

ABSTRACT

Title: The individual education plan as text. About identity, gender, power and governing in pupils' documentation at school.
Language: Swedish with a summary in English
Keywords: Special education, individual education plans, identity, gender, power and governing.
ISBN: 978-91-7346-600-4

In Sweden, an increasing number of children are defined as having some form of difficulty in school. A pupil shall be given remedial tuition if there is an apprehension that s/he will not achieve the educational targets. An Individual Educational Plan [IEP] for the planning, follow-up and evaluation of the special support should be drawn up in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents. IEPs are written in a context where official documents, the municipality, the institution, teaching and the individual's situation meet.

The aim of this thesis is to shed light on how boys and girls are constituted in the school's pupil documentation, how the construction of the identity of these pupils can form the basis of how the individual/group is defined and how it provides for a certain set of measures. I have employed Michel Foucault's concepts of the relation between society, institution and individual. In order to study the creation of identity, I have chosen to supplement my analytical tools with a perspective inspired by Stuart Hall. The gender aspect is a central component in this study; that is, studying how girls and boys are portrayed in the IEPs.

The IEPs, which comprise the empirical material in this thesis, are gathered from 14 different compulsory schools and consists of IEPs for a total of 136 pupils, 86 boys and 50 girls. As several IEPs could have been drawn up for one and the same pupil, the material consists of 358 documents (246 for boys and 112 for girls) in all.

The goals formulated in the IEPs are both knowledge goals and social fostering goals. The results show that fostering goals are almost a *prerequisite of knowledge-related learning*. This means that fostering goals take precedence and need to be worked on before tackling knowledge-related learning. Furthermore, results show that even though girls and boys are described in the IEPs as having the same type of knowledge-related difficulties, they risk being assessed according to different norm systems, one for girls and one for boys. An IEP is in several respects an important text, which also contains a power aspect. It is thus extremely important to reflect upon how such a text should be written. Based on the results from this study, we can note that it is not possible to give any simple or unambiguous answers to the question of how an IEP could or should be written. The power of the written word must be acknowledged by pedagogues. Knowledge about gender order and other social orders is also important as is an understanding of the significance of providing descriptions of individuals in texts for immediate or later use and how this description can affect children's identity constructs.