

English Summary.

This thesis focus is on a program named “Fælles sprog”¹. The main purpose is a historical descriptive analysis of the initiation and development of the program, especially regarding the construction of program theories. These are in short, the theories of how a program is supposed to work. They, as used in this thesis, can basically be seen as a combination of three parts. Firstly, normative components, which are the values affixed to the intervention. It is all the positive aspects, or reduced negative aspects, one would presume as the outcome of a given program. Secondly, explanatory components are the causal hypothesis, about how the determinants in the field, influence the situation. What causes the unsatisfactory state of the field? Finally the intervention components. This can be seen as the expected “solutions” to the problems. They are theories about how a given program is supposed to change the unsatisfactory states in the field, towards the positive valued normative statements (Vedung, 1997 s.225-226). “Fælles sprog” is a categorisation- and management- tool, used in social work and care, in relations to the elderly. It is created and developed on the initiative of Kommunernes Landsforening² (KL), in cooperation with a number of municipalities. The methodological process used in this thesis is textual analysis. I use Faircloughs critical discourse analysis as an overall frame, which means I take a social constructivist approach, thus “reality” is seen as a social construction, contingent on the situation and context, not a positivistic approach which acknowledge an objective observable “world”. This scientific point of view means that there can be multiple views of the program theories, dependent on one’s position in the field. For instance the “elderly” or the “social workers” might have different theories about how the program works and what it implies. This thesis is defined only to the construction of program theories from analysis of five KL documents, regarding “Fælles sprog”, from the period 1994-1998. It means that only the positions taken by KL in these texts, are included in the construction. It might very well be different from, say a traditional implementation analysis or a empirical investigation of how the program works. This specific approach is chosen

¹“Fælles sprog” can be translated as “common language”.

²KL is a private organisation that represents, the 275 municipalities in Denmark. It can be seen as their forum of interest. KL is the main negotiator regarding joint municipal talks and discussions with the state / government.

because the documents contain “original” data. Therefore the data is not “contaminated” by others or influenced by me (as it would be, in say a qualitative interview), only by the methodological and theoretical ways I analyse it.

Program theories.

The normative aspects of the program theories are found to be relatively stable. From the initiative thoughts, it was norms about internal control and management, that started the project. The administrative managers demanded information for better governing and insight in the complex field of social work, and care with the elderly. The latter also developed into a demand for statistical comparisons and benchmarking. The explanatory components show that the reasons for the unsatisfied states, mainly was due to two different explanations. The first is organizational. The public organization has changed and new forms of government is introduced. “New Public Management” is increasing, thus is the need for information and tools of generating insights and data regarding the field.

The second explanation is demographical and economical. The demographical development shows an increasing number of senior citizens, and more “old” senior citizens, psychological- and terminal- patients, with more demanding care requirements. This combined with stagnating or decreasing economical resources created, according to KL, a demand for more productive and efficient management tools. The development also requires statistical information gathering for comparison and benchmarking. As seen above the intervention theories also have changed. At first they were seen as IT-solutions, for administrative use only. Soon it was recognized that these solutions needed a common language or definitions of conceptions and words, that were to be used. This developed into the first proposal of a “common language” in 1996. It was unfinished, widely defined and needed to be further developed, but it had the intentions of a “united” tool, which would include most relations and communication, regarding the field of elderly care. In 1998, the final “Fælles sprog” was introduced, as more well-defined and including only the major communications, mainly a catalog to describe the services provided, and a catalog of user functionality valuation. The dominant discourse about internal management, can in 1998 no longer claim hegemony, but is challenged by “benchmarking-” and “comparison-” discourses, connected to the development of a centrally placed database.

These discourses can all be seen as part of the discourse order of the market, which has challenged the traditional “welfare discourse” in organizing social work.

The program is based on a set of principles, or “rules” that can be seen as compliments to the above mentioned program theories. It is the principle of voluntariness, local influence, interdisciplinary, individual- and full-valuation of the users functionality level. It means that no municipality is forced to use ‘Fælles sprog’. There is a certain amount of local influence in the use of the tool, and it has a interdisciplinarity approach (multi-professionals). Finally the “user valuation” it is based on a individual- and full-valuation of their functionality. These principles can be seen as the spirits on which the program is created.

Another important aspect is the role KL plays. First of all, they have a very dominant part in ‘Fælles sprog’. It is their project, and they possesses full “interactional control” all through the process and development. They take a twofold part, one as the representative of the municipalities and one as a “centralistic” dominating organization. In the beginning there was an overweight in the role as advocate for the “local” but in 1998, there is a turn, and the program theories takes on more centralistic values, regarding a database for statistical use, comparision and national sum ups.

Another interesting aspect of the analysis is the way other stakeholders are represented in the text. Elderly people are at first, adressed rather negative, but that changes and a more positive picture is made, using positive valued words. The professionals or the social workers are described as suffering from stress, but other than that, stakeholders in the field of “elderly care” are remarkable absent.

All in all one can say that ‘Fælles sprog’ is a child of changes in the organization of the public sector and the development in the world as a whole. For instance the “reflexive modernization” can be seen as a diagnosis of our time, into which ‘Fælles sprog’ fits.