Working with socially endangered children in Danish day-care institutions

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This article is based on an ongoing PhD-project which examines the teachers' competences and the pedagogical practice in working with socially endangered children in day-care institutions. The background of the article is based on an assumption that, because of the society-political development inside the day-care institution area and the modernization of the public sector, increasingly greater demands are made on the pedagogical staff in working with endangered children's well-being and development. The article increases both international and Danish research about the possibilities and difficulties of the day-care institution to prove socially endangered children's general well-being and development. In addition to this the article discusses how the changes in society in relation to the day-care institution can be understood as a change from common pedagogical work with all children with a focus on playing, learning and development and, at the same time, also to include explicit social-pedagogical contribution focused on socially endangered children.

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Introduction

The societal movements connected to the development in the Danish welfare society have resulted in that the development of the day-care institutions points towards two characteristic changes which within the latest years stand out and reach inside the pedagogical practice (Petersen, 2007, 2008). One of the changes is social political with the Service-law (1998) and then the introduction of the Law about Learning Plans (2004) for children before school start, and also the Law about Day-offers (2007) which latest has been passed by the Danish Parliament. The other change follows in the wake of the first one but it has a more pedagogical consequence because the day-care institutions through social-political laws and adoptions are changed from a predominantly offer for children at the age 0-6 years old to, in the future, to include a more explicitly described social-pedagogical character which has to imply both preventive and supporting contributions towards socially endangered children. However a lot of research areas have identified essential implications in relation to use the day-care institution as a preventive and supporting function in relation to socially endangered children and as an instrument which can help to break with a childhood affected by a negative social inheritance (Christensen 1996, Ploug, 2003, Jensen et al., 2003, Jensen, 2005, Ploug, 2007a, 2007b).

General research shows that the implications primary can be illustrated from two areas. One area consists of an institutional perspective where institutional conditions, such as lack of economical resources, social-political conditions, social segregation, lack of staff resources and insufficient co-operation between involved public instances influence on the possibilities to support the socially endangered children in their well-being and development. The other area can be identified as a child perspective. Several studies, primarily inside the anthropological and sociological research, have throughout later years pointed out that e.g. time together between the grown-ups (the teachers) and the endangered children can be affected by a (unconsciously) selective mechanism which assists in an increasing risk of expulsion and marginalizing as well as a compensating pedagogical approach to the endangered child's possibilities of development, which also assists to maintain stigmatized processes which already are assumed to be there in a societal context (Ellegard, 2003, Warming, 2002, Palludan, 2003, Jensen, 2003).

Socially endangered children

Before we take a close look upon the day-care institution and the difficulties which the research has identified in relation to the work with socially endangered children, it is essential to define the concept of socially endangered children in this context.

The concept of socially endangered children is a concept which during the last years has been a subject of very much public attention and political debate. The same has its effect with the concept of negative social inheritance. The research field is affected by many and historical changing analyses and ways of thinking which contribute to create a great uncertainty about who the socially endangered children include and when we can use the concept of negative social inheritance which apparently as well as in the public debate as in the practice field is used to cover nearly all problems concerning children and young people from endangered childhood conditions (Ejernæs et al., 2005).

In this article the concept socially endangered children is used. The concept is used as an overriding term which refers to children who, in different ways and with different weight, are in social emergency situations, as Mathisen (1999) describes it.

This employment of the concept contains an understanding of the children's problems connected to their actual, concrete participation in their lives and thus tries to go beyond determined and static understandings of the weight as well as the extent of socially endangered children's lives –and development conditions. Mathisen (1999) uses the concept pedagogical emergency situations which refers to that the child's life situation is characterized as an absenteeism of development conditions. As an understanding of this there is a focus on the child's solicitude relations as a basic development condition, and it puts in a claim for that at the same time there is a focus on the child's possibilities to develop solicitude relations rather than looking at the child's social vulnerable position as a static condition.

The idea of a social vulnerable condition is not a clear theoretical or empirical concept but is often used in the research, in political publicity, as well as in the pedagogical practice field as a term of a group of children who, for different reasons, have a hard time during their childhood. However it is difficult to increase when the different concepts are used and why, just as if looking through Danish as well as international research studies we can identify a lot of concepts which apparently are about the same, that is children who have a hard time in their life situation, but that both the reasons for this and the extent and the duration of the difficulties vary depending on the theoretical and empirical design of the research.

However a lot of Danish studies (Egelund and Hestbæk, 2004, Christensen, 2006) have increased reasons as well as indications of especially difficult childhood conditions. In this context it can be used as a tool to find out what is brought up. Schultz Jørgensen et al. (1993, Schultz Jørgensen, 2002) uses the concept risk children which consists of a tripartition among children who, in different ways, are in a risk zone; children who originally were "problem children" and who already had been exposed to great strained conditions in their childhood, and children who were "threatened" in their development because they had experienced serious strains which made demands on special pedagogical help, and children with special needs which consist of children who also have experienced difficulties in their childhood but where the problems have not been so extensive that it has had a crucial influence on the child's development and well-being.

In the international research about endangered children (Petersen, 2006) point out that children's indication of a vulnerable position can be illustrated through a number of problem descriptions; emotional difficulties, problems with behavior, cognitive difficulties and delay in development related to language, understanding, and concentration. Furthermore it is described that endangered children enter their school-lives with problems connected to the social as well as the emotional and the cognitive area. Going through a number of

international studies we can, as a starting point, classify two superior explanations about the child's vulnerable position: a structural explanation and a predominantly individual explanation.

- The structural explanation indicates the children's vulnerable position in relation to the parents' social-economical place in society (SES) and predominantly is about social-economical and political conditions. Here a childhood is affected by poverty, bad housing conditions, the parents' lack of education and lack of or badly paid jobs, abuse problems and ethnicity, culture and race problems (especially in the American researches) (Elder, et al.,1985, Elder 1999, Farber & Egeland, 1987, Anthony & Cohler, 1987, Weiss, 2004, Vleminekx & Smeeding, 2003)

- The individual explanation which is about psychological and psychiatric reasons where the child's vulnerable position is analysed in relation to the child's behavior (for example tested through psychometrical test methods and descriptions). Here the child's behavior is pointed out as the primary reason to the child's vulnerable life situation, alternative the child's correlation with parents, including the parents' desertion of care and lack of parent-ability (Hubbs-Tait et al.,2002, Kaiser et al.,2000, Lutz et al., 2002, Lyons-Ruth & Melnick, 2004, Laucht, 2003, Primavera, 2000, Raver et al., 1999, Rutter, 1985, 2000)

Socially endangered children in the day-care institution – in an international perspective

In the international research it is not a new thinking to involve the day-care institution as an organized pedagogical effort towards socially endangered children (Petersen, 2006). A broad view over the international research field increases a number of studies which have dealt with the development of early pedagogical efforts in the day-care institution directed towards the socially endangered children's development possibilities.

International studies of early pedagogical efforts are very many in number and content through the last 40 years. Primarily there are lots of studies from USA where the tradition about using a randomized research design for measuring indication of an effect of a given effort is much more used than in other countries, among these Denmark.

At present, we do not have the knowledge about what importance the day-care institution has, as it is organized in Denmark for the socially endangered children's development possibilities. On the other hand many international studies can increase the importance of the day-care institution for endangered children's social and learning development. Overriding it can be divided into two sorts of research studies:

- Studies which research into the child's participation in a normal day-care institution among all the other children.

- Studies which research into the child's participation in a day-care institution which is organized especially to support socially endangered children's development possibilities.

As regards to the first type of studies there are a number of researches which have examined the importance of the day-care institution and through that found relevant things which refer to endangered children's development possibilities in the day-care institution. The American research made by Magnuson et al., (2004) has, through a comparison with different types of day-care institutions in USA, found out that children who are in a day-care institution with organized learning programs with a focus on preparing for school-life managed much better in the first years of school compared with the group of children who had not participated. The research also proves that the day-care institution has an importance for endangered children, because endangered children in the day-care institution get a cognitive support which they would not get at home.

The English research made by Sylvia et al., (1999), Sammons et al., (2003), Sammons et al., (2004) has also made a comparing analysis of the importance of the day-care institution, which has looked upon to the different sorts care possibilities which exist in USA as well as in England. Here results from the research show that there is a difference between children's cognitive and social development whether the children are in a day-care institution before starting school or whether they are at home. Children, who are in the day-care institution, manage much better in social and cognitive tests while the children who were at home also had conditions at home which were affected by the mother being unemployed, having no education, a low income and another ethnic origin than English.

The other type of international researches which examine the effect of pedagogical efforts especially organized towards socially endangered children, are the classical American researches which have been made for about 30 years ago. When they are still interesting in this context, it is because a lot of these studies, apart from using a randomized controlled research design, are also longitudinal and therefore have collected research knowledge about how, in a long term in life, these children who have received pedagogical efforts in their early childhood, have managed. Thus a research (Schweinhart et al., 1993) has followed a group of children through their school-lives, youth-lives and later grown-up-lives, and results from the research point out that children who have participated in the pedagogical intervention in their early childhood-lives manage much better in their youth-lives and grown-up-lives compared to the control group who did not receive pedagogical intervention. Another American research (Weikart et al., 1978, Schweikart et al., 1986) made a comparison between three sorts of pedagogical efforts with three types of organized learning programs for endangered children. The results from the research point out that it is the intervention itself more than the content which contributes to create better development possibilities for endangered children.

A research from Ireland (Kellaghan & Greaney. 1993) also examines an organized pedagogical effort in relation to endangered children at the age of 3-5 years old. Also here an improvement of the endangered children's social and cognitive development through the course of intervention is pointed out, however longitudinal results from the research increase that there are not big significant differences later in the children's lives in relation to school, unemployment and education. By going through the content of the international researches (Schweinhart, 1993, Weikart et al., 1978. Schweikart et al., 1986, Kellahan & Greany, 1993) we can see a number of factors which include both the content of the pedagogical effort and facts which relate to the pedagogical staff who are working with the endangered children. Factors in relation to the pedagogical staff refer to adequate professional competences to be able to observe and organize pedagogical efforts connected to the individual child's difficulties while factors related to the pedagogical content of the day-care institution refer to the importance of organized learning plans (curriculum) with a special focus on for example language and playing and the involving of the children's parents in the organized pedagogical practice of the day-care institution.

The main conclusion on the background of the international literature is that results show that an early organized pedagogical effort has a positive influence for endangered children's social, emotional and cognitive development. This conclusion can be seen on the background of results of researches which have examined and compared children who have been in a day-care institution with children who had been taken care of at home before starting school. Also this conclusion has to be looked upon on the background of the early researches which have been made where socially endangered children have received intensive organized pedagogical efforts and where the children have been followed through their youth and adult lives. These studies point out that this group of children manage much better in relation to youth crime, broken schooling, early teenage pregnancies and education and working lives.

Another and just as essential conclusion, on the background of the collected international researches, is on one side the lack of theoretical explained analysis and on the other side the meaning of the theoretical perspectives which are used in the understanding of the socially endangered children's difficulties. This conclusion can directly seemed a bit paradoxical and in contrast and needs a further explanation.

In an examination of international researches early classical researches (Schweinhart, 1993, Weikart et al., 1978, Schweikart et al., 1986, Kellahan & Greany, 1993) explain theoretical substantiate pedagogical efforts, looked upon from the classical developmental psychological understanding of the child's cognitive and emotional development (ibib). This is obvious, compared with the time perspective but what is also remarkably is the lack of theoretically deeply rooted analysis of the children's lives in these organized pedagogical efforts. That means that we only get a knowledge about the children's participation in the day-care institution through test results and reviews of using a number of measure methods. In this way we also get a problem understanding of the children's lives, connected to their social lives for example poverty and skin colour (all children in the early American researches were black children). In proportion to the international researches, which use a more comparative research design, we do not get any theoretical perspectives about the understanding of the day-care institution or the understanding of the child's problems. Here the lack of theoretical reasonable understandings of children's life conditions as well as the understanding of the importance of the day-care institution for the child's life are very clear and it assists in not getting enough attention to how the day-care institution can contribute to creating better development conditions for socially endangered children. This way, in a research perspective, we do not get the knowledge about the socially endangered child's development directly connected to the practice of the day-care institution just as we do not get knowledge about the pedagogical staff's working with and understanding of the children.

The theoretical perspectives which we get, of course with reservations to the actual term, are primary classical development psychological and clinical psychological understandings of children's behavior, which assist in indicating that beforehand we talk about problem-oriented understanding of children's behavior and actions which traditionally operate with an abstract (Højholt & Witt, 1996, Schwartz, 2007) understanding of the child.

On our way to social pedagogical work in the Danish day-care institution

As described in the beginning the Danish day-care institution has through the last years been assigned to a number of social political laws and adoptions which vitally create changes in the common pedagogical practice – aimed towards the work with socially endangered children in the day-care institution. Changes which include social political laws and adoptions make demands on that the day-care institution has to contain both a common pedagogical content and also has to develop social pedagogical efforts aimed towards socially endangered children (Petersen, 2007, 2008). With the above it is essential to point out the following facts; that on the socially political side there is a wish that in the established practice of the day-care institution they shall work specific towards the socially endangered child while a number of research results refer to a number of problems connected to this work (ibid). It is not, in any way, new knowledge that the day-care institution has to contain and work with socially endangered children looked upon from a historical perspective.
What, on the other hand, creates new and changed conditions in the pedagogical practice is that the Government more than ever moves into the content area of the pedagogical practice, something which has not been a tradition before (Kofod, 2007). So while the lack of Government interference, in a historical perspective, has given the day-care institution a possibility to develop common pedagogical initiatives then you can also point out that the introduction of a number of laws and adoptions through later years have caused that social pedagogical work has to be organized and carried out in new ways in the existing common

pedagogical practice, because new demands are made to the presentation of the pedagogical practice as well as demands to the professional's competences and pedagogical practice knowledge.

The work of the social pedagogy has traditionally in Denmark included social work with children, young people and grown-ups who, in different ways, have been placed, or in another way have received help in institutions and is thus closely connected to the understanding of the society and treatment of social problems (Hutchinson & Oltedal 2002, Meuwisse & Swärd, 2006). Langager & Vonsild (2008) argue how the social pedagogical thinking through later years has come into the day-care institution and like this no longer only can be maintained in the traditional social pedagogical conditions in residential homes for children or young persons, houseshares and with marginalized groups in the society;

"Social pedagogy has come into focus in efforts inside day-care institutions andafter-school centres, school, education and labour market, local environment and social work. Very often with another name than social pedagogy but with the social dimension and social including purpose as a pedagogical pivotal point" (Langager & Vonsild, 2008, p.4)

The argumentation for that in the actual presentation of the day-care institution regulated by a number of laws and adoptions can be identified in a way that social pedagogical tasks demand a definition of the concept social pedagogy as well as the working areas of the social pedagogy. While common pedagogy is about upbringing, or socialization in broad sense, the social pedagogy is used in the situations where the upbringing practice did not succeed (Rosendal Jensen, 2006). In this way the two perspectives can be separated but at the same time it also shows that what is going on in the day-care institution is affected by simultaneously double functions. While social pedagogical work traditionally takes place in institutions made for the purpose, as for example children's home and residential homes and treatment institutions, that means outside the home and where social problems and children's and young people's difficulties are defined and taken care of through an emplacement, the day-care institution is organized for all children from a common pedagogical approach which focuses on upbringing before starting school. At the same time the day-care institution contains both upbringing or socialization for everybody and social pedagogical work when the upbringing project does not succeed. In this way the professional persons in the pedagogical practice have to handle two functions at the same time, where one of them, so to speak, takes precedence over the other, that is it works because of or as a result of it. Precedence means that the upbringing or socialized function of the day-care institution is the essential purpose about the child's life in the day-care institution, while the social pedagogical problems are squeezed in primary as a result of society conditional circumstances.

Social pedagogy tells us something about the relation between society and the individual – or opens up the possibility to identify ideas about the difficulties of the subject dealing with social problems in the modern society.
Rosendal Jensen (2006) is inspired of the German discussion about social pedagogy, especially Boehnisch , and increases exactly the above dialectical relations between society and the individual. In this context it is emphasized that the relation between the individual and the society is regarded as a conflict where the social pedagogy in its practice contributes to an analysis of the conflicts, their reason and explanation, and also contributes with a development of concepts for working up conflicts.

"Social pedagogy , in its historical societal development, can be understood as societal reactions on the fact that children, young people and older people have problems mastering the challenges which are the result of social non-integration" (Rosendal Jensen, 2006, p. 234-235).

In this perspective there is a focus on that social pedagogy is inextricably linked with the structural development in the society and social difficulties are linked with the actual social, economical and cultural problems which stand out for the single person as well as for groups in the society.

"The characteristic of the social pedagogy is that it puts in it's problems in relation to and looks for productive solutions to the conflicts in the dynamic individual-society-interaction. It's limits are also set by both poles: in the form of the subject's denial of "being available" and of the own-logic of the society" (Rosendal Jensen, 2006, p. 239)

The entry of social pedagogy into the day-care institution can, to a special extent, be identified through central laws through later years connected to the modernized processes of the welfare state. With The Service Law (1998) and The Law about learning Plans (2003) and The Law about Day-offers (2007) we can identify a number of explicit laws and adoptions which directly point out that the day-care institution more than before has to work specific with socially endangered children.

In the law about social service (§8) it emerges clearly that the day-care institutions have to *"work as an integrated part of both the total general offer of the local authority to children and of the preventive and supporting effort towards children, among these children with a reduced physical or mental functional ability or with another need of support"*. This formulation is written more evident in the Law of Social Service (§8a, August 2003) which became effective in August 2004 and where a number of purposes and principles for children's learning in day-care institutions are set (The Law about Learning Plans). In §3 the changed function of the day-care institution towards a more social pedagogical perspective stands out *"....It also has to be evident what considerations there are about learning-aims, methods and activities in relation to children with special needs"*.

The work with socially endangered children in the day-care institutions stands out more clearly in the proposal from the Government about efforts for prevention of a negative social inheritance (The Ministry for Social Affairs and The Ministry of Education). Here the importance of an early effort inside the area of the day-care institution is emphasized: *"The earlier you bring support to the child in action the bigger is the probability to break with the negative, social inheritance and increase the social mobility. The years before the child starts school are most crucial"* (The Ministry for Social Affairs, p17).

More concretely it refers to that the day-care institution has to work with children's learning and with language stimulation of bilingual children as a way of increasing endangered children's competences, and in this way through an early pedagogical effort to contribute to increase the social mobility.
The introduction of learning plans there is another change, because before there were no clear pedagogical descriptions of what the children have to learn in the day-care institution. Thus the content of the day-care institution is now described like this (§8 a. stk.2) *"The pedagogical learning plan has to, starting from the composition of the group of children, describe the work of the day-offer with objectives for learning and it has to contain is changing from a superior pedagogical descriptions of relevant activities and methods…."*.

Kofod (2007), in connection with the introduction of learning plans, throws a light on how the role of the day-care institution is changing from a labour market political arrangement where taking care of the children while the parents were at work was essential to a learning culture where the learning demands and objectives of the school have been pulled into the day-care institution: *"Together with the introduction of learning plans in the day-care institution it can be looked upon as a approximation to the teaching profession. The teaching of the children has been prolonged downwards to the kindergarten"*. (Kofod, 2007, p.48)

The evaluation of learning plans (The Ministry for Family- and Consumer-affairs, 2006) for example points out some essential areas which assist in supporting that there are a number of implications connected with thinking about the endangered children in relation to the development of learning plans of the day-care institution. Thus the first part of the evaluation report shows that characteristically fewer institutions have drawn up objectives for the pedagogical effort towards children with special needs. The report also shows that only half of the leaders in the day-care institutions estimate that the pedagogical learning plans are very much of use to the endangered children.

In 2005 we got yet a learning aspect in the day-care institution in the form of compulsory language stimulation of bilingual small children (Public-school Law §4 a). Through this law we can see two contemporary pedagogical efforts; one of them points towards the fact which Kofod (2007) signifies as directly learning (ibid) where the working areas from the school are used at the pre-school age. The other part of the effort refers to the total social political thinking about an early effort aimed towards socially endangered children (Schultz Jørgensen et al., 1993, Schultz Jørgensen, 2002, Tireli, 2006). It is essential to notice that in this context it is a question about that the local authorities have a duty to introduce language stimulation for all bilingual children in kindergarten and that, not less important, it is the parents' duty to accept language stimulation for their children: *"If the parents do not accept the language stimulation for their children, the local school authorities have to, to a great extent, through dialogue and information, make the parents to understand the necessity of observing the language stimulation. The early acquiring of the Danish language has an importance for the child's schooling, future education and life in Denmark"* (Public-school Law §4a, 2005, p. 19).

Also the introduction of this law makes new and changed demands to the professional persons in their daily work in the day-care institution. In the legal provision (ibid) it is recommended that the staff shall be more qualified because now they are also going to have a knowledge about "Danish as a second language", "bicultural identity development" and "pedagogical work with traumatic children".

In this context the need of *intercultural competence* of the professionals is emphasized. Intercultural competence is defined as the ability to look at and name your own, unwritten, norms and to recognize that being equal includes the right to diversity and that this competence consists of a knowledge part as well as of a practical part. While the knowledge part refers to knowledge about culture differences, language acquisition, religion and family patterns, the practical part consists of knowledge and actions where it is necessary that the professional persons can handle the *"challenging but also unforeseeable and contrary process that the meeting between people from different cultures can be"* (Public-school Law, §4a, 2005, p. 28)

The latest legal change stands out in the Law about day, spare-time and club offers et cetera for children and young people (The Law about Day Offers, 2007). Here for the first time a clear change is written in connection to the societal tasks of the day-care institution aimed towards, through an early pedagogical effort, preventing children's childhoods affected of a negative social inheritance (§1, stk.3) *"to prevent a negative social inheritance and exclusion by integrating the pedagogical offers as a part of the total offers from the local authorities for children and young people and from the preventive and supporting effort towards children and young people with special needs…."*

On the background of this we can identify a number of marked changes of the content of the practice of the day-care institution through the last decade. The different laws and adoptions intervene in the traditional practice of the day-care institution and create new demands to the professionals as well as demands about changed organizations in the everyday life. However

this is not new knowledge as all the time there are changes in the day-care institution looked at from a historical perspective (ibid) and the new demands have very much to be defined as having a character of more explicit descriptions of the double purpose of the day-care institution, put as the concept of common pedagogical work with all children and social pedagogical work with socially endangered children.

The Danish day-care institution- possibilities and difficulties connected to the work with socially endangered children

In Denmark it is a relatively new phenomenon that in research explicitly there is a focus on socially endangered children in the common pedagogical practice. Traditionally the perspective of the practice of the day-care institution has been about the understanding of inclusion and socialization aimed towards all children (Madsen, 2004). In a research perspective the knowledge we have until now is relatively limited. For example we do not have any researches with a longitudinal research design with the result that there is no research knowledge about how children who have been in day-care institution, compared with children who have been at home, manage in their youth and grown-up lives (Hestbæk & Christoffersen, 2002). Furthermore Nordenbo et al. (2008) in their research analysis about Scandinavian research made in 2006, throw a light on that we can identify 9 researches which in a different way include socially endangered children in the day-care institution but looked upon from different concepts. The researches are divided among Nordenbo et al.'s (2008) examination such as six Swedish researches, two Danish and one Norwegian study are identified (Jespersen, 2006, Tirilli, 2006, Björk-Willen, 2006, Lunneblad, 2006, Wetso, 2006, Brodén & Lindstrand, 2006, Helgersen, 2006, and Lutz, 2006).

However Nordenbo et al. (2008) point out that these researches can be divided into three topics: The first topic which includes socially endangered children analysed in a society perspective, the second topic which puts a focus on individual-oriented psychological explanations, and the third topic which puts a focus on inpulsion and expulsion in the day-care institution. One of the conclusions on the background of the research survey throws a light on which important areas in research of socially endangered children in the day-care institution are still left and which we do not have enough knowledge about:

1. Researches with a research design which can examine the effect of organized interventions.

2. Researches which put a focus on expulsion mechanisms in relation to ethnic, language, cultural differences and the significance of bullying and power relations.

3. Different understandings or paradigms connected to socially endangered children in relation to the professional persons' work (Nordenbo et al., 2008, p. 49).

Nordenbo et al.'s (2008) analysis of Scandinavian research inside the area of the day-care institution is limited to an identification of researches made in 2006. On the other hand if we spread out the conducted researches to the whole decade we can furthermore identify different types of research dealing with topic of socially endangered children in the day-care institution:

The searching in Danish research data bases shows two types of research:

1. Studies with a research design where a research perspective on the possibilities of the day-care institution, through an early pedagogical effort, to break with a childhood affected by social exposition.

2. Studies which have been captured through a cross-check of literature lists and Danish journals and which do not directly include socially endangered children, but which, on the other hand, tell about different social psychological and society-scientific perspectives on children's upbringing and development conditions, but where

indirectly through concepts as for example social reproduction, expulsion and marginalizing an important knowledge about socially endangered children in the context of the day-care institution has been found.

Thus the results show that only very few Danish researches are conducted and that these researches are relatively new. One of these is Christensen's (1996) research about the possibilities of the day-care institution to act as a preventing offer to endangered children. The results of the research point out a number of essential facts:

- Firstly there is a difference in how many endangered (threatened) children there are in the different institutions. Some institutions have many socially endangered children while other institutions do not have any. The context social segregation covers in this context the unevenly distribution of socially endangered children and is explained in the way the local authorities divide children in the day-care institutions; if the child lives in socially burdened area it will automatically belong to the nearest day-care institution. In this context it is essential that Christensen (1996) points out that there is not necessarily supplied extra resources to the institutions which have many endangered children.

- Secondly the research increases that it is experienced as difficult for the pedagogical staff to have dialogues with the parents about the child's endangered situation at home.

- Thirdly the co-operation among the day-care institution and the administration is estimated to be influenced by considerable lacks for example lack of information about the child's endangered life conditions when the child is enrolled in the day-care institution.

Hestbæk & Christoffersen's (2002) research also increases that at present we do not have research based knowledge about the possibilities of the day-care institution to break with a social endangered upbringing in Denmark. Jensen et al., (2003) substantiate in their research the above problem fields but also point out essential circumstances in the pedagogical practice which contribute to increase the risk of marginalization of the socially endangered children so that they are in a double endangered risk position. The marginalizing processes which are on social level can be found in the pedagogical practice of the day-care institution, that is without the pedagogical staff being aware of it. The day-care institution as it is created in Denmark attaches importance to the single child's development and the significance of being a part of a social solidarity. Exactly these focal points can be difficult for socially endangered children to handle which means that the day-care institution risks not supporting socially endangered children but on the other hand, without the staff being aware of it, can contribute in creating expulsion mechanisms because the socially endangered children can not deal with the common pedagogical demands.

Jensen (2005) also researches into the possibilities of the day-care institution to make a difference for children growing up under different social conditions and who are affected by a negative social inheritance. The results from this research point out, among other things, that the pedagogical staff estimates that they need in-service training and further education to be able to handle this professional duty in the context of the day-care institution.

Jensen (2005) also identifies in the research that two superior different pedagogical approaches to the work can be increased. A compensatory approach which has a focus on socially endangered children's deficiencies and needs and an innovative approach which predominantly has a focus on finding the endangered children's intellectual, social and emotional resources and competences.

Jespersen (2006) substantiates earlier researches inside the area of researching socially endangered children in day-offers and also points out that there is a need of more research

knowledge about social segregation in the day-care institutions as well as a need of the effect on concrete pedagogical efforts aimed towards socially endangered children inside the pedagogical settings. Ploug (2007) and Bengtsson (2007) have researched the possibility of the day-care institution to identify socially endangered children, including possibilities of action and the knowledge the teachers have to do their pedagogical work. In this research it is pointed out among other things that it is difficult to give clear descriptions of the concept socially endangered children, because there, at the same time, are lots of signs of being vulnerable which go together in complicated ways. At the same time the research shows that the knowledge the teachers have about socially endangered children from their education is affected by limits as a lack of methodical knowledge and a lack of professional knowledge about international researches.

Ploug (2007) also shows that the co-operation of the day-care institution with other public authorities which have a direct importance in helping the endangered child, for example The Social Administration, has a lot of deficiencies which also supported by earlier researches (Jensen et al., 2003, Jensen, 2005).

The other group of researches are characterized by not necessarily having a special focus on socially endangered children, but on the other hand on the day-care institution as a whole or on children's development and well-being in modern society particularly. The researches are, superior theoretically, placed inside the social psychological area or inside social science where especially Bourdieu's (2004, 2005), Bourdieu & Passeron's (2006) practice theory and Bourdieu's theory about social differentiation are used to throw a light on socio-cultural differences and similarities which are assumed to take place through the socialization scene of the day-care institution: *"The hierarchical structures of domineering of society can, in a complex form, be recognized in the patterns of hierarchy which are established and maintained in the pedagogical landscape…."* (Palludan, 2005, p. 175).

Inside this group of researches we find Warming (2000) who argues for that the day-care institution assists in marginalizing children who already have a difficult time. Warming (2000) describes five different child-profiles; 1. The most suitable, 2. The certainly suitable but unobserved, 3. the socially depended and vulnerable, 4. the fighters, 5. The ones who are not suitable. The described profiles are not going to be expressed as a characterization of children but describe the children's construction in the social room of the day-care institution. The suitable children are doing fine in the daily life of the day-care institution while the not suitable children are just characterized by the need of being seen and being somebody special, but are just not being met in relation to their needs. On the other hand this group of children often gets marginalized and is described as searching for limits, being incompetent and weak.

Sigsgards (2002) also puts a focus on these problems as he throws a light on children being told off in the day-care institution exactly are the children who, because of different reasons, already have a difficult time. Sigsgaard (2002) identifies in his research three groups of children who are assumed to have a difficult time in the day-care institution: the child with contact problems, the super active child and the crying child.

Ellegard's (2002) research of the competence demands of the kindergarten to children and how children deal with these demands is interesting to mention because Ellegard (2002) helps to throw a light on the importance of the child's social position in relation to the child's possibilities to handle the daily life in the kindergarten. The research shows, with a starting point in Bourdieu's (ibid) theory about sphere, capital and appearance, how the kindergarten can be analyzed as a sphere consisting of a number of structural and interactive conditions which make certain demands on children's competences and that the fellowship between the children also has a special importance for the demands which are made on the single child.

In this context also Palludan (2005) has contributed with an analysis about how socio-cultural differences and disparities take place in the kindergarten between the children and the teachers. With a theoretical starting point in Bourdieu's practice theory Palludan (2005) increases how children learn to act in the kindergarten and how certain sorts of behavior and actions are legal. Apart from that Palludan throws a light on how the children, at the same time, learn to enter a special status order, for example by learning how a certain behavior consists in having a full partnership with the teachers, while children who do not understand this have to take over less and secondary positions.

Palludan (2005) talks about the respectable body which is a construction which is developed in the children's meeting with the teachers and is characterized by a calm occupation and verbal exchange. Children who can master this respectable body have a good time in the day-care institution because they belong to the dominating status order and at the same time enter in a valid partnership with the teachers. Ethnic minority children with unskilled parents is the group of children who apparently have difficulties in getting the social advantages in the day-care institution, while Ethnic majority children with educated parents have an easier time reaching the teachers and participate in the daily life of the kindergarten.

Schwartz (2007) has in her research of children's lives in a residential home also identified relevant knowledge about socially endangered children's well-being and development conditions in the day-care institution. Even if there has not been a direct focus on the pedagogical work of the day-care institution with socially endangered children, the research has, through its theoretical and empirical design, watched a number of children left outside their homes through their lives in for example the day-care institution or in school and therefore it has been included in this context. Here the children's possibilities of participating in the pedagogical daily routines of the day-care institution are shown as well as the teachers' professional understandings of the children's difficulties. Some of the results from the research point out that the teachers think it is very difficult to deal with the very often complex problems which are connected to the children's problems, as they are seen in the day-care institution, and they also think that the co-operation with the teachers from the residential home, where the children are, and with the parents can be difficult. Schwartz (2007) especially points out that the teachers in the day-care institution experience that they are in a powerless position where their special knowledge about the child's everyday life is not to a sufficient extent used in relation to the child's whole life-situation, and that the teachers in the day-care institution have very difficult working conditions in relation to elevate the professional task.

Summarizing the Danish research we can point out essential problems connected to using the day-care institution as a preventive and active pedagogical effort aimed to improve socially endangered children's development possibilities. For one of the types of researches which take a view on an study orientated design the problems concentrate about conditions connected to the pedagogical practice: for example social segregation (Christensen, 1996) or marginalizing processes which are argued for being in the pedagogy (Jensen et al., 2003, Ploug, 2003, 2007a, 2007b) like structural and organizational conditions are also pointed at, as for example the co-operation with the social administration. In addition to this the pedagogical staff's judgment of not having the necessary professional knowledge working with this group of children in the common pedagogical practice is increased (Jensen, 2005).

For the other type of researches, which not necessary directly have a focus on socially endangered children in the common pedagogical context essential problems connected to socially endangered children's development possibilities are also increased. These problems, theoretically illustrated from different social scientific and social psychological perspectives, increase social reproduction mechanisms in the form as unevenly access to the "goods" which

have an importance in the day-care institution, for example time together with the teachers (Warming, 2000, Sigsgaard, 2002, Ellegaard, 2002, Palludan, 2005, Schwartz, 2007).

Conclusion

Through the last 50 years there has been a tendency towards the day-care institution being for all children, no matter of which social background and we do not find, as in other countries, a separation between children in early institutionalizing before school start with an explanation in socio-economical conditions. On the other hand the pedagogical thinking and development have been characterized by the specific view of children and childhood which has also been concentrated about normalizing and inclusion of all children.

A clearer separation between the understanding of common and social pedagogy however seems central because the definitions of these concepts make demands on different sorts of work in the pedagogical practice field but primarily because the pedagogy used in its practice form of the professional actually consists of different problem understandings as well as methodical approaches. Not doing this separation assists in a risk to obscure some social problems which are present as a part of the fundamental pedagogical conditions of the day-care institution. While the common pedagogy in broad sense has a focus on upbringing and socialization of all children (and young people), the social pedagogy however has another errand, namely to go in where the upbringing for society has not succeeded (Rosendal Jensen, 2007).

This way it is not enough to look at the social pedagogy in the day-care institution as being inclusion of socially endangered children at a common pedagogical basis but on the other hand a number of demands to the pedagogical practice are made which is not up to the practice field to ignore or give another name. On the other hand it calls out for a critical attitude to developing social pedagogical understandings and efforts which, at the same time and place, can be a part of the common pedagogical practice of the day-care institution.

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