

Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy

ISSN: 2002-0317 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/znst20

Together and apart: interethnic peer interaction in integrated schools

Sidsel Vive Jensen

To cite this article: Sidsel Vive Jensen (14 Jun 2025): Together and apart: interethnic peer interaction in integrated schools, Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy, DOI: 10.1080/20020317.2025.2519708

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/20020317.2025.2519708

© 2025 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.

Published online: 14 Jun 2025.

Submit your article to this journal

Article views: 481

View related articles

View Crossmark data

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?journalCode=znst20

NORDIC JOURNAL OF STUDIES IN EDUCATIONAL POLICY
https://doi.org/10.1080/20020317.2025.2519708

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

RESEARCH ARTICLE

OPEN ACCESS Check for updates

Together and apart: interethnic peer interaction in integrated schools

Sidsel Vive Jensen

Department of Education, Children and Youth, VIVE – The Danish Center for Social Science Research, Aarhus, Denmark

ABSTRACT

Policies of school integration aim to improve intergroup relations between different ethnic, racial and religious groups through social mixing in educational institutions. Although there are high expectations for the benefits of such policies, it is far from certain that the social mix leads to positive intergroup relations or even intergroup interaction. This paper investigates the extent and nature of interethnic interaction in integrated schools in Aarhus, Denmark, based on extensive fieldwork in two school classes (children aged 5–8) over a period of 14 months. The results are presented in part as an analysis of peer groups and interethnic interaction frequencies in different school settings and in part as a comparative analysis of interethnic and intra-ethnic reprimanding and collaboration. The paper demonstrates that interethnic interactions are frequent across all school settings. However, the children's peer groups are exclusive with regard to ethnicity and the interethnic interactions reflect a tacit but general inequality in the roles played by ethnic minority and majority children. Implications for school integration policies are discussed.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 9 August 2023
Accepted 10 June 2025

KEYWORDS
School integration; school desegregation; interethnic interaction; integration policy

Introduction

The segregation of different ethnic and religious groups is perceived as a social problem in many countries. One widespread remedy to counter such segregation is to employ policies of spacial integration, here simply understood as policies that provide a 'social mixing of groups without specification as to the degree or quality of interaction between them' (Merry, 2016, p. 25), especially in educational settings. To proponents of spacial integration, these policies embody a vision of mixed institutions in which people of different colour and faith engage in harmonious intergroup interaction. Ideally, the social mixing of groups would lead to intergroup friendships that could provide members of less privileged groups access to a resourceful network. Another ideal outcome is the reduction of intergroup prejudice and conflict and maybe even the establishment of shared social values. Policies of spacial integration thus entail great expectations for how social mixing could benefit both individuals and society.

Most research on policies of school integration has been conducted within the larger field of diversity, intergroup contact, and intergroup relations (Lemmer & Wagner, 2015). This field has been dominated by social psychology and focused on intergroup prejudice and how prejudice can be reduced by intergroup contact (Binder et al., 2009; Pettigrew, 1997; Wagner et al., 2006). Even if the field has expanded its scope to include other cognitive (e.g. identification and stereotypes) as well as affective outcome measures (e.g. trust and threat), we know less about how spacial integration affects the everyday interaction between members of different groups (Pettigrew et al., 2011). Some studies that set out to investigate how diversity and contact influence intergroup relations has found that intergroup interaction is a key mediating factor, but we still lack more knowledge on what intergroup interaction even looks like (e.g. Agirdag et al., 2011; Laurence, 2014). Thus, if we want to understand how policies of spacial integration work, we need to study the social processes between the integrated groups, for example through close observations of intergroup interaction in integrated institutions (Schofield, 1991; Thijs & Verkuyten, 2014).

This paper demonstrates that the interactions involving both ethnic minority and majority children in integrated school classes in Aarhus, Denmark, are frequent across all school settings. However, the children form peer groups that are exclusive with regard to ethnicity and the interethnic interactions reflect a tacit but general inequality in the roles played by ethnic minority and majority children. These conclusions are based on fieldwork in two school classes (children aged 5–8) over a period of 14 months. The analysis of the collected data investigates the extent

CONTACT Sidsel Vive Jensen sije@vive.dk Department of Education, Children and Youth, VIVE – The Danish Center for Social Science Research, Søren Frichs Vej 36G, 1, Åbyhøj 8230, Denmark

This article was originally published with errors, which have now been corrected in the online version. Please see Correction (http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/20020317.2025.2523205)

© 2025 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/), which permits unrestricted non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

and nature of the interethnic peer interactions in the two classes. The results are presented in part as an analysis of interethnic interaction frequencies across school settings and peer group developments. The other part is a comparative analysis of interethnic and intra-ethnic interactions in situations where the children engage in reprimanding and collaboration. The paper discusses the implications of the results for school integration policies.

Background

Policies of school integration come in different shapes and sizes. They differ with respect to the groups they aim to integrate (e.g. ethnic, racial or religious) and have different agendas for what they aim to achieve: It could be to reconcile groups that are or have been in conflict, as in the case of Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland (Hughes, 2014), or it could be to remedy the unequal access to resources such as high quality schooling as in the case of the American desegregation policies (McPherson, 2011). Further, the policies differ with regard to the nature of the relation between the integrated groups prior to integration. For example, the groups may have had no contact at all or be very unequal with respect to social status, power and influence. All of these aspects are relevant for our understanding of how policies of school integration work. This section introduces the context of the Aarhus policy of school integration with regard to these aspects and the social mixing established by the policy in the school classes involved in this study.

The Aarhus policy of school integration has been employed in the Municipality of Aarhus since 2006. In line with national Danish integration policies, the Aarhus policy aims to integrate the ethnic minority and majority population. In the Danish context, the ethnic minority population is understood as immigrants and their descendants. Currently, this group makes up 15 percent of the total population in Denmark (Ministry of Immigration and Integration, 2022a). Aarhus is the second largest municipality in Denmark (app. 350,000 inhabitants) and inhabits a large group of immigrants and descendants (app. 59,000), many of whom live in particular areas (Ministry of Immigration and Integration, 2022a). The Danish immigrant population is formed by the recruitment of foreign workers in the 1960s and the more recent arrival of refugees and European work migrants. The largest groups of Danish immigrants and descendants originate from Turkey, Poland, Syria and Romania (Ministry of Immigration and Integration, 2022a). The group of so-called 'non-western immigrants and their descendants' constitute roughly two thirds of the ethnic minority population. This group receives extra policy attention due to their lower employment rates, lower educational achievement, lower Danish language skills and higher rates of welfare dependency compared to non-immigrants (Ministry of Immigration and Integration, 2022b).

The relation between the ethnic minority and the majority population in Denmark is characterized by concern. At the nation state level, the ethnic minority is considered a threat to social cohesion, security and competitive power (Jaffe-Walter, 2016; Johncke, 2011; Kvaale, 2011; Mouritsen & Olsen, 2013). The concern that the ethnic minority does not support 'Danish values' and thereby challenge social cohesion is heightened in areas where the minority population is dense (currently politically labelled 'parallel societies' (The Government, 2018)). The concern for nation state security follows from the association of non-westerners with Muslims who, after 11/9 2001, have been associated with religious extremism and terrorism (Rytter & Pedersen, 2014). The concern for competitive power of the nation state is that the ethnic minority is a burden rather that a resource in terms of contributing to the workforce (Jacobsen, 2017). At the individual level, the concern is that minorities are subjected to 'social control' from within their ethnic community and to discrimination explicitly related to their ethnic background (Jaffe-Walter, 2016; Jensen et al., 2017; Mouritsen & Olsen, 2013). The Aarhus policy of school integration is an attempt to address these concerns and at the same time it exemplifies the relation between the ethnic minority and majority population.

The Aarhus policy is motivated by concerns for the language skills of ethnic minority children as well as concerns about the ethnic segregation between schools in Aarhus (Jacobsen, 2017). The policy does not target all ethnic minority children (as this would be illegal discrimination[1]) but only individuals who are bilingual (i.e. do not speak Danish at home[2]) and have a language support need (LSN) (Damm et al., 2021). For this reason, all bilingual children are subjected to a language test before school start, and the children who do not pass the test are spread across schools (children who have psychosocial difficulties are exempted) (Ibid.). Some of the LSN children are assigned to their local school. However, if the LSN children make up more than 20 percent of the pupil population, the excess LSN children are assigned to so-called reception schools (schools that receive ethnic minority pupils because there are few in their own district) and provided with free transportation. At the school level it is common, however unrelated to the integration policy, to mix pupils with respect to gender and ethnicity. Thus, the ethnic minority children (including the LSN children) are dispersed not only across schools within the municipality but also across classrooms within the schools. As a consequence, the

ethnic minority-majority ratio is evened out in most classrooms in the municipality.

This paper investigates the extent and nature of the interaction between ethnic majority and minority children in two integrated schools in Aarhus, a magnet school and a reception school. Due to the difference in the two school districts (ethnic minority children make up 70 percent of the Magnet School district compared to 10 percent of the Reception School district)[3] , the schools are integrated in opposite ways: The Reception School is receiving ethnic minority children from other districts while the Magnet School has reached the 20 percent limit and is sending LSN children to other districts. At the same time, the Magnet School invests in efforts to retain the local ethnic majority children in the district school. Due to these efforts and the bussing of ethnic minority pupils from the Magnet School district to the Reception school, the two fieldwork classes are similar with regard to the balance between ethnic minority and majority children. As displayed in Table 1, 26–29 percent of the children in the Reception School class has ethnic minority background compared to 38 percent in the Magnet School class. The ethnic background of the minority children in the two classes are also similar (see Table 1, note), however, the Magnet School class has two children with a mixed background (one parent has an ethnic majority background).

Previous studies on policies of spacial integration

Most studies on policies of school integration have investigated how it affects achievement for different ethnic groups and paid less attention to its social or relational consequences. Within the broader field of studies on policies of spacial integration (which include integration in schools as well as in other institutions or arenas), on the other hand, there has been an extensive focus on effects on intergroup relations. The relation between spacial integration and intergroup relations can be perceived as a process with two intermediate steps (Figure 1). First, spacial integration increase the diversity or social mix in a particular context. It might seem obvious that this is the case, but in reality, diversity is not always increased. The obvious case is the so-called 'white flight' from integrated schools (Farley et al., 1980). Further, diversity is not simply high or low but implies several aspects including at least the variety of different ethnic groups and their relative sizes (Agirdag et al., 2011; Lücken & Simon, 2005) and spacial integration may affect these in different ways. Second, the diversity established comprise a potential for interethnic interaction, but there is no guarantee that interethnic interaction will take place (Dixon et al., 2005). Even if the sheer experience of diversity without necessarily interacting with 'the other' might affect intergroup relations (Putnam, 2007), it is likely that such relations will be affected more through actual intergroup interactions (Laurence, 2014; Maoz, 2002). And third, a high level of interethnic interaction is not in itself indicative of improved intergroup relations. Some interventions target interethnic interactions explicitly in order to strengthen or develop positive intergroup relations by making participants interact in a particular way (e.g. through cooperative learning programmes (Slavin & Cooper, 1999)).

The existing literature on the relation between spacial integration and intergroup relations has dealt with some steps of the process (Figure 1) more than others. Especially the relation between intergroup

Table 1. Number of children and diversity in the fieldwork classes.

	Number of children		Percentage ethnic minority	
	Fieldwork start	Fieldwork end	Fieldwork start	Fieldwork end
Reception School class	21	23	29	26
Magnet School class	16	21	38	38

Note. Ethnic minority children are defined in terms of language as those children who do not speak Danish at home. In both fieldwork classes, the parents of the ethnic minority children speak the following languages (information on ethnicity is not available): Arabic, Somali, and Turkish. In the Magnet School class, one child has an Eastern European background.

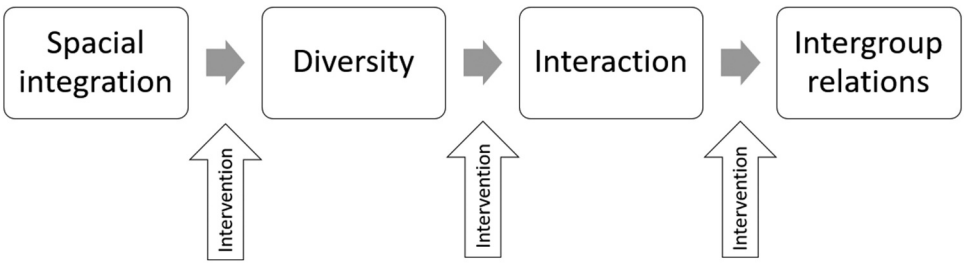


Figure 1. Processes relating spacial integration to intergroup relations.

interaction and intergroup relations has been investigated in relation to the contact hypothesis. Even if contact studies have been criticized for having very little relevance for 'real life contact' (Connolly, 2000; Dixon et al., 2005), the scope of contact studies has expanded beyond optimal conditions to demonstrate small but positive outcomes of (any kind of) intergroup contact on both cognitive and affective domains (e.g. stereotypes and trust) (Pettigrew et al., 2011). Another large body of literature deals with the relation between diversity and intergroup relations, demonstrating both positive and negative outcomes on intergroup relations (Laurence, 2014; Thijs & Verkuyten, 2014). The literature on the relation between spacial integration and intergroup relations is smaller and focuses on the outcomes of the American school desegregation policies and on interventions between conflicting groups (e.g. Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland and Israelis and Palestinians). Results from the first part are mixed (Schofield, 1991) and results from the second part are largely positive (Lemmer & Wagner, 2015), especially for interventions with a declared intention to improve intergroup relations (Birtel et al., 2020).

The literature most relevant for the present study investigates the relation between diversity (induced by spacial integration) and intergroup interaction. This literature is sparse and many of the relevant studies are older because they were carried out in relation to the American school desegregation in the 1960s and 70s. The existing literature has primarily focused on two aspects of the interaction that follows from induced diversity: the degree of intergroup interaction and the nature or quality of this interaction. There is a larger body of newer research, however, on interethnic interaction in schools that are ethnically diverse without the influence of policies of spacial integration. This research typically investigates a particular aspect of intergroup interaction rather than mapping more broadly how members from different groups interact. For example, existing research has focused on group formation, friendships, intergroup conflict and racialization. The main findings from both types of research on the degree and nature of intergroup interaction are summarized in the following two sections.

In many ethnically diverse settings, in-group interaction seems to be preferred to outgroup interaction and interaction groups tend to be more or less exclusive with regard to race and ethnicity. Dixon et al. (2005) refer to this as 'the tendency for informal systems of preferential segregation to reemerge' and finds that it is 'one of the most central, though undertheorized, obstacles to policies of integration' (Dixon et al., 2005, p. 704). Even if this resegregation at the group level is documented in several studies (Schofield, 1991), there are, of course, exceptions to the rule. One of these exceptions seems to be related to children of mixed ethnicity. For example, Vertelyte (2019) finds in her study of friendships among 13-year-olds in a highly diverse school setting, that mixed friendship groups include young people with a mixed ethnic background as well as young people with non-mixed ethnic backgrounds. Further, even if mixed groups and close relations between ethnic minority and majority students are rare, it does not mean that students do not interact in friendly or cooperative ways across ethnicity (Clement & Livesay, 1979; Van Ryzin et al., 2020).

Some features of interethnic interaction seem to be recurring across different contexts. Research on interracial interaction in recently integrated schools shows that the desegregation induced racial tension related to experiences of differential treatment (Noblit & Collins, 1979; Schofield, 1989). Rather than leading to real conflict, this tension made students avoid each other and to interact in very polite ways without explicitly mentioning race (Clement et al., 1979; Scherer & Slawski, 1979; Schofield, 1989). Research on interethnic interactions in diverse schools generally demonstrate that ethnic, racial, religious and social differences influence how children and young people perceive of and treat each other. While some studies describe how differences impact interaction in very tacit ways (e.g. Devine et al., 2008), many studies find that ethnic differences are used explicitly in for example conflict, positioning and identification (Connolly, 2000; Vertelyte, 2019). Further, close analyses of children and young people's use of ethnic difference in peer interactions demonstrate that these interactions reflect the relation between the ethnic groups in the broader social context of the school (Connolly, 2000; Tomovska, 2010). Racial and ethnic differences are generally more accentuated by older children and young people than by young children (Corsaro & Eder, 1990; Dwyer, 1958; Schofield, 1979).

Methods

The purpose of this study is to investigate the extent and nature of social interaction between ethnic majority and minority children in integrated schools. The study's categorization of children's ethnicity into two main groups, majority and minority, follows the categorization applied by the Aarhus policy: The ethnic minority group include the bilingual children who are subjected to the policy through language testing and potential bussing to non-district schools. The majority group include the children who are not directly affected by the policy. In effect, this means that the ethnic minority group comprises children of very different ethnic backgrounds (e.g. Turkish or Polish), the common denominator being that they

or they parents were not born in Denmark. The majority group, on the other hand, comprises almost exclusively children with parents born in Denmark, although a few children have one parent born outside of Denmark. While the children's interactions across minority or majority ethnicity is the main focus of the analysis, the ethnic background of the children (here defined as the parents' nationality at birth) is included when relevant.

The study is designed as a micro-sociological observation study of children's social interactions. Inspired by William Corsaro's study of children's friendship and peer culture (Corsaro, 1985), I define social interactions as series of actions and reactions (verbal or non-verbal) that the interactants (individual or groups of children) direct towards each other. Each social interaction has a starting point – when the children begin to interact – and an end point – when all of the involved children have stopped interacting. The observations of such social interactions were recorded in fieldnotes. Thus, each fieldnote contains a detailed description of the social interaction from beginning to end, focusing on the relation between the interacting children as it is expressed in their actions and reactions towards each other (for example their verbal, facial (and other bodily) expressions or tone of voice). Because I could only observe one group of interacting children at a time, for example when a pair of children were having an argument during teaching or when a group of children were playing football during recess, most of the social interactions that took place during the fieldwork remained unobserved or unrecorded. As a way of compensating for these gaps of information, I kept track of the different settings and children, that were observed, and made sure that each setting and each child were observed as equally as possibly. In addition to the detailed observations of social interaction, I also recorded more structured information (once a day) on peer groups during recess (explained in more detail below). All data for the study was collected in the two classes selected for fieldwork (one in the Reception School and one in the Magnet School) in three separate observation periods in each school (see Table 2).

A concern often raised against observation studies, and especially those with an adult fieldworker among children, is that the adult presence influences the children's interactions. Although this is a valid concern that must be taken into account for example by analysing interactions between researcher and children with attention to the significance of gender, ethnicity and status Jensen & Vitus, 2020), some measures can be taken to minimize the adult researcher influence. In the fieldwork for this study, this was done in part through silent observation and in part by adopting a 'least adult role' (Corsaro 1985; Mandell 1988). The least adult role implies using children's facilities and removing all adult signifiers, behavioural as well as physical, in order to appear more like a peer than an adult. My interactions with the children did indicate that I was to some extent perceived as a peer rather that an adult.[4] Further, the children experienced the researcher presence as a non-intrusive part of school, because the fieldwork started at the same time as the children started school.

Because the fieldwork entailed close and long-term interactions between children and researcher, ethical considerations were an ongoing part of the data collection process. On the formal level, the study was approved by The Regional Committee on Health Research Ethics.[5] Further, informed consent was obtained from teachers and parents prior to the fieldwork and the children were informed about the purpose of the study and the role they played in it at the beginning of the fieldwork. On the more informal level, my presence as an observer was continually negotiated as I would ask the children to grant me access to their different activities. Further, I quickly learned that some children were very interested in my notes. We made the agreement that I would read to them anything that I had written about them but not what I had written about others and I invited the children to comment on or edit my notes if they were incorrect.

The fieldwork produced a collection of 1214 fieldnote descriptions of social interaction. These were coded in NVivo according to three main themes: The settings in which the interactions took place (recess, teaching, playtime, after school care centre, or outside of school), the minority or majority ethnicity of the children involved in the interaction, and the type of social interaction (defined below) in which the children engaged. The present analysis employs two analytical tools to investigate the extent and nature of the interethnic interactions in the data. These tools – sociograms and a typology of social interaction – are presented in the following sections.

The sociograms display the children's peer groups and their most frequent peer interactions during recess for each of the three field work periods (see

Table 2. Fieldwork periods.

	Time in Reception School class	Time in Magnet School class	Duration
Period 1	School start	4 weeks after school start	4 weeks
Period 2	3 months into first school year	5 months into first school year	3 weeks
Period 3	1 month into second school year	2 months into second school year	2 weeks

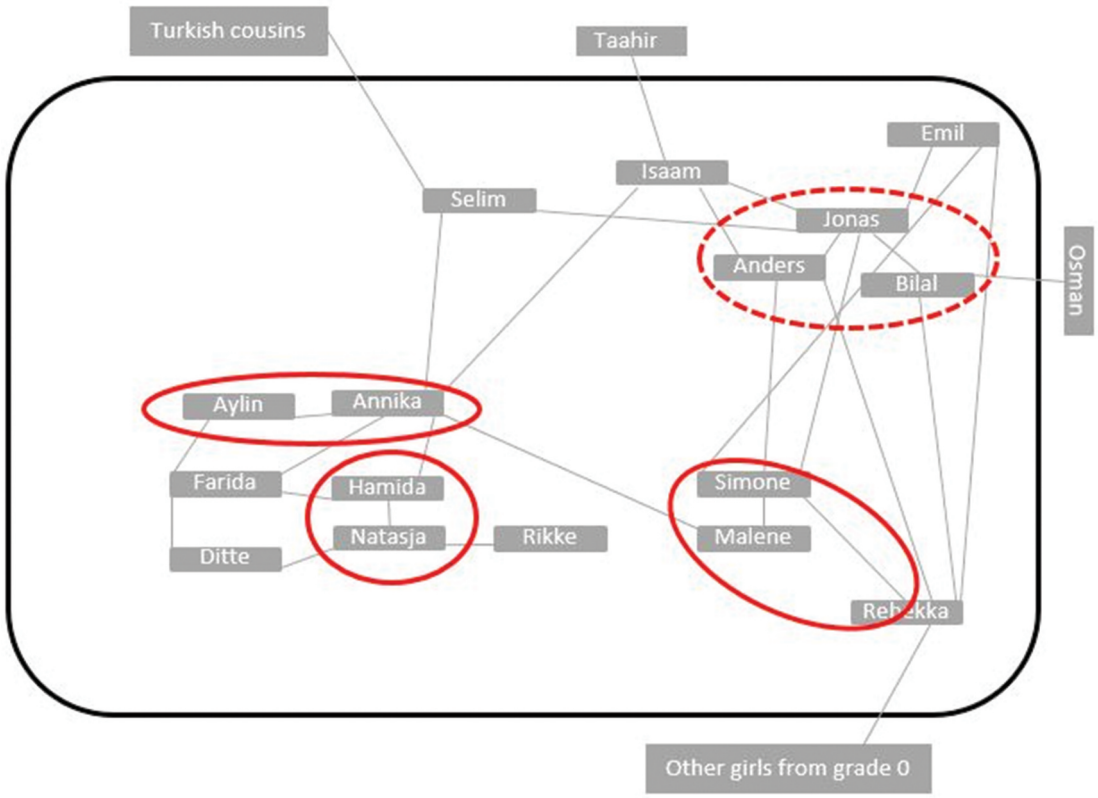


Figure 2. Peer groups and frequent interactions during recess.

Figure 2 for an example). Here, peer groups are defined as groups of children who often interact during recess without negotiating whether they should play together or not. The sociograms enable a comparison of the interactional patterns and the establishments of peer groups over time with respect to majority and minority ethnicity of the children in the two classes. Each label in the sociogram represent an observed child (pseudonym name). The bold black line in shape of a rectangle represent the class boundary: All labels representing children in the class are placed inside the rectangle. Labels outside the rectangle represent children who often interact with children in the class during recess but who are not part of the class. Labels placed close together represent children who interact more frequently than children whose labels are placed far apart. The lines between labels represent the most frequent interactions between individual children. The circles represent peer groups. Broken circles represent peer groups that are under construction but not fully developed (could become established or dissolve over time).

While tools for structured observation of children's peer interactions have been developed and proven useful for analysing individual (often pathological) peer behaviour in naturalistic settings (see e.g. Gibson et al., 2011), such tools do not capture the relational and contextual aspects of peer interaction, that is of interest for this study. Accordingly, a typology of social interaction was constructed specifically for this study on the basis of the observed variation in social interactions with respect to the children's relations (Table 3). For example, during their social interactions, children would relate to other children as peers to have fun with, peers to compete with, peers in need of help etc. Although the types of interaction were established on the basis

Table 3. Types of social interaction in the fieldwork classes.

Type	Relation between Interactants
Having fun	Interactants express positive emotions in relation to each other's actions
Conflict	Interactants express negative emotions in relation to each other's actions
Teasing	Interactants direct disturbing actions at other interactants
Helping	Interactants direct supportive actions at other interactants
Collaboration	***Interactants act in coordination to achieve a common goal***
Competition	Interactants act in coordination (against each other) to achieve the same goal
Acknowledgment	Interactants praise each other's actions
Reprimanding	***Interactants correct each other's actions***
Closeness/ sameness	Interactants demonstrate that they are close or similar
Distance/ difference	Interactants demonstrate that they are distanced or different
Rejection	Interactants reject further interaction with each other
Invitation	Interactants welcome further interaction with each other

1013 of the 1214 observed social interactions were coded onto one or more categories (some did not fit any of the categories or contained no relational information (e.g. observations of children being alone)). The present analysis only includes qualitative analyses of the two highlighted types.

of the observed and recorded social interactions, there is no complete correlation between the empirical observations and the constructed types. The types of social interaction are idealized archetypes and the empirical observations of social interactions may contain elements of more than one type; for example, rejection often occurred in social interactions that also contained elements of invitation. For the purpose of investigating social interaction between ethnic minority and majority children, however, a categorization of the empirical material with respect to the types of social interaction enables detailed analyses of how social interactions between minority and majority children differ from social interactions between minority children or between majority children within the same interactional framework. As mentioned, previous studies have found that interethnic collaboration and reprimanding in classrooms affect interethnic relations in opposite ways. While collaboration is highlighted as a type of interaction that improves interethnic relations or at least downplays the significance of ethnic difference, reprimanding (along with conflict and positioning) has been shown to increase attention to ethnic difference in classrooms. For this reason and because many of the observed social interactions contain elements of collaboration (found in 68 of the observed social interactions) and reprimanding (found in 84 of the observed social interactions), these two categories of interactions are selected for further analysis.[6] The results presented below are based on all of the selected observations (68 and 84), however, particularly illustrative examples of some of the general interactional features are presented in the text to demonstrate how these features appear in actual social interactions.

Results

The extent of interethnic interaction

In both fieldwork classes, interethnic interactions (understood as social interactions between ethnic minority and majority children) are by no means rare. Rather, the analysis demonstrates that interethnic interaction is a natural part of the children's everyday school life. Of all the recorded social interactions, 50 percent include both ethnic majority and minority children, 15 percent include minority children exclusively, and 35 percent include majority children exclusively. As displayed in Figure 3, interethnic interactions are frequent in all school settings, however, there are some differences. During recess and at the after-school care centre, interethnic interaction is slightly less frequent compared to other settings. During teaching and play time, it is the

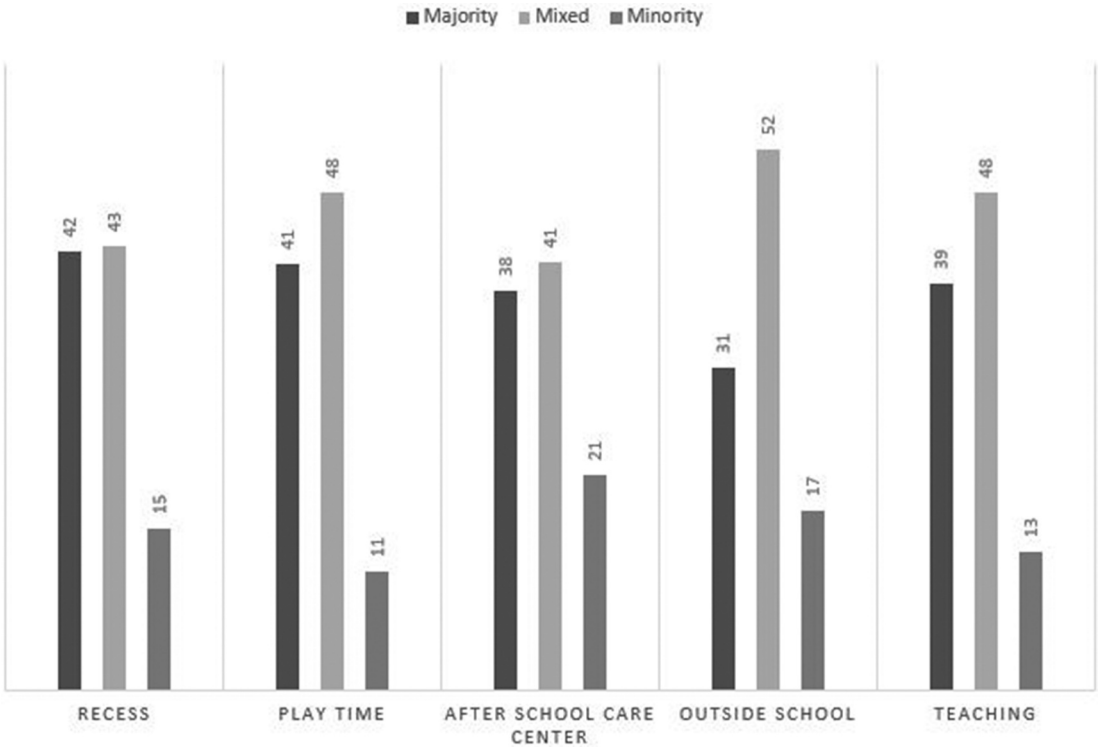


Figure 3. Frequency of interethnic and intra-ethnic majority and minority interaction in the fieldwork schools.

Note. 1214 observed social interactions were coded with respect to the setting in which they occurred and the ethnicity of the children involved. Frequencies were calculated within each setting and display the proportion of all interactions in that setting with ethnic majority interactants, with both minority and majority interactants, and with ethnic minority interactants. Recess refers to 10–25 minutes breaks between classes. Play time is a scheduled break from teaching where the children can play with e.g. board games. In many cases, the teacher decides who plays together during play time. The after school care centre offers a place for the children in grade 0 to 3 to play before and after school hours. The 'outside school' category covers school outings and birthday parties. Teaching refers to all scheduled lessons.

rule rather than the exception that the teachers decide who interacts with whom and the teachers often arrange play- or work-groups that include both ethnic majority and minority children. Social interaction recorded outside of school take place in quite different settings such as school outings, home play groups and birthday parties. Similar to the teaching and playtime setting, social interaction in school outings, in home play groups and in birthday parties are characterized by adult (teacher or parent) influence on the children's interaction partners. Accordingly, the lower level of interethnic interaction during recess and at the after-school care centre could be interpreted as evidence of the fact that children are less influenced by adult assignment of interaction partners in these settings, and that they therefore choose to engage in less interethnic interaction, when they are free to do so. The analysis of children's peer groups during recess (presented below), support this interpretation.

The changes in peer group structure follow almost identical patterns in the two fieldwork classes: The peer groups established by the end of the fieldwork are strikingly exclusive with regard to minority and majority ethnicity (Figure 4). When the fieldwork begun, the classes had just been established and only a few children knew each other. There were no groups and children interacted with different peers from recess to recess. A few peer groups were established, however, within a few weeks after school start in each class, consisting of children who knew each other from daycare, children with family relations (e.g. cousins or siblings), or children who lived close to each other (e.g. neighbours). A few of these groups did survive the reorganizations and further establishment of peer groups during the first school year. Since both classes lost and gained a few children during the summer break, groups were reorganized again, but at the end of the third fieldwork period, 14 months into the children's schooling experience, most groups had settled, and the significance of prior relationship or contact (exemplified by daycare, family, and neighbourhood) for group membership had been replaced by the significance of gender and ethnicity (Figure 4)).

While this clear resegregation at the group level could be completely coincidental, three aspects of the group formation processes underline the significance of ethnicity for group membership. First, one group in the Magnet School class includes two children with a mixed ethnic background (both children have one ethnic minority and one ethnic majority parent but are categorized as majority (following the Aarhus policy) in Figure 4). Interestingly, the group is the only group in the third fieldwork period including both ethnic majority and minority children (besides the two mixed children), suggesting that the mixed ethnicity of some children provides the potential for groups to be mixed as well. Second, despite the fact that some of the ethnic minority children in the Reception School class live in a different part of town, far away from the Reception School area, they are members of peer groups with local minority children (instead of establishing a group of their own as one might expect). And third, in both schools, the ethnic minority peer groups include children with diverse national backgrounds, who speak different languages and have diverse Danish language proficiency skills. This indicates that residential connection, national background, and language mattered less than minority ethnicity for group formation.

The observed segregation at the group level is of no immediate concern but it could pose a challenge for interethnic interaction as groups become more established. In both fieldwork classes, interethnic interactions are equally frequent in fieldwork period 1, 2, and 3 (making up 42, 50 and 43 percentage of the recorded social interactions in each of the periods). Thus, group boundaries do not prevent the children from interacting with peers outside of their groups. Even though the segregation displayed in Figure 4 does look rather discouraging, the high level of interethnic interaction in all settings (Figure 3) bears the potential for positive interethnic experiences. In the following section, I look more closely into the nature of these interethnic interactions.

The nature of interethnic interaction

The point of this study is not to uncover the 'full nature' of interethnic interaction, if there even is such a thing. Among the many observations of social interaction involving ethnic minority and majority children, there is a great variation in for example the roles, moods and dynamics involved. Some of this variation simply reflect that fact that the children engage in different types of social interaction. Thus, if we are to learn more about (some aspects of) the nature of interethnic interaction, it makes sense to reduce variation by focusing on specific types of interaction. In this study, two types of interaction have been selected for further analysis: Collaboration and reprimanding. That means that all observations categorized as either collaboration or reprimanding make up the empirical basis for the analyses presented below. Investigating interethnic interactions exclusively would make it difficult to discern which (if any) of their characteristics reflect general aspect of either reprimanding or collaboration and which are particular for interactions between ethnic minority and majority peers. Therefore, the analysis of

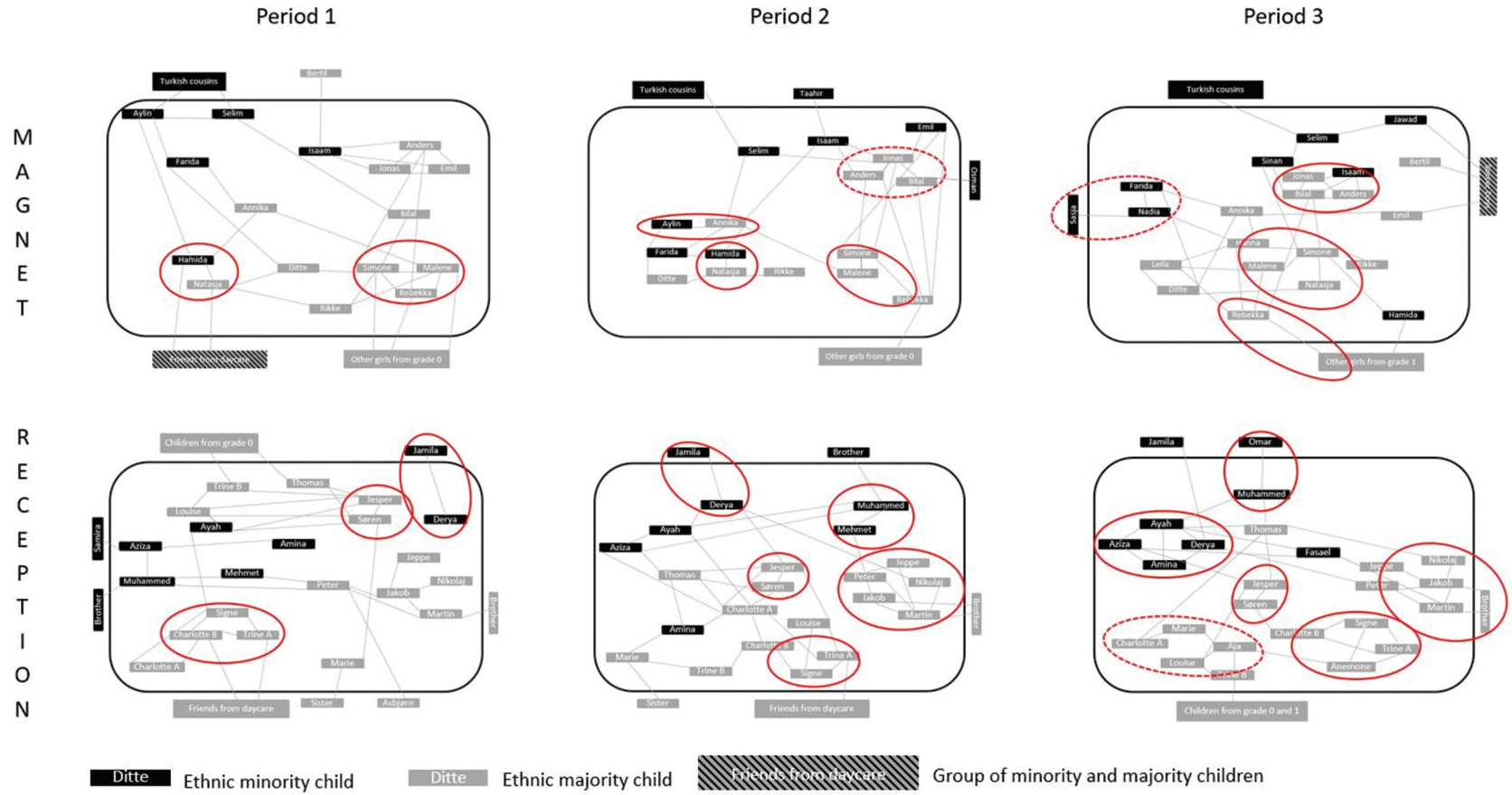


Figure 4. Interaction groups and frequent interactions during recess in three fieldwork periods in the Magnet school class and the Reception school class.

Black labels represent ethnic minority children and grey labels represent ethnic majority children. All names are pseudonyms. Larger black and grey labels represent groups of ethnic majority and minority children

interethnic interaction is designed as a comparison between interethnic and intra-ethnic (involving either ethnic minority children exclusively or ethnic majority children exclusively) interactions within the general framework of the two types of interaction.

Reprimanding

Reprimanding is broadly defined as a social interaction in which the children correct each other's actions. Among the observed interactions categorized as reprimanding, there are two main types, distinguished by the allocation of authority. In the first type, no one peer has authority over the others, at least not an authority that the other peers acknowledge. The second type involves at least one child whose authority is recognized by his or her peers in that particular interaction. The first type of reprimanding often revolve around children's personal boundaries, as in the following example:

> Ditte and Annika (ethnic majority girls) sit closely together in a couch while reading a Guinness book of records. They laugh loudly and point to the funny and often grotesque pictures. Occasionally when Ditte laughs, her mouth water accidently sprays onto Annika's hand. Annika looks annoyed and says 'don't spit on me!'. She says this several times while they are reading, but Ditte ignores it. Eventually, Ditte replies 'I didn't spit on you!' and looks offended at Annika. (Field notes, Magnet School)

Here, both girls are protecting their personal integrity. Annika's reprimand is motivated by her personal dislike of Ditte's saliva touching her skin. The reprimand is, however, not received as an authoritative request by Ditte, or at least she does not feel obliged to follow it, as she simply states that she has not been spitting. Neither Ditte nor Annika recognize the other as an authority. The other type of reprimanding (involving at least one recognized authority) often revolve around school rules, as in the following example:

> During teaching, Hamida (ethnic minority girl) gets out of her chair when the children are supposed to sit and work on their assignments. The teacher is talking to another child and pays no attention to Hamida who seems to have noticed that the sun light is reflected from her jewelry onto the walls of the classroom. To begin with, Hamida turns her torso while looking at the reflections but eventually she gets up and starts spinning her whole body around. Annika (ethnic majority girl), who is sitting across the classroom from Hamida, says 'sit down!' in a harsh voice and looks condescendingly at Hamida. Hamida sits down promptly, obviously aware that she was violating classroom rules. (Field notes, Magnet School)

This interaction involves a clear sender and a receiver of a reprimand with no dispute about who has authority over whom. In interethnic reprimanding interactions (involving ethnic minority and majority children), this type of reprimanding is very frequent compared to reprimanding among ethnic majority peers where the first type of reprimanding is the most frequent. Further, in all of the observed examples of interethnic reprimanding interactions, the ethnic minority child is the receiver and the majority child is the sender of the reprimand. Thus, interethnic reprimanding interactions reflect a tacit but conceded stratification of authority between ethnic minority and majority children in school, especially when it comes to the positions that (some of) the ethnic majority children have as more in sync with and even as guardians of school rules.

Collaboration

Collaboration is defined as social interactions where the participants act coordinated to achieve a common goal. Analyses of the observed interactions categorized as collaboration demonstrate that such interactions differ with regard to two aspects: Whether the common goal is explicitly defined or acknowledged and whether the coordinating of actions is a shared responsibility or the responsibility of one specific peer. For example, in the social interaction described below, the common goal is not entirely clear and continually negotiated by the two interactants (shared responsibility).

> Hamida (ethnic minority girl) and Isaam (ethnic minority boy) are at the daycare center, in the Lego room. They are making a large building and placing various Lego figurines in it. They agree that Isaam is the father and Hamida is the child.

Hamida: So I am the princess. Ok, Isaam?

Isaam: Yes.

Hamida: Look daddy, how pretty I am!

> Hamida reaches her Hello Kitty Lego figurine toward Isaam for him to see it. Isaam does not look at it, he is building and has just discovered a Lego helicopter.

Isaam: Yes, pretty.

> Hamida goes to get some more Lego from the boxes. She comes back carrying a lot of Lego.

Isaam: How about if we make the house bigger?

Hamida: Yes, it is way too small.

Isaam: Let's fly over and get some building material.

Hamida: Look daddy, this is where the fuel for the helicopter goes.

Hamida points to a Lego fuel tank just outside of the Lego building. They walk together to the boxes of Lego holding the helicopter. As they reach the boxes, Hamida takes the helicopter and says

Hamida: I'll hold this Isaam and then you'll take the building blocks.

They return to the building and Isaam unloads the building blocks. He walks over to the boxes of Lego while Hamida is building. Isaam finds two Lego figurines and holds them up for Hamida to see.

Isaam: Look, here are two older brothers.

Hamida does not look up. She has placed some larger pink roof and wall pieces next to the building.

Hamida: How about if the princess lived here? Isaam, will you help me build a castle for the princess?

Isaam takes a figurine out of the original building.

Isaam: Here's the mother.

Hamida: Yes, but the castle is for the princess.

Isaam: Ok.

(Field notes, Magnet School)

In this interaction, Hamida and Isaam coordinate their actions to build a Lego house and undertake a role play. They both initiate negotiations about the characters involved and the script for the role play. This type of collaboration is frequent outside of teaching contexts and in intra-ethnic interactions. It is less common but does occur between ethnic minority and majority peers and during teaching. Below is an example of the other type of collaboration – more common in the teaching context – where the goal is explicitly defined and where one peer takes responsibility for the coordination of actions to reach the goal:

> The teacher has told the children to work together in pairs with the person sitting next to them. Their assignment is to spell a number of words using small blocks with letters on them before writing the words into their individual books. I am sitting with Thomas (ethnic majority boy) and Aziza (ethnic minority girl), both of them trying to write the words in their books without interacting. The teacher comes over and tells them that they should work together, not side by side. She shows them how they are supposed to use the blocks with letters. The teacher leaves and Aziza directs her attention to her pencil case and her new beautiful gold and silver colored pencils. She takes one out and shows it to me, smiling proudly. Thomas says 'come on, let's do this', and collects the blocks with letters with his hands. He is trying to spell KÅL (cabbage) but cannot find the right letters. Aziza looks at the blackboard where the teacher has spelled some of the words. She reads the letters K-Å-L and Thomas gathers the letter blocks. Thomas then writes KÅL in his book and starts searching for the letters for the next word. Aziza is pulling her new pencils out from her pencil case, one by one. The teacher comes over and tells her to leave the pencils alone. The interaction continues in a similar pattern where Thomas – increasingly annoyed – prompts Aziza to participate and Aziza is more interested in her pencils, even if she follows Thomas' request to participate every time he asks her. (Field Notes, Reception School)

In this interaction, Thomas' role as a coordinator is primarily to ensure that Aziza's attention is continually focused on the assignment. There is no negotiation as to who takes the coordinating role. Presumably, Thomas finds it necessary to involve Aziza in order to reach the explicit goal as specified by the teacher (not just to do the task, but to do it together). In other collaboration interactions during teaching, the coordinator has various different tasks, for example to make decisions about which idea to use and when to end an assignment. In all of the recorded observations of collaboration during teaching, ethnic minority children are paired or grouped with majority children and in all of the cases, where one peers has the coordinating role, it is the ethnic majority child. This is not necessarily a problem in the isolated interaction, but it is a concern if the consequence of the interethnic collaborations designed by teachers is that ethnic minority children never or rarely have the coordinating role.

In conclusion, the analysis shows that interethnic interaction is characterized by inequality in the way that roles assigned to ethnic minority children are different than those assigned to ethnic majority children, regardless of the interactional framework being supportive of (collaboration) or detrimental to (reprimanding) interethnic relations. Specifically, ethnic

minority children often take an inferior position to ethnic majority children, as they are receivers rather than senders of reprimands, they do not challenge ethnic majority children's authority when receiving a reprimand, they are positioned as being out of tune with school rules, and they do not take a coordinating role when collaborating with ethnic majority children. However, there are also (fewer) examples of ethnic minority and majority children having equal positions. In some collaborative interethnic interactions (especially in non-teaching settings), ethnic minority and majority children share the responsibility of negotiating goals and coordinating actions to meet these goals.

Discussion

This paper has investigated the extent and nature of interethnic peer interaction in two integrated schools in Aarhus, Denmark. The schools are integrated due to the Aarhus policy of school integration. The policy disperses ethnic minority children from school districts where they are many to schools where they are few in order to desegregate ethnic minority and majority children. While the general aim of the policy is to improve the Danish language skills in ethnic minority children and to integrate ethnic minority and majority children, there is no further specification as to what this integration should look like. Whether the policy is successful in its aim to integrate ethnic minority and majority children is thus in some ways a matter of perspective or understanding of what it means to be integrated. As a result, the findings from this study could both be interpreted as indicating integration and as indicating lack of integration. On the one hand, there is a high level of interethnic interaction between the children in both integrated schools. This high level of interethnic interaction is not restricted to settings where teachers influence the children's choice of interaction partners, indicating that the children themselves engage in interethnic interaction. Moreover, the analysis of children's collaborations shows that ethnic majority and minority children share experiences of working together in shared responsibility towards a common goal at least in some of their interactions. According to the literature, such experiences could, if they are not too few, foster interethnic trust and attunement over time. All of these findings support the understanding, that the Aarhus policy is successful in integrating ethnic minority and majority children.

On the other hand, despite the many voluntary interethnic interactions during recess and at the after-school care centre, the children still establish intra-ethnic peer groups, that include ethnic minority or majority children exclusively. This element of resegregation points to the fact that children's intra-ethnic relations are stronger than their interethnic relations, however, it does not imply that interethnic relations are weak or bad in a more absolute sense. Further, the analysis of children's collaborations and reprimanding documents that many interethnic interactions are fundamentally unequal with respect to the roles that ethnic minority and majority children play. This means that in significant parts of their daily interactions, ethnic minority children engage with majority children from an inferior position. Such persistent inequalities could lead to a lack of solidarity, disrespect (on the part of the ethnic majority children) and apathy or resentment (on the part of the ethnic minority children). These findings support the understanding that the Aarhus policy is far from successful in integrating ethnic minority and majority children.

Rather than understanding the results from the present study as indications of either 'integration' or 'lack of integration', it might be more fruitful to regard them as representing different dimensions of integration. Studies on occupational segregation distinguish between horizontal and vertical segregation in order to describe and investigate occupational inequality between men and women (Blackburn & Jarman, 1997) and between minority and majority workers (Mailand, 2004). The horizontal dimension refers to the extent to which particular groups are located in or have access to different occupations, for example when minority workers are overrepresented in unskilled labour. In the context of this study, horizontal segregation would refer to the unequal distribution of ethnic minority and majority children between schools, which was the point of departure and the initial motivation for the Aarhus policy. The vertical dimension of occupational segregation refers to inequality between groups in terms of status, power and resources. An example of vertical occupational segregation is the lack of minority representation in manager positions (at least in Denmark (Djøf, 2023)). In this study, vertical segregation would refer to the unequal distribution of status, power and resources between ethnic minority and majority children within schools.

If we understand the findings in the present study in terms of horizontal and vertical segregation, it is rather clear that the Aarhus policy does impact horizontal segregation and successfully establishes (at least to some extend) what we might term 'horizontal integration': Ethnically diverse student populations (in every school), interethnic classrooms, and frequent interethnic interactions. Even higher levels of horizontal integration would entail the existence of (at least some) interethnic peer groups. With respect to vertical segregation, however, this study provides no evidence that the policy establishes an equal distribution of status, power, and resources between ethnic minority and majority children within schools.

In fact, the policy does in itself add to this vertical segregation because it targets ethnic minority children exclusively, assigning some of them to schools far from their homes. As I have demonstrated elsewhere, the ethnic minority children who are assigned to schools in distant school districts are 'double deprived' of social status because they are on 'foreign territory' and because they are ethnic minorities (Jensen & Vitus, 2020). The current study shows, however, that also the ethnic minority children who stay in their local school have lower status, power and resources compared to their ethnic majority peers (demonstrated in the analysis of peer reprimanding and collaboration). Thus, the policy is not successful in establishing 'vertical integration' which would be characterized by interethnic interactions without systematic power or status inequalities between minority and majority children.

For policy makers who aspire to integrate ethnic minority and majority children through spacial integration in schools, the main take away point from this study is that while the dispersal of ethnic minority pupils may support horizontal integration (in terms of increased interethnic interaction), vertical integration is not affected and might even suffer from such a policy (in terms of increased interethnic inequality). Accordingly, policy makers should consider whether they aim to increase interethnic interaction or whether they also want to improve the nature or quality of the interaction and relation between ethnic minority and majority children. If the latter is the case, simply dispersing minority children across schools is insufficient and may even be harmful.

This draws attention to a second take away point from this study, that policy makers should be aware of when considering policies of spacial integration: The significance of the local (school) level for both horizontal and vertical integration. With respect to horizontal integration, the high level of interethnic interaction found in this study is contingent on the local school administrators' practices of establishing mixed classrooms. Further, there are some indications that the high level of interethnic interaction observed in this study is contingent on extensive teacher intervention. Since most of the social interactions that the children engage in throughout the day are governed by teachers and mixed with respect to ethnicity, the relatively high level of interethnic interaction in ungoverned settings could be a 'spill-over effect' of these efforts: Relations established between ethnic minority and majority children during governed interactions might inspire voluntary social interaction in ungoverned settings. Accordingly, the horizontal integration observed in this study relies on local school level practices of mixing classrooms and interactions with respect to ethnicity. Policy makers should be aware that such practices cannot be implemented in any setting, since children or students cannot always be assigned to any classroom (for example when assignment depends on student choice or academic level) and since a high level of teacher governance of peer interactions is not appropriate in all classrooms (for example when the children are older).

With respect to vertical integration, as I have already pointed out, policy makers should first and foremost avoid policies that employ differential treatment of ethnic minority and majority children. However, policy makers should also be aware of the significant role that local institutional practices play in sustaining or even increasing vertical segregation. In a recent review of school interventions to reduce racial bias and prejudice, Slobodin and colleagues write that '[d]iscriminatory practices in schools are multifaceted and include silencing ethnic/racial minority students, using harsher disciplines, providing insufficient encouragement, disproportionally allocating these children to special education, and ignoring giftedness or high skills in those from diverse backgrounds (Jernigan & Daniel, 2011; Parekh et al., 2018)' (Slobodin et al., 2023, p. 1018). Although such practices may not be addressing peer-to-peer interactions directly, interethnic inequalities enacted in discriminatory school practices will inevitably influence the ways in which minority and majority children interact, as it assigns them with different levels of status and power. As a first step to decrease vertical segregation, policy makers should therefore help schools identify discriminatory practices (since schools are often unaware that they have them) and replace them with equal treatment practices, that value and respect all children regardless of their ethnic background but without 'muting' ethnic differences (Anderson et al., 2019; Apfelbaum et al., 2010, 2012; Glasford & Johnston, 2018). In this way, teachers would act as important role models for interethnic respect and acknowledgement while also ensuring that children come together from more equal status and power positions, regardless of their ethnic minority or majority status. Policy makers could also encourage schools to develop 'institutional support' for ethnic minority positions. Such institutional support could include efforts to ensure that ethnic minority perspectives are included and acknowledged in school practices and that ethnic minority children and parents are represented and supported in positions of power and status (whether formal or informal).

Conclusion

This paper has investigated the extent and nature of interethnic peer interaction in two integrated schools in Aarhus, Denmark. The study shows that the ethnic minority and majority children interact frequently in all school settings, however, the established peer

groups in recess are exclusive with respect to majority and minority ethnicity. Further, the study finds that the interethnic interactions reflect a general but tacit inequality in roles, that leaves ethnic minority children in an inferior position.

Funding

This work was supported by the TrygFonden.

Notes

1. The law was accused of ethnic discrimination twice (in 2006 and 2010) but acquitted due to the assessment, that the interaction with native Danish speaking peers was an appropriate measure to increase language skills in bilingual ethnic minority children (Jacobsen, 2017).
2. In the case of children born in Aarhus Municipality, the home language is registered by the infant health nurse, who visits the family to follow the growth of the child several times during its first year. For children moving to the municipality after the child is born, the home language is registered when the child is signed up for daycare or school.
3. Reference is anonymized in order to preserve the anonymity of the two schools.
4. In a situation where the teacher compared the class to a family, the children identified the teachers as parents, the pupils as children and the researcher as the older sister. In another situation during recess, when I was questioned by children from other classes whether I was a parent or a teacher, the children in 'my class' answered on my behalf that I was neither a teacher nor a parent but that I was part of their class.
5. At the time when the fieldwork was conducted (in 2014 and 2015), social science research projects were evaluated by the ethical research committees on health. The regional committee found that, according to the Act on Research Ethics Review of Health Research Projects, Act number 593 of 14 July 2011, section 14(2), the study could be conducted without approval, since it did not involve human biological material.
6. An analysis of markings of sameness and difference is published in *Childhood* (Jensen, 2018). The focus of this analysis is to explore the way that children use sameness and difference in peer relations and how this is influenced by the school context (without explicit attention to ethnicity). Another analysis of conflict is published in *Symbolic Interaction* (Jensen & Vitus, 2020). This analysis investigates the interactional dynamics that potentially lead to violence and includes a discussion of the significance of ethnicity for the involvement in peer conflict.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

ORCID

Sidsel Vive Jensen http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6329-9981

References

Agirdag, O., Van Houtte, M., & Van Avermaet, P. (2011). Ethnic school context and the national and sub-national identifications of pupils. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *34*(2), 357–378. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2010.510198

Anderson, R. E., McKenny, M. C., & Stevenson, H. C. (2019). EMB race: Developing a racial socialization intervention to reduce racial stress and enhance racial coping among black parents and adolescents. *Family Process*, *58*(1), 53–67. https://doi.org/10.1111/famp.12412

Apfelbaum, E. P., Norton, M. I., & Sommers, S. R. (2012). Racial color blindness: Emergence, practice, and implications. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *21*(3), 205–209. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721411434980

Apfelbaum, E. P., Pauker, K., Sommers, S. R., & Ambady, N. (2010). In blind pursuit of racial equality? *Psychological Science*, *21*(11), 1587–1592. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797610384741

Binder, J., Zagefka, H., Brown, R., Funke, F., Kessler, T., Mummendey, A., & Leyens, J. P. (2009). Does contact reduce prejudice or does prejudice reduce contact? A longitudinal test of the contact hypothesis among majority and minority groups in three European countries. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *96*(4), 843. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0013470

Birtel, M. D., Reimer, N. K., Wölfer, R., & Hewstone, M. (2020). Change in school ethnic diversity and intergroup relations: The transition from segregated elementary to mixed secondary school for majority and minority students. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *50*(1), 160–176. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2609

Blackburn, R. M., & Jarman, J. (1997). Occupational gender segregation. *Social Research Update*, *16*(Spring). https://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU16/SRU16.html

Clement, D. C., Eisenhart, M., & Harding, J. R. (1979). The veneer of harmony: Social-race relations in a southern desegregated school. In R. C. Rist (Ed.), *Desegregated schools: Appraisals of an American experiment* (pp. 15–64). Academic Press.

Clement, D. C., & Livesay, J. M. (1979). The organization and representation of social race relations in six desegregated schools. In M. L. Wax (Ed.), *When schools are desegregated: Problems and possibilities for students, educators, parents and the community* (pp. 39–57). National Institute of Education.

Connolly, P. (2000). What now for the contact hypothesis? Towards a new research agenda. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *3*(2), 169–193. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613320050074023

Corsaro, W. A. (1985). *Friendship and peer culture in the early years* (Vol. 5). Praeger Pub Text.

Corsaro, W. A., & Eder, D. (1990). Children's peer cultures. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *16*, 197–220. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.16.080190.001213

Damm, A. P., Mattana, E., Nielsen, H. S., & Rouland, B. (2021). Academic achievement and wellbeing of dual language learners: Evidence from a busing program. *Journal of Urban Economics*, *126*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jue.2021.103358

Devine, D., Kenny, M., & Macneela, E. (2008). Naming the 'other': Children's construction and experience of racisms in Irish primary schools. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *11*(4), 369–385. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613320802478879

Dixon, J., Durrheim, K., & Tredoux, C. (2005). Beyond the optimal contact strategy: A reality check for the contact hypothesis. *American Psychologist*, *60*(7), 697–711. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.60.7.697

Djøf. (2023). *Etniske danskere har næsten tre gange så stor sandsynlighed for at blive ledere end ikke-vestlige efterkommere*. Djøf. https://services.djoef.dk/-/media/documents/djoef/p/2023junietniske-danskere-har-nsten-tre-gange-s-stor-sandsynlighed-for-at-blive-ledere-end-ikkevestli.ashx

Dwyer, R. J. (1958). A report on patterns of interaction in desegregated schools. *The Journal of Educational Sociology*, *31*(7), 253–256. https://doi.org/10.2307/2264778

Farley, R., Richards, T., & Wurdock, C. (1980). School desegregation and white flight: An investigation of competing models and their discrepant findings. *Sociology of Education*, *53*(3), 123–139. https://doi.org/10.2307/2112408

Gibson, J., Hussain, J., Holsgrove, S., Adams, C., & Green, J. (2011). Quantifying peer interactions for research and clinical use: The Manchester inventory for playground observation. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, *32*(6), 2458–2466. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ridd.2011.07.014

Glasford, D. E., & Johnston, B. (2018). Respect the technique: Status-based respect increases minority group social cohesion with majority groups, while also increasing minority collective action tendencies. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *158*(2), 201–214. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224545.2017.1324395

The Government. (2018). *Et Danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030*. https://www.regeringen.dk/aktuelt/publikationer-og-aftaletekster/%c3%a9t-danmark-uden-parallelsamfund/

Hughes, J. (2014). Contact and context: Sharing education and building relationships in a divided society. *Research Papers in Education*, *29*(2), 193–210. https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2012.754928

Jacobsen, G. H. (2017). "Alle kræver politisk handling, og hvad kan vi gøre"?: Skolehenvisning af etniske minoritetsbørn som undtagelsespolitik i den nationale konkurrencestat. *Journal Dansk Paedagogisk Tidsskrift*, (3), 17–26.

Jaffe-Walter, R. (2016). *Coercive concern: Nationalism, liberalism, and the schooling of Muslim youth*. Stanford University Press.

Jensen, S. V. (2018). Difference and closeness: Young children's peer interactions and peer relations in school. *Childhood*, 25(4), 501–515. https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568218803437

Jensen, S. V., & Vitus, K. (2020). Broken interaction rituals, struggles for membership, and violence among young children in two Danish schools. *Symbolic Interaction*, *43*(2), 284–307. https://doi.org/10.1002/symb.454

Jensen, T. G., Weibel, K., & Vitus, K. (2017). 'There is no racism here': Public discourses on racism, immigrants and integration in Denmark. *Patterns of Prejudice*, *51*(1), 51–68. https://doi.org/10.1080/0031322X.2016.1270844

Jernigan, M. M., & Daniel, J. H. (2011). Racial trauma in the lives of black children and adolescents: Challenges and clinical implications. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Trauma*, *4*(2), 123–141. https://doi.org/10.1080/19361521.2011.574678

Johncke, S. (2011). Integrating Denmark: The welfare state as a naional(ist) accomplishment. In K. F. Olwig & K. Paerregaard (Eds.), *The question of integration: Immigrants, exclusion and the Danish welfare state* (pp. 30–53). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Kvaale, K. (2011). Something begotten in the state of Denmark? Immigrants, territorialized culture, and the Danes as an indigenous people. *Anthropological Theory*, *11*(2), 223–255. https://doi.org/10.1177/1463499611407395

Laurence, J. (2014). Reconciling the contact and threat hypotheses: Does ethnic diversity strengthen or weaken community inter-ethnic relations? *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *37*(8), 1328–1349. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2013.788727

Lemmer, G., & Wagner, U. (2015). Can we really reduce ethnic prejudice outside the lab? A meta-analysis of direct and indirect contact interventions. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *45*(2), 152–168. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2079

Lücken, M., & Simon, B. (2005). Cognitive and affective experiences of minority and majority members: The role of group size, status, and power. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *41*(4), 396–413. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2004.08.006

Mailand, M. (2004). Etniske minoriteter og arbejdsmarkedssegregering-en komparativ analyse af integrationsbarrierer inden for tre sektorer i tre lande. *Tidsskrift for Arbejdsliv*, *6*(2), 71–87. https://doi.org/10.7146/tfa.v6i2.108416

Mandell, N. (1988). The least-adult role in studying children. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *16*(4), 433–467. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241688164002

Maoz, I. (2002). Is there contact at all? Intergroup interaction in planned contact interventions between Jews and Arabs in Israel. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *26*(2), 185–197. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767(01)00046-3

McPherson, E. (2011). Moving from separate, to equal, to equitable schooling: Revisiting school desegregation policies. *Urban Education*, *46*(3), 465–483. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085910377431

Merry, M. (2016). *Equality, citizenship, and segregation: A defense of separation*. Springer.

Ministry of Immigration and Integration. (2022a). *International migration - Denmark. Report to OECD*. Corporate Management and Supervision, Ministry of Immigration and Integration. https://integrationsbarometer.dk/tal-og-analyser/filer-tal-og-analyser/arkiv/InternationalMigrationDenmark2022.pdf

Ministry of Immigration and Integration. (2022b). *Status på integration*. https://integrationsbarometer.dk/tal-og-analyser/filer-tal-og-analyser/arkiv/Statuspintegration.pdf

Mouritsen, P., & Olsen, T. V. (2013). Denmark between liberalism and nationalism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *36*(4), 691–710. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2011.598233

Noblit, G. W., & Collins, T. W. (1979). The social context of alienation: New policy research on lower-class black students in desegregated schools. In M. Wax (Ed.), *When schools are desegregated: Problems and possibilities for students, educators, parents and the community* (pp. 59–70). National Institute of Education.

Parekh, C., Brown, R. S., & Rboson, K. (2018). The social construction of giftedness. *Canadian Journal of Disability Studies*, *7*(2), 1–32. https://doi.org/10.15353/cjds.v7i2.421

Pettigrew, T. F. (1997). Generalized intergroup contact effects on prejudice. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *23*(2), 173–185. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167297232006

Pettigrew, T. F., Tropp, L. R., Wagner, U., & Christ, O. (2011). Recent advances in intergroup contact theory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *35*(3), 271–280. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2011.03.001

Putnam, R. D. (2007). E pluribus unum: Diversity and community in the twenty-first century the 2006 Johan skytte prize lecture. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, *30*(2), 137–174. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9477.2007.00176.x

Rytter, M., & Pedersen, M. H. (2014). A decade of suspicion: Islam and Muslims in Denmark after 9/11. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *37*(13), 2303–2321. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2013.821148

Scherer, J., & Slawski, E. (1979). Color, class, and social control in an urban desegregated school. In R. C. Rist (Ed.), *Desegregated schools: Appraisals of an American experiment* (pp. 117–153). Academic Press.

Schofield, J. W. (1979). The impact of positively structured contact on intergroup behavior: Does it last under adverse conditions? *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *42*(3), 280–284. https://doi.org/10.2307/3033772

Schofield, J. W. (1989). *Black and white in school: Trust, tension, or tolerance?* Teachers College Press.

Schofield, J. W. (1991). Chapter 8: School desegregation and intergroup relations: A Review of the literature. *Review of Research in Education*, *17*(1), 335–409. https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X017001335

Slavin, R. E., & Cooper, R. (1999). Improving intergroup relations: Lessons learned from cooperative learning programs. *Journal of Social Issues*, *55*(4), 647–663. https://doi.org/10.1111/0022-4537.00140

Slobodin, O., Noufi, T., & Caspi, Y. (2023). Interventions to reduce racial bias and prejudice in preschool children: A systematic review of the literature since 2010. *School Mental Health*, *15*(4), 1017–1032. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-023-09608-8

Thijs, J., & Verkuyten, M. (2014). School ethnic diversity and students' interethnic relations. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *84*(1), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12032

Tomovska, A. (2010). Contact as a tool for peace education? Reconsidering the contact hypothesis from the children's perspectives. *Journal of Peace Education*, *7*(2), 121–138. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2010.498993

Van Ryzin, M. J., Roseth, C. J., & McClure, H. (2020). The effects of cooperative learning on peer relations, academic support, and engagement in learning among students of color. *The Journal of Educational Research*, *113*(4), 283–291. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2020.1806016

Vertelyte, M. (2019). Not so ordinary friendship: An ethnography of student friendships in a racially diverse Danish classroom. Aalborg Universitetsforlag. Aalborg Universitet. Det Samfundsvidenskabelige Fakultet. Ph.D.-Serien.

Wagner, U., Christ, O., Pettigrew, T. F., Stellmacher, J., & Wolf, C. (2006). Prejudice and minority proportion: Contact instead of threat effects. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *69*(4), 380–390. https://doi.org/10.1177/019027250606900406