"Can I join in?" – Possibilities of Inclusion Through Play

*Helle Marie Skovbjerg¹, Hanne Hede Jørgensen², Heine Kaasgaard Jepsen²

¹Design School Kolding, Denmark
²Aalborg University, Denmark

We know that vulnerable children rarely independently take the initiative in play (Kvello, 2013; Tetler, 2015), and a number of recent studies show a close connection between lack of play competences and social exclusion (TrygFonden and Mandag Morgen, 2012; WHO, 2016). There is a need for giving vulnerable children good strategies to become a part of the community of play (Alenkjær, 2012).

Based on a pilot study in two Danish schools among children aged six to nine, this paper wants to discuss potentials of using play practices and play material (Skovbjerg, 2016) as a tool for inclusion. Through a number of interventions, based on Design-Based-Research and action research (Barab & Suire, 2004; Knoblauch, 2005), we explore the possibilities of play as a tool for inclusion.

Our preliminary results are as follows:

- Play practices are constantly in a continuum between exclusion-inclusion.
- The body is often used in this continuum between exclusion-inclusion.
- Play material is often used in this continuum between exclusion-inclusion.
- Play practices are developed over time and can be heavily informed with meaning from the participants. It makes it difficult for children from “outside” to understand and participate.

References:


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