

Social anchoring from a children-centered perspective

conceptualizing integration in the analysis of two cases from the Danish context

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Research Question

How can we code, analyze and interpret interviews with migrant children and field notes from observation sessions when looking for how migrant children conceptualize and construe integration?

Social Anchoring

A working definition of anchoring refers to the process of finding significant reference: grounded points which allow migrants to restore their socio-psychological stability in new life settings. The anchors people use allow them to locate their place in their world, give form to their own sense of being and provide them with a base for psychological and social functioning. In this way, anchoring represents a means of both adaptation and integration.

Grzymala-Kazlowska, 2016, 1131

Social Anchoring

Subjective/internal

National identification

Personality traits and self-concept

individual values

Values

Beliefs

Memory

Mixed

Social and professional (e.g. family roles, occupation, being an immigrant)

A position in social structure and group belonging (real or imagined)

cultural anchors (related to language, cultural transfers, norms and values)

Objective/external

Citizenship

Legal and institutional

Economic (economic resources, consumed goods, types of economic activity)

Spatial and Environmental (such as place of birth, place of residence, graves)

Photos and personal possessions

Based on Grzymala-Kazlowska (2016)

Cultural Regimes

Michael Paulsen 2013

Infusion approach
(Education)
(Banks 2011 a+b,
2019)

Transformative
approach
(Education)
(Banks 2011
a+b, 2019)

Type	Process	Space	Logic	Identity	Development
Mono-cultural	Assimilation	Territorial	Adjust or not	One closed identity + sub	One opportunity horizon
Multi-cultural	Segregation		Broadness or not	Several closed identities	Parallel opportunity horizons
Inter-cultural	Integration		Dialogue or not	Several open identities Encounter	Interchange between opportunity horizons
Trans-cultural	Digression	Virtual space	Otherness or not	New identities Uncertain and unknown	New opportunity horizons

A Model for Mapping, Analysis and Interpretation

Levels of Social Anchoring

SUBJECTIVE

MIXED

OBJECTIVE

Spatial positioning (place of birth, place of residence, etc.)

Social positioning (stance on family, school, work, peers, politics, religion, etc.)

Relations to

- peers in school
 - peers in leisure time
 - Teachers
 - family members
 - employers
- Language

Socio-economic status

Health
Language
Family
Religion
School

Concepts for Coding and Mapping

(Data: Interviews)

How do the teachers (the school) respond to the social anchoring of the migrant child? Do the teachers accommodate, accept and acknowledge the social anchoring? When teaching a starting point? Or do they reject the social anchoring of the migrant child?
(Data: Interviews and field notes)

Which cultural regime dominates the classroom?

Example 1: Omar (extract from a interview and interpretation)

10 years old. Came to Denmark about a year ago. Born and grew up in a country in the Middle East

Interviewer: Do you also play [online] games with someone who is not sitting in Demark?

Omar: I play a lot...

I: Okay.

O: I play with someone from [country in North America] and..

I: From [country in North America] ?

O: Yes.

I: Okay. Do you talk to each other?

O: Yes.

I: Do you speak... what [language] do you speak then?

O: We speak English, and I have also...Arabs.

I: Okay.

Omar: I've got something, which ... I also have someone who speaks Danish.

I: Okay.

O: Yes.

I: The ones who're speaking Arabic are they also sitting in [country in the North America], do you think?

O: Yes. There are some of them, yes.

Anchors:

Language
Relations to
peers in leisure
time
Spatial
positioning

Preliminary considerations about anchoring

- Anchors are multidimensional and interwoven
- Omar draws upon multiple linguistic resources (Danish, Arabic and English) in his anchoring process, revolves around online gaming
- In an adaption-perspective he might be interpreted as not integrated
- Yet, in anchor-perspective he is anchored both nationally and transnationally

Preliminary consideration about cultural regimes:

- Non-Danish languages is a tension field at the school with discourses and practices pointing in both monocultural and intercultural directions
- The students uses computers extensively, yet the transnational potential of online gaming is not addressed in the school

Example 2: Sarah (extract from a interview and interpretation)

17 years old. Came to Denmark three years ago. Born and grew up in country in the Middle East

Being with her family in Denmark:

Sarah: I have a big family

Sarah (who wants to stay in Denmark): There is no war ... because freedom ... a very democratic country

Interviewer: How often do you have to renew your residence permit?

Sarah: I don't know, we just send the letter of application, and then ...

On Sarahs place of birth:

Sarah: It means a lot to me ... I have had ... beautiful days with my family and my friends ... war, hard days, hard to forget

On her sister living with her husband and her three years old son in another country in the Middle East

Sarah (who has visited her sister and nephew): When I went back to Denmark ... he was crying ... because he loves me

But my sister, she is always at home ... she has taught him a little English. Yes, he speaks a little English and Arabic

Preliminary considerations about Sarah's social anchoring

- Anchors are multidimensional and intertwined (languages, family, countries, values)
- Sarah is anchored nationally and transnationally through her family. She ascribes meaning to 'family' by the way she positions herself in relation to family members and the 'spaces' of the family. She does that in order to feel safe. But sometimes she feels lack and is insecure.
- She draws upon multiple linguistic resources (Arabic and English is mentioned. Danish is implied) in her anchoring process
- In an adaptation-perspective she might be interpreted as not integrated - she positions herself as emotionally engaged in a transnational way
- Yet, in anchor-perspective she is anchored nationally and transnationally

Preliminary consideration about cultural regimes:

- Sarah's social anchoring is accommodated and accepted by her teachers (known from field notes)
- Her personal/cultural knowledge (Banks) is accepted and may be included as a resource in the school work
- Thus, there is either a multicultural or an intercultural regime in the classroom.

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