

The Integration Basic Education

- Valuing or Devaluing Migrant Labour

Iben Thøger Martin (20172445)

Global Refugee Studies, AAU Campus Copenhagen

Thesis – 10th. semester, Spring 2022

Supervisor: Danny Raymond

Characters: 138554

Abstract

Since its introduction in 2016, the Integration Basic Education has been a subject which has divided political opinion. On the one hand, we find parties who celebrate the idea of an industry-oriented integration programme as a pathway for refugees and family reunified to employment, while others reject it over concerns for how it will position the refugees and family reunified in the Danish labour market. These divided opinions have made me curious to investigate both the underlying rationales of the implementation of the Integration Basic Education and the conflicting interpretations of its purpose and potential in relation to the labour market integration among different labour market stakeholders and political parties.

In this thesis, I thus seek to answer the question: *“How does the Danish government, political parties and labour market stakeholders position refugees and family reunified in the Danish Labour market in the context of the Integration Basic Education?”*. To answer this question, my thesis focuses on the debate preceding the adoption of the Integration Basic Education into law in 2016, as the discourses surrounding the Integration Basic Education were the most openly antagonistic at this point in time.

In order to conduct this analysis, I will combine the methodological frameworks of Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis and Laclau and Mouffe’s Discourse Theory. Whereas, Fairclough’s approach lends itself to a more in-depth analysis of a few cases of text, Laclau and Mouffe provides different analytical concepts to investigate the more abstract processes in which different discourses battle to fixate meaning to specific terms and domains. Through the combination of the two approaches, I will, with inspiration from Fairclough, delve into concrete examples of discourse (text) and, drawing on Laclau and Mouffe’s conceptual tools, identify the discursive and hegemonic struggles which prevail in my empirical material.

Index

Abstract	2
1.0 Introduction and Motivation	4
2.0 Methods and Theory	7
2.1 Discourse Analysis as Theory	7
2.2. Methodological Framework	11
2.2.1 Fairclough’s Three-dimensional Model	11
2.2.2 Laclau and Mouffe’s Discourse Theoretical Toolbox	14
2.3 Data Selection	18
2.4 Sub Conclusion	19
3.0 Context	20
3.1 Towards an Employment Focus in the Integration Policy	20
3.2 The Tripartite Agreement	24
3.3 The Integration Basic Education	26
3.4 Sub Conclusion	29
4.0 Analysis	30
4.1 Introduction to the Analysis	30
4.2 An Unmined Resource Ready for Harvest	32
4.2.1 The Paradigm Shift	32
4.2.2 The Refugee and Family Reunified as “Active Citizens”	35
4.2.3 From a Burden to a Resource	37
4.2.4 An Unmined Resource to Harvest	39
4.2.5 Sub Conclusion	40
4.3 Labour Exploitation or Upskilling?	41
4.3.1 Institutionalised exploitation of refugee labour?	42
4.3.2 The IGU as a Stepping Stone	46
4.3.3 Sub Conclusion: The IGU as Labour Exploitation or A Stepping Stone?	49
5.0 Conclusion	52
6.0 Bibliography	54
Appendix 1	
Appendix 2	

1.0 Introduction and Motivation

In February 2016, the Danish government initiated negotiations with the central labour market stakeholders, the Danish Employers Organisation¹ (DA) and the Danish Trade Union Confederation² (LO), on a new tripartite agreement on the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified (Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016; Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016). These negotiations were launched in the context of the large inflow of refugees arriving at the Danish Border from Syria in 2014 and 2015, which had reignited political discussion on the effectiveness of the Danish integration policies (Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016).

In the new Tripartite Agreement on Labour Market Integration the Danish government, LO and DA, argued that there was a need for a paradigm shift in the integration effort, where the refugees and family reunified to a much greater extent were to be seen as job-ready upon arrival in Denmark and, therefore, should meet strict requirements to work and financially support themselves and their families (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016:2, 3). This marked a break from the previous integration policy, which, according to the Danish government, had failed to implement effective measures to secure the integration of nonwestern migrants and refugees into the labour market, many of whom were living off public benefits and without an attachment to the labour market (Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016:4). To facilitate this shift, The Tripartite Agreement proposed different initiatives, which should serve to expedite the road to employment for the refugees and family reunified³ in industries with a demand for labour (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016:18).

One of these proposed programmes was the Integration Basic Education, commonly known as the IGU. During the programme a refugee or family reunified is expected to complete a work placement at a Danish company in parallel with industry-relevant and competence-improving classes (Uddannelsesguiden, 2022; Dansk Industri, 2022). The stated purpose of the programme was to ensure that the activity-ready, but not yet job-ready,

¹ Author's translation of Dansk Arbejdsgiverforening

² Author's translation of Fagbevægelsens Hovedorganisation - the former "LO"

³ In this paper, a "refugee" is defined as an individual whose asylum claim has been approved and who is therefore granted temporary protection and residency in Denmark, whereas the "family reunified" refers to a relative to a refugee, who has been granted residency in Denmark through the family reunification process.

refugees and family reunified would receive the upskilling and, thus, the opportunity to eventually enter vocational training or the Danish Labour market on ordinary terms (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016; Lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse, 2016:§1).

Since its introduction, the Integration Basic Education has been a subject which has divided political opinion. When the bill for the Integration Basic Education was presented in front of the Danish parliament and sent to consultation amongst different institutions and organisations, it was surrounded by much debate. While many of the consulted parties were predominantly positive towards the idea of an industry-oriented integration programme as a pathway for refugees and family reunified to enter the labour market, some also raised serious concerns over how this specific form of education would position refugees in the labour market (Appendix 1; Appendix 2). This is a discussion that continues to this day, where we on the one hand find those who endorse the programme and proclaim it a success for the integration, while on the other hand, there are also those who approach it with continuous scepticism.

This scepticism, I have often encountered in my work as a project assistant in a non-governmental organisation focused on labour market integration of minority citizens and migrants both among colleagues and project partners. Here I have experienced a general consensus that the Integration Basic Education is a net negative, which will position the refugees and migrants poorly in the labour market and push them into a precarious position. This has, for example, been expressed through an opposition towards endorsing Integration Basic Education-related initiatives, as it was not seen for the benefit of the refugee or migrant, but rather of benefit to an opportunistic employer.

These experiences made me curious to investigate the background for why the Integration Basic Education has been met and viewed with such divided opinion from different organisations and political parties. I was curious as to understand the underlying rationales behind these opinions and the discourses through which they were expressed. Thus, in my thesis, I wish to unfold the underlying rationales and perspectives on the Integration Basic Education appearing in my empirical material, and seek to explain how these rationales and perspectives clash.

Through a combination of Norman Fairclough's critical approach to discourse analysis and Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, I will delve into the concrete policy proposal for the

Integration Basic Education and the discourses surrounding it in order to unfold their inherent rationale and illuminate how and why they collide.

Thus this thesis seeks to answer the question:

How does the Danish government, political parties and labour market stakeholders position refugees and family reunified in the Danish Labour market in the context of the Integration Basic Education?

To answer this question, my thesis focuses on the debate preceding the adoption of the Integration Basic Education into law in 2016, as the discourses surrounding the Integration Basic Education and its potential in relation to the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified were the most openly antagonistic at this point in time.

In the analysis I will also work around the following subquestions:

- What are the rationales underpinning the Integration Basic Education?
- How do the different stakeholders perceive the purpose of the Integration Basic Education and its potential in relation to the labour market integration for refugees and family reunified?
- And how do these rationales clash or correlate?

To answer my research question, section 2 of my thesis delves into the methodology and theoretical lense through which I am investigating the Integration Basic Education and how it positions the refugees and family reunified. Section 3 provides the needed context of the Integration Basic Education and unfolds policy development in this area prior to the law proposal on the Integration Basic Education. Section 4 analyses the rationales underpinning the Integration Basic Education policy, and unfolds how these rationales are interpreted and ascribed differing values by the relevant stakeholders. The last section summarises the findings in my thesis and concludes on the research question.

2.0 Methods and Theory

In my thesis, I am interested in analysing how the Danish government, political parties and different labour market stakeholders articulate the position of refugees and family reunified in the Danish labour market in text-material preceding the adoption of the Integration Basic Education into law. In order to investigate this, I have chosen to conduct my research using a discourse analytical framework. The discourse analysis provides both a theoretical approach and methodological tools to empirically examine the relationship between instances of language use and social practice (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999). It derives from structuralist and poststructuralist language theory, in which language is seen as more or less constitutive of the social world. This means that, in the tradition of discourse analysis, linguistic constructions actually construct the social reality, and, thus, the way we speak about something has social consequences (ibid.).

Applying a discourse analytical framework to my analysis allows me to investigate how the Danish government, politicians and labour market stakeholders use the complexity of the language to construct different linguistic representations or 'discourses', which compete to assert meaning over the integrational policy domain. This enables me to elucidate how the competing discourses problematise the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified, and how they perceive the potential of the Integration Basic Education in this regard.

Since the theory and methodological approach are deeply intertwined in the tradition of discourse analysis, we must first become acquainted with the theoretical foundation in order to use discourse analysis as a method. Due to the intertwining of method and theory, the discourse analysis as theory will be presented as part of the methodology chapter in my thesis. In the following, I will first introduce the theoretical foundation informing my analysis, then elaborate on my use of combined Critical Discourse Analysis and Discourse Theory as methodological approaches and lastly, briefly explain the way in which the empirical data was generated and delimited.

2.1 Discourse Analysis as Theory

Jørgensen and Phillips explain the concept of discourse as a “...*particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)*”⁴ (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:9). The Discourse Analysis provides the theoretical and methodological framework to

⁴ Author's translation

empirically examine these instances of language use. However, the term discourse analysis is not only used to refer to one single academic discipline. In fact, the term discourse analysis covers several different theoretical and methodological approaches, which differ in both their terminology, methods, analytical scope and focus (ibid.). These different approaches all share certain key ontological and epistemological premises regarding the role of language in the social construction of the world.

The different approaches' view on the relationship between language and the social world derives from the structuralist and poststructuralist language theory, which claims that our social reality gains its meaning through the use of language. As Jørgensen and Phillips explain it: "*By using language, we create representations of the social reality that never just neutrally reflect an already existing reality...*"⁵ (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:17). Instead, these representations (discourses) play an active role in creating and shaping our social world (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:9, 17). The language is thus not just a vehicle to communicate information about an objectively and physically existing reality. On the contrary, language constitutes our social world, including our social identities, relations, knowledge etc. Here we find variation between different approaches in regards to their perception of whether discursive practices alone fully constitutes the social world or whether discourses are constituted in a dialectic relationship with other non-discursive phenomena, such as social phenomena (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:11, 28-29). I will elaborate on this later in this section.

Discourses form linguistic representations of the social reality, which constitute knowledge, identities and power relations in such a way that alternative understandings are either marginalised or completely rejected. By doing so, they produce a certain image of the world or "the reality", which allows for certain social practices and possibilities for action (Phillips, 2015:299). Discursive action is thus a form of social action, and a change in discourse will often be an indicator of social change (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:13-14). The possibility for social change occurs as different discourses co-exist and compete to assert meaning over specific terms or domains in discursive battles. It is in these discursive struggles that the discourse and, thus, the sociality is either reproduced or transformed (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:17, 34). The purpose of discourse analysis is to exactly "*...map out the processes in which we battle over how the meaning of signs should be defined, and where some fixations of meaning become so conventionalized that we perceive them as natural*"⁶ (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:36). Applying a discourse analytical framework to my research question, thus,

⁵ Author's translation

⁶ Author's translation

allows me to analyse how the Danish government, political parties and labour market stakeholders employ different discourses, which compete to assert meaning over the integrational policy domain. It enables me to elucidate how these competing discourses problematise the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified, and how these articulations privilege certain policy responses, which influence the refugees and family-reunified opportunity to enter the labour market.

However, the different discourse analytical approaches give different explanations of how some understandings or meanings become naturalised while others are rejected. For example, Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis argues that unequal power relations between different actors and groups in society cause some discourses to have more impact than others. Therefore, this approach is interested in uncovering the dominance patterns of discursive practices and the struggle of dominant groups to maintain certain structures (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:27-28, 85-88). In my analysis I will not go into detail with suppressive mechanisms and dominance patterns in the discursive practices related to my chosen material. Instead I will, in line with Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, focus on how the different discourses and actors struggle over the right to define reality - or speaking in their terms, "to establish hegemony" over the policy field.

According to Laclau and Mouffe power is not linked to suppressive mechanisms of an 'elite' or a dominant group in society. The term power is instead considered as something productive, which "...constitutes discourses, knowledge, bodies and subjectivities..."⁷, while excluding alternatives (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:23). Laclau and Mouffe argue that the social world, including social classes and relations, are constantly negotiated in discursive ('political') processes, and the focus of their theoretical approach to discourse becomes to map out these battles over the right to define sociality (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:47-50). Their approach does not, however, offer any explicit explanation as to why some discourses become accepted as objective, while others are rejected. Although I will not place weight on the dominance patterns between the interacting parties in the analysis, I do recognize that the different actors or voices present in the material are not equally influential and impactful. In this case, the Danish government as policy- and lawmaker occupies a privileged position compared to their consulted parties, including their opposition amongst other politicians in the parliament and labour market stakeholders expressing concerns over the proposed bill. The government's discourses therefore have a greater impact when it comes to defining the integration policy field compared to its opponents. However, due to the remit of my thesis, I

⁷ Author's translation

will not expand upon this dominance pattern. Instead the analysis focuses on the discursive battles surrounding the Integration Basic Education to comprehensively answer my research question.

In my paper I will combine the methodological frameworks of two different discourse analytical approaches; namely Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis and Laclau and Mouffe's Discourse Theory. These two approaches differ from each other on a few central theoretical questions. This includes, for example, the way in which they perceive the relationship between the discursive practices and the reality. Fairclough, unlike Laclau and Mouffe, distinguishes between discursive practices and other social practices, where he reserves the term 'discourse' for text and speech acts (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:28, 75-78; Fairclough, 1992:62-63). He argues that these other social practices do not exclusively gain meaning through discursive practices. Instead, they function according to other logics than the discursive and, therefore, must be uncovered using other theoretical frameworks and tools than the discourse analytical (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:15, 73-74). Laclau and Mouffe, on the other hand, do not make the same distinction. They consider all social phenomena as discursive constructions, which in principle can be analysed using solely discourse analytical tools (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:34-35). In this paper, I will assume the position of Laclau and Mouffe and analyse my empirical material as discursive constructions using solely discourse analytical tools. This paper will, thus, not deal with what reality looks like 'behind the discourse'. On the contrary, it is the discourse itself which is the subject and focal point of the analysis. In the analysis, I will include different sources of literature to illuminate the position and implications of the discourses in play. Following the logic of Laclau and Mouffe, I will consider these included materials as discursive constructions. Though this thesis takes the position of Laclau and Mouffe in relation to discursive constructions, Fairclough's approach still provides valuable insights as to how to unfold these discursive constructions that are used in combination with the approach of Laclau and Mouffe to investigate my research question.

I will not get into extensive detail on all of the accounts in which the two approaches differ theoretically here. My research will have a clear empirical outset, as I analyse how different voices frame, or speaking in discourse analysis terms "discursively construe", the refugee and family reunified in relation to the Danish labour market in my selected document materials. Therefore, I will instead now turn my attention to the different analytical concepts these two discourse analytical approaches offer to my empirical study.

2.2. Methodological Framework

Discourse Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis each employ different concepts to the analysis of text or communicative events that are useful to combine into a coherent analytical frame. Whereas Fairclough's approach lends itself to a more in-depth analysis on micro-level linguistics of a limited number of selected cases of text, the Discourse Theory provides different analytical concepts to investigate the more abstract processes in which different discourses battle to attribute or fixate meaning to specific terms and domains (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:36, 72-78). Combining the two approaches will allow me to investigate concrete examples of discourse (text) and the discursive battles prevailing within the political context. I will structure my analysis with inspiration from Fairclough's three dimensional model, which provides an analytical framework to study the relationship between text, discursive practice and social practice (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:80-81). At the same time, I will draw on different concepts from Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory to analyse how meanings and discourses are constructed within the particular materials and political structure. Drawing on Laclau and Mouffe's conceptual tools will allow me to identify the discursive and hegemonic struggles which prevail in my empirical material.

In the following, I will elaborate on how I will combine these two approaches as the analytical apparatus for my empirical study. I will first describe Fairclough's three dimensional model, which has inspired the analytical frame for my analysis. Then I will move on to explain the conceptual tools of Laclau and Mouffe's contribution to my analysis.

2.2.1 Fairclough's Three-dimensional Model

Norman Fairclough provides a model to empirically examine discourse. His approach focuses on two overall levels: The communicative event, which denotes the specific instance of language use and the 'discourse order', which he defines as "*...the sum of all discourse types used within a social institution or a specific social domain*"⁸ (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:80). According to Fairclough, every communicative event consists of the three dimensions "text", "discursive practice" and "social practice". These constitute the three analytical dimensions of his model (ibid.). The three dimensions are always in a dialectical relationship with one another. Therefore, they must also be analysed in connection. In the

⁸ Author's translation

analysis, we must thus look at interplay between the “text” (the linguistic properties and features of the text), “the discursive practice” (the way in which the text is produced and interpreted/consumed) and the “social practice” (the larger social context or domain of the given communicative event) (ibid.). In the paper, I will not explicitly structure my analysis according to these three dimensions. Rather, I will use Fairclough’s model as an analytical gaze on and an approach to my empirical material in combination with concepts derived from Laclau and Mouffe.

Fairclough uses the term “text” to refer to both written language and speech (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:73). In text dimension, the formal linguistic features and properties of the chosen material are analysed. Here we uncover the linguistic grips or instruments used by the author of a given text to construct the discourses and genres (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2013:82). Looking at the textual features in my empirical material allows me to analyse how the author(s) of the text creates certain narratives about the role of the refugees and the family reunified in the Danish labour market in their articulation of the Integration Basic Education. I will focus on the ‘identity’ function of the language in order to analyse how social identities are constructed in the discourse, and also, uncover the ‘ideational’ aspects of the language, which attribute certain meaning “...to the world and its processes, entities and relations”⁹ (Fairclough, 1992:64).

As we will see in the later analysis, different political actors and labour market stakeholders construct different social identities for the refugees and family reunified, to which they attribute certain characteristics, potentials, expectations etc. They each speak into certain ideas about this group's position as subjects of integration efforts and as a potential workforce, for example. Applying the gaze of the text-dimension from Fairclough’s model to my analysis allows me to uncover what rationales are in play in the concrete examples of discourse in my empirical material, and how they privilege and naturalise certain ideas of the Integration Basic Education and of the refugees and family reunified as objects of the integration effort. In my analysis, I will, however, not engage in the kind of in-depth linguistic analysis that Fairclough’s model proposes. I will instead draw on different analytical concepts provided by Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory to elucidate how the mentioned actors use the language to create certain systems of meaning. This includes, for example, how they connect and equate different concepts and terms and thereby construct certain discursive formations. These concepts will be further explained later in the chapter.

In Fairclough’s approach, the analysis of the “discursive practice” focuses on “... how the authors draw on already existing discourses and genres to create a text, and of how the

⁹ Author’s translation

*recipients also use former discourses and genres in their consumption and interpretation of the text*¹⁰ (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:81). This is what Fairclough refers to as the production- and consumption processes of a text (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:80-81). Applying this analytical gaze in my analysis, allows me to elucidate how the Danish government draw on external discourses and previous policy events when forming it's discourse on the Integration Basic Education presented in the law proposal on the Integration Basic Education and related policy texts, and how the 'recipients' (the different labour market stakeholders, politicians and organisations commenting on the proposed law) does the same in their interpretations of the texts.

In this dimension, Fairclough allows one to delimitate discourses to a certain domain, where one can use the concepts of interdiscursivity and intertextuality to pull apart the discursive practices that are in play within the domain. I will do so for the domain of integration policy in chapter 4. The term 'interdiscursivity' refers to the articulation of different discourses within and across discourse orders (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:84). The discourse order is, as mentioned, defined as the sum of all genres and discourses used within a social institution or a social domain (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:80). The discourse order shapes specific instances of language use, since it offers a certain reservoir or system of meaning for them to draw from. However, the specific language usage can also challenge and change the discourse order by combining discourses and genres in new ways, and especially by drawing in discourses from other discourse orders (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2013:83). 'Intertextuality' refers to the fact that all communicative events draw on previous communicative events within the domain (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:84).

Fairclough's concept "interdiscursivity" allows me to investigate how discourses about the Integration Basic Education and the refugees and family reunified are articulated across my empirical material. Looking for interdiscursivity in my empirical material will enable me to investigate the relationship between different institutions and the discourse orders attached to them (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:86). It enables me to analyse the relationship between different discourses employed by the Danish government, social parties and other stakeholders and how these articulations draw on certain meaningssystems or 'discourse orders' in my selected material (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:84). It will allow me, for example, to investigate how competing discourses battle to assert meaning within the same domain.

¹⁰ Author's translation

The last of Fairclough's dimensions in his model is the dimension of 'social practice', wherein the communicative event is analysed in relation to its broader social context. The purpose of this dimension is to examine the role of discursive practices in either maintaining the social or creating social change (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:82). This is analysed by examining how a specific case of language use either reproduces or challenges the discourse order. The communicative event both "...shapes and is shaped by the broader social practice through its relationship to the discourse order"¹¹ (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:83).

According to Fairclough, social practice cannot be uncovered using solely discourse analytical theory, since the social world contains both discursive and non-discursive elements. For this purpose sociological theory or cultural theory must be used instead (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:82). However, in this paper I will not engage with uncovering a reality behind the discourse. Instead I will, as previously mentioned, assume the position of Laclau and Mouffe, and perceive sociality as a discursive construction. For this reason, I will also not include secondary theory.

In this dimension, I will instead draw on different analytical concepts provided by Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory to elucidate how the Danish government, politicians and labour market stakeholders construct different linguistic representations or 'discourses', which compete to assert meaning over the integrational policy domain.

2.2.2 Laclau and Mouffe's Discourse Theoretical Toolbox

In the above I have mapped out Fairclough's more textually-oriented three-dimensional model, which provides a great framework to analyse concrete examples of discourse. In the following, I will explain the analytical tools provided by Laclau and Mouffe, which are operationalised in my analysis to help me both elucidate how the Danish Government, politicians and labour market stakeholders use language to create different systems of meaning and how they battle over the right to define reality. In the problematization of the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified in my selected empirical material, there are certain concepts that the different parties ascribe different meanings to, which can be seen as struggles over meaning. Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory provides an array of analytical concepts that are useful to analyse these discursive struggles appearing in my material.

¹¹ Author's translation

As briefly mentioned earlier in the chapter, I am concurring with Fairclough when defining discourse as a form of a resource that can be used strategically in attempts to either reproduce or challenge the social structures. However, when conceptualising discourse as an analytical entity, I will depart from Fairclough's theoretical framework and instead draw on Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory.

Laclau and Mouffe understand the social world as a discursive construction. It consists of a net of processes in which systems of meaning are both momentarily fixated and constantly negotiated (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:35). They argue that the social world is never locked in place since meaning cannot be definitively fixated. This is due to the fundamental instability and the contingent nature of the language. The openness in the language creates room for struggles over definitions of the social world and it is in these conflicts or negotiations that the systems of meaning are either reproduced or changed (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:15, 34).

The creation of systems of meaning or "discourse" happens through processes where the meaning of words and concepts is fixed and placed in what is often referred to as a form of network or a fishing net. This is to be understood in the sense that we always attempt to determine the meaning of characters, and place them in relation to other characters in a system (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:35). Laclau and Mouffe use the term "discourse" to refer to the "...*fixation or determination of meaning within a specific domain*"¹² (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:36). They define discourse as "... *a structured totality that is the result of an articulatory practice, ie. a (relative) whole, whose 'parts' (or moments as they are called) are in a relatively stable relationship with each other*"¹³ (Laclau and Mouffe 2002:24). This means that a specific discourse constitutes a system - a 'net' - of meanings, in which characters are placed in a certain formation and obtain their meaning through their interrelation with one another (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:36). The discourse analytical endeavour thus becomes to analyse how the language is arranged in these formations. This includes, for example, the analysis of how words or characters are connected, equated or placed in opposition to one another.

Laclau and Mouffe employ the term "moments" to refer to all characters in a discourse. These moments can, for example, either be certain concepts or words. The different "moments" obtain their meaning both through their relation to each other and in relation to the discourse's "nodal point" (Jørgensen & Phillips 1999:36-37). The "nodal point" denotes a

¹² Author's translation

¹³ Author's translation

privileged character, which acts as the discourse's central point, around which the characters are organised (Jørgensen & Phillips 1999:37). In my empirical data, one such nodal point could for example be the word "integration". A discourse, thus, constitutes "... a *totality, in which each character is uniquely determined as a moment through its relationships to other characters*"¹⁴ (ibid.). The discourse tries to diminish ambiguity by excluding alternative meanings that the characters could have had, and other possible ways they could be related to one another.

These alternative possibilities of meanings and connections that are excluded from a given discourse are called the "discursive field" in Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory. A discourse constantly constitutes itself in relation to the discursive field, and can never become so absolute and complete that it does not risk being influenced or even undermined by it (Jørgensen & Phillips 1999:38). In Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory it is unclear whether the discursive field consists of organised discourses or whether it is considered more or less an unsorted, unstructured mass of all that is not included in the given discourse (ibid.). I therefore find it more useful for my analysis to work around Fairclough's concept "discourse order" as a frame to delimit the discursive 'other'. This allows me to investigate the different discourses in play within the same domain and how they struggle within the same political arena (ibid.).

In the discursive field we find the "elements". Laclau og Mouffes use the term "elements" to describe the characters that are ambiguous and do not yet have a fixed meaning. A discourse will attempt to change an element into a moment by reducing its meaning potentials, thereby creating what Laclau and Mouffe refers to as a "closure" of the sign's meaning (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999:38). This is done through a process where the element is placed in relation to other signs or characters, and depending on which characters it is placed in relation to, it is ascribed with a certain meaning. This process is called "articulation" (ibid.). The closure of the sign's meaning is of course never definitive and total, and will be contested by other discursive constructions, in which the sign is placed in other constellations of characters and thus has different meanings.

One type of such element is the "floating signifier". "Floating signifiers" refers to a type of elements that are particularly open to different meaning potentials and which different actors and discourses battle to ascribe meaning to in different ways (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999:39). Nodal points are a kind of floating signifier, however, as an analytical concept they

¹⁴ Author's translation

refer to “... *the crystallisation of meaning within a given discourse*”¹⁵, whereas the term floating signifier refers to the discursive struggle between different discourses (ibid.). The term “integration” can, as an example, simultaneously act as a nodal point in the Danish government’s integrational political discourse and be a floating signifier, which the Danish government and other stakeholders battle to assert meaning over in political discussions.

Following Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theoretical analysis, our task becomes to investigate how the nodal point is ascribed with meaning by looking at the way certain words and terms are used to describe or define the nodal point in a given discourse. These words are part of what Laclau and Mouffe call an “equivalence chain”, which refers to the fact that they are all linked to and equated with the nodal point in a chain-like formation (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999:41, 59). This means, for example, that we can investigate what is meant with the term “integration” in the government’s discourse by identifying the words that are equated with the term.

The floating signifiers are part of the equivalence chain, and are attributed with meaning through its relation to the other words within a given discourse, but will take on a different meaning when being put in another constellation of words in a different discourse. Discursive battles can arise when a nodal point is equivalated differently in different discourses. Discursive battles, also called “antagonisms”, occur when different discourses conflict (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999:60). It is in these clashes that different discourses enter into negotiations over meaning, in which each discourse can either be undermined by the other or establish “hegemony”. The term “hegemony” refers to exactly the process where a discourse is undermined by its discursive field, meaning that another discourse dissolves it by rearticulating its elements and reestablishing its meaning in a new way (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999:60-61).

In the above I have introduced the array of different concepts provided by Laclau and Mouffe in order to explain their discourse theoretical approach. In my analysis I will boil it down to focus specifically on 1) how meaning is formed around a discourse’s nodal point in equivalence chains in a given discourse and 2) how different discourses struggle to fill in the concepts (the floating signifiers) with meaning in different ways resulting in antagonistic struggles over meaning.

¹⁵ Author’s translation

2.3 Data Selection

In this section I will account for how my data was generated and delimited.

I used the 'snowball-method' as a method for data selection. I took an outset in the "Tripartite Agreement on Labour Market Integration" of 2016, which marked a paradigm shift in the Danish integration policies and preceded the introduction of the new Integration Basic Education, the latter being the focal point of my analysis. From here I traced references between document materials and searched online for material relating to the tripartite agreement, thereby generating a body of documents of varying relevance and quality (Lynggaard, 2015:157-158). This included document materials such as law documents, policy- papers and agreements, transcripts of political discussion, press releases, academic research, news articles, and public political statements.

Since I was interested in analysing the discourses present in text-material surrounding the adoption of the Integration Basic Education I searched specifically for data that had been instrumental, or at least influential, in the processes leading up to the adoption of the bill on the Integration Basic Education into law. In order to select my primary data sources I created a hierarchy of the gathered document materials, dividing them into central and supplementary material.

The first of my criteria for selecting my main empirical data was that the data must have been part of the political processes leading up to the adoption of the law. This included for example, transcripts of political debate in the parliament, law material, policy papers advocating for the Integration Basic Education, the bill itself and the written responses from the different NGOs, trade -organisations, unions and other stakeholders consulted on the matter. Here I focused on the material that directly addressed the role of refugees and family reunified in the labour market and the potential of the Integration Basic Education as a means to secure labour market integration of these groups.

A second criteria for selecting the data especially relevant to my analysis was to identify material either published by or including quotations of senders with a special authority or central role as an actor within the integration policy field (Lynggaard, 2015:158). Therefore, I sought not to include materials which represented a marginal or radical position in the field. Furthermore, I considered the weight and position of the data in shaping the integrational political and legislative field surrounding the refugees and family reunified (ibid.). I prioritised

material that I believed to have a significance in this regard through its potential for political change.

2.4 Sub Conclusion

I have chosen to use qualitative methods by departing my analysis in a discourse analytical framework. My research will have a clear empirical outset, as I analyse how competing voices frame, or speaking in discourse analysis terms “discursively construe”, the refugee and family reunified in relation to the Danish labour market in the selected empirical data. In my paper I will combine Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis with Laclau and Mouffe’s Discourse Theory as the theoretical and methodological framework for my analysis. Combining the two approaches allows me to investigate concrete examples of discourse and also the discursive battles prevailing in my empirical material within the integration domain. The structure of my analysis is inspired by Fairclough’s three dimensional model, which provides an analytical framework to study the relationship between text and discursive practice. In relation to the last dimension of ‘social practice’ I deviate from Fairclough’s model and instead draw in different concepts from Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory to identify the discursive and hegemonic struggles which prevail in my empirical material. Applying this analytical framework to my analysis will allow me to analyse how the Danish government, social parties and other relevant stakeholders use the complexity of the language to construct different linguistic representations or ‘discourses’, which compete to assert meaning over the integrational policy domain. This enables me to elucidate how the competing discourses problematise the labour market integration of refugees and family, and how they perceive the potential of the Integration Basic Education in this regard.

3.0 Context

In order to understand the different rationales and influences informing the discourses articulated in my empirical data it is necessary to elucidate the broader social, historical and political context in which these discourses are embedded and play into. The Danish government, politicians and labour market stakeholders draw on both previous and external events, discourses and logics when forming discursive representations. Looking at the legislative and integrational political environment preceding and surrounding the Integration Basic Education can thus grant some context to my discourse analysis, which allows me to explain some of the rationales appearing in my empirical data.

In this chapter I will first outline the policy changes and legislative framework on employment and integration leading up integration policy reform in 2016, then introduce the Tripartite Agreement on Labour Market Integration and lastly, describe the purpose and composition of the Integration Basic Education.

3.1 Towards an Employment Focus in the Integration Policy

In 1952 The Danish state ratified The United Nations Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, which defines a refugee as “...[any person who] owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it” (UNHCR, 1951).

Additionally, the state later signed the related 1967 Protocol, which lifted the geographical scope of the Geneva Convention, in which the refugee status was originally reserved for persons fleeing events occurring on European ground prior to 1951 (Arendt, et. al., 2022). Thereby the Danish state recognized the right of a person fleeing individual persecution to seek protection (asylum) and temporary residency in Denmark, which made it necessary to create a framework for the reception of these asylum seekers and refugees (ibid.).

In 1956 the first organised integration effort entered into effect, when Denmark accepted 1400 Hungarian refugees under its jurisdiction following the Soviet Union's invasion of Hungary. The reception of these refugees, including the allocation of food and housing, were undertaken by the newly established The Danish Refugee Council. In these post-war times, the Danish state took pride in being a humanitarian frontrunner and an inspiration for other countries to follow when it came to the treatment and reception of refugees (Stenild and Martens, 2009).

Furthermore, the general attitude towards refugees in the society was predominantly positive and welcoming. The Danish society had so far only experienced limited numbers of immigrants, despite the fact that Denmark had a non-restrictive and welcoming immigration law, which made it fairly easy for foreigners to live and obtain a work permit in Denmark. Also, the society enjoyed economic growth and an increasing demand for labour, especially in the late 50s and 60s, which made immigrants and refugees a welcome resource for the labour market. This would, however, change significantly during the course of the following decades and lead to a number of policy changes within the integration field (ibid.).

In 1979 the Danish Government started to fully finance the Danish Refugee Council's integration work, including their newly established integration programme for refugees. During the course of the 18 months long integration programme the refugees would receive Danish language training and be offered employment guidance and support from a caseworker assigned by the Danish Refugee Council. This employment support could for example be in the form of internships, assistance with the job search, preparatory courses, vocational training or other kinds of education (Arendt et. al., 2022; Stenild and Martens, 2009). After the 18 months, the responsibility for the integration of the refugee, including the payment of welfare benefits and the planning of additional education- or employment support, was handed over to the refugee's municipality of residence (ibid.)

The overall objective of the integration programme was “[...] to secure the support that is necessary for the refugee to be able to cope on equal terms as natives”, and “to initiate a process that can help the refugee to become self-supported” (Arendt et. al., 2022:8). This meant in practice that the integration period, and thus the responsibility of the Danish Refugee Council or the municipality, ended as soon as the refugee would either start an education or become employed, since he/she would then be considered self-supporting. However, in the time that followed the implementation of the integration programme the integration task and the goal of self-reliance proved difficult to ensure. This was partly due to the vastly increasing number and the changed composition of the asylum seekers arriving in

Denmark during the 80s and the 90s and due to deficiencies in the system surrounding the reception of asylum seekers (Stenild and Martens, 2009).

From the mid 80s Denmark experienced a rapidly increasing inflow of asylum seekers from Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Sri Lanka and Bosnia, many of whom had little to no education from their former countries of residence. The scope of these new streams of asylum seekers challenged the still premature integrational system. Although there were integration efforts in place focusing on supporting self-sufficiency through education and employment for the refugees, in practice it was in many cases up to the individual refugee to find a job (Stenild and Martens, 2009).

However, where there had been a high demand for foreign labour in Denmark during the 1960s, which meant that refugees could relatively easily and quickly acquire a job, there was now a surplus of workers in the Danish labour market. It thus became increasingly difficult for refugees and other groups of migrants to get a foothold in the Danish labour market and many remained unemployed living off welfare benefits (ibid.). Consequently, the immigrants and refugees were no longer perceived as a needed resource for the Danish labour market and political parties, especially Fremskridtspartiet (the current Danish People's Party), started to increasingly address issues relating to the integration of the non-western immigrants and called for increasingly restrictive immigration policies. By the late 90s the numbers on unemployment among the immigrants and refugees of non-western descent peaked, with unemployment rates that were about four times higher than that of the rest of the population. This led the Danish state to introduce a new reform of the refugee policy in 1999 (ibid.).

The reform was the first comprehensive and coherent legislation implemented within the integration policy field. With the new integration policy the responsibility for the integration of refugees and migrants was transferred from the Danish Refugee Council to the municipalities, and the municipalities thus became responsible for allocating housing and for planning and facilitating the integration programmes, including the employment support (ibid.). The reform significantly intensified and streamlined the integration effort in the aim to ensure that refugees would “...become self-supported faster”¹⁶ (Integrationslov, 1998:§1).

In an aim to ensure this faster road to self-supportedness, the duration of the integration programme became extended and transformed from the previous 18 months programme

¹⁶ Author's translation

into a 3 year long “introduction programme”, while it became mandatory for newly arrived refugees over the age of 18 years to participate in the programme. In case of absence from the programme the refugee would face financial sanctions of up to 20% of the welfare benefit, plus he/she would become ineligible to apply for permanent residence as a result of the reform (Arendt et. al., 2022). The only legitimate cause for non-participation was if to attend other forms of training or employment. Additionally, the welfare benefits for newly arrived refugees were reduced by 30% under the new title “introduction benefits”, however this measure was later withdrawn.

Moreover, the reform sought to improve and professionalise the Danish language training by allocating more resources to educate language teachers and by extending the Danish language course from the previous 1370 lectures to 1800 lectures (Arendt et. al., 2022). These changes to the integration effort were implemented by the then Social Democratic government with the argument that refugees and migrants should be met with clear expectations and demands to participate and work quickly after obtaining a Danish residence permit (Stenild and Martens, 2009).

With the newly elected right wing Government in 2001 the new action plan “På vej mod en ny integrationspolitik” was drafted, which introduced an array of different labour market-oriented initiatives intended to further promote fast employment of newcomers (Stenild and Martens, 2019) The aim of these new measures was to strengthen the link between the integration efforts and the employers in the labour market by making the integration programme, including the Danish language course, more flexible and industry-specific. For example, it became a priority that the newcomer should be able to accommodate employment in parallel with attending the Danish language classes and the use of workplace internships in the integration programme was encouraged to a greater extent (Arendt et. al., 2022; Stenind and Martenns, 2009).

Furthermore a new benefit scheme called the Start Aid programme was introduced in 2002 with the objective to strengthen the economic incentive for newly arrived refugees and migrants to participate in the labour market. It intended to do so by drastically reducing the welfare benefits for the refugees and migrants who obtained Danish residency after the reform, thereby making it an unattractive and a financially unsustainable option to live off public benefits (ibid.). This new Start Aid was approximately 40% lower than the social assistance offered to unemployed Danish citizens and it was in effect until 2012 when it was retracted. However, in 2015 the benefits for refugees were again reduced following the

implementation of the “integration benefits” - this time to payments that were lower than the previous rates under the Start Aid programme (Arendt et al., 2022)

In 2016 the integration policy was again subject to reform, when the Government introduced a new “work-first” policy aimed at expediting the path to employment for refugees. Most noticeably, the new policy promoted the idea that all refugees in principle should be considered ready to work straight after their asylum claim had been processed (Arendt et al., 2022; Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016). In practice this meant that all newly arrived refugees were required to actively seek employment or participate in workplace training within the first month after being transferred to their municipality of residence, regardless of whether they were lacking Danish language proficiency and/or having limited relevant worklife competences. Prior to the reform refugees and other immigrant groups would be assessed on their ability and readiness to enter the labour market and a lack of skills, for example Danish language proficiency, would typically entail that the individual would be (at least temporarily) exempted from the requirements to work (Arendt et. al., 2022).

This latter reform catalysed an array of initiatives intended to qualify and prepare refugees for the Danish labour market through on-the-job training programmes, including the Integration Basic Education, which is the subject of this paper. I will elaborate further on the cause and the intent of this shift in policy in the following section.

3.2 The Tripartite Agreement

The influx of refugees arriving in Denmark from Syria in 2014 and 2015, during what was often referred to by politicians and the mainstream media as the “refugee crisis”, sparked new political discussion over the effectiveness of the Danish integration policies. The Danish government assessed that the former integrational programs had failed to implement effective measures to secure the integration of nonwestern migrants and refugees into the labour market, many of whom were living off public benefits and without an attachment to the labour market (Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016:4; Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016:3). It further argued that the high unemployment rate among non-western migrants placed an enormous economic burden on the Danish welfare system, which function is preconditioned by high levels of labour market participation (Samarbejde om integration 2016: 1, 4). For the above reasons and in light of the prospect

of new streams of refugees arriving at the Danish border, the Danish Government initiated negotiations with the key stakeholders in the Danish labour market on a new tripartite agreement on the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified in February 2016 (Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016).

The new Tripartite Agreement on Labour Market Integration, which was adopted in March 2016, proposed different strategies for creating better conditions for employment in the integration efforts. Herein, the Danish government and the labour market stakeholders; Danish Employers Organisation (Dansk Arbejdsgiverforening) and the Danish Trade Union Confederation (Fagbevægelsens Hovedorganisation - the former "LO") argued that there was a need for a paradigm shift in the integration effort, where the refugees and family reunified to a much greater extent were to be considered job-ready and therefore should meet strict requirements to work and financially support themselves and their families (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016:2-3).

It called for a clear break with former integration policies' tendency to place migrants on passive income without sufficient support and proper plans to ensure their integration into the labour market. With the new agreement, it was no longer acceptable for migrants to live off public benefits. Instead, to live in Denmark they were expected to be financially self-reliant and to contribute actively to the society through employment (Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016:1, 4). The parties behind the agreement sought to achieve a higher labour market participation by strengthening the cooperation between the government, the employers (private and public), the municipalities and key labour market stakeholders, including the unions, on the integration of refugees and family reunified into the labour market. The aim was that these parties should work together to secure their integration through different corporate-oriented integration programmes (Samarbejde med bedre integration, 2016; Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016). The objective of these programmes was to ensure the fastest and most effective road to employment for these target groups in industries with a demand for labour (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016:18). One of the programmes proposed under the Tripartite Agreement was the Integration Basic Education, which will be described in further detail in the following section.

3.3 The Integration Basic Education

As mentioned above, the Integration Basic Education, commonly known as the “IGU”, was one of the programmes proposed in the Tripartite Agreement on Labour Market Integration of 2016. It was introduced as part of the broader objective of the Danish government to improve the employment rates among refugees and family reunified through tailored employment- and industry oriented internship or wage subsidies programmes (Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016; Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016). These programmes should ensure that the activity-ready, but not yet job-ready, refugees and family-reunified would receive the retraining and thus the opportunity to eventually enter the Danish Labour market on ordinary terms (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016; Undervisningsministeriet, 2022). The initial draft for The Integration Basic Education was formulated in cooperation between the Danish Employers Organisation (Dansk Arbejdsgiverforening) and the Danish Trade Union Confederation (Fagbevægelsens Hovedorganisation - the former “LO”) (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016:8). On the basis of this, the former Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing submitted a bill on the Integration Basic Education in front of the parliament on 4 May 2016 (Forslag til Lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse, 2016). Moreover, they sent it for consultation among various organisations and labour market stakeholders (Appendix 2).

The Integration Basic Education was adopted into law by the Danish parliament as a trial programme in 2016, but has since been renewed in 2019 and is now expected to continue until January 2024 (Undervisningsministeriet, 2022). It is thus a relatively new two-year industry-oriented educational programme, which is targeted at refugees and family reunified between the ages of 18 and 40 years, who have had a Danish residence permit for less than 10 years (ibid.). Initially, when the program was first implemented, it was aimed at persons who had had their residence permit for less than 5 years, however this time scope has since 2021 broadened to the current 10 years . Furthermore, the duration of the programme has expanded from 20 weeks to 23 weeks with a weekly average of 37 hours of training as of May 2021 (Lov om ændring af integrationsuddannelse, 2021:§1; Uddannelsesguiden, 2022; Dansk Industri, 2022).

The Integration Basic Education combines vocational courses with employment in a paid internship at a company. During the programme the student is expected to complete a work placement at a Danish company in parallel with industry-relevant and competence-improving teaching. The teaching must amount to seven teaching hours per week on average for the

entire period of the programme, and it typically consists of a combination between Danish classes for adult foreigners and classes within Labour Market Education, Preparatory Adult Education, General Adult Education or gymnasium level single courses¹⁷ (Uddannelsesguiden, 2022; Dansk Industri, 2022).

The planning of the education program is undertaken by educational providers, job centres in the municipalities and/or the specific company. However, the allocation of this responsibility for the planning of the program varies between municipalities and depending on the different types and sizes of the workplaces involved (Dansk Arbejdsgiverforening, 2018:3-7; Refugees Welcome, 2018). Furthermore, the weekly distribution of the work time and teaching is agreed upon in a contract between the employer and the Integration Basic Education-student (Lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse, 2016:§4, §6; Refugees Welcome, 2018).

During the educational courses of the program the Integration Basic Education-student receives an education allowance corresponding roughly to the rates of the integration benefits, whereas he or she receives a salary which corresponds to the wage rates of the Basic Vocational Training (EGU) while interning at the workplace (Undervisningsministeriet, 2022). The latter varies according to the vocational field and industry, where we find that the salaries are generally higher within private construction work companies than in public health care positions (Refugees Welcome, 2018). Moreover, the companies are financially compensated by the state for taking in students through these programmes through two bonuses of 20.000 DKK. They receive the first payment after the student has completed the first 6 months of training and the last once the entire course has been completed (Lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse, 2016:§11).

The purpose of the Integration Basic Education is to ensure that *"...the refugees and family reunified to refugees obtain qualifications that provide a basis for starting a vocational education or obtaining permanent and ordinary employment in the Danish labour market"*¹⁸ (Lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse, 2016:§1). The aim is that the refugees and family reunified through the programme will develop qualifications and practical work experience both in practice at the work placement and in school teaching, which will improve their chances of entering the Danish labour market on ordinary terms after the programme ends

¹⁷ Author's own translation of Arbejdsmarkedsuddannelse (AMU), Forberedende voksenundervisning (FVU), Almen voksendannelse (AVU), Hf-enkeltfag

¹⁸ Author's translation

(Refugees Welcome, 2018). Ideally, this could be in the company in which they interned or within another company in the same working field.

The Integration Basic Education is not recognised as a form of formal education in the sense that it does not count as vocational training and does not qualify the student for merit in the formal educational system. Rather, it is a preparatory course, which can serve as a stepping stone to either work in a given field as an unskilled worker or to continue onto a vocational education (Dansk Industri, 2022). It has a clear vocational focus and the programme is commonly offered in industries such as hospitality, public administration, construction, retail, manufacturing, cleaning, transport, health care services and many more - i.e. job functions that can be performed with limited professional or linguistic competences (Integrationsbarometer 2, 2021; Dansk Industri, 2022).

By April 2022 there have been 2773 Integration Basic Education-programmes registered in total (Integrationsbarometer 2, 2021). In May 2021 this number was 2.658. Hereof, it is estimated that around 4 out of 10 programmes are completed (Integrationsbarometer 1, 2021:33, 47). Of those, approximately 50% of the students enter into ordinary employment after the Integration Basic Education, 6% start an education, and around 33% return to unemployment (Integrationsbarometer 1, 2021:8). The dropout rate is assessed to be due to different factors, such as the fairly low salary offered during employment (which in some cases are lower than the integration benefit), absence, a miss-match between the students and the company or industry and the fact that a number students are offered ordinary positions during their enrollment in Integration Basic Education-programme (Integrationsbarometer 1, 2021:33, 41; Helms Jørgensen, 2019:8).

Furthermore, the number of students enrolling in the Integration Basic Education-programmes has been declining since 2017, although the group of persons qualified for the programme has broadened. This is argued to be caused by less immigration to Denmark and the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic (Integrationsbarometer 1, 2021:8, 32). Although the Integration Basic Education is a relatively new initiative it has been given credit for having led to higher employment rates among the refugees and family reunified and to a larger number of persons assessed as 'job-ready', which was also one of the arguments for prolonging the education beyond its trial period in 2019 (Dansk Erhverv, 2018; Kommunernes Landsforening, 2022; Beskæftigelsesministeriet, 2019)

When the bill for the Integration Basic Education was presented in front of the Danish parliament and sent to consultation amongst different institutions and organisations, it was the subject of a great debate. Although many of the parties involved in the adoption of the law were predominantly positive towards the idea of an industry-oriented education as a way for refugees to enter the labour market, some also raised concerns over how this specific form of education would position refugees in the labour market (Appendix 1; Appendix 2). I will elucidate these perspectives as part of my analysis.

3.4 Sub Conclusion

In this chapter, I have elucidated the broader historical and political development surrounding the Integration Basic Education. This grants some context to my discourse analysis, which allows me to explain some of the rationales appearing in my empirical data. Here, I have outlined the policy changes and legislative framework on employment and integration leading up integration policy reform in 2016, introduced the Tripartite Agreement on Labour Market Integration and lastly, described the purpose and composition of the Integration Basic Education.

In the next chapter, I will delve into the analysis part of this thesis. Here, I will first analyse the rationale, or “discourse”, underpinning the law proposal on Integration Basic Education and trace it back to some of the developments elaborated in this chapter. Then I will seek to uncover how different politicians and labour market stakeholders interpret this rationale differently and ascribe different values to the Integration Basic Education, resulting in antagonistic struggles.

4.0 Analysis

In this analysis, I wish to elucidate how the Danish government, political parties and different labour market stakeholders articulate the position of refugees and family reunified in the Danish labour market in the discussion surrounding the adoption and continuation of the Integration Basic Education. I will analyse different policy documents, transcripts from the debates in parliament and consultation responses in order to unfold what different discursive meanings the Integration Basic Education is ascribed with in this regard.

In order to investigate the different discursive representations prevailing in my material and how they conflict, I will divide my analysis into two overall parts. I will first analyse how the Danish government discursively construe the Integration Basic Education in relation to the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified in concrete examples of policy text, including the documents “Samarbejde om bedre integration”, the “Tripartite Agreement on Labour Market Integration” of 2016 and the bill for the Integration Basic Education. In the second part of my analysis, I will unfold the discursive battle of the different actors either challenging or endorsing the adoption of the Integration Basic Education as a means to ensure the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified. These include both politicians, who participated in the debate on the law proposal for the Integration Basic Education in parliament and labour market stakeholders, who expressed their concerns or agreement in their consultation response¹⁹.

4.1 Introduction to the Analysis

In the chosen empirical material we find certain words and concepts that the Danish government and other relevant stakeholders attribute different meanings to and attempt to fill with substance in different ways. Although these different parties discuss the same political issue “The Purpose of Integration Basic Education and its and Potential in Relation to the Labour Market Integration of Refugees and Family Reunified” and seemingly structure their arguments around some of the same key terms, they attribute different meanings to these terms by placing them in different constellations of meaning with other words. This leads to what we in Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theoretical terms call ‘antagonistic struggles’, during which the different parties compete to assert meaning over the integration policy domain (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:60).

¹⁹ Author’s translation of “hørings svar”

In order to elucidate the different discursive representations prevailing in my material and how they conflict, I have first defined the central terms which the Danish Government, political parties and labour market stakeholders struggle to ascribe with meaning in different ways i.e. the “floating signifiers”. In my analysis, I am interested in unfolding how the Integration Basic Education is articulated in relation to the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified in the political debate and discussion between the mentioned parties. In order to investigate this, I have defined the Integration Basic Education as a “floating signifier”, which as a term denotes an empty concept that different actors struggle to determine the meaning of (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:39). Hereafter, I looked for the words and concepts that are used to determine the meaning of the Integration Basic Education by different actors. By identifying these different chains of meaning, the “equivalence chains”, I was also able to define the ‘nodal points’, which constitute the central points of each discourse around which the discourse’s meaning is structured. These nodal points reveal the overarching theme or topic of the given discourse (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:37).

In the analysis, I include both concrete examples of policy text and an array of quotations from the political discussion surrounding the bill on the Integration Basic Education. In order to sort these many quotes, I have during the coding of the material lumped them together under arguments or nodal points. I have thus through the coding process 1) defined the Integration Basic Education as a floating signifier in my material, 2) investigated the different words and concepts used to ascribe it with meaning by different actors 3) Sorted these into chains of meaning by defining the overall headlines or themes, that these chains of meaning is structures around; namely the “nodal points”. These equivalence chains and nodal points will be further elaborated and unfolded in the following analysis.

Although my analysis will mainly focus on the meaning attributed to the Integration Basic Education, the different parties, through their articulation of the Integration Basic Education, also articulate conflicting ideas about the position of refugees and family reunified as subjects of the integration effort and as a potential workforce. This influences how they perceive the purpose of the Integration Basic Education and its potential as a measure to ensure the labour market integration of these groups. I will therefore also simultaneously investigate the refugee and family reunified as a floating signifier in my analysis.

4.2 An Unmined Resource Ready for Harvest

In the following, I will take an outset in the discourse presented by the Danish government in specific textual sources. Through Faircough's approach, I am able to delve into these concrete examples of text, and by using it in combination with the concepts of Laclau and Mouffe, I will unfold how the Danish government discursively construe the Integration Basic Education in relation to the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified. The Integration Basic Education was, as mentioned previously, one of the new programmes introduced as part of the new Tripartite Agreement on the Labour Market Integration in 2016 as a measure to support the objective of the new integration policy reform. Therefore, the objective and rationale behind the bill for the Integration Basic Education should be analysed in context of this policy reform. In this section, I will thus trace the discourse of the Government and the labour market stakeholders behind the drafting of the bill for the Integration Basic Education across the formal policy documents preceding the law proposal. Furthermore, I will elucidate how this discourse draws on external policy events and discourses when constructing its linguistic representation of the position of refugees and family reunified in the labour market and the objective of the Integration Basic Education.

4.2.1 The Paradigm Shift

The new Tripartite Agreement on Labour Market Integration of 2016 was adopted by the Danish parliament as a new integration policy strategy focused on expediting the road to employment for refugees and family-reunified. According to the Danish Government this policy reform marked a "*...paradigm shift in the integration effort for the refugees and family reunified, who do not immediately find employment in Denmark*"²⁰ (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016:2). It is, thus, articulated as a clear break from the previous integration policy.

In the proposal initiating the tripartite negotiation titled "Samarbejde om bedre integration" the Government argues that "*Unfortunately, integration efforts have so far shown disappointing results. About half of the immigrants from non-Western countries are employed. Of the refugees who have come to Denmark, only three out of ten are in work after three years. It is worryingly few*"²¹ and it further states that the high unemployment

²⁰ Author's translation

²¹ Author's translation

levels among the refugees and family reunified is caused by the fact that “...*the society has had too low expectations [to the refugees]*”²² (Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016:4). The policy reform is, thus, articulated as a reaction and a response to the failure of the former integration policies to implement the proper measures to support the road to employment of non-western immigrants, which has resulted in many remaining outside of the labour market (ibid.). A criticism that we see echoed in the Tripartite Agreement on Labour Market Integration (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016:3).

In “Samarbejde om bedre integration” it is estimated that approximately 50% of the immigrants from non-western countries were in employment in 2014. Of them, the unemployment rates are calculated to be especially high amongst refugees, where only 3 out of 10 were in employment three years after being enrolled under the integration programme (Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016:4). This led the Government to introduce a new benchmark for the integration effort, namely that 1 in 2 refugees and family reunified should be in employment and that fewer will be parked on passive income (Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016:7).

To reach this objective the Government emphasised the need to impose new and stricter requirements on the refugees and family-reunified in the integration effort arguing that they: “... *must henceforth be met as job-ready and thus meet a clear requirement that they must work and support themselves and their family*”²³ (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016:3). This indicates that with the new policy, it is no longer acceptable for refugees and family reunified to live off passive income. Instead, to live in Denmark they are required to work and be financially self-supported. It implies a break with the previous policy’s acceptance of refugees and family reunified as passive recipients of welfare benefits, who can be exempted from formal requirements to work.

This argument can be substantiated through quotes from “Samarbejde om integration” which reads: “... *we must avoid that the refugees who come to Denmark end up on long-term welfare benefits. They need to work, make money and be part of the community ... It is in a workplace where you can learn Danish culture and manners, train your Danish language, ultimately support yourself and have a good life as active citizens. But we must also help the refugees to help ourselves. Successful integration is crucial for Denmark.*”²⁴ (Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016:1). Here, however, the emphasis on the requirements to work and

²² Author’s translation

²³ Author’s translation

²⁴ Author’s translation

become financially self-sufficient is supplemented by a focus on what there is to gain for the individual refugee and family reunified through active participation in society - i.e. the labour market.

In this quote a link is established between integration and employment where labour market participation appears as a prerequisite for the integration of refugees and family reunified into society. Speaking in discourse analytical terms, we can say that successful integration is “equivilated” with labour market participation. This idea is reproduced in the tripartite agreement, which states that: *“The integration in the labour market is a completely central part of integration into Danish society ... If Denmark is to deal with the growing integration challenge, it is crucial that far more refugees and family reunified persons find employment and in this way become part of the community”*²⁵ (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedintegration, 2016:1). The view on integration articulated in these quotes is, thus, both oriented towards the individual and has a clear societal objective. Through employment the individual refugee or family reunified is expected to acquire knowledge and skills, which enables him/her to enjoy full membership of the community. At the same time, an improved employment rate of these persons is seen as a necessity to sustain the welfare society. The latter implies that the policy shift has a socioeconomic objective. I will return to this point later in the chapter.

Read in light of the Government’s critique of the former integration policy and its call for a paradigm shift in the integration effort, The Tripartite Agreement on Labour Market Integration appears to mark a substantial shift from previous discourses on the integration policy and the refugees and family reunified prior to the reform. According to Laclau and Mouffe, discourses are *“fixations of meaning”*²⁶ and we can unfold these manifestations of meaning by defining their central points and identifying the constellations or “equivalence chains” of words used to describe them (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:36-37). We can, thus, investigate a possible discursive shift by looking for a change or a difference in the word constellation used to ascribe meaning to the central concept. In the Tripartite Agreement and “Samarbejde om bedre integration” the Government defines the new integration policy through its contrast to the previous. Through this opposition we can see two equivalence chains forming.

From the quotes highlighted above we see that the previous integration policy, and hence also the framing of refugees and family reunified as objects of the integration effort, are

²⁵ Author’s translation

²⁶ Author’s translation

linked to words and phrases such as: “disappointing results”, “worryingly”, “low expectations”, “welfare benefits”, “unemployment“. In opposition, the new policy reform is described with words like: “labour market integration”, “requirements”, “active citizens”, “job-ready”, “employment”, “work”, “support themselves” and “part of community”²⁷.

Through these equivalence chains, the new integration policy reform becomes articulated as a more restrictive policy than the previous, which places “requirements” on the refugees and family reunified, who as “active citizens” are expected to “work”, “support themselves” financially and be “part of the community”. This stands in opposition to the previous integration model, which through its “low expectations” to the refugees and family reunified in regards to their labour market participation and its linkage to the high numbers of unemployed on “welfare benefits” remaining outside the labour market, appears as a support system that have produced a marginalisation, which will now be opposed through the new restrictive legislation.

By contrasting the previous discourse on refugees and family reunified with the new, the government indirectly establishes a correlation where its framing of the refugees as possible “active citizens” appears to be in stark contrast with the previous policy discourse on refugees as “passive individuals”, who could be exempted from formal requirements to work. The Government, thus, implies that with the new policy there also followed a discursive shift where the refugees and family reunified no longer should be perceived as passive recipients of welfare benefits and just objects of the integration effort, but rather active citizens who are expected to be financially self-supported, to contribute and participate actively to the society through employment.

4.2.2 The Refugee and Family Reunified as “Active Citizens”

The Government’s discourse on refugees as “active citizens”, who are required to contribute to society through employment, gives associations to the social democratic notion that in order to enjoy full membership in the society (citizenship) one is obliged to contribute. Here active citizenship is seen as an absolute prerequisite for the welfare state (Socialdemokratiet, 2022; Socialdemokratiet – Medborgerskab, 2022). According to the social democratic philosophy, the society is responsible for providing the citizen with rights and possibility. In return the individual has a duty to contribute back to the society (ibid.).

²⁷ All words in this constellation are the author’s translation

This means, for example, that the society must create the conditions for employment, whereas the individual then is obliged to work. It thus emphasises the dogma “to enjoy one must provide”²⁸ (Socialdemokratiet, 2022). It entails a carrot and stick approach to policy, where the state uses a combination of reward (“carrot”) and sanction (“stick”) in order to induce a desired behaviour among its citizens (Medborgerne, 2022). In the policy reform from 2016 we see elements of this logic present, as the Government imposes stricter requirements to work and be self-supported in an effort to combat the low numbers of labour market participation amongst groups of refugees and family-reunified. It imposes these stricter measures with the argument that it is for the benefit of both the individual refugee and society alike (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016:1; Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016:1).

This discourse on refugees as “active citizens” can be traced back through the different policy changes over time to the policy act introduced under the Social Democratic government in 1998, which provided the first coherent legislation within the integration political field (Stenild and Martens, 2009:12). This policy significantly intensified the integration effort by extending the integration programme, by imposing new requirements to work on the non-western immigrants and refugees and by introducing economic sanctions on their welfare benefits for non-participation in order to raise the economic incentive to work (Stenild and Martens, 2009:13). The objective of these new policy changes was that refugees and immigrants should be met with clear expectations and demands to participate and work shortly after obtaining a Danish residence permit both for the sake of the foreigners themselves and for the sake of the society - an objective that we see parroted in the 2016 policy reform (Stenild and Martens, 2009:13; Integrationslov, 1998:§1, §16 stk. 3; Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016).

One of the cornerstones of the social democratic philosophy is that the welfare state provides everyone with equal access to enjoy full citizenship (Socialdemokratiet, 2022; Medborgerne, 2022). Both in the 1998 integration act and in the numerous subsequent policy amendments we see this idea echoed in the purpose clauses, when it is stated that objective of the integration effort is to “...*contribute to ensuring that newly arrived foreigners have the opportunity to participate on an equal footing with other citizens in society's political, economic, employment, social, religious and cultural life*”²⁹ (Integrationslov, 1998:§1; Integrationsloven, 2020:§1). Therefore, at first glance, it seems that the discourse of refugees as “active citizens” must imply that refugees and family reunified, through their

²⁸ Author's translation of “Man må yde før må kan nyde”

²⁹ Author's translation

membership in society, are given rights and opportunity to enter the labour market on equal terms with the rest of the population. However, when digging a little deeper into the analysis and going below the surface of the discourse as described in section 4.2.1, it appears that something else is at stake.

4.2.3 From a Burden to a Resource

In the proposal for the tripartite negotiations, the failed labour market integration is articulated as especially problematic from a socio-economic perspective in quotations such as: *"...it is particularly costly for a welfare state when refugees do not obtain employment"*³⁰ (Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016:4) and *"When we have to spend many extra billions on refugees, it puts pressure on our economy. Then the room for manoeuvre that we have fought hard to provide is threatened. Then our opportunities to invest in health and education and to ease the tax on labour become limited"*³¹ (Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016:1). In these quotes, the Government speaks into a market discourse, where the failed labour market integration of the refugees and family reunified is 'bad business' for the welfare society, which is preconditioned by high levels of labour market participation.

Consequently, it constructs an identity for the refugees and family reunified as a "costly" economic burden for the welfare society. A discourse that has also been explicitly repeated in the Government's press-release regarding the tripartite agreement by the former Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen, who states that: *"A job is the key to integration. That is why it is crucial that we get refugees into jobs more quickly so that they become a resource - instead of a burden - for our society"*³² (Statsministeriet, 2016). With this logic follows, that the integration must become a better business i.e. that more refugees and family reunified must enter the labour market quickly and, thus, become transformed from an economic burden to a resource for society. The Government aims to secure this shift through the new active integration effort, including the Integration Basic Education.

The Integration Basic Education was introduced as part of the broader objective of the Danish government to improve the employment rates among refugees and family reunified through tailored employment- and industry oriented internship or wage subsidies programmes (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016:7). In the bill for the

³⁰ Author's translation

³¹ Author's translation

³² Author's translation

Integration Basic Education, the purpose states: *“The purpose of the law is to ensure an opportunity for work and upskilling for refugees and family reunified refugees, whose qualifications and productivity do not yet meet the requirements of the Danish labour market. The purpose of the law is thus that refugees and family reunified refugees obtain qualifications that provide a basis for starting a vocational education or obtaining permanent and ordinary employment in the Danish labour market”*³³ (Forslag til Lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse, 2016:§1).

In the purpose clause of the bill we see that the Integration Basic Education is linked to words and formulations such as: “upskilling”, “opportunity”, “obtain qualifications”, “provide a basis for starting a vocational education...or ordinary employment”³⁴. Through this constellation, The Integration Basic Education' becomes articulated as an upskilling programme, which functions as a stepping stone to vocational education or ordinary employment in the labour market for the refugees and family reunified, who do not yet meet the high demands of the Danish labour market in terms of worklife qualifications. It is framed as an “opportunity for work and upskilling” of benefit to the individual, who through the programme can “obtain (the) qualifications” necessary to enter the labour market. However, when read in light of the broader policy shift and in connection to the descriptions of the Integration Basic Education in the Tripartite Agreement on Labour Market Integration, it becomes evident that the programme also serves a clear societal purpose.

In the Tripartite Agreement the Danish government states: *“... one of the biggest challenges for the Danish labour market in the coming years is to ensure sufficient and qualified skilled labour throughout Denmark and internships for young people. The new IGU courses help to solve this challenge, as the courses, among other things, create a basis for starting vocational training”*³⁵ (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016:18). The Integration Basic Education is, thus, framed as a measure that can be used to direct refugees and family reunified towards employment and education in industries, where there is a demand for labour.

Through these constellations of words and phrases emphasised from the material, it appears that in the policy shift, the Integration Basic Education and the refugees and family reunified are mainly a matter of socio-economic interest. Here, the refugee and family reunified becomes framed as an economic burden or an “unmined resource” that can be mobilised to

³³ Author's translation

³⁴ All words in the constellation are translated by the author

³⁵ Author's translation

solve a societal problem, namely an acute shortage of labour. The Integration Basic Education in turn, as an initiative under the policy reform, seems as a measure that, through upskilling, can transform the refugees and family reunified from burdens to a resource for society.

4.2.4 An Unmined Resource to Harvest

The above shows that the Danish government employs a discourse where the refugees and family reunified can be an active part of society and society can use them actively. Here they are framed as “active citizens”. But this does not mean that the refugees and the family reunified are seen as an ultimate good and an enrichment to society. The burden discourse is still present. In fact, refugees and family reunified are not as much seen as “active participants” and “equal citizens” as a superficial discourse analysis in section 4.2.1 can show. Instead, more than speaking of them as active, willing, equal participants in society and the labour market, the discourse focuses on the refugee and family reunified as an “other”, who would rather remain outside of the working community and receive benefits unless pushed (i.e. using the stick). The discourse emphasises that they must be ‘forced’ to participate in the labour market through stricter requirements to work and through participation in employment-oriented programmes such as the Integration Basic Education.

The refugees and family reunified are therefore not active in the discourse - i.e. driven by their own self-will and motivation to work and enter the labour market. They are 'still' passive objects on which politicians must exercise "coercion"/politics, but this time with a strong purpose. They are a resource, which society can use to solve problems in relation to labour shortages in skilled industries. Thus, the “active participant”/“active citizen” discourse hides a deeper discourse that shows that the discourse about refugees and family reunified as passive and a burden has not disappeared with the policy shift, but rather transformed into a discourse about them as an unwilling, unmined resource that can be brought into play to fill a gap in the labour market.

Simultaneously, The Integration Basic Education appears as the measure that, through upskilling, can transform the refugees and family reunified from burdens into a resource for society. Speaking figuratively, we can say that it becomes articulated as a means to harvest these unmined resources. It does so, by upskilling the refugees and family reunified within industries with an acute demand for labour.

4.2.5 Sub Conclusion

In this chapter of the analysis I have elucidated the Danish government's discourse on the Integration Basic Education and the refugees and family reunified in context of the broader policy shift which followed the Tripartite Agreement on Labour Market Integration in 2016. I have done so, by tracing the discourse of the Government and the labour market stakeholders behind the drafting of the bill for the Integration Basic Education across policy documents preceding the law proposal.

I have argued that the Danish government frames the Integration Basic Education and the refugees and family reunified as a matter of socio-economic interest. It employs a "market discourse", where the refugee and family reunified becomes discursively constructed as an "unmined resource" that can be mobilised to solve a societal problem, namely a shortage of labour in skilled industries. The Integration Basic Education concurrently becomes articulated as a measure that can be used to "harvest" these resources in the sense that it can expedite the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified and mobilise them to fill in a gap in the labour market.

In the next chapter I will turn my attention towards the discussion preceding the adoption of the Integration Basic Education into law in 2016. Although different parties and labour market stakeholders were predominantly positive towards the idea of an employment- and labour market-oriented programme in the integration effort, some also questioned the premise and the format of the proposed Integration Basic Education. These critical voices, for example, raised their concerns over what this programme would entail for the position of refugees and family reunified in the labour market. We see here that the different parties ascribe different meaning and substance to the Integration Basic Education and to the refugees and family reunified as objects of the integration effort. This influences how they perceive the purpose and the potential of the programme and leads to discursive struggles in the form of political discussion and debate. It is these struggles that I wish to elucidate in the following chapter.

4.3 Labour Exploitation or Upskilling?

In the previous chapter I have accounted for the Danish Government's discourse on refugees and family reunified in relation to the policy shift and the passing of the Integration Basic Education into law, where I argue that the Government and its allies construct the refugee and family reunified as an unmined resource for the society to "harvest". The Integration Basic Education simultaneously becomes articulated as a measure that can be used to "harvest" these resources in the sense that it can expedite the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified and mobilise them to fill in a gap in the labour market.

As law- and policy makers the Danish Government occupies a hegemonic position compared to the labour market stakeholders and organisations consulted on the law proposal for the Integration Basic Education. However, before the bill could be adopted into law it had to go through processes of political debate in the Danish parliament and it was also sent for consultation among different relevant labour market stakeholders, institutions, and organisations. Through these processes, the different parties raised objections to the bill and/or proposed changes or specifications (Appendix 1, Appendix 2). Despite the debate and criticism surrounding the proposed law, the majority in the Danish parliament voted in favour of the bill and so it was passed into law (Lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse, 2016).

In this chapter of the analysis, I will focus on exactly the discussion preceding the adoption of the bill on the Integration Basic Education into law. Here we find that the Government, political parties and labour market stakeholders discuss the same political issue "the purpose and potential of the Integration Basic Education", although they ascribe different meanings to the subject by placing it in different constellations of meaning with different words. Thereby, they create conflicting discursive constructions on the purpose of the Integration Basic Education and its potential in relation to the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified. This leads to what we in Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theoretical terms call 'antagonistic struggles', in which the different parties compete to assert meaning over the integration policy domain (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:60). These antagonistic struggles will be the focal point of this chapter of my analysis. I will work around Laclau and Mouffe's analytical concepts "Nodal Point", "Floating Signifiers" and "Equivalence Chains" to unfold the different discursive constructions on refugees and family reunified in relation to the Integration Basic Education and investigate how they conflict.

4.3.1 Institutionalised exploitation of refugee labour?

When the bill on the Integration Basic Education was presented in front of parliament and sent to counselling parties, several parties, including the unions PROSA, FOA, and different representatives from the parliament, raised concern over the fact that the bill did not specify any assessment criteria to establish whether the refugees and family reunified have “... *qualifications and productivity [that] do not yet meet the requirements of the Danish labour market*”³⁶ (Forslag til Lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse, 2016:§1; Appendix 1; Appendix 2).

In its consultation response³⁷, FOA criticised the bill for defining the target group of the Integration Basic Education too vaguely, stating that: ... *the proposed target group is too broad, since the target group of the bill in no way presupposes a recognised need for upskilling for the Danish labour market. Thus, the bill will authorise the possibility for companies to employ already qualified refugees and family reunified refugees for certain statutory pay- and employment conditions that deviate negatively from the applicable collective bargaining terms*³⁸ (Appendix 2:24). Hereby, the union expresses its concern over the possibility that refugees and family reunified, who have the ability (qualifications) to enter the labour market on ordinary terms, can be used as cheap labour due to the vagueness in definition of the target group in the law.

This concern is also repeated by the Danish Institute for Human Rights who, in the same vein, argues that: “... *It is important that it appears clearly from the law when a refugee or family reunified should be considered not to possess such qualifications and productivity, so that a refugee or family reunified, who possesses the necessary qualifications and who thus should be employed in an ordinary position, does not become employed in an internship for a lower salary*”³⁹ (Appendix 2:35). For this reason, both parties called for a more detailed definition of what is meant by qualifications and productivity that do not yet meet the requirements of the Danish labour market in the law, plus a clarification of who is responsible for conducting this assessment (Appendix 2:24, 35).

Their concern is supplemented by an elaborate criticism of the economic arrangements and terms of Integration Basic Education. In the first political debate on the bill in the Danish

³⁶ Author’s translation

³⁷ Author’s translation of “hørings svar”

³⁸ Author’s translation

³⁹ Author’s translation

parliament Finn Sørensen, spokesperson for the Enhedslisten, echoes the argument above and further argues that the low wages offered to students enrolled in the Integration Basic Education and the lack of control with the employers, leave the refugees and family reunified vulnerable to exploitation (Appendix 1). He questions how the parties in favour of the bill, can be “... *satisfied with legislation that in actuality mean that refugees can work for 49 DKK an hour in the public sector, at least parts of the public sector, for 84 weeks out of the 104 weeks that such a 2-year integration student agreement lasts?*”⁴⁰ (Appendix 1:4). A critique that is shared by both the spokesperson for the Socialist People's Party, Karsten Hønge and different representatives from the Danish People's Party, who frames the issue as a matter of exploitation and wage dumping (Appendix 1).

Sørgensen continues: “...*There are no requirements that it [the programme] must not lead to the displacement of ordinary workplaces, or other handles that one could pull to try to limit the misuse of cheap labour, and there is no real educational perspective in it for the refugees ... there are no requirements for the employers, they can do exactly what they want, and they can even get a bonus on top of it ...This law is a gateway to abuse and wage dumping ...The legislation completely leaves the power to the employers. They can make agreements directly with the individual refugee, bypassing union representatives, bypassing local trade unions, bypassing trade union committees, bypassing the municipalities*”⁴¹ (Appendix 1:21). He thus introduces a further issue of concern in relation to the exploitation of refugees and family-reunified as cheap labour, besides that of the salary and the lack of requirements on the employers, namely the lack of representation, referencing to the fact that the refugee must enter into the agreement with the employer without having any representative on his/her side. He argues: “*After all, there is no requirement whatsoever for the content of the education or guidelines at all. It depends entirely on an agreement between the individual refugee and the company, where the refugees are in a very vulnerable position, perhaps even poorly equipped linguistically*”⁴². A condition which the trade union PROSA is also highly critical of (Appendix 1:27).

Lastly, Sørgensen furthermore questions the ability of the refugee or family reunified to oppose an offered IGU-position in a written commentary on the bill (L 188, 2016). To this the former minister of integration Inger Støjberg replies that that it is up to the individual to decide whether he/she wishes to enter the Integration Basic Education, while also disclosing that “... *it is incorrect that the foreigner is protected against sanctions of the integration*

⁴⁰ Author's translation

⁴¹ Author's translation

⁴² Author's translation

*benefit if the person fails to enter into an IGU agreement*⁴³ (ibid.). Read in light of his other criticisms, this question can be interpreted as another way for Jørgensen to emphasise the vulnerability of the refugees and family reunifieds' position in the proposed arrangement in the law; namely that they cannot oppose exploitative or unsuitable employment contracts without risking economic consequences.

From the above quotes we can see a discourse forming. According to Laclau and Mouffe, we can define and unfold the meaning of a discourse by identifying the words or characters that are linked to the discourse's nodal point in equivalence chains (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999:37, 59). As mentioned previously, I have defined the Integration Basic Education as a "floating signifier" in my material, which the Danish government, labour market stakeholders and politicians ascribe different meanings to. By identifying the constellation of words, the "equivalence chain", used in the quotes above to describe the Integration Basic Education, I can define the 'nodal point', which denotes the central points or the overarching theme of this discourse surrounding the Integration Basic Education (ibid.).

In the discourse "Integration Basic Education" is ascribed with meaning by the constellation of words surrounding it. In the quotes we find that it is installed in a constellation or equivalence chain of words and phrases like: "misuse of cheap labour", "gateway to abuse", "deviate negatively", "lower salary", "too broad", "wage dumping", "no requirements", "no real educational perspective" and "bypassing ordinary conditions"⁴⁴. Through this equation of words, the Integration Basic Education thus becomes articulated as an exploitative legislation that is in opposition to the "ordinary" labour market - it actually "bypasses the ordinary terms and conditions" of the labour market and allows for "misuse" and "abuse" of refugee labour.

In this line of discourse, the refugees and family reunified are articulated as persons who are "vulnerable" to becoming exploited by the employers for "cheap labour" through the programme. The focus is that the refugees and family reunified bring a value in the form of labour that will potentially be undermined through the Integration Basic Education due to its vague requirements and "too broad" scope. The concern is that some of these refugees and family reunified persons, who could now fall under the scope of the Integration Basic Education due to the vagueness in definition of the target group, do actually possess the ability and qualifications to enter the labour market on ordinary terms and for a higher, ordinary salary. This potential for exploitation is emphasised by the fact that the refugees

⁴³ Author's translation

⁴⁴ All words in constellation are translated by the author

and family reunified cannot oppose unsuitable IGU-employment contracts when enrolled in the integration programme without risking financial sanctions on their integration benefits.

Moreover, this concern over how the Integration Basic Education will position the refugees and family reunified in the labour market appears to extend beyond the employment conditions during their enrollment in the programme. This becomes evident as Finn Jørgensen questions the stated purpose of the programme, which is articulated as an upskilling programme, which can pave the way to ordinary employment and vocational education (Forslag til Lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse, 2016). He problematizes the fact that “...*there is no requirement whatsoever for the content of the education or guidelines at all*”⁴⁵ and further claims that the programme has “*no real educational perspective in it*”⁴⁶ (Appendix 1: 21). In a similar vein, FOA criticises the bill, stating that they “...*note with regret that this is not an education law. On the contrary, this is a primarily employment-oriented legislation which, among other things, aims to "ensure an opportunity for work" for refugees and family reunified refugees*”⁴⁷(Appendix 2:23).

These quotes imply a criticism of the fact that the programme is not required to provide the refugees and family reunified with formally recognised competences and qualifications. Here, they frame the Integration Basic Education as a programme that does not actually qualify the refugee for anything other than unskilled labour due to its “employment-oriented” objective and lack of “educational perspective”, which only ensures “an opportunity to work”. Read in light of both Jørgensens and FOA’s concerns over the potentially exploitative nature of the Integration Basic Education elucidated above, this can be interpreted as a concern that the programme will be used as a way to generate refugees and family reunified into unskilled low wage sectors of the labour market, without securing them real competences which could eventually give them a stronger foothold in the labour market or enable them to enter vocational education.

The above mentioned parties, thus, articulate an idea of the value of refugee labour and the Integration Basic Education, which appears to be in sharp contrast with that of the Danish government, elaborated in the previous chapter of the analysis. Here the refugees and family reunified are not framed as unmined resources that can be harvested by society to patch gaps in the labour market or to ease the economic burden they would otherwise be to the society. Rather, they are whole persons, who bring value in form of labour that can

⁴⁵ Author’s translation

⁴⁶ Author’s translation

⁴⁷ Author’s translation

potentially be undermined and even exploited in the proposed format of the programme. The Integration Basic Education is, thus, not seen as a net positive and a upskilling programme necessarily targeting the individual refugee or family reunified, who lack qualifications to enter the labour market. Instead, it becomes articulated as a potentially exploitative legislation and initiative, which can be used to push refugees and family reunified into low-wage positions.

The parties' criticism of the Government's proposed bill, has been further elaborated and expanded in a later commentary by Finn Jørgensen, who has accused the Integration Basic Education of being a "front for cheap labour"⁴⁸ (Jyllandsposten, 2016). Read in light of his other points of criticism, he hereby implies that the Government and the labour market stakeholders behind the bill have intentionally left the definition of the target group for the Integration Basic Education vague and, thereby, open to exploitation. Through his discourse he, thus, raises the suspicion that the Integration Basic Education is not just intended to be an upskilling programme of benefit to the individual, who lack qualifications to enter vocational education or the ordinary labour market. Rather, it appears to be a way for the Government and employers to secure cheap labour for skilled industries with a demand.

Thereby, this line of discourse articulates the Integration Basic Education as an potentially exploitative legislation and maybe even a matter of institutionalised and state legitimised exploitation of refugee labour. Simultaneously, it centres the refugees and family reunified as vulnerable persons and victims, who can easily be exploited through the programme.

4.3.2 The Integration Basic Education as a Stepping Stone

On the other side, we find those who endorsed the proposed bill for the Integration Basic Education. They include spokesperson for the Socialdemocratic Party, Dan Jørgensen who announces that: "*We [the Socialdemocratic Party] believe that a so-called IGU will have a positive effect. It can be a first step into a labour market, which can otherwise be difficult to enter, partly due to the high qualification requirements we set in Denmark, and partly due to the high wage levels*"⁴⁹ (Appendix 1:1). This indicates that the Socialdemocratic Party takes a positive stance towards the idea of low salaries and benefits offered to the Integration Basic Education-students as they believe that it will make the refugees and family reunified

⁴⁸ Author's translation

⁴⁹ Author's translation

more attractive (i.e. competitive) as workers in the highly qualified labour market. Furthermore, Dan Jørgensen articulates the high qualification requirements as a barrier for the refugee and family reunified's participation in the labour market, which the Integration Basic Education can diminish.

Also, Marcus Knuth, spokesperson for Venstre, applauds the new programme. He, like Dan Jørgensen, does not concur with the criticism of the Integration Basic Education's potential for exploitation, which is argued to be due to the low wages offered to the Integration Basic Education-students and the compensatory bonuses offered to the private companies, who employ the students. Instead he articulates the scheme as a reward, claiming that: *... instead of being parked on public welfare for a little more [money], it is a reward to go out and get a job, so that one can get out and go from the IGU to a real job afterwards and earn even more.*⁵⁰ (Appendix 1:17) And he further states that: *... if you are here as a refugee, and if you wish to be integrated, if you want to enter the Danish labour market, the IGU is not a place where you remain for the rest of your life. It is a stepping stone into the real labour market, if you can call it that, i.e. outside of the IGU, which is a kind of internship*⁵¹ (ibid.). Hereby, he legitimises the lower wages and the bonus scheme by referring to the temporary nature of the programme and by equating it to an internship. Furthermore, he frames the programme as an opportunity to enter the labour market for the refugee or family reunified, who would otherwise remain on passive income.

These framings of the Integration Basic Education as a positive means to support better labour market participation of the refugees is echoed by spokesperson for the Radical Left, Sofie Carsten Nielsen, who argues that: *...It is imperative that we get more refugees started as quickly as possible. And with the Integration Basic Education, more refugees will gain skills and experience, both with work and cooperation in a Danish workplace simultaneously with upskilling in an educational course, so that the individual refugee, together with the work experience and the internship, also acquires the language skills and other skills necessary to cope in the labour market, and can upgrade concrete qualifications.... It is a good step on the way to getting refugees started from day one*⁵² (Appendix 1:29). She stresses the necessity of getting more refugees and family reunified in employment quickly and sees the programme as a way to ensure the necessary upskilling, which will enable them to enter the labour market.

⁵⁰ Author's translation

⁵¹ Author's translation

⁵² Author's translation

This main line of discourse in the debate on the Integration Basic Education centres the discourse around the same two central terms as the discourse unfolded in the previous section of the analyses; namely the Integration Basic Education and the refugees and family reunified. Here, however, the constellation of words and phrases used to ascribe them with meaning differs. We, thus, see two contrasting discourses forming.

In this line of discourse the Integration Basic Education and the refugee and family reunified is inscribed in an equivalence chain of words and phrases such as “positive effect”, “upskilling”, “stepping stone”, “internship”, “cope in the labour market”, “real job afterwards”, “work experience”, “reward”, “parked on welfare”, “imperative that we get more refugees started”, “acquire skills” and “first step”⁵³. Through this constellation, the discourse on the refugees and family reunified appears to echo the Government’s framing of them as a burden to society, as illustrated in chapter 1 of the analysis. This becomes evident through phrases like “it is imperative that we get more refugees started as quickly as possible”, indicating that the unemployment of these groups is an urgent societal matter, which must be solved. Read in light of this, the view on the refugees and family reunified as a potential resource, unfolded in chapter 1, also appears to be repeated here. They need “upskilling”, “work experience” and “skills” if they are to be able to “cope in the labour market” - i.e. not being “parked on public welfare” at society's expense.

Here, the Integration Basic Education is presented as a solution to this problem. The word constellations surrounding it makes this clear. Here the programme is articulated as a net positive that will give the refugees and family reunified a “first step” to a “real job afterwards”. Through this constellation, The Integration Basic Education' becomes articulated as an “upskilling” programme, which functions as a “stepping stone” to ordinary employment - a “real job” - in the labour market. Furthermore, it is formulated as an opportunity to work and to “obtain qualification” through an “internship”-like position for the refugees and family reunified, who do not yet meet the high demands of the Danish labour market in terms of worklife qualifications. It is thus both described as a benefit to the refugee and family reunified and to society due to its perceived “positive effect”. It is a positive starting point for the refugees and family reunified, who would otherwise just be “parked on welfare” at the cost of the state funds.

Thus, the Integration Basic Education is here not articulated as a matter of labour exploitation as in the previous line of discourse. Instead it is framed as a good opportunity for

⁵³ All words in the constellation are translated by the author

refugees and family reunified, who cannot enter the labour market on ordinary conditions due to barriers such as high qualification demands and the high wage levels. In this line of discourse, the refugees and family reunified have shortcomings in the sense that they lack competences, which justify the low wage offered to them during the programme and special intern-like working arrangement. Their labour does not have an inherent value unlike the previous line of discourse, where the labour of the refugees and family reunified is valuable even if it is unskilled. Here, the programme "rewards" the individual refugee or family reunified by giving him/her the necessary skills, "the stepping stone", which enable him/her to eventually obtain a "real job" and earn an ordinary salary. At the same time, it also benefits the society by getting more refugees and family reunified into employment, who would otherwise have been "parked on public welfare" at the cost of state funds.

This discursive representation appears to be very much in tune with that of the Danish government presented in the purpose clause of the bill on the Integration Basic Education, which was elaborated in the previous chapter of the analysis. Here the Integration Basic Education is linked to a very similar constellation of words and formulations such as: "upskilling", "opportunity to work", "obtain qualifications", "provide a basis for starting a vocational education (...) or ordinary employment". Through this constellation, the government too articulates the Integration Basic Education as a form of upskilling programme, which functions as a pathway to the ordinary labour market or vocational education. It is formulated as an "opportunity to work" and to "obtain qualification" for the refugees and family reunified, who do not yet meet the high demands of the Danish labour market in terms of worklife qualifications - an articulation that can also be traced back to the Tripartite Agreement on Labour Market Integration (Lovforslag:§1; Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedintegration, 2016:8). We, thus, see the Government's discourse on the Integration Basic Education as upskilling and as a pathway to vocational education or ordinary employment repeated by those who advocated for the adoption of the bill in the preliminary debate in parliament.

4.3.3 Sub Conclusion: The IGU as Labour Exploitation or A stepping Stone to Integration?

In the above analysis I have argued that there are two main lines of discourses appearing from the discussion preceding the adoption of the Integration Basic Education into law. They both centre the Integration Basic Education as their nodal point, however, they ascribe very

different meanings to the subject by placing it in different constellations of meaning with different words. The Integration Basic Education thus also becomes a “floating signifier”, which the actors behind each discourse tries to fill in with content in a different way. Thereby, they create conflicting discursive constructions of the Integration Basic Education and its potential in relation to the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified, resulting in “antagonistic struggles” between the two.

In the first main line of discourse, which will be named “The Integration Basic Education as Institutionalised Exploitation of Refugee Labour” we see that the refugees and family reunified are framed as persons, who bring value in form of labour that can potentially be undermined and even exploited in the proposed format of the programme. The Integration Basic Education is articulated as potentially exploitative, since it, due to its vague definitions and requirements, allows employers to buy this labour for a discount, bypassing the “normal” terms and conditions of the labour market. Here the perception appears to be that value is taken from the refugees and family reunified and given to the employers in the form of cheap labour through the Integration Basic Education. The Integration Basic Education is thus not, like in the second line of discourse, seen as a net positive upskilling programme only targeting the individual refugee or family reunified, who lack qualifications to enter vocational education or the ordinary labour market. Rather, it becomes articulated as a potentially exploitative initiative, which can be used to push already qualified refugees and family reunified into low-wage positions.

Thereby, this line of discourse articulates the Integration Basic Education as an exploitative legislation, which, due to the low salaries offered to the students enrolled, along with the lack of educational objective of the programme, risks placing the refugees and family reunified in a precarious position within an institutional framework.

In stark contrast to this, we find the second line of discourse, which we can here call “The Integration Basic Education as a Stepping Stone to labour market integration”. Here the Integration Basic Education is not articulated as a matter of labour exploitation as in the previous line of discourse. Instead it is framed as a great opportunity for refugees and family reunified, who cannot enter the labour market on ordinary conditions due to barriers such as high qualification demands and the high wage levels. In this line of discourse, the refugees and family reunified lack competences, which justify the low wage offered to them during the programme. Their labour does not have an inherent value unlike the previous line of discourse, where the labour of the refugees and family reunified is valuable even if it is

unskilled. Here value is given by the employers to the refugees and family reunified in the form of access to the labour market through the Integration Basic Education.

The programme benefits the individual refugee or family reunified by giving him/her the necessary upskilling, which enables him/her to eventually enter the labour market on ordinary terms. At the same time, it also benefits the society by getting more refugees and family reunified into employment, who would otherwise have been "parked on public welfare" at the cost of state funds. Thus, this line of discourse appears to echo the Government's framing of the refugees and family reunified as burdens to society, which through upskilling in the Integration Basic Education, can become transformed into resources for the labour market.

5.0 Conclusion

Since its introduction in 2016, the Integration Basic Education has been a subject which has divided political opinion. On the one hand, we find parties who celebrate the idea of an industry-oriented integration programme as a pathway for refugees and family reunified to employment, while others reject it over concerns for how it will position the refugees and family reunified in the Danish labour market. These divided opinions have made me curious to investigate both the underlying rationales of the implementation of the Integration Basic Education and the conflicting interpretations of its purpose and potential in relation to the labour market integration among different labour market stakeholders and political parties.

In this thesis, I have sought to answer the question: *“How does the Danish government, political parties and labour market stakeholders position refugees and family reunified in the Danish Labour market in the context of the Integration Basic Education?”*. To answer this question, I have focused on the debate preceding the adoption of the Integration Basic Education into law in 2016, as the discourses surrounding the Integration Basic Education were the most openly antagonistic at this point in time.

In order to conduct this analysis, I have combined the methodological frameworks of Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis and Laclau and Mouffe’s Discourse Theory. Whereas, Fairclough’s approach lends itself to a more in-depth analysis of a few cases of text, Laclau and Mouffe provides different analytical concepts to investigate the more abstract processes in which different discourses battle to fixate meaning to specific terms and domains. Through the combination of the two approaches, I have, with inspiration from Fairclough, delved into concrete examples of discourse in the form of policy texts and, drawing on Laclau and Mouffe’s conceptual tools, investigated how the Government, political parties and different labour market stakeholders ascribe different meaning to the Integration Basic Education in relation to the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified, resulting in antagonistic struggles within the integration policy field.

Through the analysis of my empirical material, I have identified two main lines of discourse. They are both centred around the Integration Basic Education, however, they ascribe very different meanings to the programme and its potential in relation to the labour market integration of refugees and family reunified.

In the first main line of discourse, the Integration Basic Education is articulated as potentially exploitative, since it, due to its vague definitions and requirements, allows employers to buy the refugee and family reunified's labour for a discount, bypassing the "normal" terms and conditions of the labour market. The Integration Basic Education is thus not, like in the second line of discourse, seen as a net positive upskilling programme only targeting the individual refugee or family reunified, who lack qualifications to enter vocational education or the ordinary labour market. Rather, it becomes articulated as a potentially exploitative initiative, which can be used to push already qualified refugees and family reunified into low-wage positions. Thereby, this line of discourse articulates the Integration Basic Education as an exploitative legislation, which, due to the low salaries offered to the students enrolled, along with the lack of educational objective of the programme, risks placing the refugees and family reunified in a precarious position within an institutional framework.

In the second line of discourse, the Integration Basic Education is not articulated as a matter of labour exploitation as in the previous line of discourse. Instead it is framed as a great opportunity for upskilling for the refugees and family reunified, who cannot enter the labour market on ordinary conditions due to barriers such as high qualification demands and the high wage levels. In this line of discourse, the refugees and family reunified lack competences, which justify the low wage offered to them during the programme. In this discourse, the Integration Basic Education is perceived to benefit the individual refugee or family reunified by giving him/her the necessary upskilling to eventually enter the labour market on ordinary terms. At the same time, it also articulates the programme as of benefit to the society as it is expected to more refugees and family reunified into employment, who would otherwise have been parked on public welfare. Thus, this line of discourse appears to echo the Government's framing of the refugees and family reunified as burdens to society, which through upskilling in the Integration Basic Education, can become transformed into resources for the labour market.

6.0 Bibliography

Bm.dk. 2016. *Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration*. [online] Available at: <<https://bm.dk/media/6669/trepartsaftale-om-arbejdsmarkedsintegration-pdf.pdf>> [Accessed 2 February 2022].

In text: (Trepartsaftale om arbejdsmarkedsintegration, 2016)

Bm.dk. 2019. *Regeringen og arbejdsmarkedets parter er enige om at forlænge IGU'en*. [online] Available at: <<https://bm.dk/nyheder-presse/pressemeddelelser/2019/02/regeringen-og-arbejdsmarkedets-parter-er-enige-om-at-forlaenge-igu-en/>> [Accessed 10 April 2022].

In text: (Beskæftigelsesministeriet, 2019)

Dansk Erhverv. 2018. *Integrationsgrunduddannelse for flygtninge har bestået første eksamen*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.danskerhverv.dk/presse-og-nyheder/nyheder/2018/september/integrationsgrunduddannelse-for-flygtninge-har-bestaet-forste-eksamen/>> [Accessed 10 May 2022].

In text: (Dansk Erhverv, 2018)

Da.dk. 2018. *IGU i Praksis*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.da.dk/globalassets/integration/igu-i-praksis.pdf>> [Accessed 4 March 2022].

In text: (Dansk Arbejdsgiverforening, 2018)

Danskindustri.dk. 2022. *Integrationsgrunduddannelse (IGU) - DI*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.danskindustri.dk/vi-radgiver-dig/personale/ansattelse-og-rekruttering/flygtninge-i-arbejde/integrationsgrunduddannelse-igu/>> [Accessed 4 March 2022].

In text: (Dansk Industri, 2022)

Fairclough, N., 1992. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity.

In text: (Fairclough, 1992)

Ft.dk. 2016. *L 188 endeligt svar på spørgsmål 5*. [online] Available at:
<<https://www.ft.dk/samling/20151/lovforslag/L188/spm/5/svar/1327021/1636831.pdf>>
[Accessed 3 February 2022].

In text: (L 188, 2016)

Ft.dk. 2016. *Forslag til Lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse (IGU)*. [online] Available at:
<https://www.ft.dk/ripdf/samling/20151/lovforslag/l188/20151_l188_som_fremsat.pdf>
[Accessed 8 March 2022].

In text: (Forslag til Lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse, 2016)

Helms Jørgensen, C., 2019. *Erhvervsuddannelse for flygtninge - Fem danske cases om god praksis*. [online] Rucforsk.ruc.dk. Available at:
<https://rucforsk.ruc.dk/ws/portalfiles/portal/64167135/Fem_danske_cases_om_god_praksis_12.4.2019.pdf>

[Accessed 5 March 2022].

In text: (Helms Jørgensen, 2019)

Integrationsbarometer.dk. 2021. *Igu: Status på ordningen og evaluering af implementering af ordningens justeringer*. [online] Available at:
<<https://integrationsbarometer.dk/aktuelt/filer-og-billeder-igu/IGUStatuspordningenogevalueringafimplementeringafordningensjusteringer.pdf>>

[Accessed 5 March 2022].

In text: (Integrationsbarometer 1, 2021).

Integrationsbarometer.dk. 2021. *Integrationsuddannelse: Supplerende Statistikker*. [online] Available at:
<<https://integrationsbarometer.dk/aktuelt/filer-og-billeder-igu/Integrationsbarometerapril2022.pdf>>

[Accessed 4 March 2022].

In text: (Integrations Barometer 2, 2021)

Jyllands-Posten. 2016. *Enhedslisten: Trepartsudspil er pivåbent for misbrug*. [online] Available at:
<<https://jyllands-posten.dk/politik/ECE8502561/enhedslisten-trepartsudspil-er-pivaabent-for-misbrug/>> [Accessed 2 April 2022].

In text: (Jyllandsposten, 2016)

Kl.dk. 2022. *Trepartsaftale om integrationsgrunduddannelse (igu) på plads*. [online]

Available at:

<<https://www.kl.dk/forsidenyheder/2022/februar/trepartsaftale-om-integrationsgrunduddannelse-igu-paa-plads/>>

[Accessed 10 May 2022].

In text: (Kommunernes Landsforening, 2022)

Laclau, E., & Mouffe, C., 2002. *Det radikale demokrati: Diskursteoriens politiske perspektiv*.

Frederiksberg : Roskilde Universitetsforlag, pp. 11– 100.

In text: (Laclau & Mouffe, 2002)

Lynggaard, K., 2015. Dokumentanalyse. In: S. Brinkmann and L. Tanggaard, ed., *Kvalitative Metoder*, 2nd ed. Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag, pp. 153-167.

In text: (Lynggaard, 2015)

Medborgere.dk. 2022. *Socialdemokratiet – Medborgerskab*. [online] Available at:

<<https://medborgere.dk/socialdemokratiet/>>

[Accessed 4 March 2022].

In text: (Medborgerne, 2022)

Nielsen Arendt, J., Dustmann, C. and Ku, H., 2022. *Refugee Migration and the Labor Market: Lessons from 40 Years of Post-Arrival Policies in Denmark*. [online]

Rockwoolfonden.dk. Available at:

<<https://www.rockwoolfonden.dk/app/uploads/2022/03/RFF-Study-paper-171-Refugee-Migration-and-the-Labor-Market.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1IaVzph5U3kZTDnZyihayYw7EPRBJVNramykuhEnrHZ5PkILuxEZ3FSo>>

[Accessed 3 April 2022].

In text: (Arendt, et. al., 2022)

Phillips, L., 2015. Diskursanalyse. In: S. Brinkmann and L. Tanggaard, ed., *Kvalitative Metoder*, 2nd ed. Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag, pp. 297-301.

In text: (Phillips, 2015)

Refugees.dk. 2018. *IGU*. [online] Available at:

<<http://refugees.dk/fakta/integration-job-uddannelse/igu/>>

[Accessed 4 March 2022].

In text: (Refugees Welcome, 2018)

Regeringen.dk. 2016. *Samarbejde om bedre integration*. [online] Available at: <https://www.regeringen.dk/media/1327/samarbejde_om_bedre_integrations.pdf> [Accessed 2 February 2022].

In text: (Samarbejde om bedre integration, 2016)

Retsinformation. 1998. *Integrationslov. Lov om integration af udlændinge i Danmark (LOV nr 474 af 01/07/1998)*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lta/1998/474>> [Accessed 9 March 2022].

In text: (Integrationslov, 1998)

Retsinformation. 2016. *Lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse (igu) (LOV nr 623 af 08/06/2016)*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lta/2016/623>> [Accessed 9 March 2022]

In text: (Lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse, 2016)

Retsinformation. 2020. *Integrationsloven. Bekendtgørelse af lov om integration af udlændinge i Danmark (LBK nr 1146 af 22/06/2020)*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lta/2020/1146>>

[Accessed 9 March 2022]

In text: (Integrationsloven, 2020)

Retsinformation. 2022. *Lov om ændring af lov om integrationsgrunduddannelse (LOV nr 722 af 27/04/2021)* [online] Available at: <<https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lta/2021/722>> [Accessed 4 March 2022].

In text: (Lov om ændring af integrationsuddannelse, 2021s)

Socialdemokratiet.dk. 2022. *Arbejdsløshed | Socialdemokratiet*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.socialdemokratiet.dk/det-vil-vi/arbejdsloshed/>> [Accessed 4 March 2022].

In text: (Socialdemokratiet, 2022)

Stm.dk. 2016. *LLR Trepartsaftale om integration*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.stm.dk/presse/tidligere-pressemeddelelser/llr-trepartsaftale-om-integration/>> [Accessed 10 March 2022].

In text: (Statsministeriet, 2016)

Stenild, K. and Martens, A., 2009. *Integrationspolitikens historie og den integrationspolitiske dagsorden*. [online] Djoef-forlag.dk. Available at:

<https://www.djoef-forlag.dk/openaccess/samf/samfdocs/2009/2009_1/samf_2009_1_3.pdf?fclid=IwAR24vWVFWt1NGapwToAMr6J0AQdnuB7Fm4yq3y6VWM7oxOPBhc8KOnxQD5E>
[Accessed 6 March 2022].

In text: (Stenild and Martens, 2009)

ug.dk. 2022. *Integrationsgrunduddannelsen (IGU)*. [online] Available at:

<<https://www.ug.dk/uddannelser/andreerhvervsrettedeuddannelser/andreuddannelserforvoksne/andresaerligeuddannelser/integrationsgrunduddannelsen-igu>>

[Accessed 4 March 2022].

In text: (Uddannelsesguiden, 2022)

UNHCR. 1951. *Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*. [online]

Available at: <<https://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10>>

[Accessed 3 March 2022].

In text: (UNHCR, 1951)

Uvm.dk. 2022. *Integrationsgrunduddannelsen (IGU)*. [online] Available at:

<<https://www.uvm.dk/integrationsgrunduddannelsen-igu/om-igu>>

[Accessed 4 March 2022].

In text: (Undervisningsministeriet, 2022)

Winther Jørgensen, M. and Phillips, L., 1999. *Diskursanalyse som teori og metode*. Frederiksberg: Roskilde Universitetsforlag/Samfundslitteratur, pp. 9-161.

In text: (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999)