The use of drama to teach social skills in a special school setting for students with autism.

Article

Accepted Version

www.reading.ac.uk/centaur

CentAUR

The Use of Drama to Teach Social Skills in a Special School Setting for Students with Autism

Introduction

Claxton (2007) has argued that the goal of education is to expand young people's 'capacity to learn' and provide students with the tools they need for a lifetime of engagement with learning. For young people with additional learning needs this can be a particular challenge as they may become frustrated when they find engaging with academic concepts difficult. When a student has a deficit in social skills as part of the core element of their disability the challenge of learning is compounded by the corresponding difficulty with the personal and social aspects of learning (Baron-Cohen, Leslie, & Frith, 1985). Current thinking on the best way to attain high academic standards for all learners is through inclusive education, ideally within the student's local setting. The presumption of mainstream education as the learning environment of choice is well established in the UK (Warnock, 1978) as well as internationally ("No Child Left Behind Act", 2007). Research links mainstream settings with academic achievement (Myklebust, 2006) and high expectations on the part of teaching staff, resulting in high student attainment (Farrell, Dyson, Polat, & Hutcheson, 2007).

However, the integration of pupils with special needs into mainstream education is not always regarded as being wholly or universally positive with additional demands being placed on teaching staff to meet the needs of all learners in mixed settings. For some students, social outcomes in particular are affected (Frederickson, Simmonds, Evans, & Soulsby, 2007). Current research shows links with bullying, (McLaughlin et al 2012, Green, Collingwood, & Ross, 2010; Norwich & Kelly, 2004), social isolation and anxiety (Humphrey & Lewis, 2008). Nonetheless, current thinking is committed to creating a 'welcome diversity amongst all learners' (Ainscow, 2007, p. 3) rather than simply placing students with additional needs amongst more able peers in the hope of successful integration. The emphasis therefore is on keeping the

advantages of an inclusive setting (high expectations, learning from peers, diverse curriculum opportunities) while minimising the social difficulties. This change is happening not only within mainstream settings but is also having an impact on teaching practice in more specialist educational settings.

If it is accepted that, for a variety of reasons, not all learners thrive in mainstream schools (Head & Pirrie, 2007) then it must also be accepted that some may prefer being placed in specialist settings (Norwich & Kelly, 2004; Pitt & Curtin, 2004). Smaller class sizes and greater personalised learning might provide opportunities to explore creative solutions to teaching less straightforward areas of the curriculum, one of which is the wider area of social skills. If social challenges are both part of the disability as well as a barrier to accessing education within the mainstream school, then this may be a particularly significant obstacle for the student with a diagnosis of autism (Wing, 1996). This paper explores how a supportive (and we argue inclusive) climate was created for two girls with autism in a special school setting through the use of drama with a group of non-autistic peers.

The Role of Drama

A number of challenges must be overcome when using drama as an educational tool in special school settings. Firstly, as Peter (2009, p. 9) notes, '…drama as a learning medium is still under-used in specialist settings'. Typically, the extent of drama in many special schools is the occasional performance of a play presented to an invited audience. Although a wonderful opportunity for families and school to engage with each other, the narrative of the play and semi-formal nature of the event may not necessarily support the goals of improving social skills.

Secondly, teachers may feel their personal ability to use drama as a tool for learning and teaching is limited due to a lack of specific training. The limited research in this area presents a

challenge for teachers who wish to increase their knowledge base in this area (Jindal-Snape & Vettraino, 2007). In the case of students with autism, 'Play and drama are rarely used with children with autism in any purposeful way' (Sherratt & Peter, 2002, p. 17). With this particular group, a deficit in imagination and the desire for rigidity or patterns of behaviour can make the unpredictability of the drama medium difficult and lead to teachers becoming prejudiced against the use of this pedagogy:

> 'Rigid adherence to simplistic interpretations of the autistic 'triad of impairments' in communication, interaction and imagination (Wing, 1996) can in practice lead inadvertently to the development of services and professional practices that struggle to address the needs of those children who are identified.' (Billington, 2006, p. 2).

Finally, the very nature of teaching learners with special needs (and those with autism in particular) means that repetition and restructuring difficult concepts is be needed (MacKenzie, 2008) while students need to be kept engaged. The nature of drama is that it engages through surprise and novelty. As such, it can be a flexible pedagogy that is highly responsive to setting and context. However, less experienced teachers may lack confidence in using drama as a learning medium because of its requirement for reflection in action (Schon, 1991) and subtle blending of spontaneity and structure (Taylor & Warner, 2006). Nonetheless, if this flexibility is embraced, it can lead to the creation of a teaching situation that has little scope for failure for students and therefore represents a 'safe environment' in which to practice important social skills.

The four challenges above (limited use in schools, teacher level of skill and limited research, difficulty in learning the skills, and lack of rigidity) were addressed in the project reported on here. The idea for the project derived from work by Hatton (2003) which focused on adolescent girls working in mainstream schools in England and Australia. Hatton recognized that peers

could learn from each other as not all the students had deficits in social skills. Such a view is affirmed by Topping (2005, p. 641) who noted that 'learners who themselves have educational challenges can act effectively as tutors to other learners'.

Setting

The school in which the project took place is in the south of England. It caters for students from age 2 to 19 years who have a wide range of learning needs. The school has a specialist resource for pupils with a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorders. The project involved a class of 12 pupils the majority of whom were in their final year of school and had moderate to severe learning difficulties in addition to other special needs (communication, medical and other). The two students with ASD, unusually both girls (Baird et al., 2006), were a particular focus of the pilot study. All students in state maintained English schools, including special schools, are required to follow the National Curriculum. Drama is a statutory strand of the curriculum for English (DfEE, 2003) so one aim of this project was to introduce the students to a range of new drama skills and techniques.

Following initial organisational meetings, the project ran from November 2008 to March 2009 and involved 13 sessions of one hour forty minutes each. The culmination of the project involved spending a whole day of filming, which took place after parental and student consent was obtained. For the duration of the project the lead researcher was assisted in the classroom by a full time teaching assistant and a part time learning support assistant.

Pedagogical aims

Many children with learning difficulties lack confidence in their own creative and communicative abilities (Whitehurst, 2007). Perceiving that they are developing these skills less rapidly than their peers tends to exacerbate the situation. Given that the current education system in England may be seen as being dominated by the requirement for children to achieve set levels in key subjects such as English, mathematics and science. Such a regime may be charged with lowering self-esteem by emphasising the need for children to do things they are not very good at while limiting the time and space available to explore other potential avenues of achievement. However, drama can provide a context in which skills can be practiced and learned, understanding fostered and, as a result, confidence heightened. By drawing on research by Hatton (2007) into the use of drama to release the 'student voice' (Ruddock, 2007; Tangen, 2008), the project sought to (1) create a drama that would reflect the students' own perceptions of what young people sharing similar circumstances as themselves needed to know, understand and be able to do. It was also anticipated that the project would reveal something of their (2) hopes and expectations for the future as well as their (3) fears and concerns.

On the whole, the class had very limited experience of drama; only one girl had who transferred to the class from another (mainstream) school in the third week of the project, had experienced drama as a part of the taught curriculum. Thus, a supplementary aim of the project was to introduce the students to a range of dramatic techniques that might be used to develop the drama. Over the course of the project the students experienced working with a range of techniques and skills including tableaux, improvisation, narration, choral speech, masks, puppets, ritual and writing in role. This served the duel purpose of developing a degree of subject specific knowledge (in this case, knowledge of the art form of drama) as well as facilitating learning through visual, verbal and kinaesthetic modes. The teaching strategies employed included devices commonly known as teacher-in-role, role-on-the-wall (in which a

fictional character is created by writing descriptive words inside a simple outline of a human body) and conscience alley (which involves students making two lines who speak aloud what they imagine to be the thoughts of a character who walks slowly between the lines while considering an impending decision).

Methods

The research was qualitative in nature and took the form of a case study (Punch, 2009). Brief notes were made as each session progressed in order to record contributions that were deemed particularly interesting because of the way they helped develop the drama or illustrated the nature of a student's engagement. Following each session the project leader consulted with the teaching assistants regarding the children's engagement and progress, and updated a more detailed collaborative reflective journal. Additional data was obtained through staff and student feedback. Four of the sessions involved writing collaboratively on the class whiteboard and this was kept as a record of the session. In three other sessions the students were asked to write pieces individually. The salient aspects of these pieces of writing, which included letters, diary entries and pieces of choral speech, along with notes taken in the sessions, was developed into a rough script. Ultimately, this script was used as the basis of a short film that was made to record the story that the class had developed over the course of the project. In turn, the field notes, script and video footage taken during the day long filming session were also used as evidence of the learning that took place for the school's records.

The research in practice

The project was formatted on the principles of what has become known as 'process drama'. This involves the teacher and students collaborating as participants while simultaneously

making, performing and reflecting on an evolving 'play' (Haseman, 1991). The project started with a pre-text (O'Neill, 1995) in the form of the following questions:

> *'If a new student joined this group, in this school, in this area, what would they need to know? What would their hopes and fears be? What would you be able to tell them that neither their parents nor their teachers could?'*

In a preliminary meeting with the group, specific feedback and goals were identified for the two girls registered as being on the autistic spectrum. It was noted that Kattrin (all names have been changed) 'seems very quiet – tends only to respond when asked a direct question but her responses are quite articulate' while Anna initially came across as 'lively, cheerful, willing to engage' though the class teacher commented that sometimes this outward presentation belied her actual level of engagement.   These initial observations were consistent with the girls' responses in the initial sessions and so it was agreed that the goal for both girls would be to build their confidence in working collaboratively and actively contributing their own ideas to the emerging drama…...

As the focus of the sessions was on increasing social skills and opportunities, several techniques were tried. The first involved the focused use of dialogic talk (Myhill, Jones, & Hopper, 2005) where the group were told that a new pupil would be joining the class. The students were given the opportunity to decide who the new student was and what they were like. The first detail to fix was the gender of the new pupil. This led to some lively and amusing debate which was recorded and later used in the skeletal script:

> G(irl)1 Andy said we could have a new classmate. We could choose who they would be. So we chose Lauren.
>
> G2   She was 14 and lived near the school.
>
> Katrin We thought having a new girl would be good because girls are more helpful
>
> Anna   girls are happier

G5   we could share her make up

G6   girls are kind.

G7   and girls are good at gardening!

G1   Of course not everyone agreed.

G2   Boys are best, they said,

B(oy)1 because I'm a boy

G5   and we haven't got many in our class.

B2   Mind you, I'm single so some new talent would be good!

Although interactions from most of the pupils tended to be limited in the first session, this example demonstrates how the girls were, unexpectedly, immediately able to participate in the group work. As a result of the teacher posing carefully structured tasks and questions to the group a fictional character called Lauren was created. Over the course of the next two sessions it became apparent that neither of the girls appeared to have any problem accepting the fictitious Lauren as a real person. Because of the stereotypical difficulties with imagination in students with autism (Wing, 1996) Lauren was signified through concrete rather than abstract means. For example, it was put to the class that Lauren was uncertain what to wear in order to fit in with her new peer group. Students were invited to give her a (pretend) item of clothing by taking turns to walk towards an empty chair and address it as if Lauren were sitting on it (the project leader modeled the activity for them first). Notes taken at the time recorded that Katrin spoke with more conviction and attention to detail than any of her classmates, offering Lauren a pair of jeans that had an 'embroidered pattern around the ankles' and that 'should fit quite comfortably.' In subsequent sessions Lauren was always signified by placing a (real) black velvet scarf and denim cap on the same chair. Once in place, the class said 'Good morning, Lauren.' Although some of the students found this a funny thing to do, the routine became an enjoyable and humourous way of starting each drama session. The fact that Lauren was never

a single person seen in the flesh but was signified by two items of clothing was an important part of the dramatic process. It meant that while she existed primarily in the imagination of each student, she could be played by any member of the group, boy or girl, when the need arose.

It quickly became apparent that both girls were ready to be encouraged further. Notes from Session Two document that Katrin in particular was able to engage in the drama especially well when supported through the asking of direct, open ended questions or invited to work on her own in front of the group. While this limited her direct interaction with peers it effectively made her the object of the class's attention and gave her some control over the direction of the drama. For example, one exercise in Session Two involved the students considering how they might make Lauren feel more welcome by sitting with her at lunchtime. When the project leader asked to see some examples Katrin, with little hesitation, sat next to the chair on which Lauren's scarf and hat had been placed and proceeded to show and describe the contents of her (imagined) 'healthy option' lunch box to her invisible classmate. In the next session the class improvised what happened when they invited Lauren to join them at a local night club. Following the improvisation, the students were asked to imagine what Lauren might have written in her diary about the event. Katrin's piece demonstrated that she had accepted the fictitious character of Lauren to such an extent that she could see herself through Lauren's eyes:

> *Dear diary*
>
> *I went to a night club. I felt a bit scared until one of my friends called me over to come and dance and have something to drink of coke and I felt a bit better. I went back to school in the morning quite a bit worried and petrified. I met a friend she was called Katrin and went outside to play and had lunch. I had fun.*

Teaching staff familiar with Katrin's work noted that writing in another persona with such conviction represented a new departure for her and a skill that is often difficult for students with autism (Baron-Cohen, Leslie, & Frith, 1985).

The sessions that followed built on these emerging skills. In a subsequent session, the group explored what happened when Lauren went back to the nightclub but discovered her school friends were not there. Instead, she encountered another group of local youths who mocked the way she was dressed. The students were invited to suggest what the youths may have said to Lauren with the intention of upsetting and intimidating her. They circled the chair which signified Lauren and took turns at taunting her. At one point, Katrin stepped towards the chair and said, 'You look good I suppose – but not as good as me!' In the following session one girl volunteered to take on the role of Lauren. The project leader asked her to talk about what had happened in the club. She did this with conviction and when two other girls started to giggle she rounded on them, asking 'Why is that funny?' She did this really well, sustaining the hurt of Lauren as she asked the rest of the group why they hadn't turned up as they'd promised. Katrin's response was notable in that rather than giggling she accepted the improvisation, adopted an ashamed expression and said, 'I'm sorry Lauren. I just forgot to go.' The project leader suggested that the class made it up to Lauren by ensuring that she was coached in contemporary 'street language.' Their initial offerings of 'Yo Bro!' 'Alright blud?' 'Cool, in it?' turned into a revelation of the class's personal favourite expressions such as 'Oh my days!' or 'Oh fish!' as a safe alternative to swearing in front of parents and teachers. However, while 'oh fiddlesticks' was not considered to be sufficiently cool, Katrin's suggestion of 'Sugar iced tea!' was so unexpected and unique it made everyone laugh and it was adopted as a class saying from that moment on!

Anna's social skills and use of imagination were also starting to develop. In contrast to Katrin's valuable verbal contributions, Anna seemed happy to join in with group activities though more reluctant to initiate ideas. Although she was able to respond to Lauren and contribute to the

discussion, this was generally limited and often prompted directly by the project leader who suggested that using a more physical approach could give some of the pupils, including Anna, a chance to express themselves in non-verbal ways. Thus, one session involved the use of masks to convey how frightening the bullying experience was for Lauren. A ritualized sequence evolved in which the pupils, wearing blank white masks, stomped around and pointed at the scarf and cap that signified Lauren to a piece of vibrant music suggestive of children taunting ('Powaqqatsi' by Philip Glass). The energy and repetition involved in this simple piece of choreography was something that Anna clearly enjoyed and committed herself to.

Particularly useful evidence of the degree to which Katrin's and Anna's ability to engage with abstract ideas and make strong verbal contributions was apparent in a session when the class were introduced to the idea of metaphor. In this session, the pupils were asked to imagine what Lauren might be if she wasn't a girl but something else. The project leader modeled a few examples by saying what colour, what car, what sort of plant he would be and why he had chosen these. When asked what object in the classroom Lauren might be, Anna answered:

> 'If Lauren could be an object she would be a glass window then she'd be able to see just who was talking about her.'

This idea could suggest that while Anna presented herself as being cheerful there was perhaps an underlying lack of social confidence. In an earlier session the group had decided that Lauren lived with her father who did not look after her at all well. Katrin's suggestion regarding what animal Lauren might be illustrated not only a sound grasp of metaphor but a strong visual and kinaesthetic imagination when she complemented her comment by using her hands as claws:

> 'If Lauren could be an animal she would be a crab. She could give her father a pinch. It might hurt a bit, but he needs to wake up.'

Another tool used with the group was a pair of puppets. Again, Anna found working physically with the props helpful when contributing to the scenes created. The puppets were introduced in order to explore how Lauren might respond to a boy asking her out on a date. It was decided to use puppets for this session in order to help protect the teenagers from feeling too embarrassed or exposed when improvising the dialogue between Lauren and the boy. Anna had no hesitation volunteering to handle the Lauren puppet and provide a voice for her. The subsequent improvised dialogue was, appropriately, stilted with long pauses signaling that neither knew quite what to say. Much to the delight of the group though, Anna eventually broke the silence by boldly saying, 'Let's just get on with it!' and planting the face of her puppet onto that of the boy puppet with a hearty smack of her lips in a simulated kiss! Anna was clearly delighted with the reaction this got from the rest of the class and relished the chance to recreate it, adding more dialogue, in front of the camera when the story was filmed.

Discussion

The use of drama as a teaching tool is an underused pedagogy in special school settings. This may in part be due to a lack of teacher skill and expertise, and also a general misunderstanding of how the art form may be applied owing to a lack of readily availability of research into its potential in this field,. Although part of the National Curriculum in England (DfEE, 2003), specialist schools for students with additional learning needs are frequently not given the opportunity to explore this as a medium for learning or motivating skill development.

The evidence presented above addresses these concerns in the context of a special school setting. The challenge for teaching staff was how to provide the opportunity to practice these important skills within a structured classroom context while still maintaining the flexibility

necessary to make learning meaningful.   The use of drama provided an avenue for this, although there were several challenges faced by the teaching team.

The first challenge involved the issue of peer learning. The research literature shows that mainstream settings provide increased opportunities for peer engagement and support for learning but, as this research shows, peer learning may be harnessed in more specialist settings. The facility to accommodate and build on the pupils' own ideas was integrated into the structure of the drama sessions and allowed opportunities for peer learning, while providing the teaching team opportunities to build on emerging skills.

The second challenge was to address the gaps in the expertise of staff. All sessions were led by an experienced tutor who was supported by two full time members of staff. As these members of staff grew in confidence, they were able to participate more fully in the running of the sessions. This also allowed for the carryover of learning throughout the rest of the teaching week as the students discussed aspects of the drama sessions and undertook related extension work.

Teaching new skills to learners who need additional support can require frequent repetition of core concepts. This third challenge was built into both the structure of the sessions as students and involved the teachers modeling frameworks for practical responses, encouraging students to revisit scenes, and working collaboratively to build on ideas incrementally. Some teachers can struggle to find engaging ways to rework or revisit concepts; drama techniques such as choral speaking may provide an innovative opportunity for this while maintaining the flexibility needed to keep students involved.

An unexpected outcome of this research was the development which was identified in the creative imaginary skills of two girls with a diagnosis of autism. Engagement in imaginary worlds is often seen as difficult for individuals with ASD. Evidence from this project suggests that

drama can provide a forum for supporting this skill. Guided questioning and collaborative work with peers provided the chance to explore these concepts in a flexible structure which safeguarded against failure yet gave the students a chance to practice social skills that had relevance beyond the confines of the classroom.

Conclusion

Mainstream settings are often seen as the hallmark of inclusive practice., the perception being that it is here that students with disabilities achieve greater gains in academic progress and enjoy access to the full curriculum. Nonetheless, there exists a group of students that have difficulties which need to be addressed alongside the academic ones. In these cases, specialist settings can more appropriately address both the educational and social learning needs.   The challenge is how to find a way to provide an ethos of inclusive practice within a specialist setting that will still allow for individualized attainment of goals with a diverse student population. The focus of this paper was on how one class of mixed ability secondary students contributed to the development of social skills in two students with autistic spectrum disorders by working in drama. The drama provided a structure wherein the class developed an ongoing story for an imaginary character. Through the process of interacting and co-creating a dramatic context a 'safe space' was established which enabled two young women with autism to practice transferable social skills. Inclusion thus became part of the work in practice as well as the object of the exercise.

4,477 words

References

Ainscow, M. (2007). Taking an inclusive turn. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 7*(1), 3-7.

Baird, G., Simonoff, E., Pickles, A., Chandler, S., Loucas, T., Meldrum, D., et al. (2006). Prevalence of disorders of the autism spectrum in a population cohort of children in South Thames: The Special Needs and Autism Project (SNAP). *Lancet, 368*(210-215).

Baron-Cohen, S., Leslie, A., & Frith, U. (1985). Does the autistic child have a 'theory of mind'? *Cognition, 21*, 37-46.

Billington, T. (2006). Working with autistic children and young people: sense, experience and the challenges for services, policies and practices. *Disability & Society, 21*(1), 1 - 13.

Claxton, G. (2007). Expanding young people's capacity to learn. *British Journal of Educational Studies, 55*(2), 115-134.

DfEE. (2003). *The National Curriculum for England: English.*

Farrell, P., Dyson, A., Polat, F., & Hutcheson, G. (2007). Inclusion and achievement in mainstream schools. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 22*(2), 131-145.

Frederickson, N., Simmonds, E., Evans, L., & Soulsby, C. (2007). Assessing the social and affective outcomes of inclusion. *British Journal of Special Education, 34*(2), 105-115.

Green, R., Collingwood, A., & Ross, A. (2010). *Characteristics of Bullying Victims in Schools*: Department for Education.

Haseman, B. (1991). Improvisation, Process Drama and Dramatic Art. *The Drama Magazine, July,* 19-21.

Hatton, C. (2003). Backyards and Borderlands: Some reflections on researching the travels of adolescent girls doing drama. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 8*(2), 139-156.

Head, G., & Pirrie, A. (2007). The place of special schools in a policy climate of inclusion. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 7*(2), 90-96.

Humphrey, N., & Lewis, S. (2008). What does 'inclusion' mean for pupils on the autistic

    spectrum in mainstream secondary schools? *Journal of Research in Special Educational*

    Needs, 8(3), 132-140.

Jindal-Snape, D., & Vettraino, E. (2007). Drama techniques for the enhancement of social-

    emotional development in people with special needs: review of research. *International*

    Journal of Special Education, 22(1), 107-117.

MacKenzie, H. (2008). *Reaching and Teaching the Child with Autism Spectrum Disorder*.

    London: Jessica Kingsley Publisher.

McLaughlin, C., Byers, R. & Oliver, C. (2012) *Perspectives on Bullying and Difference:*

    Supporting young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities in schools
    National Children's Bureau, London

Myhill, D., Jones, S., & Hopper, R. (2005). *Talking, Listening, Learning: Effective talk in the*

    primary classroom. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Myklebust, J. O. (2006). Class placement and competence attainment among students with

    special educational needs. *British Journal of Special Education, 33*(2), 76-81.

No Child Left Behind Act, US Department of Education(2007).

Norwich, B., & Kelly, N. (2004). Pupils' views on inclusion: Moderate learning difficulties and

    bullying in mainstream and special schools. *British Educational Research Journal, 30*(1),

    43-65.

O'Neill. (1995). *Drama Worlds.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Peter, M. (2009). Drama: narrative pedagogy and socially challenged children. *British Journal of*

    Special Education, 36(1), 9-17.

Pitt, V., & Curtin, M. (2004). Integration versus segregation: the experiences of a group of

    disabled students moving from mainstream school into special needs further education.

    Disability and Society, 19(4), 387-401.

Punch, K. (2009). *Research Methods in Education*. London: Sage.

Ruddock, J. (2007). *Improving Learning Through Consulting Pupils.* London: Routledge.

Schon, D. (1991) *The Reflective Practitioner,* Ashgate Publishers, London

Sherratt, D., & Peter, M. (2002). *Developing Play and Drama in Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders.* London: David Fulton Publishers Ltd.

Tangen, R. (2008). Listening to children's voices in educational research: some theoretical and methodological problems. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 23*(2), 157 - 166.

Taylor, P. & Warner, C. (2006)   *Structure and Spontaneity: the process drama of Cecily O'Neill,* Trentham Books, Stoke-on-Trent

Topping, K. (2005). Trends in peer learning. *Eduational Psychology, 25*(6), 631-645.

Warnock, M. (1978). *Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Handicapped Children and Young People (Warnock Report)* (web page) http://www.ttrb.ac.uk/attachments/21739b8e-5245-4709-b433-c14b08365634.pdf (accessed 7/4/08)

Whitehurst, T. (2007). Liberating silent voices: perspectives of children with profound & complex learning needs on inclusion. *British Journal of Learning Disabilities, 35*(1), 55-61.

Wing, L. (1996). *The Autistic Spectrum*. London: Constable.