Aalborg University

International Relations and Development – Refugee studies

Master's thesis

The power of language

A thesis about how the corona virus pandemic has influenced the Danish media's representation of minorities

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Abstract

This thesis investigates how Danish media depicts minorities by looking at written articles from Danish newspaper media. The study is built upon using tools from Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Moueffe discourse theory and draws on Rosalind Gill's method of analysis. By collecting several newspaper articles reporting news regarding minorities in Denmark, we can investigate whether certain discourses depict minorities in a particular way, which issues are being framed and what type of stories in the, media minorities are depicted in particular. By analyzing newspaper articles, we can shed light upon whether depictions of minority groups have changed in a negative or positive way. This study investigate on how certain elements of language is used in a particular way both before and during the Covid-19 outbreak. By applying Michel Foucault notion of knowledge and power to see how certain elements of the news articles are articulated we will gain an understanding of how power and knowledge manifest in the language. I will be drawing upon Stuart Hall's theory of representation to investigate how visible minorities are depicted in the media from a media perspective.

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0. Structure of this thesis

The thesis begins with an introduction to the research field by explaining my motivation for conducting the study. It further explains my research question and presents significant terms used to explain the context and the analysis. The study is structured into different chapters, each with a different focus. **Chapter one** includes my motivation, research question and explains the relevance of the study. **Chapter two** includes my theoretical framework, which includes a metatheoretical approach to discourse study and explains the theory behind the analysis. In **chapter three,** I explain the methodological approach. **Chapter four** provides the reader with an overview of my empirical data, findings and research data. **Chapter five** presents my discourse analysis, which is structured by the themes, I detected in my empirical data. Firstly, I introduce the analysis. Next I analyze certain themes and elements, I found in the articles, then I discuss my findings from the analysis. In **chapter six**, I study the analysis in relation to Stuart Hall's notion of Representation and Michel Foucault's theory of power/knowledge, which consists of a comparison of the media discourses before and during the COVID-19 outbreak and the discursive and ideological depictions of minorities in the media. Finally, **chapter seven** offers a conclusion, while **chapter eight and nine** presents the literature and appendix.

1. Introduction

1.1 Motivation

While growing up, I noticed how often minorities were mentioned in daily conversation. People I knew who had little or no knowledge of certain minorities often talked about minorities or had opinions on them (refugees and foreigners). I did not see myself as a minority when I was young, but I was told, that I was different due to my physical appearance, such as my brown skin color, dark eyes and black hair. I became curious as to why people talked about minorities, and I even met people who openly had opinions on minorities, even when they had never interacted with someone from a minority group before. A question came to my mind: how can someone have opinions about another human being without knowing them? I understood the answer to this question when I grew older and began watching and reading the news, which was the beginning of a new understanding of myself and my background. Reading the sensational stories published by mainstream (mass media), I noticed how often stories about minorities were published. Mostly, I came across negative stories often related to crime, poverty and other social issues referring to people who had a background other than Danish.

My motivation for writing about such a topic is founded in a desire to gain an understanding of how and why minorities are portrayed so often in the media. It is interesting how the Danish media portrays minorities and their integration into the Danish society, and how the media impacts, can and is still creating stereotypes of minorities (Ramasubramanian, 2007, p. 249). Over the last year, the world has been facing a pandemic due to a virus that was detected in Central China in December 2019. The virus Sars-Cov-2, mostly known as the corona virus or COVID-19 (these two synonyms will be used interchangeably throughout my thesis), has caused a global epidemic with more than 4 million confirmed cases worldwide (Bergquist & Stensgaard, 2020). The virus quickly reached Europe within the first couple of months of 2020 and the first cases appeared in Denmark in the end of February. According to Staten's Serum Institut (2020), the first time COVID-19 was detected in Denmark was in a Danish white male returning from a winter holiday in Lombardy, and later several others were found to be infected as well. This created massive headlines and Danish media officially began to cover every inch of the COVID-19 news, which also had an impact on the public's behavior toward access to media in order get the latest information about the virus.

Recent studies done by Danish Media Research – Gallup show a sudden increase of more than 100,000 Danish households now paying Danish news internet sites in order to get as much information as possible on the ongoing health crisis (pay per view). The studies also show that the Danish public agrees that having independent news media is essential to any well-functioning democratic country (danskemedier.dk, 2020). But this was not the only change in behavior. According to language professor Tanya Karoli Christensen, when the media began writing about the Covid-19 virus, she noticed that stories regarding Asian people being responsible for the spread were popular on Facebook. A look down of the major Danish public newspapers Facebook sites, you would eventually find cruel and racist comments were written, such as foreigners being idiots and Chinese/Asians being dirty (Hansen, 2020). This led me to think that the media might have specific ways of framing minorities. Research has already been done on how media has an impact on our opinions. But the question is whether a phenomenon of framing minorities during times of the Covid-19 virus has been more distinct.

1.2 Contribution to existing field of research

According to Hussain. et al. (1997), it is well known that minorities often receive a great deal of attention from the public, whether the question is about how they live, where they live and what they do, as studies have shown how often minorities are represented in the media and how the general public receives information regarding minorities (Hussain et al., 1997; Hussain, 2000; Yilmaz, 2001). Other research perspectives on the media include the formation of public opinion by looking at media coverage and opinions where the intention has been to investigate how far the media – especially newspaper coverage and discourses – can have an influence on the public's perception of knowledge and information (Ottesen, 1993, in Hussain et al., 1997) and according to Hanne Jørndrup (2017), the center for attention has not changed over the years as shifting governments have kept debating minorities, and the public is given impressions of minorities through the media, impacting what impression the public has of different minority groups (Jørndrup, 2017).

A number of researchers have focused their attention on minorities and their representation in the media, and there has been done much research on minorities' inclusion/exclusion when it comes to the news and other media. Topics of discussion have been whether minorities feel included in the society they live in – both when it comes to Denmark and other countries hosting minorities. The

Institute for Human Rights in Denmark has contributed to several studies on minorities and in 2017 Hanne Jørndrup refined the research on media coverage of minorities in the report "Nydanskere I nyhedsmedierne" (Jørndrup, 2017). This report included a mapping of the daily media and news regarding news reports featuring minorities, which motivated me to look further into media discourses.

Not much research has been done with the aim of shedding light on how the media writes stories about minorities during a pandemic, which is the ambition of this research. My perspective within this research field will primarily be focused on the media coverage of minorities. I have chosen to investigate how some phenomena in the media have changed during times when disaster strikes and through the perspective of current discourses used in the media. In order to investigate this topic and get a nuanced perspective of the media discourses represented, I collected and analyzed various news articles from a broad spectrum of Danish media. In this way, I focused on collecting a representative picture of the media discourse in relation to how minorities have been depicted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.3 Research field

The aim of this thesis is to investigate whether the Danish media portrayed minorities in a certain way, during the Covid-19 virus pandemic. My choice of investigating the media is based upon the common notion of the media being the fourth estate of the realm, since a growing number of political scientists and media scholars considered the media to be major player in the political arena (Harrop, 1987). As a result, the media is considered to have great power, due to its ability to create agendas in order to create a good story (Harrop, 1987). The media's way of portraying minorities plays a significant role in ethnic Danish people's opinions on "the foreigners" (Andreassen, 2007, p. 14). According to Danish media scholar Rikke Andreassen (2017), only a minority of Danish people have met an actual refugee or foreigner in person, which does not prevent the majority of the Danish people expressing their opinions on a minority group. As mentioned, this motivated me to look into the research on how the media frames stories about minorities and how certain trends have become more prominent during the Covid-19 virus pandemic. The following paragraph explains the research field:

When looking at certain discourses used by the media when covering issues where minorities are mentioned or represented in some ways, before and during the Covid-19 virus pandemic, there might

be some phenomena, that are more present during the pandemic than they were before. In order to detect and investigate the differences in how articles were written before the Covid-19, and how they are written during the pandemic, I have chosen to do a comparative study of media discourses through a discourse analysis. This will help me to achieve an understanding of changes in language written by Danish media. Another perspective on language used in media can be obtained by using Stuart Hall's theory of representation. Hall explains that representations connect meaning and language to culture, that representation means *using* a language to say something meaningful about or to *represent* the world meaningfully, to other people. His theory is based upon drawing a distinction between the theories: *Reflective* (Does language simply reflect a meaning which already exists out in the world of objects, people and events?), *Intentional* (Does language express only what the speaker, writer or painter wants to say, his or her personally intended meaning?) and *Constructional* (Or is the meaning constructed in and through language?) (Hall, 1997, p 1).

In order to distinguish between the media discourses, I asked the research question presented below.

1.4 Research question

I have developed my research question according to my interest in investigating discourses in the media before and during the Covid-19 outbreak. In this thesis I will be conducting a discourse analysis, finding discourses about visible minorities, and explaining their representation in daily Danish media. Hence the research question is:

What representations of visible minorities are produced in the media and have they changed during the Covid-19 virus pandemic?

1.5 Relevance of this study

Studying media discourses is not a new scientific approach. Many scholars have contributed to the study of ethnic minorities and media. The relationship between media and minorities is constantly changing depending on time, field, territory and social space, which is why the media occupies a key site and plays a crucial role in the public representation of unequal social relations and the play of cultural power.

When inviting the members of media audience to help construct the sense of "we" "them" "us" "Insider" "outsider" "The West" and "the rest", the social interest mobilized across our society are marked out from each other (Chan & Strabucchi, 2020). However, at the same time, the media also invites dialogue and social and cultural diversity by creating space for opinions. Teun Van Dijk studied news racism through a discursive analytical approach, quantitative studies of stereotypical words and images representing minorities, by focusing on the media and the information society and the newspapers daily readers (Van Dijrk, 2000). Danish media scholars Mustafa Hussain, Ferruh Yilmaz and Tim O'Connor contributed with their research on Danish media discourse and its influence on their audience and how ruling discourses can shape one's understanding of certain topics by looking at depictions of ethnic groups in the 1990s media (Hussain et al., 1997).

Since time has passed some areas within the study of media representations have changed as well. Given the current global pandemic, I find the study of minority representations in times of crisis relevant for several reasons. Firstly, the aim of this study is to investigate the changes in how media discourses represent visible minorities in Denmark, as this provides a basis for further research on how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected media constructions of representations of minorities. Secondly by looking into written news articles published by several newspapers, I will be able to understand if there have been changes in the way the media depicts minorities. Since the Covid-19 virus is a new social and biological phenomenon, it has created a certain interest in how minorities act in everyday life. In March 2020, the Danish Government announced a nationwide lockdown and enforcement of social distancing influencing all citizens in some way as well as the media agenda.

In the next chapter I will introduce my theoretical framework.

2.0 Theoretical framework

In this chapter I will outline the theories and concepts that represent the theoretical framework for my analysis. I will explain my use of theories and present different hypotheses based on our research question. Firstly, I will explain our use of the main concept of this thesis by briefly touching upon the historical background of visible minorities in Denmark. Next I will elaborate on the term visible minorities. Later I will present my theoretical approaches, starting out by presenting our metatheoretical framework in relation to discourse theory and scholarly discussions that will be explored on various analytical levels. Lastly, I will elaborate on Michel Foucault notion of Power/Knowledge and Stuart Hall's theory of representation. I chose this approach based on how communication in daily media has changed and is still changing at a fast pace. The media informs the public and provides a channel for social and political actors to voice their opinions influencing perceptions of pressing issues and depicting stories of people in a particular way that shapes the audience's view on certain issues or people. Being able to understand how communication works and influences us is highly relevant in the study of discourses. Let me now present a brief historical overview of our social actors.

2.1 Denmark and its minorities

In the early 1960s Denmark experienced immigration from non-Western countries as a result of Northern Europe becoming more industrialized. Factory workers were in high demand, which led the Danish Government to invite guest workers from Pakistan, Turkey and Yugoslavia to take over the jobs that ethnic Danes were not interested in (Bejder, 2016). Until the 1970s refugees from Spain, Portugal, Greece and Africa came to Denmark, which was the beginning of the Danish media's interest in minorities (Bejder, 2016). Many immigrants – especially from Pakistan, Turkey and other non-Western countries – decided to stay and invite their families to Denmark, which often resulted in people from third world countries coming to Denmark who did not have any educational background as the goal of their arrival was to support manual labor in factories.

At the end of the 1990s Denmark was in a rather difficult situation. Minorities categorized into specific groups including low wage and unemployed minorities and minorities from non-Western countries were four times more likely to be unemployed than ethnic Danes. This trend sparked the idea of creating the new Integration law in 1999 consisting of legislation on integration, which

focused on refugees, migrants and their families who came through by family reunification (Steinild & Martens, 2009, p. 12). The responsibility for the integration program was handed over to the Danish municipalities, who helped the minorities with housing, finding jobs, and learning the language. Following the law of integration, the government decided to establish the Ministry of Integration, creating the foundation for more coherent foreign and integration politics (Steinild & Martens, 2009, p. 13). On account of the government shift in 2001, new integration policies were outlined based on the government goal of integrating as many foreigners as possible and helping them establish themselves in Danish society. Some of the initiatives were job-oriented but another initiative launched in 2002 aimed to limit the number of foreigners immigrating to Denmark for the purpose of concentrating the integration efforts on the foreigners already living in Denmark.

While the establishment of refugees and migrants was initiated, the press did not hold back from writing stories about the new citizens of Denmark, which led a range of Danish media scholars to investigate the change in the media discourse (Hussain et al., 1997).

2.2 Clarification of concept - Visible minorities

By way of introduction, I must clarify the object of the minority discourse. In this thesis I will be using the term "visible minorities" as an umbrella term for other terms relating to the same meaning of a non-ethnic Danish person living in Denmark. "Visible minorities" will cover both "Refugees" (people who have fled from war) and "migrants" (people who came to Denmark in order to find work)", since the definitions of minorities often get mixed up in contexts, which can create confusion regarding what the sender is referring to, such as in this statement:

*"Jo, der er nogle **indvandrere**, der lever op til regeringens stramme krav om at bestille noget, når de bliver en del af det nordiske paradis... Og det med at arbejde for føden og pladsen I samfundet gælder også en del af de bombestressede **flygtninge**"* (Bech, 2015).

This phrase might be difficult to understand, as the writer does not distinguish between the words "migrants" and "refugee". Since the articles are written about many different minority actors, I will discuss them using one umbrella term.

In this thesis, we found that articles represented minorities in certain ways or as part of certain stories, which is why we will go through different stories and themes. The term *"visible minorities"* will be used in order to locate the discourses. In order to distinguish between ethnic Danes (Individuals born of Danish parents in Denmark) and individuals with roots in other countries, one must highlight the relevant actors in the articles, as the thesis is interested in minority discourses, where the object of discussion is people of minority groups. The thesis is not interested in any specific minority group, which is why I do not distinguish between religions, cultures or races when using the term "visible minorities", unless it is clear in the article, why "visible" relates to their psychical appearances in the Danish society and the media. The term also includes individuals born in Denmark and those born outside of Denmark.

2.3 Theoretical approaches

When we read the newspaper, we expect to get an update on what is happening around us. Most of us read the news in the morning and when the interest relies on certain incidents or people - as in this case, finding media discourses before and during the Covid-19 virus outbreak, one might look at certain representations of minorities in the media and the media's framing of certain incidents. We decided to combine both the theory of representation and the framing theory, as this might improve the research on certain discourses within the media in times of the Covid-19 virus. Before I present the theories, I will account for my use of discourse theory, Stuart Hall's concept of representation, and how media framing creates certain depictions of minority groups below. Also, I will briefly touch upon my overall metatheoretical perspective of social constructivism.

2.3.1 Applying theory

Selecting theories and methodological approaches for research can be challenging. My research question will try to shed light upon the media's representation of visible minorities before and during the Covid-19 virus pandemic. By applying Stuart Hall's theory of representation, I can reflect on broader societal representations. Hall's theory allows us to understand how meaning is constructed and how representation influences the audience and how information is given through the process of communication is presented in the media. Since written texts can clarify information and make it more "dominant", the reader will remember the words creating a demand for similar information. By applying discourse theory one can illuminate the construction of minority representations, since the

purpose of discourse theory is to identify which social changes are visible (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 150). Discourse theory is used as a tool for understanding discourses as 'objects' constructed by the writer, rather than objects that exist in a delimited form of reality ready to be identified and mapped. Nevertheless, this does not mean just anything can be called a discourse, since the analysts need the aid of secondary literature that identifies particular discourses (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 150).

2.3.2 Social Constructivism

My metatheoretical perspective for this research is a social constructivist one. According to Jørgensen and Phillips (1999 p. 13), social constructivism is an umbrella term for a range of theories about culture and society, including discourse analysis as an approach for understanding language. According to Vivian Burr (1995), we should not provide only one definition for all social constructivist approaches. However, Jørgensen and Phillips (1999), drawing on Burr (1995, p. 2) and Kenneth Gergen (1985), list four premises shared by all social constructivist approaches, building on Gergen (1985). The four premises are:

1. *A critical approach to taken for granted knowledge*

Our knowledge of the world should not be treated as objective truth. Reality is only accessible to us through categories, so our knowledge and representations of the world are not reflections of the reality "out there" but are instead products of our ways of categorizing the world (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 13).

2. *Historical and cultural specificity*

We are fundamentally historical and cultural beings and our views of, and knowledge about, the world is the *"products of historically situated interchanges among people"* (Gergen, 1985, p. 257). Consequently, the ways in which we understand and represent the world are historically and culturally specific and contingent; our worldviews and our identities could have been different, and they can change over time. This view that all knowledge is contingent is an anti-foundationalist position that stands in opposition to the foundationalist view that knowledge can be grounded in a metatheoretical base that transcends contingent human actions. Discourse is a form of social action that plays a part in producing the world – including knowledge, identities and social relations – by maintaining social

patterns. This view is anti-essentialist, proposing that the social world is constructed socially and discursively implies that its character is not given beforehand or determined by external conditions, and that people do not possess a set of fixed and authentic characteristics or essence (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 14).

3. *Link between knowledge and social processes*

Our ways of understanding the world are created and maintained by social processes (Burr, 1994, p. 4; Gergen, 1985, p. 268). Knowledge is created through social interactions in which we construct common truths and compete about what is true and what is false (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 14).

4. *Link between knowledge and social action*

Within a particular worldview, some forms of action become natural, others become unthinkable. Different social understandings of the world lead to different social actions, and therefore the social construction of knowledge and truth has social consequences (Burr 1995 p. 5; Gergen 1985 p. 268-269 in Jørgensen & Phillips 1999, p. 14).

The notion of social constructivism relies on an understanding of how language develops as a part of social activities, how the use of language can reproduce and maintain social activities and relations and how language enters into the continuing process of social negotiation that produces novel arrangements for our social future (Blazer, 1990). This metatheoretical view was chosen, as I think it can support an understanding of how and why media discourses about minorities changed during the outbreak of the corona virus.

2.3.3 Discourse theory

This study will focus on current media discourses in relation to the portrayal of minorities during the Covid-19 pandemic. In order to understand certain language and symbolic patterns, I found inspiration for this thesis' theoretical foundation in Rosalind Gill's discourse analysis, supported by Marianne Jørgensen and Louise Phillips' *"Diskursanalyse som teori og metoder"* (1990). Jørgensen and Philips provides a practical understanding of the usage of discourse theory from a structuralist point of view due to their representation of theories and methods that can help investigate processes within communication (media) and provide a broad context as a whole regarding developments

within society and culture. In this subchapter, I will present the discourse theory and why I find it relevant for my study.

2.3.4 What is a discourse?

The concept of discourses concerns the idea that language is constructed according to the different patterns that people's utterances follow when they take part in different domains of social life (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 9). The definition of the term "discourse" originates from the area of linguistics and semiotics but has been used in several other connections such as in the social sciences such as associating discourses with parts of the social system (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 12). According to Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, the term "discourse" can be used to underline that "any social situation contains a meaning" (Laclau & Mouffe, 1987, p. 84). Discourses construct the social world in its meaning, but the discourse can never be closed since language is fragile in its foundation – meaning that no discourse is closed, it simply changes when coming into contact with other discourses. Different discourses, that each are representing their way or understanding of language in the social world, fights against other discourses in order to archive hegemony (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 15). From a discourse analytical point of view, language is not seen as a simple form of communication, but rather a domain where knowledge and understandings of social relations are being created.

Since we are interested in looking at certain elements of the language provided in the media, we will be looking at *signs,* as the aim of a discourse analysis is to map out the process where the meaning of a particular domain is fixated. According to Laclau & Mouffe, a discourse is understood as the fixation of meaning. All signs in a discourse are 'moments' They are the knots in the fishing net, since their meaning is being fixed trough their differences *"all signs are moments in a system and the meaning of each sign is determined by its relations to other signs"* (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 36). A discourse is formed by the partial fixation of meaning around what we call *nodal points* (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p 112) A nodal point can be understood as a privileged sign around the other signs. Hence when we search for nodal points in media articles, we look for nodal points in minority discourses. A nodal point here will be fx. Diversity. Another example of nodal points can be the nodal point 'democracy' if we look at a political discourse (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p 37). Laclau and & Mouffe also argue for *floating signifiers*, being particular signs that are open to different ascriptions

of meaning. Nodal points are floating signifiers, where the term 'nodal point' refers to a point of crystallization within a specific discourse, hence the term 'floating signifier' belongs to the on-going struggle between discourses to fix a meaning of important signs. (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p 37).

2.3.5 A Foucauldian notion of discourse - Power and language

Michel Foucault played a major role in the study of discourse analysis. Traditionally, Foucault's work has been divided into an early "archaeological" phase and a later "genealogical" phase, although both phases overlap. He uses tools from archaeology, meaning he is interested in investigating what rules determine which statements are accepted as meaningful and true in a particular historical epoch (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 21). He defines a discourse as:

> "*We shall call discourse a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation (...Discourse) is made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined. Discourse in this sense is not an ideal, timeless form (...) it is, from the beginning to end, historical – a fragment of history (...) posing its own limits, its divisions, its transformations, the specific modes of its temporality*" (Foucault, 1972, p. 117).

Foucault follows the social constructivist premise that knowledge is not a reflection of reality. The truth is a discursive construction and the different regimes of knowledge determine what is true and what is false (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 21). The majority of contemporary discursive analytical approaches follow Foucault's conception of discourses as relatively rule-bound sets of statements which impose limits on what gives meaning. They also draw upon his idea that the truth is something which is, at least to a large extent, created discursively. In his genealogical work, he develops a theory of *power/knowledge*, by not focusing on treating agents and structures as primary categories and instead focusing on power. Power does not belong to a specific interest; rather it is spread across different social practices. (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p 21-24) Power should be understood as *productive,* as power constitutes discourse, knowledge, bodies and subjectivities. He states:

> "*What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it does not only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs*

through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression" (Foucault, 1980, p. 119).

Power provides the conditions of possibility for the social; hence it is power that our social world produces, and objects are separated from another, but they attain their individual characteristics and relationship to one another. Thus, power is both for creating our social world and for the particular ways in which the world is formed and can be talked about ruling out alternative ways of being and talking (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 23).

According to Foucault, power is connected to discourse. Discourses contribute to the production of the subject and the object, we can know something about (including ourselves as subjects). Hence his concept of power/knowledge also has consequences for his conception of *truth*. Foucault claims that it is not possible to gain access to a universal truth as it is impossible to talk from a standpoint outside a discourse; there is no escape from representation. *Truth effects are created within discourses* (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p 23) In Foucault's archaeological phase, he understood "truth" as a system of procedures for the production, regulation and diffusion of statements. In his genealogical phase, he created a link between truth and power; hence the focus is on how effects of truth are created in discourses. What is to be analyzed are the discursive processes through which discourses are constructed in ways that give the impression that they represent true or false images of reality (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 25).

2.3.6 Language and representation

People who belong to the same culture might share a similar conceptual map, and they might also share the same way of interpreting the signs of language in order to be able to exchange meanings amongst each other. The constructivist approach can be examined through two models: the semiotic approach by Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and the discursive approach by Michel Foucault.

According to Saussure, the production of meaning depends on language. In his view, language is a system of signs, such as sounds, images, written words, paintings, photographs etc. (Hall, 1997, p. 16). But language is not just a channel that provides information, but also a machine that creates the social world, e.g. by creating identities and relations (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 18). According

to Saussure, our understanding of language is arbitrary; hence we provide meaning to the world through social conventions, where specific things are related to specific words. There is, he argued, the *form* (the actual word, image etc.) and the *idea or concept* in your head with which the form is associated (Hall, 1997, p. 16). The first element is called the **signifier** and the second element is called the **signified**. Every time we hear, read or see the signifier (e.g. the word "Walkman" for example), it correlates with the signified (the concept of a portable cassette-player). Both are required to produce meaning, but it is the relation between them, fixed by our cultural and linguistic codes, which sustains representation (Culler, 1976, p. 19 in Hall, 1997, p. 16).

We have now touched upon the idea of discourses. I will now explain Stuart Hall theory of representation.

2.3.7 Stuart Hall's theory of representation

The concept of representation presents the notion of connecting meaning and language to culture. Representation means using language to say something meaningful about or to represent the world meaningfully, to other people (Hall, 1997). Representation is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture. It involves the use of language, i.e. the use of signs and images which stand for or represent certain things. But how does the concept of representation connect meaning and language to culture?

Hall explains, "*If you put down a glass you are holding and walk out of the room, you can still think about the glass, even though it is no longer psychically there. You cannot think with a glass. You can only think with the concept of glass*" (Hall, 1997). This is the linguistic sign we use when we are referring to an object from which you might drink water. This is where the concept of representation comes in – meaning, representation is the production of meaning of the concepts in our mind's through language. This enables us to *refer* to either the "real" world of objects, people or events or to the imaginary worlds of fictional objects, people and events. Hall further explains the two systems of representation:

System one: All objects, people and events are correlated with a set of concepts or *mental representations*, which we carry around in our heads. Without these we would not be able to interpret the world meaningfully at all, hence meaning depends on the system of concepts formed in

our thoughts, which can stand for or "represent" the world, enabling us to refer to things both inside and outside our heads (Hall, 1997).

System two: In order to be able to represent or exchange meanings or concepts, we need to have access to a shared language. Language is therefore the second system of representation involved in the overall process of constructing a meaning. The conceptual map that we share with others has to be translated into a common language, so that we are able to correlate our concepts with certain written words, sounds or visual images. The general term we use for words, sounds or images that carry meaning is *signs.* These signs represent the concepts and the conceptual relations between them which we carry around in our heads and together they make up the meaning system of our culture (Hall, 1997).

In order to explore this connection between the systems, we will look at a number of different theories about how language is used to represent the world. In order to explain how representation of meanings through language comes from, one can ask following question: "Where do meanings come from? And how can we tell the 'true' meaning of a word or image?" (Hall, 1997).

Here we will draw a distinction between three different accounts or theories that can help us answer this question:

The reflective: Does language simply reflect a meaning which already exists out there in the world of objects, people and events?

According to this theory, meaning is thought to lie in the object, person or idea of the real world, and language therefore functions as a mirror, by *reflecting* the true meaning as it already exists in the world.

The Intentional: Does language express only what the speaker or writer or painter wants to say, his or her personally intended meaning?

This approach argues the opposite as it holds that it is the speaker, the author, who imposes his or her unique meaning to the world through language. Words mean what the author wants them to mean. But we should remember that language can never be a private game. Our primary intended meanings, however personal to us, have *to enter into the rules and codes and conventions* of

language in order to be shared and understood by others. Language is therefore a social system (Hall, 1997).

The constructionist: Is meaning constructed in and through language?

This third approach acknowledges that neither things themselves nor individuals' use of language can fix meaning in language. Things do not *mean;* we *construct* meaning, using representational systems (codes and signs). According to this system we must not confuse the *material* world, where things and people exist, and the *symbolic* practices and processes through which representation, meaning and language operate. However, constructivists do not deny the existence of the material world, hence it is not the material world that conveys meaning: it is the language system we use to represent our concepts. It is the social actors who use the conceptional systems of their culture and linguistic and other representational systems to construct meaning and to make the world meaningful (Hall, 1997).

By applying Stuart Hall's theory of representation to my research of how media depicts visible minorities we can understand how language of visible minorities is constructed in the media.

3.0 Project methodology

This thesis is built upon a comparative study of media representations of visible minorities during the Covid-19 pandemic. I will investigate which discourses are being presented when the media writes stories about minorities. To be able to understand certain phenomena that might appear in the news regarding minorities, I have chosen to investigate whether some phenomena have an even stronger appearance in the way media represents visible minorities. To be able to detect these differences or similarities we will compare the media discourses before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. To be able to do so, we gathered various news articles for analysis, presented in the fourth chapter of this thesis. In this chapter, I will provide a methodological overview of my use of Rosalinda Gill's understanding of discourse analysis, as I find her four themes within discourse analysis useful as it enables be to create a structure for the analysis. This will be explained later in this chapter. I have briefly touched upon discourse theory earlier and I will now present my use of discourse analysis.

3.1 Applying discourse analysis

Discourse analysis refers to how discourses constitute knowledge and power in certain ways. The way we speak is organized within discourses that create different representations of the social world and these representations create our reality and opinions, while marginalizing other forms of knowledge (Philips, 2010, p. 265). According to Jørgensen and Phillips (1999), discourse analysis does not constitute just one approach but constitutes a field of different approaches within analytical strategies. My discourse analysis of written newspaper articles is built upon Rosalind Gill's model of discourse analysis.

I chose Gill's approach as it can help highlight linguistic use, discourses, themes, relationships between media and audiences and subject positions in the news articles. This method is also relevant due to the exploratory approach of analysis, as the aim of my analysis is not only to identify and expose phenomena within certain discourses, but to clarify the possibility of critically investigating our reality by uncovering and reflecting upon the consequences it might have (Philips, 2010, p. 266). Below I will present Rosalind's Gill's model for discourse analysis.

3.2 Rosalind Gill's model of discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is the name of a variety of different approaches to the study of texts. There is no single "discourse analysis" but instead different styles of analysis. They do share the same perspectives which is the rejection of the realist notion of that language is simply neutral means of reflecting or describing the world (Gill, 2000, p. 172). Gill's discourse analysis draws upon four themes: a concern with discourse itself; a view of language as constructive and constructed; an emphasis on discourse as a form of action; and a conviction in the rhetorical organization of discourse (Gill, 2000, p. 174).

The first theme refers to all forms of talk and texts, whether naturally occurring conversations, interview material or any written kind of text. Discourse analysts are interested in texts in their own right, rather than seeing them as a means of "getting at" some reality which is deemed to lie behind the discourse – whether social, psychological or material (Gill, 2000, p. 174).

The second theme concerns the constructivist approach, meaning reality cannot be separated from our notion of reality: *"Language and linguistic practices offer a sediment of system of terms, narrative forms, metaphors and commonplaces from which a particular account can be assembled"* (Potter et al., 1990). Language is constructed and a part of the social practice where each phenomena can be described in different ways and the description will rely on the speaker's or the writer's conviction as the term discourse refers to a social construction of reality, which is why texts/speeches can construct our world (Gill, 2000, pp. 174-175).

The third theme, according to Gill, is a discourse which cannot be seen as a representation of reality but instead as a form of social practice, as language is not viewed as a mere epiphenomenon, but as a practice in its own right. People use discourses to do things – to make excuses, present themselves in a positive light and to fit in in social contexts. In discourse analysis it is important to not only investigate the source but also the context which the discourse is a part of (Gill, 2000, p. 175).

The fourth theme is about texts within a discourse analysis that are being perceived as being organized rhetorically. This can help us understand certain incidents or phenomena of the world from different angles (Gill, 2000, p. 176).

3.3 Foundation of discourse analysis

Rosalind Gill has presented discourse analysis upon the social constructivist approach (Gill, 2000, p. 173). An important notion in social constructivism is its critical stance towards "taken for granted knowledge', and scientism towards the view of our observations of the world, as our knowledge of the world is not an objective truth. Reality is only present through categorizations, which is why knowledge is the product of that (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999; Gill, 2000, p. 173). Knowledge is socially constructed; knowledge is being created and kept in a social interaction. What we perceive as common knowledge – which varies depending on our cultural or historical habitat – will be accepted as a common understanding of our world (Burr, 2003, p. 4; Gill, 2000, p. 173).

According to Gill (2000), discourse analysis also has its roots in the structuralist and post-structuralist theory of linguistics, where our access to knowledge is always provided through language. We create representations of reality with help from language. Representations are not mirrored within the already existing reality, as representations construct reality. Reality only makes sense through discourses (Gill, 2000 p. 173; Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 17). Language appoints the social world, which is also applicable to social identities and social relations. When discourses change, the social world will reproduce. The notion of language as a system, is not determined by the reality – referring to the structuralist idea (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 18). Post-structuralism has given us the structuralist approach of words getting their meaning through their relation to other words in constructed networks. But words are not unalterable in their structure, as meanings change in between discourses according to the post-structuralist approach. This means that our usage of certain words makes the changes of discursive patterns (Jørgensen & Phillip, 1999, pp. 19-21).

3.4 Method of analysis

In this chapter I will present our method of analysis, referring to Rosalind Gill's method of discourse analysis of newspaper articles. The discourse analysis is built on the following steps (Gill, 2000, p. 18):

1) Formulating initial research questions.
2) Choosing of texts to be analyzed.
3) Transcribing the text in detail (texts such as newspaper articles will not require transcription).

4) Skeptically reading and interrogating the text.

5) Coding – as inclusively as possible.

6) Analyzing.

7) Checking reliability and validity.

8) Writing up.

In order to create an analysis using Gill's method, it is important to highlight the main problem areas that are relevant to focus on. These sub-research questions are founded upon my research question and are helpful for the further investigation of this research field.

- What discourses are to be found in the newspaper articles regarding minorities?
- How have these discourses been positioned in the articles?

These questions are relevant to keep in mind when analyzing the overall research question. As we are investigating media discourses around minorities, the newspaper articles will be analyzed in relation to current media discourses. The newspaper articles included in the study were published in the period 2012-2020, offering a timeframe which helps create an overview of articles written before and during the corona epidemic. The articles that were chosen were each assigned a number, which was written above the article, so that they can be found in the appendix of this thesis (the appendix can be found at the end of the thesis).

Before picking the relevant articles, my focus was on the point of view, context and specific words used in relation to minorities. Critical reading was performed in order to decode the articles, which will be explained next.

3.5 Coding

When reading through 20 news articles from various newspapers, one must illustrate the empirical data by coding, meaning improving and preparing the data as the preliminary work in order to conduct a thorough analysis. For this thesis, 20 different news articles from the time period 2012-2020 were selected for analysis. This period of time is relevant as we found it sufficient to also look at written

articles published before and after the refugee flow to Europe in 2015 since more than 1.3 million people fled from the Middle East and South Asia to Europe (Chege, 2020.)

Before beginning a discourse analysis, one must prepare the data by reading thoughtfully and become confidential with the texts (Gill, 2000, p. 8). Coding is a tool within discourse analysis that makes use of our capability to find patterns and themes within the newspaper articles by dividing pieces or fragments of text and putting them into different categories (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 132). The categories used for the coding will be determined by the questions of interest (Gill, 2000, p. 8). In this thesis I organized the newspapers articles into different categories within different themes. When searching for relevant articles, the Infomedia search engine was used to search for words in relation to minorities. As the biggest online archive in Denmark, Infomedia enabled us to do an exploratory search for relevant news articles.

After gathering relevant articles, key information about them was entered into an Excel sheet to create an overview. This sheet contains two tables (both tables can be found in the appendix section in the last pages of the thesis). The first table illustrates the different themes and signs that we detected and decoded in our data. This gives the reader the overview needed in order to understand which themes are appearing when searching for articles related to visible minorities. The second table offers an overview of the articles used in our discourse analysis. It includes the following: Title of article, author, date of publication, article link, and article type, i.e. whether it is a news article, debate, blog post or interview. Finally, this table also includes minority actors and the signs, I detected. The two tables were created in order to help the reader understand which article is being analyzed. All articles were numbered from 2-48, where the number will be used when referring to a specific article in my analysis. As I will be analyzing various articles under one theme, it will be easier for the reader to navigate as well. Below, the first table describes the themes, including the signs that I found relevant to research:

Main themes	Signs	Discoursive standingpoint
Integration	being danish, success, achivements, education, culture, politics, differences, happiness, job, assimilation, society, equal	Visible minorities do not integrate in the danish society however there are a few 'trail blazers'
Crime	crime, robery, theft, culture, police, investigation, violence, family, criminal record, deportation, assults	Visible minorities engange more in crime
Religion	islam, danish, values, culture, pray, radicalization, fear, terrorism, indoctrinating	Visible minorities practice fundamentalism (islam) usually been used as a reference
Defnitions	being danish, non danish, culture, religion, job, education, freedom	Visible minorities are not danish
Jobs	safety, ressource, positive, success, unemplyment, social benefit,	ambigiuis focus, minorities are being applaused for their engagement/minorities being told to engage or statistics of minorities on social benefits
Fear	stranger, lack of control, domination, freedom	Visible minorities act and look like 'bad' guys
Diskrimination/Racism	sterotype, acting, racism, color, hate, discrimination, race, fear, diversity, difference, fight	Visible minorities experince evrytday casual racism
Health and society	Fear, burden, health, egoist, frustration, dissapointment,	Visible minorities lack of moral

Table 1

The tables in the appendix illustrate which were the most common correlations identified when reading the different articles. Once the coding is complete, the researcher must search for patterns in the data, as described above. Next there is the concern with function, with forming tentative hypotheses about the function of particular features of the discourse and checking these against the data (Gill, 2000 p. 179). An important element when conducting a discourse analysis is to remember to think about how and why an article might be read in a certain way and what the article contributes since the analyst is interested in the content and organization of texts (Gill, 2000, p. 173). The second theme is that language is constructed. According to Potter and Wetherell (1990), *"Language is, and linguistic practices offer a sediment of systems of terms, narrative forms and metaphors and commonplaces from which a particular account can be assembled"* (Gill, 2000, p. 173).

The language within the article is important to investigate, as the author can construct different meanings when using certain words, which makes the discourse analysis fragile, as we have to elaborate on what is not being said or commented on (Gill, 2000, pp. 175-180). In order to secure the validity and reliability of the chosen data, one must create a detailed examination of the texts, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

3.6 The role of the researcher

The discourse analysts' purpose is not to get "behind" the discourse, or to find out what people *really mean* when they say something or to discover the reality behind the discourse. The starting point is that reality can never be reached outside discourses and so it is the discourse itself that has become the object of analysis (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 31). You are not interested in figuring out which statements about the world are true and which are false (although a critical evaluation can be carried out in later stages of the analysis). As a discourse analyst, you are interested in what has been said or written and explore patterns in and across the statements and identify the social consequences of different discursive representations of reality (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999 p. 31).

When working with discourses close to oneself and with which one is very familiar, it can be particularly difficult to treat them *as* discourses that are socially constructed meaning systems that could have been different. Analysts are often part of the culture under study; they share meaning of the "taken for granted knowledge', common sense understandings expressed in our empirical data. The difficulty within the analysis of our data is the 'common sense' understandings that we are investigating. Taking an exploratory approach towards the analysis can help us find out what make sense for one (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999 p, 31).

When utilizing qualitative methods, one must keep in mind that information is collected and interpreted by people, meaning the researcher always have a position in relation to the field of research, and that position can decide what the researcher presents as a result of their research (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 32). According to Jørgensen and Phillips (1999), it is important for the researcher to know their standing point in relation to their discourse analysis and to reflect upon what consequences might appear when contributing to the reproduction of a discourse (1999, p. 33). I decided to investigate various Danish newspapers articles in order to search for ruling discourses within the media about visible minorities and their representation in media during the corona virus. When studying different articles, we create discourses, but our interpretation is not the only valid understanding. By using theories and methods during the discourse analysis, I am able to create valid knowledge (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, pp. 33-37, p. 120). By applying a theory to an assumption, I can question our set of data with my everyday understanding of a particular phenomenon. According to the social constructivist discourse analysis approach, there is more than one truth, as there can be different versions of that one truth, which also gives us the benefit of being able to combine theories

and methods in order to investigate the subject of interest. Using theoretical practices combined with my own research data, one can improve the validity of our research (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, pp. 33-37, p. 120). In the following section, I will introduce my empirical data.

4.0 Empirical data

In this chapter, I will present my empirical data used in the analysis. We will briefly discuss the quality of our data, maintenance of the data and validation of data. Let me briefly recap my intentions when collecting the empirical data:

To be able to conduct a discourse analysis we selected 20 news articles from a number of different Danish newspapers. These included articles, chronicles and blog post/debates. We included blogs/debates even though they might have been written by a member of the public. As the newspaper decided to publish the article, they represent the newspaper's stand in the public. Our articles were published between 2012 and 2020, a timeframe which includes certain events regarding minorities such as articles before the refugee crisis in 2015 and the entering of 2020 as the corona virus broke out, analyzing changes of minority discourses in this timeframe.

Our material includes 2 articles published in *Ekstra Bladet*, 11 articles published in *Jyllands-Posten* (one of these articles are written by Ritzau but published in Jyllands-Posten) 2 articles published in *Kristlig Dagblad* and 5 articles published in *Politiken*. All data was accessed through the media search engine InfoMedia, since it allowed us to search directly in its database, using specific keywords and dates. As we were interested in investigating the minority discourse, we used certain keywords in order to find relevant articles. Our keywords included: Indvandrer, minoritet, efterkommer, udlændinge, asylansøger and flygtning as these keywords can help detect articles mentioning visible minorities.

4.1 Quality of a discourse analysis and data

There are several ways to gather data and investigate a phenomenon. Researchers have different methods they can use when investigating a research question. According to Kvale (2007), there are many ways to interpret, measure and analyze a problem, depending on one's research question. I was not interested in measuring, but in getting a nuanced view of the ruling media discourses in news articles that were gathered. This could be done by looking at the *connections* within our analytical findings (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999 p. 133). I investigated and analyzed my empirical data by looking at certain repeating elements in the articles.

In the discourse analysis section, I help the reader to understand my results by presenting representative quotes from the articles and explaining my interpretation of some parts of the texts (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999 p. 133). By analyzing a broad range of news articles from newspapers we were able to obtain a nuanced view of ruling discourses, which is also the focus point of the thesis. In the next section, I will account for my selection of empirical data.

4.2 Data for the discourse analysis

In order to investigate media discourses before and during the pandemic, I chose to focus on Danish newspaper articles as the foundation of my discourse analysis. Newspapers are popular sources for information, and many people read the news in order to obtain information about current events. A survey conducted by Kantar Gallup (2020) found that more than 46% of Danes read newspapers on a daily basis. This includes reading newspapers in hard copy, on their phone, iPad or laptop. Among adults aged 19-34 the most popular information source was online newspapers sites, where people can access digital newspapers such as the Danish tabloids (Kantar Gallup, 2020). Due to newspaper articles being the most popular sources of information and knowledge for the majority of Danish society, we decided to look at articles published in *Ekstra Bladet*, *Kristlig Dagblad*, *Jylland-Posten* and *Politiken*. These newspapers cover a broad range of views, representing society from different political and ideological perspectives (Kantar Gallup, 2020).

According to Hussian, Yilmaz and O'Connor, media does not only reflect political opinions but also its daily readers opinions (1997, p. 47). In order to be able to investigate discourses, newspaper articles will be my foundation for further analysis, as the newspaper reaches a broad group within the Danish society, including men and women, since their sex, occupations and political views are seen as an indicator for who they are and what they are interested in.

Let me introduce the newspapers and explain why I chose these newspapers as sources. The articles for analysis were taken from *Ekstrabladet*, *Jyllands-Posten*, *Politiken* and *Kristlig Dagblad*, all newspapers which represent different political profiles. The newspapers do not indicate their position in a particular political field; however, we are able to read their statistics – including profiles of their

readers which I assume can reveal a certain tendency within constructing the news in a particular way. I will introduce each newspaper and its target audience later in this chapter.

The articles that were chosen for analysis all convey a certain perspective on minorities. Journalists, citizens and politicians spoke of minorities both before and during the corona pandemic, and the articles reflect these discourses. Since I will be looking at the discourses of the articles, I am not interested in the background of the publisher. My only focus is what is being said, and not by who. It is also important to keep in mind that newspapers make a profit when selling their news to the public; newspapers aim to sell stories that the public is interested in. Sales numbers, and the popularity of certain stories can also help identify what the majority of the public is interested in.

4.3 Introducing the newspapers

Jyllands-Posten

Jyllands-Posten was founded in 1871 and quickly became known as a newspaper that stood out from other newspapers by representing itself as a morning newspaper read by more than 450,000 people at the weekend and 350,000 on weekdays. Nowadays it offers online versions of its news stories as well as a printed newspaper. According to Jyllands-Posten's own website, they were owned by a private foundation until 2002 and later became completely independent of institutional or political affiliations or other external influences, but in 2003 Jyllands-Posten's publishing company A/S merged with Politiken A/S and Ekstra Bladet. However, each newspaper retains its editorial freedom and individuality (Jylland-posten.org). Jyllands-Posten's target audience has an average age of 55, and mostly consists of men based in central Jutland, voting central right (Gallup Marketing, 2019).

Politiken

Politiken was founded in 1884 by two journalists: Viggo Hørup and Edvard Brande. Both were highly educated. Hørup was working as a politician and lawyer and Brande was a scientist with a passion for culture and education. Both were interested in creating an idealistic newspaper turning up and down then time's understanding of the world. They aimed to establish a newspaper that would compete with the conservative morning newspapers to give readers access to critical stories. In 2003 Politiken was merged with Jyllands-Posten and Ekstra Bladet. Today the newspaper sees itself as an independent, radical – liberal and social - liberal newspaper with more than 522,000 readers between

2019-2020 (Kantar Gallup, 2020). According to Politiken's own database, their readers are equally men and women, highly educated, and many of them live in the Danish capital, Copenhagen, and vote central liberal (Politiken announcer, 2019).

Ekstrabladet

With their slogan "Tør – hvor andre tier", Ekstrabladet is a tabloid, known for its sensational news. According to Ekstrabladet's own database, Chief Editor Victor Andreasen wanted to create a newspaper with a focus on the individual by writing stories containing scandals and injustice. The tabloid also known for being progressive and anarchistic (ekstrabladet, 2015). The tabloid has 275.000 weekly readers (jppol.dk, 2020) The target audience consists mostly of male readers aged 50-70+ and living in central Copenhagen. The readers come mostly from the working class and below, voting central right (Ekstrabladet Salg, 2019).

Kristlig Dagblad

Faith, ethics and existence is the slogan of Kristlig Dagblad. This broadsheet paper was founded in 1896 having Christians as their main readers based upon the evangelical belief being the opposite of Politiken, who they meant was hostile towards the Christian belief and values. The paper later became more culturally interested, focusing on culture and value-based journalism. The newspaper is mostly known for feature stories and culture pieces and reviews. According to Gallup, Kristlig Dagblad has weekly 109,000 readers, both men and women. (Jensen, 2019).

My discourse analysis was conducted based upon 20 different news articles mentioning visible minorities and it has laid the groundwork for identification of different discourses before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. We will now turn to the discourse analysis. I have chosen to analyze already written material as we were not interested in interfering with data, but to analyze on what have already been said (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 127).

5. Analysis

In the introduction, I elaborated on my interest in investigating the establishment of media discourses on visible minorities. The essence of this study lies in finding patterns and particular phenomena within these discourses that might be occurring during the Covid-19 outbreak, which is what I will analyze in this chapter.

In this chapter I will look into the articles that have been collected and follow Gill's model for the analysis since Gills model will help me get a structure of my analysis, as I am interested in looking at what discourses of visible minorities are appearing in the media. The model is divided into eighth sections allowing me to structure my analysis in a way I am able to cover and identify discourses, signs, nodal points and floating signifiers. I will be presenting the main themes, by highlighting certain quotes I find relevant to discuss and analyze upon.

Let me briefly recap and introduce my discourse analysis:

5.1 Discourse analysis

At the beginning of this thesis, I stated that there might be certain phenomena that become more prominent when reading the news during the Covid-19 virus pandemic. This study sets out to find patterns within our research material, which includes various news articles. By conducting a discourse analysis and comparing current discourses with our new findings, we might be able to understand how pandemics can influence the media's depiction of visible minorities in Denmark. In this thesis I investigate whether there have been any changes in the media's language use and how these changes are expressed. I will briefly explain my analytical set up.

Hall's theory of representation engages in uncovering the process whereby meaning is produced and exchanged, which could help me elaborate further on the discourse findings of this thesis which will be discussed later.

Based on the themes identified in the news articles, below I will examine each of these themes. Each theme will be presented to identify the underlying discourses. In order to track discourses in the

analysis, I will reference a number from 2-48 which corresponds to a specific article shown in the appendix. Lastly, we will elaborate on the analysis and compare our findings.

5.2 An analysis of different patterns within the newspaper articles

The study of different newspaper articles consists of 20 articles written in the period 2012-2020 and published by the tabloid newspaper Ekstrabladet, broadsheet paper Jylland-Posten, broadsheet paper Politiken and the Christian broadsheet paper Kristlig Dagblad. These newspapers were some of the most read in Denmark between 2012 and 2020 and as they vary in both political and ideological orientation they can be seen as representative of a broad range of views, making them suitable for carrying out a comparative discourse analysis of the Danish media (Kantar Gallup, 2020). It should be noted that the newspapers in themselves do not indicate any political, religious or ideological orientation. However, based on statistical evidence about the readers of the daily newspapers, I have made an assumption about the newspaper's orientation. I assume that the political orientation of the readers is more closely linked to the orientation of the newspaper than those who don't read the newspaper. The statistics that have helped me understand who is reading what newspaper, by presenting an overview of newspapers, their readers political/ ideological view and their socioeconomical standing point. According to TNS Gallup, the readers pick their newspaper according to their political standing point, however the newspapers are not connected to any political party (Winther, 2011).

The analysis is carried out by identifying certain patterns such as repeated or similar words and sentences within the chosen news articles. These patterns have helped me to identify certain discourses within the media both before and during the Covid-19 pandemic also including media reporting of Covid-19 where minorities are mentioned. The analysis presents different themes that were found in the written articles and which will be elaborated below: Integration, Crime, Religion, Definitions, Jobs, Discrimination, Role models and Covid-19-related articles. These themes can be found in my appendix, table 1.

Through our coding approach, integration was the first theme identified. This theme includes both political agendas and public opinion on visible minorities before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. In articles focusing on integration initiatives aimed towards visible minorities, Danish politicians' opinions are usually included. What is common for the political agendas are that they often have an influence on visible minorities living in Denmark. In article number nine, it says: "*Vi bør forvente, at indvandrere gifter sig med danskere*" (Selsing, 2020) published in Jylland's Posten, written by columnist Rune Selsing, who agrees on the proposal made by Danish People Party (DF) of the importance of visible minorities – referring to Muslim minorities marrying Danes in order to preserve Denmark as it is. "*Indvandrere skal reelt vælge Danmark til – Men hvordan gør man så dog det? Jo, det gør man eksempelvis ved at gifte sig med en dansker*" (Selsing, 2020).

Selsing refers directly to visible minorities when using signs as; '**indvandrere**', '**redde** et samlet Danmark', '**parallelsamfundet** vokser', '**De** skal ville os', 'Et **fravalg** af **os** som **folk**', er et fravalg af **vores land',** 'Det er ikke nok, at **de** overholder loven'. The nodal point in this article is 'Invandrere' since it creates a specific meaning and generates associations.

In Kristelig Dagblad (article number two) *"10 gode råd til indvandrere om integration*"; a chronicle by David Munis Zeperneick a second generation foreigner himself, urges visible minorities to follow certain rules in order to be accepted in Danish society such as *"Få et arbejde på en dansk arbejdsplads", "Drik alcohol", "Fjern dit skæg eller fjern dit tørklæde", "Få en dansk kæreste"* (Zeperneick, 2017). A notable discourse within these articles is that visible minorities need to put their own culture away and embrace Danish culture and the Danish way of living. The signs in here include 'inklusion', 'accept' and 'signal værdi'. (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, pp 36)

When looking at equivalences such as words that are used to back up a particular sign, we notice floating signifiers; 'Sig ja tak', 'tag en symbolsk tår' since these signs can strengthen the discourse. (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999 pp 36).

The writers of these articles are not trying to directly force people away from their own culture, rather the authors argue that visible minorities should chose the Danish culture in order be accepted and integrated into society, and as Selsing puts it, "*Men for langt de fleste muslimer, der ikke gifter sig med en dansker, handler det om et fravalg – Et fravalg af os som folk og et fravalg af vores land"* (Selsing, 2020). Where 'fravalg' acts as a floating signifier. The sign is also repeated several times,

strengthening the discourse. The floating signifier meaning in relation to the nodal point is being more clear when it is being repeated.

In another article in Jyllands-Posten (article number one) "*Danske muslimer går mere op I bøn, tørklæder og koranen"* (Johansen, 2015), the writer notes that many young Muslims in Denmark have become more religious according to a survey by the research facility Wilke in 2015, which concluded that more than 50 percent of young Muslims prayed five times a day and 77 percent said the Quran has to be followed before a democratic government and that girls should wear headscarves. (Johansen, 2015) The article features an interview with an expert, who was surprised by the results of the study, but said that mosques were the reason for these findings. Another "expert", an imam, implied that harsh rhetoric against Muslims might be the reason why young people were turning more towards Islam and there might be a chance of radicalization due to many pushing factors such as radicalized Muslim networks and the harsh tone directed at young and vulnerable Muslims (Johansen, 2015).

The whole article problematizes the fact that young Muslims are becoming more religious, by presenting facts on their religious engagement, but also commenting on why they chose the Muslim religion over the "Danish lifestyle". This creates a discourse of visible minorities being more vulnerable towards radicalization and extremism than their counterparts and that Islam has a negative effect on visible minorities. The signs of this discourse are here; 'religiøs praksis', 'at tildække sig med tørklæde', 'følge koranens anvisninger', 'yngre muslimer er mere religiøse', 'trosbevidst' and 'radikalisering'. The nodal point in this article is 'muslimer' where the signs of equivalence are religion, radicalization and extremism. The signifier then here is 'Muslims' (the sound) signified as extremists (the concept). Hence the connections can still be seen as arbitrary, since no logical connections are seen between these two words. As Saussure explains, the connection between all 'signifiers' which are 'sounds' or 'images' or 'linguistic signs' and what they are signifying – their signified objects or concepts – is arbitrary. (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999 p 18).

5.2.2 Jobs

When identifying articles depicting minorities, "jobs" were mentioned several times. In article number ten, "*Få indvandrere I arbejde!"* published in Jyllands-Posten by Danish politician Ole Birk Olsesen, he contributes to a negative discourse on visible minorities. This can also be seen in article number four "*Indvandre arbejder mest I usikre jobs*" by Thomas Flensborg (Jyllands-Posten). Both

are referring to minorities not having a job and if so, their jobs are not good enough – emphasizing that visible minorities are struggling when it comes to attaining higher education or better jobs, as they tend to find work in places with a high risk of getting fired (Flensborg, 2012 ; Olsen, 2014). According to Olesen, too many visible minorities do not have jobs and the municipality is not doing enough to help them get jobs. He points out several problems, such as many visible minorities living off social benefits being the reason for the missing contact with the rest of the society due to their livelihood in ghettos: "*Ledige indvandre kan bo i ghettoen sammen med andre indvandre og gøre sig alle mulige og umulige forstillinger om, hvad danskerne er for nogle, uden at de engentligt kender særlig mange*" (Olsen, 2014). This statement could paint a picture of minorities being lazy and anti-social, but simultaneously he indicates that the municipalities are not doing enough to help minorities, and that being jobless increases the risk of committing a crime. He adds that if you get caught committing a criminal activity, your social benefits will not stop, but if you commit a crime while being employed, you might lose your job and source of income (Olsen, 2014).

This article might create the perception that visible minorities are not qualified for jobs, are lazy, criminal, prejudiced and not interested in Danish society, as he describes visible minorities with signs such as "*Lever isoleret*", "*(…) gør sig umulige tanker om, hvad danskerne er for nogle*", "*ledige indvandrere tiltrækkes oftere end beskæftigede af de penge, som kan tjenes ved at begå kriminalitet*"(Olsen, 2014) " Such representation can be understood since we provide meanings to the world through the relationship with between our cultural and linguistic codes (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999).

Besides the negative article on visible minorities and their job situation, Politiken published an article about some minorities being overlooked in the Danish job market, focusing on visible minorities with university degrees not being able to get a job in Denmark in the article (article number 11) "*Kloge udlændinge bliver overset*" (Kjær, 2015). Here the writer uses signs that depict minorities in a more positive light, such as '*Kloge*', '*overset*' and '*spild af ressourcer*', which imply that even when bright minorities have made an effort in their home countries, they are still not appreciated in Denmark. Instead they face problems as their level of education might not reach the Danish standards, which makes them struggle more than their Danish counterparts to get into the labor market. Firstly, the nodal point of the article is 'indvandrere'. The signs in this articles highlighting the issues are; 'veluddannet', 'dansk' 'uddannelse' 'kompencer' 'resource spild' 'uduelig' 'problematisk' why we

can call them floating signifiers, since they help construct the discourse, but they also function as a chain of equivalence since they are attached to the nodal point and they construct the language in a certain way (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, pp 63).

5.2.3 Fear

During my analytical coding of the data, I identified ten articles reporting the issue of fear of visible minorities. Within the theme of fear, subthemes appeared to overlap. The first theme is *culture of violence*, the second theme is *fearing economic* consequences created by minorities and the third theme is *fear of Islam* taking over Denmark.

In article number. 12, published by Ekstra Bladet and written by Pernille Vermund, leader of the right-wing party, Nye borgerlige, several issues are raised regarding visible minorities: *"Kriminelle, dovne og illoyale indvandre skal stoppes"*(Vermund, 2016). Vermund starts by pointing out how culture is created by mankind, stating that when the Danes travel the world, they take their culture with them. Visible minorities do the same, but according to her, their culture is a problem as she says, *"Indvandring fra de muslimske lande, accepterer forfølgelse af mindretal, undertrykkelse af kvinder, børn, homoseksuelle og ikke muslimer, samt begrænsninger af vores hidtil frie og demokratiske samfund som en rimelig pris, danskerne skal betale"* (Vermund, 2016). In this quote Vermund describes the Muslim minority culture as criminal, lazy and disloyal by comparing Muslim culture with other non-Danish cultures such as people from Hungary, Vietnam and Korea, who she describes as being more polite, well-functioning and cooperative. Vermund creates a negative discourse about visible minorities, targeting Muslims especially, by using strong signs that become floating signifiers such as *"criminal", "lazy",* and *"disloyal"* since the terms are floating in the text and come in supporting the discourse in the text.

The same elements are also noticeable in Jyllands-Posten's article number 13: *"Jeg har intet problem med muslimer. Jeg har et problem med folk, der undertrykker kvinder"*(Broberg & Hjøllund, 2020), where Pia Dyhr and Halime Oguz from the Socialist Party (SF) agree with the right-wing construction of minority cultures: *"De havde jo ret. De havde jo ret I de problemer, de så. De kom bare ikke med nogle løsninger"* (Broberg & Hjøllund, 2020). The article also refers to Halime Oguz – a Turkish female politician, who herself experienced trouble in the Danish ghettos, getting married off against her will and experiencing social control, describing the Middle-Eastern culture as backward by using

the signs *"negative social control", "dominating"* and *"violent solutions"*. Oguz, who is herself a minority woman, creates the image of visible minority cultures as old fashioned since they represent violence against women, and she states that their strict approach toward Islam is the reason for this. Therefore, the culture might not be the problem, but Islam itself, since culture is formed based on our understanding of religion: "*Islam mangler I virkeligheden sin Luther og mangler at fjerne Gud fra individet"* (Broberg & Hjøllund, 2020). Hence the nodal point of the article is 'minoritetskvinde' the signs; 'negative' 'social control' 'dominating' 'violent solutions' function as floating signifiers, since they back up the nodal point and direct the discourse toward a negative depiction of how minority women are treated in certain visible minority cultures.

5.2.4 Role models

The theme "*Role models"* was also identified and it contains positive stories about visible minorities, which is worth analyzing. These articles contained stories about or interviews with a person from a visible minority background who had achieved success in some way. Visible minority women achieving good grades in school and brown politicians who broke social and cultural norms are all examples of role models for other minorities (Ifill, 2000).

Many of these positive stories were build up as portraits, telling stories of the individuals' path through life, their childhood, the obstacles they faced and how it was not easy for them to achieve success. One of these stories includes the interview with Soulaima Gourani (article number three) in the article *"Fra taberland til stjerneland"* (Boyaash, 2012), published in Jyllands Posten. She ran away from an abusive home and foster care and later became a successful businesswoman and speaker: "*Vejen hertil har været utrolig besværlig. Når jeg kigger på andre, ser manges karriere mere ubesværet ud. Men jeg føler, jeg altid skal kæmpe meget mere"* (Boyaash, 2012). Another story by Jacob Sheikh in Politiken, (article number 17) *"Til zumba-dans I Mjølnerparken: Kvinderne er I gang med en stille revolution",* illustrates a woman's "revolution" in the Danish ghetto Mjølnerparken. Mjølnerparken is known for its harsh environment, hosting criminals and neglecting people in need, and has "risen from the ashes" (Sheikh, 2016). Mjølnerparken's Chairman, known as the *"Klan leder"* (Sheikh, 2016) is now gone, and new projects including fitness studios and cafés for women have been established. The new chairman of the housing association, Jan Hyttel, called the progress of Mjølnerparken for "*Det Københavnske forår"* since the old 'rulers' of the ghetto has left and new establishment of a more democratic neighborhood has come. He said: "*Det er jo et demokrati, der er*

vendt tilbage. I dag er det de udenlandske kvinder der fører an, og som står først ved stemmeboksen – hvor de i øvrigt har valgt en dansk formand" (Sheikh, 2016).

The main theme in both articles is that "role models" create an image of success among and within minority groups – minority women especially are often depicted as "trail blazers" when they leave their culture. According to article number three, Gourani is a source of inspiration. Due to her background, she can relate to many people who might be in the same position as she once was. The construction of the successful minority identity is founded upon the individuals' difficult journey from point A to B (Boyaash, 2012). The same is observed in article no. 19, which describes how minority women took control of the Copenhagen ghetto by turning it into a more peaceful environment: *"Det var især kvinderne herude, der fik mobiliseret deres netværkog fik folk til at vælge den nye betyrelse. Og det satte gang I en positive udvikling"* (Sheikh, 2017).

These articles can be seen as something sensational due to the way they are constructed. Firstly, the reader is given an introduction to the different obstacles visible minorities face. This later turns into success in different formats, such as one's effort in school and general education, or the oppressed minority women who took over the Copenhagen ghetto by creating safe spaces for other minorities. The sensationism of each story can be seen in the headlines: *"Fra Taberland til Stjerneland"* (Booyash, 2012) and *"Til Zumba- dans I Mjølnerparken: Kvinderne er I gang med en stille revolution"* (Sheikh, 2017), indicating the transformation from something bad to something good and creating a positive discourse, especially around minority women. Signs indicating the positive changes are the signifiers *"success", "women's café", "safe space", "social clubs", "revolution", "health", "Det Københavnske forår", "democracy", "education", "being brown", "support", and "leadership"*. Where the nodal point is the 'visible minority woman', the positive floating signifiers 'freedom', 'equality', 'safety' and 'tolerance' are shown in this discourse. The signs might not be understood when standing alone, but in a chain, a concrete understanding occurs (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999). When reading these types of articles, the reader gets the image of a powerful and successful, but underappreciated, brown woman standing up for herself. But stimulatingly, the articles also draw the attention toward the visible minority men, presented as the culprits before the progress in minority environments *"I dag er Muhammed Aslam væk, "Høvdingen" som Jan Hyttel kalder ham"* (Sheikh, 2017). Showing the sign 'Høvding' display itself in negative discourse in this sentence.

The theme of discrimination is represented by two subthemes – the discrimination found in the Danish film industry and discriminatory acts in nightclubs. The first issue was addressed by several media channels after a report by Aarhus University showed that visible minorities to a much greater extent had experienced harassment on movie sets, such as sexual assaults, discrimination and stereotypical casting (Restorff, 2020). In an article published in Politiken (article number 14) *”Det er ret udmattende at blive behandlet, som om man ligger til skue i den lokale frugtafdeling”* (Mørk & Herskind, 2020), black actress Diem Camille said: *“Det er udmattende at blive behandlet som noget man finder på et eksotisk marked”*. Diem Camille elaborated on her experience, saying that people would touch her and comment on her looks due to her physical appearance. The nodal point of this article is *’discrimination’.* We see the signs ‘uretfærdighed’, ‘facination’, ‘seksualisering’, ‘eksotisk’, ‘ligeværdig’, ‘uønsket’, ‘grænseoverskridende’, ‘opsigtsvækkende’, ’chikane’, ’fysik og psykisk vold’ and ’respekt’. These signs function as a chain of equivalence, as they back up the nodal point, which strengthens the discourse in the above article.

Another issue regarding discrimination is observed in the Copenhagen Nightlife, as people with certain looks cannot enter the bars or dancefloors: “*Har du brunt hår, mørke øjne, og – Gud forbyde det – mellemøstlige ansigtstræk, er det umuligt at komme ind på de fede diskoteker. Det kommer bare ikke på tale”* (Mohsen, 2013). In the article (article number 18) *“Apartheid stortrives i det københavnske natteliv”* Ala Mohsen (2013) engages with the discrimination taking place in the nightlife sector. According to Mohsen, it is common that visible minorities cannot always enter certain clubs due to their looks (Mohsen, 2013). In this case, the nodal point is also *discrimination* as the central term in the discourse, backed up by the floating signifiers: ‘Mellemøstlig’, ’forholdsregler’, ‘fremtoning’, ‘magtesløshed’, ‘mindreværd’, ‘frustration’, ‘uønsket’, ‘hudfarve’, ‘afvist’, ‘offerolle’ and ‘mistænkeliggøre’. The floating signifiers strengthen the discourse of visible minorities situation during night life.

In political discourses, visible minorities are often emphasized as the “other”, as indicated in this blog post (article number 15) *“Vi skal trykke på pauseknappen, ikke flere muslimer I denne omgang, tak”*(Jalving, 2019.

"Hvor mange rettroende muslimer skal vi tildele statsborgerskab? Mit svar er ingen, nul og niks. Vi skal trykke på pauseknappen, ikke flere muslimer i denne omgang, tak vi har så rigeligt. Forskelsbehandling, diskrimation? Ja, det kan du bande på, jo mere forskel, jo bedre for Danmark. Ikke flere stratenrøvere, imamer og bandemedlemmer, end de mange vi allerede har i landet og vores fænglser" (Jalving, 2019)

By connecting "muslim" with "bander", the author places the responsibility for gang activity on Muslims and creates a justification for, why especially Muslims should not be considered for Danish citizenship. The signs 'stratenrøvere', 'Imamer' and 'bandemedlemmer' then become a part of a negative chain of signifiers on the signified 'Muslim'. Jalving also justifies discriminatory practices with the protection of Denmark, reducing their right to be in Denmark and categorizing them as non-equals. The quote above describes a negative development of Denmark as a society as a result of the migration of Muslims. Muslims are framed as the reason for poor development, where the only reasonable response is to stop them from entering the country. Drawing upon another quote from the article; *"Brandende kan ikke umiddelbart sættes I forbindelse med bandeopgør, oplyser politi og medier, men undlader den mulighed, at ildpåsættelsen af op mod 800 biler om året er varsler om en beslægtet krig. Den mod danskerne"* (Jalving, 2019). Firstly, the nodal point and the signifier of this article is 'Muslims' since the word is the center of the focal point including the signs 'bandeopgør' and 'krig'. Secondly, I noticed *antagonisms*. According to Laclau, antagonisms can be found where discourses collide (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999 p 60) The antagonisms refer to 'them and us' since we figure out what or who is inside and what is outside in a particular establishment. If we go back to the first quote being (them) *"Ikke flere stratenrøvere, imamer og bandemedlemmer.."* another sentence introduce (us) *"Sig goddag til virkeligheden. Vist lyden af humanisme, kaviar og champagne"* we observe what is inside and what is outside of that particular community given the language signs used to describe visible minorities.

Since we have gone through the above-mentioned themes, finding signs that represents certain depiction of visible minorities, I will continue the analysis upon a new theme. The theme below represents the articles that includes the reporting of the new virus; Covid-19. These articles also include representation of visible minorities. As I have stated earlier in my research question, I am interested in whether representations of visible minorities have changed during the virus outbreak,

why I will specifically go through articles about Covid-19 and minorities. Next I will present these articles under the theme 'Health and society'.

5.2.6 Health and society

Since February 2020, COVID-19 has been given an enormous amount of column space in Danish newspapers (Nyhus, 2020). When reading the news, whether it is Ekstrabladet or Kristlig Dagblad, the latest news about the corona virus will appear somewhere. At the same time, news about minorities and their behavior regarding the virus has also been a subject of interest for many media platforms. A quick Google search can find several articles mentioning minorities and Covid-19. Many of these articles focus on government restrictions, new health guidelines, updates regarding the virus flow, but also a focus on how some minorities have behaved during the corona virus outbreak.

A general discourse within the field of health and society during the pandemic is that visible minorities are being less careful with regard to the pandemic. This discourse is notable on several media platforms. Danish EU parliamentarian Søren Gade posted a blog post in Jyllands-Posten: *"Store muslimske begravelser sætter hensynsløst vores alles sundhed og frihed over styr"* (Gade, 2020) (article number seven). He called out Muslims especially for being inconsiderate and urges the government to take action, using signs such as 'Tankeløs', 'tvang', 'smittekilder', 'eidfester', 'muslimsk begravelse', 'respektløshed', 'religiøse højtider' and 'tvangsisolering'.

"Det er tankeløst at samles flere hundrede til en begravelse eller fest netop nu. Vi er alle nødt til at vise hensyn, så landet ikke skal lukkes ned igen – og det har indvandrermiljøerne svært ved at fatte" (Gade, 2020).

The article focuses on telling off the Muslim minority and making them feel unwelcome and creating a "them vs. us" discourse by saying: *"Denne opførsel hører ikke hjemme I vores land"* (Gade, 2020). He uses signs such as 'vores land' and 'Denne opførsel'. The headline of the article expresses a focus on "Muslims", where articulations concerning a particular group of minorities are identified as the subject for discussion. Gade (2020) also uses "hensynsløshed", creating a discourse about Muslims as a homogenous group being the reason for mass spreading of the virus. The nodal point of this article is 'hensynsløshed' accompanied by the floating signifiers; 'respektløshed' 'ærgelse'

'fornuft''egoisme''ligegyldighed' and 'trist'   These are also called 'signs of equivalence' since they strengthen the discourse in the text.

In a similar article, "*Kravet om at udvise samfundssind gælder også muslimske begravelsesoptog*" (Jyllands-posten, 2020), the writer states that Muslims have not been following restrictions, and they do not care about public health: "*Selvfølgelig må det da kunne påtales, når det muslimske miljø demonstrativt og beviste ligegyldighed ser stort på ordensmagten og det større samfund*" (Jyllandsposten, 2020). These representations of Muslims construct the idea that visible minorities are not obeying Danish law. The negative discourse further focuses on some minorities' lack of engagement with and understanding of Danish law. In this way the media contributes to normalizing a prejudiced discourse on Muslims and since the prejudices in texts are not produced by media discourse alone but in cooperation with powerful actors, which is also seen in the other themes. However, the media is autonomous when creating negative depictions of visible minorities, which makes them contribute to a discursive production of continuously negative depiction of visible minorities.

In a Kristelig Dagblad article (article number 16) "Sørine Gotfredsen: Medier skal vågne op og undersøge indvandrermiljøernes corona-disciplin" (Gotfredsen, 2020), Danish priest Sørine Gotfredsen creates more media attention on visible minorities by highlighting that Danish media is too ethical and polite when it comes to "digging up dirt" on visible minorities: "*Sagen er, at det er bekymrende at erkende, at medierne ikke tør gå tættere på indvandrermiljøerne og undersøge, om det mon også kniber med moralen og viljen til at udvise selvdisciplin*" (Gotfredsen, 2020). Visible minorities are here considered to be "overlooked" by the media, since the media does not engage more with minority issues. The discursive representation here is that minorities are suspected of not following rules and order when the government demands it.

When it comes to minorities without Danish citizenship, the focus is concerned towards their behavior. In a Jyllands-Posten article (article number 20) "DF forstår ikke manglende opbakning til dobbeltstraffe" (Ritzau, 2020), the Danish People's Party's spokesman Peter Skaarup suggests tougher penalties for migrants who commit any COVID-19-related crimes. Besides punishment by imprisonment, Skaarup suggests that migrants should be deported as well. Skaarup stated: "*Vi kan ikke finde os i, at nogen udnytter krisen til at lave kriminalitet. Slet ikke udlændinge*" (Ritzau, 2020).

He emphasizes that Danish law should distinguish between Danish citizens and people holding resident permits. We can see the nodal point being 'udlændinge' highlighting the distinction between visible minorities and ethnic Danes. The signs in this article are; 'kriminalitet' 'coronakrise' 'udlændingepolitik' 'udvisning' 'straf''udnyttelse' as floating signifiers since, we do not see a connection when each sign standing alone. But together with the nodal point, it creates a meaning.

The above analysis, finding nodal point, signifiers and chain of equivalences of the discursive construction of visible minorities has been expressed in the articles. The articles were both written before and during the Covid-19 outbreak, including stories regarding the outbreak where minorities are also depicted. Next I will present Stuart Halls' take on the depiction of visible minorities.

5.4 How minorities are being depicted before and after Covid-19

By looking at the different signs that have occurred during our themes, we have observed mostly negative discourses toward visible minorities. The negative discourses are especially noticeable in the themes; Integration and fear. However, most of the signs from all the themes were overlapping. Nevertheless, religion seem to play a crucial role when describing visible minorities. When we look upon articles in relation to Covid-19 we find some of same pattern and signs, as in the other themes, which is why we might not say that there are any particular changes in the language of visible minorities. The question is why the news media is still interested in publishing certain stories representing visible minorities their behavior during the Covid-19 outbreak in a certain way.

Since we now have an overview of ruling discourses, we can look at Hall's argument of representation.

5.5 Stuart Halls notion of representation

We have identified and analyzed several themes, where visible minorities are depicted in certain ways. The discursive representations of visible minorities in the media have the nodal point; 'dysfunctional visible minority' as the central term, since the overall signs, I have identified, are closely correlated to this term. The discourse analysis of the representation of visible minorities in news media shows that in most articles where visible minorities are the subject of discussion, are mostly negatively framed. The articles contribute towards hostility towards Muslims, since the contributors often tend to stereotype when making a particular argument. According to Stuart Hall,

the systematic representation of visible minorities not only contributes to the reproduction of stereotypes but also indirectly produces racism (Hall, 1997).

Many of the articles concentrate on people's opinions when reporting a crime, such as interviews with politicians and experts who condemn crimes done by minorities. Generally, the articles in focus do not concentrate on the individual, instead telling off minority groups and creating a "them" vs. "us" discourse. This means that every newspaper reports their story from a specific standing point of 'I' or 'we' or 'them and us' which indicates a notion of a community. But it can also help us understand who or what is standing outside of this community or as an opposition to that community (Hall, 1997). These discursive constructions were found in most Covid-19 related articles as well as in articles focusing on other events or happenings. These constructions occur when one interacts with the "other" by directly or indirectly writing negatively about the "other" which in this case is visible minorities. Hence, the starting point of a discursive analytical approach to the phenomenon of inclusion and exclusion is to realize that discrimination manifests itself discursively.

Another way of interpreting the representations of visible minorities is from the notion of representation connecting meaning and language to culture. Saussure argue that language is seen as a complex system of signs, images and written words, hence language is arbitrary. When we observed the signs in the articles, we would not understand the discourse only by looking at the signs. But if we come from the same culture, we might share a similar conceptual map why we might interpret signs in the language in a similar way.

It is evident from the analysis that discriminatory opinions are produced and reproduced by means of discourse and through discourse. Discriminatory practices are prepared and justified. On the other hand, discourse offers a space in which to criticize and argue against such opinions (Delanty et al., 2008), as can be seen when reading articles where visible minorities are framed in a much more positive light. The articles that focus on a positive or a neutral story concerning visible minorities present especially ethnic minority women as trailblazers and a resource for society. These articles are mostly written as portraits of women who have succeeded in life by accomplishing something that can benefit the rest of society.

The Muslim minority have received more column space than any other minority that was detected in the analysis. Some main keywords and discourses found were: Visible minorities being more violent

and criminal and violent minorities' actions coming from their culture. Kristelig Dagblad published the article *"Kultur kan forklare hvorfor migranter er kriminelle"* (Birk, 2017), stating that Middle Eastern culture was the reason for visible minorities' violent tendencies. Some experts also referred to discrimination as a possible indicator for violent behavior. However, Lecturer Mehmet Necef does not agree *"It seems like discrimination, racism and islamophobia has been turned into a medication explaining everything"* (Birk, 2017).

The article's title on its own creates the image of migrants being violent, although the article does not distinguish between migrants and descendants of migrants from the Middle East (people born in Denmark to migrant parents). The article also mentions that ethnic Danish males are still statistically the most criminal in Denmark.

If we take a look at some of the positive stories, role models are often a theme getting mentioned in the Danish media. The article *"Fra Taberland til Stjerneland"* published in Jyllands-Posten introduces us to a minority woman who has been successful in life, thus framing minorities as being capable of succeeding in life on their own. The success in these kinds of stories often relies on an individual being able to turn their life around without help from anyone and standing as an example of success when it comes to integration. However, it is worth mentioning that the positive stories were written before the intake of the Covid-19 virus.

6. Discussion

In this chapter, I will discuss the concept of representation and Foucault's notion of power/knowledge according to the visible minority representation in the Danish media.

6.1 How minorities are being represented

We know from Stuart Hall, that all objects, people and events are correlated with a set of concepts or mental representations, which we carry around in our heads. When we read certain words, we use system one and system two in order to exchange meanings. Before we can do that, we need to have a shared language, which is why language is a system of representation in constructing a meaning.(Hall, 1997, p 4) The construction of visible minorities during Covid-19 as uncareful and provocative is emphasized in news media through a language of exclusion. Such representations of visible minorities are found when the newspapers use *signs* as, 'dominating' 'problematic', 'backward' or 'dangerous', 'uncareful', 'barbaric', 'deviant', 'hateful' and 'different' (According to Hall (1997), the media produces a message encoding it with certain ideas or agendas, embedding a 'preferred reading'. However, the decoding of the message that the media is sending can be different depending on people's social, economic or political views – which is why one single message can produce multiple meanings. Meaning is therefore fluid. The representation of visible minorities is then constructed from stereotyping, when media attaches negative signs. Hall argues that stereotypes work through 'splitting' by essentializing one group, that is contributing to the discourse of visible minorities as the unacceptable 'other'. Visible minorities is representing as one homogenized group when the news media uses signs as 'dem'.

Next I will present Foucault notion of power and knowledge. I have chosen to use Foucault's work since Foucault's approach toward the understanding of power and knowledge is embedded as an everyday phenomenon. Here Foucault argue that power in common with discourses do not belong to any particular agents, such as individuals or groups with particular interests; rather, power is spread across different social practices, why power should be understood as *productive*. (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999 p 22) By looking at certain elements in the language, I find it relevant to look upon the construction of power/knowledge in relation to the depiction of visible minorities in the media.

6.2 The production of power and knowledge

We have investigated statements in particular articles looking for *signs, nodal points, equivalences* and *signifiers.* If we draw upon Foucault's notion of power and language, we see different indicators in play when a prominent person such as a politician write his or her statements. These indicators are typically drawn from the persons own experience which, according to Foucault, makes it impossible to take a neutral position when presenting their statements through the media (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999). In the Jyllands-Posten article "*Borgmester retter skarp kritik mod begravelse"* (Rye & Hvid, 2020), Aarhus major Jacob Bundsgaard made the following statement: "*Jeg må tage klart afstand fra det, når deltagere til en begravelse i Aarhus ikke følger de gældende regler om forsamlinger. At man ikke følger politiets opfordringer til at sprede forsamlingen, gør sagen kun mere bekymrende"* (Rye & Hvid, 2020). However, Jyllands-Posten also published an article about the same issue, but with a different opinion by the funeral director Lars Kingo who arranged the funeral; "*Hvis politiets hensigt var, at loven skulle overholdes, gjorde det ikke sit arbejde ret godt. Men hvis målet var at få det til at glide og undgå ballade, blev det håndteret helt rigtigt"* (Zahle, 2020).

According to Foucault both articles above illustrates *truth* as a discursive construction, where different regimes of knowledge determine what is true and false. We identify statements produced in a specific domain, and when drawing upon his notion of *power/knowledge* we see that the discursive process within the articles are constructed in a way that gives the reader the impression that they represent true or false perceptions of reality (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999 pp 22-23). However, we see two different truths of the same issue, why according to Foucault power does not belong to a discourse (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p 23).

According to Foucault, power and knowledge are closely related (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, pp 22-23) Journalists and opinion makers can therefore exercise their knowledge as power, when they illuminate their readers. Power then becomes something that has to be performed - meaning the media has the power to both manipulate and it can act as an illuminator during certain events. The question is therefore whether the media communication is objective knowledge to its consumers or is it using its powers to influence people to accept a certain construction of the truth? Foucault argues that there is no such thing as objective knowledge or standpoint, however almost all media say they act upon being as objective as possible, hence they still tend to offer opinions when they include certain opinion makers to contribute with their 'knowledge'(Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999 p.22) We see prominent

political figures arguing about visible minorities' behavior and questioning their livelihoods while creating a discourse of mistrust through the use of certain signs. The media is known as the fourth realm when it defines and constructs a certain agenda.

The negative framing of minorities is not only an issue in Denmark. In April an incident occurred in the Chinese city Guangzhou, where a McDonalds restaurant was reported for not allowing black people inside. In Germany a Chinese woman was insulted by a man splashing surgical sanitizer on her while yelling "Corona". In India two Muslim women were not allowed into a hospital due to fears that they had Corona. In Denmark Somalian children were yelled at and called "Somali – Corona" (Cekic, 2020). According to Sørensen and Kaarebæk, minorities have always been targets for insults and racism during such events as the COVID-19 outbreak. The health situation has become an excuse for discriminating against and insulting minorities; hence certain minorities appear in the media due to not following the restrictions, where politicians and other powerful profiles do not hold back in confronting minorities in public, and at the same time certain minorities are seen as incompetent and contagious when they fail to follow orders from the government. "*Det udsagn indikerer, at indvandreren portrætteres som bade dansksproget inkompetent og direkte smitsom*" (Sørensen & Kaarebæk, 2020). Sørensen and Kaarebæk underline that the government itself has not done enough to create awareness of the dangers posed by the virus (2020).

6.3 The pandemic as a reason for discrimination?

While reading many different stories and articles during the COVID-19 pandemic, one might notice that the virus is not only a biological phenomenon, but also a social phenomenon influencing our behavior towards another. Similar studies of minorities being treated in certain ways during pandemics or other outbreaks have shown the framing of minorities in way that have created debates among the society of how certain population groups acts.

In these articles, the contents and news coverage frequently focus on negative or controversial issues concerning minorities (stories regarding crime, gangs, low achievement, poverty etc.) In articles where minorities are portraited in a positive light, the article mostly focuses on their achievements as "trail blazers" or in the entertainment business. Many stories about non-minorities can also be found in the same category as above, but a significantly greater tendency is shown in each case and presented in a more balanced way, such as weddings, political and community-based

achievements. In other words, minorities tend to make the news in negative stories or in stereotypically positive ones, in regular or everyday lifestyle news articles, e.g. stepping out from under negative social control or when a group of women started a "revolution" in Mjølnerparken.

The world is battling COVID-19 and new strains of the virus are continuing to evolve. When a health crisis such as the current outbreak of coronavirus emerges, the amount of information flow seems to be overwhelming; thus mass media wields a strong influence in shaping public opinion and even political decision making, since the language communicating the virus is escalating and therefore contributing to tensions among politicians and other opinion makers. The pandemic does indeed trigger health concerns, but the framing of the virus also increases fear. For instance, shortly after Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen held her first national press conference in March 2020, people panicked and bought huge amounts of toilet paper, canned food and other necessities for survival. This resulted in empty supermarkets and scared children. Hence some of the first news regarding "unethical" behavior among certain minority groups appeared, claiming visible minorities not respecting law and order hence this article *"Trodser forsamlingsforbud: Over 30 muslimer samlet til fællesbøn"* (Smith, 2020) keywords indicating Muslims defying corona restrictions.
 or visible minorities tendencies in being more sick: "*Invandrere fylder mere I coronastatestik end etniske danskere"* (Ritzau, 2020), visible minorities style of living being a problem, since the article refers to minorities living in smaller households, where more people are living in small apartments in bigger groups.

6.4 The difference between media reporting before and during the COVID-19 pandemic – Is there really any difference?

We mostly found negative stories about and representations of minorities in our search for certain patterns in communication. Understanding of the factors that shape the coverage of visible minorities has grown – meaning that more social actors and opinionmakers are now able to create statements by using media platforms and more people have access to information through the internet or newspapers. According to Hall (1978), the primary definers of what is "important news" and the "correct" perspective on that news can be politicians and business leaders etc. The idea of these people has a hegemonic value in our society and in media, the latter because their ideas become integrated into concepts news value and professional journalism. Hall further draws upon his idea that the "machinery of representation" determines *"…What and who gets represented and*

what and who routinely gets left out (and) how things, people, events, relationships get represented… the structure of access to the media is systematically skewed toward certain categories" (Hall, 1978, p 95) arguing that the hegemonic model is too bound to the concept of the dominant ideology constituting the media being the elite in the society.

A fundamental discursive division between visible minorities and the ethnic white majority is shown in almost all media. The language on visible minorities is rather different compared to when writing an article about a person from the majority population. Visible minorities are often associated as refugees or migrants and not often considered being Danish and this distance has been shown be even greater during the corona outbreak – when people from the elite uses media for telling off visible minorities.

As Zepernick (2017) puts it; the best way a minority person can fit in is by giving up his or her own culture or religion in order to be on the same position as a Danish white person. But one will never be called Danish when being described in the media. Every other way of "doing" or believing is a foreign action. Every foreign action is an indication of not wanting the Danish way of living, which both Andreassen and Hussain describe as a "one-way" process; even if some of our articles did consist of positive stories, these stories mainly described visible minorities embracing Danish culture and media interest in a foreign culture (Andreassen 2005; Hussain 2000).

7. Conclusion

Over the past few decades, scholars have paid considerable attention to visible minorities' position in both Danish and international media. A number of media reports have focused on the assumed divergence between the Western world and especially the Islamic minority, a conflict which seems to have been fueled by the pandemic. This divergence is appearing in the media discourse, in which visible minorities from the Middle East are described as disloyal, troublemakers, violent, disobedient and irrational whereas ethnic Danish citizens are depicted more neutrally. Hall (1992) argues that a particular discourse on Muslims is dominant in most media, which is also following in some degree upon the visible minorities' depiction during Covid-19 pandemic. A discourse has developed in which politicians and other people in influential positions legitimize their "selected" worries by connecting visible minorities to certain negative elements of their cultural heritage and religion – indicating that problems are being spread to Europe and Western values need to be protected. One might also think, when a worldwide epidemic emotion upon the new 'treat' can create more fear of "strangers". Edward Said's work *Orientalism* might be considered relevant to understanding how Danish media depicts visible minorities, as Said initiated an influential and enduring discussion on *othering,* which forms our understanding of visible minorities when reading the articles, as the newspapers tend to publish stories referring to "migrants", which can be understood as a signifier as its meaning is continuously negotiable and formed by political and social circumstances (Said, 2003) The way in which visible minorities are portrayed can problematize discourses about integration, crime, jobs, fear, discrimination and religion and the new social health issue.

One should bear in mind that the media has different approaches when it comes to minorities. The media conveys or constructs particular representations of visible minorities, including negative depictions, and the media acts as a space for the participation of migrants and minorities in the public sphere, where they can advance their interests and identities (Bleich et al., 2015).

Representation is a key element within many disciplines when referring to our use of language, hence when we want to say something about the world to other people or represent the world in a certain way. As Hall puts it, "*the link between concepts and language which enables us to refer to either the "real" world of objects, people, or indeed to imaginary worlds of fictional objects, people and events"* (Hall, 1997). Discourse, on the other hand, is according to Foucault not the language itself but the discourse that creates a system of representation (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999).

The discursive representations of visible minorities construct dysfunctional perceptions of visible minorities – also in times of Covid-19. This way of representing visible minorities has a significant influence since the articulation has a meaning influencing the audience. Our discursive findings regarding visible minorities are constructed as opposites of how media is representing ethnic Danes. However, since Covid-19 is currently still ongoing, new perspectives or phenomena might occur as well.

8. Literature

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9. Appendix

Number	Title on aticle	Author	date	Online link	decription	Article type	Media	issue framing	Signs
1	Danske muslimer går mere op i bøn, tørklæder og koranan	Martin Johansen	10.10.2015	https://jyllands-	Muslims in Denmark has begin to practice their religion more than before according to a survey done by Wilke. Young muslims are more conservative	News article	Jylland-Posten	Muslims are becomming more practicing	Muslims, Islam, religion, Problem of radicalzation, need of danish imams, islam critics
2	10 gode råd til indvandrere om intergration	David Munis Zepernick	14.07.2017	https://www.kr	What is good intergration? David Munis gives advises for how to be integrated in the danish society	Feature article	Kristlig dagblad	Minorities, ecpecially muslims needs to adjust	Integration, definition of being danish
3	Fra taberland til stjerneland	Booyash	19.08.2012	https://jyllands-	Souleima Gourani interview of how she became successful when coming from a browm low class family	Interview	Jylland-Posten	How a brown woman became sucessfull	Integration, sucess, being danish when sucessful, bad childhood, education
4	Indvandre arbejder mest i usikre jobs	Thomas Flensburg	25.02.2012	https://politike	Foriginers are taking low paid and unsafe jobs	news article	Politiken	Minorities taking low paid jobs	low pay, job, cleaning, language being a problem
5	Kultur kan forklare indvandres kriminalitet	Christian Birk	30.11.2017	https://www.kr	Experts sharing their views on why minorities have righ crime rates	News article	Kristligt Dagblad	minority culture is the culprit when it comes to crime	culture, crime, non western, difference between chinese and
6	Borgmester retter skarp kritik mod muslimsk begravelse	Jørgen Rye & Jonas Hvid	21.08.2020	https://jyllands-	Århus major critisising muslim burials with more than 200 people. Politichans are backing up	News article	Jyllands-posten	Muslims do not care about corona	Corona, muslims, burrials, unresponsible, stupid,
7	sætter hensynsløst vores alles sundhed og frihed over styr	Søren Gade	13.08.2020	https://jyllands-	muslims not follwing the restrictions	News article	Jylland-Posten	being a muslim and christian	freedom, health, happiness, destructed
8	Mette F: Indvandredrenge må ikke gøre det utrygt at tage S-tog	Ritzau published in ekstrabaldet	19.08.2020	https://ekstrabl	Brown boys harass peope in the trains	News article	Ekstra Bladet	Brwon boys only harass	browm minority boys,

Table 1: Part 1 of article overview

A	Title on aticle	Author	date	Online link	decription	Article type	Media	issue framing	Signs
9	Vi bør forvente, at indvandre gifter sig med danskere	Rune Toftegaard Selsing	30.11.2020	https://jyllands-	A commont on Danish People party porposal in saving Denmark	Blog post	Jylland-Posten	Minorities should marry danes	Integration, marry, help, become a part of, relationship
10	Få indvandrere i arbejde!	Ole Birk Olsen	17.04.2014	https://jyllands-	former member of the paliament, to many	Debate	Jylland-Posten	Minorities lives off social benefits	minorities , parralell, crime, ghetto, the
11	Kloge udlændinge bliver overset	Jacob Sognfri Kjær	15.02.2015	https://politike	Workgivers in Denmark do not notice bright minorities	News article	Politiken	Minorities are invisble, educated, not a rescource	bright visible minorities, no chance of getting into the labour marked
12	Kriminelle, dovne og illoyale indvandre skal stoppes	Pernille Vermund	12.09.2016	https://ekstrabl	Pernille Vermund (NB) discusses minorities in Denmark	Debate	Ekstra Bladet	Minorities are lazy, stupid and prejudiced. Danish culture is better than middle eastern culture	middle eastern are lazy and their culture is backward
13	Jeg har intet problem med muslimer. Jeg har et problem med folk, der undertrykker kvinder	Broberg & Hjøllund	12.09.2020	https://jyllands-	Pia Dyhr and Halime Oguz dicussing the issue with minority cultures and the interpretation of islam among other minorities in Denmark	Interview	Jylland-Posten	Minorities in Denmark are interpreating islam in a more backward way than in the middle east	Islam, islamic culture, social control, religion, politics and feminism
14	Det er ret udmattende at blive behandlet, som om man ligger til skue i den lokale frugt afdeling	Mørk & Herskind	11.11.2020	https://politike	Actor Diem Camille tells about her experience as a black actress i Danish movies and film sets	interview	politiken	Visible minority actors often plays sterotypical roles	steotyping, acting, sadness, overseen, used,
15	Vi skal trykke på pauseknappen, ikke flere muslimer i denne omgang, tak	Mikael Jalving	06.10.2019	https://jyllands-	Opinionmaker Mikael Jalving wishes to stop muslim migrants into Denmark	blog post	Jylland-Posten	Visible minorities from muslim countries commit more crime why they should be allowed in DK	bandeopgør, krig
16	Sørine Gotfredsen: Medier skal vågne op og undersøge indvandrermiljøernes corona disciplin	Sørine Gotfredsen	16.07.2020	https://www.kr	Sørine Gotfredsen argues the government should focus more on visible minorities during the outbreak	debate	Kristlig Dagblad	Visible minorities do not have the same level of moral than danes	moral, corona, value, suspicion

Table 3: Part two of article overview

A	Title on aticle	Author	date	Online link	decription	Article type	Media	issue framing	Signs
17	Til zumba dans i Mjølnerparken	Jacob Sheikh	07.02.2017	https://politiker	Jacob Sheikh interviews people of Mjølnerparken	Blog post	Politiken	Minoritywomen becoming more independent.	café", "safe space", "social clubs", "revolution", "health",
18	Apartheid stortrives i det københavnske natteliv	Ala Mohsen	09.03.2013	https://politiker	Visible minorities are being discriminated in during nightlife	Blog post	Politiken	Visible minorities experiance discrimination during night life	'forholdsregler', 'fremtoning', 'magtesløshed', 'mindreværd', 'frustration', 'uønsket',
19	Kravet om at vise samfundssind gælder også muslimske begravelsesoptog	No author	21.08.2020	Kravet om at ud	Muslims do not care about the corona virus nor the society	Blog post	Jylland-Posten	The muslim community needs to step up in times of the outbreak	samfundssind, community, handling,
20	DF forstår ikke manglende opbakning til dobbeltstraf	Ritzau published Jyllands-Posten	01.04.2020	https://jyllands-	Danish People Party want to double the sentence when visible minorities without citizinship	News article	Jylland-Posten	Visible minorities are not valued the same as rest of the society	punishment, crime, law,

Tabel 4: Part three of overview