Parent-Teacher Partnerships –
Collaboration with Families –
Parental Participation:
**Daycare-Family Relations
From the Perspective of
Inequality Research**

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**KINDHEITSFORSCHUNG –
WORKING PAPER**

JOHANNES GUTENBERG
UNIVERSITÄT MAINZ

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Kindheitsforschung – Working Paper

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University Professor of General Educational Science and Childhood Studies

The WORKING PAPER series by the General Educational Science / Childhood Studies Research Group at the Department of Educational Science at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz serves as a forum for the publication of a loose sequence of working papers based on the research group's ongoing projects. In addition to publications in scientific journals and books as well as practice-oriented publication formats, these working papers provide a further level of *open access* information to interested members of the field, students and researchers concerning project developments and (preliminary) research results. The aim is to contribute to scientific and research-oriented discussions on theoretical foundations, empirical findings as well as interpretations and conclusions.

The research group's projects cover a wide range of topics, including empirical analyses in the field of social scientific childhood research and educational inequality research in early, middle and late childhood. The working papers in this series address the relationship between the family and public institutions responsible for early childhood education and care as well as schools from different perspectives and with a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches. They analyze the complex mechanisms behind the strong linkages between background-related factors such as social milieus and school success, as well as how childhood is and can be structured under conditions of social inequality. Particular focus is placed on actors who play a role in childhood, such as preschool educators, teachers and other educational staff, mothers and fathers, as well as children, policymakers and institutions of early and middle childhood, which include education and care institutions and families, but also policy, research, economics and law. Emphasis is placed on political and societal models of 'good' childhood and 'good' parenthood, widespread national and international educational and political programs addressing parents' and pedagogical professionals' practices, and widespread social ideologies. Another area of focus concerns processes that produce difference and reproduce social and generational inequality during childhood.

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PARTNER

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RAHMENPROGRAMM
EMPIRISCHE **BILDUNGS-FORSCHUNG**
PARTNER

GEFÖRDERT VOM
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Universität Trier

1. Introduction: Project PARTNER and Focal Points of the Workshop

Project PARTNER

Collaborations with families in the form of parent-teacher partnerships for the child's best interest, or increasing parental involvement in day care centers and nurseries, have become established objectives in many countries as a way of improving the quality of practice in early childhood education and care (ECEC) facilities. These partnerships serve as almost unquestioned pedagogical quality standards. There is great political and professional interest in new and existing relationships between ECEC institutions and families, which find expression in these proposed partnerships. Despite – or perhaps because of – this interest, how those relationships are addressed in the social sciences, especially research taking a detached, critical stance, can still be easily summarized. This is especially the case for analyses of childhood and inequality along three dimensions:

The positions children adopt towards day care–family relations, children's views of these relationships and/or the ways in which children participate in these partnerships

Contradictions and hierarchies in the relationship between families and day care centers in the context of social inequality, or efforts to reduce inequality by increasing collaboration between ECEC facilities and the family

The relationships among children, parents and professional pedagogical staff (in specific organisational contexts), which are embedded in the education and care arrangements of different welfare states ("educational mix")

The PARTNER project – "*Strong Partnerships in Early Childhood Education and Care: The interplay between organizations, practices and actors as a foundation for inequality-sensitive quality development*" – conducted by the Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz (led by Professor Tanja Betz) and Trier University (led by Professor Sabine Bollig) in alliance with the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, focuses on concrete collaboration practices as organisationally multifaceted and multi-perspective ways of structuring day care-family relationships in which children are also actively involved. We are particularly interested in how unequal societal relationships exert their effects in these diverse and sometimes contradictory ways of practically structuring the relationship between day care centers and families. Specifically, several sets of questions are addressed from the perspective of inequality-sensitive quality research:

How is the relationship between day care and the family normatively and performatively structured in cooperation practices? What different conceptualizations of the family exist in day care centers' everyday structures, and what forms of day care—family relations are made practically relevant in this context?

How are educators and parents involved in producing these relations? How do children – as a previously neglected group of actors – contribute to shaping these practices and relations? What orientations underlie the different actors' behavior?

What is the significance of the organizational context in light of these practical relations between the family and day care? What aspects of social inequality become organizationally relevant and are re-/produced as unequal forms of 'partnership'?

Research Objectives and Goals of the Research-Practice Dialog

By addressing these research questions, the PARTNER project seeks to obtain fundamental insights into the structuring of day care—family relations from the perspective of childhood, inequality, practice and organizational theory. Moreover, the project makes a practical contribution to quality development in early childhood educational practice.

The research results are presented in an application-oriented manner in order to sensitize professional practice to the diverse dimensions and sometimes ambivalent standards of partnership-based collaborations among educators, parents and children as well as inequality-related challenges. This knowledge transfer between research and day care practice is structured as an ongoing research-practice dialog in various formats throughout the entire project period.

Focal Points of the Workshop

An **international expert workshop** in which we held discussions about current research and outstanding research gaps on this topic was part of the PARTNER project. High priority was given to questions concerning inequality in relationships between ECEC institutions and families, current national developments, the possibilities and limits of collaboration/partnerships between ECEC institutions and families, and children's positions and perspectives – the latter of which have rarely been the subject of research thus far.

This international expert workshop on "The Parent-Teacher Partnership – Collaboration with Families – Parental Participation: Daycare–family relations from the perspective of inequality research" took place on 9th and 10th September 2019 at the Department of General Educational Science / Childhood Studies at the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. Current international research findings and outstanding research gaps concerning this topic were discussed with international guests from different countries and universities. The workshop's aims were twofold. First, we sought to discuss various national developments and the experts' perspectives on the project focus area. Second, we sought to identify common interests and thematic areas as well as parallels in international research.

2. Research Design of the PARTNER Project

In the light of the objectives described, the alliance project PARTNER examines concrete collaboration practices between families and ECEC organizations from a practice-analytical perspective (Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 2002). PARTNER views these practices as organisationally diverse, multi-perspective ways of structuring day care—family relations and takes into account the fact that children are actively integrated into these ECEC practices in diverse ways. We are also particularly interested in how societal inequalities exert their effects through these sometimes contradictory ways of structuring day care—family relations.

In order to investigate these practical definitions and manifestations of day care—family relations, we interpret concrete collaboration practices and their mutual interrelations in light of the multifunctionality of ECEC organisations. A different day care—family relationship exists in the context of day care's service delivery function (that between a "service provider" and a "client") than in its educational function (as "sites of formal vs. informal education") or its function as a leveller of societal inequalities (as a "social service" for "needy people"). These practical definitions and manifestations are relevant for the analysis of educational partnerships and parental involvement, not least in light of the assumption that the programmatic desire for "partnerships" represents just *one* possible way of structuring day care—family relations that competes, interacts, and becomes conjoined with numerous other practical definitions and manifestations within the organisational context. At the same time, understandings of what "partnership" means are themselves diverse (Betz & Bollig, 2019; Alasuutari, 2010). Thus, we seek to identify the diverse spectrum of practical definitions and manifestations of these manifold reciprocal relations confronted by actors in this space in everyday organisational life and determine when and how which concrete concepts are made relevant.

In light of ECEC's historical and systemic importance for the social formation and normalisation of the family (e. g. Loseke & Cahill, 1994; James & James, 2012), our research question also allows us to explore the milieu-specific fit as well as lack of fit between these manifestations of day care—family relations, which make certain ways of organisationally addressing certain families – such as non-German-speaking or socially disadvantaged families – more likely than others (cf. "doing difference"; Hirschauer, 2014) and thus in the long run contribute to the reproduction of social inequality.

PARTNER's research questions will be explored via ethnographic field research. This will primarily take the form of *participant observation* of everyday practices in day care centers for 3 to 6 year olds and *semi-structured and ethnographic interviews* with educators, parents, and facility directors (and also perhaps group discussions with children at a later date). Over the course of the project, fieldwork will be conducted in 2-3 day care centers in each project location (Mainz, Trier). The first 2-4 organisations will be selected on the basis of their contrasting institutional characteristics (size, institutional sponsor, curriculum) and social environments (urban vs. rural, socioeconomics, many vs. few families with (forced) migration

experiences). Subsequently, further contrasting institutions will be sought out on the basis of *theoretical sampling*.

Figure 1 on the research design illustrates the PARTNER project's various building blocks.

Figure 1: Research Design of the PARTNER Project

Work to identify the current state of research has already been completed, and a secondary analysis of data from previous studies on 'collaboration', 'partnership' and 'inequality' has been conducted. The ongoing ethnographic field research (participant observation and interviews) forms the core of the project. This field research is supplemented by continuous exchange with experts from research and practice, with the objective of developing materials for structuring inequality-sensitive practice on the organizational level as well as with respect to educators' pedagogical practice.

Before the workshop, we worked on developing **sensitizing concepts** to guide our ethnographic exploration. In addition to their general methodological function in ethnographic research (Blumer, 1954; Glaser & Strauß, 1967), our sensitizing concepts should also be able to serve as "working hypotheses" and thus facilitate a relatively quick transition to more focused observations. Following Blumer (1954), we understand "sensitizing concepts" as concepts that "do not provide prescriptions of what to see" – which Blumer would define as "definite concepts". Instead, "sensitizing concepts merely suggest directions along which to look". Thus, as Charmaz (2003) adds, they "offer ways of seeing, organizing, and understanding experience [···and···] provide starting points for building analysis, not ending points for evading it" (p. 259). These sensitizing concepts can be obtained in a multitude of diverse ways – through

theoretical or empirical terms or by making methodological, analytical, or metaphorical linkages – and are ultimately legitimized by their functionality for the subsequent research process. It is crucial to formulate them concretely enough to allow analytical connections to be made with the observed happenings from an early point, yet vague enough to avoid restricting the researcher's gaze a priori.

In this sense, we have developed sensitizing concepts to guide the subsequent field research process. These were the subject of the sessions on the second day of the workshop. Three focal points for discussion were defined based on the concepts we had developed up until this point. Our goal was to improve the plausibility and productivity of these sensitizing concepts for our ethnographic research and the basic research interests of the PARTNER project.

First, we focused on practices of *doing family in, through and with ECEC*. Here, our primary aim is to identify how educators and parents/family members produce 'the familial' and active linkages between families and day care centers in the organizational context of day care.

Subsequently, we turned to practices of *doing collaboration* between day care centers and families. Here, our primary aim is to identify sets of practices that explicitly or implicitly allow the actors to understand their activities as 'collaboration'.

Finally, we shifted our focus to *children as actors in the relationship between family and ECEC*, and sensitizing concepts regarding their participation in practices of *doing family* and *doing collaboration* were put up for discussion.

3. Presentations

On the first day, public lectures by national and international researchers from the field of childhood and family research served to introduce the topic. On the second day, a smaller group of researchers discussed concepts and questions concerning relevant topics for researchers from the PARTNER project to broaden the perspective on the current research process (see Appendix for the Workshop Program (7.2) and List of Participants (7.1)).

3.1 The Family as a Domain of Struggle[1]: Prof. Dominik Krinninger (Osnabrück University, Germany)

The talk takes up current developments as a phase of differentiated normalisation of public childcare. These developments, also described as "de-familialisation" (Lange, 2010), change the relationships between families and ECEC-institutions. Important aspects here include differing orientations on the part of parents towards the well-being of their children and on attachment and education on the part of the institutions. Cooperation between parents and institutions, framed as partnership, is often addressed in research in such a way that parental commitment is put in relation to the children's academic achievement. Other contributions critically highlight the dominance of institutional perspectives in these cooperations. I will argue that the relationship between family and ECEC institutions is figured around the aspect of academic achievement – in programmes of partnership cooperation and beyond. Research on pre-school-aged children's learning considers the family as a learning environment for the development of required competences. Discourse-analytical approaches, on the other hand, criticise that families and parents in particular are either exposed to strong expectations of cooperation or become addressees of preventive compensatory programmes. Against this background, I will advocate for more complexity in the struggle between system-affine and system-critical positions. In this sense, research on the family's internal perspective can be an important complement (Presentation slides: Appendix 7.3).

3.2 Transgressing boundaries of families. The role of early childhood and care institution in promoting home learning in families[2]: Prof. Karen Ida Dannesboe (Aarhus University, Denmark)

This paper explores how early childhood and care institutions intend to promote home learning in families in Denmark as a tool to improve small children's learning. In many Western countries. investment in small children is seen as crucial for the development of future citizens. This is also the case in Denmark.

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[1] The following abstract was composed by Prof. Dominik Krinninger.

[2] The following abstract was composed by Prof. Karen Dannesboe.

Denmark has a long tradition of early childhood education and care (ECEC) and 97 % of all children aged 3-6 attend ECEC institutions. In Danish ECEC institutions, children's social relations and play have been central aspects of the pedagogical work. However, since the 1990s there has been an increased political focus on learning in early childhood education and care institutions, and recently, ECEC institutions have been assigned the task of improving children's learning at home. I will present some preliminary findings based on small-scale ethnographic fieldwork in Danish ECEC institutions. In this study I investigate pedagogues' use of home learning technologies (games, books, etc.) and how they collaborate, invite and instruct parents to create so-called 'learning situations' with their children as part of family life. The main question is how the use of such home learning technologies in collaboration with parents produce certain understandings of learning, childhood and parenthood and transgress or reconfigure the boundaries between families and ECEC institutions within the Danish welfare state. In a broader sense, the paper discusses the family as a learning context for the education of children and the construction of good parenthood.

3.3 Partnerships in early childhood education and care – a childhood studies perspective: Prof. Tanja Betz (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany) and Prof. Sabine Bollig (Trier University, Germany)

In many countries, including Germany, parent-teacher partnerships for the child's best interest and increasing parental involvement in ECEC institutions have become established objectives as a way of improving the quality of practice in ECEC institutions. Hence, it is still easy to summarize research on these partnerships, especially research taking a critical stance. There are some studies on the ambiguities of partnership discourses, parents and educators' struggle to enact these partnerships, and even some first critiques claiming not only that the promises of these partnerships – to enhance children's well-being and learning and compensate for social inequalities – are hard to reach. Instead, it seems that inequality is also very much reproduced through those 'partnerships'.

In this talk, we take these partnerships as a starting point to raise questions concerning family—day care relations and the construction of a 'good' childhood from a childhood studies and inequality perspective. In particular, we will argue that the reproduction of inequalities within these partnerships is very much related to the complex nature of family—day care relations. To analytically highlight those complexities, we propose to take into account, first, that these partnerships are embedded in multiple representations of 'family' within ECEC organizations, in accordance with the multiple family-related functions of ECEC; second, that these multiple representations of families and family—day care relations are present within the complex socio-material web of practices which constitute ECEC organizations and not just within actual interaction events between parents and educators; and third, that children are very much part of this organizational 'doing' of the family and relationships/partnerships. The talk will discuss these foundations of the ongoing PARTNER study and outline its research design and the research questions. (Presentation slides: Appendix 7.4).

4. Sensitizing Concepts

4.1 Doing Family: Introduction

The concept was presented by Dr. Sabrina Göbel (Trier University).

Against the backdrop of demands for *educational partnerships* between family and day care, the PARTNER project asks *how* day care—family relations are accomplished in everyday organizational life and *how* in these processes the participants are positioned as certain kinds of familial or organizational actors or placed in relation to one another. We assume that a variety of such practical definitions and manifestations are employed in day care centers' everyday routines that differ according to both the diversity of families and the situational context. From an inequality theory perspective, we ask how these diverse practical definitions and manifestations differ depending on concrete family—day care constellations. We also ask how the involved actors draw distinctions in this context and which categories of social inequality, such as class and migration, are made relevant here. Our goal is to present initial theoretical approaches and sensitizing concepts that enable a closer empirical examination of these practical definitions and manifestations. Specifically, we draw upon and expand the theoretical perspective of doing/displaying family by adding an organizational perspective. In light of the plurality, fluidity and diversity of family constellations and meanings, the doing family approach (e. g. Schier, & Jurczyk, 2008; Jurczyk, 2014a, b; Jurczyk, Lange, & Thiessen, 2014) has introduced an analytical view that redefines previous definitions of family. Instead, it asks what "is actually done to live out family in everyday life" (Eßer, & Köngeter, 2015, p. 112; own translation). We argue that doing/displaying family should not just be understood as accomplished by family members in more or less private spaces, but also *in, through and with ECEC organizations*. In order to examine how 'doing family' in, through and with ECEC organizations relates to the constitution of day care—family relations, we propose two heuristic focuses for observation and analysis: practices of *doing shared care* (Singer, 1993; Brückner, 2011) between family and day care and practices of belonging among the involved actors in the form of *doing belonging* between family and ECEC organizations (Stratigos, Bradley, & Sumsion, 2014; Stratigos, 2015).

Hence, the study's central guiding question is as follows: How is family produced *in, through, and with ECEC organizations?*

Doing family *in* ECEC organizations

The central question from this first perspective is as follows: How do families produce family life in day care centers? At the most basic level, a characteristic of day care is that children spend their days there for the most part without other family members (Bundgaard, & Fog Olwig, 2018). Nevertheless, other family members are co-present on various occasions. Consequently, with respect to *doing family in ECEC,* we are first of all interested in all the situations and constellations in which family members interact with one another within the organization and thus signal that their actions are familial in nature in a way that

is recognizable to themselves and others ('displaying'; Finch, 2007). Doing family in ECEC organizations is of particular interest for **inequality theory** because this production of family takes place with the help of resources made available by the day care center. These include, for example, certain temporal and spatial arrangements for saying goodbye or material artefacts and opportunities to stay in contact (e.g., electronic portfolios; Gallahger, 2018). We are particularly interested in whether these organizational infrastructures are more 'fitting' and accessible to some families than to others. Also of relevance for 'doing difference' (Hirschauer, 2014) is that the children and parents' family life should become directly visible in these practices and formats.

Doing family *through* ECEC organizations

The essential question from this second perspective is how doing family is framed, normalized, and enabled by the organization and which organizational concepts of family/families are reproduced in these processes. Families not only produce themselves within day care centers and with the resources provided there; they are also addressed and codified as families by the day care center itself in specific ways (e.g., through forms and documents; Karila, & Alasuutari 2012; Lehrer, 2018). In this context, 'codification' refers to all of the categorizations of family that proceed from organizational routines and requirements. For example, families are addressed differently in relation to the day care center's booster club, joint church services in the community, education-related activities in the family, or when counseling parents and providing parenting advice (Cloos, Zehbe, & Krähnert, 2019). Both familial and organizational demands can be made relevant and placed in relation to one another through these different forms of addressing. These outlined codifications and forms of addressing are relevant for our **inequality perspective**, firstly in regard to the question of which families do not conform to these organizational requirements and thus (need to be) treated as exceptions or special cases. Secondly, organizational forms of addressing and related positioning practices are relevant for inequality with respect to which opportunities for involvement are enabled or denied to individual families (and family members), how categories of social inequality are made relevant in these processes ('doing difference'), and what forms of resistance 'by' families are interpreted as deviant and harden into fixed attributions.

Doing family *with* ECEC organizations:

The central question from this third perspective is as follows: How do the involved actors produce themselves as family members in the context of these organizational codifications and forms of addressing, and how are distinctions drawn in negotiation situations between the family and day care center (boundary work)? This involves examining the practical definitions and manifestations of family—day care relations and identifying how 'the familial' first takes shape through the construction of a boundary to day care as a public space. Another relevant question concerns how boundaries are maintained and crossed by the involved actors (Mohn, & Bollig, 2016), or how educators deal with children telling them sensitive information that their parents see as part of the family's intimacy and privacy. Organizational routines and rules also play an important role in boundary work, e.g., the requirement that

children must be for the most part 'diaperless' before enrolling in day care. The day care—family relations produced through boundary work practices are primarily of interest for **inequality theory** with respect to where day care ends and the familial begins for specific actors (relationship between public/private) and to what extent flexible boundaries are or become possible here depending on the constellations of actors. Another question concerns how boundary work interacts with other attributions related to familial and non-familial practices (e.g. "non-German-speaking families" or so-called "multi-problem" families).

4.2 Doing Family: Presentation

Session I: Input and Discussion

Relationships between ECEC organizations and families:
doing family in, through and with organizations,
doing shared care and doing belonging

Presenter: Sabrina Göbel
Moderator: Tanja Betz

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International Workshop „Parent-teacher partnerships – collaboration with families –
parental participation: relationships between ECEC institutions and families from the
perspective of inequality research"
9th-10th September 2019, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

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Structure

1. Introduction: Doing family from a relational perspective

2. Sensitizing concept "doing family in, through and with ECEC organizations"

    • Sensitizing concept "doing shared care"

    • Sensitizing concept "doing belonging"

3. Discussion

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1) Introduction: Doing family in a relational perspective

- 'The family' is not a naturally given entity

- Family as meaningful connection produced in everyday life
  (Schier, & Jurcyk 2008; Jurcyk, 2014a, b; Eßer, & Köngeter 2015)

- Multiple understandings of family, e.g. as ...
  - private sphere (Art. 6 GG)
  - reciprocal relation between care and protection (Helming, 2014)
  - (dispersed) network (Schier, 2016)
  - de-privatization of family, (semi-)public actors (Hünersdorf, & Toppe, 2011)

- 'Doing family' as embedded in societal and organizational frameworks

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3

1) Introduction: Doing family in a relational perspective

- Organizationally and situationally multiple ways of structuring day care–family relations

Special occasions
- Registration, habituation
- Celebrations with families (summer party, etc.)

Formal Situations
- Individual development conferences
- Conferences with the parent collective

Informal everyday situations
- Informal talk at pick-up, drop-off situations
- Information sheets, phone calls, etc.

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1) Introduction: Doing family in a relational perspective

- Diverse definitions and manifestations of day care–family relations

Day care centres as...
- partner
- service provider
- professional support
...

Parents as...
- partners
- customers
- experts on their families ...

Children as...
- partners
- informants
- objects
-outcome
...

→ Sensitizing Concept I: Doing family in, though and with ECEC organization as a reciprocal process

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2) Sensitizing concept "doing family in, through and with ECEC organizations"

Doing family *in* ECEC organizations

Doing family *through* ECEC organizations

Doing family *with* ECEC organizations

Families produce 'their' family life & their understanding of the familial in day care centres
- Daily balancing of interests & forms of engagement
- Creating social ties (Jurcyk, 2014a)
- Displaying family to others (Finch, 2007)

Doing family is enabled, framed and normalized by day care centres
- Codifications of families in organizational life (concepts, rules, artefacts)
- Practices & forms of addressing families

Doing family as joint & reciprocal process of negotiation
- Boundary work
- Practices of belonging between family & day care

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2) Sensitizing concept "doing family in, through and with ECEC organizations

Doing family *in* ECEC organizations

Doing family *through* ECEC organizations
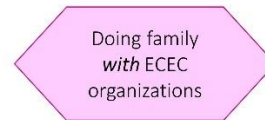
Doing family *with* ECEC organizations

→ Influence of resources provided by day care centres on doing family in day care

- Material resources
- Spatial arrangements
- Temporal arrangements
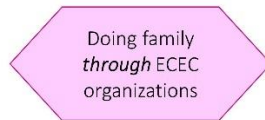
→ Social categorizations and attributions of "non-/conforming" families part of these codifications?

→ Positioning of families among these forms of addressing?

→ Are there stable or flexible forms of boundary work and how do they influence family–day care relations?

→ Influence of distinctions on other attributions related to non-/familial practices

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3) Sensitizing Concept "doing shared care"

- Doing care as a common concern of families and day care centres

- Family – day care relations as a complex and dynamic network of doing "shared care"
  - Divergent understandings of care & responsibility
  - Different practices and forms of shared care
  - Processes of negotiating and arranging

- How are definitions and manifestations of day care–family relations negotiated through practices of doing shared care?

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3) Doing shared care – heuristic dimensions

Differentiating between familial & organizational care

Doing shared care

Presenting accomplishments and expertise

Delegation of care

Prolonging care
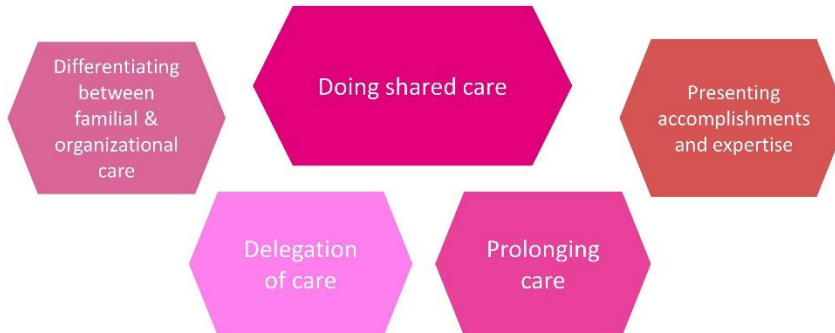
Practices that can be used to draw, maintain, eliminate, or soften boundaries between family and day care

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4) Sensitizing concept: "doing belonging"

- Dynamic family–day care constellations: multiple forms of belonging
  (e.g Probyn, 1996; Phoenix, 2016)

- Focus on concrete experiences and (self-)attributions

→ Depending on politics of belonging (Yuval-Davisn 2010, 2006; Stratigos, Bradley, & Sumsion, 2014; Stratigos, 2015)

- How can practices of doing belonging shed light on concrete definitions and manifestations of day care–family relations?

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4) Doing belonging – heuristic dimensions

Doing belonging

Differentiation between familial and organizational belonging

Doing formal belonging (see codifications)

Doing personal belonging

Doing emotional belonging (e.g. we-ness)

Practices of temporally, partially or permanently demarcating belonging shed light on concrete (states of) relations between families and day care centres

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5) Discussion

- Are the presented concepts plausible and useful as sensitizing concepts for our ethnographic research?

- How do the sensitizing concepts match your research experiences? Where do you see fruitful connections to your work and your findings?

- How can we further develop these sensitizing concepts as we move forward?

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Thank you for your attention!

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4.3 Doing Collaboration: Introduction

This concept was presented by Dr. Stefanie Bischoff-Pabst (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz).

Families and day care centers are supposed to collaborate in educational partnerships in which they are equally valued and have equal rights. They are supposed to open themselves up to each other in a way that enhances parental involvement. However, there are several open research questions with respect to these overlapping objectives and their relationship with social inequality: e.g., what these actors understand 'collaboration' and 'involvement' to mean in the first place (Alasuutari, 2010; Sparrmann et al., 2016; Betz, Bischoff, Eunicke, & Menzel, 2019a, 2020a) and divergences in their perspectives (for the parent perspective: van Laere, van Houte, & Vandenbroeck, 2018; for the children's perspective: Dannesboe, 2016), how day care—family collaboration is produced and processed by the relevant actors (Karila, 2006), and how educators, parents, and children position themselves and are positioned in collaborative situations with respect to one another (Heiskanen, Alasuutari, & Vehkakoski, 2019). Against this backdrop, we aim to present initial theoretical approaches and sensitizing concepts that enable the observation of 'collaboration' and 'involvement' as something produced in everyday life in day care centers. This is captured under the concept of *doing collaboration*, the subject of this section. 'Doing' perspectives are characterized by their understanding of the production of social reality as practical actions rather than objective facts (Hörning, & Reuter, 2004, p. 10). With respect to collaboration practices, they focus on (reconstructing) *how* the involved actors accomplish forms of collaboration (practice) in family—day care relations that can be identified as such and gain importance for the field. It should also be considered that not all forms (of practice) in which parents and educators participate or are mutually addressed fall under the framework of collaboration; instead, (a) they must be made identifiable as such in the field; and (b) explicit forms of non-collaborative practice are also likely to occur.

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Hence, the central guiding question for our investigation of *(un-)doing collaboration* in day care is: How, through whom or what, and in what situations are reciprocal relations produced among educators, parents and (members of) families that are explicitly or implicitly understood to be or interpreted as 'collaboration'? To this end, collaboration will be tentatively defined as a complex of practices involving 'work' by organizational members (e.g., educators) and/or families with respect to the other party in day care—family relations, practical actions that involve effort and are goal-directed in the broadest sense of the term. This encompasses both 'work' undertaken between educators and family members as well as carried out alone or together with other actors in one's own group but with reference to the other party (such as educators working together to organize a parent evening).

In order to call attention to elements and dimensions of *doing collaboration* between educators and parents (sensitizing concepts), we refer to definitions and understandings of collaboration and cooperation from different disciplines, including work and organizational psychology, the sociology of work, and educational science (e.g. Ahlgrimm, Krey, & Huber, 2012). Additionally, we consider the results of empirical studies on collaboration in networks and (multi-)professional teams (expl. Freeman, Miller, & Ross, 2000; Bauer, 2011, 2014) as well as our own research (the CHILD Study, the Children between Opportunities and Barriers Study, and first data from PARTNER)[3].

o   Practices, Elements and Dimensions of *Doing Collaboration*

The following practices, elements and dimensions have been identified so far:

- Negotiating areas of responsibility and divisions of labour
- Clarifying expectations, needs, and goals
- Reaching explicit agreements and coordinating actions
- Reaching implicit agreements and synchronisation
- Leading and guiding

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[3] ' Children at the Crossroads of Opportunities and Constraints': Cooperation Project by Goethe University Frankfurt and the Bertelsmann Foundation (Duration: 2015-2018, Director: Prof Tanja Betz); This study asks how educators and teachers, parents and children interact with one another in collaborations/educational partnerships from the perspective of childhood and inequality theory. In addition, children's positions in and perspectives on collaborations between families and educational institutions are identified.

'CHILD – Children in Luxembourgian Day Care': Research project by the University of Luxembourg (FNR, 2013-2015, Prof. Michael-Sebastian Honig / Sabine Bollig); this project investigated education and care arrangements of 2-to-4-year-old children in Luxembourg from a practical and childhood theory perspective. Its central guiding question was how care arrangements affect and are enacted through children's everyday lives and how this creates differential childhoods.

- Monitoring, evaluation, surveillance, and sanctioning
- Presenting accomplishments and expertise

To briefly explain the dimensions, we provide an example of each. In the "Presenting accomplishments and expertise" dimension, we assume that both educators and parents make various efforts to present their accomplishments, knowledge and skills to the other involved actors in a recognizable way. This presentation of accomplishments and expertise can be observed in exhibit formats (Bollig, 2004), weekly overviews, summaries of available offerings, observation protocols and so on. The performance of expertise can be observed in elements such as documentation instruments (Alasuutari, 2015). In the 'Children between Opportunities and Barriers' Study, it became apparent in interviews with educators (and parents) that parental involvement (e.g., spontaneously helping out, delegating tasks to parents) is arranged in a way that allows parents to "get a sense" of "what work is being done here" (quote from an educator). The presentation of accomplishments and expertise is of importance for **questions of inequality** to the extent that it can be assumed that different forms of presenting accomplishments and expertise can be observed to different degrees in specific constellations of educators and family members; for example, with respect to more typically middle-class connotations of *parenting* (Jergus, 2018), or when the parents themselves have a pedagogical qualification.

4.4 Doing Collaboration: Presentation

Structure

1. Introduction

2. *Doing collaboration*: sensitizing concepts

    a. Sub-practices, elements, dimensions

    b. Displaying collaboration

3. Questions

PARTNER

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1) Introduction

Starting point

- Numerous debates, political measures etc. with regard to collaboration, partnerships etc. → families and day care centres are supposed to collaborate
- Open research questions
    - How do relevant actors understand 'collaboration', 'partnership' etc. (Alasuutari, 2010; Betz, Bischoff-Pabst, Eunicke, & Menzel, 2019)
      and what different perspectives exist (e.g. parents, educators, children)? (parents: van Laere, Vandenbroeck, & van Houte, 2018; children: Dannesboe, 2016)
    - How is day care–family collaboration produced and processed by relevant actors? (z. B. Karila, 2006; Cloos, Gerstenberg, & Krähnert, 2018)
    - How is day care–family collaboration linked to questions of social inequality? (Betz, Bischoff, Eunicke, Kayser, & Zink, 2017)

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1) Introduction

Our aims

- Identify initial theoretical approaches & sensitizing concepts enabling the observation of 'collaboration' as produced in everyday life in day care centres
- Identify sets of practices which explicitly or implicitly allow actors to understand their activities as 'collaborating'

→ Concept of *doing collaboration*

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2) Concept of *doing collaboration*

Doing collaboration

Focus on collaboration **practices** → *how* do actors accomplish forms of collaboration in family—day care relations that are important to the field?

Initial Question: How, through whom or what, and in what situations are reciprocal relations produced among educators and families that are explicitly or implicitly understood to be or interpreted as 'collaboration'?

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2) Concept of *doing collaboration*

Doing collaboration

First definition
- Complex of practices involving ‚work' by organizational members and/or familiy members with respect to the other party in day care–family relations → practical actions involving effort and goal-directed in a broad sense
- Encompasses (1) ‚work' between educators and family members and (2) ‚work' carried out alone
- Includes material manifestations and instruments of this 'work', such as information boards, brochures etc.
- Collaboration practices must be made identifiable as such in the field (Schmidt, & Volbers, 2011)
- Explicit forms of non-collaborative practices are likely to occur (un-doing difference: Hirschauer, 2014)

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2) Sensitizing concepts

a. Sub-practices, elements, dimensions of *Doing Collaboration*
b. *Displaying collaboration:* Making collaboration visible

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2) Sensitizing concepts

a. Sub-practices, elements, dimensions of *Doing Collaboration*

- Clarifying expectations, needs and goals
- Negotiating areas of responsibility and divisions of labour
- Reaching explicit agreements and coordinating actions
- Reaching implicit agreements and synchronisation
- Leading and guiding
- Presenting efforts and expertise
- Monitoring, evaluation, surveillance, sanctioning

PARTNER

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2) Sensitizing concepts

a. Sub-practices, elements, dimensions of *Doing Collaboration*

- Weekly overviews, offerings, yearbooks, exhibition of quality labels, diagnostic instruments etc.
- Organizing parent-teacher conferences and parental involvement so that ‚parents get a sense of what work is being done'

→ Inequality: Different forms of presenting efforts can be observed to different degrees in specific constellations of educators and family members (e.g. with regard to different forms of *parenting* (Jergus, 2018))

Presenting efforts and expertise

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2) Sensitizing concepts

b. Displaying collaboration: Making collaboration visible

Based on Finch (2007) → displaying family

Collaboration must be visibly performed in day care centres' everyday routines:

-To be identifiable for third parties

-To strengthen its function as a joint reference point in day care-family relations

Encompasses e.g. gestural performances (like making loud jokes) and more complex choreographed performances (parent evenings)

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3) Discussion

• Are the presented concepts plausible and useful as sensitizing concepts for our ethnographic research?

    – Is the presented concept of *doing collaboration* specific enough to observe practices of collaboration in family–day care relations?

• How do the sensitizing concepts relate to your research experiences? Where do you see fruitful connections to your work and your results?

    – Do you have empirical experience with *displaying collaboration*?

• How can we further develop these sensitizing concepts moving forward?

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Thank you for your attention!

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4.5 Children as actors in the relationship between family and ECEC: Introduction

This concept was presented by Nadine Kaak (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz) and Angelika Sichma (Trier University).

The PARTNER project aims to explore diverse practical definitions and manifestations of day care—family relations embedded within the everyday life of day care centers in order to determine how social inequality is reproduced through day care—family collaboration. Previous research on early childhood education quality has rarely focused on children as actors in partnerships and parental involvement (Betz, & Bollig, 2019; Betz et al., 2017). However, we understand them to be actors with situationally variant spaces and opportunities for agency (Bollig, & Kelle, 2016; Eßer, 2016). Building upon this perspective, we aim to develop sensitizing concepts and focal points for observational research that will assist us in reconsidering the practices upon which we focus from the "vantage point of children" (Mayall, 2002). Consequently, we assume that children are involved as actors in all of the previously outlined practices of *doing family in, with and through ECEC organizations* and *doing collaboration* in which they participate in ways still need to be determined empirically (Bollig, & Kelle, 2016). Moreover, both analytical perspectives afford children a unique role:

First, with respect to *doing family,* children are the only group of actors who are members of both the family and day care and structure their everyday lives in and between these two social worlds (cf. Dencik, 1995; Hedegaard, 2011; Højholt, & Kousholt, 2018). This involves constantly placing the two environments in relation to one another and navigating daily transitions (cf. Mohn, & Bollig, 2016). Consequently, children are deeply involved in *boundary work* and other practices of doing family as uniquely-positioned actors. Second, children hold an exclusive position with respect to *doing collaboration* as well, because they can be considered to be both boundary objects (Star, & Griesemer, 1989) and collaborating actors

(Betz, & Bollig, 2019). Accordingly, they participate in practices of *doing collaboration* not only as uninvolved third parties (e.g., as outcome, project, observer, or listener), but also as informants, translators, intermediaries, messengers, information providers, disruptors, spies, and conversation and coalition partners in shifting alliances (on school students' position: Betz, Bischoff, Eunicke, & Menzel, 2019b, 2020b).

With a view to the specific positions of children as actors in the practices of *doing family* and *doing collaboration,* the PARTNER project asks

a) which practical definitions and manifestations of day care—family relations result from specific organizational and situational positionings and ways of addressing children (as children within families, nursery school children, migrants, etc.),

b) how children specifically produce and position themselves peer-culturally (Kelle, 2005) and/or individually in these different relationships, and

c) in what forms of *doing difference* are they involved with respect to the relations between day care and certain families.

We build upon existing research on children as actors within collaboration (Betz & Eunicke, 2017; Betz et al., 2019a, 2020b) and day care, which has also begun to pay increasing attention to children's everyday lives at the crossroads of day care and the family (e.g. Bollig, Honig, & Nienhaus, 2016; Højholt, & Kousholt, 2018); how children navigate divergent cultural models within the family and day care (Dencik, 1995; Brooker, 2006) and their practical, everyday enactment of their fractal and multiple cultural identities (James, & Prout, 1996; Heedegard, 2011); their multiple belongings between day care and the family (Stratigos, Bradley, & Sumsion, 2014); and their connections to the family in extended care relations between day care and the home (Bundgaard, & Olwig, 2018).

The central guiding question when analysing children as situational actors is as follows: What do children do within practices of *doing family* and *doing collaboration,* and what are they expected to do?

4.6 Children as actors in the relationship between families and ECEC: Presentation

Session III: Input and Discussion

Children as actors in relationships between
ECEC organisations and families

Presenters: Angelika Sichma, Nadine Kaak
Commentator: Sascha Neumann

PARTNER

International Workshop „Parent-teacher partnerships – collaboration with families –
parental participation: relationships between ECEC institutions and families from the
perspective of inequality research"
9th-10th September 2019, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

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Structure

1. Introduction

2. Sensitising concepts

    a. Doing and displaying family

    b. Doing and displaying collaboration

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1) Introduction

Children inhabit unique positions within doing family and doing collaboration involving situationally variant spaces and opportunities for agency (Bollig, & Kelle, 2016; Eßer, 2016) between complicity and resistence (Bühler-Niederberger, 2013).

They can be seen as:

- members of both social worlds – family and preschool (Hedegaard, 2011; Højholt, & Kousholt, 2018)
- boundary objects (Star, & Griesemer, 1989)
- actors of doing collaboration (Betz, & Bollig, 2019; on school students' positions: Betz, Bischoff, Eunicke, & Menzel, 2019)

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1) Introduction

- Which practical definitions and manifestations of day care—family relations result from specific organizational and situational positionings and ways of addressing children?

- How do children specifically produce and position themselves peer culturally (Kelle, 2005) and/or individually in different relationships?

- In what forms of "doing difference" (Hirschauer, 2014) are children involved with respect to the relations between day care and certain families?

Initial question

How do children contribute to practices of "doing family" and "doing collaboration", and what are they expected to do?

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2) Sensitising Concepts

- …serve as "working hypotheses" and thus facilitate a relatively quick transition to more focused observations
- …"do not provide prescriptions of what to see" (Blumer, 1954, p.7)
- …."offer ways of seeing, organizing, and understanding experience […and…] provide starting points for building analysis, not ending points for evading it" (Charmaz, 2003, p. 259)

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2a) Children as actors in doing family in, with and through ECEC organizations

1. Boundary work, creating social ties, doing belonging

- How do children create social ties through boundary work?
- How do they distinguish between family and day care, and which markers of belonging and difference they use?
- Which children from which families are able to (successfully) make reference to and differentiate themselves from the family?

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2a) Children as actors in doing family in, with and through ECEC organizations

2. Objects as tools of boundary work and displaying family (Finch, 2007)

Objects children
bring to day care

Objects explicitly
designed to create a
link between day
care and the family

Image source:
Bollig, Honig, & Mohn,
2016, p. 25

How do children distinguish and use objects as markers of belonging and difference?

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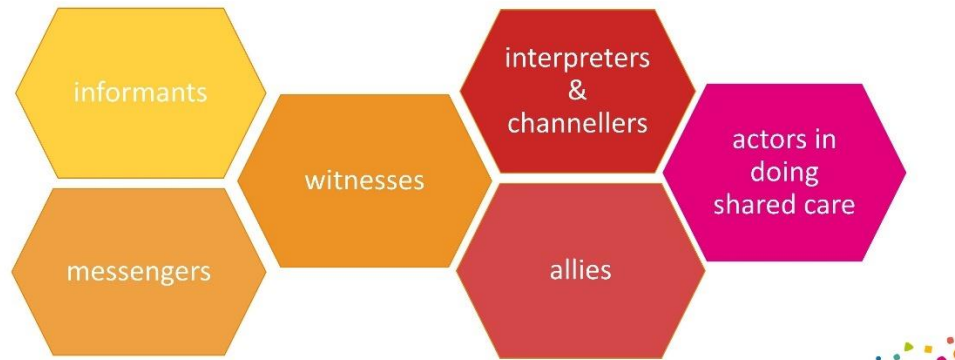**2b) Children as actors in doing and displaying collaboration**

- How are children part of doing and displaying collaboration?

- Which positions are attributed to them?

- Which positions do they take on themselves?

- Which strategies and resources do they use to collaborate?

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2b) Children as actors in doing and displaying collaboration – specific positions of children

2b) Children as actors in doing and displaying collaboration

1. Children as witnesses

- Confirm, complete and evaluate from a child's perspective
- Free from the suspicion that information is self-interested
- Element of displaying 'good day care center'/'good family'

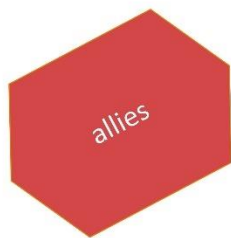To what extent are specific children involved as witnesses?

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2b) Children as actors in doing and displaying collaboration

2. Children as allies

allies

- of parents, educators, other children
- to advance their own wishes and interests
- expanding options for action; different forms of resistance (Markström, 2010)
- foundation: familiarity, neediness, presents & secrets

How and through which forms of ,doing difference' are some children enacted as less or more trustworthy than others?

How is ,trustworthiness' built across social milieus in these alliances?

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2b) Children as actors in doing and displaying collaboration

3. children as actors in doing shared care

actors in doing shared care

- Starting point for negotiations of responsibility, division of labour, occasions to reach agreements
- Goals of doing shared care are read off the child

How do children position themselves within care practices and in negotiations of care responsibilities?

What 'divisions of labour' or responsibilities are directed towards them?

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Thank you for your attention!

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5. Summary

All in all, numerous fascinating aspects were discussed during the workshop and new questions were raised. We warmly thank all of the participants for the fruitful comments and animated discussions! Below, we have summarized a small selection of particularly important points from our perspective, organized according to the concepts of *doing family, doing collaboration* and *children as actors in the relationship between family and ECEC organizations* of relevance for the PARTNER project. We will continue to work on and refine these points in the coming months both theoretically and empirically.

Doing family

The following aspects based on the sensitizing concept *doing family in, with and through ECEC organizations* were particularly interesting. First, an open question concerns how our concept of *doing family* relates to other concepts and related empirically observable practices, such as *doing (good) parenthood* or *doing motherhood/fatherhood*. This is linked to a stronger consideration of gender constructions and gender differences in day care centers' everyday routines. Second, it seems fruitful to not limit practices of *doing family* to familial actors. Professional educators also present themselves in the organizational context and for their addressees as members of families, creating a situational diffusion of boundaries and roles. Finally, we seek to further develop and refine the heuristic concepts. For example, we will examine other shared practices apart from *doing shared care.*

Doing collaboration

The discussions primarily revealed that a key goal for the future is to further explore and test the validity of the theoretically complex concept of *doing collaboration* (in German: Zusammenarbeit machen) from an empirical perspective. This will take place through intensive field research in 2020. Furthermore, following the international exchange, we find it fruitful to extend our thinking in the following three directions. First, the dimension of *doing collaboration* needs to be filled out empirically and further developed, particularly concentrating on aspects relevant for inequality as well as empirically exploring the notion of *un-doing*. How can forms of *undoing collaboration* be observed empirically? Second, greater attention should be paid to tensions and ambivalences in *(un-)doing collaboration* between day care and the family, which should be linked back to theories of power and inequality. One idea is to place greater focus on relations concerning fit (e.g. Kramer, 2017) within doing collaboration. How is (lack of) fit produced between the facility's culture and familial practices, between educators and parents/guardians? Third, we consider it useful to incorporate the concept of *displaying* (e. g. Finch, 2007) more strongly as a sensitizing concept. How and where do displays of collaboration or non-collaboration take place? How is 'good' parenthood, involved parenthood produced by both parents and the institution?

Children as actors in the relationship between family and ECEC

The discussion revealed that and to what extent children's agency can be significant not only with respect to collaboration processes in which they are directly involved, but also in processes of *doing collaboration* in which they are not physically present. In light of this, we will address the question of how children's positions are made visible to external actors within doing collaboration during both their presence and absence. Another objective is to empirically sharpen the concept of *boundary work*, creating a connection to practices of *doing family*. Of interest here is to what extent children make collaboration between parents and educators possible in the first place through practices of translating, mediating, interpreting, etc. Furthermore, we will apply the concept of 'addressing' (Reh & Ricken, 2012; Rose, & Ricken, 2018) to work out children's positions and positionings in greater detail, in order to address the question of how children's *agency* is situationally produced by the involved actors.

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7. Appendix

7.1 List of Participants

Participants (in alphabetical order):

Prof. Maarit Alasuutari (University of Jyväskylä, Finland)

Prof. Dr. Tanja Betz (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz)

Bindges, Anna-Lena (B.A.) (Trier University)

Dr. Stefanie Bischoff-Pabst (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz)

Prof. Dr. Sabine Bollig (Trier University)

Prof. Dr. Peter Cloos (University of Hildesheim)

Prof. Karen Ida Dannesboe (Aarhus University, Denmark)

Dr. Sabrina Göbel (Trier University)

Lisa-Maria Groß (M.A.) (Trier University)

Nadine Kaak (M.A.) (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz)

Jérôme Kloos (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz)

Dr. Alex Knoll (University of Fribourg, Switzerland)

Prof. Dr. Dominik Krinninger (Osnabrück University)

Eva Reitz (B.A.) (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz)

Prof. Dr. Philipp Sandermann (Leuphana University Lüneburg)

Alina Schaefer (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz)

Nadja Schu (B.A.) (Trier University)

Angelika Sichma (M.A.) (Trier University)

Katrien Van Laere (Phd) (VBJK, Centre for Innovation in the Early Years, Belgium)

7.2 Workshop Programme

International expert workshop

Parent-teacher partnerships – collaboration with families – parental participation: relationships between ECEC institutions and families from the perspective of inequality research

Monday, 9th September 2019 – Public Lectures

2:00 – 2:30 p.m.	**Arrival**
2:30 – 2:45 p.m.	**Welcome & Opening** *Tanja Betz & Sabine Bollig*
2:45 – 3:45 p.m.	Public lecture by *Dominik Krinninger (Osnabrück University, Germany)* **The family as a domain of struggle**
3:45– 4:45 p.m.	Public lecture by *Karen Ida Dannesboe (Aarhus University, Denmark)* **Transgressing boundaries of families. The role of early childhood and care institution in promoting home learning in families**
4:45 – 5:15 p.m.	Coffee Break
5:15 – 6:30 p.m.	Public lecture by *Tanja Betz (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany) & Sabine Bollig (Trier University, Germany)* **Partnerships in early childhood education and care – a Childhood Studies perspective**

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Tuesday, 10th September 2019 – Closed Workshop: Relationships between ECEC institutions and families.

8:45 – 9:00 a.m.	Arrival
9:00 – 10:30 a.m.	Session on Sensitizing Concepts I: Input and Discussion **Relationships between ECEC institutions, doing family in ECEC and doing shared care**
10:30 – 10:45 a.m.	Coffee Break
10:45 – 12:15 p.m.	Session on Sensitizing Concepts II: Input and Discussion **Doing collaboration between ECEC institutions and families**
12:15 – 13:30 p.m.	Lunch at *Baron (www.baron-mainz.de)*
13:30 – 15:00 p.m.	Session on Sensitizing Concepts III: Input and Discussion **Children as actors in relationships between ECEC institutions and families**
15:00 – 15:30 p.m.	Discussion and further plans

PARTNER

7.3 Prof. Dr. Dominik Krinninger: The family as a domain of struggle (presentation slides)

Dominik Krinninger, Osnabrück University

The Family as a Domain of Struggle

International Workshop, Johannes Gutenberg Universität, Mainz, 9.-10.09.2019

Parent-teacher partnerships – collaboration with families – parental participation: relationships between ECEC institutions and families from the perspective of inequality research

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1

_ Historical Spotlights

_ Key aspects in research

_ Family as a Domain of Struggle... for Recognition

_ Empirical Spotlights

_ Theses for Discussion

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2

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_ **Historical Spotlights**

_ Key aspects in research

_ Family as a Domain of Struggle... for Recognition

_ Empirical Spotlights

_ Theses for Discussion

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3

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi:
"Lienhard and Gertrud" (1781-1787)

an early document of parent education

Göttingen SUB. DD90 A 33276 RARA

Fig. 1: Frontispiz J. H. Pestalozzi. Lienhard und Gertrud.
Ein Buch für das Volk, Berlin und Leipzig, George Jakob Decker,
1781

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images of the idealization of the family

You shall sing this to your dear father when he comes home, she told the children, and the children gladly learned what the father would rejoice if he came home. In the midst of their work, without any trouble, without any omission, without a book, they sang after their mother until they had learned it.

(transl.: DK)

[…]

A tear filled Lienhard's eye because the mother and the children all sang so brightly and peacefully to him. God bless you, dear ones! God bless you, my Love! he said to them with a heartfelt movement. My darling, Gertrud replied, earth is heaven if you seek peace, live righteously and wish little.

(transl.: DK)

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Stanser Brief, 1807

I actually wanted to prove by my attempt that the advantages of home education must be imitated by public education, and that the latter has value for the human race only by imitating the former.

(transl.: DK)

Fig. 2: Konrad Grob: Pestalozzi bei den Waisenkindern in Stans, 1879

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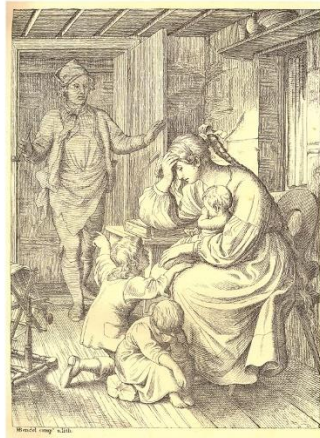
Fig. 3: Hans Bendel (1814-1853) - Pestalozzi's Lienhard und Gertrud. Ein Buch für das Volk. Die zwei ersten Theile, in Einem Bande nach der ursprünglichen Ausgabe neu gedruckt. Mit 13 Federzeichnungen von H[ans] Bendel und einer Notenbeilage. Zürich, in Commission bei Meyer und Zeller 1844

school as a pedagogical sphere beyond the reach of parents

"parents must put up with the fact that their children, as soon as they are handed over to school, must also submit to the order introduced therein" (Natorp 1812; transl.: DK)

family as family natural model of pedagogy

school as "helping institution of the family house" with a "family-like character [that] is acknowledged and protected by the constitution and the management of the entire school system"

(Dörpfeld 1863; transl.: DK)
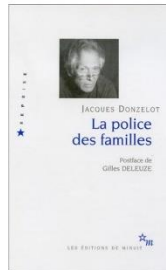
Fig. 4: Umschlagabbildung J. Donzelot. La police des familles. Les editions de minuit, 2005

Fig. 5: Umschlagabbildung J. Donzelot. Die Ordnung der Familie. Suhrkamp Verlag, 1980

"A gift from heaven, because it does not forbid married life, but at the same time expands it with a restraint - because it makes it impossible for parents to enrich themselves directly through the work of their children - and a gain that lies in the curriculum and in the norms of hygiene and behaviour. Through school one will at the same time reduce careless fertility and promote a precautionary lifestyle, one will trigger the decisive incentive of human activity which ... lies much more in the fear of deprivation than in deprivation itself".

(Donzelot 1977, 89; transl.: DK)

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_ Historical Spotlights

_ Key aspects in research

_ Family as a Domain of Struggle... for Recognition

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societal shifts reframing the relationship between family and educational organizations

"new hybrid ratios" (Andresen 2018, p. 376; transl.: DK)

"Family and parenthood ... on the one hand come to the fore as a resource, at the same time family and parenthood are 'discovered' as a risk" (Richter 2016, p. 36; transl.: DK)

"de-familialisation of childhood" (Lange 2010, 107; transl.: DK)

"legislative and cultural blurring of the boundary between public and private" (Gillies 2012)

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self-positioning and external positioning of migrant parents in educational institutions

dynamics and adaptiveness of everyday concepts of migrant parents
(Demuth/ Roth/ Gerwing 2015; Otyakmaz/Westphal 2018; Türkyilmaz 2018)

cultural ascriptions to migrant parents and children through professionals
(Betz/ Bischoff 2017; Schmidt 2017; Neumann 2013)

displaying of migrant families in educational organizations
(Westphal/ Motzek-Öz/ Otyakmaz 2017; Walsh 2015; Seymour/ Wash 2013)

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family conditions as a predictor of academic success

Kuger & Lehrl (2013): interactions between pre-school experiences in kindergarten and family in relation to reading skills at primary school age

Kluczniok et al. (2013): quality of the home learning environment during preschool age in relation to development domains

Lehrl et al. (2012): family learning environment and literacy precursor competences in pre-school age

Kluczniok et al. (2011): family conditions for the stimulation of learning in relation to the economic resources of the families

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practice formations between institutional and family areas

_ parental involvement

_ parent-teacher-partnerships

_ transitions
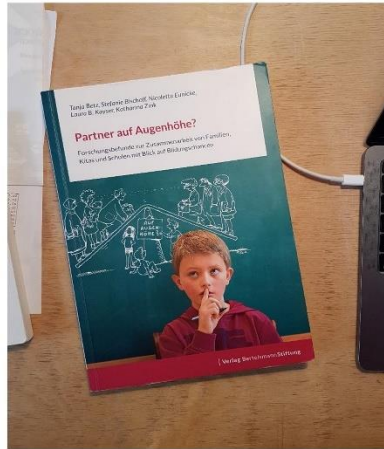
Fig. 6: Umschlagabbildung T. Betz, S. Bischoff, N. Eunicke, L.-B. Kayser, K. Zink. Partner auf Augenhöhe? Forschungsbefunde zur Zusammenarbeit von Familien, Kitas und Schulen mit Blick auf Bildungschancen. Verlag Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2017

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_ Historical Spotlights

_ Key aspects in research

_ **Family as a Domain of Struggle… for Recognition**

_ Empirical Spotlights

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Recognition

_ given according to norms of recognizability (Honneth 1993)

_ cultural values of the community as background for the recognition of individual achievements

_ transformation/shifting of norms through societal struggles for rights, cultural achievements and ways of life

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_ societal debates about recognition in the context of the family: specific family forms claim their right to be recognized as families and to be included in the "field of normalcy" (Link 1999; transl.: DK)

_ discourse on the relationship between family and institutions in educational policy and research: family as a learning environment vs. family as a living environment
→ discourse **about** family and **not with** family

_ possibilities and limits of a research-based speaking **for** families?

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_ Historical Spotlights

_ Key aspects in research

_ Family as a Domain of Struggle… for Recognition

_ Empirical Spotlights

_ Theses for Discussion

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research project: family and the transition to primary school (2014-2018, DFG)

_ 12 families in the phase of their first child's transition to primary school

_ ethnographic case studies

_ case comparison: key structural elements

Family Order
Practices and Concepts of Transition
Relationships between Family and School

→ clear predominance of families enabling the children to participate competently, autonomous use of not parental-structured times and spaces only in very few families

→ most parents link their responsibility for the child with a responsibility for school matters, very few parents separate these aspects

→ relationships to school are determined in terms of content (e.g. through similarities in educational attitudes) and not in social terms (e.g. in terms of personal closeness to teachers)

→ strong tendency for families to adapt to organizational requirements: *coherence* (*conflict*), patterns of *difference* in only two out of 12 cases.

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Fig. 7: Finn am Schreibtisch

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Fig. 8: Gretas Schreibtisch

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Fig. 9: Bennet auf seinem ‚Berg-Car'

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Fig. 10: Bennet mit Freunden im Wald

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Fig. 11: Bennet spielt am Wegrand

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Mother: So the teachers already take on a bit of education I think [...] Of course, if that
goes along with our conformity it is great. But, um, as I said, we can't influence that.

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Mother: Ham, we are already thinking about getting a desk and ... I don't know, I don't know what it is. So I always did my homework at the kitchen table in elementary school.

Father: Well, with about ten or so she's perhaps more likely to be sitting at a desk.

Mother: Yes.

Father: Never liked sitting at a desk.

Mother: Yes, so I think, um, there are just a few things, if she does homework here, then Ivo [little brother] is there, he sometimes is loud, extra loud, because he wants to play, of course, sometimes that's a problem when doing homework. But I don't know what would happen if she had a desk and did it in the room. He would, he would probably go into the room anyway and probably be loud (laughing).

Kaja Kesselhut: The transition to crèche

ethnographic research with four families in two different day care centers for one year

'Eingewöhnung' as a procedure to help in the child's coping with the transition also addresses the parents:

_ build trust in the child's attachment to the professionals

_ take over (or at least tolerate) the ascriptions concerning the needs and competences of the children made by the professionals

_ professionals resort to discisionist (and not evaluative) strategies

The Nazari/Navai Family

Fig. 12: The Nazari/Navai Family

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Fig. 13: Javads Kinderzimmer

Fig. 14: Javad malt im Wohnzimmer

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Suddenly Leonie [the kindergarten teacher] sees that Javad still has a piece of bread in his hand while he ... is running around. "You're still eating!" She goes to him, takes him by the hand and says loudly and articulately: "Sit down... you eat, you sit down." She pulls him a little behind her, points the other hand to a chair at the table, pulls the chair up and sits Javad down. I also sit at the table ... and think about how my father spoke almost perfect German to me ... Leonie explains to me: "There's a lot about manual language with him". (transl.: DK)

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_ Historical Spotlights

_ Key aspects in research

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_ Empirical Spotlights

_ **Theses for Discussion**

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empirical attention to the internal family perspective

How is family produced in, through, and with ECEC organizations?

→ How do processes of doing family in, through, and with ECEC organizations relate to processes of doing family that the family has performed and continues to perform so far or in other contexts?

theoretical refinement of the concept of doing family

vagueness concerning the connection between everyday practices and the dimension of societal patterns of living

need for specification of the theoretical figure that the family is to become when its constitution is thought of as a social procedure

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7.4 Prof. Dr. Tanja Betz & Prof. Dr. Sabine Bollig: Partnerships in early childhood education and care – a childhood studies perspective (presentation slides)

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Alliance Research Project

Strong Partnerships in Early Childhood Education and Care

The interplay among organizations, practices and actors as a foundation for inequality-sensitive quality development

2019 - 2021

1. The starting point

educational partnerships between family and day care

The starting point

- Political and public awareness of an education gap even in early childhood
    large-scale studies in different countries: Influence of family background variables on different educational transitions and academic achievement (e.g. Schmitt, & Kleine, 2010) but also on access, enrolment rates in ECEC provision and development of competencies in the early years (for an overview: Vandenbroeck et al., 2018)

- *Quality* works as a powerful driver ("quality matters") – also to tackle inequalities

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The starting point

- A multitude and diversity of policy levers to enhance quality, e. g.
    - Implementing national curricula and standards
    - Improving workforce conditions, qualifications and training
    - Advancing data collection, research and monitoring
    - **Engaging families** and communites (OECD, 2012a)
        handbooks for action, guidelines, how-to manuals... for involvement, partnerships, collaboration

- Educational Partnerships / Involvement – a ‚story of success' in many countries
    - works as a *boundary object* (Star, & Griesemer, 1989; Gießmann, & Taha, 2017) between and within policy levels (for national curricula: Betz, & Bollig, 2019), research/science, the media, ECEC providers, staff, parents
    - come to work in the practical definitions and manifestations of day care-family relations

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The starting point

- Educational Partnerships / Family-ECEC-partnerships and parental involvement
  have become established targets to improve the quality of practice in ECEC organisations (and in families) and to maximize the effect on childrens development, learning and academic achievement

  - the stronger the family-ECEC relationship, the stronger the effect (more frequent exchange, regularly information, intensifying collaboration,…)
  - the more similar/consistent the learning environment (both, ECEC centre and family), the stronger the effect (e. g. OECD, 2012a)

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The starting point

- Guidelines from a prominent approach of parental engagement/involvement (based on the theory of overlapping spheres of influence (Epstein 1995, Epstein 2002)

  - In a partnership, educators and administrators create more **family-like ECEC centers**. A family-like ECEC center recognizes each child's individuality and makes each child feel special and included. Family-like ECEC centers welcome all families, not just those that are easy to reach.
  - In a partnership, parents create more **ECEC-like families**. Families reinforce the importance of learning and activities that build student skills and feelings of success (adopted from Epstein, 2002, p. 9)

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2. State of research and desiderata

Research on partnerships, parental involvement, collaboration I

Broad and complex research field – broad and divers results

(1) Research on 'engaging families' – effects of partnerships /parental involvement

- Parent-infant interactions and reading within the home learning environment (HLE) (e. g. Sylva et al. ,2004; OECD, 2012b)
- Programmes guiding parents and providing materials – a support for parents to actively engage in children's learning activities at home (Melhuish, 2010; OECD, 2012a)

    "parental involvement in the form of 'at-home good parenting' has a significant positive effect on children's achievement and adjustment" (Desforges, & Abouchaar, 2003, p. 4; Leseman, 2009; OECD 2012b)

- Parental engagement in ECEC services – ambiguous results: volunteering in ECEC centers and participation in parent councils or parent-teacher organisations: little or no impact on children's achievement (e. g. OECD, 2012a), hints for strenghtening the collective voice of Latino parents (Durand, 2011)

- **Inequality**: parental involvement somehow related to social class (Nzinga-Johnson et al., 2009), the higher the class the more the involvement, influenced to some degree by the ethnic culture (Desforges, & Abouchaar, 2003); focus on correlations, not on causal factors (critical: Betz et al.. 2017)

Research on partnerships, parental involvement, collaboration II

(2) Research on (De-)Constructing partnerships / parental involvement

- studies on the ambiguities of partnership discourses (e.g. Vandenbroeck, 2009; Jansen, & Vandenbroeck, 2018; Betz et al., 2017, Betz, & Eunicke, 2017)

- the struggling of parents and professionals in enacting and maintaining partnerships (e. g. Viernickel et al., 2013; Betz et al., 2019; van Houtte et al., 2015; Karila, 2006)

- ambiguities of partnership concepts and complex asymmetries between professionals and parents in practice (e. g. van Laere et al., 2018; van Laere, & Vandenbroeck, 2017; Cloos et al., 2018; Karila, & Alasuutari, 2012; Menz, & Thon 2013; Thon, & Mai, 2018; Betz et al., 2017; Einarsdottir, & Jónsdóttir, 2019; Kesselhut, 2015)

- **Inequality**: social class differences, ethnic minority contexts etc. (Brooker, 2006; Lawson, 2003; Betz et al.,2019), whom is giving a voice, who is positioned how e. g. in talks about/with parents, in parent-teacher meetings, in team meetings parent participation in relation to inequality and cultural diversity: privileges for families who are already privileged?
  Does involvement/partnership reinforce inequalities? (Vandenbroeck et al., 2018; Betz et al., 2017)

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PARTNER-Study: Strong Partnerships in ECEC...

Dominant focus:

involvement and partnerships enhance quality in the sense of achieving positive effects for children (adjustment, achievement, aspiration, self-concept) and partnership is seen as a general approach in the parent-practitioner collaboration (e. g. for Finland: Alasuutari, 2010, for Germany: Viernickel, & Schwarz, 2009) and the best/ideal way of linking families to ECEC centres

the respective guidelines, programs, curricula, how-to-manuals, ... unfold **symbolic power** (Bourdieu, 1991) with (still unknown) effects on the field of ECEC:

(How) Is it possible not to collaborate/not to maintain a partnership?

(How) Is it possible for organisations not to be family-like (the family not be ECEC-like)?

(How) Is this dominance of childrens achievement out of many other functions of ECEC put into practice?

PARTNER

PARTNER

PARTNER-Study: Strong Partnerships in ECEC...

Following research strand II we are interested in these partnerships and forms of involvement with a focus

- on examining the **concrete collaboration practices** between family's and ECEC organisations from a practice-analytical point-of-view (Reckwitz, 2003; Schatzki, 2002)

- on the question how **societal inequalities** exert their effects in these means of structuring day care-family relations

- on the diverging **positions of children** within the practical definitions and manifestations of day care-family relations

→ Quality Research from an inequality and childhood studies perspective

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3. The theoretical view

A childhood studies, organizational and practice-analytical perspective on inequalities in family-day-care-relations

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Childhood Studies

Two basic assumptions of the broad interdisciplinary field of *childhood studies*

- Childhood as a Socio-Cultural Form, Societal Pattern, Institution, Social Construction, etc.
  *'childhood' as a social, generational order and, thus, not the epitome of children's growing
  up/development, but as the social and societal context of it*

- Children as social and societal actors, which exercise agency *as children*
  *children's inter-generational and peer-cultural reproduction and transformation of their
  positioning's as children (children's culture, self-sozialisation, etc.)*

Children not only worth to be studied in their own rights, because they have particular perspectives related
to their social positions ('children's point of view'/ voices), but also because they 'inhabit' unique positions
within the set of practices which constitute certain fields of society ('**vantage point of children**')

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Childhood studies perspective on Family – Day Care Relations

Family and ECEC intensively interrelated *Institutions* of Childhood

- concurrent and ambivalent processes of scholarization and familiarization of childhood (Zeiher, 2009)

- establishing Day Care as crucial part of constituting the nuclear and child-centred family (e.g. Honig, 1996; James, 2012), interrelated processes of 'normalizing day care – normalizing the child – normalizing the family' (Loseke, & Cahill, 1994)

- ECEC as crucial part of the 'civilizing project' of European welfare states towards children and family (Gilliam, & Gulløv, 2014)

- expansion of ECEC services as interrelated welfare-political processes of the De- Familiarization and Re-Familiarization of childhood (e.g. Lepperhoff, & Corell, 2014; Oelkers, & Richter, 2010), and shifting private and public responsibilities (e.g. Gillies, 2011; Ostner et al., 2017) in child-centred social investment strategies (e.g. Mierendorff, 2018)

- ECEC politics as drivers of the 'Politicization of Parenthood' (Richter, & Andresen, 2012) and the blurring of private/public boundaries (e.g. Wyness, 2014; Hünersdorf, & Toppe, 2011)

Focus here on how ECEC and family as societal institutions are interrelated historically, structurally, politically, administrativilly,
discoursively and practically and how images of *(good) childhood, (good) day care, (good) family* and *(good) parenthood*
are defined, transformed and negotiated **relationally**.

PARTNER

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Childhood studies perspective on Family – Day Care Relations

Family and ECEC as interrelated sites of every day life and social/societal positions

- Dual Socialisation (Dencik. 1995) and development across certain sites (e.g. Hedegaard, 2011; Højholt, & Kousholt, 2018)
- Fractal identities (e.g. James, & Prout, 1996), multiple cultural identities of children (e.g. Brooker, 2006)
- Children as 'daily commuters' between family and ECEC and commuting practices (Mohn, & Bollig, 2016)
- Families come to know about themselves and their children trough interactions with day care (Kousholt, 2011)
- Children come to know about their family in day care (Bundgaard, & Olwig, 2018)

Focus here mostly on the relational differences between Family and ECEC, like public/private, home/outside, particularism/univeralism and so on, and how those are part of the everyday life of children and a condition of their growing up, learning processes and identity maintenance;
not so much on how children are actively engaged in the everyday conduct/accomplishment/management of these sites as ,distinct' and/or 'interrelated'

PARTNER

In PARTNER …

… we use this childhood studies perspective on the interrelatedness of family and ECEC as institutions to ask how and in which ways Educational Partnerships and Parental Involvement are embedded in the relational 'becomings' of ECEC and family;

specifically, we ask how the dominant discursive framing of 'partnerships', 'co-working' and so on come to work in the everyday accomplishment of family-day-care relations,

and how families and ECEC constitute and normalize themselves, their duties and responsibilities relationally in practices of *doing those partnerships*.

Hence, to ask how this fairly new politics of 'partnership' come to work in the everyday conduct and accomplishment of these *institutional relationships* it is necessary to view them in terms of 'organization'.

PARTNER

Organisational perspective on Family – Day Care Relations

neo-institutionalism/system-theory view:
organisations constitute themselves as entities in constant inter-/transaction with their environment

thus, emphasis is laid on the question, how ECEC services as organizations stabilize and change their ,inner life' in interaction with their ,outside', what also includes a constant an work on organisational boundaries and a multiply of inner/outside relations (for ECEC: Ben-Ari, 1997; Honig, & Neumann, 2004; Jung, 2009; Schnoor, & Seele, 2013)
family as the outside of ECEC organisations to whom those employ diverse boundaries, related to...

ECEC as ,hybrid organizations' (Robinson, 2016) which combine the diverse logics of public/statual, market and civil society sectors (Robinson, 2016) and which accomplish **multiple functions** (Honig et al., 2004)

How are families and Day Care are related and relate themselves
in light of these diverse functions and hybrid logics of ECEC organisations?

PARTNER

Organisational perspective on Family – Day Care Relations

How are families and Day Care are related and relate themselves
in light of these diverse functions and hybrid logics of ECEC?

Multiple (and to some extend also conflicting) functions and duties

first of all **care** and **education** (in Germany „Bildung, Erziehung und Betreuung"),
- to support families work-care-balance,
- women's participation in labour market,
  - compensating educational lacks in family,
  - school-preparation,
  - enhancing childrens rights for participation in education and social life,
  - democracy education, etc.

but also **community building, inlcusion, offering low-threshold access to further family-related welfare services, child protection**, and so on...

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Organisational perspective on Family – Day Care Relations

How are families and Day Care are related and relate themselves
in light of these diverse functions and hybrid logics of ECEC?

ECEC as ‚hybrid organizations' which combine the diverse logics of public/statual, market and civil society sectors

Websites of day care centres, for instance, adress parents (and/or families) simultaneously

- as **customers**, to whom ‚information tours' and ‚taster days' are offered and which can expect high quality

- as **receiver of public services**, to whom information about eligibility, rules, etc. are provided

- as **community members** (neighbourhood, church, milieu), which share same values and reciprocal responsibilities (for instance engagement in church services, or running parts of the day care service, etc.)

- as **allies** in regard to **civil society** issues like democratic, intercultural, inclusive ways of living together, which are part of the solidarity group of the centre

- as ‚Partners', ‚Experts', ….

PARTNER

Practice-analytical view on organizations

nexuses of hetereogeneous interrelated practices and socio-material arrangements
and organisational routines

- **Practice theoretical approach** (Schatzki ‚2002; Reckwitz, 2003; Schmidt, 2012) focusing the „nexuses of bodily saying and doings" which constitute doing relationship between family and day care as sited activities;

- include **situational interactions** (between children, parents, practicioners) but also ‚ego-practices' and the socio-material arrangements which are entangled with those practices, or to say **organisational routines** (like for instance time-space-arrangements, opening times, use of architecture, etc.)

- **diversity of organizational occasions** in which family members and day care members interact/interrelate, or the relation between family and day care is 'at stake', which display also the multiple functions and hybrid logics of ECEC (for instance intake conference, informal talk at pick up/drop off, 'parent evenings', celebrations, church services, etc.)

- **multiply of practical definitions and manifestations of family – day care-relations in the organisational everyday**

PARTNER

PARTNER

In PARTNER …

… we use the practice-analytical organization perspective to address the family-day care relationships in regard to the multiple functions and diverse logics of ECEC,

and to identify and map the multitude of practical definitions and manifestations of family-day care relationships which are accomplishment in diverse organizational occasions and routines.

We are interested in mapping this organisational multiply of family–day care-relations, because we assume this as a so far underestimated source of inequality in educational partnerships and parental involvement.

The question is then, how are social inequalities reproduced within the multiply of organizational ‚becomings' of Family and ECEC?

PARTNER

Inequality perspective on Family and ECEC

- **social and cultural capital** (e. g. Lareau, 1987; Bourdieu, & Passeron,1990)
transformation of unequal distributed cultural and social resources of families into cultural capital by educational institutions; schools /ECEC centers utilize particular linguistic structures, authority patterns, and so on, to whom children and adults from higher social strata are more familiar with ("middle class orientation")

fit / lack of fit ('Passung': Bauer, 2011; Kramer, 2017; Lareau 1987)
unequal forms of match and interplay due to unequal resources in the family <u>and</u> in the organisation:
How is the inequality of resources and positions realised and maintained in ECEC organisations? (Behrmann et al., 2017)

At which points do families with other family languages, less financial resources or precarious working conditions, etc. don't fit into organisationals routines or ‚codifacations' of family employed there?
How do which families fail to meet ‚middle class' related expectations?

- **Un/doing Differences** (Hirschauer, 2014)
point on explicit routines and activities of distinguishing between 'us' and 'them' and how categorizations related to social inequality (like minority group, class) are used by that and be ignored, and/or made irrelevant

also adds a focus on the contingency of social categories, i. e., their concurrence and temporality
undoing means to suspend (Stillstellen) the categorization with the possibility to reactivate it

Multiply of family-ECEC-relations: in which kind of enacted family-daycare-relations are which kind of categorizations more likely to be used or not and with which situational and transsituational effects?

PARTNER

In PARTNER ...

... we use this theoretical approaches to inequality to

questioning, which kind of family-day care relations requires which kind of fit between families and day care and which families 'candidate' by which performances for a **lack of fit** with organisational routines or to be accounted as 'different'.
This also includes the question on how certain families are made visible as families within day care and how this contribute to their (lack of) fit to organisational routines and interactions with ECEC practitioners.

Furthermore, we ask how categories connected to social inequalities (like class, income, ethnicity) are made relevant within the multiply of practical manifestations of family-day care relationships (**'doing difference'**) and in which kind of relationships we find **'un-doing difference'** as well.

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To sum it up ....
a **childhood studies and practice-analytical perspective on family-day-care-relations and inequality**

Research Questions

Which multiple definitions and manifestations of day care—family relations are afforded practical relevance in day care centres as organisations, and how is 'the family' produced in relation to this? How is the relationship between the family/families and day care centres normatively and performatively structured through collaboration practices?

How are organisational routines and educators, parents and **also children** involved in the production of these multiple practical definitions and manifestations?

How does these diverse day care-family relations produce certain (lack of) fits between families and day care centres which may become relevant for the reproduction of social inequality? To what extent are practices of 'doing difference' embedded within them?

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4. The study

research design, methods and sensitizing concepts

PARTNER

Aim of the PARTNER-study

- Basic Research
  Fieldwork: Participant observations and ethnographic / semistructured interviews

- Applied Research / Research-Practice Dialogue
  developing research based 'materials' which help to foster research-based professionalization
  and reflective organizational development towards more inequality-sensitive collaborations with families

→ Combine basic and applied research approaches in regard to
  Inequality-sensitive research on quality in ECEC

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Research Design of PARTNER

- Research Dialogue-Workshops with experts / practicioners
- Participant Observations
- Materials for inequality-sensitive practice and organisation
- Secondary analysis / State of Research
- International Research Workshop
- Interviews with parents / educators

Participant Observations

(focused) participant observations, including informal talks with parents, educators and children, collecting field documents and audiotaping of formal parent-practicioner-talks

in 4-6 contrasting day care centres (urban and rural areas, big and small centres, super-divers and more homogenous social environments)

Interviews with parents / educators

Ethnographic and semi-structured interviews with parents and practicioners

4-6 parents in each centre and 2-4 practicioners in each centre to highlight different perspectives in regard to social and professional positions, experiences and strategies

Analysis via grounded theory (Strauß, & Corbin, 1998), situational analysis and mapping (Charmaz, 2008)

International Research Workshop

Sensitizing concepts for participant observation and interviews

1) practices of *doing family* (Jurczyk, 2014) with the aim to identify how educators and parents/family members produce familiality and active linkages between families and day care centres in the organizational context of day care: How is the family produced *in, through and with ECEC?*

2) practices of *doing collaboration* between day care centres and families with the aim to identify sets of practices, which explicitly or implicitly allow the actors to understand their activities as 'collaborating'

3) focus on *children as actors* and *their participation in practices of doing family and doing collaboration*

PARTNER

Thank you!

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