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DEVELOPMENTS in the Field of Extended Education

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Editor's Preface

Greetings! I am Dr. Sang Hoon Bae, Professor of Education at Sungkyunkwan University, South Korea. Since the 2/2017 issue, I've taken the position of editor-in-charge of the *International Journal for Research on Extended Education* (IJREE). As many of you have witnessed during the past few decades, extended education is becoming a vibrant part of the world's educational culture. A variety of extended education programs and activities are thriving and providing opportunities for learning and development to students across the globe. In line with this movement, there is a growing body of research in this field. Particularly, many efforts have been made to conduct international comparative studies. One example is the newly launched WERA IRN Extended Education (World Education Research Association, International Research Network).

In the 2/2017 issue, we have five *General Contributions*. Anna Klerfelt, employing sociocultural and dialogical perspectives, investigated how professional identities are formed among teachers in school-age educare centres in Sweden. Bakhtin's notion of 'authoring' is one key concept in her study to shed light on the commonly shared discourse unifying the professional identity among Swedish teachers. Marie Fahlén examined the issues of freedom of religion versus secular values, which are potentially conflicting concepts in the everyday practices of Swedish schools. Given the increasingly multi-religious society along with intensifying globalization, discussions on this topic could be applicable to nearly every country in the world. David Thore Gravesen and Lea Ringskou analyzed the work of pedagogues in the Danish Primary School and Leisure-Time Center. They suggested a new concept of 'timeagogy', which provides a very interesting perspective to the extended education community. Atara Sivan and Gertrude Po Kwan Siu investigated how extended education is manifested in a place where schooling and academic performance are of primary focus. Looking into the case of extended education in Hong Kong, their research shows that extended education can have the potential to be a vehicle for not only students' all-round development but also families' reproduction strategy. Finally, Björn Haglund and Louise Peterson, employing the viewpoints of the staff at leisure-time centres, examined what kinds of outcomes are expected from children by playing board games at leisure-time centres in Sweden.

In this issue, there are also three short reports in the section of *Development in Extended Education*. Charles Underwood presents *University-Community Links* as a collaborative strategy for supporting extended education in the US. Kolbrún Pálsdóttir and Steingerður Kristjánsdóttir provide information about Leisure-time centres for 6-9-year-old children in Iceland. Finally, Thomas Akiva reports, *Leadership in Out-of-School Learning*, on the Educational Doctorate Program at the University of Pittsburgh in the US.

IJREE thanks all authors for submitting phenomenal works. We are also very grateful to all reviewers for their invaluable commitment. We are looking forward to all the great work to come from the extended education research community.

Sang Hoon Bae

To author yourself:
Teachers in Swedish school-age educare centres describe their professional identity

Anna Klerfelt

Abstract: This study aims to construct knowledge about how teachers in Swedish school-age educare centres build on their professional identity by listening to their narratives about their work, their interpretations of their mission and how they apply their intentions. The study takes its point of departure from sociocultural (Vygotsky, 1978) and dialogical (Bakhtin, 1986) perspectives. The analysis starts with Bakhtin's notion of authoring. The construction of data was carried out in three steps. Firstly, by collecting written narratives from 21 teachers, secondly by oral narratives from ten teachers among the 21 teachers participating in 'walk-and-talk' conversations and finally from a commonly created conversation in two focus interviews with eight of the teachers. The results from this study indicate that there is a commonly shared general discourse unifying the professional identity of the teacher in school-age educare centres.

Keywords: professional identity, school-age educare teacher, sociocultural and dialogical perspectives, narratives, authoring

Introduction

The school-age educare centres in Sweden have roots from the 19th century, are implemented all over the country, they are organised as whole-day activities complementing the school and are regulated by the national curriculum and staffed by university-educated teachers. Still, the profession as teacher in educare centres is described as being characterised by weak framing, and the professionals are said to suffer from both stated and unstated demands, lack of visions and unclear claims (Andersson, 2013; Hjalmarsson, 2013). Andersson reports that teachers in school-age educare centres face dilemmas related to comprehensive decentralisation, the introduction of new public management systems, reduced resources and closer links between educare centres and schools. Working with traditional methods is problematic, and it becomes hard to balance the work between the activity in the educare centre and the school. Andersson maintains that the different ways in which teachers in educare centres handle new tasks and changes to their circumstances are related to the local organisation, the governance and the signals from the headmasters.

Swedish school-age educare centre

The Swedish school-age educare centres are well established all over the country. Attending the school-age educare centre is voluntary and about 84% of the children between 6-9 years old are enrolled in the school-age educare centres (The Swedish National Agency for Education, 2017). 21.5% of the children aged 10-12 are also enrolled in school-age educare centres. The number of children per school-age educare teacher has increased during the last 30 years. At the beginning of the 1980s, the average group consisted of 18 children per two school-age educare teachers. In 2016, an average group of children in school-age educare centre consisted of 40.3 children. Most of this increase occurred during the 1990s. However, the increase has continued into the twenty-first century and in the latest ten years the groups have increased by one child per year, while the number of teachers in school-age educare centres has not increased correspondingly.

The personnel working with school-age educare are mostly educated school-age educare teachers, with a three-year university-based teacher education – but due to the shortage of educated school-age educare teachers, there are also personnel who have backgrounds as preschool-teachers, primary- or secondary school teachers, recreational activity leaders and also persons working in the school-age educare centres without a university education. The positions are regulated, and there are no volunteers working in the Swedish school-age educare centres.

University-based education

The professionals working in school-age educare centres with an education from before 2001 are called leisure-time pedagogues. In 2001 the education changed, and then ten years later, in 2011, it changed again. Now the profession is called 'teachers towards work in leisure-time centres[1]'. In the Swedish teacher-education there are three specialisations directed towards children in the early school-age; one towards preschool-class till grade 3, one towards grades 4-6 and the third towards work in school-age educare centres. Besides working in school-age educare centres, teachers working at school-age educare centres also get qualifications to teach pupils in grade 4-6 in practical/aesthetic subjects within the framework of the school.

School-age educare centres complementing the school

In Sweden, there is a close cooperation between the school-age educare centre and the school. The Swedish National Curriculum stipulates that forms of co-operation between preschools, compulsory schools and educare provided for school-age children in school-age educare centres shall be developed with an objective to enrich the pupils' development and learning (The Swedish National Agency, 2011, rev. 2017, p. 10). All Swedish educational policy documents have as their starting point the child's perspective. The definition of

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1   In this article the leisure-time centre is labeled school-age educare centre with the purpose of highlighting the relation between education and care. The school-age educare centres were earlier denominated leisure-time centres or recreation centres, and there is a heated discussion in Sweden aiming to create new concepts that more clearly explain the purpose and content of the activity.

school-age educare embrace and emphasises that both education and care are given in this activity directed towards children in the early school-ages and located in school-age educare centres which are mainly located inside school-buildings. Other international denominations for kindred activities are 'extended education' or 'all-day school'. Although the educare activity for school-age children in school-age educare centres is well established, the research concerning the activity in school-age educare centres and the professional role is scarce.

The activity in Swedish school-age educare centres

The activity in school-age educare centres is elaborated on the interaction between different practices; the school, the home and the school-age educare centre, aiming to create coherence in children's everyday lives. The activity is based on care and play. Modern educational theories have created a growing interest for the processes of meaning-making, care and leisure that are supposed to happen in school-age educare centres (Klerfelt & Haglund, 2014a). Through the practical educational tradition developed over decades, the activity is characterised by a child-centric perspective, where interaction between the children and the school-age educare teachers constitutes the foundation of the educational activity.

The activity is primarily based on the children's perspective and puts children's meaning-making processes in the centre. The children are seen as actors and participants in the construction of culture. Through aesthetic learning processes, children's cognitive abilities, communication skills and constructions of identities and relationships are supported. Tools for these learning processes are formed and structured in the situated learning that provides children with opportunities for applying meaning-making processes in authentic situations. Through children and teachers' reciprocal actions, the discursive context is created in which the activity is composed. In the school-age educare centre, children with different ethnicities, different backgrounds and different experiences meet. Meetings that both call for and invite to intersubjective processes with the opportunity to take the other person's perspectives and to understand the motivations behind the actions of others. The space for children's participation is an essential part of the traditions in the school-age educare centre and offers children the opportunity to learn how to participate in democratic processes, where they also learn about their own rights and the right to be respected. The educational activity in school-age educare centres aims to create an everyday life where human and world is held together (Klerfelt, 1999; 2007).

Aim and research question

This study aims to construct knowledge about how teachers in school-age educare centres build on their professional identities by listening to their narratives about their work, their interpretations of their mission and how they apply their intentions. The research question seeks to investigate whether or not there is a shared general discourse in the educational traditions providing the basis for a commonly shared professional identity.

Theoretical framework

The study takes its point of departure from sociocultural (Vygotsky, 1978) and dialogical (Bakhtin, 1986) perspectives. A fundamental position within the sociocultural perspective is that knowledge is constructed and reconstructed by people together, and that there is a need to understand meaning-making as a basis for human actions. Human interaction and tools used for these interactions are situated in the social and cultural practice where people live and are seen as institutionally and historically developed. This implies that the social practice at school-age educare centres is a consequence of human conceptions and attempts to structure and categorise the activity. The participants, in this study, in their role as teachers in school-age educare centres, produce and reproduce their profession in their everyday social practices, regulated by policy documents and through interactions with other actors in the educational setting, through mutual negotiations, or to use Bakhtin's words, they author themselves (1986). One of the most important tools for these processes is language. Besides social practice, practice also involves discursive practice. This aspect of practice shapes the way, or the ways, in which the teachers speak about educare activity in the school-age educare centres. Discursive practice is based on how the teachers in school-age educare centres interpret their responsibilities and the policy documents that describe the objectives for school-age educare centres.

In this study, the analysis starts with Bakhtin's notion of authoring. To develop a common voice, the teachers rest in a polyphony of voices. By narrating, they author themselves. The construction of self lies in language practices. Language shapes our perception of the world and the self is constituted by discourses. According to Bakhtin, it is impossible to voice oneself without appropriating the words of others. Narrative spaces, such as educare centres, become the intertextual ground for contesting the voices of others, reaccentuating their utterances with new meaning, and re-interpreting the self through the other (Vitanova, 2004).

Previous research

The activity in school-age educare centres has roots back to the 19th century, and was in these days mainly set up in the big cities. In the 1960-1970 period, the activity grew quickly to encompass all parts of Sweden and more and more children joined the activity. In 1984, we have the first research studying school-age educare teachers' view of their work (Johansson, 1984). This thesis was then followed by three other theses made by Calander (1999), Hansen (1999) and Haglund (2004). The research reported in these theses direct their focus in relation to the mission of the primary school teachers when studying the role of the school-age educare teacher.

Calander (1999) is studying the collaboration between school-age educare teachers and primary school teachers. The study takes a social constructionist/constructivist perspective, and the qualitative data was analysed by means of notions from Gidden's (1984) theory of structuration. The results show that the primary school teacher position in the educational institution dominates the position of the school-age educare teacher. An unequal occupa-

tional relation has thus been established, and that makes collaboration in interprofessional work teams harder. In his conclusion Calander states that school-age educare teachers wishing to keep or develop an occupational identity as a school-age educare teacher could best do so outside of school and outside of interprofessional collaboration with primary school teachers. The same year, 1999, Hansen presented her thesis examining the same phenomenon with an ethnographic approach. Her results show that the two categories of teachers have different conceptions of their professional identities depending on which tradition they belong to. The primary school teacher looks upon the teacher function as a mediator in children's learning, while the school-age educare teacher sees her/himself mainly as a model for the child. The primary school teachers' professional culture is here described as a culture with a relatively strong classification and framing, and the school-age educare teacher' culture is described as a culture with weaker classifications and framing. The third thesis exploring primary school teachers' and school-age educare teachers' ways of working together in school was conducted by Haglund (2004) a few years later. He also took his point of departure in Gidden's (1984) theory of structuration and used qualitative data. In his study, three different forms of working practices are identified and described as: a social-directed practice, a school-directed practice and an integrating practice. Haglund describes these working practices as regionalised and notes that they support different social positions of labour. The positions are: social fosterer, school assistant, school follower and integrating renewer. The results indicate that primary school teachers do not necessarily dominate the school-age educare teachers as regards the content of their activities in circle time. It is possible for school-age educare teachers to demarcate and control their own work. The results also indicate that there are possibilities for school-age educare teachers to contribute to integration of different traditions and help change existing work in schools.

A decennium later, other questions are affecting professional identities and need to be researched. In her thesis from 2013, Andersson presents findings about how the professional identity of the school-age educare teachers can be understood in the tension between tradition and new forms of governance. The results, generated through interviews, document analysis and surveys and analysed from profession theories perspectives, show that the profession of teacher towards work in educare centres is being reshaped and that these teachers' professional identity can be understood in different ways. Andersson finds four types of professional identities in her study: the backup teachers, the teachers of social competence, the teachers complementing school and the traditional teachers towards work in educare centres. The study also illustrates how a core of a traditional knowledge base stands out as central for most of the professionals in the various professional identities found. The differences are related to the local governance of schools' organisation: to what extent the work of the teachers in educare centres is placed in the compulsory school day and how strong their collective base is in the school unit[2].

A short look at research conducted outside Sweden shows that the results are also pointing to the fact that multi-professional collaboration between primary school teachers and other educational staff, for example in Germany, is underdeveloped (Böhm-Kasper, Dizinger, & Gausling, 2016).

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2   Andersson, Calander and Haglund use the denomination 'leisure-time centre' and 'leisure-time pedagogues'.

To sum up, you could say that the earlier research about the professional identity of the school-age educare teacher were mainly directed towards comparing the different positions of the school-teacher and the school-age educare teacher with the purpose of analysing why conflicts repeatedly occurred when school-age educare teachers and primary school-teachers were meant to collaborate in the school-setting. But the time has now come to explore other dimensions of the profession. The research conducted in the project reported in this article is not mainly directed towards any other educational profession, but towards the mission of the school-age educare teacher. The study aims to construct knowledge about how teachers in school-age educare centres build on their own professional identity by listening to their narratives about their work, their interpretations of their mission and how they apply their intentions.

Methodology

Written and oral narratives are used as ways to come close to – not only what is told in the story – but also the personal experiences of the storytellers. The opportunities for reflection and clarification are more evident in a narrative interview compared to conventional interviews (Mischler, 1986). Narrative conversations are used with the purpose of establishing a dialogue about a mutually construed object (Linell, 1998). In a so-called, 'walk-and-talk' conversation (Haudrup Christensen, 2004), the participant leads the researcher to different places and gives their account of them. This is a way to allocate to the participating teacher the power to control the content of the conversation based on a posed question. This part of the study takes this scenario one step further by abandoning conventional open-ended and non-emotionally charged questions (Klerfelt, 2007; Klerfelt & Haglund, 2014b). This choice is made with reference to dialogical theory that suggests that agreement pertaining to interpreted objects is created in the interaction between the persons taking part in a conversation (Linell, 2009). This means that in this study, the school-age educare teachers and the researchers are free to use emotionally charged adjectives and expressions. The intention behind this approach is to use emotion-based questions for the purpose of provoking the perspectives of the participating school-age educare teachers by creating space for them to define the situation. The focus interviews (Merton, Fiske & Kendall, 1956) are used to deepen and extend the answers given in the written narratives and to contribute to the ideas of the interpretation of the material. The marker 'focus' indicates that the group is composed for a particular purpose, that the conversation is focused around a given theme and that there is a designated moderator who assumes a management role (Kruger & Casey, 2000). In an ideal situation, the group creates fertile ground for critical discussions and reflections thanks to the peer dynamics. The data obtained in a focused interview shows how participants collectively talk about a certain phenomenon. It is the thought structures or deep-seated values that are revealed in the common conversation that constitutes the unit of analysis.

Participants

21 school-age educare teachers working in school-age educare centres located in a medium-sized town and from five small municipalities in the middle of Sweden participated in the first part of the construction of data, the written narratives. Ten of these 21 school-age educare teachers participated in the walk-and-talk conversations and eight in the focus interviews. One criterion for participation in the study was to have a two-year university education as a leisure-time-pedagogue, for the older education, or a three to three-and-a-half year university education as a school-age educare teacher with the newer education. The other criterion was to be currently working in school-age educare-centres as a teacher for the children. Both female and male school-age educare teachers[3] participated. The oldest participant was born in 1949 and the youngest in 1988, while the professional experience varied from one year up to 35 years as a teacher in the profession. All teachers are given fictional names.

Construction of data

The first step of the construction of data, the written narratives: In the written narratives, the school-age educare teachers were asked to tell about their motives for becoming school-age educare teachers, to describe their work and how they apply their intentions. 19 questions were sent by mail to the school-age educare teachers. The questions were directed towards their professional role, their mission, their educational attitude, their view on the curriculum and their intentions, and they were asked to provide examples of activities and describe how they accomplished these activities. The narratives were analysed by qualitative methods. Based on these analyses, ten school-age educare teachers were asked to take part in the walk-and-talk conversations together with one researcher.

The second step of the construction of data, the walk-and-talk conversations: Ten of the school-age educare teachers agreed to take part in an extended walk-and-talk conversation. In these conversations, the dialogue was conducted with the intention of providing prerequisites for the school-age educare teachers to have most of the speaking space. All the walks were carried out in the school-age educare-centre where the school-age educare teachers were working. The teachers received a digital camera and were encouraged to show and to take photos of places they related to, in response to questions asked by the researcher. The school-age educare teachers were asked questions about where they were the best teacher, the worst teacher, where they were the happiest teacher, the most boring, the most efficient, the strictest and finally, the most creative teacher. They brought the researcher to these places, both outdoors and indoors, took their photo, and were then asked to explain why they had chosen exactly that place and tell how they were acting in the chosen place. The conversations continued by the participants motivating and valuing their actions. One of the advantages with using walk-and-talk conversations is that the conversation is strongly situated in the setting, and this way of carrying out the dialogue provides prerequisites for the participating teacher to describe examples of situations that regularly occur in the identified place and this was done by all the participants. The conversations were

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3   Both the older leisure-time pedagogues and the younger school-age-educare teachers are called school-age educare teachers in the text henceforth.

recorded by a dictaphone. The length of the conversations varied, ranging between 23 minutes to 63 minutes.

The third phase of the data construction, the focus interviews: The focus interviews were framed by information gained from the written narratives. From the analysis of the written narratives, some main themes were discovered and they formed the basis for the focus interviews. The purpose was to let the participants talk about, discuss and reflect about the phenomenon researched in the study. The main themes were profession, leadership, organisation, bildung and values. Based on these themes, questions intended to follow up on the statements in the written narratives were constructed. The focus interviews were carried out in two school-age educare centres. The dialogue took place between two researchers and four school-age educare teachers. One of the researchers acted as moderator, and the other one added follow-up questions. The focus interviews were recorded by a dictaphone. The first focus interview lasted 1 hour 35 minutes and the second 1 hour 40 minutes.

Procedures for organising and analysing the data

The first step: All the written narratives were brought together in one document and read repeatedly through both person by person and questions by question.

The second step: All the walk-and-talk conversations were transcribed. The conversations were read repeatedly person by person and question by question. The photos were used for underpinning the process of analysis.

The third step: Both focus interviews were transcribed and read repeatedly one by one and in relation to each other.

The data were initially read with the intention of letting the data speak to you. Then a more systematic phase followed with the purpose of revealing similarities and differences. When reading the data over and over again, certain formulations stood out. These notions were then possible to search for systematically by using a computer. The notions were see, presence, interaction, participation, influence, perspective, development, learning. This was one of the ways to discover how the teachers spoke about their professional position and their mission. Step by step, it was possible to see a pattern in the ways the school-age educare teachers spoke about their work.

Ethics

The research conducted in this study was carried out in accordance with the Swedish Research Council's (2011) ethical principles for research concerning information, consent, confidentiality and use. The participants were given written information and gave their consent to participate. They are ensured confidentiality and the presentation is used with the aim of contributing with knowledge in scholarly and educational contexts.

Trustworthiness

Perspective awareness, internal logic and consistency are quality criteria that must be observed to ensure scientific work (Larsson, 2005). This means that the researcher is responsible for explaining the different research moments and for motivating different choices of methods for data design and analysis. In the methodological section the different research moments are described and methods for design and analysis motivated. In order to illustrate my interpretations and analyses, I have reproduced certain parts of the empirical material, with the purpose of giving the readers access to the narratives of the participants. Larsson (2005) maintains that a key criterion for qualitative studies is the heuristic quality of the study and he explains that the reader through the presentation should be able to see some aspect of the reality in a new way. I assert that the reader is able to do this by the access to the narratives and to my analyses. Here the reader provides opportunity to, in communication with the text, interpret and understand the material and can also make own interpretations and adopt different perspectives as there is not one only truth or one way to perceive the reality.

Yet three criteria concerns qualities in the results: richness of meaning, structure and theory development (Larsson, 2005). I have clearly described the theory chosen and declared my perspectives, and I have hopefully presented the results in a structured and meaningful way.

According to Larsson (2005) there are five criteria concerning validity: discourse-criteria, heuristic value, empirical anchoring, consistency and a pragmatic criterion. A strength of the study is the method triangulation used and the coherence between different sources. A weakness is that the analyses have not been exposed to the participants validation. The results in this study is now subjected to convince members of the educational and the scientific community.

Results

The school-age educare teachers in this study were asked to describe their professional position and their mission. The results will be presented as narratives under the following headlines; *Life-affirming attitude, To see and to be present, Activities emanating from cultural traditions and conscious choices, Giving or creating, contrasting perspectives* and *Extended education as the objective of school-age educare*. The narratives will firstly be introduced, and then illustrated by excerpts retrieved from the written narratives, the walk-and-talk conversations and/or the focus interviews. The excerpts will then be followed by an interpretation.

Life-affirming attitude

In their written narratives, the teachers express a life-affirming attitude and use emotionally charged expressions. Their stories are grounded in value and emotionality. Their goal is joy. They say that they love the kids, they have the best job in the world, they share joy with the children every day. They also describe how they use jokes and fun as means for creating a happy atmosphere.

Magdalena gives voice to this in the walk-and-talk conversation when formulating:

> Magdalena: … this little fun-making fun …

Magdalena is describing how she is using jokes and fun as ways to construct relationships with the children and also a non-prestigious position.

> Magdalena: I think the children think it's funny when we adults dare to go the whole hog. – / / – When we adults make fun of ourselves.

That the adults are not afraid to let their adult prestige go and commit themselves to the children builds confidence and trust.

To see and to be present

Several school-age educare teachers express the importance of seeing every child. Signhild emphasises that, "In groups, it is important that each child is seen". In the walk-and-talk conversation, she returns to the importance of looking every child in the eyes at the moment when they arrive at the school-age educare centre. The researcher is then challenging this statement.

> Signhild: Just because I want every child to be seen.
>
> Researcher: Yes, and what do you put in that? Do you really have time in that moment and do you have the opportunity to make sure…hmmm… that "I see in your eyes that you are not really happy. I see that you are totally happy"?
>
> Signhild: Yes. Yes. Yes...
>
> Researcher: Do you have time to perceive that in a hundredth of a second?
>
> Signhild: Yes, or we are trying to...
>
> Researcher: Yes.
>
> Signhild: ... Because we divide the group so that we ... We try to do that.
>
> Researcher: Hmmm.
>
> Signhild: Then I cannot say that it is clear that it is after all ... No, we do that! ... That's what you want anyway! With it!

The researcher questions if Signhild really got the possibility to perceive the children's frames of minds when she looks into their eyes for a short instant. Then she explains that the teachers systematically have organised the educational activity and divided the children into smaller groups, so every teacher actually has the responsibility to greet a defined, smaller group of children in the whole group. She searches within herself, considering whether it really is so that she does this, and takes finally, with some reservations, a position that is indeed so.

Kim talks about his own presence when he is answering the question about where he is the worst teacher.

> Kim: It contributes to a certain extent to … Eh… Anyway, I am not present here.

He says that the place where he is worst teacher is in the play hall, for it is a little away from the other rooms, and there he is not present. That he sometimes is present there is because a child who wants him to intervene in a conflict picks him up.

> Kim: "Remember this and this!" You think about yourself that you tend to be repetitive, and that is why … one wishes to be more present. In this room.

Also in aesthetic activities Kim expresses a wish to be more present.

> Kim: …And then I feel I got to be more, …yes, but it is needed that we can (said with emphasis) be more present also.

Kim explains that the reason for the teachers not being able to be more present is that the number of teachers for a group consisting of 40 children is just two, and the children play indoors, outdoors and in several different rooms at the same time.

The opportunities to see each child is limited by the possibilities of sharing responsibility between the school-age educare teachers, how the premises are located and it also depends on the content in the activities.

Activities emanating from cultural traditions and conscious choices

The school-age educare teachers were also asked to tell about how they applied their intentions. The described activities could both emanate from a traditional way of choosing and conducting activities for children in school-age educare centres, and it could also be motivated from an educational stance. But above all, the teachers describe that they, regardless of the choice of activity, are consciously working with themselves as a role model.

> Cecilia: I try to be a good role model. Talk much about how to behave towards each other. Spread security around me. Have a lot of material that children can use. Let the children choose what they want to do.

There are also teachers who speak about nature as a place for learning and development. When Desirée describes how she wants to realise her goals to encourage curiosity and creativity, create an environment where children feel happiness and security and challenge the children to try things they would not do otherwise, she mentions being out in nature.

> Desirée: To be in the forest where there are opportunities to build huts and investigate animals and plants.

Both examples, to use yourself as a model and to use nature as a setting, can be seen as both emanating from the cultural tradition and as conscious choices. Both teachers also motivate their choice of activities in a compelling way that shows the logic between the mission, their intentions and the implementation of activities that can create conditions for the desired competencies you want the children to develop.

All teachers are talking about the close dialogue as a tool for all learning, but particularly for social learning. The location of this can be everywhere, both indoors and outdoors, but the place mentioned most often is the sofa (in all Swedish school-age educare centers there are usually gigantic sofas that almost always are big enough to accommodate the whole group of children). Hilma describes how she can initiate these conversations.

> Hilma: "How do you stop the anger that begins inside the heart before it comes out into the arms and the legs?"

Gunnel and Alice clearly state that for whatever they want the children to learn, they try to adopt the children's perspectives.

To start from the child's perspective has always been a living tradition in the activity in the school-age educare centre and it is something that one today cares for more and more.

Giving or creating, contrasting perspectives

In the narratives, some school-age educare teachers describe how they try to give the children a feeling of safety and how they provide prerequisites for meaningful leisure. Other teachers describe how they try to construct tools together with the children for them to use to create safety and meaningful leisure.

Julia gives her picture of the professional role of the school-age educare teacher in her written narrative.

> Julia: A leader that provides safety. An adult to trust. Someone to laugh and cry with. A person who with knowledge grounded in policy documents and values, through good treatment, gives the children/pupils the possibility to develop into independent individuals who can manage and handle social interactions.

She starts out with expressing a taken-for-granted attitude that allocates to the teacher the agency to be the one acting and giving. However, when she continues, she also opens up for the teacher not just to give, but to arrange possibilities for the children to be able to act to develop the desired competencies.

But there are also school-age educare teachers describing a more clearly participating and process-directed perspective. Lykke, Magdalena and Nina express this in their written narratives.

> Lykke: It is a human right to be a part of a whole, and this is an objective in the school-age educare. To include all individuals in our society and involve everybody in the values of the society is the sovereignty of the school-age educare centre.

> Magdalena: In order to be able to create and to be able to construct a setting that stimulates development, it is a must to have good relationships.

> Nina: To give them [the children] tools for further development and learning through playfulness and curiosity about life. -//- To be well-briefed in our policy documents and what is written in different reports, to update yourself continuously. To be able to be professional in your professional role and also prove the importance of the activity for children's development and learning. We work systematically towards our goals in our plan for high quality.

Nina is in her narrative emphasising the children's agency. And as she elaborates, she is describing an educational attitude and how she is realising her intentions in carefully chosen activities. But she is also emphasising the importance of curriculum and policy documents.

To sum up, the narratives presented above deal with how the school-age educare teachers describe their attitudes to their work, their intentions, and how they apply and execute them. We will now turn to how the school-age educare teachers talk about the objectives in the school-age educare.

Extended education as the objective of school-age educare

The school-age educare teachers also answer questions about what they see as the most important tasks in the activity in the school-age educare centre. At the same time, these responses reveal what they think the children should learn and how.

When Cecilia describes her picture of the professional position, this description also coincides with her view on the objectives of school-age educare.

> Cecilia: Greet and see every child. Give these children the possibility to take part in an inspiring, learning, challenging educare in the school-age educare centre. Provide different activities, both indoors and outdoors. Make plenty of room for play. Lead and support children to learn in all forms, above all in the social interaction with other people. Bring our educational attitude into the school.

In her description, she points out an extended learning in different forms, and gives special attention to play and interaction. Yet she also wants the listener to notice that there is a difference between the school-age educare centre and the school when it comes to the educational questions about what to learn and how to learn.

Ella's story also coincides with her description of her perception of the goals and intentions of the activity in the school-age educare centre.

> Ella: The role at the school-age educare centre is essentially the one of a leader, one who guides the children towards knowledge and development. That you as a teacher do not have all the answers but help children themselves to reflect and find the answers. The role also includes caring for the children's interests and creating meaningful leisure, as the time in the school-age educare centre is children's leisure time. The role of the school-age educare teacher is also to teach social skills, to teach how to communicate with other people, to crack the social codes within play and to show what is proper behaviour towards other people. It also has the task of promoting good self-esteem and self-confidence among the children.

Briefly, Ella mentions knowledge, development, meaningful leisure, social competence, communication, social codes, self-esteem, self-confidence, and specifies both a child-oriented perspective and a different educational role.

Britt-Marie broadens this description when she points to her ambition of creating awareness about the surrounding world.

> Britt-Marie: Help children become well-functioning global citizens.

Analysis and discussion

The narratives focusing on a life-affirming attitude are possible to connect to Rancière's (1991) theories about care and love as an educational space between pupils and teachers. Just as the school-age educare teachers do, these prominent theorists speak about the importance of the gaze, viewing children with humility and appreciation and to greet the children. Rancière (1991) introduces the notion 'attention' for involving the child in this educational space and this notion builds upon an assumption of equality. Being attentive is the mode of a being who verifies equality and who is verified in its turn by other speaking beings. This is an educational stance that has serious consequences for how to understand not only the individual, but also society. Rancière declares that this is "the moral foundation of the power to know" (1991, p. 57).

When it comes to cultural traditions or conscious choices, several school-age educare teachers depict and motivate a clear choice of activities in their ambition to fulfil their intentions; intentions that at the same time emanate from the cultural traditions. In the narratives dealing with Giving or creating, contrasting perspectives on the question about agency in the activity makes itself visible. Is the activity imbedded in a context were the school-age educare teachers perceive themselves and the children as active agents who construct safety, meaningful leisure and other contents in the activity by their mutual interactions? Or is safety, meaningful leisure and other contents perceived as something inherited in the context and permanently existing inside the teachers and thereby possible to give to the children? In their narratives about 'Extended education' as the objective in school-age educare, the teachers reveal their views on how they perceive the significance of 'extended education'. They build this view not only on governmental policy documents and academic training, but also on cultural traditions and practical experience.

Is there an inner core in the profession of school-age educare teachers in Sweden? The results of this study indicate that there is. Throughout the three studies, the teachers speak more frequently about the same phenomena in the same way than in different ways. But how can we look at a common discourse? A professional discourse is said to unify the profession (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009), and here I want to highlight the importance of the shared training in the common teacher education as a significant aspect of the construction of consensus in the teacher's narratives. Since the Swedish teacher education consists of courses placed both in the practice of the school-age educare centres in combination with courses placed in the practice of the university, the development of practical knowledge, cultural traditions and theoretical knowledge in both these practices are embraced, guarded and analysed in the teacher education. In this way, the professionals already as students get used to and are trained to participate in and contribute to a common discourse characterised by the use of a professional language. By mastering a common professional language, the teachers get the prerequisites to develop the profession.

Expression of a common discourse can be seen both as good and bad. What might the benefits be? What can the disadvantages be? Lack of clarity can by studies about how school-age educare teachers describe their work be revealed, and they can highlight the need for clarification of the contents of the occupation. How can the role and the content of the work be developed by taking advantage of the common construction of discourse, where the professional role is handed down in practical work, where policy documents are a controlling component, where research contributes with new knowledge and where the teacher education is a significant actor and organiser of common dialogues? How do the processes of authoring work?

By naming the world around them, the participants in this study have claimed their voices and signed their own acts of authoring. The results from this study indicate that there is a commonly shared general discourse unifying the professional identity of the teacher in school-age educare centres. The teachers in school-age educare centres speak more frequently about the same phenomena in the same way than in different ways. To develop this common voice, the teachers rest in a culture constructed by a polyphony of voices. By participating in an everyday ongoing dialogue embedded in and surrounded by voices from policymakers, researchers, the union, visits from students learning to work in educare cen-

tres and their teachers from the teacher education and in concert with their colleagues, they have opportunities to author themselves. The creation of this construction of professional selves lies in the discourse developed in the practices. Clandinin (2007) maintains that the construction of a teacher identity is realised in an interaction between experience and the narrative about the teachers' living life as a basis for practice. The teacher identity is considered as a collective identity. Teachers have something in common that provides answers to the questions of who they are and what they know. According to Bakhtin (Holquist, 2002), it is impossible to voice oneself without appropriating the words of others. Narrative spaces, such as educare centres, become the intertextual ground for contesting the voices of others, reaccentuating their utterances with new meaning, and re-interpreting the self through others. Bakhtin describes this position of looking upon yourself as seen from without, by saying that the person does not look at himself with his own eyes but with the eyes of the world. The dialogical combination of the self and the other is described as a matter of constructing "the possible author of our own outside" (Holquist, 2002, p. 33). Holquist names this process, 'authoring' (p. 30), and he adds: "In order to forge a self, I must do it from the outside. In other words, I author myself" (p. 28). The results from this study show that the teachers towards work in school-age educare centres, although exposed to stated and unstated demands, lack of visions, unclear claims and subjected to a withdrawal of resources still speak with a common voice. This indicates that they still maintain a unified professional identity. The school-age educare teachers author themselves.

Conclusion and suggestions for further study

This study indicates that the profession teachers towards work in school age educare centres provide a unique contribution to children's everyday lives by their faithfulness to the child's perspective. It would be interesting to deeper study in what way factors as new policy documents and changed teacher education influence the common discourse, or with other words, affect the processes of authoring. Another important finding is the life-affirming attitude the teachers expressed and it would be interesting to design a coming study that investigates strategies used by the teachers for supporting children's affirmation to life.

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Freedom of religion and secular education: Teachers define the meaning of religious freedom in everyday school practice

Marie Fahlén

Abstract: Questions about freedom of religion versus secular values have increased as a controversial topic in European public debate during the last decades. The aim of this article is to shed light on these issues by focusing on the definition of "freedom of religion as a human right" among teachers working with younger pupils in the Swedish school system. From a holistic perspective on religion and children's education, in-depth individual interviews were conducted with teachers working in primary school, as well as teachers in the leisure-time center, examined through discourse analysis. This study provides insights into how two different groups of teachers interpret and apply these potentially conflicting values in everyday school practice. At the end of the article, I reflect upon the consequences of the Swedish, secular and individualistic values that were dominant in the teachers understanding of freedom of religion, in relation to the challenges of a multi-religious school and society.

Keywords: Freedom of religion; human rights; primary school; leisure-time center; discourse analysis

Introduction and research question

Sweden can be described as one of the most secularized countries in the world. Religion has been highly privatized and largely kept away from the public sphere. The school system is a key example of this process (Sjöborg & Botvar, 2012). The secular paradigm is now being challenged by processes related to immigration and globalization (Casanova, 2014). A central question in a plural society is the implications of freedom of religion as a human right (UN General Assembly, 1948).[1] Is it an absolute freedom or should there be limits? In European law (ECHR, 1950) parents have the right to bring up children in their own religious tradition. Children also have their rights, but their autonomy is governed by judgements of their maturity. Freedom of religion is highly valued as an important goal in the Swedish national curriculum (National Agency for Education, 2011/2017) and the Swedish Education Act (2010:800). At the same time, they require an objective, neutral and non-

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1   The Universal Declaration of Human Rights not only supports freedom of belief and religious practice, it also includes the freedom to change one´s religion or belief (UN General Assembly 1948).

denominational education, creating ambiguous demands on teachers. This reflects the ambiguous relation between religion and human rights in the Swedish society, where religion is often constructed as a private matter and human rights discourses are used as a common denominator (Sjöborg, 2015).

The aim of this article is to shed some light on the meaning-making processes involved in the definition of "freedom of religion as a human right" among teachers working with younger pupils in the Swedish school, year 3. From a holistic perspective on religion and children's education, a qualitative study was conducted with primary school teachers and teachers in the leisure-time center. The research question can be summarized in the following:

• *How do teachers define the concept "freedom of religion as a human right" in relation to everyday education practice?*

Background

The leisure-time teachers assist teachers during school and they provide care and education in the leisure-time center. The Fundamental values, formulated in the beginning of the Swedish national curriculum (National Agency for Education, 2011/2017), work as a common basis for the two groups of teachers in the study regarding issues of freedom of religion. Fundamental values are imparted and instilled in all subjects (which includes the leisure-time center), and can be characterized as a citizenship education:

> *The education should mediate and anchor respect for human rights and the fundamental democratic values that the Swedish society is based upon (…) In accordance with the ethics borne by Christian tradition and Western humanism, this is achieved by fostering in the individual a sense of justice, generosity of spirit, tolerance and responsibility. Teaching in the school should be non-denominational.*
>
> (National Agency for Education, 2011/2017)

The quotation above illustrates the importance of citizen education in the Swedish national curriculum. In the curricula for the leisure-time center the concept "education" is given a broad interpretation where care, development and learning forms a whole (ibid.).[2] Religion education is part of the assignment for the primary school teachers since they are responsible for their pupils to reach the educational goals.[3] This is, however, not the focus of this study.

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2   The curriculum for the leisure-time center stresses that education in the leisure-time center should complement the pre-school class and the school through a higher grade of situated, experiential and group-oriented learning, built on pupils' needs, interests and initiatives (National Agency for Education 2011). In the article the teachers in the leisure-time center will be named *leisure-time teacher.*

3   The Swedish national curriculum for religion education, year 1-3, focus on local community and storytelling. Christian tradition is central, pupils are required to learn psalms and the basics about the ecclesial year (National Agency for Education 2011).

Review of the literature

Previous studies on respondents' interpretations of freedom of religion, in a Nordic context, have involved young people's interpretations (Sjöborg & Botvar, 2012; Sjöborg & Botvar, 2014; Sjöborg & Botvar, 2018; Sjöborg, 2012; Sjöborg, 2015). These studies were conducted through quantitative method and indicated a positive evaluation of religious freedom. While personal religion had a limited effect on attitudes toward political and judicial rights, there was an effect of experienced discrimination and perception of conflicts related to ethnicity.

Thornberg (Thornberg, 2008; Thornberg & Oğuz, 2013) studied teachers' views on values education towards the younger ages of the Swedish school system, using qualitative methods. Thornberg found that values education for these teachers were primarily about intervening when things happened, such as conflicts or fights between students, breaking rules or being mean to other students. Teachers claimed that a significant part of values education was unplanned, occasional, reactive, and situated. Because of this, their values education practice was mostly or partly unreflective or unconscious. Thornberg could also see problems for the teachers in finding a relevant language to talk about values with their pupils.

Issues of religion in Swedish schools have been studied using qualitative methods primarily in relation to Religion education (See Kittelmann-Flensner, 2016; Osbeck, 2017; Lövstedt & Sjöborg 2018). The number of studies in this research area is limited. The studies that have been conducted were mainly focused on teachers working with older pupils. Kittelmann-Flensner (2016) found in her observations of religion education in upper secondary school that a secularist discourse was hegemonic in the classroom practice. It also implied a norm of talking about religion, religions and worldviews as something outdated that belonged to history. The secularist norm was also strong in Lövstedts and Sjöborgs (2018) qualitative study on teacher's personal view on religion in relation to Religion education. They found that teachers who had a religious belief met challenges; they had to balance their personal view with the professional demands of neutrality.

Otterbeck (2000) made qualitative interviews with teachers on the topic of Muslim pupils in the Swedish school system. Significant in these interviews were the limited knowledge about Islamic traditions by the teachers, together with insecurities in how to interact with the parents on topics related to religion.

The theoretical framework that informed the study and on which this article is based is grounded in social constructionism; the assumption that the world around us can be understood primarily through certain ways of categorizing our knowledge (Berger & Luckmann, 1967/1979). Furthermore, discourse analysis has been important in order to understand how categories are actively constructed in social texts, the interview data of the study. I drew here primarily on the work of Potter and Wetherell (1987). As discourses provide the language for talking about a topic, they also construct the lived reality: "They do not just describe things, they *do* things. And being active, they have social and political implications," (ibid. 6).

Civic education, the goal of the Fundamental values, has become an increasing challenge for teachers in a plural society. Biesta´s (2006) approach to education has been useful

in my understanding. Drawing from Hanna Arendt, he focuses on the ways in which human beings "break into the world" as unique individuals. Yet, without plurality, it is impossible for something new to break into the world. The role of the pedagogue is to give responsible responses to what and who is other and different. Instead of an instrumental view on education, the pedagogue should think wider: plurality "is the core condition of education (…) a plurality that only exists in interaction" (ibid. 89).

Berglund (2014) promotes an "ethnographic eye" on religion in everyday life in order to avoid stereotypes. The categorization of religion into stereotypical monolithic systems involves a risk that we also categorize people into "we" and "them". A similar perspective is given from Jackson (2007) based on his studies in the British school system. He advocates an "interpretative approach" to religion, an approach that also is critical of simplistic representations of cultures, and of the relationship between religion and cultures when they are seen as internally homogenous. Jackson also brings forward the dangers of letting children be representatives of their parent's religion. Berglund´s and Jackson´s perspectives are directed primarily towards Religion education, but they are also useful for understanding religious diversity in relation to everyday school practice.

As mentioned in the introduction, the Swedish national curriculum (National Agency for Education, 2011/2017) and the Swedish Education Act (2010:800) requires an objective, neutral and non-denominational education. This reflects the secular idea of differentiation: the separation of different public spheres, such as education, from a religious subsystem. As a consequence, religion is constructed as a private matter (Casanova, 1994). For the teachers in the study, demands of a neutral education have to be balanced with respect to freedom of religion in school practice in addition to their own personal view on religion. I drew on Dobbelare's theory of compartmentalization in order to understand these challenges. He (2002) uses the term to explain differentiation between religion and other spheres on the individual, as equivalent to differentiation on a societal level. Compartmentalization is described as the strategy individuals adopt in order to cope with different roles that do not fit well together. For a religious person, this process takes place when there is a distinction between their religious faith and their views on political and social issues, such as work roles or political preferences. It also regards persons with a secular view on religion: "the secularization of the younger generations is made up by persons who overwhelmingly think in a compartmentalized way and who for more than fifty percent are unchurched" (ibid. 178).

Method and context

The study is based on individual qualitative interviews with 18 teachers. The interviews were conducted in three schools in a Swedish city (six interviews per school).[4] Of the 18 participants, 14 were women and four were men. Nine of the informants worked as primary school teachers; the others had their assignment both in school and in the leisure-time center. All worked with pupils of year 3. The informants were chosen on the premises that they

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4   The interviews were conducted in November-December 2016. They took place in the local school context, in the classroom or a group-room, after the pupils have ended the school day. The transcription from the recordings has been adapted to written language codes, using punctuation, etc.

worked together with the same group of pupils in year 3. It meant three classes per school where a primary school teacher worked together with a leisure-time teacher. I did not choose the informants on other grounds. It turned out that they had all worked at the school for at least a year and that they all had a teacher's degree in accordance with their assignment.[5] The schools were chosen on the basis of their differing ethnic pupil populations. The teachers are presented with fictitious names in the article. The schools are named School A, B and C.[6] School A had a low percentage (4%) of ethnic diversity, School B had a higher percentage (17%), and School C was almost exclusively pupils of non-Swedish ethnicity. The interviews ranged in duration from 35 to 90 min, they were recorded on a portable mini-disc recorder. Of central importance in the interviews were questions concerning the definition of the concept "freedom of religion as a human right", as well as the implications of these issues in everyday school practice.

Discourse analysis was used as a method to analyze the interview data. Early in the process I searched for regular patterns in the variability of accounts. Potter and Wetherell (1987) use the term "interpretative repertoires" for these patterns. A "repertoire" is a register of terms and metaphors that are drawn upon to evaluate actions and events. By definition, interview talk is interpretation work concerning the topic in question. There is, nevertheless, a close interdependence between descriptive and evaluative language. Furthermore, function was stressed during my analysis: what are the uses and functions of different repertoires, and what problems can be recognized by their existence? (ibid. 138-149).

Regarding the findings in this study there needs to be a note of caution. The sample in the study limits transferability, since it was sampled from only 18 teachers working in year 3, on three schools in one Swedish town. From a qualitative approach, the intent is, however, to reach a wider and deeper understanding of the meaning-making processes involved in teacher's interpretations of freedom of religion. This has been done through carefully conducted interviews that gave the informants time to reflect, as well as a close reading of the interviews and a thorough analysis using discourse method.

Results

The findings will be presented under headlines named by the different interpretative repertoires that were found in the interview material.

Freedom of religion is constructed as a positive value

Freedom of religion as a general concept is highly valued among the teachers in the study. There is a striking consensus in favor of the idea that everyone should have the right to believe and practice their religion. This excerpt from the interview data is typical: "It must be

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5   The leisure-time center provides care for pupils of age 6-12. The leisure-time teachers in my study had pupils of age 6-10.

6   The teachers that participated in the study are the following:
     School A: Eva; Hanna; Maria (primary school teachers). Annika; Lars; Ann (leisure-time teachers).
     School B: Karin; Åsa; Kristina (primary school teachers). Lena; Linda; Erik (leisure-time teachers).
     School C: Monica; Jennifer; Nahid (primary school teachers). Gunilla; Per; Jonas (leisure-time teachers).

regarded as obvious, I think, to have the right to practice whatever religion you want" (Lars, leisure-time teacher, School A). The formulation shares the same pattern as most of the other teachers; it can be characterized as an interpretative repertoire. Freedom of religion is constructed as a positive value, a common denominator. It shows correspondence with the results found in Sjöborg (2012; 2015). The teachers often relate their view on freedom of religion to professional requirements in the national curriculum (National Agency for Education, 2011/2017) and the Education Act (2010:800).

Concerns about freedom of religion conflicting with other human rights

Further on in the interview most of the teachers express concern about religious freedom in relation to other human rights, such as children's right to choose their own religion, women's (and girls') rights, and freedom of expression and thought. Teachers at School C relate their evaluations to experiences with pupils in the local school context:

> *We want them (the pupils) to be more open-minded and feel that it is good to live in a place like our society. That you are allowed to think and to think what you want - this is freedom of religion. You don´t want a child to say `you can´t do this´, instead it´s fantastic that we have this freedom in Sweden.*
>
> (Gunilla, leisure-time teacher, School C)

In a similar way as Gunilla, Jennifer refers to her teacher experience when she wants to implement a new way of thinking in her pupils:

> *For me, freedom of religion is an obvious matter, but for many (children) here, it is not obvious, they grow up in a religion and that will be a natural part of them. But I hope that these children will be able to make their own choices sometime later in life (…) For a more modern society, I think, we are perhaps moving towards more freedom from religion, but we are not there yet.*
>
> (Jennifer, primary school teacher, School C)

At the same time as Jennifer expresses concerns for children's rights to choose their own religion, she constructs a clear secularist view on religion: the extinction of religion as a consequence of modernization and rational thought (Casanova, 1994). The excerpt shows that her personal opinions on religion also informs her professional assignment. The secularist worldview is hegemonic and religion is constructed as something outdated, which shows similarities with the study conducted by Kittelmann-Flensner (2016). Another typical excerpt from the interview data has a similar pattern:

> *It is an important human right, but difficult since religion and culture are so interwoven. I dislike that women are oppressed in the suburbs. I think Sweden is too passive about these issues. Swedish rules should be kept. Personal belief is ok, as long as it does not interfere with anyone else. The school should be non-denominational, I´m against faith schools.*
>
> (Kristina, primary school teacher, School B)

What is possible to hear in the excerpt is an understanding of a "we" and a "them"; a "we" that is more of a general statement and not referred to local school practice (Berglund, 2014). Kristina's opinions on religion has been diffused with her professional assignments. Furthermore, it expresses the Swedish secular view of religion constructed as a private matter (Sjöborg & Botvar, 2012). In the last sentence, the formulation meets the requirements in the national curriculum and the Education Act. This is another typical excerpt where the teacher's statement about children's rights in a similar way is informed by these documents:

> *Everyone has the right to practice their religion, but all pupils must have an objective education. Children should have information on everything, and be able to create their own view. I am referring to children's rights in general. There is a risk with Muslim schools and Jehovah's Witnesses that these children will be limited.*

(Eva, primary school teacher, School A)

Whereas teachers at School C relate their concern for freedom of religion to their experiences with pupils in the local school context, the teachers at School A and B describe their concern in a more general sense. There is a close interdependence between the described concern and an evaluative language when the teachers formulate their concern for freedom of religion in relation to other human rights. The evaluation is clearly informed by topics debated in politics and media. The teachers at School A and B do this to a higher degree, compared to teachers at School C. For all teachers there are also evaluations that meet the professional requirements in the national curriculum and the Education Act.

A secular, Swedish and individualistic view on religion

Even though the teachers approach the topic from different angles, it is possible to recognize a regular pattern when the teachers formulate their concern for freedom of religion in relation to other human rights. An interpretation repertoire is constructed that highlights Swedish, secular and individual values on religious freedom. The informants relate their interpretations many times to what is described as Swedish values, often in relation to the national curriculum and the Education act. Two of the teachers stand out as exceptions. One of them shares the understanding of religious freedom as an important human right with the other teachers, but he differentiates himself in that he does not believe that it includes him:

> *It is clear that you should have the right to believe what you want (…) When it comes to myself, I am very careful not to talk about it (his Christian faith). I have not experienced that there is freedom of speech, I cannot express my opinion so that I feel safe. The risk if I express my opinion is that I will be bullied. Therefore, I am very careful not to do it. Unfortunately, I have bad experiences from my former workplace where I was ordered to the principal's office to sit down and receive a lecture about not to teach creationism. I have studied the curriculum; I have not provoked anyone when it comes to belief. I don´t understand anything. Is it ok to threat a human being like this?*

(Jonas, leisure-time teacher, School C)

Jonas' account is a striking illustration of the Swedish secular paradigm where religion is constructed as a private matter, to be kept away from the public sphere (Sjöborg & Botvar, 2012). It also illustrates the hegemonic secularist norm that Kittelmann-Flensner (2016) found in her classroom observations of Religion education. As Lövstedt and Sjöborg (2018) shows in their study, teachers with a personal belief met challenges in Religion education, they had to balance their private view with professional demands of neutrality. In a similar way, Jonas statement is a clear example of compartmentalization, as he has learnt to separate his religious belief from the professional demands of neutrality (Dobbelaere, 2002). Nahid is the other teacher that differentiates herself from the majority of the teachers in her definition of religious freedom:

> *I think every person has the right to choose what they think and believe in, but at the same time, there are also some limits (...) I think that those who make these kinds of caricatures (Jyllands-Posten Muhammad cartoons) they have gone over the limit, it has nothing to do with freedom. Then I have trampled on others, I have not shown respect to their thoughts and ideas.*

(Nahid, primary school teacher, School C)

A close reading of the text suggests that Nahid's definition of freedom of religion is mixed together with her understanding of freedom of speech. She clearly positions herself against what she believes is the way that these issues are treated in Sweden: a freedom of speech that has gone too far. Compared to the other teachers, she does not bring up any of the concerns about religious freedom. Nahid describes herself as a Muslim. She expresses a strong desire to make her pupils think wider and accept other religions. Yet, she stresses that she has to be neutral when she talks about religion: "Religion is such a sensitive subject. I cannot influence with my thoughts and ideas. It's wrong to say that they can choose, their parents have often already made that choice." This excerpt shows a compartmentalized way of thinking, separating her personal view on Islam in relation to the parents (Dobbelaere, 2002).

The fact that Jonas and Nahid both work at School C raises questions about their interpretations in relation to the local school context. Yet, Jonas shares the concerns about freedom of religion with the other teachers in the study when he describes the everyday school practice: "You want to talk to them (the pupils) on a deeper level, to be able to introduce new ways of thinking (…) many times I feel that there is some kind of collective agreement on how to think and believe." From what is expressed in the interview, Jonas' statement is related to his relations to colleagues (where he keeps a low profile about his belief), not to the pupils. Despite the fact that Jonas does not express secular views, he shows a clear positive evaluation of individualism. For him to have a religion is an active choice on an individual level. As a comparison, Nahid expresses positive evaluations on collective norms, such as children following their parents' choice. Nahid and Jonas are the exceptions in the interview data, where most teachers define freedom of religion from a secular and individualistic view; many times, they also promote what they define as Swedish values. Still, Jonas shares the interpretational repertoire of individualism with the other teachers. This relates to international surveys were Sweden is one of the countries where individuality is evaluated to a very high degree (Ingelhart & Welzel, 2005).

For the majority of the teachers there is a concern for professional demands of neutrality in relation to a personal negative view on religion, whereas two teachers show their concern in relation to having a personal belief. In both cases, there is a clear separation between personal views on religion from the professional demands of neutrality, which complies with *Compartmentalization* (Dobbelaere, 2002).

School A and B: Implications of freedom of religion understood primarily as practical problems

After defining their understanding of freedom of religion, the teachers went on to talk about the implications of this concept in relation to everyday school practice. For most of the teachers at School A and B, issues related to freedom of religion are limited to diet restrictions for Muslims and tensions around Christian elements. Two teachers at School B mention issues related to physical education for Muslim girls that were solved by a separate dressing room. Diet restrictions are solved by a vegetarian alternative in the canteen. Tensions around Christian elements are dealt with by talking to parents and refer to the national curriculum. The pupil might also be given permission to refrain from the activities.

The tensions around Christian elements concerns the end of the school year ceremonies taking place in church, the singing of hymns and celebration of Christian holidays, activi-

ties related to the Lutheran Church of Sweden. The topic is brought up by all teachers in School A and B. Secular parents have protested against the activities from a general standpoint, requiring a non-denominational education. Jehovah's Witnesses and some Muslims have required that their children should be relieved from the activities in order to protect them from Christian influence. According to the National Agency for Education (2012) the national curriculum states that visiting churches, singing hymns and celebrate Christian holidays are part of education and regarded as "tradition, not religion". As a consequence, pupils can be forced to participate. The tensions described concern the principle of freedom of religion: Is it right to force a pupil to participate? It also concerns the separation of church and state in a secular state (Berglund, 2013; Thurfjell, 2011).

Except for one teacher, Lena, the teachers in the study do not problematize the Lutheran Christian tradition in the national curriculum as an enforcement on pupils with other beliefs. On the other hand, some primary school teachers describe these elements as an important part of education in order to learn about Swedish history and traditions. These evaluations are clearly informed by the formulations in the national curriculum, described above (National Agency for Education, 2012). Lena is the only exception among the teachers in her critical view on school graduation in church, which she defines as a violation against freedom of religion:

> Everyone is entitled to their own beliefs as long as they subscribe to the human rights of human equality (…) The only exception to this (freedom of religion) in this school is the ceremony in church before Christmas. The language of the church room is strong; this is a religious room. When you come here it means indirectly that you accept the religion.

<div align="right">(Lena, leisure-time teacher, School B)</div>

It is, despite Lena's critical view on school graduations in church, possible to identify an interpretative repertoire in the interview data; the evaluation that the implications of freedom of religion is understood primarily as practical problems among the teachers at School A and B. Problems that (if they appear) are solved by referring to the national curriculum in interaction with parents and through pragmatic solutions. The following excerpt is typical of this pattern: "I might have had some few Muslim pupils over the years, but it has not been noticeable or changed anything," (Maria, primary school teacher, School A). One of her colleagues, Hanna, shares a similar view on the mix of pupils, but she expresses a different view on how to deal with issues related to freedom of religion:

> I think that we talk too little about each one's religion. This is because the majority come from Sweden and are born in a home where you do not talk about religion at all. Then maybe Muslim pupils get affected by some sort of taboo, and despite this you try to talk about it, but then you want your pupils to talk about it too, and that is hard. In the world in general, I see that these are amazingly difficult questions (…) Some religions have got a bad reputation which can be hard for a child at this school. I can tell from their body language that they are not proud of their religion. That´s why I found it even more important to work with these questions, to prevent prejudices.

<div align="right">(Hanna, primary school teacher, School A)</div>

Like Lena, Hanna is an exception from the evaluation that freedom of religion has little implication on everyday school practice. Hanna's statement is interesting since she gives a critical evaluation on the consequences of avoiding "difficult questions." This statement is reinforced by her experience of children's body language being affected by their religious

affiliation, which is a worrying account. However, the matters she describes are all part of the goals in the Fundamental values (National Agency for Education, 2011/2017). From a close reading of the text, it is possible to understand the attitude from her colleagues as an avoidance of dealing with questions concerning tolerance, plurality and religion in every-day school practice. These questions are sensitive since they are all related to the challenges raised by immigration and debated in the politics (Berglund, 2014). Religion is also many times presented in harsh ways in media. At the same time as teachers at School A and B claim that religion has little implication on their school practice, they mention the effects of media coverage on religion on their pupils. This excerpt illustrates this pattern:

> *Children bring up questions about things they see on TV, why do people kill because of religion? We should not take a position as teachers. But when it concerns IS and these extreme expressions of Islam it is harder to stay neutral.*

> (Annika, leisure-time teacher, School A)

While these violent expressions of religion can be discussed with the pupils in relation to the Fundamental values (Hakwoort & Olsson, 2014), Annika expresses an insecurity when it comes to distinguishing between religious practices in general and the extreme versions of religion. I interpret this insecurity not only as related to the professional demands of neutrality; it also shows a stereotyped view on religious traditions (Berglund, 2014; Jackson, 2007). It is possible to talk about these issues in a nuanced way with the pupils. As Biesta (2006) points out, it is important to bring up "difficult questions", in order to confront pupils with what is "other" and different. Nevertheless, in order to do so, the teacher needs knowledge of religion to make this happen (Dinham & Francis, 2015). Earlier in the interview, Annika expressed that she neither had an interest in religion or a closer knowledge. She did acknowledge this, however, as a problem: "We never talk about these issues in meetings with the staff. Mathematics and Swedish are the main topics when we meet". Other teachers at School A and B bring up similar interpretations.

School C: Implications of freedom of religion understood as practical problems *and* ideological problems

The majority of the teachers in the study describe similar concerns around the requirements of neutrality and their personal negative view on religion (except for Nahid and Jonas). For teachers at School C they also come close to the politicized and mediatized image of religion in their local school context, where many of their pupils also have relatives in war zones.

When it comes to the implications of freedom of religion on everyday school practice at School C, the teachers mention Muslim parents requesting that their children should refrain from singing hymns and celebrating Christian holidays (the school have no ceremonies in a church), as well as diet restrictions for Muslim pupils. These issues have been solved in a similar way as in School A and B. Implications of freedom of religion is understood as practical problems, but it is also understood as ideological problems. I identify this as an interpretative repertoire for the teachers at School C that contrasts from the other teachers in the study. This excerpt is a typical formulation of this pattern:

> *Religion is very natural here, especially with the Muslim children since they live to a high degree in a strict religious environment. We have had problems to get the Muslim girls to learn how to swim in previous years. Now we start in pre-school class, the Education Act is more clear on this issue now. There are no religious reasons against swimming. However, we show respect by going with girl-groups or boy-groups.*
>
> (Monica, primary school teacher, School C)

None of the teachers express that they have to violate freedom of religion in order to meet the professional requirements. Yet, some issues cannot be solved, such as parent's demands of separation of sexes: "When a girl tells me she is not allowed to play with boys in school because of her religion, it´s impossible for us in school to meet the demands of her father (…) but it´s tough to deal with," (Per, leisure-time teacher, School C). Per's statement has connections to Otterbeck's (2000) study of Muslims and the Swedish school system in the description of problems concerning interactions with the parents on issues related to religion. When it comes to teachers' limited knowledge of Muslim traditions, as described by Otterbeck (2000), teachers at School C express that they learn about religious traditions from their interactions with pupils. Issues around implications of religion are also brought up on staff meetings, primarily when there have been problems. The discourse constructed on these issues has connections to Thornberg's (2008; 2013) studies on values education as something that primarily took place in order to intervene when things happened, to avoid conflicts.

The teachers at School C express that they want to learn more about religious traditions, at the same time as they claim that they have learned the basics by interacting with the pupils. Since ideological problems are an implication of freedom religion on School C, knowledge of religion is central in order to deal with the challenges (Dinham & Francis, 2015). Knowledge is also important for avoiding stereotyped view on religious traditions (Berglund, 2014; Jackson, 2007). This is also related to simplistic representations of cultures, as Jackson (2007) points out, and the risk of seeing religion and cultures as internally homogenous. By learning about religious traditions from the pupils, there is also a risk that they become representatives of their parent's religion, instead of supporting them in finding their own worldview (Jackson, 2007).

Questions about religion are brought up more often in the leisure-time center compared to the classroom

There is still one interpretation repertoire that has to be presented, which is related to the variations between the two groups of teachers in the study. In the interviews, leisure-time teachers mention spontaneous questions around religion raised by the pupils themselves; this is mentioned more often compared to the primary school teachers. The questions raised by the pupils can be difficult, almost philosophical, and they are many times related to media coverage. Compared to school, the schedule in the leisure-time center is less structured, which opens possibilities to spend time on dealing with these issues on an informal basis. Many times, pupils bring up questions about things they heard in the classroom. However, some of the leisure-time teachers emphasize that the structural conditions have been impaired over time. Large numbers of pupils in the leisure-time center restricts the possibilities to sit down and talk about important matters. This is problematic since the leisure-time center, in accordance with a holistic view on children's education, which promotes pupils'

own initiatives, should be a place for pupils to practice democracy, in order to reach the goals in the Fundamental Values (Orwehag Hansen, 2013).

Discussion

The teachers interviewed expressed positive attitudes towards freedom of religion. They often related those attitudes to the professional requirements of the national curriculum and the Education Act. I identified in the responses interpretation repertoires that highlight Swedish, secular and individual values of religious freedom. Two of the teachers stand out as exceptions: a practicing Christian and a Muslim. For them, freedom of religion is primarily understood in terms of practical problems, such as diet restrictions for Muslims and tensions around Christian traditions. Among the teachers at School C it is *also* understood as ideological problems which are more difficult to resolve, such as parents' demands for separating students by gender.

In the presentation of the interview data, I have tried to highlight some of the complex experiences that these eighteen teachers have developed in their interactions with pupils on issues related to freedom of religion, as well as their definition of the concept. Their interpretations can be problematized from the Swedish, secular and individual values on religious freedom that are dominant in the material. At the same time, it is important to have an awareness of the strong requirements of the national curriculum and the Education Act on the teachers, in relation to the demands for freedom of religion. These conflicting demands are discernible in the interview data; tensions around visiting churches and celebrating Christian holidays (tensions that are aroused from secularist as well as religious standpoints), but also the challenge to meet demands from strict religious parents in a segregated school. To meet these challenges teachers should need a profound knowledge of religious traditions, something that the teachers in the study have not been part of. This should be taken in consideration when their interpretations are problematized. As Thurfjell points out: "Perspectivism, self-reflection, methodological agnosticism and contextualization have to be brought into the discussion on what non-denominational teaching means in a `post-Lutheran majority culture" (Thurfjell, 2011, p. 216).

Freedom of religion is today approached from different interpretations, related to immigration and globalization that challenge the secularist paradigm (Casanova, 2014). Yet, a secular state management works as a guarantee for a multi-religious society (Leirvik, 2014; Bangstad, 2013). Leirvik describes secularity as a non-hegemonic condition; no one religion can control the public sphere (Leirvik, 2014). We need, however, a constant critical reflection and discussion on how the secular norm is constructed in a plural society. The Fundamental values stress values like tolerance and human rights (Hakwoort & Olsson, 2014). There is a risk that the younger generations with little or no literacy about religions are restricted to stereotypical images of religion in political debate or mediatized forms. Religious literacy is not only facts about the world religions, to a high degree it is also cultural competence (Dinham & Francis, 2015). This competence is brought forth in interaction with what is different and challenging (Biesta, 2006). As pointed out above, Hanna, one of the teachers in the study, recognizes that issues of religion "are amazingly difficult ques-

tions (…) That´s why I found it even more important to work with these questions, to prevent prejudices." A wide, holistic approach to education that focuses on the ongoing critical reflection and discussion is a good starting point for this work.

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On the move from pedagogy to timeagogy?
Or how time constitutes the work of pedagogues in the Danish Primary School and Leisure-time Center

David Thore Gravesen & Lea Ringskou

Abstract: This article analyzes the work of pedagogues in the Danish Primary School and Leisure-time Center. With a reform in 2014, schooldays are prolonged and hours for leisure-time pedagogy in the afternoons have become fewer. Time pressure and a focus on effectiveness have become crucial, and core pedagogical ideas are seemingly changing. On the basis of qualitative data material and sociological theories our analysis suggests a new concept: *timeagogy*. Timeagogy is a rising phenomenon deriving from the tense relationship between societal acceleration and renewed pedagogical demands on the one hand, and the pedagogue's subjective practices on the other.

Keywords: Danish Primary School; Pedagogues; Leisure-time pedagogy; Time; Qualitative research;

Introduction and Research Question

Since the 1980s, leisure time pedagogues have been a part of the Danish public school system. In Denmark, *pedagogue* (in Danish: *pædagog*) is the title for a bachelor degree in social education. An independent education, separated from the Danish Teacher Education. The bachelor degree in social education gives access to many work spheres and job positions, that all use the term *pedagogue* (e.g. preschools, Primary Schools, youth clubs, specialized institutions for children, youth and adults with disabilities, different forms of social work, etc.)[1]. The pedagogues we focused on in this research, are working in Primary Schools, their working hours partly spent during the formal school hours, partly spent in the Leisure-time Center in the mornings and afternoons. Some Leisure-time Centers are physically located within the school buildings while others are located in other buildings, separated from the school. Administratively, the Leisure-time Centers have their own director, who cooperates with the principal of the school. However, the principal of the school is in charge when it comes to organizing working hours and defining the pedagogues' tasks during the school day.

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1   In international contexts, however, different terms are used for such different work spheres and roles. Examples of such different terms are preschool-teachers in preschools or daycare, teachers or educators in schools, social educators in after-school programs or Leisure-time Centers and social workers in social work.

The relatively firm link between Danish schools and afternoon-based Leisure-time Centers also means that cooperation between pedagogues and teachers has existed for decades. Traditionally, the idea of free time and self-rule has been central to leisure-time pedagogues. In many aspects, leisure-time pedagogy has been formulated as an alternative to the relatively strong structure, academic focus, and overall goal orientation of traditional school pedagogy. Instead, a freer atmosphere, creativity, friendships across ages, and general well-being were priorities in leisure-time pedagogy, emphasized by the daily priorities of the pedagogues (Stanek, 2010).

However, in 2014, a reform was implemented in the Danish Primary and Lower Secondary School. The reform is of great importance to pedagogues working in the Danish Primary School and Leisure-time Centers. To a considerable extent, the School Reform from 2014 can be understood in response to receding Danish results in international tests such as the PISA test (Regeringen, 2010). Generally, the test results led politicians to conclude, that the academic standards of the pupils in the subjects *Danish* and *Mathematics* were unsatisfying. Furthermore, it was argued that too many pupils were disadvantageously located in disconnected special education services and that neither the strong nor the weak pupils were given the opportunity to achieve their best academic results and realize their full potential. Prior to the reform, the Local Danish Government, a Danish interest group and member authority of the Danish municipalities, emphasized that the Danish Primary School must range in the top five of the best schools in the world (Knudsen, 2010). In line with the Local Danish Government, the political decision makers behind the reform accentuated that the overall ambitions, the academic goals, the quality, and effectiveness ought to be improved: 'In the long term, through more extensive and better education, the students in the 8th grade must be able to do what the 9th grade students are capable of today.' (Aftaleteksten, 2007, p.3). Hereto, the aim of the reform is to challenge all pupils, regardless of social background, and key answers to these demands are more varied school days and flexible learning environments. In everyday practice, the reform means prolonged schooldays and a series of new curriculum initiatives.

Prior to the reform, pedagogues participated in formal school hours and academic activities in diverse constellations, although their working hours were primarily spent in Leisure-time Centers, in the mornings and in the afternoons. Today, due to the reform and longer schooldays, pedagogues' working hours in Leisure-time Centers are drastically reduced, while working hours during formal school hours have increased.

So far, discussions and research focusing on the work of pedagogues in the reformed school is limited. In this article, we present a qualitative research project carried out in 2014-2015 at two Danish Primary Schools and Leisure-time Centers. The aim of the research is to examine the professional routines of the pedagogues who share their working hours between the formally structured school activities and the more voluntarily based activities in the Leisure-time Center. To what extent does the reformed school milieu affect the pedagogues' daily practices and their relations to the children?

Methodological Approach

Methodologically our research is based on various qualitative data types. American sociologist Mario Small notes that 'the strengths of qualitative work come from understanding how and why, not understanding how many' (Small, 2008, p. 8) and Steiner Kvale & Svend Brinkmann accentuate that qualitative studies give the researcher privileged access to the informants' everyday lives (Kvale & Brinkmann 2008). According to Daniel Bertaux empirical sociology should release itself from 'the burden of proof' (Bertaux, 1981, p. 41) and focus on depth in the analysis. Informants have great insight into the battles and values in their social milieu, and the sociologists' task is to collect various types of data and thereby provide an overview and awareness through the analytical process and interpretations (Bertaux, 1981). Norman Denzin & Yvonna Lincoln note that 'the use of multiple methods, or triangulation, reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question' (Denzin & Lincoln 2011, p. 5), stressing that the combination of multiple methodological practices and empirical materials adds 'rigor, breadth, complexity, richness, and depth to any inquiry' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Inspired by such methodological notions, we[2] chose to collect a wide range of empirical materials throughout the process. A vital part is based on ethnographic participant observations (Hastrup, 2010; Kristiansen & Krogstrup, 1999; Spradley, 1980) carried out in two Danish Primary Schools, respectively Beechwood Primary School and Northside Primary School[3]. On a daily basis, throughout six weeks, we followed four pedagogues; Joan and Michael at Northside Primary School and Karen and Amanda at Beechwood Primary School. All four informants work in the Leisure-time Center in the early morning hours and in the afternoons when the school day is over. However, due to the reform, the majority of their working hours are now spent participating in and facilitating formal school activities. During the period of observations, the informants kept a diary, in which they wrote down general reflections regarding their tasks and challenges during the day.

Theorizing on researchers successively securing focus throughout a sequence of observations, Kristiansen and Krogstrup (1999) distinguish between descriptive, focused and selective observations. Gradually, throughout our period of observations, our attention moved from a general interest in the pedagogues' activities to an intense attention towards specific categories, practices and questions. Here we focused on the following categories: *time*, *space* and *relations*. In the final and selective phase of the observations, we looked only at the activities related to those three categories. In this article, we focus on the two categories *time* and *relations* (see Gravesen & Ringkou, 2016 for our former work on *space* and *relations*). During the observations, we most often positioned ourselves as moderate partici-

2   The authors of this article arranged and conducted the empirical studies. Lea Ringskou holds a MA in educational sociology and David Thore Gravesen holds a MA and a PhD in educational sociology. They both have many years of experience with teaching and research in pedagogy and educational sociology. Alongside with the researchers, a number of students from the VIA Faculty of Education & Social Studies carried out observations and participated in follow-up focus group interviews.

3   To ensure anonymity, names of participating schools, informants and students have been changed. The two schools are located at each end of a large Danish provincial town. Beechwood Primary School and Northside Primary School are both medium-sized municipal schools with approximately 500 students from pre-school/kindergarten to 9th grade.

pants (Spradley, 1980), swapping between writing notes in our Field books while seated or standing and following the pedagogues around in the school environment. Occasionally, when it felt natural and relevant, we participated in various activities. By doing so, we gained a deeper sense of the cultural routines in the field (Hastrup, 2010).

Afterwards, field notes from the observations and data from the diaries were supplemented by two (one at Beechwood Primary School with Karen and Amanda as informants and one at Northside Primary School with Joan and Michael as informants) qualitative semi-structured interviews (Kvale, 1997; Kvale & Brinkman, 2008; Spradley, 1979) carried out as focus group interviews (Halkier, 2002). Many days of transcribing field notes, diary notes and tape-recorded interviews followed to secure a clear overview of the varying data materials. Inductive data analysis was implemented using color-coding to ensure systematic search on the selected categories.

Lastly, we facilitated a dialogue seminar, in which all four participating informants and students were invited to discuss findings and analytical foci. The dialogue seminar enabled us to challenge our understandings and empirical selections and test for exaggerated interpretations. Discussions on the seminar were inspiring, and verified an overall coherence between the informants' experiences and the researchers' interpretation perspectives.

Theoretical Basis and Analytical Focus

The link between our empirical data and the analyzes in this article is the categories of time and relations. Throughout – and indeed after – our inductive readings and color-coding processes, we started searching for theoretical perspectives that could broaden and challenge our first – and more immediate – readings of the data materials. In the following, we present the theoretical apparatus that we use, respectively in the *Findings and Analysis* section and the *Discussion Section*, later in this article.

The sociological and philosophical conceptualizations of time and related cultural questions are many. The interest dates back to classic European sociologists and their take on epochal changes from a pre-modern to a modern industrialized age. Ferdinand Tönnies's distinction between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft (Tönnies, 1957; Falk, 2000) and Émile Durkheims notions on the shift from mechanical to organic solidarity (Durkheim, 2000; Guneriussen, 2000) are examples of this. Among such classic takes were also Georg Simmel's characterization (and critique) of city-life and the modern times' influence on the individual, including the so-called 'intensification of nervous stimulation which results from the swift and uninterrupted change of outer and inner stimuli' (Simmel, 1969, p. 48). When interpreting the data we collected at the two Primary Schools, Simmel's notions still come about fresh, adequate, and relevant today, as time pressure, rapidity, and continual shifts in activities appear to be highly important in the professional lives of the pedagogues when they interact with the children.

Time as a theme complements a general tendency in the field of education, with demands of efficiency and measurement dominating official objectives, curriculums, and every day practices at schools. In the introduction, we pinpointed the Danish Governments' urge to make the School system secure academic results *faster* than before, as an illustrative

example of exactly that. The tendency is described, analyzed, and criticized by Gert Biesta (2010), who questions the stressed focus on effectiveness:

> Instead of simply making a case for effective education, we therefore need to ask "effective for what" and given that what might be effective for one particular student or group of students may not necessarily be effective for other individuals or groups, we also need to ask, "effective for whom"? (Biesta, 2010, p. 14)

Werner Bergmann (1992) states that it is an ongoing challenge to analyze and understand the impact of time in modern societies. Understanding time in relation to the entire society, however, is a much too complex task, and therefore empirical studies of the time structures in social subsystems are necessary and important (Bergmann, 1992, p. 126). This article is meant as a contribution to that challenge.

Our construction of the concept timeagogy is inspired by the concept of *time* and the concepts of *pedagogy* and *pedagogue*. Pedagogy[4], meaning the method and practice of teaching, is related to the word pedagogue[5], originally (via Latin from Greek (*pais, paid-* "boy" + *agōgos* "leader")) meaning a slave who escorted children to school. In regard to timeagogy, we intend to emphasize what we see as a shifting trend from a traditional form and understanding of pedagogy (having to do with leading, supporting, and controlling children) to a practice we name *timeagogy* (focusing more on the leadership of time, the controlling of individuals and the managing of their adherence to the logistics and imperatives of time structures).

The key argument in this article is that timeagogy must be understood equally as an every-day and a societal/structural phenomenon.

In our analysis section, the concept of time is used to shed light on timeagogy as a daily phenomenon forming the daily structure of the pedagogues' tasks and relationships with the children. In those analyses, we draw on inspiration from theoretical conceptualizations on time launched by sociologists such as Georg Simmel, Alex Szollos, Helga Nowotny, Jonas Frykman & Orvar Löfgren and philosophical thinkers Paul Virilio and Michel Foucault.

However, these every-day practical matters are indeed embedded in political demands and societal structures that also need to be scrutinized. In our discussion section, we discuss timeagogy as a societal and structural phenomenon. Here, we shed light on the concept in a broader educational perspective, drawing on inspiration from Michel Foucault, Gert Biesta, and Pierre Bourdieu. In the conclusion, we reflect on the purpose of the article and the value of the concept timeagogy.

Obviously, the analyzes and discussions in this article are based on our categorizations and interpretations of the data, and the inspiration and awareness we shared when selecting and using the theoretical perspectives. Having to make such choices is a natural part of qualitative and interpretive research, and depending on epistemological belief one can consider that a strength or a weakness. Because had we chosen differently in the different phases of our research, the analyzes and discussions would have come about different too. With that reservation, the article must be read.

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4   http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/pedagogy
5   http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/pedagogue

Findings and Analysis

Timeagogy as daily practices

"Time is everything! And it hasn't been like that before!" states Amanda, one of the pedagogues in our data. As mentioned earlier, inductive readings of our data highlight time and relations with the children as important constitutional factors in the daily routines of the pedagogues. In this section we will elaborate on such findings and analyze timeagogy as daily practices, forming the professional routines of the pedagogues. *Time*, identified in our data as eg. (feelings of) time pressure, a strict focus on timetables and adherence to time structures, constitutes the daily aspects of the timeagogy phenomenon, characterized by haste, rhythm, and disciplinary training. These aspects influence the relationships between the pedagogues and the children. To illustrate our analytical points, we support and illustrate our analysis by using specific examples from our varying data set. Of course, the quotations and extracts given below are only few among many others, but they were all chosen because they clearly represent general findings across the entire material.

The haste of things

During Michael's education, he specialized in the field of bodily activities and physical exercise and today he draws on these competences on a daily basis. Owing to the reform in 2014, a new invention was launched in the school curriculum, named *Exercise & Movement*. Exercise & Movement is not a regular subject or class with explicit content, methods and examinations, but an intermediate line of activities carried out during the day to ensure better learning. To make room for 45 minutes of Exercise & Movement (and other novelties in the curriculum) every day, the school day for pupils up to third grade is extended with two extra school hours, now stretching from eight in the morning to two in the afternoon. When Michael practices Exercise & Movement at the Northside Primary School, he does so in between a number of other school activities, usually ordinary lessons of 45 minutes, and often, in order to have time for the pupils' lunch and recess he has to start up, run through, and finish an activity during a period of merely 20 minutes.

Having to manage this with school classes of approximately 25 pupils is a challenge for Michael. Often things go well, but regularly some of the (more vulnerable) children test and oppose Michael's setup, causing confusion, conflict, waiting time, and delay. During our observations, Michael states that after the reform in 2014 the pedagogues' daily routines 'moved deeper into structured school activities'*,* with fixed content, tight timetables, and less autonomy. 'In the Leisure-time Center in the afternoon I can take 30 pupils to the gym, because it's voluntary, and there are no conflicts, what so ever', Michael explains, trying to elaborate on the difference between structured and voluntary activities. Michael is hardly convinced that the reformed school day is productive, asking polemically: '…does it create more learning or more conflict? You can judge for yourself!'

Albeit the fact that time is a highly challenging factor, Michael thrives in the new structure, more often knowing *where* to be, *what* to do, and most importantly *when*. However, according to Michael, it is very important to balance the different roles and the difficult schism between the individual and the group. Eye contact, he explains, is crucial and the re-

lational work is most powerful and influential when you are one-on-one: 'If they feel you're not there, because there are six or seven others, they're out of here!'

Another example of the hastened routines is played out when the pedagogue Karen and the teacher Susan, one morning, are headed for a trip to the nearby forest with a class of 1st graders at the Beechwood Primary School. Among the pupils is Peter, a vulnerable boy, who often finds it difficult to solve tasks and adhere to time structures in the classroom:

> We walk to the forest. Susan leads. The children are walking in pairs in a long row. Susan brings a whistle and instructs the children, telling them what to do, when she blows the whistle. (…) Karen and the boy Peter team up and walk together. Later Susan instructs the children on how to write their names with organic materials they find in the forest. (…) After some time working with the assignment, the children play more freely. Seemingly, Peter did not solve the task. Susan announces it is time to walk back to the school. Karen responds impulsively: 'We barely had the time to get here, now we have to go back!'

The field note illustrates Karen's frustration caused by the lack of time. Peter, the vulnerable boy that she helps and supports, cannot keep up with the pace of the group, and the result is an unfinished task and a rushed feeling of having to move on to the next activity. For some of the pupils, the rapidity and frequent shifts is a daily challenge, and Karen's role is to help things move easier, in order to get through the activities within the allowed time.

The construction of rhythm

Joan also works as a pedagogue at the Northside Primary School. In the majority of her work during the school day, she is affiliated with a specific 1st grade class, and often she handles the class alone. One morning, however, Joan and the teacher Inga are co-working, carrying out a test on syllables in their joint class of 1st grade pupils:

> Numerous children are frustrated because some of the tasks are unfamiliar to them. Loudly, a boy says that he has no eraser. Several classmates offer their eraser, including Paula. 'That was kind of you, Paula', Joan says across the class. 'I already got one' the boy answers. Shortly after Joan heads to Paula. 'You must wait for Inga' she says, 'you do not know if it's the right word ... it's great you can do it, but you must wait for Inga!'

The activity is based on testing the children's scholastic competences, and Inga and Joan share the responsibility for solving this task. While Inga takes the role of leading the class academically, explaining the content of the test and the rules that apply, Joan supports the activity in other ways, seemingly balancing between supporting some of the children emotionally, while correcting and quietly scolding others. Her relation to Paula is an illustrative example of this, as it holds both dimensions. She recognizes Paula's motivation to help a classmate, but corrects her when she is moving too fast with the test, telling her to wait for Inga and the others. Under the headline 'the control of activity', Michel Foucault highlighted aspects of time in his analysis on discipline in modern institutions (Foucault, 1977):

> 'But an attempt is also made to assure the quality of the time used: constant supervision, the pressure of supervisors, the elimination of anything that might disturb or distract; it is a question of constituting a totally useful time.' (Foucault 1977, p.150)

The example with Paula illustrates the coherence between the political ambitions of the school reform and the disciplinary efforts carried out on the everyday level in the classroom. The test expresses the focus of the state and the reform on learning results and effec-

tiveness at a societal and structural level, while Joan's efforts to administer the activity – partly supporting, partly scolding the children – are parts of the day-to-day disciplinary strategy, that attempts to eliminate disturbing and distracting factors in the classroom. Albeit the fact that the pupil Paula does well and actually moves ahead in the test, Joan asks her to wait and follow Inga's rhythm and the tempo of the others pupils. According to Foucault, the disciplinary time 'establishes rhythms, imposes particular occupations and regulates the cycles of repetition' (Foucault 1977, p. 149), creating series of activities and conduct that ensure the productive milieu of learning and results. Managing this in a class of 1st graders 'on time', is quite a challenge. In an informal talk during the observations, Joan accentuates that turmoil, noise and conflicts are regular symptoms of the time pressure and the many shifts during the prolonged school day:

> The days are just too long, and for many, there are way too many shifts…In the morning they have one teacher, then another, then a third, then on to this, then on to that. Throughout the day, shifts, shifts, shifts! All the time they have to move on to something new… Simply, I think many of them do not benefit from those long days and the many shifts.

Seemingly the state-driven reform initiatives to create more varied learning environments and to increase the learning outcome, result in a shortage of time, not dissimilar to what Alex Szollos discusses as 'time poverty' (Szollos, 2009). In a research review, Szollos accentuates that 'one of the most pervasive experiences in contemporary society may be the shortage of time' (Szollos, 2009, p. 332). Day-to-day life for many, seemingly, feel rushed and hurried, and the sense of not having enough time is ubiquitous. Allegories such as 'the speed of life' and 'time poverty' are used to describe such modern conditions. Szollos stresses that children's school and leisure life are also characterized by 'more and more activities pressed into the same amount of time: they have to eat faster in the cafeteria, may have only three minutes to change classrooms, and after-school life is often regimented by fast-paced schedules.' (Szollos, 2009, p. 333)

The training

To make things run smoother on a daily basis, Joan trains the children in what she calls 'quiet shifts'. Speedily find a book in the drawer, line up fast, walk quickly and quietly to the bathroom, are among the routines that Joan seeks to improve during the training sessions. For many children the relentless shifts compromise the ability to connect to the next tasks and requirements, often leaving themselves and parts of their environment in a state of confusion. The challenges the pedagogues face to keep all the children engaged and willing during the repeated shifts and the hastened and speedy learning environment brings to mind Paul Virilios notions of the high-jacked individual suffering from picnolepsy, a mental state detached from the quieter structure of earlier times. Virilio developed the concept *dromology*, stating that acceleration and speed is what constitutes the lives of modern individuals (Virilio, 1986, 2008, 2009):

> The techniques of rationality have ceaselessly distanced us from what we've taken as the advent of an objective world: the rapid tour, the accelerated transport of people, signs or things, reproduce - by aggravating them - the effects of picnolepsy, since they provoke a perpetually repeated hijacking of the subject from any spatial-temporal context. (Virilio, 2009, p. 110)

It might be a stretch to include Virilios' thinking and add such abstractions to the analysis of the everyday life at contemporary Danish Primary Schools. But obviously the confusion among the pupils is often so manifest that it requires that Joan uses a whistle to silence and manage the group. 'I only do it on days like this', she excuses, when explaining why she uses the whistle.

The 'quiet shifts' training that Joan carries out to socialize the pupils and have them adhere to the time structure and repeating shifts include such components as whistling, clapping rhythms, carrying out different exercises, and introducing a selection of noiseless games. Such trainings sessions can be analyzed as a series of disciplinary techniques, with learning procedures divided into small, gradually applied units to make the children behave more resourcefully. Foucault described how pupils are trained in efficacy: 'The training of schoolchildren was to be carried out in the same way: few words, no explanation, a total silence interrupted only by signals – bells, clapping of hands, gestures, a mere glance from the teacher…' (Foucault, 1977, p. 166). The different methods state the importance of effectiveness, and are used to accelerate the process of learning, teaching the pupils rapidity as a deed (Foucault, 1977).

Early mornings and late afternoons

In the early mornings in the Leisure-time Center at the Beechwood Primary School, time pressure is less present. Here, creativity, self-initiated activities and self-determination are still central elements of the pedagogical sphere, as touched upon, when describing the core characteristics of (traditional) leisure-time pedagogy in the introduction of this article. Many children arrive before formal school activities begin around 8 am. The Leisure-time Center is located in a small building next to the school. At one of Karen's morning shifts, she is sitting at a big table situated at the center of the 'living room'. Karen welcomes the children and creates an atmosphere of tranquility, based on small-talk and various minor activities in which some of the children choose to participate. Others play in the adjacent rooms away from adult interference. The social rhythm in the Leisure-time Center is based on voluntariness, which is also often the case in the late afternoons, when obligatory school is over. Like Michael at the Northside Primary School, Karen is very aware of the difference between the structured and the voluntary spheres of the job, and what role this difference plays for the children. With the school reform fewer hours of the day are earmarked for leisure-time. Paradoxically, sometimes this also speeds up time in the Leisure-time Center, namely when the pedagogues introduce specific activities in which the children can participate voluntarily. With the limited time, the pedagogues need to start up, carry out, and complete the activities within strict timeframes before the children must leave or their parents arrive to pick them up. In that respect, haste and time structures not only define the formal school events, but to an increasing degree also the leisure-time sphere.

Relationships in timeagogy

In different ways, the above stories about Michael, Joan, and Karen indicate how timeagogy affects the relational bonding between pedagogues and children. To a certain amount, the rapidity and disciplinary techniques result in instrumental relationships that offer fewer

moments spent exclusively with each child, acknowledging their personal needs and seeing them as individuals. Timetables encourage the pedagogues to move on. For Amanda, working at the Beechwood Primary School, the issue of time is also blatantly present. With the increased hours spent during formal school activities, Amanda feels it is harder to find time for the relational bonding and social care that, to her, is a crucial element in working as a pedagogue. Amanda explains that she often chooses to enter the classroom in due time before the lesson starts:

> Well, when I choose to be there five to ten minutes early, of course it reduces my preparation time for the rest of the day… time I could have spent planning activities for tomorrow. But these minutes are very important. I say 'good morning' – to make each of them feel, that I've noticed them... it really results in a much more quiet atmosphere, when the lesson actually begins.

Once a week the pedagogues join in for staff meeting. At one of these meetings, Amanda speaks out irritated, problematizing that every minute of the meeting is spent coordinating and planning. Afterwards the observer follows up on her reaction. Amanda explains that their meetings are primarily used to plan and organize, which she finds frustrating and a waste of time. 'We're stuck in coordination, we never get to the important issues', she says, indicating that even at their staff meetings, sufficient time is a rarity that leaves the pedagogues in a hastened state with marginal time for discussing and reflecting on the childrens' well-being and physiological development.

Helga Nowotny (1992) notes that the intensification and increasing density in the use of time profoundly affects social life in advanced industrial societies, turning time into a scarce resource. Intensified economic utilization of time is the basis of economic rationalization. The former linear and mechanized time regime has given way to new patterns of time management in a modern individualized society (Nowotny, 1992, p.444). Even though Nowotny's analysis seems to capture a more dynamic application of time management than in earlier modern days, the organization of time and activities in the reformed Danish Primary School in many aspects adopts the temporal logics of linear and mechanized time structures of earlier times. Through the focus group interviews and informal talks during our observations, the pedagogues often speak of the increased number of schedules and structured activities and to perform adequately, the timetables are of utter importance in their daily business. One day, intensively looking for her personal briefcase with the important schedules, Amanda cries out: '…the briefcase is my life! It must not disappear!'

Every eight weeks at the Beechwood Primary School, the classes' weekly schedules are changed, in order to ensure a varied school experience for the children. Amanda problematizes that not only during the day, the children experience multiple shifts, but also on a broader scale, caused by these so-called 'rolling schedules':

> Just when they've got it, realize the meaning and start to recognize, the whole thing changes!... and it's all because of the reform… probably to show the parents that teaching is many things… that we do a lot of different things with their kids… but the pedagogical argument is missing!

The analysis of Amanda's practice illustrates, that timeagogy in numerous ways challenges her ability to bond with the children. The haste and demand for effectiveness often leaves the pedagogues and the children equally frustrated. Metaphorically speaking, a time robbery takes place, but in ambiguous ways. On one hand, the reform and the time-based structures rob time by reducing the moments that the pedagogues can spend focusing on indi-

vidual contact and relational bonding with the children. On the other hand, the pedagogues, and in this case Amanda, steals time, seeking small cracks in the overall strict timetables and efficient organization, in order to bond with the children.

Discussion

Timeagogy – a tension between everyday practices and societal structures

On an overall basis, our analysis illustrates that time and time pressure constitutes an accelerated pedagogy that deeply affects the everyday practices of the pedagogues and their relationships with the children. However, it is important to recognize that timeagogy is a phenomenon that should not solely be interpreted as everyday events. Certainly, timeagogy arises in the interconnected tension between everyday practices and objective societal structures. In the school milieu among pupils, teachers, and pedagogues, time dominates, seemingly becoming an object in its own right -- internalized, invisible, and natural -- just as pointed out by Jonas Frykman & Orvar Löfgren in their classic work on the cultivated human (Frykman & Löfgren, 1979).

Frykman and Löfgren reflect on the idea that a culture's sense of time tells us much about the way people live and think, thus offering a key to comprehend the basic cultural structure of a specific society (Frykman & Löfgren, 1979). A rational time structure, severely formalized and divided into seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, and years, gives modern societies the opportunity to standardize and measure everyday activities. For many, however, this results in a feeling of living under the tyranny of time (Frykman & Löfgren, 1979, p. 41), and, ironically, of losing control. When time pressure internalizes and thus turns invisible in the everyday life, it is seldom problematized and scrutinized (Frykman & Löfgren, 1979, p. 43). However, when talking to the pedagogues during interviews and at the subsequent dialogue seminar, as the analysis in this article illustrates, matters related to the time pressure of their everyday experiences rose to the surface. Seemingly, the pedagogues used the "research space" as a reflective room, where feelings and concerns that they would normally hide, could come to light for discharge and further scrutiny.

With Foucault's work in mind (Foucault, 1977), it can be argued, that the dominance of time in school and Leisure-time Centers functions as part of a bio-political regulation mechanism. We understand timeagogy is part of a structural flow that pervades society in multiple ways. In his scrutiny of the macrophysics of power, Foucault described how forms of bio-political power are regulating life processes in the population; the well-being of the people is crucial to the strength of the state and a series of far-reaching control techniques concerning the life style, choices and daily behavior of the population are promoted. Schools and Leisure-time Centers can be characterized as institutions that carry out such control mechanisms and discipline techniques, with the pedagogues, among other groups of professionals, being hired to perform these important tasks. The everyday training, shifts and focus on academic skills analyzed earlier in the article are everyday examples of this bio-political endeavor, aiming to harvest operative, successful, and obedient children that adhere to societal values and behavioral imperatives. Last, but not least, children are re-

quired to use time effectively by learning faster than earlier generations, cf. the phrasing in the political decision behind the reform stating that 'in the long term, through more and better education, the students in the 8th grade must be able to do, what the 9th grade students are capable of today'.

Another way to illustrate that timeagogy is a phenomenon existing in the tension between subjective practices and objective structures, is through the work of Gerd Biesta (Biesta, 2010). The timeagogy phenomenon ties in with a societal trend in the field of education and in society in general. The dominance of new public management policy, which rules public institutions today, emphasizing measurement, accountability, input-output logics, results, and effectiveness, also permeates the educational system and its practices.

With the increased amount of working hours during the formalized school day, the practices of the pedagogues are part of a system craving effectiveness and measurement, strictly framed by time. When pedagogues progressively become members and managers of the scholastic regime, inherently, they are considered as factors, who must contribute to and improve the performance of the system -- individually and collectively as a profession -- by being effective and productive themselves (Biesta, 2015). As mentioned in the introduction and touched upon just above, in order to stand up in global competition, the policy makers behind the reform wished for academic results to materialize quicker. This desire, prior to the reform and indeed after, is related to the demand for activities and results being measured. Measuring processes that seemingly function as timeagogical concerns based on supranational imperatives, rather than traditional (leisure-time) pedagogical ones.

The system's striving for more efficiency actualizes the question raised in the beginning of this article: who is this effective for? (Biesta, 2010). Seemingly, the day-to-day changes due to the reform, such as the accelerated rhythm of activities, the increased number of shifts during the day and the compressed relational bonding between the children and the pedagogues, challenge children in fragile positions. In a follow-up talk after a chaotic lesson with much noise and many conflicts at the Beechwood Primary School, Amanda brings up the haste and shifts, namely addressing challenges related to a fragile boy in the classroom:

> …now take a look at Benjamin for instance… he's having such a difficult time handling all the shifts and he needs much more than just a twenty minutes break. However, there isn't time for that.

Virilio describes the speed and acceleration of our society in metaphorical and somehow abstract terms, but in our data the hastened reality of things stand out blatantly present and real. With inspiration from Virilio, one could argue that in general, with the current focus on succeeding faster, the rapid pupil conquers the slow – or to put it more gently – at least gets ahead of him in the run for scholastic competences and social acknowledgement. The situation with the vulnerable boy Peter on the fieldtrip to the forest and the unfinished task (mentioned and discussed earlier in this article) is a pictorial example of this. One could argue that the rush of things and the focus on better results and academic qualification overshadows other important elements of schooling and leisure-time, such as processes of socialization and subjectification (Biesta, 2010). Seemingly, the children who are not capable of synchronizing with the rhythm, speed and overall learning demand are at risk of being underdogs of the rising timeagogical era. Perhaps the changes that came into force to diminish the importance of social background and raise the academic standard of vulnerable

children, have the opposite effect. To a certain degree, the dominance of time and the demand for better results eliminate crucial aspects of slowness, contemplation, and daily contact that are necessary learning components. Michael addresses this, while talking about the children who need a little more attention than the majority of pupils, accentuating that with the reform, especially this aspect of the job gets more challenging and difficult, due to the lack of time:

> Well, I guess, that's where, in my opinion, time has been reduced the most (…). It's the children who really need that you have time for one-to-one conversation during the lessons (…). Often these moments, where they get a chance to loosen up and have a talk… well that's exactly what makes them ready to learn again…

Our data suggests that often the pedagogues take the time pressure and hastened reality for granted, as the natural order of things (Frykman & Löfgren, 1979). Through tacit day-to-day acceptance, structures internalize in the pedagogues as a natural part of their socialized bodies – their habitus (Bourdieu & Waquant, 1996; Bourdieu, 1997). On a daily basis they do what they have to do (or at least they try) and thereby contribute to the institutional doxa, shaping the system and making it function. In doing so, they also accept the conditions and their position in the field (ibid.), a position that, in multiple ways, is crafted and determined far away from the pedagogues' local anchoring as part of national policy-making, heavily inspired by global educational trends.

Conclusion

In this article, we suggested the term *timeagogy* to grasp the tense relationship between pedagogues' daily practices and the renewed societal demands in the Danish Primary School after the reform in 2014. More than just a fun play on words, we consider this a necessary update to the lexicon of pedagogy. Through our research, we experienced that pedagogues' actions, stories, and reflections are important and serious perspectives relevant for current and future discussions about the development of the Danish School System. While qualitative research does not serve the purpose of generalizations and representativeness, it rather qualifies in-depth understandings and the progress of asking new questions and fostering critique. We hope to contribute to that.

The title of this article asks if we are moving from pedagogy to timeagogy, and the answer to this question can only be answered if one accepts the premise of the suggested term. If readers and other researchers doing qualitative research on education and pedagogy find interest in the tension between everyday practices among professionals and the societal/educational trends, perhaps – through mutual debate and ongoing reflection – the term timeagogy can be developed and refined, so that the ambiguities, that our work and this article clearly represent, over time can be challenged.

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Extended Education for Academic Performance, Whole Person Development and Self-fulfilment: The case of Hong Kong

Atara Sivan & Gertrude Po Kwan Siu [1]

Abstract: This paper examines the ways in which extended education is manifested in a place where schooling and academic achievement are of primary focus. Over the past few decades, the Hong Kong education system has undergone major reforms that have incorporated various forms of extended education to enhance students' all-round development. Despite these changes, Hong Kong people continue to put an emphasis on academic excellence resulting in parent-directed activities in a form of private supplementary tutoring. At the same time, extended education is also demonstrated through students' self-directed engagement in serious leisure activities that contribute to adolescents' growth. The paper portrays and examines the different activities directed by schools, parents and students within school and out-of-school settings in light of the sociocultural context of Hong Kong. References are made to school based initiatives and studies on outside classroom learning and serious leisure among children and adolescents.

Keywords: Hong Kong, Life-Wide Learning, Other Learning Experiences, tutoring, serious leisure

Introduction

Over the past few decades, Hong Kong has undergone major educational and curriculum reforms. Underpinned by the notions of whole person education, lifelong and life-wide learning, these reforms reinforced the initiatives and offerings of programmes and activities aiming to enhance students' all-round development. Even though these changes aim at academic, personal, social and emotional development of students, the academic area is perceived as the most significant of all and thus shapes the profile and implementation of extended education. This paper examines the ways in which extended education is manifested in Hong Kong within school and out-of-school contexts. Specifically, we refer to activities directed by the school, parents and students.

School-directed activities: Whole person development

Following international and regional educational trends, Hong Kong has initiated a series of educational reforms over the last few decades (Cheng, 2009). These changes were underpinned by the move to a knowledge based society and the need to maintain educational competitiveness and develop students' independent learning capabilities (Chan, 2002). A major reform was implemented in 2000 to focus on student-centered approach, enhance quality education and introduce various mechanisms for preparation for life beyond academic development. A new curriculum framework which encompasses several key learning areas (KLA), some generic skills, values and attitudes was introduced. Subjects were no longer compartmentalized but grouped into eight KLA: Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics, Personal Social and Humanities, Science, Technology, Art and Physical Education. Schools were called to develop certain generic skills including communication, critical thinking, collaboration, information technology, numeracy, problem solving, self-management and study skills. Furthermore, a list of proposed values and attitudes to be imparted in schools was suggested. This reform aimed to fulfil the overall school aims of providing students with: "essential life-long learning experiences for whole-person development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physical development, social skills and aesthetics, according to individual potential, so that all students can become active, responsible and contributing members of society, the nation and the world" (Curriculum Development Council, 2001, p. 3). The new framework has demonstrated a move from a traditional teacher-centered curriculum based on study of academic disciplines to a progressive student-centered approach that emphasizes cross disciplinary themes. Of high relevance to the notion of extended education has been the shift in the concept of curriculum from *documents* to *learning experiences* which were defined as "the contexts of learning processes and learning contents, and the social environment in which students learn how to learn" (Curriculum Development Council, 2001, p. 20). Students were introduced to a range of learning experiences to ensure their whole person development.

Another major reform relevant to the concept of extended education took place in senior secondary and higher education with the system moving to a new academic structure. This structure allows all students to complete 6 years of secondary schooling and obtain an education diploma, and higher education study is extended from three to four years. A new senior secondary curriculum was introduced which includes career oriented and other learning experiences, both aim to extend beyond the mere academic development of students. The curriculum reforms have introduced two strategies that are pertinent to extended education: Life-wide Learning (LWL) and Other Learning Experiences (OLE).

The strategy of LWL aims to move student learning beyond the classroom to other contexts within the school and community. The term LWL refers to a range of school-organized activities which aims to extend and enrich students' experiences for whole person development and nurturing their life skills. Examples of such activities include field trips, museum visits, community service activities, and training of skills such as leadership and communication. These organized activities not only help extend and enrich students' knowledge, skills, and values acquired in the classroom, but also widen their horizons and perspectives in general.

Specifically, LWL emphasizes the following essential learning experiences: moral and civic education, community service, physical and aesthetic development, and career-related experiences. All the aforementioned forms of learning foster the development of five essential Chinese virtues: 'Ethics, Intellect, Physical Development, Social Skills, and Aesthetics' (德、智、 體、羣、美) (Education Bureau, 2010). To best implement LWL, schools are required to make effective use of time and resources in providing students with pedagogically structured activities. Resources here refer to the use of internet and mass media, involvement of peers and family, collaboration with social service organizations and uniform groups, and utilization of the natural environment.

The offering of this experiential learning within a range of educational contexts is a significant component of extended education in Hong Kong. Learning is not limited to knowledge transmission in a classroom but takes places through students' structured involvement in life situations and contexts. Learning takes place when students interact with a relevant context (Lave & Wenger, 1990). During such interactions, students learn about others, becoming aware of their own and others' abilities and emotions. These experiences can enhance problem-solving skills, develop personal and social values and attitudes, and facilitate emotional growth. For example, one school arranged a *Chinese culture week* to strengthen students' understanding of the Chinese culture and cultivate cultural values. To achieve these goals, students were engaged in a series of structured activities like organizing a carnival around cultural themes, undertaking service learning actions (Furco, 2011) and participating in a guided visit to the museum of history. Service learning is an experiential learning which focuses on the community (Howard, 2012). Students are engaged in contributing to the community and the emphasis is on authentic issues and collaboration, with the aim to benefit both students and the recipients and to ensure equal focus on serving and learning (Hackar-Cam & Schmidt, 2014).

To ensure that learning took place, students were involved in reflection on their actions through essay writing and painting which also serve as channels for them to express feelings about their involvement in all these activities (Education Bureau, 2017).

Further examples of structured activities led by community organizations are: a training camp offered by the Correctional Services Department, adventure training by the Hong Kong Playground Association Services and a series of sharing sessions by the Women's Foundation Association. Comments of students and teachers attested to the benefits of these activities to the development of effective and self-regulated learning habits, enhancement of confidence, and acquisition of major life skills (Education Bureau, 2012).

The other strategy pertinent to extended education under the new senior secondary curriculum is the OLE. The provision of these learning experiences is guided by several principles. Taking into account students' choices and interests, their prior knowledge, learning needs, and motivation, a range of meaningful, coherent and flexible learning opportunities are provided for students to build their ability to learn in different contexts and interact with others outside the schools (Education Bureau, 2012a). The structured nature of OLE is demonstrated in allocation of time-tabled and non-time-tabled learning time. For example, structured time-tabled activities for the areas of moral and civic education and community service utilize morning assembly, life education lesson and class-teacher period while non-time-tabled activities include study trips, community service award scheme and community

leaders project (Education Bureau, 2013). One additional component of the OLE which illustrates its pedagogically based structure is the establishment of Student Learning Profile (SLP). This is the presentation of a student's learning experiences and reflection on the corresponding learning and whole person development. Students are encouraged to prepare SLP for application for tertiary institutions both locally and internationally (Education Bureau, 2012b).

Overall, both LWL and OLE aim at whole person development as illustrated by their offerings and underlying principles. At the same time, they emphasize the nurturing of good learning habits while facilitating students' lifelong learning abilities and preparing them for further academic studies.

Studies on the effect of school directed activities have highlighted their benefits to students' development. A field experiment study of Hui and Lau (2006) investigated the effect of drama education on the psychological development of primary school students in Hong Kong. A drama education programme was delivered to students with the assistance of school teachers after school. There was a control group taking part in other extracurricular activities. Students in the experimental group were found to be more fluent in their creative responses and their drawings were more elaborate, unconventional and boundary-breaking. They also produced more interesting and creative stories, and were more expressive in their story-telling.

A more recent study by Cheung (2011) examined the use of adventure-based programmes organized by secondary schools. After taking part in the programmes, participants rated themselves significantly higher in all aspects of development, especially social self-concept, general self-efficacy, learning climate, and spiritual dimension. Their sense of life purpose and life satisfaction was also rated high.

While the senior secondary curriculum has been reformed to facilitate whole-person development, initiatives are also taken at tertiary education along this direction. Universities have been providing undergraduates with learning programmes outside the classroom and in the form of internship. Apart from integrating students' knowledge with practical experience, these programmes aim at enhancing students' personal growth and social awareness, helping them achieve interdisciplinary learning which goes beyond their academic focus (Faculty of Social Sciences, 2015).

Programmes offered at Hong Kong universities include students' involvement in learning communities and their active participation in service learning activities. Students taking part in a service learning programme at one university in Hong Kong indicated that such experience heightened their self and social awareness, and enhanced confidence in taking up their future career (Ngai, 2006). Students at another university were empowered to establish a learning community together with the university academic staff, professionals, secondary school students and older adults (Sivan et al., 2015). Utilizing an action learning approach (Zuber-Skerritt & Teare, 2013), they planned and implemented a series of activities while working collaboratively on issues and problems related to healthy lifestyles and wellbeing. This form of extended education heightened students' awareness and understanding of diverse lifestyles and needs, inducing value changes and contributing to their social and emotional development (Sivan et. al., 2015). Students' reflection on their participation in this learning community revealed increase in confidence, enhancement of ability to work in teams, and development of leadership skills (Sivan, 2017).

Parent-directed activities: Enhancing academic performance

While people identify strongly with capitalist culture, meritocracy and credentialism, competition is encouraged in the Hong Kong society (Ho, 2010). This competitive atmosphere is further intensified by the limited university places and the well-accepted Confucian obligation of making efforts to improve the self (Bray & Lykins, 2012; Yung, 2015). Indoctrinated with the Chinese idea that emphasizes the role of examination results as indicators of learning and achievement (Careless, 2011), academic performance has remained a major concern of parents and schoolchildren. Parents enroll their children in after school tutorial classes to better prepare them for school and public examinations. Sending their children to tutorial classes is perceived by parents as an educational investment and means to climb the social ladder (Bray & Lykins, 2012; Ho, 2010).

Several studies indicated the popularity of after school activities in Hong Kong and especially those that could contribute to students' academic development. A survey conducted by the UNICEF among primary and secondary students and their parents revealed that most of the parents enrolled their children to after school extracurricular activities to utilize their potentials and enhance their competitive edge for admission to better schools (Hong Kong Committee for UNICEF, 2014). It is not unlikely to see children filling the swimming pools in competitive swimming lessons after school or during weekends as an attempt to build their profile beyond academic performance. At the same time, as children grow up and enter higher grades, they involve less in non-academic activities such as playing a musical instrument. Parents expect them to study more and harder to achieve good grades in examinations (Ho, 2011). There has been an increase in undertaking tutorials with increasing age of students. For example, during 2010 about 72 percentages of lower secondary students, 82 percent in middle school and 85 in senior school received tutoring (Kwo & Bray, 2010).

The pressure exerted on children to join after school activities comes as early as their kindergarten age. A recent study among parents of kindergarten students pointed out that many children are involved in at least one after school activity in midweek and one at the weekend (Lau & Cheng, 2014). As the children grow, they are loaded with more extracurricular activities. Though parents realize the importance of physical health and fitness in child development, most of them still prefer enrolling their children in English language-related activities as means to get them prepared for primary education (Lau & Cheng, 2014). Parents believe that these structured activities are more beneficial and can help with all round education, cultivation of talent, diminishing weaknesses and enhancing social interaction (Lau & Cheng, 2014).

Bray's study (2013) revealed that about half of the middle grade of secondary school students and the majority of the upper grades students received private supplementary tutoring about one to two hours per week and there would be increased duration during the examination season. Private tutorial of the English subject is particularly popular among students since proficiency in English can open the door to better schooling either locally or abroad. Secondary school students also undertook tutorials in other core subjects like Chinese and Mathematics (Bray, 2013). Many students found private tuitions more effective than regular schools in helping them get prepared for examinations and obtain higher

grades (Zhan, Bray, Wang, Lykins, & Kwo, 2013). Students' accounts showed that they learned from private tuitions knowledge and skills in tackling examinations as contrast to acquiring all-round development in school education. Zhan and colleagues (2013) found that when students grew older, they internalized the need to perform well in their studies and actually did well in examinations too. Bray (1999) identified private tutorials as *shadow education*, asserting that they only exist at the shadow of the mainstream education. From the government perspective, there have been regulations related to tutorials and at the same time it has been emphasized that there is no need for this mechanism since the educational system is providing the adequate education for youngsters (Kwo & Bray, 2010). As long as the need to perform well in examinations remains prevalent among parents and schoolchildren, private tutoring will continue to serve as an important form of extended education in Hong Kong.

Student-directed activities: Leisure pursuits for self-fulfillment

Hong Kong students are portrayed as diligent and their lives are dominated by schoolwork both in and out of school. As revealed in the previous sections, even if they have activities other than studies, those activities are predominately arranged by their parents and geared towards complementing their academic portfolio. At the same time, experiences of school-age adolescents are not limited to schoolwork and there is another significant domain in their life which is leisure. A study examining the role of leisure in school life of Hong Kong higher education students revealed that leisure provided them a channel for rejuvenation and revitalization so that they could again embark on their studies after all (Sivan, 2003). Leisure activities that students engaged in also broadened knowledge and developed skills that could be utilized in their studies, such as some thinking skills and presentation tricks. Students' organized leisure activities facilitated the development of their strong social bonding, enabling them to have someone to turn to when they needed help, and providing them with strong social and emotional support.

Of high relevance to the concept of extended education is the construct of serious leisure (Stebbins, 2007). Serious leisure is defined as "the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer core activity sufficiently substantial, interesting, and fulfilling in nature for the participants to find a career there acquiring and expressing a combination of its special skills, knowledge, and experience" (Stebbins, 2007, p. 5). The adjective *serious* represents qualities such as earnestness, sincerity, importance, and carefulness. It connotes the importance of activity pursuit, which eventually brings to the participants self-fulfillment. Serious leisure is characterized by six distinctive qualities: perseverance, leisure career, knowledge and skills, durable benefits, unique ethos and identities (Stebbins, 1992). Perseverance refers to the need to endure in the activity, and leisure career implies that the activity may develop into a career in either leisure or work. Serious leisure participants need to make an effort to gain skill and knowledge and their leisure pursuit will bring them personal and social benefits. Serious leisure also leads to the development of a unique ethos around the activity, and as a result of all the above qualities, participants tend to develop certain identities with their chosen pursuits.

Serious leisure is a form of self-directed learning which is intentional and self-planned where the individual participant is clearly in control of this learning process (Belanger, 2015; Merriam & Bierema, 2013). The learner controls the start, direction, and termination of learning which is pedagogically structured so that learning is systematic and hierarchical. The meaning of serious leisure for those who pursue it is obtaining rewards of personal fulfillment which in return becomes their motivation for further activity pursuit. Self-fulfillment is experienced when participants engage themselves in the process of developing their capacity, particularly their gifts and characters (Stebbins, 2012).

Of the scarce studies on serious leisure about adolescents, two were conducted in Hong Kong, highlighting the pursuit pattern and outcomes of such involvement. The first one was a phenomenological study (Siu, 2013) on fifteen adolescents taking part in the three forms of serious leisure: amateur (Chinese-dance, stage-play, basketball-playing, football-playing), hobbyist (equestrian, being an NBA fan, taekwondo, guitar-playing with a band, photography, piano-playing, painting, street-dancing, canoeing), and volunteer (church voluntary service) (Stebbins, 2012). Serious leisure experiences of the participants in this study were the key elements that both incited their interests and consolidated them. The participants' single-minded pursuits of excellence in their special fields were achieved largely through self-disciplined search for knowledge and engagement in those related activities. Their initial interest in the activities was consolidated by their achievements in their own special fields, the resultant sense of fulfillment and the recognition of their effort and talent by others. Through engagement in their serious leisure, the participants developed insights into themselves and their surroundings, gaining motivation to explore and discover their strengths and accept their limitations. Furthermore, all participants desired to keep their serious leisure activities to continue meeting their current needs, including stress-reduction, life-fulfillment and -enrichment, and getting together with friends. Some also expressed their wish to develop further in their leisure pursuit such as becoming a taekwondo or dance teacher or having own painting collection and first exhibition.

The second study was conducted on a sample of senior secondary school students from ten schools of different academic levels and geographically located around Hong Kong (Sivan, Tam, Siu, Chan & Stebbins, 2017). This study revealed a higher frequency and longer duration of participation in the students' serious leisure pursuits. This phenomenon was especially marked among those engaging themselves in performance and fine arts activities. Furthermore, it was found that activities that required effort and dedication such as learning how to play a musical instrument or master certain dancing skills in performing arts became a serious leisure of those who took part in them. In turn, students spent more time undertaking these activities.

Results of these two studies illustrated the importance of self-directed extended education that could be structured by the participants themselves with resultant development.

Conclusion

Education is a lifelong and all-encompassing process that involves both formal and non-formal learning. It differs from schooling which is structured, time-bounded and formal (El-

lis, Cogan, & Howey, 1991). Learning can take place throughout life, and formal, credentialing education is only the visible part of the educational iceberg (Livingstone, 2012). References are made to extended education as activities that are structured, held outside the classroom and geared towards students' development. Since education could take different forms, it is important to refer to all domains in the lives of children and young people to see where and how extended education takes place. Our examination was underpinned by this premise.

Extended education is manifested in Hong Kong through activities directed by the school, parents and students. School- and parent-directed activities aim to enhance students' learning and contribute to their whole person development. The practices of extended education are also highly influenced by the Chinese sociocultural context of Hong Kong as well as by its educational and curriculum reforms. A unique form of extended education in Hong Kong is found in students' self-directed serious leisure involvement. There, extended education brings participants numerous benefits which go beyond their academic achievement. Further examination of this form of extended education may help understand more its role in child and adolescent development. Efforts could also be made to facilitate students' participation in all three forms of extended education for their all-round development.

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Why use board games in leisure-time centres? Prominent staff discourses and described subject positions when playing with children

Björn Haglund & Louise Peterson

Abstract: Board games are traditionally seen as an important Swedish leisure-time centre activity, but research regarding this activity is sparse. This study aims to fill part of that void through a web survey directed to members in a closed Facebook group focusing on leisure-time centres. Fifty-five informants' answers were analysed using critical discourse analysis to find why staff at leisure-time centres use board games. The article also discusses the subject positions the staff use when playing board games with the children. The results reveal four prominent discourses, which were termed: supporting social structure, learning social competence, substituting digital games, and learning cognitive abilities. The results also reveal three subject positions while playing board games: developer, supervising judge, and participant. The informants' discourses regarding their reasons for using board games and the positions the staff settled into while playing board games drew mostly from a social pedagogical arena. However, features that emphasize traditional school related content are also evident.

Keywords: board games, leisure-time centres, critical discourse analysis, subject positions, teachers

Introduction

Research that focuses on Swedish leisure-time centres is sparse despite apparent governmental ambitions to stress these institutions importance through the production of new steering documents.[1] It is therefore important to deepen our knowledge concerning everyday practice in leisure-time centres and study how and in what way the activities used stimulate children's learning and offer meaningful leisure and recreation. This article focuses on the use of board games (i.e., different stimulating card games and parlour games directed to younger school children) within the practices of Swedish leisure-time centres. However, before discussing play and its connection to board games more thoroughly, it is necessary to

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1   For some time, these institutions have been referred to as "leisure-time centres", but in the official English translation of the latest Swedish curriculum (Lgr11), these institutions are called "recreational centres". Swedish researchers have in recent years called these institutions school-age educare centres as a way to emphasize that they comprise both education and care.

first describe leisure-time centres and the everyday activities that take place in these institutions.

Leisure-time centres are institutions that provide pedagogical activities for children between 6 and 12 years of age before and after school. According to statistical data from the Swedish National Agency for Education (2016), more than 400,000 children (about 85% of all six- to eight-year-old Swedish children) participate in these activities. The cultural traditions are to a great extent based on pre-school and its connections to Fröbel and progressive ideas influenced by Dewey (Pihlgren & Rohlin, 2011). According to Ursberg (1996), Swedish leisure-time centres should be seen as grounded in a common Nordic child-minding culture that focuses on care, nurture, and children's personal development.[2] Saar, Löfdahl, and Hjalmarsson (2012) argued that these activities traditionally include pottery, sports activities, play, bakery, and games. The importance of playful activities is evident in earlier research concerning leisure-time centres, but the use of board games has not been the main focus in these studies. Svensson (1981), for example, asserted that the most common activities are to play games of different kinds, to puzzle, draw, paint and to potter. Johansson (1984) also affirmed that these-as well as free play, circle time, sports, and snack time-are important activities.

During the last 20 years, the government has, through the creation and distribution of new steering documents, initiated a transition of focus concerning leisure-time centres. This transition has resulted in a change from a social pedagogical arena, where the staff at leisure-time centres prioritize cooperation with the children's parents, to an arena emphasizing education and cooperation with schools (cf. Andersson, 2013; Haglund, 2015; Rohlin, 2001). Although more recent steering documents (The Education Act, 2010; The National Agency for Education, 2011, 2014) treat the leisure-time centre as an educational institution, play still has an important role, which is also indicated in the general recommendations. "The pupils could amongst other things cultivate impressions, develop fantasy and creativity and develop their skills in cooperation and communication. Play also give the pupils opportunities to practise turn taking, consent, concentration and endurance" (The National Agency for Education, 2014, p. 34).

Since the focus of leisure-time centres, amongst other things, are to support social, emotional and academic development in a structured way they are embodied by the term extended education. This study is based on a web survey and should be seen as a pilot study focusing on board games as one aspect of the content and framing of activities in leisure-time centres. The study is a starting point for more extensive studies concerning leisure-time centre activities in general and playing board games within this context in particular. This is of relevance since a deeper knowledge regarding the use of board games could be a way to offer meaningful leisure and recreation and to stimulate learning through a carefully prepared everyday practice at the leisure-time centre. The aim of this article is to (a) discuss

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2 After-school services exist in other countries in addition to Nordic countries. For more detailed information concerning these institutions and their somewhat different purposes and activities see, for example, Pálsdóttir (2012) concerning the Nordic countries; Vandell, Pierce, and Dadisman (2005) and Shernoff and Vandell (2007) pertaining to after-school programs in the US; and Stecher and Maschke (2013) and Fischer and Klieme (2013) regarding all-day schools in Germany. Australian outside-school-hours care is described and studied by Cartmel (2007).

prominent discourses to find why staff at leisure-time centres use board games and to (b) discuss what identities or subject positions they use when playing board games with children.

Perspectives on play and different uses of board games

Children's play and games

In the *Encyclopaedia of Play in Today's Society* (Carlisle, 2009), it is argued that both children and adults spend a great deal of time in activities that are labelled as play. Play is seen as fun and entertaining and includes various kinds of games, sports, and hobbies. Carlisle (2009) asserted that children and adults participate in different play activities for many reasons and that play could have many functions such as entertainment, learning skills (e.g., accepting defeat), following rules, and exercising leadership. It is also suggested that games and toys may also assist the development of various intellectual skills "such as reading, arithmetic, and even gaining knowledge of such subjects as physics, geography, and history" (p. x). The belief that play fosters learning during children's development is not new: "Most traditional theoretical and empirical work on children's play and games has focused on the contributions of these activities for children's development of cognitive and communicative skills and their acquisition of social knowledge" (Evaldsson & Corsaro, 1998, p. 377). Evaldsson and Aarsand (2011, p. 137) suggested that research on children's play can be divided into two strands. The first is research that considers play (and games) as a means for learning. The focus is on what formal knowledge children learn and how they learn it. This research design takes an adult perspective on play. The second is research that regards children's play and games as valuable in its own right. Here, the analytical focus is on how children play and aims to take children's perspectives on play.

Research has also shown that play is an elusive term. There is no consensus on how play should be defined. Playing games often includes a variety of activities. As mentioned earlier, previous research has shown that board games are often positioned as one play activity among others in leisure-time centres. Subsequent studies have also treated the use of board games in a synoptic way while other issues are highlighted. Kane, Ljusberg, and Larsson (2013), Kane and Petrie (2015), Lager (2016), and Haglund (2015) discussed different aspects of play and tried to describe the complexity of giving space to play in everyday practice. Although "[b]oard games are seen as pedagogical devices" (Haglund, 2015, p. 223), research addressing board games is "extremely sparse" in after-school contexts (Shernoff & Vandell, 2007, p. 4). A study by Harvard Maare (2015), however, focuses on children´s use of board games at a leisure-time centre. She argues that the design of learning activities implies that the participants have the right to choose whether they want to participate. For that reason, she asserted that it is important to regard board games from the perspective of learners and use the concepts *learnable* and *learnworthy* as a way to come closer to a child's perspective. These concepts are directed towards the child's perception of whether the game can be learnt and if it is seen as enriching with respect to reciprocity, mastery, and the potential for closure.

As Linderoth (2014) suggests, for a teacher interested in using games in a pedagogical setting, it is also important to understand how games and play works. Empirical work on teachers' perceptions of using games for learning are rare. Four hundred and seventy-nine teachers in schools in Singapore (primary, secondary, and junior colleges) participated in a survey study focusing on teachers' perceptions of game related learning. The results show that the majority of participating teachers were positive towards and used games in their classrooms, although not frequently. Board games, card games, and word-hunt games were the most common game types used (26%) by the teachers. It is concluded that teachers' personal interests and a "gaming mind-set" are seen as pull factors that influence game adoption and use (Koh et al., 2012, p. 57).

Studies on games and learning

As suggested by Mosely and Whitton, "[g]ames are enjoying something of a golden period at the current time" (2014, p. 1). It also appears that there is a revived interest in how games can be used for educational purposes in different educational settings. This is particularly evidenced by the rapidly growing academic field termed *Games Studies*, which produces a great deal of research literature. However, much of the research literature expresses an interest in digital games (e.g., computer games, online games, mobile games, and console games). Instead of making a division between digital and non-digital games, Linderoth (2011) suggests that it might be more fruitful to look at the family resemblance of games. Digital technology is not a condition for approaching game-based learning (Linderoth, 2014; Sharp, 2011). This requires the attention of scholars who are interested in game mechanics. Furthermore, games are complex artefacts, and Linderoth argues that it is important to distinguish between two elements of a game: the rules of the game and the theme of the game. The theme of the game may have pleasant features for a specific player, but it is often subordinated (Linderoth, 2014). Thus, playing a game is interacting with the game mechanics (i.e., the rules of the game). According to Mosely and Whitton (2014), the procedures and rules of a game also distinguish between a good game and a bad game. In their book *New traditional games for learning* (Mosely & Whitton, 2014), the authors present a set of cases accompanied by ideas about how to design games using more traditional methods. Much of the empirical research conducted with regard to children, board games, and learning has paid attention to how board games can foster different cognitive, social, and communication skills.

Board games are studied in disciplines such as history, the social sciences, mathematics, philosophy, psychology, and particularly in formal sciences such as mathematics. Goobet et al. suggests that they have become a favoured subject "due to their well-specified rules" (2004, p. 6). This is also reflected in studies that take an interest in children who are playing board games so as to learn. Much of the empirical research that has been conducted focuses on finding out how board games can promote arithmetical understanding. Studies have shown that playing linear board games improves children's numerical knowledge (Siegler & Ramani, 2009) and improves children's numerical estimation skills and number comprehension (Whyte & Bull, 2008). Linear board games also strengthen children's early arithmetic skills, which was not the case when playing circular board games (Elofsson, Gustafson, Samuelsson, & Träff, 2016). These studies show that it is important to distin-

guish between the types of games that are used in research when investigating the potential of learning by playing games (i.e., it is important to take the game mechanics into consideration).

Some empirical research has taken an interest in how games might benefit from the development of emotional and social skills. For example, based on a review of the theoretical and practical literature, Hromek and Roffey (2009) argued that games are powerful tools for children to develop social and emotional skills.

> Every face-to-face game, no matter the objective, provides a 'social experiment' in which players must use self-regulation and social skill to play successfully with others. The complexity of games played by young children varies from turn-taking games, such as tag, to more complex games where players require a fair degree of social and cognitive sophistication to play /…/ (Hromek & Roffey, 2009, p. 631pp).

Research grounded in psychotherapy has also been interested in the use of board games. For example, Oren (2008) suggested how board games can be used by therapists to evaluate a child's emotional development. Other studies have payed attention to how different game mechanics influence social behaviour. As an example, Bay-Hinitz, Peterson, and Quilitch (1994) examined the effects of playing cooperative and competitive games. Seventy preschool children between four and five years of age participated in the experimental study. The results showed that cooperative board games increased cooperative behaviour and decreased aggressive behaviour in young children.

Theory

The theoretical point of departure emanates from critical discourse analysis (CDA), which focuses on how our language, in the form of discourses, contributes to the constitution of the world. Fairclough (2003) claims that a discourse, used as a general notion, should be seen as an element of social life that is dialectically related to other elements. More specifically, "different discourses are different ways of representing aspects of the world" (p. 215), and these discourses are often competing since different people have different ways of representing the world. Fairclough (2010) described these often competing discourses as the order of discourse:

> An order of discourse is a social structuring of semiotic difference - a particular social ordering of relationships among different ways of making meaning […]. One aspect of this ordering is dominance: some ways of making meaning are dominant or mainstream in a particular order of discourse, others are marginal or oppositional, or 'alternative'. (p. 265)

The order of discourse should, therefore, be seen as the totality of the different discursive practices and the relationships between them. This means that, in this study, it will be important to discuss the existing prominent discourses in the empirical material concerning why staff at leisure-time centres use board games and the relationships between these discourses.

Fairclough asserted that text analysis is an important part of discourse analysis, but he also stressed that the language in these texts are an irreducible part of social life. Fairclough (1992, 2010) therefore stressed that CDA uses a three-dimensional framework of analysis regarding what he labelled as discursive events: text, discourse practice, and social practice.

Text includes pictures and language, both written and spoken, and focuses on the analysis of linguistic structure.

Discursive practice contributes to "reproducing society (social identities, social relationships, systems of knowledge and belief) as it is, yet also contributes to transforming society" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 65). Discursive practice studies how people produce and interpret texts—for example, how staff members at leisure-time centres debate about and interpret their responsibilities and policy documents that describe their work. Discourse as social practice is the effort made by people when they interact with each other and the surrounding world. Fairclough and Wodak (1997) asserted that discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between particular discursive events and those situations, institutions, and social structures that frame them. This dialectical relationship means that social practice is shaped by situations, institutions, and social structures while at the same time, these situations, institutions, and social structures are also shaped by social practice itself.[3] As this is a dialectic process, this also means that the social practices we engage in and the efforts we make in connection with them, contribute to the construction of our identities and positions—in the same way that people's identities and performed efforts contribute to the construction of social practices. Fairclough (2010) argued that "positions within practices are pre-given 'slots' in which people have to act, and the position-practice system has a relative durability over time" (p. 176).[4] However, Fairclough (2003, 2010) also pointed out that texts and discourses used in one social practice are sometimes relocated and in this way recontextualised in another social practice. This means that that the position-practice system is open to changes since "recontextualising of meanings is also transformations of meanings, through decontextualisation (taking meanings out of their contexts) and recontextualising (putting meanings in new contexts)" (2010, p. 76).

Methodology and analysis

Data was collected through a web survey directed at members of a closed thematic Facebook group focusing on work at leisure-time centres and the professional role of leisure-time pedagogues. The reason for this was to gain access to potential research participants working in leisure-time centres from a wide geographical area in Sweden. The survey information contained a general description of the aims and objectives of the study, which was initially based on a student teacher idea where the intention was to write an examina-

3   This corresponds with Anthony Giddens theory of structuration (1979, 1984). Giddens (1979) asserted that an activity is both a consequence of and a medium for the social practice that the actors participate in. When actors produce and reproduce virtual structures, they are also recreating the conditions concerning the specific social practice in which they are engaged.

4   This corresponds with both Hall (1997) and Giddens (1979). Hall asserted that group members adopt specific subject positions within a certain discourse. They settle into the subject position that the discourse offers regarding that particular subject position. Giddens claims that a social position can be described as a power position that offers different privileges and obligations.

tion paper regarding children´s development and analogue games.[5] Analogue games were considered as games that did not require digital technology such as card games, board games, and parlour games. These various kinds of analogue games are all labelled board games in this article.

The intention of the study was to reach many participants with the help of a questionnaire. An online survey was seen as a faster way of collecting data compared to other survey methods and was also considered as giving opportunities to collect answers from across Sweden. The questionnaire was available online from April 8th to April 18th, 2014. Sixty-six members of the Facebook group participated in the inquiry, 55 of whom completed the survey. The answers showed that the majority of the informants who completed the survey (37) were leisure-time pedagogues, seven classified themselves as leisure-time centre teachers, and the remaining eleven had various qualifications such as child minders, teachers, recreation leaders, and one had a qualification as an assistant nurse. The web survey was, however, only online for eleven days, and many of the 2,000 website participants probably did not notice the survey. However, as already mentioned, the Facebook group was only used to gain access to potential research participants, and our aim was not to generalize the results through a large representative sample. We consider the result from this pilot study to be valuable in that the study initiates research in an area that lacks thorough discussion.

The questionnaire included both closed-ended questions, which were followed up with contingency questions, and open-ended questions. The questionnaire began with three questions that asked participants to specify their professional training, the county where they work, and what kind of activity they worked in. The subsequent questions included three closed-ended questions, which were followed up with contingency questions, and seven open-ended questions. The questionnaire concluded by asking the participants if they wanted to be informed of the results. All survey answers were recorded in an Excel file—the questions were placed in columns, and the participants' answers were located below each question. In this way, it was possible to get an overview of the answers and to investigate the number of drop-outs (i.e., participants who had not completed the questionnaire). The following questions were seen as the most relevant to the study's research questions: (1) What analogue games do the children have the opportunity to play, and why did you choose these particular games? (2) What is your attitude to analogue board games? (3) How do you understand the children's game activities? Motivate your answer. (4) Do you play together with the children? If yes, what role do you adopt?

According to Fairclough (1992), there is no rigid CDA manual for conducting the analysis of empirical material. Three dimensions—text, discursive practice, and social practice—will overlap during the analysis process, which according to Fairclough involves the progression from interpretation to description and back to interpretation. The analysis in this study began by repeatedly reading the informants' responses to the questionnaire. This entailed looking for prominent discourses (i.e., the staff's different and repeatedly formulated ways of representing the board games' function in the activity). The analysis contin-

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5   The two students, Richard Gustafsson and Kristina Köröndi, abandoned their initial idea and changed the subject for their examination paper after the data was gathered. We are grateful for their approval in letting us use the gathered data.

ued by describing the order of discourse and the relationships between the different discourses (i.e., how the texts were constituted and articulated together) (cf. Fairclough, 2010). These descriptions were a means for finding and describing the activity's essential conditions, with the help of Fairclough's notion of intertextuality, and thereby explain "why the discourse practice is as it is; and the effects of the discourse practice upon the social practice" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 237).[6] Fairclough (1992, 2010) describes intertextuality as "What is said and done and written in a particular event or text is intertextually related to other events and texts: people inevitably draw on, anticipate, and respond to other events and other texts" (2010, p. 420–421).

The analysis of the linguistic content aimed to support and give a richer understanding of discursive practice, the discourses described, and social practice. The text analysis aimed to discuss both linguistic structure and intertextuality in the empirical material. The latter discussion intended to make contingent relations to other texts and events visible. It appeared that the answers were often rather short—approximately one to eight sentences. For this reason, the studies of the linguistic content were confined to looking for and analysing two grammatical elements: modality and transivity. The analysis of modality depicts the level of affinity people have with different propositions. In this study, a participant could assert, for example, that "board games are very important and must be a part of the activity". The words "very" and "must" indicate the importance the participant places upon this activity. The sentence "board games could be an important part of the activity" shows a lower affinity (see also Fairclough, 1992).

The analysis discusses the staff´s descriptions of their social identity or subject position when playing board games with the children. In addition to describing the relation between discursive practice and social practice, the analysis concerning this issue also focused on the power relations between staff and children when playing board games and the specific subject positions the staff settled into. This involves the second grammatical element—transivity—which "deals with the types of process which are coded in clauses, and the types of participant involved in them" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 178). This includes two processes, a relational process "where the verb marks a relationship (being, having, becoming, etc.) between participants, and 'action' processes, where an agent acts upon a goal" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 178). Thus, the analysis also focused on discussing the relation between discursive practice and social practice. Both the internal validity and the credibility are estimated to be high since we operationalized the relevant concepts and the theoretical framework. The research process has been transparently described and the aim and research questions have been answered.

Results

The results will first describe and discuss staff discourses in relation to board games in leisure-time centres. The subject positions that the staff acquire when playing board games with children will then be described and discussed.

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6   This should be seen as a way to discuss the social system and whether existing norms are reproduced or transformed (see also Giddens, 1984).

Discourses regarding the reasons for using board games

Four prominent discourses were distinguished: supporting the social structure, learning social competence, substituting digital games, and learning cognitive abilities. These discourses are described here as separate but were most often articulated together in a more entangled way, which will be discussed in the concluding discussion.

Supporting social structure

The Supporting social structure discourse focuses on the use of board games as an activity that is integrated into the everyday work at the leisure-time centre.

> 12087784: We have gambling-dens as an activity at the leisure-time centre resulting in that children learn to play the games and because of that can choose to play board games during free play. You can ask if someone want to play because it was fun.

This excerpt describes the use of board games in two ways—the informant uses board games as a structured (i.e., staff directed, repeated activity) and as a child directed activity during their free play. The children learn the rules of the games during the structured activity and may, based on their positive experiences of learning how to play the games, play it again with other children during their free play. The excerpt indicates that board games are used in a carefully prepared way. It also indicates that the use of board games can develop positive relations between the children when they play. Such positive relations and the promotion of fellowship are also highlighted in the following excerpt.

> 12047521: I like to play and introduce the children to the board games. It´s a good way to make the children to get to know each other and start talking to more children than their regular friends.

Introducing children to board games was seen as a good way (positive affinity) to help them become acquainted with one another. The staff used board games as a device to support interactions between children who did not previously play together. This informant is consciously encouraging children's relation work (cf. Bliding, 2004) and their interaction (cf. Dahl, 2014), which supports the social order of the leisure-time centres (cf. Ursberg, 1996). The informants personal interest in playing board games also becomes a pull factor that influences game adoption (cf. Koh et al., 2012). The next excerpt emphasizes a preference for games that are not time-consuming and do not require factual knowledge.

> 12087784: We want games that don´t take such a long time to play…That makes more children want to participate…A game goes rather fast and you can play many times if it is fun! We prefer games that don´t require [factual] 'knowledge' like TP (Trivial Pursuit), it can get incredibly uneven in a group of children…Smartness and problem-solving abilities are promoted.

Games that are completed quickly are preferred because this provides the opportunity to play many times and to involve more children in what is considered as a fun activity. The words "many" and "more" indicate a positive affinity for both involving many children and providing the opportunity to play several times, and this should be seen as a way to offer a fun activity that contributes to maintaining fellowship and a positive everyday experience in the leisure-time centre. The informant also argued, with a strong negative affinity, *incredibly uneven*, that the games played should not involve factual knowledge since some

children's lack of knowledge would be made visible, which is not in line with the agenda of this leisure-time centre.

The next excerpt also highlights how board games are used as a device for developing social structure and easing everyday work at the leisure-time centre.

> 12065377: They gather around a common activity where the rules are settled. You don´t have to put time and effort to construct 'the game' by yourself. This can be nice after a tough day in school. The children think that some games are fun.

The informant's account indicates that children's use of board games is seen as a way to avoid planning structured activities after working in school while offering an activity that is self-directed in some respects and meets the children's need for recreation. The "tough day" in school appears to reflect the division between the work at school during the school day and the work at the leisure-time centre after school (cf. Andersson, 2013). Board games seem to be used as a part of the children's free play (Haglund, 2015)—activities that are not planned and structured by the staff—and is emphasized here as a device to ease the staff's work load. The concluding excerpt not only emphasizes board games as a structuring device for keeping children occupied but also as a device for changing the direction of their activities.

> 12092186: I have no particular opinion concerning the children´s playing. /…/ They pick up the games by themselves, some of the adults suggest it when they are bored or when they just run about.

As the informant does not have any particular opinion concerning board games, it appears that the use of board games within the activity is not greatly appreciated. The children are encouraged to play if they are bored or if they act in a disruptive way, but the account does not depict playing board games as an activity with a relevance beyond that.

Learning social competence

Many of the participants asserted that board games facilitate social competence.

> 12040585: A natural part of the activities that exercises many abilities. To follow rules, turn taking, chat, co-operate for example.

Board games are depicted as developing several competences but also as a natural part of the activities. This can be interpreted as meaning that board games are a natural part of leisure-time centre activities simply because board games, in themselves, are devices that are used to support social competence. The development of children's social competence has also, by tradition, been emphasized in leisure-time centre activities (cf. Haglund, 2015; Saar, Löfdahl, & Hjalmarsson, 2012). The abilities that are mentioned in the excerpt—to follow rules and take turns—are social competences that are useful in various contexts where interaction with other people is required. The informant is neutral regarding board games as no intensifying words are used. The informant in the following excerpt, however, emphasized social learning more explicitly.

> 12048851: It is fun and rewarding to play. A social activity. It is a very good social training for many [children]. It is always okay. /…/ Besides that, they, with the help of games, are practicing various skills. They are above all training turn taking and cooperation. They practice to become good losers and good winners.

Several social abilities that games may support are mentioned and, similar to the previous excerpt, turn taking and cooperation are mentioned. Moreover, board games are described as a fun and social activity that is appreciated by the informant. This indicates that playing board games is not entirely a matter of training social competence, but also a way to have fun at the same time. The use of board games is described with high affinity since the informant emphasizes that it is a social activity that gives "very" good training and that it is "always" okay to play. The next excerpt also highlights turn taking, cooperation, and children's happiness, but also patience, the ability to celebrate the success of others, and to be flexible concerning game rules.

> 12051573: I think it's a good way to learn to cooperate, wait for your turn, train patience, to rejoice concerning others success. Good social training. /…/ Because I see happy children! And children which many times deal with conflicts on their own during the game, for example by adjusting the rules of the game :) It is important to learn how to deal with bad luck and respect the rules, but it works just as well if all participants agree to that rules are adaptive.

The excerpt emphasizes that it is "important" (i.e., a high affinity) to learn to accept defeat, that others can win, and to handle bad luck. Social competence is described as an ability to respect game rules and to adjust and develop game rules together with other participants. This provides opportunities to negotiate the rules in a manner that satisfies all participants.

Substituting digital games

A third prominent discourse was directed to the fact that board games should be seen as a substitute for playing digital games, as in the following excerpt.

> 12044129: We often play analogue games. Digital games are never used at our leisure-time centre since we know that many children are playing way too much at home. The children are, on the other hand, writing all the documents that are sent home to the parents. They make nice weekly schedules that depicts the activities during the educational holidays and they take photos of the activities and put them in a picture frame in the hallway.

The excerpt above uses several words that indicate a strong affinity. It is asserted that they "often" play analogue games. It is also understood that the reason for this is that "many" children are playing digital games at home "way too" much. This should be seen as a strong negative affinity concerning both the number of children engaged in digital play and how much time they spend playing those games at home. The perception that children spend a lot of time playing digital games at home is also evident in the following excerpt.

> 12087784: I think that children should learn to play analogue games, I don´t think there are so many that play board games at home…It is easier to sit down at the computer or the iPad and play…But the children miss out much of the community spirit and the social practice…To win-lose, explain game rules and follow those rules! Wait for their turn, get new fellow relations with the game as an activity.

Digital games are depicted as "easier"—a weak negative affinity (i.e., there is more motivation to start playing digital games than regular board games when at home). Digital games are, however, not seen as supporting social relations, social development, or interaction with other children. This indicates that the staff member thinks that children play digital games in isolation at home. The substituting digital games discourse highlights that board games are, at least partially, used as a device to enable children to participate in activities

that they do not participate in at home. This is in line with the Education Act (2010), which states that leisure-time centres should take a comprehensive view of the students and their needs as its starting point. Avoiding digital games at the leisure-time centre can therefore, be seen as a way of stimulating children's comprehensive development and learning.

Learning cognitive abilities

The participants emphasized that board games contribute to developing cognitive skills. Several skills were mentioned, one of the most common being the ability to think strategically.

> 12045873: We want the children to be challenged when they are playing games. They get opportunities to use experiences and things they learn at school. Logical thinking is a general property concerning our games. We don't use junior variants, we think that the children learn 'senior' games fast. /…/ It is developing to play analogue games. The interaction between children and adults is interesting to observe. It is usually very developing discussions when we play games.

It appears that the informant wants the children to be challenged when they are playing—that playing board games is not merely for amusement. The games are also expected to contribute to the children's development. In this case, the focus is on the development of logical thinking, which is seen as a prominent reason for using board games at this leisure-time centre. The excerpt also highlights that children, by playing board games at the leisure-time centre, get opportunities to use experiences from school and that the leisure-time centre contributes to the consolidation of knowledge emphasized in school. It also indicates that the staff are making observations and evaluations regarding the interactions between children and other staff members when they play (cf. Andersson 2013). The informant also expresses a high affinity concerning the discussions that emerge during the games, which are seen as "very" developing. The following short excerpt also emphasizes interaction, but in this case, it is the interaction between children that is stressed.

> 12172012: They become committed, it is a lot of interaction between the children concerning rule interpretations etcetera. Good for language development.

This excerpt also highlights language use concerning, for example, discussions about how rules should be understood. Here, language interaction has a high affinity since it is emphasized that there is "a lot of interaction" between the children. The excerpt does not highlight strategic thinking, as in the previous excerpt; instead language development is emphasized. The following excerpt highlights the acquisition of mathematics skills with the help of board games. The excerpt also underlines a division between the board games used in school and those used in the leisure-time centre.

> 12166181: The pupils know where the games are, and during lessons, they know from the start that they have games they could choose. They ask if they are uncertain and learn that it is okay to play. /.../ Different sorts of math games that trains mathematics in different ways. At the leisure-time centre it is games such as 'Thief and Police', 'Ludo', and other common games.

The first three sentences describe the use of board games during school. Since staff at leisure-time centres often work both in school during school hours and in the leisure-time centre after school, it is possible to describe the use of board games in both of these activities. It appears that board games used in school, as far as the informant is concerned, are di-

rected towards mathematics, while games used in the leisure-time centre do not tend to be particularly directed in this way. The board games *Thief and Police* and *Ludo* used in the leisure-time centre are games that use dice and could be seen to develop mathematics skills. Here, however, they were not seen in this way, indicating different motivations for using board games in school and in the leisure-time centre. The following excerpt also highlights mathematics. Prior to this, the informant described many of the board games used at the leisure-time centre and concluded by mentioning the reasons for buying the games and why these games are used.

> 12064844: We have bought some of these games for connecting to mathematics. Other games have been bought since the children have wished for them.

In contrast to the previous excerpt, here it is asserted that some of the games in the leisure-time centre activity were bought to develop or enhance mathematical skills. The use of the word "some" indicates a somewhat lower degree of positive affinity—some, but not all, board games are bought to practice mathematics. Nevertheless, the staff are attentive to opportunities for developing mathematical skills. At the same time, it also appears that the children are given the opportunity to express their game preferences. This could be seen as a way of complying with the children's interests and of offering meaningful leisure and recreation during their stay at the leisure-time centre.

The staff's subject positions

The analysis of the staff's descriptions of their social identity or subject position when playing board games with the children focused on the power relations between staff and children and on describing the specific subject positions the staff settled into. The answers in the web survey revealed that there were three positions: developer, supervising judge, and participant. These positions will be described as distinct, but, as with the previously described discourses, the informants' positions are most often articulated together.

Developer

Taking the position of a developer means trying to develop certain skills in children by playing games with them.

> 12062107: Sometimes to activate certain children, sometimes because I want some children to practice a certain ability sometimes 'just' because it is fun.

The answer describes both a wish to activate children who are not engaged in a particular activity and to play games because it is a fun thing to do with the children. Once again, this indicates that playing games is seen as a fun activity that is also used to influence the structure of the leisure-time centre activity. However, the participant also describes a transitivity process wherein games are used to develop abilities. The excerpt does not specify which abilities—cognitive abilities, social abilities, or both—that are focused on, but it describes the goal of the activity as being to develop through "practice". The informant also adopts the position of someone who possesses power and knowledge in relation to the children,

who should be developed. The following excerpt also emphasizes a purpose directed towards development when playing games.

> 12166181: The same [position] as the pupils or I use it [the board game] in an educational purpose. 'You don´t learn anything if you play games' is a rather common opinion amongst my pupils despite my talking about the purpose of the games.

The informant starts the sentence by claiming that his or her position is the same as that of the children, that they are seen as equals. However, the informant also has an "educational purpose" wherein the games are "used" for reasons beyond just participating as a co-player. This shows that the informant's position transforms from being a co-player to taking a position as a developer. These reasons are, however, not always in line with the children's reasoning about games. The children often do not consider learning to be an aspect of playing games, although the informant tries to describe the purposes of different games.

Supervising Judge

The supervising judge is a position where the overall control of the game play is stressed. This includes managing the game and the way participants are performing.

> 12047557: Most often, the one that pull the strings and notify whose turn it is and control that no one cheats (which disgusts me).

This excerpt shows that the informant controls much of the game, and the goals in this action process are to facilitate the playing by "pull[ing] the strings" and "notify[ing]" the participants regarding turn taking. The excerpt indicates that the informant's relation to the children during the game is superior since he or she supervises the game and also has "control" over adherence to the rules. The next excerpt also highlights board game rules but invites other children into the game as well.

> 12047929: I start up the game, usually discuss the rules before we start and involve other children.

Discussing rules is seen as important and should be seen as a way to inform the children what is allowed and to make sure that they have understood how to play the game. This position indicates that the staff member both introduces the game and participates while playing, which means that he or she must know how the game should be performed. This indicates a superior position, but since the staff member "discuss[es]" the rules with the children, rather than informing them of the rules, the children seem to be invited to express their understanding of the rules. This does not, however, exclude the staff member from having the final say concerning the game rules, and, in this way, he or she acts as a supervising judge. The staff member also "involves other children", which indicates an active supervisor and is well in line with the previously discussed supporting social structure discourse.

Participant

When a staff member takes the participant position, he or she participates under the same terms as the children. This could mean not having any specific intentions when playing board games with children. However, as the excerpt below points out, a specific intention can be performed using a passive position.

> 12045873: A passive role. I think that the children should have opportunities to act.

Having a "passive role" means that the staff member pulls back from a leading teacher position and gives the children "opportunities" to be in charge or to have an equal relation with the adult. This should be seen as an intentional act to acknowledge the children and thereby support their social development (cf. Anderson, 2013; Haglund, 2015). The next excerpt also indicates that the staff member functions as a participant and also has the opportunity to chat with the children.

> 12150029: As any adversary. You often get opportunities to chat more if there´s only two of you.

Taking an "adversary" position indicates that the adult is adopting an equal position to the children when playing board games together. It is also mentioned that there are opportunities to "chat more" if there are not so many children participating. This indicates that the informant appreciates talking to children, which is also a focus in the concluding excerpt.

> 12178037: If I can afford the time. The children often ask if you want to play with them and then you get the opportunity to sit down and chat with someone/a few.

The excerpt indicates that it is not always possible to play board games with the children since the informant has other pressing issues that must be performed. However, playing board games is a popular activity, and the children often ask the staff to participate. The excerpt also indicates that playing board games is an opportunity to sit down and "chat" with children. The opportunity to chat should, in both excerpts, be seen as a bonding opportunity, a goal that is part of the cultural tradition of leisure-time centres (cf. Haglund, 2015; Pihlgren & Rohlin, 2011; Ursberg, 1996).

Discussion

The web survey analysis aimed to find why staff at leisure-time centres use board games in leisure-time centres. This has been described with the help of four prominent discourses: supporting social structure, learning social competence, substituting digital games, and learning cognitive abilities. These discourses are seen as different ways of representing aspects of the world—here, the function of board games in leisure-time centres (cf. Fairclough, 2003). The supporting social structure discourse should be seen as the most prominent of these discourses since the other discourses are subordinated in different ways. The supporting social structure discourse should be seen as part of the core work in leisure-time centres (cf. Evaldsson, 1993; Haglund, 2015; Saar et al., 2012), and board games are used as devices for constructing the favoured social structure—a structure that focuses upon the promotion of positive relations and fellowship amongst children. Emphasising relations and fellowship should be seen as intertextually rooted in a child-minding culture (cf. Evaldsson, 1993; Ursberg, 1996), and this position still appears to dominate discursive practice. The use of board games may, however, vary between different leisure-time centres—some use it as a conscious structured activity, while others use it as a means to prevent social disorder. This indicates that there are different local discursive practices (cf. Fairclough, 2010) and differences concerning social practice (cf. Fairclough, 1992).

The assumption of the learning social competence discourse that playing board games develops social skills and emotions, the ability to follow rules, turn taking, and handling bad luck is well in line with game research that emphasizes learning opportunities provided by games (Carlisle, 2009; Hromek & Roffey, 2009). This discourse is also closely related and dependent upon the previously described supporting social structure discourse. It is closely related as emphasizing social competence has been an integral element of traditional work at leisure-time centres and is therefore intertextually related to a social pedagogical arena (cf. Rohlin, 2001). It is dependent because it is difficult to enhance children's social competence when the social structure is inadequate (i.e., when positive relations and fellowship are not emphasized). Supporting social structure should, therefore, be seen as vital for developing opportunities to learn social competence through board games.

The substituting digital games discourse can be seen as a consequence of the promotion of positive relations, fellowship, and the development of social skills in the preceding discourses. The substituting digital games discourse presupposes that children often play digital games at home and that children play digital games in isolation (i.e., digital games do not contribute to positive relations or the enhancement of children's social competence). Available statistics support statements that children often play digital games at home. According to the Swedish Media Council (2015), 27% of the participating parents asserted that their children (5–8 years) play digital games every day, and 46% stated that their children played digital games some days each week. The statistical material does not, however, give any indication of whether digital games were played alone or together with friends.

The last prominent discourse—learning cognitive abilities—emphasizes opportunities to develop different cognitive skills such as strategic thinking, language, and mathematics (cf. Evaldsson & Corsaro, 1998; Siegler & Ramani, 2008). This discourse has a somewhat different point of departure compared to the proceeding discourses. Some of the written answers, particularly those that focused on mathematics, connect in different ways to the leisure-time centre's relation to school and should be seen as an expression of the increasing collaboration between these institutions. Neither older steering documents nor older research concerning staff at leisure-time centres stresses the development of cognitive skills. The emphasis on these skills in this study should therefore be seen as intertextually influenced by the leisure-time centres transition from the social pedagogical arena to the educational arena and a more developed cooperation with schools (cf. Andersson, 2013; Rohlin, 2001). The emphasis on cognitive skills within leisure-time centres is a relocation, a recontextualising, of meanings from school (cf. Fairclough, 2010). However, the informants who emphasized cognitive skills were, compared to those who stressed social competence, rather few.

As mentioned earlier the analysis of the staff´s subject positions while playing board games revealed three positions: developer, supervising judge and participant. The developer position corresponds to those discourses that stress learning social competence and learning cognitive abilities with the help of board games. The developer also, however, appears to be keen to engage many children through playing and stresses the importance of having fun while playing. This corresponds with the assignment to offer meaningful leisure and recreation and with the supporting social structure discourse. The developer position indicates that the informants, whether they try to develop social competence or develop cognitive

abilities, adopt a power position (cf. Giddens, 1979), stressing that the educational purpose of game playing corresponds to a teacher position. This is in line with recent steering documents concerning leisure-time centres (cf. The Education Act, 2010; The National Agency for Education, 2011). The supervising judge position adopts, as with the developer position, a superior power position in relation to the children. Informants who adopted this position strived for overall control concerning the unfolding of the game. Besides facilitating play and in that way supporting a positive social structure, the supervising judge appears to limit the educational aspects of the game and concentrates on developing children's social competence by stressing turn taking and following game rules. This position depicts a distinct leader and emphasizes content that is in line with older social pedagogical traditions (cf. Rohlin, 2001). The participant position is, in contrast to the former positions, one where the informants participate under the same terms as the children. This position emphasizes opportunities to support, interact, and chat with children; the reasons for adopting this position are to support and get to know the individual child and to support the social structure. This position therefore corresponds with the supporting social structure and the learning social competence discourses. The three positions described were often articulated together—the informants often described a social practice in which they adopted different positions while playing. The supervising judge and the participant position were most often articulated together, while the developer position was less frequently described and also less often articulated together with the other positions.

The social practices of the informants, described through their discourses regarding their reasons for using board games in the leisure-time centre, show an activity based on social pedagogical traditions. The positions the staff settled into while playing board games also drew mostly from a social pedagogical arena. However, playing board games also has features that emphasize traditional school related content, which indicates that existing norms are not only reproduced but also, in some respects, transformed (cf. Giddens, 1984). Intentions to use board games as devices for developing social competence and cognitive abilities and promoting of fellowship were described, although the study cannot show that these competences and abilities actually improved. This would be an interesting area for further research. Such research would probably offer opportunities to improve the social practices in leisure-time centres and in schools and in that way support children's competences and abilities.

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University-Community Links:
A Collaborative Strategy for Supporting Extended Education

Charles Underwood & Mara Welsh Mahmood

Mission and Strategy

University-Community Links (UC Links) is a University of California faculty and community engagement initiative designed to promote relevant scholarship and integrate the University's community service efforts with its teaching and research missions. Since 1996, UC Links has been an active collaborative network of university and community partners, providing quality after-school programs and activities for pre-school through 12th grade (P-12) students from underserved communities in California. UC Links programs prepare these young people academically and socially for high school and college, while also preparing university students for advanced professional training. To achieve this dual mission, UC Links faculty teach academic coursework that places their students in practicum experiences with young people in local community after-school programs. There, the university students guide their younger peers in learning activities designed to promote multiple literacies and digital skills, as well as collaborative behavior and college-going identities.

In this way, UC Links enables the University to extend educational services to the community and to gain access to authentic new contexts for teaching and research on educational issues of crucial concern to both community and university partners. For underserved communities, UC Links offers a collaborative context for garnering scarce educational resources to support their young people, while providing the local knowledge relevant to the development of pedagogical practice for those youth.

History

UC Links was originally based on the Fifth Dimension and *La Clase Mágica* after-school models. Cole (1996) approached after-school programs as activity systems in which the collaborative engagement of young people generates multiple opportunities for *the zone of proximal development* in which individuals can together accomplish tasks that they could not have completed alone (Vygotsky, 1978). Cole designed the Fifth Dimension as a pragmatic implementation of his findings, and it has been adapted worldwide (Cole, 2006). Through *La Clase Mágica* programs, Vásquez (2003) has expanded the view of extended education as collaborative learning, sustained in the larger context of dynamic relations of exchange in broader community systems. UC Links grew out of this theoretical and practi-

cal work, as a means to institutionalize this activity system as a long-term strategy for engaging universities and communities in the collaborative development of sustainable afterschool programming for underserved youth.

In 1996, UC President Richard C. Atkinson, established UC Links as a pilot statewide initiative and in 1998, given its initial success, made UC Links a permanent University program. As a statewide UC program, UC Links was based on the recognition that the educational problems many underserved children face are symptomatic of much broader economic and social problems (Duster et al., 1990; Underwood, 1990). In response to this recognition, UC Links has focused on educational equity not as a distant future goal but as a pragmatic collaborative process for developing and sustaining the institutional means for extending educational resources to underserved students (Underwood & Frye, 1990).

Since 1996, UC Links has evolved into an extensive socio-technical activity system that both supports individual sites as primary activities and connects them in a broader organizational system that promotes cross-site information sharing and assessment (Underwood & Parker, 2011). Together with its worldwide partners, UC Links has become a dispersed learning community of practitioners and researchers operating a network of programs that offer learning activities to engage young people and connect them to each other, to their communities, and to the larger world around them.

From the outset, UC Links drew on the local knowledge of the community, to adapt each program to interests and needs of local children and their families. Community members played key roles as equal partners in the collaboration, defining themes and activities that were culturally appropriate for their children. University partners offered multi-disciplinary experience in building innovative learning activities and in using new digital resources to serve those themes and activities. Practicum coursework placed undergraduates in the community setting, thus offering real-world opportunities to connect educational theory to practical learning experiences that benefited both their own learning and that of the P-12 students.

In 2016-17, UC Links served 3,576 participants, including 3,013 P-12 students and 563 undergraduates at 29 locations throughout California. University faculty (17 at 9 campuses in 14 California cities) led these programs, and 104 graduate students assisted them in teaching UC Links coursework and coordinating site operations and assessment. Since 1996, UC Links has served over 40,000 P-12 culturally and linguistically diverse young people across the state.

Innovations and Outcomes

UC Links has proven to be a productive strategy for extending access to new digital and media tools to underserved P-12 students and preparing them academically for higher learning. Its model for high-quality undergraduate and graduate education consistently demonstrates positive results. As a program network collaborating closely with international partners for over 20 years, it has also shown remarkable capacity for sustainability. UC Links fosters the following innovative practices that can be applied in other settings:

(1) University-community collaboration: Through long-term collaboration, UC Links sustains the inter-institutional connections necessary to keep all partners at the table, provides

an impetus for pooling institutional resources (technology, materials, professional and lo-cal knowledge), and changes the ways partners think about and carry out their work.

(2) Formal and informal after-school educational activities: UC Links provides under-served students with innovative digital and hands-on learning activities, guided by uni-versity students, and changes the way they look at their own lives and the world around them. Mentoring by university students promotes P-12 students' college aspirations.

(3) Practicum undergraduate coursework and fieldwork experience: UC Links coursework offers students deeper understandings of course content, changes how they think about and carry out their work, and prepares them to pursue advanced graduate training.

(4) Research in real-world settings: UC Links tests theories and practices of using new dig-ital media for teaching and learning, thus enabling local educators to work more pro-ductively with the children they serve.

Drawing on the combined expertise of both educational researchers and local community leaders, UC Links has developed evaluation and assessment strategies that provide for data collection and analysis across sites, while allowing for the specific orientations of particular program sites. UC Links studies indicate its effectiveness for academic preparation, especially in reading and writing, 21st Century digital literacies, critical thinking, and global citizenship:

- UC Links showed significant pre-post assessment gains for P-8 students. In 2016-17, these students made gains of 20.6% from pre- to post-assessment in the number scoring at proficient levels in literacy skills and knowledge.
- Most UC Links undergraduates continue to graduate training: 72.8% (N=519) planned to enroll in graduate schools. Most (93%) received sustained mentoring from UC Links fac-ulty and graduate students, and 70% pursued collaborative community-based research.
- The UC Links / Fifth Dimension / *La Clase Mágica* model has sparked interest of edu-cators and community practitioners worldwide. It presently collaborates with similar programs in five US states and seven nations in Europe, Central and South America, and Japan. After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, UC Links collaborated for five years in developing and providing extended education and social services to displaced families and their children in evacuation camps in Louisiana.

UC Links constantly refines its research and evaluation efforts to improve their reliability and validity. UC Links continues to contribute and disseminate research on key topics rele-vant to 21st Century learning – including digital and media literacies, STEM learning and design interventions for students from non-dominant communities, program and curriculum design for both in-school and out-of-school settings, and local inter-institutional engage-ment and collaboration.

Conclusion

Working closely with local communities near universities, UC Links provides distinctive leadership in designing and implementing effective strategies for building and sustaining youth-oriented learning activities that reach across geographical, cultural, and institutional boundaries. In promoting the development of underserved youth, UC Links has been suc-

cessful in three key areas: (1) providing underserved youth with digital and hands-on activities that prepare them for lifelong learning; (2) providing quality undergraduate and graduate education that connects theory and practice, while also providing underserved youth with positive role models; and (3) building sustainable local collaborations that support local young people academically and socially. The program is particularly effective in working with academically disengaged, socio-economically disadvantaged young people after school, and in preparing them for greater confidence, competence, and success, both inside and outside the classroom.

In these ways, UC Links partners view their collaborative work as both a strategy and a resource. As a strategy, it brings community, school, and university people together as equal partners involved in the long-term process of building the social and academic foundation for their children's future. As a resource, it is both a network of people pooling their professional and local knowledge of how best to stimulate young minds, and a tested strategy for developing innovative digitally-based and hands-on learning activities.

UC Links has become, for community and university people alike, a resource for testing the efficacy of educational tools and strategies for re-engaging the disengaged – for encouraging and activating the minds of young people who have become discouraged by lifelong experiences of poverty and displacement. UC Links faculty, students, and community partners continue to forge collaborative links across geographical and sociocultural borders, to explore innovative uses of new digital technologies for teaching and learning and to develop new tools for assessing student development and program impact, especially for practitioners and young people working together in out-of-school learning contexts.

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Leisure-time centres for 6–9 year old children in Iceland; policies, practices and challenges

Kolbrún Pálsdóttir & Steingerður Kristjánsdóttir

Introduction

Leisure-time centres (LTC) for six to nine-year-old children have in the last decades become a part of the basic services provided by municipalities in Iceland. LTC provide care and organized leisure-activities during out-of school hours while parents work or study. A national survey from 2014 showed that 92% of municipalities in Iceland operated LTC as opposed to 75% in 2010 and that around 60% of all six-to-nine-year-old children attend leisure-time centres (Pálsdóttir, 2014). However, participation is much higher for children from grades 1 and 2 and declines dramatically in grades 3 and 4.

We, the authors, have both worked as professionals and active participants in developing the services of LTC in Iceland. Currently, we are both teachers and researchers in leisure and youth studies at the University of Iceland. In this article we introduce policy in Iceland with regard to LTC and discuss challenges that lie ahead.

A brief history: Care, learning and leisure

From a brief overview of different periods in the history of the leisure-time centres in Reykjavík a lot can be learned about the importance of LTC and also, about the conflicting views regarding their primary purposes. The first day-care institutions for school-aged children in Reykjavík opened its doors in the year 1971 to children from socially disadvantaged families. In this first period, ranging from 1971 to 1992, the provision of *care* was the main objective. At that time, the few school-day care centres that operated in Reykjavik belonged to the day-care department which also oversaw day-care institutions for younger children. It was not until the 90's that compulsory schools in Reykjavik started to offer extended services in out-of school hours, thus the operation of School-Daycare began. This second period, ranging from 1993 to 2004 centered around the organization of a whole-school day, for example by offering help with home-work in the LTC and providing educational activities. However, a third period began in 2004 when the responsibility for the LCT was moved from the schools to the Recreation and youth department. The name *Leisure-Time Centre* (i. frístundaheimili) was introduced at this time, instead of School-Daycare, which exemplifies a shift in emphasis from learning to leisure. A fourth period began in

2012 with increased emphasis on integrating services of schools and leisure-time centres, although in practice LTC and schools still operate as different units with a separate administration and finance. Until recently Icelandic educational authorities had not developed any framework for leisure-time centres.

New legislation

A small clause in the Compulsory School Act from 1995 stated that schools were allowed to offer extended after-school services and to charge parents for such services (Compulsory School Act, nr. 91/1995). However, no further directives were to be found about the purpose or operation of such services. An important step was taken in the summer of 2016, when a new clause was added to the law, using the concept *leisure-time centre* (i. frístundaheimili) and thereby confirming it as the main term for extended school-based services. The new clause says, amongst other things, that leisure-time centres should meet the needs and interest of children in their out-of-school time; furthermore, emphasis should be on children's choice, free play and a variety of activities (Laws on changes to the compulsory school law no. 91/2011, no.76/2016). According to the new clause, local authorities are responsible for the operation of LTC and should aim to provide integrated services of school and LTC. There is no reference to the overall educational goals of leisure-time centres, qualifications of personnel, standards for facilities, or daily organisation; however, it states that the ministry of education will publish further quality standards in collaboration with the Icelandic Association of Local Authorities. Currently, a committee is working on setting such standards.

Educational policy

Elementary schools have changed dramatically since the beginning of 20th century when school became obligatory in Iceland. The purpose of schooling is no longer to teach only the three main R's, Reading, Writing and aRithmetic, but to support the overall development of children. Six pillar stones were introduced into the Icelandic educational national curriculum of pre-school, elementary school and high school in 2011. Those pillar stones are: Literacy, Equality, Creativity, Democracy, Human Rights, Health and Welfare (Ministry of education, 2011). These themes are expected to be intertwined into daily school practice, content and methods. Furthermore, the aim of the compulsory school is "to encourage pupil's general development and prepare them for active participation in a democratic society" (Compulsory School Act, no. 91/2008). School activities shall lay the foundations for pupils' autonomy, initiative and independent thinking and train their cooperation skills (Compulsory School Act, no. 91/2008).

Considering the educational policy of elementary schools in Iceland, the question arises what role LTC is expected to play in the education of children? We believe that educators in Iceland have already started to recognize that informal learning empowers children and should be considered a part of their education. In the next chapters we identify some of the characteristics of the Icelandic leisure-time centres.

Child-centered services

The philosophy that shapes the leisure-time centers in Iceland is characterized with an emphasis on a child-centered pedagogy where play, informal learning, choice and autonomy of children should be the focus point. Such pedagogical vision aims to enhance the development of children and identifies the child and its needs at the core of daily practices. Therefore, it is not difficult to see how the leisure-time centres could support the fundamental pillars of education as defined in the national curricula, discussed above. A good example comes from Reykjavik city; according to its policy on LTC, every centre should highlight democratic ways of working with children. Most LTC in Reykjavik operate a *children's council* which takes part in deciding activities within the program. Children´s democracy helps to develop the quality of the work in the LTC´s, promotes children's development and their social responsibility. Although we cannot say with certainty that democratic practices exist in all LTC in Iceland, our discussions with practitioners in Iceland show that they emphasize child-centered practices.

Play and informal learning

Most LTC in Iceland offer opportunities for valuable informal learning experiences. School-day is very structured and Icelandic children do not have much time during school to play or be with friends (Pálsdóttir, 2012). Therefore, it is important to value the flexibility offered for children within LTC to play and be with friends. Play is without a doubt the most important source of creativity for children of all ages. In play children strengthen their identity, learn empathy and practice their communication skills (Lillemyr, 2009). Although play is recognized in the Icelandic pre-school curricula as children's main way of learning, it is rarely mentioned in the curricula for elementary school. More national research is needed, but our communications with professionals and administrators throughout the country indicate that play and informal learning is emphasized within most LTC in Iceland.

Emphasis on friendship and social skills

Extended school day and changes in society have affected children's culture and spaces for friendship and social activities. There is evidence that LTC are replacing homes and outdoors playfields where children used to meet after school. Children themselves describe how important it is for them to spend time with their friends in LTC since they seldom can decide with whom they sit or work in the school and not even whom they play with (Pálsdóttir, 2012). Unfortunately, as in many Western schools, bullying has been an increasing problem in Icelandic schools. Leisure-time personnel in Reykjavík say that one of their main tasks is to support friendships and help children develop social skills.

Therefore, we see that LTC's can play an important role to support healthy and supporting relationships by being a place where children at this age can develop their social skills and cultivate friendship. Research indicates that if you are able to make and sustain

friends as a child you will have better skills to form relationships later in life (Bagwell & Schmidt, 2011). It is therefore important to educators to be conscious of that and support children that are having difficulties in finding friends. We believe that in every LTC there should be guidelines that support positive and constructive relationships. However, nothing is as important as personnel that are good role models, kind and caring.

Challenges

In the last few years we have seen a giant leap forward in the professional development of leisure-time centres for young school-age children in Iceland. The new legislation is a formal recognition of the importance of leisure-time centers within the education system. Here, we share our concerns on the main challenges ahead.

Recognizing the educational value of informal learning

There is multiple evidence that what children do in their out-of-school hours is a part of their learning and development (see for example Kumpulainen & Mikkola, 2015; Pálsdóttir, 2015). In the new legislation on LTC in Iceland it says that municipalities should focus on *integration* between school and leisure-time centre (Laws on changes to the compulsory school law no. 91/2011, no.76/2016). The meaning of this is unclear, but one can suppose that it means that school leaders and leisure-time leaders should collaborate to an extent. A survey from 2013 revealed that in most municipalities LTC are run by the schools, they are most often located in school buildings and school personnel work in LTC (Pálsdóttir, 2014). In the near future, it can be expected that we will see quality standards being set by the Ministry of Education, according to the new legislation. Reykjavik has already published their own quality standards to evaluate leisure-programs for children and youth (Reykjavik, 2015). Hopefully, we will see a more holistic professional development in every municipality and a careful consideration of how leisure-time centres can be organized to provide creative informal learning opportunities for children.

Educating professionals

One of the main challenges ahead is to educate and train professionals and personnel that work in LTC. Majority of the personnel in the Icelandic LTC have not received specific qualifications. In the Reykjavik capital area, many of the personnel are university students working part time, and often LTC's personnel are support staff at school (Pálsdóttir, 2012). A higher education program specifically designed to educate leisure and youth professionals, or leisure-time pedagogues, started at the University of Iceland, School of Education, first in 2001. The program was in the beginning only a three semester diploma but in 2003 it became a three-year bachelor-degree program. Since 2007 we also offer a M.Ed. graduate program in leisure and youth studies. It important to note that our students are not only aiming to work in leisure-time centres with young school-children but also "social centres, rec-

reational centres, youth houses, sports associations, elementary schools, preschools, service centres for senior citizens, and the offices of sports and leisure issues" (School of Education, 2017). This diversity can be seen as a strength, as students gain an overall knowledge of the importance of leisure and informal learning during the whole lifespan and in various settings.

Conclusion

Although there is no agreement on the purposes of leisure-time centres – whether they are *simply* a place for children to play and be cared for while their parents work or whether they provide, or should provide, educational opportunities through leisure and informal learning – LTC have become an important venue in the lives of children in Iceland. Lack of professional input and lack of policy and funding can all undermine the educational benefits of children participating in LTC. We believe that in Iceland there is a strong foundation and a general will to create child-centered out-of-school services for school-aged children. It is a field of opportunities, of creativity, fun and endless opportunities to support holistic learning for children, their social awareness and a sense of community.

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Leadership in Out-of-School Learning: The Educational Doctorate Program at the University of Pittsburgh

Thomas Akiva, Kevin Crowley, Jennifer Lin Russel, Marijke Hecht

The beginning of the 21st Century has ushered in a new era for the out-of-school learning (OSL) field. In the U.S., structured OSL time for children and youth has become normative: Family enrichment spending has steadily increased for over forty years (Duncan & Murnane, 2011) as has afterschool participation, nearly doubling from 2004 to 2014 (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). Advances in research and learning design make informal learning in museums and other cultural organizations more engaging and effective than ever. Technology and advances in community infrastructures has made it possible to conceptualize a "connected learning" model proposed by multiple researchers (Ito et al., 2013) in which we can consider how best to support learning that is lifelong (across the lifespan), lifewide (across settings and topics), and connected (across digital and face-to-face contexts).

All of these developments bring new and increasingly complex problems to solve. For example, school-community partnerships are often celebrated; however, few communities make them work in ways that draw on the strengths of both school and community (Perkins, 2015). Another striking example is the stark differences in child enrichment across lines of household income; household enrichment spending (on things like summer camps, dance lessons, etc.) has steadily increased for decades for higher income families but has not significantly changed for lower income families (Duncan & Murnane, 2011). Another important example is that the workforce associated with the rapidly increasing OSL field is, particularly in the U.S., generally underpaid and under-professionalized (Pozzoboni & Kirshner, 2016).

The growth, developments, and challenges of the OSL field create the need for professional leaders in out-of-school learning to address problems of practice. We need research, but research alone will not be enough to rise to the challenge that the new opportunities bring. The rise of OSL has brought the need for leaders at high levels; however, no terminal degrees exist specifically for this growing set of leaders.

Meanwhile, over the last few decades, several developments in higher education and in research support the development of a practice-focused, OSL doctoral program. Educational Doctorate (EdD) degree programs have emerged or been redesigned across the U.S. The Carnegie Program on the Educational Doctorate (CPED, www.cpedinitiative.org), launch-

ing with 25 member institutions in 2007, now boasts over 100 members. These CPED-related EdD programs provide advanced degrees that are focused on high level practice-based leadership versus the research training of PhD programs. This coincides with increasing recognition that participatory approaches like research-practice partnerships, continuous improvement, and improvement science are critical for the future of education. So, in 2016 we launched a doctoral-level program for emerging leaders in OSL.

Challenges in Designing an OSL Doctoral Program

We designed our OSL EdD program building from an existing School of Education EdD program, which launched in 2014. This cohort-based program offers a degree in three years in concentration areas like school leadership, higher education, and health and physical activity. The existence of this program made an OSL EdD possible and simplified our design challenges—the existing program has a clear structure of four courses on educational fundamentals (e.g., leadership, policy), four courses on practitioner inquiry methods, and four courses in a concentration area (in our case, OSL). However, even with this strong foundation, we considered two main challenges in designing our program.

First, we believed we would need to recruit nationally rather than just locally. Whereas the area of southwest Pennsylvania may have enough school district professionals to continuously populate an EdD program in school leadership, for example, the OSL field is smaller and we assumed we'd need to recruit from beyond our local area. As the EdD is a part-time program for working professionals, recruiting beyond locally presented the challenge of distance learning. We would need to provide ways for students to participate from a distance without sacrificing the quality we have in our face-to-face program.

Our second challenge related to the field of OSL itself. This is an extremely varied field, representing numerous contexts such as afterschool, informal learning, juvenile justice, STEM outreach, community-based arts programs, pregnancy prevention, youth employment, to name a few. In many ways, this diversity is a major strength of OSL. However, this spread also presents challenges for the field and professionalization. In our case, it meant we must design a program that is broadly applicable, yet able to be tailored to the specific professional needs of students from various sectors of OSL.

Designing the Program with Participatory Methods

Ideas for the OSL EdD began several years before we launched. We had noticed for a while that many applicants to our Ph.D. program were looking for an advanced degree in OSL, but wanted to return to practice after graduate school, as opposed to switching careers to become a researcher. We knew that our Ph.D. researcher training would serve these applicants poorly – let alone the fact that full time study would require them to pause their current OSL careers. We began thinking about how we could cover the same topics as in our Ph.D. training, but do it with the needs of practitioner leaders in mind. We sketched out the broad specifications of the program—that in addition to OSL focused capstone projects we would include four doctoral courses in topics like learning science, youth development, and evaluation.

In the year before launch we took time to consider the design of the courses themselves, with a focus on hybrid methods that allowed students to participate both locally and from a distance. We worked with a Ph.D. learning design course and acted as a client (specifically, the second author took on this role) for a small group's learning design project. The three students working on this course assignment were all interested in OSL. We asked this student group to help design OSL courses keeping in mind the two challenges described earlier. We shared with the students our perceptions of the benefits of the existing EdD structure and supports, a willingness to experiment and iterate, and our commitment to data-based decision-making.

The student team treated the design challenge as a research project. They reviewed documents and met with primary instructors associated with the OSL EdD. They surveyed 31 OSL professionals about their leadership development needs and aspirations for career advancement, and explored various technology options (for example, viewing demonstrations of learning management systems different from the one currently used by the university).

Based on these data, they arrived at several principles to consider in designing the OSL program and courses. The program should focus on cohort building in a learner-centered, strengths-based way. That is, it was clear from survey responses that the OSL field has wisdom and talents that could make educational spaces stronger if this knowledge is honored. Second it became clear that the course should blend both synchronous and asynchronous methods for hybrid courses (i.e., with some participating from a distance and some locally). They emphasized the importance of using technology for cohort building and productive learning and presented some recommended structures and tools.

The third recommendation was perhaps the most exciting. They recommended we practice research-practice partnerships within the program. That is, as we also work with PhD students who study out-of-school learning, they suggested creating class assignments that paired research-focused PhD students with practice-focused EdD students to tackle problems of practice on a team. As research-practice partnerships are becoming increasingly important in professional OSL work, why not practice how to do this in a graduate program?

Program Launch

We launched in the summer of 2017. Our first cohort includes seven students with a wide range of expertise. For example, we have an afterschool coordinator for a large public school system, a program manager at a science center, and a director of a community-based dance academy. Their rich professional backgrounds are enhancing our program as it goes, with class examples, readings, and course projects shaped to refer directly to the day jobs of our cohort. The OSL courses combine youth development and learning sciences perspectives to address informal learning, afterschool, evaluation, and organizational processes and networks.

Like all students in the University of Pittsburgh program, our OSL cohort dove into the work during their first semester by identifying an enduring problem of practice that shapes their work practice. Students analyzed the root causes of the problem through a review of research and practice-focused literature. Through four foundations courses, students will

analyze their problem of practice through multiple perspectives. They explore the leadership factors related to the problem and its potential solutions, examine how policies shape the problem and efforts to ameliorate it, and explore how social and cultural contexts (poverty, racism, urban vs. rural settings, etc.) contribute to their problem of practice. Throughout the program, students will engage in various experiences to deepen their understanding of the problem and potential solutions. Through the program's inquiry sequence, they will learn how to use systematic methods to plan for and study the impact of changes introduced to their work context aimed at addressing the problem.

One of the features of the program we are most excited about is the culminating product. A traditional doctorate program ends with a student writing a dissertation of usually about 200 to 300 pages, defending the dissertation to a committee of four or five professors, and then filing the dissertation with the university library where it sits on a shelf (or these days more likely in a database). Writing a dissertation might be useful to researchers, but how does it serve the needs of practitioners? Instead, we re-conceptualized the culminating milestone requirement to be a portfolio of professional products that students develop throughout the program. These products, all focused on the student's problem of practice, might include work such as developing a PD training, creating and testing a new after-school curriculum, conducting an evaluation of a program, writing an article for a practitioner-focused journal, or creating a policy brief. The products would be developed in consultation with faculty advisors, would often be linked to course-work throughout the three years of the program, and might even be collaboratively authored with other students in the cohort. The idea is that our EdD students work as professionals, so the work in this program should reflect that and help them to continuously build their skills, leadership, and reputations. In lieu of a traditional dissertation and oral defense, our students write a reflective summary that links the products of the portfolio.

We are excited about the contributions of this program but have much to learn. Ultimately, we hope and expect the graduates of this program to shape the future of OSL in the U.S. and beyond. We plan to continue to welcome annual cohorts of OSL leaders in our three-year program. We have an early spring application deadline, then the program starts in the summer with a week-long, in-person on-ramp, followed by synchronous classes approximately once a month. If you are interested in more information, please visit our website at education.pitt.edu or feel free to contact us.

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Author Information

Anna Klerfelt, Jönköping University, School of Education and Communication. Main research interests: school-age educare, children's meaning making and communication through aesthetic expressions, teacher profession, integration in school-age educare centres. Address: Jönköping University, School of Education and Communication, Box 1026, SE 551 11 Jönköping, Sweden.
E-mail: Anna.Klerfelt@ju.se

Marie Fahlén, University of Borås, Faculty of Librarianship, Information, Education and IT. Main research interests: impact of religion and human rights on education; visual culture, religion and media. Address: University of Borås, SE-501 90 Borås, Sweden.
E-mail: marie.fahlen@hb.se

David Thore Gravesen, VIA University College, Denmark, Faculty of Education & Social Studies. Main research interests: Leisure-time pedagogy, Leisure-time centres, extended education and research of youth culture. Address: Faculty of Education & Social Studies, VIA University College Campus Viborg, Prinsens Allé 2, 8800 Viborg, Denmark.
E-mail: dtg@via.dk

Lea Ringskou, VIA University College, Denmark, Faculty of Education & Social Studies. Main research interests: Leisure-time pedagogy, Leisure-time centres, extended education and animation aesthetics. Address: Faculty of Education & Social Studies, VIA University College Campus Viborg, Prinsens Allé 2, 8800 Viborg, Denmark.
E-mail: lri@via.dk

Atara Sivan, Hong Kong Baptist University, Department of Education Studies. Main research interests: Leisure education, youth development & leisure, classroom environment, learning communities, teacher education. Address: Department of Education Studies, Hong Kong Baptist University, 8/F AAB Building, 15 Baptist University Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong.
E-mail: atarasiv@hkbu.edu.hk

Gertrude Po Kwan Siu, Hong Kong Baptist University. Main research interests: Adolescents' serious leisure. Address: Department of Education Studies, Hong Kong Baptist University, 8/F AAB Building, 15 Baptist University Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong.
E-mail: siupkg@gmail.com

Björn Haglund, University of Gothenburg, Department of education, communication and learning. Main research interests: leisure-time centres, childhood sociology, critical discourse analysis and structuration theory. Address: Box 300, 405 30, Gothenburg, Sweden.
E-mail: bjorn.haglund@ped.gu.se

Louise Peterson, University of Gothenburg, Department of education, communication and learning. Main research interests: play and games, IT and learning, teachers' professional learning in social media. Address: Box 300, 405 30, Gothenburg, Sweden.
E-mail: louise.peterson@ped.gu.se

Charles Underwood, University of California, Berkeley, Graduate School of Education. Main research interests: Learning in sociocultural context; digital literacies and social identities; sociocultural processes in inter-institutional collaboration; mediational processes in social inclusion. Address: Graduate School of Education, 4423 Tolman Hall, University of California, Berkeley.
E-mail: underwood@berkeley.edu

Kolbrún Pálsdóttir, University of Iceland. Main research interests: Informal learning, leisure-time centres, collaboration in education, childhood studies. Address: Stakkahlíð, 105, Reykjavík, Iceland.
E-mail: kolbrunp@hi.is

Steingerður Kristjánsdóttir, University of Iceland. Main research interests: Leisure-time centres, play, informal learning, servant leadership. Address: Stakkahlíð, 105, Reykjavík, Iceland.
E-mail: steingek@hi.is

Thomas Akiva, University of Pittsburgh, School of Education. Main research interests**:** Understanding youth programs, professional development for youth workers, and building equitable systems for cross-setting learning. Address: 5938 Posvar Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15260, USA.
E-mail: tomakiva@pitt.edu

Kevin Crowley, University of Pittsburgh, School of Education. Main research interests: Informal learning. Address: LRDC 822, 3939 O'Hara St., Pittsburgh, PA 15260.
E-mail: crowleyk@pitt.edu

Jennifer Lin Russell, University of Pittsburgh, School of Education. Main research interests: Organizing for educational improvement, policy implementation, networks. Address: 3939 O'Hara St., 808 LRDC Bldg, Pittsburgh, PA 15260.
E-mail: jrussel@pitt.edu

Marijke Hecht, University of Pittsburgh, School of Education. Main research interests: Informal science education, urban environmental education, learning ecosystems. Address: 3939 O'Hara Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.
E-mail: meh183@pitt.edu