

The Journal of Youth Voices in Education: Methods, Theory, Practice

Volume 1 Issue 1 July 2019

We are doing it together!

This is the very first issue of the journal *Youth Voices in Education. Methods, Theory, Practice*. The eight papers in this issue, are the culmination of many forces brought together in the research project Marginalisation and Co-Created Education (MaCE), funded by Erasmus+. In MaCE, we seek to better understand the structures behind marginalization and inequality in education, and we do so through young people's experiences and insights. Therefore, we would like to thank all the informants that shared their perspectives, when all the interviews were carried out. Without your generosity, there would be no MaCE and no *Youth Voices in Education!*

The MaCE project is a collaboration between students and scholars from University of Cumbria in the UK, The University College of Southeast Norway and VIA University College in Denmark. Since the project start in September 2017, we have crossed many borders. Literally, when we visited each other across the three countries, and symbolically, when we shared ideas and learned from each other in online teaching sessions, interview training courses and writing seminar activities. MaCE is crafted around collective spirit and hard work, and we believe that all contributions in this first issue express just that. Some will find it hard to decipher all eight papers, because authors are allowed to submit their work in their own languages. Therefore, there should be something for everyone! All papers, however, are equipped with English abstracts and key words to stimulate everyone's interest.

In the first paper, entitled '*Great Expectations*' in the UK Education System, Kaz Stuart and Steve Walker introduce an Equalities Literacy Framework, that was developed in the MaCE project. In their paper, Stuart and Walker focus on one element of this framework, *the technologies of oppression and liberation*, and through a youth perspective, they analyze what works and what does not work in the UK education system. Stuart and Walkers inspiring work is followed by Gemma Linnell's paper *Perceived expectations and young peoples' self-perceptions; exploring disadvantage in the context of a grammar school*. Linnell interviewed four students from a grammar school, and in the paper, she scrutinizes how young people's perceived expectations from teachers and school context inform the young people's view of success and accordingly how they feel about themselves. Linnell's recommendations for teachers and policy makers are highly relevant and utterly important. In the third paper, *Mental health and relationships in school*, by Lisbeth Hellesnes Gausvik, Heidi Høglund and Trine West Svenni, the focus is on young people's perspectives on mental health and relationships in schools. Throughout an inspiring analysis, the authors thoroughly illustrate that student's mental health is strongly linked to long-lasting and consistent relationships with teachers and peer students. In her paper *Fylde Coast Living Libraries. Seaside Story Telling – within a pedagogy framework*, Deborah Terras explores inequalities in schooling. The empirical background for the analysis is six interviews with young people from Blackpool in England, and the narratives revolve around experiences of intimidation, bullying and oppression. The paper contains poignant quotes and very strong messages. David Thore Gravesen's contribution *Stupid and lazy? When young people meet the educational system and confusion builds. Who is to blame?* reflects the persistent nature of inequality in education in the light of the concept *social reproduction*. The analysis revolves around 13 interviews conducted in the Danish part of the MaCE project.

Whereas the five already mentioned papers are thematically driven, the last three are motivated by methodological enquiries. In each their way, the authors reflect on the interviewing technique *The Indirect Approach*, that all participating students and scholars use, when they conduct their research interviews in

the MaCE project. Thit Bjerre Hjortborg, Maria Normann Brøtger and Josefine Mark Raunkjær's paper *From research method to questioning technique in social work practice. Reflections on how citizens with homelessness problems can play a stronger role in their own development process* asks if the *The Indirect Approach* questioning technique can be transferred, used and implemented in a social work practice with homeless people in care homes. The authors see great potential for positive progress, if social workers use elements of *The Indirect Approach* in their relationships with homeless people. Linking research methodology with social work practice is not only original, but also very inspiring. In *Exploring young people's voices in ethnographic research. Remarks on the ethical implications of ethnographic interviews with marginalised young people*, Peter Hornbæk Frostholm looks into ethics when doing research with vulnerable and marginalized young people. Frostholm concludes that researchers must undertake ethical judgements as they go, because ethical considerations cannot be boiled down to rigid schemes or absolute rules. The last paper by Annemette Lund and Annesophie Kjeldahl, entitled *The Indirect Approach - Reflection, critique and potentials*, is also concerned with ethical dilemmas when using *The Indirect Approach*. Lund and Kjeldahl introduce interesting reflections on the power relation in the interview situation, and discuss very thoroughly how to start up, carry out and end the interview in an ethically appropriate manner.

Have fun reading the papers! And please share your thoughts with students, colleagues, policy makers, researchers, teachers, social workers and last, but not least: *young people*!

David Thore Gravesen

Editor