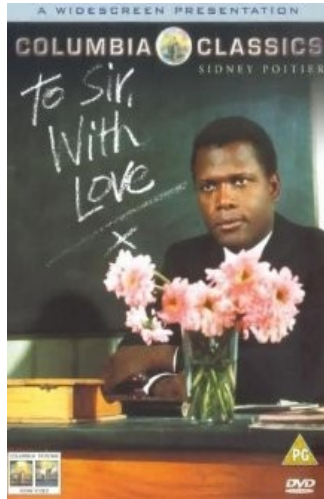
Task 1: strands for self-evaluation

What do we analyse (what exists in our analysis)
- Criteria (idea, discourses)
- Practices, institutions, procedures

On which level do we explore an issue
- Macrolevel of explaining (policy, culture, economical reasons, idea of progress/backwardness)
- Mesolevel (separate groups of actors, relations between people and groups: community level, lack of embeddedness)
- Microlevel (behaviour of certain people, trend to be out of changes)
- Connections between levels

How do we know what we know about society, disability, people with disability?
- Facts, behaviours, numbers observable things
- Feelings, attitudes, process of meaning making

The connection between criteria and procedures

Who does ***what*** and under ***which*** reasons

- Agents, actors, groups of interests
- Practices, strategies, policies
- Discourses, communicative (translating to public) and coordinative (used within creating and implementing policies)

Two trajectories between education and disability studies

- Educational system as an area of applying disability studies

- Wide range of methodologies for exploring education and planning its transformation

- Testing disability studies in the context of education

- Achieving more coherent approach in evaluating the impact of education on exclusion

How could you define the meaning of each of the trajectories for special education?

Task 2: redefining education for disabled children

Agents	Practices	Discourses
	Family placement of disabled children (foster care, adoption, reintegration with birth families)	
	Transparent decision making related to the trajectory of education	
	Early intervening with disabled children, continuity between early intervention and further education	

Disability studies as providers of meta-methodological approach

- Meaningful dichotomies for constructing our own approach in consistent way

- Accepting the diversity of approaches

- Accepting the necessity to indicate our own position towards disability

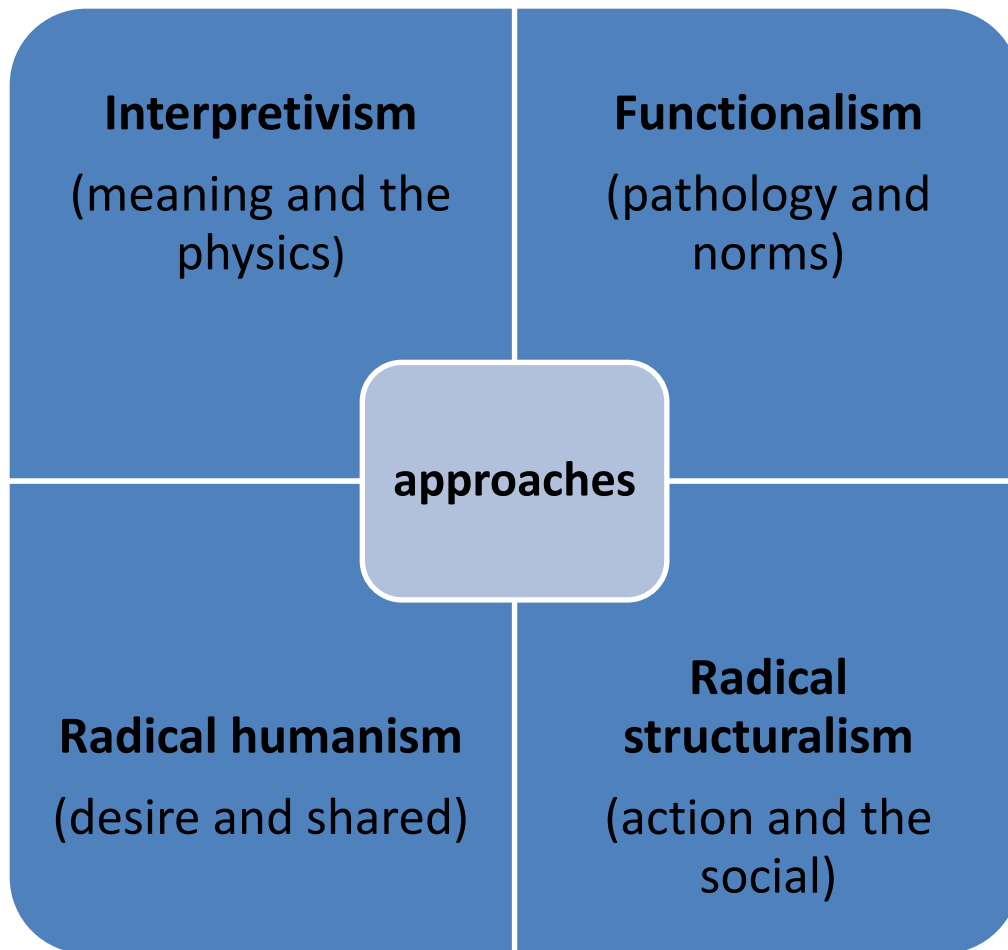# Task 3: Indicate your position towards disability and approaches
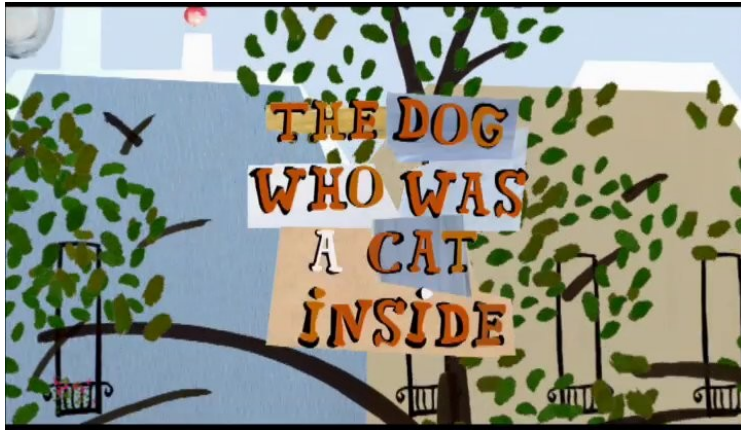
Short cartoon movie by Siri Melchior (Denmark, 2002)

Does the main character (dog who was a cat inside) run into problems or not?

Could we draw an analogy between the main character and...:

Has the issue been solved and if yes in which way?

The division of social theories regarding disability

Interpretivism (meaning and the physics)	Functionalism (pathology and norms)
approaches	
Radical humanism (desire and shared)	Radical structuralism (action and the social)

Two dichotomies:

- Society is understood as **regulated** *vs.* Society is understood as **in conflict**

- **Subjective** entities in society *vs.* **Objective** things in society

The key question of disability studies: what is more important

- Human rights
- Process of education
- Meaning of here and now
- the collision of interest groups

- Human capital
- Outcomes of education
- Meaning of future results
- over-utilitarian and very traditional approach

Functionalism: ideas

- Education as an element of social order
- Norms as regulators of the balance between individuals and society
- Disability as an abnormality (potentially) destroying social order

Variety of approaches

- focus on biological factors
- Focus on social factors
- Coinciding both perspectives

The case of eugenics

Selective strand

Main focus: the threat of reproducing low-value people and two alternatives to solve the issue:

- the isolation from mainstream society (placement into institutions)
- sterilization

Assimilative eugenics

Main focus: the mode of life as a key determinant of the national health

1) all diseases are the result of inappropriate mode of life;
2) the sustainable improvements of the quality of life are indispensable for the health of nation

The framework of arguments in favour of residential care in eugenics

Combining both domains of eugenics into consistent scheme in education

Main elements of the approach to re-educating	Selective stream	Assimilative stream
connection between disability and deviant behaviour	Both need to be under control and restrictions, common hereditary factors	Common strategies for correction, without which deviance becomes inevitable
incapability of parents to provide care and control	Mostly, parents of children with disorders are the core source of bad heredity	The disorder of child is a result of inappropriate family upbringing
indispensable role of institutions and professionals	Better knowledge and the ability to differentiate the degree of disorder. Working out classification with various types of disorders relevantly to the main source of disorder's origin: heredity, social circumstances, or the mix of both	

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Roma children in residential care: the first day in children home and after 5 months

Functionalism: selective procedures

Differentiating norms and abnormality

Assessment centres

Tests and the art of psychodiagnostics

Methods of pathopsychology

Correcting deviance towards norms

Special schools

Special programmes

Correction

Actors

Professionals vs. parents

- The knowledge belongs to experts

- Parents are posed as a main threat for child up bringing

Children vs. society

- What transforms 'dangerous' children into socialised entities?

- What are expectations of the society from next generations?

Final task for today: Whistleless

- What symbolises the ability to whistle?

- Who teaches the bird to whistle?

- In which reasons do they have the right to teach?

- What are differences between teachers?

- How does the movie describe the social order in "the pink town"?

- What are consequences of stealing the whistle by policeman?

- Which attitude towards functionalist approach does movie provide?

Two views on functionalist approach and the education based upon it

- Total unacceptance because of the apology of naturalness

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29Mg6Gfh9Co

- Critique towards monopolising the space of approaches by functionalism, the call for diverse methodologies and practices