

THE INFLUENCE OF LOCAL PRACTICES AND IDEOLOGIES UPON THE PARTICIPATION OF THE PEDAGOGUE IN SITUATED ADULT-CHILD INTERACTIONS

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Introduction and aim

Adult-child interactions are recognized as a key contributor to children's development (Bowlby, 2008; Fonagy & Target, 2006; Stern, 2000; Vygotsky, 1994) and to the quality of early childhood education (Hamre, 2014). However, while effects of adult-child interactions on children's outcomes have been thoroughly investigated (e.g. Mashburn et al., 2008; Sylva, 2010; Weiland & Yoshikawa, 2013), far less is known about how the pedagogue's open and sensitive participation in intersubjective (Stern, 2000) interactions is shaped in situated preschool settings (Goodfellow, 2008; Johansson, 2004; Bae, 2012). Based on current research, which shows that aspects related to pedagogue-child interactions, such as the pedagogue's *relation-competence* and *knowledge* are situated, contextual, collective, and not (only) associated with the individual pedagogue (Nielsen & Laursen, 2020; Plum, 2017; Togsverd & Aabro, 2020), the aim of this study is to investigate processes, that contribute to the pedagogue's participation in interactions with children in preschool settings.

Method

Qualitative interviews (Forchhammer, 2001) were conducted with five pedagogues from two Danish daycare centers. Based on the theoretical framework of practice based critical psychology (Kousholt & Thomsen, 2013; Mørck, 2000; Schwartz, 2005) and a thematic analysis (Kousholt, 2019) using the interdependent terms *participation*, *local practices*, *local ideologies*, and *the process of coming to an understanding* (inspired by Mørck, 2007), the study explores the following research question through the standpoint of the pedagogue as a subject: *How do local practices and ideologies contribute to the shaping of the pedagogue as a subject who participates in interaction with children in day care?*

Results and discussion

The results show that the pedagogue's process of coming to an understanding mediates the influence of local practices and ideologies upon the pedagogue's participation in adult-child interactions and occurs on several levels simultaneously. It is associated with orienting oneself in both physical and discursively created spaces, which depend on which local ideologies are expressed or not expressed. At the center of this orientation is *the pedagogical space*, where the *pedagogue as a subject* seeks to participate in ways that are consistent with the interpellated figure "*the pedagogue*". In contrast to this figure, the *pedagogue as a subject* not only participates as open, sensitive, and responsive, but also experiences how these attitudes are associated with insecurity,

vulnerability, and emotions, which are not included in the local ideologies, that interpellate (Mørck, 2007) the figure “*the pedagogue*”. If the individual pedagogue does not include the *pedagogue as a subject* in his or her understanding of “*the pedagogue*”, the *pedagogue as a subject* is marginalized not only in the local ideologies, but also in the pedagogue’s own process of coming to an understanding.

The collegial community can constitute a *boundary community of practice* (Mørck, 2007), allowing the *pedagogue as a subject* to exceed the marginalized position and achieve recognized participation in *the pedagogical space*.

Without this *boundary community of practice*, the vulnerability associated with the *pedagogue as a subject* seems to entail a participation, where the pedagogues recline from collective professional reflection about their trajectories of participation, which in turn can impact the pedagogues’ participation in adult-child interactions.

The interdependence between local practices, local ideologies, and the pedagogue’s process of coming to an understanding seem to pose both a prerequisite and a barrier to the pedagogue’s participation as an open and sensitive subject in adult-child interactions. The results suggest a potential for further studies using the applied theoretical framework to understand how adult-child interactions are shaped in situated preschool practices.

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