

# Abstract

- Title: Including and Excluding Practices. An Investigation of Childrens' Relations Work in School
- Language: Swedish
- Keywords: peer-relations, peer-groups, peer-culture, peer-interaction, communication, social actors, social practice, inclusion, exclusion, ethnography, childrens' perspective,
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Life in school is an important arena for children to establish, maintain and break social relationships with peers. In daily interactions children learn about social conditions of life at school and, gradually, about social life in a more general sense. These processes take place within an institutional context where the number and social selection of age mates available are decided upon by agencies outside the reach of the child. At the same time children have few possibilities to run away from the fact that social life at school does not automatically organise itself but demands hard work to make sense and to organise.

How children deal with the processes of sorting relations and people in the everyday school environment has been the central focus of the present thesis, which has also been approached with the ambition of taking a perspective from which children are seen as responsible agents and social actors. The research has been conducted close to the specific peer-group culture constituted by a group of children who spent a major amount of time together within the school environment in one particular school class.

In this thesis, based on a one-year ethnographic study in one school class in a Swedish primary school, the work of 10-year-old children when organising their social life in school was studied with a particular focus on acts of social exclusion and inclusion. The data consists of fieldnotes from participant observations in a diversity of locations in school and audio-recorded conversations with groups of children.

Results show that the establishment of friendship patterns and the work with sorting and organising social life formed complex social practices and that organisational frames and ordinary activities in school constituted means in this on-going work. Acts of social exclusion and inclusion directed towards particular children were regular, and from the children's perspective, legitimate and normal events during the school day.