

An Occupational Perspective on Discourse in Practice: The presentation of desirable occupations within texts used in Dutch refugee integration programs

Author(s)

Blankvoort, Nadine

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Nadine Blankvoort

An Occupational Perspective on Discourse in Practice: The presentation of desirable occupations within texts used in Dutch refugee integration programs

On this page:

Discussion:

Background

Refugees encounter texts such as course books, pamphlets and exams during mandatory integration in the Netherlands. Texts present explicit or implicit messages to refugees on “successful” integration and citizenship.

The What’s the Problem Represented to Be? (WPR) approach from Carol Bacchi, allows us to understand how texts are a presentation of governments see problems, and what is needing to be fixed. Applying an occupational lens facilitates identification of occupations promoted as desirable or discouraged towards those striving for citizenship.

Feedback



Relevance:

Discourse in integration programs can be considered as a tool of governance, aiming to promote “acceptable” everyday occupations during the transition to citizenship.

Aim:

This presentation aims to present findings of an initial analysis for discussion. The main aim of the research project, is to explore the impact of differing discourses in integration programs in the Netherlands, including government and citizen programs, to understand the consequences of these discourses on the lives of refugees.

Identify Gaps:

This research addresses important gaps in current integration research. Firstly, this research focuses on texts in practice, while previous research has largely focused on the policy texts. Secondly, this research program will focus on not only government integration programs, but also those who are being initiated and facilitated by citizens in the Netherlands’.

Theoretical Foundation:

Theoretical approach inspired by Foucault governmentality. Critical analysis of discourse in texts is informed by Bacchi’s WPR approach. Concept of citizenship will be framed with Isin’s concept of acts of citizenship. Theories from occupational science, such as occupational possibilities, will facilitate understanding of how occupations are promoted in practice.

Conclusion:

Textual documents, utilized in practice, are important to include when exploring the relationship between discourse and everyday doing. It is important to consider discourse as a tool of governance and how it impacts on the occupational engagement of refugees.

DISCUSSION:

1. Do current occupation-based theories facilitate exploration of the impact of discourse on everyday doing?
2. What theoretical or methodological tools allow us to link the impact of discourse to the lived experience?
3. Can practice-based evidence, examined through an occupational lens, facilitate the developing of alternative discourses?

Bibliography

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