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Implications of inclusion and exclusion for the social pedagogical practice within the field of disabilities

Inclusion has been a dominant theme for more than twenty years in the political and educational field (Kornerup 2009). Inclusion can be seen in many different levels and in many different areas and has become a political and educational buzzword (Langager, Schmidt & Øster 2012). On an ideological political level, ratifying the Salamaca Declaration in 1994 had a huge impact on the worldwide focus on inclusion, especially in the school / day-care system. But also within the field of disability, ratifying the United Nations Disability Convention in 2006, equal rights and inclusion for people with disabilities became a focal point (Kornerup 2009).

A report from The Danish National Centre for Social Research (SFI) from 2011 indicates that there is a general lack of research on disability in Denmark. Specifically, there is a lack of research on the possibility for disabled people to participate in society and the risk of being exclude (Bengtsson & Laursen Stigaard 2011). In addition, a Danish review study (2012) concludes that adults with intellectual disabilities often are excluded or at risk of being excluded from social life. The study claims these exclusion processes can be identified as barriers in society (Rosendahl Jensen, 2012).

Focus of the project

The aim of this project is to create knowledge about adults with intellectual disabilities and social pedagogue’s, experiences and understandings related to inclusion and exclusion processes. What consequences emerge from these experiences and understandings within the field of social work? The project’s ambition is to study inclusion and exclusion processes in different bottom-up perspectives (Bogason & Sørensen 1998). Bottom-up perspectives can help to understand and develop social understandings (Krogstrup 2001, Aagaard et al., 2014), identify problems and concepts in social work regarding service users and social pedagogues (Hedegaard Hansen 2009).
Research question
How can inclusion and exclusion processes be experienced and perceived in an adult service user perspective and a social pedagogical perspective within the field of intellectual disabilities, and what consequences may this have for the field of social work?

The project will study:
- Through narrative interviews, how adults with intellectual disabilities experience themselves included or excluded.
- Through narrative interviews, how social pedagogues understand inclusion and exclusion processes within social work.
- Through document analysis, how political and administrative documents describe the inclusion efforts in the field of adults with disabilities.

This paper aims to describe the projects theoretical and methodological approach in relation to the above-mentioned narrative interviews. In other words, there is no focus on the part of the study that concerns the document analysis. I will explain the project's theoretical position, the logic of research and the data processing such as my analysis- and interpretation approach. I am inspired by Dahler-Larsen (2010) who claims that methodology in qualitative studies must be reflected in relation to the above three levels. Furthermore, it is the ambition to clarify the correlation between my research theoretical basis, the research logic and the specific research approach that I am planning to conduct. In this way, this paper must be seen as primarily reflections towards an analysis strategy.

Reflections regarding the theoretical approach
The purpose of my empirical study is to gain knowledge - perspectives regarding inclusion and exclusion in the field of social work. How different experiences and understandings among adults with intellectual disabilities and social pedagogues may have an impact on how social pedagogical practice is taking place. Thus, there is focus on the concrete experiences and understandings among the service users and street level workers in social work. A study of everyday life’s ‘small’ narratives that can provide detailed understanding of local problems and experiences (Reff & Sehested 2003). This knowledge should not only be seen as individual experiences, but also as an account of existing cultural understandings and can be seen as ‘windows’ to different powerful discourses (Järvinen 2005). Therefore, it is also my ambition to generate knowledge that may be relevant to the field of social work.

My project is inspired by the theory of symbolic interactionism where human activity must be understood related to sociality. At the same time, I am inspired by constructivism and how phenomena are created through the activation of various dominant discourses. Although the two approaches are different, they both focus on power (Mik-Meyer & Järvinen 2005). Goffman and Becker describes how exclusion can be based on society's categorization of the deviant and is not related to the individual's characteristics. This categorization may lead to labelling and stigmatization of the individual as being abnormal or directly inhuman (Becker 2005, Goffman
1963/1990). This stigmatization process can even change the stigmatized identity, whereby the person may experience himself or herself, as the negative deviation that others have labelled the person with (Goffman 1963/1990). Therefore, these social interactions are crucial to how deviation and outsiders are created (Becker 2005, Goffman 1963/1990), and thus how exclusion issues can be understood. My second theoretical perspective can be seen as a constructivist approach and explain how power determines the individuals through normalization, control and technology. Foucault describe how the modern western society has changed and excluded deviants by institutionalization such as jails and hospitals (Foucault 2002, 2003). However, at the same time powerful discourses controls the individual and internalize a form of control into the subject itself. Foucault claims therefore the normalization project today also are ruled by the subject itself (Foucault 2002). The exclusion processes are ruled through institutionalization both inside and outside the subject and shapes both subject and the society. In order to understand power we must pay attention to the powerful discourses and the way it govern society (Foucault 1978/1994). In relation to these two theoretically approaches, I would like to focus on subtle power relations, and study how this can be seen in relation to the topic of the Ph.D. thesis on inclusion and exclusion.

The discourse analytical approach can furthermore be justified by my ambition to link ‘small’ local narratives with more general cultural trends. The discourse concept focuses on how meaning are defined, understood as a level between universal and unique (Hansen 2013). The discourse theoretical approach also means that the knowledge this project is able to gain may always be understood in relation to the position and perspective in which the researcher is studying the field (Hansen 2013). It is thus not possible to find the 'truth' or how the world really is, but to gain knowledge about or focus on how the world can be understood. Laclau mentions the relationship between objectivity and the way in which we understand a given situation, like a myth.

"By myth we mean a space of representation witch bears no relation of continuity with the Dominant structural objectivity. Myth is thus a principle of reading of a given situation. ... Any Objectivity, then, is merely a crystallized myth. "(Laclau 1990).

This lack of relation between objectivity and the way we understand the world will thus be present not only in the understanding of inclusion and exclusion processes that emerge in the empirical material, but also in the way in which the findings will be selected, analysed and understood. We cannot get insight into the world without taking into account a particular discourse or paradigm (Hansen 2013).

The logic of research
The above mentioned theoretical approaches have an influence on how the empirical material can be understood in this project. The data I have collected should not be seen as knowledge that reveals an inherent truth in the material. My approach differs, from Kvale and Brinkmann's metaphor of the qualitative interviewer who, as a 'miner', searches for digging 'metal', as objectively given information (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009). Instead, the empirical material in my project can be seen as the metaphor, Kvale & Brinkmann call 'the traveller'. Here data is made in conversations with the interviewer as an inquirer, and where empirical material is created in interaction, understood and interpreted by the interviewer – ‘the traveller’ (Kvale & Brinkmann
In my ambition to create knowledge about experience and understandings, I have chosen a semi structured interview approach (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009), where the focus will be everyday life analyzed as narratives (Järvinen 2005, Gubrium & Holstein 2012, Riessman 2012). The narrative approach is described by Brinkmann & Tanggaard (2010) as a significant contribution to human- and social science research, because this approach provides effective insight into how people perceive, define and understand. Narrative interviews are not neutral objective knowledge but seek to focus both on how and what in relation to analysing the interviews (Gubrium & Holstein 2012, Järvinen 2004). In other words, it is not only relevant to look at what the informants talks about but also how it is told, which Gubrium and Holstein call the narrative practice. This can be understood as an active meaning-producing activity that emerges in the meeting of the interview participants. However, it is not just a practice that can be seen as an individual or local action. Stories arise in an environment that are based on culture and widespread norms (Gubrium & Holstein 2012). An example of this is Goffman's theory of how people in the asylum become institutionalized (Goffman 1967). Here the individual's possibilities are framed by the powerful institutional order or culture (Järvinen 2005). The narrative practice provides certain understandings regarding themes, knowledge, subject positions and authority (Gubrium & Holstein 2012) and these understandings are possible through the narrative interview to gain insight into. In relation to my project, the question becomes how meaning is created through narratives of in / exclusion processes in the field of social work. The narrative approach also means focus on the way of speaking. You may see language unfolding meaning and as a filter through which our experiences are structured. In other words, it is the language and thus stories that construct the social world (Galvind Bo 2016).

Narrative interview and how to analyse the empirical material

From June 2016 to June 2017, I have conducted seventeen interviews in three different institutions. Approximately half of the interviews were conducted with adults with intellectual disabilities, and half of the interviews were conducted with social pedagogues. As an inspiration to my work in conducting and analysing narrative interviews, I will refer to Riessman (2001, 2012) and Järvinen (2004, 2005). Riessman does not necessarily see narratives as bibliographic life stories or as 'big' stories but narratives can also be seen as 'small' everyday life accounts and can imply many different types of conversations, interviews, or other kind of field work interactions. Similarly, my interviews are structured around ‘small’ accounts based on everyday life in the field of social work. The focus in my project is inclusion and exclusion and like Riessman (2001), I use a thematic narrative approach where I have prior focus on the subject of the research.

Riessman (2012) and Järvinen (2004) both focus on the plot of narratives where Järvinen describes that narrative which contains a plot can be seen as a prototype for Western narratives. The purpose can be seen as the individual’s way of creating coherence in chaotic elements and describe who we were in the past and how we describe ourselves today (Järvinen 2004). Järvinen mentions, like Riessman, how stories can thus be seen as an identity project (Riessman 2012, Järvinen 2004). The narrator has experienced some form of distortion that the narrators interpret
and make sense of. The account is so important that it is given space by the narrator, unlike other stories and the plot(s) are so important because they tell about disruptions, personal troubles uncertainties for the narrator. These plots, personal troubles or uncertainties etc. are the focus for my study. As mentioned before my starting point focus are power issues and how power emerges in the narrators problems. In addition to a thematic focus, narrative analysis can also focus on the structure of the narrative and how the story is related to time and space (Riessman 2012). The narrative structure is typically described as having a general structure as follows: a beginning, a middle and the end, and thus tries to make sense with the experiences the narrator has experienced (Järvinen 2004).

With inspiration from Riessman (2012), my analysing approach is structured as below and I will subsequently describe how I understand and plan four analytical elements.

1. Presentation of a detailed transcription of my interviews focusing on the story plot(s).
2. Focus on structure and language used in my interviews related to discourse features
3. Analysis of the dialogic interview or co productive narrative between interviewer and informant.
4. Interpreting similarities and differences across my narrative interviews (Riessman 2012)

As a first part of an analysis, after transcription, I will organize each interview based on the above-mentioned narrative structure in order to identify the plot or plots in the narratives. As previously described, Laclau (1990) points out; reality is a myth or one reading of reality that cannot be seen as the objective reality. Therefore narratives is not to be seen as a natural reality but can be understood as the reality of the story. Furthermore narratives should not only be seen as a personal issue because what is said and the way in which it is interpreted can be seen as the narrators’ meaning embedded in the social, thus rejecting or confirming dominant discourses (Riessman 2012). The analysis’s identification of the narrative’s plot can also be seen as my reading of the informants’ experiences and understandings that will also be related to cultural structures or patterns in the field of social work as well as society in general. Järvinen describes how stories of the individual can only make sense to the individual and the outside world if the account corresponds to other more general narratives. This means that the story also serves to confirm or enrol in the culture or context of which individuals are a part. The narrative must legitimize for others and for the individual herself/himself that the problem or struggle is generally recognizable (Järvinen 2004).

The above-mentioned relation between the micro level and macro level will be my focus in the second analysis. My ambition is to link local narratives to more general themes such as inclusion and exclusion issues. This includes, as previously mentioned, a Goffman (1963/1990) approach on deviation, stigmatizing and spoiled identities, as well as Foucault’s (2004, 1978/1994) power analysis on normalization, control and technology. In the attempt to analyse how the interview enrols in different discourses, I will focus on the language and the structure of the narrative. How does the informant describe her/his daily life and how does the accounts links to the above-mentioned themes? With inspiration from Riessman and Järvinen, I will look for how different
roles and positions are described, although they can be understood as contingent and sometimes opposing. (Riesman 2012, Järvinen 2004). An example may be how the narrator can appear in active or passive roles, as well as how the narrator talks about the response he or she gets from adopting these positions (Riesman 2001).

As a third element of my analysis, I will focus on the interview dialog or the words of the narrative praxis as used by Gubrium and Holstein (2012). The interview takes place in a concrete interaction in a specific context between the informant and me. The narrative interview approach can be understood as a dance of conversation where interviewer and informant are switched to lead (Riessman 2012). In this way, an interview must also be analysed and understood in relation to the interaction that takes place during the interview. Riessman (2012) mentions that if the informant told his/her story in another context and to another person, the story would have sounded differently. To explain what happens in the narrative interview, Riessman draws on Goffman’s dramaturgical metaphor:

"What talkers undertake to do is not to provide information to a recipient but to present dramas to an audience. Indeed, it seems that we spend more of our time not engaged in giving information but in giving shows” (Goffman 1974)

Therefore, it becomes relevant also to focus on the drama in the interview and focus on roles, perspectives, orientations, statements and views (Riessman 2012). In relation to my semi structured interview approach, I have focused on the informant’s understanding of his / her own role, their perspectives and positions as well as their views of context and relation to other people. How are these elements presented during the interview and how can I subsequently analyse these presentations. That will be the focal point for this part of the analysis. There must be two to tango and this dance of conversation emphasizes the importance of playing attention to the interviewer role as well. How do I understand the subjects of the interviews and what does it mean for the interview data and vice versa.

As a fourth analysis, I will identify similarities and differences across my interviews in relation to the above named themes of deviation, stigmatizing and spoiled identities, normalization, control and technology. Finally, it is a focal point for Riessman (2012) that the analysis must be open to unexpected findings that emerges in the empirical material and my ambition will be the same – try to be open-minded discovering new findings. This part of my analysis, hopefully, will reveal consequences of inclusion and exclusion experiences within the field of social work and can be seen as my interpretation of the empirical material.

Closing remarks
Narratives can be seen as the individual’s continuous identity project in relation to how the narrator carries out his/her accounts (Järvinen 2004), both in terms of content and form. Therefore, as mentioned, my analysis will focus on both ‘what’ and ‘how’ because the content and structure of the story entails a prototype of Western narratives and may lead to link ‘small’ stories
to dominant discourses. The narrative approach can be relevant for the purpose of this project, describing how the informants have experiences and understandings, regarding the above mentioned identity project, and can reveal knowledge about the individual and its relation to groups, institutions and society. My narrative approach will hopefully be able to both generate knowledge about in-/exclusion processes that are not only relevant to the individual but can be seen as knowledge of more general trends in the field of social work.
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