Discourses on inclusion in media

An account of belonging and exclusion[1]

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This article explores discourses on inclusion in articles about education in Sweden's four largest newspapers, and how these discourses position children, students, teachers, and schools. The findings indicate that the journalistic practices of agendization, accountabilization, factualization, emphasizing, and sensationalization have impacted arguments and increased the newsworthiness of the subject. Inclusion is often discussed in a sporadic and inconsistent way and students and teachers are often positioned out of a deficit perspective. Discourses were demarcated on three interrelated levels: an individual level, an organisational level, and a societal level.

Keywords: Inclusion, mediatization, discourse, education, students and children in need of support.

Inclusion in the media

In everyday school practice, the approach actors take towards inclusion and the student's educational needs have consequences for the learning, development and security of children and students. These approaches are influenced in part by the discourses and debate about inclusion in the media. This can be described as a process of mediatization of the concept of inclusion, whereby the language used in media describes inclusion in terms of the children and students in need of support, or school staff, parents and politicians. Using mediatization as a starting point, we examine the discourses that emerge when the concept of inclusion is used in Sweden's four largest newspapers. More specifically, we examine the claims that are made that ascribe meaning to the term inclusion and the how the demarcated discourses make positions available to guardians, teachers, children and students as well as educational practices.

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Research on inclusion needs to account for the national context, as conditions differ between countries, and studies are therefore not suitable for direct comparison (Nilholm, 2020). The present article contributes to the exploration of the Swedish context by contributing knowledge concerning the occurrence of the concept of inclusion and changes in meaning over time in the Swedish media. This should not be considered an examination of how the concept of inclusion has generally evolved in the educational science and practice, but rather an examination of the progression of the societal discourse on inclusion in Sweden. This also means that this article presents texts on inclusion that express a wide range of interests from potentially different fields of knowledge that are seldom represented in the educational research literature.

We have chosen to refrain from defining what we mean by inclusion, as we need to be open to different ways of defining, understanding and clarifying the concept. Particular attention is given to the broad ideological and field-specific basis that may be represented in the empirical material. However, we proceed from an understanding of inclusion that is similar to Gadler's (2011) understanding of 'A school for all', namely, that inclusion can be viewed from three different perspectives that affect the individual simultaneously. This approach is useful for the purpose of this paper as it is ultimately the individual who is included, excluded, segregated or integrated. We understand the concept of inclusion as it pertains to *rights* in the sphere of education regardless of conditions, a concept of *development* in terms of the development of knowledge and democratic citizenship, and finally, a concept of *socialization* in terms of student's diversity as a resource for learning and as a means to develop an understanding of otherness. Given this understanding, we make no determination of where inclusion occurs, how well it is functioning or what the goal of inclusion is. By extension, the article allows for a problematization of students' ability to learn and have an influence, as well as to participate in their lives in the present day and in the future as democratic citizens.

Mediatization of education and inclusion

Knut Lundby (2015) describes mediatization as "a concept to characterize changes in practices, cultures and institutions in media-saturated societies, thus denoting transformations of tehse societies themselves" (p. 3). Previous studies on the mediatization of educational issues include a Russian study by Maria Oreshkina and Jessica Nina Lester (2011) that looked, in part, at discourses of inclusion in 32 articles that were directly aimed at teachers. The authors identified a conflict between a medical, more excluding perspective, and a socio-cultural, more inclusive perspective, which is characterized by an acceptance of otherness and that students get to express themselves with regard to their situation and have their voices heard. Studies on mediatization has also been done in an Australian context. Kathryn Shine (2015) studied and analyzed

Australian media over a ten-year period. In this context, the teachers are positioned as underperforming, with students who are too difficult to manage, and usually want to exit the profession; they are also absent in the news items. Aspa Baroutsis (2019) has also studied mediatization in the Australian context by examining the reporting of teachers, where five journalistic practices proved to be central in the positioning of the teacher:

> ...agendisation and accountabilisation which are both institutional practices; and the journalistic practices of factualisation, emphasisation, and sensationalisation – all of which operate globally, to some degree, across and within media institutions and media practitioners, and produce the news about teacher's work within the framework of these practices (Baroutsis 2019, p. 545).

One effect of the mediatization of education is that: "This sense of media involvement with education highlights what representations of problems in education are newsworthy, the limits of arguments that can be publicly maintained about the education within nations and which representations of problems in education are capable of travelling between national contexts in different modes" (Rawolle & Lingard 2014, p. 596). Mediatization also has an impact on the concepts used in policymaking, such as inclusion, while the concepts ultimately "reach the broader public in inconsistent, time-bound, and sporadic patterns" (Rawolle & Lingard 2014, p. 595).

Inclusion as a phenomenon and concept

Conceptually, the meaning of inclusion differs between countries, contexts and theories (Engelbrecht & Savolainen, 2017; Nilholm, 2020). However, a study by Claes Nilholm and Kerstin Göransson (2017) has shown that the concept is generally defined in European and North American journals in four categories. The first definition is a *placement* definition. The second adds the *social and academic needs* of students in need of special support, the third definition includes *all students,* and the fourth also concerns *participation in the school community.*

The concept of inclusion in the Swedish context

Gunlaugur Magnússon, Kerstin Göransson and Gunilla Lindqvist (2019) contend that the tendency towards segregation in the Swedish school system is related to a particular approach to inclusion that manifests in educational institutions, in policy decisions and in the direction of the country's broader educational policy. Inclusion has been given a more prominent role in Sweden's educational policy and practice since the adoption of the Salamanca Declaration in 1994 (Nilholm, 2020). However, the concept of inclusion does not appear in the curricula nor the Swedish Education Act (National Agency for Education, 2011). Therefore, despite the central position inclusion has been given and

the high frequency with which it is raised in discussions about school quality, equity, governance and the vision for the future, it is not very well defined (Isaksson & Lindqvist, 2015). And while the definition of the concept remains ambiguous, the concept of inclusion has become more widely used in policy, research and practice (Allan & Persson, 2020; Magnússon, 2019; Nilholm & Göransson, 2017). An interim report from the Swedish government problematizes the use of the term based on the presumption that the meaning has become multifaceted (Government Offices, 2020). In addition to the lack of clarity and ambiguities described above, the school's role and function in relation to the *student in need of support* has been the source of tense debate. This stems from the fact that the meaning of inclusion is based on both political ideals and value-based discourses while applying a rights-based perspective on education, as well as on market-driven ideals guided by economic discourses where the evaluation of teaching effectiveness plays a central role (Isaksson & Lindkvist, 2015; Magnússon, 2019; Magnússon, Göransson & Lindqvist, 2019).

Given the somewhat undefined and ambiguous definition of inclusion and its divergent ideological origins, there is uncertainty about how to go about interpreting what inclusive teaching should be and how it should be implemented (Magnússon, 2019). A number of research and development projects in Sweden illustrate this complexity. Common elements in the attempt to define inclusion include the sentiment that the school is for all students, both in terms of the conveyance of knowledge and socially. In this respect, participation, interaction and openness are key words that stand out in contrast to exclusion, isolation and exclusivity (Ohlsson & Assarsson, 2015). In addition to partaking, inclusion has also been described in terms of belonging, equality and acceptance, as well as the respect for diversity (Gadler, 2011). For students, inclusion can be felt as an experience of trust, confidence, community and context along with a sense of motivation, self-confidence, self-reliance, partaking and belonging (Allan & Persson, 2020; Olsson, 2017; Ohlsson & Assarsson, 2015).

Theoretical starting points

The present study takes its starting point from Michel Foucault's (1982; 1979; 1994) thinking on discourse. Deriving from Foucault, everything that is said, written and done is understood as expressed in a discursive regime that appears constructive and deconstructive. This dictates what is possible, appropriate and desirable to say and do, but also what, by whom, when and how (Foucault, 1994). In this way, formulations in newspapers can be interpreted as expressions of the disciplining power inherent in the discursive regime. This also means that when analysing content in text, the analysis must be situated in the relevant context, which in our case means portraying the type of news media, genre and sender. Multiple discourses occur simultaneously, which can overlap, contradict or reinforce each other according to specific systems of confinement and exclusion. The will to truth is one of the exclusionary systems described by Foucault in *The Order of Discourse* (1993). The purpose of these systems, which distribute and name

discourses, is to ensure that institutions operate within discourses that distribute, create and recreate language, knowledge, truth and power and the relationships between these. The discourse generates more or less stable positions that subjects can assume within the specific discourse. In this way, the discourse dictates what can be said, done and thought for different subjects within a specific socio-cultural context (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008) and thus what rights and obligations are afforded to the respective subject position (Davies & Harrè, 1999). In the context we examine here, discourses on inclusion make subject positions available to the student, the teacher, other professionals and the schools. The key point is that activated discourses make certain subject positions available and not others, and this occurs to varying degrees for different kinds of people. This makes it essential to account for the disciplining power that makes possible subject positions available and dictates through power relations (see Foucault, 1982). The system of relations between language, power, knowledge and truth affects and shapes both available subject positions and the objects (in this case inclusion) that the discourse is speaking to. This discursive theory allows us to anchor our analysis within a framework where we can demonstrate how conditions are created for what can be said, done and thought in relation to the concept of inclusion.

Materials and method

The purpose of the present article is to investigate how discourses about inclusion appear in Sweden's four largest newspapers [Svenska Dagbladet, Dagens Nyheter, Aftonbladet and Expressen], how these discourses relate to each other and the subject positions they make available. The above newspapers are considered the largest newspapers as they have the widest circulation. We have based this ranking on information from mediafacts.com, which shows that in 2019, these four newspapers together reached 981,300 people per day. A search in Retriever Research's (Mediearkivet) database for the last ten-year period with the keywords inclusion and school* generated 125 results, of which six were double hits. Hits that did not concern preschool or regular school and inclusion were excluded, which left 79 newstexts including one double hit. This also means that regardless of what was contained in the texts regarding inclusion or regular school or preschool, they were included in the sample. In this sense, the selection is also very inclusive. Special groups of students or learning difficulties are thus not explicitly included in the selection. An important aspect of the research procedure itself was that it broadly and unconditionally investigate how inclusion is ascribed meaning and for and by whom. During the analysis, another 13 texts were excluded because they did not explicitly address inclusion and education in preschool or regular school, which resulted in the inclusion of a total of 66 news items in the analysis. The sample can be found in Appendix1 to the original article in swedish.

The context of the empirical material

An illustration of typical texts on inclusion from different genres can be found in Figure 1. Overall, we can state that the four newspapers started to address the concept of inclusion in the editorials in the years 2012–2014; during the same period, the concept appeared in approximately the same number of debate articles and news articles. In the years 2015–2017, the number of debate articles increased, while no editorials were found with mention of inclusion. The years 2018 and 2019 there was a marked increase in the number of texts concerning inclusion and an increased number of editorials, debate articles and news articles compared to the beginning of the ten-year period. The number of texts concerning inclusion in education doubled in these two years compared to 2017, and compared to the first two years studied (2009 and 2010), the number of texts increased by 140%.

Figure 1. Number of texts during the 10-year period and type of text (translation: Nyhet=News, Ledare= Editorial, Debatt= Debate articles, Reportage= reportage)
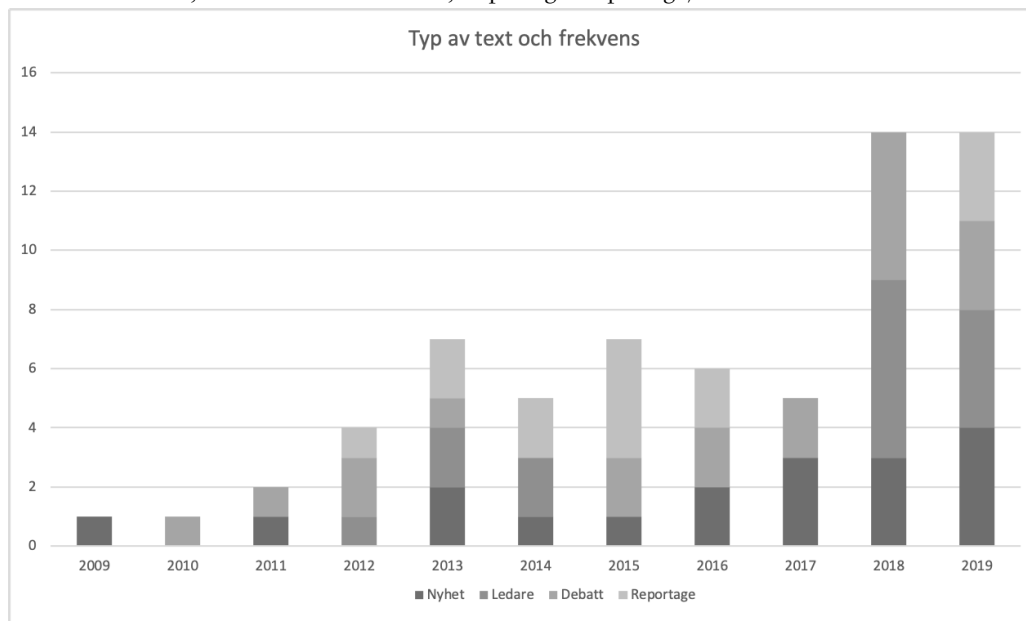
Of the news features written by the journalists and editorial writers during the ten-year period, DN accounts for 22, Expressen for ten, Aftonbladet for four and SvD for six. As inclusion is described in terms of special education support, support measures or adaptations, no description is given of what the special support consists of or what support measures or adaptations entail in relation to inclusion. These kind of descriptions are infrequent in the texts, even as it pertains to special schools. On the other hand, there is broader mention of special teaching groups, lesson structure, support measures, the systematics of the organization, group size, teacher density and training programs. Mention of occupational groups that work with special support and adaptations that are intended to create inclusion are relatively

absent in the texts. In 2016, there is a report that gives an account of a child psychiatrist's perspective. Special educators and special teachers are sometimes mentioned, but then only indirectly and often because those who are commenting on inclusion believe that special educational competence is important. It is mentioned, for example, that cooperation with those working in these professions is valuable, that adapted special education is called for when students have special needs, that more special teachers are needed and that there are staff with special competencies in central groups with a special focus on primary schools. In addition, there is reference in other texts reporting that children and students work with a special education needs teacher individually a couple of times each week and that the special needs educator is insufficient. The authors of the texts are editorial writers, journalists, psychiatrists and psychologists, parents, a historian of science, a professor of Spanish, cultural workers and politicians. It is only clearly stated in a text in 2018 that experts on inclusion or students in need of support have authored parts of the texts. This was a debate article that included 40 researchers, psychologists and educators who work with individuals with ADHD. Occupational groups working within the school (head teachers, preschool teachers, teachers and advanced teachers) have been involved in a total of five features during the ten-year period, which equates to 7.6% of all texts. In all other respects, the special education professions are most notable for their absence.

The analythical procedure

The analysis was exploratory in the first phase and then interpretive (Creswell, 2007). The exploratory phase included a qualitative content analysis where a first analytical step was the identification of segments in the texts that contained the concept of inclusion. The context in which the identified segment occurred was then coded. The sender and function of the text were also coded, i.e. according to whether it was a debate article, editorial column or news article and the role and name of the author. The content analysis was performed by describing the meaning that was ascribed to inclusion in the text and also the knowledge represented on inclusion. The process then entered an interpretive phase in which a discursive analysis was performed. Segments that mentioned children, students, guardians, professionals and educational practices were then analysed based on how the texts made different types of subject positions available. We noted how subject positions were named and what characteristics, rights, obligations and responsibilities they were ascribed. A segment could be just a few words or a couple of sentences in length, but for the purposes of our study, it needed to form a meaningful unit. Phrases that were similar to each other based on their claims and attributions regarding subject positions were then collected from different texts. This was to compare the definitions, knowledge and claims that were put forward in order to reveal the inclusion discourses. The collection of phrases were given descriptive headings that best

represented the content, in what we would describe as discursive themes. The formulation of headings for these discursive themes was inspired by the method used by Florian Feucht and Lisa Bendixen (2010). The creation of headings entailed substantial paraphrasing. Segments from one and the same text could fall in two different discursive themes. Table 1 illustrates the process used to deconstruct discourses and subject positions during the analysis.

Table 1: Examples of steps in the analysis process

Segment from text on the meaning of inclusion	Paraphrasing	Subject positions	Discourse and level
Many municipalities are pulling the supplementary funding grant and calling it "inclusion" (text 59).	Inclusion means that everything fits within the confines of the "typical" school and budget.	Children with NPDs are positioned as lacking functioning schooling in a "typical" school.	Discourse on inclusion as an economic strategy
Everything needs to fit within the budget of the typical school. However, many children with these problems have never been as excluded as they are there (text 59).	This type of inclusion leads to exclusion and seclusion. The impact is felt both socially and spatially.	The school is positioned as typical and can therefore also be atypical. The same applies to the children	Discourse on the organizational level

The discourses that were construed were examined based on the claims made for inclusion and the subject positions that were made available in the texts. The discourses were then arranged into what can be called a discursive distribution based on Foucault's ideas on the order of discursive formations (1993). The process is inspired by Anette Bagger's analysis of discursive formations (2015) and constitutes an adapted version of Foucault's description in order to delimit and construct discourses about inclusion and their rank order:

1. The identification of phrases referencing inclusion and descriptions of subject positions
2. A description of its form and content through the reformulation of phrases. This step corresponds to the paraphrasing we have applied (see Feucht & Lisa Bendixen, 2010)
3. A description of the relationships between these expressions in a discursive distribution. Expressions are grouped to explore how they reinforce or contradict each other
4. A summary of how these groups relate to each other in a discursive formation

The paraphrasing step and the identified discursive formations form the basis for the joint narrative that has been constructed around the discourses about inclusion and available subject positions.

News items are intended to arouse attention, emotions, thoughts and reach the reader. The greatest challenge in the analysis was that texts and segments were often ambiguous and contradictory. For example, the term inclusion is occasionally used to demonstrate the presence of exclusion. The continuous exchange between the researchers when coding and sharing texts provided an opportunity to ensure a degree of consensus in the interpretation of the texts. However, it is important to emphasise that we do not claim that the discourses we have construed are the only possible interpretations or that they necessarily need to be ordered as we have ordered them.

Discourses on inclusion

In presenting our analysis, we have applied the procedure used by Oreshkina and Lester (2013), who also conducted an analysis of inclusion discourses in the media by examining expressions of subject positions and how these are constructed in the media. Our examination of subject positions allowed us to code discursive patterns in the articles and to generate explanations and interpretations, which we illustrate below. This also means that we have taken an approach to discourses that is 'constructive rather than representative' (Oreshkina & Lester 2013, p. 690). This approach means that it is neither possible nor desirable to formulate the result as a depiction of 'reality'. The study instead aims to reveal the production and reproduction of inclusion that the discourses maintain or create. Below, we first provide a summary and overview of the study's contribution to the literature and how subject positions and discourses have changed over time. Figure 1 illustrates the discourses that appeared in the four largest newspapers during the period 2009–2019, the relationships between these discourses and the subject positions that were made available.

The discourses overlap and interrelate through their overall narrative of inclusion as a prerequisite for belonging and exclusion. During the analysis, discourses emerged on three different levels; individual, organizational and societal (Table 2). Overall, the empirical material shows that the organizational level links inclusion as an individual discourse with inclusion as a societal issue. Subject positions at the individual level are often related to those at the organizational level, as the wording of the texts consistently states that adaptation, support, well-being, health and development are impacted by placement, funding and competencies. Thus, over the long term, the organization has an impact on participation or exclusion in society, which is raised in several texts. At the same time, the societal level and prevailing ideologies delimited what should and can be organized.

Table 2. An overview of the constructed discourses and subject positions that were made available within the framework of these discourses. P= Primary school. S/R = Special/Resource school (also R/S)

Discourses	Subject positions		
Individual discourses	Student	Teacher	School
1 (a) Inclusion as (lack of) adaptations and support

1 (b) Inclusion as (a threat to) health, development, and well-being | Lacking, acting out, resource-intensive, carrier of the problem, excluded

Exposed, exhausted, suffering, self-harming, in need of rehabilitation, with diagnosis, bullied by 'normal' children. Safe and calm (S/R) | Lacking competence and resources (P), High competence and with resrouces (S/R).

Insufficient Lacking competence and resources (P), High competence and with resources (S/R). Challenged | Insufficient (P) Sufficient (S/R)

(Un)usual, (un)normal, wrongly organised, insufficient (P), sufficient (S/R)

Policymakers: Incomprehensible |
| **Organisational discourses** | Student | Teacher | School |
| 2 (a) Inclusion as placement

2 (b) Inclusion as an economic strategy

2 (c) Inclusion as an educational strategy and competence issue | Unusual student (P) Healthy (S/R) Unable to attend school

Hard to educate, a cost, lacks functioning schooling

Lacking choice, isolated, alone, forgotten, ignored | Challenged (P)

Not mentioned

Fooled Challenged, stressed and incompetent (P) Competent (S/F) | Usual (P) Unusual

Unwilling to pay (P) Saviour (S/R) Dysfunctional (P)

Not mentioned |
| **Societal discourses** | Student | Teacher | School |
| 3 (a) Inclusion as a (obstacle to) path to citizenship and rights

3 (b) Inclusion as an ideology | Hard to educate, segregated, trapped between society and family, outside of society

Recruit for criminality and violence, obstacles for teachers | Discriminating

Tools to counteract criminality, gatekeepers | Discriminating **Municipalites** Discriminating **The governing** Excluding

Tools to counteract criminality, gatekeepers

School inspectorate Fights to get rid of recourse schools |

In performing our analysis of how inclusion is discussed and the focus of the texts over time, a certain tendency to change themes emerged: During the first three years, the texts were often about the rights afforded to the individual and the child and the resources to access these. After this period, the content then turned towards a focus on racism and the education of Roma children, and in the later years of the period studied, inclusion is more often referred to as a threat to order, development and democracy. Within the subject positions made available to the student, a potential development path can be discerned for the student in need of support through the three discursive levels. On the individual level, the student is often characterized as someone *with a need for support* that is not being met, and with inclusion as a motive, this often rests on a placement definition of inclusion. On the organizational level, this lack of support – or inadequate support – is described as something that causes the student to become *an obstacle* for the teacher and the organization and ultimately a *potential threat* to society. This is interpreted as a drift away from the view of inclusion as an individual rights issue towards an emphasis on the obligations inherent in the relevant subject position (cf. Davies & Harrè, 1999). The corresponding shift for the teacher is that he or she can adopt an *active* subject position in the individual discourse, which is more and more transformed into a *passive* subject position in the organizational discourse, where the teacher becomes more a tool for the needs of the organization.

In the societal discourse, the teacher is virtually *absent* but is mentioned as a gatekeeper against criminality or someone through whom systematic discrimination manifests. In their discussion of inclusion, several of the texts refer to the ideologies behind the concept. Foucault (1980) contends that an ideology always stands in virtual opposition to other truths and is a difficult expression to use. It is of greater interest to examine the truths that are expressed, the power effects they have and how this orders the subjects. In the present study, we make expressions of truths and power effects visible by revealing the way ideologies make subject positions available to students and schools and fundamentally order teachers and students in a network of power relations and truths that move between the individual and the societal level. This is often depicted in terms of an individual being disciplined or that society has failed to discipline. For example, the student can become a *criminal* or a *good citizen*. In the overall narrative, we have interpreted this as an expression of the existence or non-existence of belonging (or exclusion) on three discursive levels, which concern the individual, organization and society. These three levels are demarcated by showing the claims made for inclusion and how subject positions were named and what characteristics, rights, obligations and responsibilities these were ascribed.

1. The individual level: Inclusion as an individual issue

The overall discourse on inclusion as an issue on the individual level comprises two underlying discourses: *Inclusion as (lack of) adaptations and support* and *Inclusion as (a threat to) health, development and well-being*.

1a) Inclusion as (a lack of) adaptations and support

Claims for inclusion in this discourse

Several texts point out that inclusion requires the adaptation of the entire school and competence in relation to functional impairments among students. The texts emphasize that support needs to be available throughout day, not just during support lessons on the side of the classroom. This stands in contrast to the message that inclusion is the absence of assistance, whereby individually tailored support is not offered, only group efforts. One adaptation that is mentioned in this context is small teaching groups in the "typical school" or one-on-one instruction during individual lessons. Inclusion, as it is delimited in this discourse, can only occur if support and adaptations are tailored to the individual, which requires competence and a long-term perspective, as well as financial resources. The student would otherwise lack the opportunity to develop. The more dominant construct in this discourse is that inclusion is a threat to learning and development.

Subject positions within this discourse

Students with neuropsychiatric disabilities (NPDs) are described in approximately one third of the texts. The behaviors and needs of these children are described as symptoms of the failure to deliver the support that is needed. Some news items diverge from this needs-oriented, rights-based perspective of the student. Namely, rather than texts that make subject positions available which mean that the students are seen as the problem and, as previously mentioned, a symptom of the failure to deliver support, some texts describe characteristics: students with a *concentration deficit, learning and behavioral problems* or who engage in *acting out behavior and are resource-intensive*. The subject position that is thus made available to a student in need of support is that he or she is the *bearer of his or her own difficulties*, difficulties that cannot be accommodated in a primary school. This means that the student is ascribed a subject position of being *excluded in practice*, if the student attends a primary school.

   The subject position that is made available to the primary schools within the confines of this discourse is that they are *insufficient* to meet the student's needs, and *sufficient* if the subject position instead concerns a special school/resource school. A primary school is often referred to as a *typical* or *normal* school. On the other hand, staff with specialist competence at a special school can meet a student's need for support by working in smaller groups. In this way, the subject positions that are made available to teachers become: If teachers work in the *typical* or *normal* school, they *lack competence or resources*, but if they happen to be employed at a special school/resource school, a different subject position becomes available by virtue of the teachers' *high competence and resources* to perform the work that needs to be done. These subject positions emerge repeatedly in the discourse at the organizational level on inclusion as an educational strategy and competence issue.

1b) Inclusion as (a threat to) health, well-being and learning

Claims for inclusion

Although inclusion is sometimes defined as something that has a positive impact on students in need of support – generally by referencing research and international conventions – inclusion is primarily positioned as a detriment to learning, well-being and development, both in the present day and over the long term. The students will miss out on the opportunity to learn and develop. Furthermore, inclusion is positioned as a form of discrimination, as it deprives students with disabilities of their right to education. Inclusion is an impediment to students getting the help they need. In this depiction of inclusion, the concept is considered to mean that students will not manage to earn a school-leaving certificate, as they will lack the support they need to achieve this. On occasion, a student receives support that is available in a preschool, but the same support is not available when the child starts kindergarten in the primary school. Expressions made within the confines of this discourse sometimes use language that symbolizes violence, and inclusion is linked to existential issues of life and death, for example, in articles on crime, racism and violence in schools. These expressions also often occur together. Inclusion is described as an antidote to the hatred that gives rise to violence. In particular, inclusion in school can provide an individual with the tools needed to be included in other environments and prepare the individual to manage everyday life, reduce the risk of crime and provide the opportunity to partake in society. On the other hand, inclusion is positioned as the cause of exclusion, chaos, weariness, fatigue and depression in children and parents.

Subject positions within this discourse

Parents and families are positioned within the confines of this discourse, which represents a *fight*, a life or death struggle. In one case, a mother is described in terms of being a wounded *soldier*. Children in need are ascribed a subject position of being *vulnerable, victims, suffering*, *fatigued and self-injurious* as they do not receive the support they need in the *typical* or *normal* school. Students are also ascribed a subject position of being at risk of becoming juvenile delinquents, especially if they have a foreign background. Within a special school, a subject position is made available to the student of being *calm and secure*. There is also a subject position in this context that positions the student or child as prepared or *rehabilitated* in order to be included in the future. The child requires rehabilitation due to the harm suffered at school. Inclusion is portrayed as something that places the child's right to education at risk, where it is especially students with NPDs and Roma students who are described as systematically discriminated against. Just as schools are portrayed as *typical* and *normal*, children are also portrayed as *typical and normal*. Typical children are privileged in the typical school and bully and abuse children in need of support; Roma students are also victims of bullying and discrimination. In this way, the subject position of *typical* children can be interpreted as *bullies* because they expose children who are different to bullying. This simultaneously positions children with a foreign background or functional impairments as *atypical* and *vulnerable* to bullying.

The reason that inclusion presents a risk is shown in the subject positions that are made available to politicians, teachers and schools within this discourse. Namely, that politicians are *oblivious* and *schools are improperly organized*. Here, the special school's subject position is also that it is *adequate* and can contribute to learning, well-being and harmony. Primary school is attributed a subject position of *inadequate,* as it helps create students who are uneducated and insecure, which can lead to exclusion. Politicians, teachers and schools are portrayed as discriminatory against Roma students and their parents.

2. Organization level: Inclusion as an organizational issue

In this overall discourse, the need for inclusion work is placed with the organization instead of the individual. This discourse is generally concerned with how the school is organized, and comprises three underlying discourses: *Inclusion as* placement, *Inclusion as an economic strategy*, and *Inclusion as an educational strategy and competence issue* within the organization.

2a) Inclusion placement

Claims for inclusion

Inclusion is associated with *where the student is placed:* inside or outside the classroom, in a *typical/normal* school or class, in specialized schools or in special education groups. Above all, inclusion is something that happens in the typical school and comprises a blend of students from different backgrounds and with different levels of knowledge. The message then is that different types of students should not be mixed. Inclusion is depicted as something that occurs in a full class and in a typical school, which also means a lack of proper support. Inclusion is thus used to talk about exclusion. In contrast to these constructs, this discourse also conveys the message that if inclusion is reduced to placement issues, it can lead to exclusion instead of participation and inclusion. Such messages more clearly define the word and distinguish between the use of the terms inclusion and exclusion. The same conceptual clarity can be found in the critique of inclusion that is raised when the practice of inclusion is about integrating students with functional impairments. As a whole, these subject positions are interpreted to mean that inclusion means an *atypical* student attends a *typical* school.

Subject positions within this discourse

This discourse concerns students with a diagnosis. The subject position that is expressed here positions the student as an individual who *cannot be* in the typical or normal *school.* Schools are thus also positioned in this discourse in terms of *atypical* and *typical.* Inclusion is positioned as a lose–lose scenario for all involved. In the most common scenario, this is portrayed as a male student, and inclusion leads to stress. The special competence needed to provide this student with the proper support is needed to rehabilitate the children; rehabilitation also appeared in the discourse on the individual level, but it was then portrayed as an individual need. Here, it is instead portrayed as an

organizational and systemic issue: This kind of rehabilitation must be carried out in small groups with a solid structure and a high density. The goal is for students who have suffered harm due to the *atypical* school to eventually return to the *typical* school, where they will then carry over the tools they need to support themselves and be able to manage their everyday routines in the *typical* school. This implicitly means that the competencies and resources needed for *atypical children* to be in the *typical* school are not found in the primary school, but externally. It also requires that certain groups of children be allowed to attend their own schools, such ADHD children and children with diagnoses such as dyslexia or developmental disabilities. Other more unusual suggestions on how children who are not like other children need to be seen as special also apply to students who do not meet the knowledge requirements for their grade.

As the physical placement is a special school, a subject position is made available to the child in need of support as *experiencing well-being*. Teachers in primary school are positioned as *challenged* by the degree of individualization that is demanded of them. Furthermore, inclusion in this discourse is constructed as something that researchers have conceived to promote their own importance and which means that all students are in the same room, which contributes to poor academic outcomes. It is thus presumed that the typical school cannot accommodate a certain type of subject position in relation to its students, just as, within the confines of the discourse on inclusion at the individual level, it is seen in terms of (a lack of) adaptation and support. Within this discourse, the municipality is described as the *savior of resource schools* at a time when they are threatened by the "Swedish Schools Inspectorate's inclusion policy". This discourse then makes it possible to say that there has been too much of an emphasis on inclusion at the expense of special schools and special classes. This is interpreted to mean that inclusion is indirectly defined as incompatible with special schools and special classes.

2b) Inclusion as an economic strategy

Claims for inclusion

Within the framework of this discourse, inclusion is defined as an *economic strategy*. Inclusion is a *financial choice* made by head teachers to reduce costs for children in need of support or to fit them in the budget.

Subject positions within this discourse

The subject position that is thus made available to children and students is that they are a *cost*. Without this cost, the typical school would fail to provide the children the opportunity to succeed; furthermore, the primary school lacks the resources and competencies. The position of *children without functioning schooling* is made available to children in need of support if they attend a typical primary school.

For municipalities, in their capacity as the principals for the school system, a subject position is made available of *unwilling to pay* for the cost of adaptations and to arrange education programs for children in need of support. They are also positioned as being in violation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child for financial reasons. This can manifest as an unwillingness on the part of the principal to investigate, provide support or resources or, with respect to the schools, being positioned as unwilling to

accommodate students with autism. In the projection of support that is withdrawn or absent, the text is often oriented towards allocating financial resources to special schools or resource schools, in other words, to include some students in certain activities and not others. Resource schools and special schools are ascribed a subject position in their capacity as *saviors in a time of need* and as those with the ability to educate these difficult children. The typical school is assigned a subject position of dysfunctional and harmful.

2c) Inclusion as an educational strategy and competence issue

Claims for inclusion
Within the framework of this discourse, inclusion is about an approach that emerges from competence in the area of functional impairments, much like the individual level where it was a prerequisite for meeting students' needs through inclusion. Inclusion demands preparation and instruction that is based on specific competencies and adaptations, a kind of preparation that is not done within the schools. Likewise, inclusion is also equated with inefficient 'fuzzy pedagogy' with order and discipline at the other end of the spectrum. The pedagogy associated with inclusion in the typical school is described in terms of shortcomings. Inclusion is sometimes presented as a novel concept. A buzzword contrived by researchers, a trend or a watchword. Inclusion is also described as antagonistic to special education groups and special schools. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate aims to promote inclusion by removing these groups. Overall, inclusion is depicted as a discriminatory practice where students fail to receive the support they need.

Subject positions within this discourse
Within this discourse, students with NPDs are ascribed a subject position of *lacking choices, isolated and alone*. One subject position that is interpreted within the confines of this discourse is that the student is *forgotten* or has needs that are *ignored,* due to an inflexible kind of pedagogy or competence shortage. This may be the case for students who, over the years, have an increased need for support or changes in the need for support (e.g. in the case of autism), but cannot get their need for support met in school. Or it may be that the student is unable to get the support he or she needs at all in small groups or by having his or her own resource staff in the classroom because this does not fall within what inclusion entails as a pedagogical strategy.

The school does not have access to the competence to address the needs of children in need and inclusion is a kind of novelty, or afterthought, where teachers lack the knowledge and resources. Another subject position that is made available is *teachers cannot reasonably relate individually to all students*, and that teachers are *challenged* by inclusion, which has not previously been part of their work duties. The task is impracticable and stressful. The teacher is also ascribed a subject position as being *tricked*, through the teacher education program, into believing that they would be able to educate a broad mixture of students at the same time, which is too burdensome to manage in practice. The typical school is positioned as having a deficit of competence, while there is expert competence at the special school. In the discourse, such expressions create an accessible subject position whereby the typical primary school is *incompetent*

while the special school is *competent*. At the same time, subject positions that are made available to teachers within this discourse are *inadequate, incompetent* and *stressed*, if they work in a primary school. Or if the same teachers are employed at a special school, *competent*.

3. Societal level: Inclusion as democratic and societal issue

This overall discourse concerns what is required to realize democratic principles and a good society. This is supported by two discourses: *Inclusion as a (obstacle to) path to citizenship and rights* and *Inclusion as an ideology*.

3 a) Inclusion as a (obstacle to) path to citizenship and rights

Claims for inclusion

In texts that mention Roma, which were mostly printed in 2016 and earlier, inclusion is defined in terms of citizenship and rights. It is also seen in the expression of citizenship and equality, where inclusion is seen as a prerequisite for these but also as something that is always present, side by side with exclusion. The rights that need to be defended in order to achieve inclusion also concern the school and its events. i.e. that they are non-denominational. Another aspect of citizenship is that inclusion in school is a means to ensure that the individual can become a productive citizen and participate in society. The texts describe inclusion as a means to create thriving, well- functioning citizens, which does not generate costs in the long run.

Subject positions within this discourse

The school is depicted as part of a system with the power to marginalize based on class, gender and ethnicity, but also functional impairments, such that citizens may potentially be excluded from society and fail to prosper in the future. The school, teachers, the municipality and society as a whole are ascribed a subject position of *systematic discrimination* by, for example, allowing Roma students to fail to obtain a school certificate and thereby preventing them from studying in upper secondary school. School governance and policy also make the subject position *excluded* available to new arrivals or working class children through their language.

For students with a Roma background, the subject position of *segregated* in school and society is made available as is the subject position *discriminated against*. Students with a Roma background are also ascribed a subject position as *trapped* between family and society, where society needs to create conditions for trust and confidence instead of disadvantaging children and students' parents, thereby leading to exclusion in society. This holds especially true for girls. This will otherwise be reproduced and the children's schooling and future career opportunities, as well as participation in society, are at risk. This is also connected to linguistic accessibility. Other subject positions that are made available to working class students, new arrivals or students in need of support include *situated outside society*.

3 b) Inclusion as an ideology

Claims for inclusion

The school is discussed within the framework of this discourse as a tool to create a good society, and inclusion is a core issue in this effort. Inclusion should create students who are conscious of society's interests and needs and who are able to shape and participate in their own learning. Inclusion is also described as a watchword, an ideology or an ideal that is not rooted in the knowledge of what is good for the student's learning and well-being. Inclusion is considered a doctrine and a somewhat insular ideology that is considered to result in exclusion rather than inclusion. Within the framework of this discourse, inclusion is also described as a remnant of an ideological clash from the 1990s. References to the origin and ideology behind inclusion are uncommon. A positive construct is that inclusion is an instrument of justice, peace and equality. However, this is not a common construct in the discourse. In these cases, the definition is more precise and complex than something that simply touches on placement in or outside of a typical school. This can be associated back to the more positive aspects of the individual discourse, where inclusion is about accessing the same quality education on equal terms. Inclusion also implies something that will ensure the student's health and development by virtue of it serving as an instrument for justice: however, a lack of resources prevents students from having a good school environment in line with the intentions of international and national policy. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the Swedish Education Act, are invoked to explain the origin and significance of inclusion. Inclusion is thus raised from a values, rights and democracy perspective.

Subject positions within this discourse

It is within this discourse, to a much higher degree than other discourses, that authorities and politicians are ascribed a subject position. In its work to promote inclusion, the Swedish Schools Inspectorate is given the subject position *fighting to eliminate resource schools*. This is most prevalent in the texts from 2015 and 2017 and in debate articles. The school is given the subject position a *tool to fight crime* through the inclusion of marginalized students. However, the texts suggest this tool is weakened by a lack of resources and it is dependent on cooperation between the home and school. Schools and teachers are positioned as gatekeepers. What is ultimately at stake is society itself.

Within this discourse, we find descriptions of how politics causes harm and marginalizes students, which is often linked to the discourse on inclusion as an economic strategy. The subject position made available to multilingual students and students of foreign descent is *recruits* for involvement in *crime and violence.* This is a passive subject position; the student needs to be protected and rescued for the student's own best interest, or ultimately face a future of criminality. Students are also ascribed a subject position within the framework of this discourse as an *obstacle for teachers* in their efforts to convey basic knowledge to their students. As obstacles, these students should be excluded; this applies to students with concentration difficulties, behavioral problems or who have not acquired grade level knowledge, something that is also evident in the organizational discourse. Certain students are also not suited to upper secondary studies,

given that they lack core knowledge. Students should be excluded from their peers, i.e. repeat a school year, if they do not meet the knowledge requirements

Summary and discussion

The discourses on inclusion and the subject positions that are made available can be directly linked to the mediatization of the meaning of inclusion and the positioning of teaching children and students in need of support. Mediatization concerns which arguments can be perpetuated and what can be considered newsworthy, which in itself means that the conception of inclusion branches out in an inconsistent, time-bound and sporadic manner, much like Shaun Rawolle and Bob Lingard (2014) argued in relation to political concepts. This inconsistent and sporadic positioning is evidenced by the fact that there are few – or not many reasonably stable – definitions of inclusion; the texts instead contain a discussion of the effects of inclusion. The conception of inclusion – as well as the depiction of children and students, teachers and schools – therefore always appears in a slightly nuanced manner. the meaning of inclusion varies depending on which children, students, teachers and school the text concerns. In this way, arguments and evaluations of newsworthiness are built that are sustained throughout the ten-year period we examine here. The core argument is often that more schools are needed where teachers possess the necessary competence and have adequate resources and where children experience well-being; it is also implicitly understood that this kind of school is not a primary school. The teacher's competence thus attains a relative position in relation to where he or she is employed, rather than the teacher's educational qualifications or experience. This way of portraying the teacher's competence further shifts the skillful exercise of the teaching profession away from professional skills to a placement issue. This coincides with the simplest way of understanding student inclusion, namely, as a matter of placement (Nilholm & Göransson, 2017)

These journalistic practices cause the conception of inclusion to be handled with agendization, accountabilization, factualization, emphasizing, and sensationalization (Baroutisis 2019). The results from the Swedish context thus reveal the same conflict between medicalization and relational and sociocultural perspectives of the student in need of support as described by Oreshkina and Lester (2011). This manifests as a rights-based perspective on inclusion. But the question is whether these rights relate to inclusion or avoiding inclusion – because in its truest sense, exclusion is difficult to interpret. In addition, it is acknowledged in the Swedish context that the very conception of inclusion and the students it concerns has ended up in a tug-of-war between market-driven efficiency discourses and values-based political and ideological discourses (Magnússon, 2019; Magnússon, Göransson & Lindqvist, 2019). This tension can be seen in our results in the contradictions observed between the individual and organizational discourses and frequent cases where the authors of the texts attribute the deficient situation in the schools to economic strategies and something that negatively affects the student, or vice versa. The student is a cost and a burden, not only in terms of money.

The claims about inclusion we have analyzed in the texts are often set against the background of a memory of what is often described as an ideal past when the school better served its students – with clear structure and discipline and with atypical children placed somewhere other than in the typical school. The present-day manifestation of inclusion is presented rather as something that runs counter to inclusion, i.e exclusion, and is linked in several texts to what is called 'fuzzy pedagogy'. This foreshadows a school of the future that is hobbled by the responsibilities placed on it and the problems that the school is expected to resolve or address, both in the short term and the long term. At the same time, the effects and expressions of inclusion are primarily discussed on the individual level, often from a perspective of shortcomings among schools, teachers, parents, students and children. This is similar to Shine's (2015) findings from Australia, where teachers are seen as the problem due to their lack of competence or understanding if things do not go well for the student. Based on the perspective that there are inherent deficiencies, a position emerges on inclusion that concerns students' right to a safe and secure school environment with a calm learning environment. This calm learning environment and security only seem possible through the categorization and sorting of students based on whether they are able to be in a regular classroom without causing a disruption. Boys are positioned as disruptive more often than girls, as are newly arrived students and students with low socio-economic status. The question that naturally emerges from this perspective is not only who should remain in the classroom, but who has the right to what education and where should this occur. If the dominant ideology continues to be inclusion, but inclusion is seen as a question of placement (Nilholm & Göransson, 2017), we end up in a circular argument, where the conception of inclusion has been inflated. Students may experience exclusion even if they are included in relation to their placement. An interim report (Government Offices 2020) proposes that the concept of inclusion be replaced with a focus on inclusive learning environments (see examples in Tetler, 2015). The reason for the proposal is the negative connotation the concept has acquired in Sweden, while the use of the concept inclusive learning environments sends the signal that the school is responsible for adapting the learning environment to meet the students' needs.

News items are intended to arouse attention, emotions, thoughts and reach the reader. In the analysis, the authors therefore engaged in continuous discussions to determine how segments should be interpreted while maintaining neutrality. But just as important were temporary breaks from the reading process to independently review the texts with a fresh perspective. The greatest challenge was that texts and segments were often ambiguous and contradictory. For example, the term inclusion is occasionally used to demonstrate the presence of exclusion. The continuous exchange between the researchers when coding and sharing texts provided an opportunity to ensure a degree of consensus in the interpretation of the texts. However, it is important to emphasise that we do not claim that the discourses we have constructed are the only possible interpretations or that they necessarily need to be ordered as we have ordered them. We have consistently used an interpretive analysis procedure (Creswell, 2007), which means experiences and knowledge, which in this case concerns the authors' background with inclusion and students in need of support.

Implications and recommendations

The concept of inclusion seems to some extent exclusive in the context of this debate, as it requires us to create an account of the views shared by individuals, children and students and those in greater society who are steeped in the debate in order to be able to understand the arguments. At the same time, the term is widely used, and writers and recipients can often read through a text without considering the definition of the term and what it means in the relevant context. It may be that the effects of inclusion and exclusion that we highlight here, namely, community and exclusion, are more suitable to use to prevent misunderstandings. We also see that the responsibilities assigned at the individual level are not reflected in and do not relate well to the societal level and vice versa.

A collective effort is needed to arrive at a more nuanced discussion of inclusion and its expression, existence and meaning. The question is how collective knowledge exchange can help create a sustainable form of inclusion and a sense of belonging for all students. Inclusion efforts that result in loneliness or exclusion for any single student or group of students are not in line with the school's governing documents and the principles of a democratic society The ability to engage in this kind of nuanced discussion is dependent on the willingness of key actors to engage in order to ensure that students experience belonging rather than loneliness. Likewise, these students should not be seen as a pedagogical challenge, or as "acting out or underachieving" students. We argue that this will first require a dialogue around inclusion based on the third discourse: a democratic and societal issue. Only when the dialogue clearly shifts to that level – and governance and decision-making – can the organizational level create the right conditions for belonging and learning. A prerequisite for this is that any decisions made are paired with the necessary resources. It will then be possible to investigate and examine how the effects of inclusion – or symptoms in the form of exclusion or belonging – manifest in individuals. The current state of affairs is almost the complete opposite: symptoms of exclusion/belonging are discussed and the conclusion is that it is the individual who needs to be fixed and set on the right path, or that inclusion itself is the cause of loneliness and exclusion.

It would be a desirable outcome if those with competence and experience working with inclusion could take a more prominent role in these discussions and have a greater influence over the conclusions that are made. This will also require true reflection on what resources and funding bring with them in terms of the conditions created in the real world. It is not a reasonable conclusion that a teacher with the same experience and educational qualifications can be considered lacking competence in a primary school but highly qualified in a special school. This article can assist student teachers, teachers and decision makers in their efforts to familiarize themselves with the prevailing discourses and the implications of these discourses for how the student in need of support can be understood – and as a result, included or excluded in school and society. The contribution the present study makes to the body of research on inclusion, students in need of support and the educational sciences in general is an opportunity to understand and further contribute to the cultivation of inclusion as a phenomenon and a concept.

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