Abstract

In this dissertation, I investigate how social difference and distinctions are enacted and talked into being among schoolchildren in two contemporary urban schools – a “mainstream” public school at Amager and an “elite” private school at Frederiksberg. From an epistemological anchoring in interactional sociolinguistics, I show how the pupils use language to handle and organize their social worlds and how such organizing involves discursive constructions and ascriptions of various identities and stereotypes.

I illustrate how they through such actions draw on and re-shape cultural formations (Agha 2007) of indexical links (Ochs 1992, Silverstein 2003) between ways of speaking and behaving based on local ideological understandings and perceptions about similarity/difference and social status relations. Finally, I discuss how these practices link up with ongoing processes of social stratification in the contemporary Danish society.