

Article

Interactions of Power and Social Pedagogical Recognition: An Analysis of Narratives of Pupils Who Use Alcohol and Drugs in an Upper Secondary School Context in Sweden

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to contribute new knowledge about interactions of power and social pedagogical recognition in narratives of students who use alcohol and drugs in an upper secondary school context. In this context, the student narratives create and re-create a series of images of varied treatment by professional actors (e.g., teachers, student coordinators, counsellors). The reproduced power interactions in narratives describing the practices of professional actors are significant for student learning, teaching, nurturing, inclusion, change, discipline, and identity creation. The social pedagogical recognition of the “other party” in the pupil–professional actor relationship is especially important for achieving the aims of including pupils who use alcohol and drugs in a learning context and enacting positive change through the creation and re-creation of social pedagogical identities (e.g., successful pupil identity) in the upper secondary school context.

Keywords: insignificant power-wielding other; meaningfulness; reliability; account; rejection; ethnic identity; self-esteem; self-awareness; victim identity



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1. Introduction

The Swedish National Agency for Education (2015, 2020) and the Swedish Schools Inspectorate (2015) have noted that some pupils in Sweden either leave senior-level comprehensive school without meeting the entry requirements for admission to upper secondary school or drop out of upper secondary school early [1–3]. (Some parts of this text were previously published in English, in the scientific article, “Inclusive Educational Spaces and Social Pedagogical Recognition: Interaction- and Social-Pedagogy-Inspired Analysis of Space Dynamics in Compulsory, Upper secondary and Post-Secondary Education” [4], and in Swedish, in the independent work at the first cycle, “A social pedagogical analysis of stories by professional actors working with young people and young people who use alcohol and/or drugs. Inclusion, learning, change and identity formation” [5]. Social and pedagogical activities in schools are dramatized as playing a crucial role in the development of children and young people. School dropouts or failures in the school context are portrayed as a crucial dimension for the development of alcohol and narcotics use, criminality, mental illness, and difficulties in establishing oneself in the labour market [6–9]. Conversely, a good connection to the school context and good school results are portrayed as being associated with a reduced risk for the social and pedagogical problems that can affect a young person [10,11].

DuPont et al. (2013) stress that various types of school problems among students may lead to an increased risk of alcohol and narcotics use in adulthood. The school problems highlighted in that study are described as originating in low self-esteem, which leads to problematic relationships with teachers and schoolmates, low attendance, and poor academic performance. Previous research on this phenomenon has shown that poor school

involvement, shortcomings in teacher–pupil–parent relationships, insults from or violations by teachers, incidents of violence, and unsafe places in school contribute to an increased risk of dropping out of school. This effect in turn increases the risk of both alcohol and narcotics use and other health-related problems [12,13].

As an environment, schools can contribute to stability for students, and education is a central resource for an independent life, establishment in the labour market, and participation in society at large [4,14–18]. Fothergill and Ensminger (2006) and Trenz et al. (2015) highlight that it is important for students to have a good connection to school and positive relationships with teachers and peers, as well as good grades in upper secondary school [19,20]. These components provide a protective dimension against risky consumption of alcohol and narcotics use in adulthood [20]. In previous research, upper secondary school thus was dramatized as a place that can be safe—where recognition can be bestowed in the social and pedagogical senses—which in turn can strengthen the self-esteem of the student (see Sections 3 and 4).

Allan and Persson (2016) emphasise that a teacher’s encouragement, commitment, and ability to motivate (inspire) contribute to the reproduction of the perception of students as included and participatory in the school context. A reciprocal relationship between pupils and teachers, characterised by trust, is also presented as important for the engagement of both populations. Allan and Persson show that encouraging pupils to take responsibility for themselves and to support and help others in the classroom contributes to experiences of inclusion and participation. Other dimensions highlighted as contributing to inclusion and participation among students were their own norms and values in relation to their academic goals, which were reproduced as being in line with the norms of the organisation (school). These dimensions highlight the importance of helping students become more self-aware and to recognise their own position in the respective school context. Student strengths in relation to learning goals have been presented as important factors for higher motivation and achievement [21].

Sharma and Branscum (2013) detail the importance of prevention efforts in schools for young people with problematic substance use. Prevention efforts in the school context are presented as being able to foster identity formation of the young people based on the rejection of drugs. The authors point to the fact that many students experiment with drugs without becoming addicted, whereas others do become addicted. The kind of drug dependency that they develop is reproduced as a complex problem said to involve a range of different professional actors, whereas the issue of successful cooperation among professionals, pupils, and relatives is crucial for the creation and re-creation of student identities based on the rejection of drugs [22].

The aim of the present study is to contribute to the development of new knowledge about interactions of power and social pedagogical recognition in narratives of students who use alcohol and drugs in an upper secondary school context. The research question posed by the study is the following: How are verbal aspects important for interactions of power and social pedagogical recognition presented during interviews with students who use alcohol and drugs in an upper secondary school context?

2. Materials and Methods

This analysis is part of the research project, “School as a protection factor. An analysis of achievements, obstacles, collaboration, and identities in senior high school work with students who use alcohol and narcotics” [23]. With inspiration from qualitative methods and narrative research, the study’s empirical material is gathered and analysed. The empirical material of the study is based on qualitatively oriented interviews with 13 pupils who use alcohol and narcotics within the study contexts of upper secondary school in Sweden. The interview material of this study also consists of qualitatively oriented interviews with 36 professional actors working with the study’s narrative category of “pupils who use alcohol and narcotics”, within the study contexts of upper secondary school activities and outpatient treatment units in Sweden. Several of the study’s informants have work-related

experiences from both the school and treatment contexts. This part of the study's empirical material is not analysed within the framework of this study (see also [24]). All interviews were collected in 2020 and 2021 within the framework of the research project, following the issuance of an advisory opinion from the Regional Ethical Review Board in Sweden [25].

Through this analysis, the study contributes to the development of knowledge regarding the narrative management of the combination of interactions of power, social pedagogical recognition, inclusion, learning, change, and identity creation with students who use alcohol and drugs. It also adds information about the importance of stories for the representation of inclusion, learning, change, social pedagogical recognition, and lack of recognition in the upper secondary school contexts, the identity production and reproduction of students who use alcohol and drugs, and alternative approaches to analysis compared to typical psychiatric and medical perspectives. In addition, this study contributes to the development of knowledge about how interactions of power and social pedagogical recognition in upper secondary school contexts work in relation to students' past and present experiences regarding normatively right and normatively deviant behaviour in these situations.

3. Theoretical Starting Point

The general scientific theoretical points of departure for the study are interactionist [26], constructionist [27,28] and ethnomethodological [29,30]. Social reality is not a stable and immutable social phenomenon; rather, it is changeable and characterised by constant interactive processes, changes in interpersonal encounters, and dynamic activities tied to the various situations in the contexts in which they occur [4,26–36]. The words Context (with Collins's conceptual apparatus) or Region (with Goffman's conceptual apparatus) are used to connote the delimited field where a series of interactive activities (situations—interactive rituals) are played out and can be delimited by the actors' observational and hearing abilities. Empirical examples of these interactive flows in the countless interpersonal exchanges that occur in a context contain the interactive behaviours of persons in a specific situation; the narrative representations of a particular situation by actors; and the productions and reproductions of important social objects such as language, text, documents, laws, news, images, and videos [37–40].

In the interactive sense, the delimited field of "context" can be analysed as consisting of three subregions. The front-stage subregion is where the performance of the actors themselves (as action, reproduction, and/or production of social objects) takes place. The back-stage context (behind the scenes) is a subregion that is inaccessible for those in the surroundings (the audience). In this context, actors who are acting, characterising, and/or producing can affect their future performances and reflect on their previous performances, prepare, or unwind [4] (pp. 3–4), [26,31,32]. Some contexts can be both back-stage and front-stage. Upper secondary schools, for example, treatment rooms, outpatient treatment units, classrooms, and different offices (e.g., of the counsellor, head teacher, school nurse) can act as either. The designation of front-stage or back-stage depends on the actor's particular performance and the function of the contexts at the time.

The third context is outside/off-stage (the outsider/exclusion region). This subregion represents everything that does not belong to the front- or back-stage contexts. Actors in the third subregion are outside actors because they act, reproduce, and/or produce on the outside. In their relationships with actors established in the front- or back-stage contexts, the actions of outsiders take the risk of creating and re-creating disputes in the interaction. An outside actor who steps onto the front-stage or back-stage creates momentary confusion by disrupting the social order and driving a redefinition of the situation in the context [4] (pp. 3–4), [26,31,32].

Theorists' contextual reasoning on this subject made us interested in what could be appearing in different characterised situations in the upper secondary school contexts. Using this question as a starting point, we found that the study informants (pupils who use alcohol and drugs in the contexts of upper secondary school in Sweden), when constructing

and reconstructing their identities, typify actors from both the front-stage and back-stage subregions, as well as from the outside (off-stage). Just as the classroom and teacher's and counsellor's office can be both a front-stage and a back-stage, the typified actor can be both a professional actor in these subregions and an actor outside the organisation, such as another pupil and/or a parent.

Typifications accomplish an important purpose in interactive creation and re-creation. Division into categories and typification of individuals, professions, and events into types—their identification through categorisation—is essential for navigating the multitude of daily interactions. Typification is not a static process; rather, it changes from one interactive flow (situation) and context to the next. The productions, representations, and actions of an actor represent a cause for and a response to the productions, representations, and actions of the other. In this procedure, the associations and self-esteem of the involved players, their creation and re-creation of various social and pedagogical identities, and their recognition in these identities take shape and are altered and established [4] (pp. 3–4), [26,31,32]. Considering these perspectives, the stories, and practical actions (interaction) of both pupil and professionals in the upper secondary school contexts, as well as their analysis, can be considered as meaning-making actions. These actions can add to the improvement of knowledge that can support the involvement and success of both pupil and professionals in circumstances that exemplify these contexts.

An essential starting point in analyses embedded in the scientific theory above is that actors in all social contexts are categorised in relation to their interactive positioning in a given situation, in which particular actors obtain the advantage in relation to the others. Therefore, some actors in the context will have better authority and greater social status than others. Consequently, they have an advantage in defining and re-defining how actors, groups, contexts, and society should act and be represented, produced, and reproduced [4] (pp. 3–4), [26,31,32,34]. In its most serious form, this advantage might lead to the subjugation of individuals with lesser social status.

3.1. Power in Upper Secondary School Contexts

Weber (1968) analyses power as a direct action by an actor X that forces an actor Y to act in accordance with X's will, even if the action does not support Y's interests or desire. Weber draws attention to two dimensions of power relations/interactions. The initial dimension is kept out of the practical implementation of pressure(s) or related threat. The other dimension arises when exposed individuals give in or surrender to and accept the power of the one exerting the pressure. The power of the executor of pressure often contains an order with substance that particular individuals or groups are supposed to follow [35] (p. 4), [41–43]. Collins's (2004, 2008) analysis of power, conflict, solidarity, resistance, and status is inspired by Weber's perspective. Collins considers that in all social arenas, the practice of power is always met with opposition from other people and thus creates new conflicts. For Collins, "conflict and solidarity are two sides of the same coin" [33] (p. 40), [35] (p. 4). Mobilisation against an enemy in interaction and in situation often leads to solidarity among individuals and groups, and vice versa.

Power relations/interactions in interpersonal encounters are influenced, for example, by the personalities of the parties involved, verbal ability, knowledge, domination techniques, posture, and strength, and the individual's class and position in the context, age, sex, ethnicity, and group affiliation. An individual's economic class, educational level, gender, or ethnicity is related to whether an individual and group are at an advantage or disadvantage during interactions in a given context [33,41,42].

All power relations/interactions are characterised by a certain degree of resistance. With this resistance comes an opportunity to change power relations/interactions, which injects a certain degree of freedom into all relations by increasing individual awareness of how power functions and can be influenced. Power is dynamic and constantly changing—conscious or unconscious actions can always shift the power balance. However, power relations/interactions are not phenomena that merely inhibit and oppress;

they also can be seen as something beneficial that moves people forward. Power relations/interactions are created and re-created in every situation, in every relationship, and in every context. The interactive normalisation contributes to the construction of what the establishment considers normal and abnormal. By constantly correcting and adapting their behaviour, actors who act and are represented as acting in power relations/interactions adapt their actions in accordance with normatively accepted expectations in a given context. This adaptation can be seen as a form of disciplinary power relations/interactions, which contribute to the creation and re-creation of normatively accepted behaviour within the given context [33,41–43].

In the upper secondary school context, professional actors are expected to have knowledge about interventions that may be relevant in the practical social pedagogical work with young people who need help and support. With this knowledge and the formal position of the professional actor, an interactive power advantage is actualised in the relationship with the pupil. At the same time, the professional actor is expected to relate to the normatively accepted behaviour in the upper secondary school context; to discipline, monitoring, and control in relation to the pupils and other staff in the school; and to structural frameworks that produce economic constraints, time constraints, and demands for measurable, evidence-based interventions in the school [33,41–43].

The starting point of the present study is that young people's narratives emanate from and are made in a steady stream of power relations/interactions (a series with varied content) with professional actors in the upper secondary school context. Young people's narratives about professional actors in the upper secondary school context are influenced by power relations/interactions in this context and as such constitute part of the empirical material for the present study through qualitative interviews and transcripts of these interviews.

3.2. Social Pedagogical Recognition

The social pedagogical perspective is centred on theoretical and methodological logic, which contends that society is not governed solely from the top down. Additionally, this perspective presumes that normality, in the teaching situation, and fellowship are not exemplified by a transparent structure or order in either the social or pedagogical sense. Social pedagogical order—or social pedagogical disorder—does not arise only from normative standards in teaching situations linked to the school's written and unwritten routines, rules, values, norms, and curricula. Rather, both social pedagogical order and social pedagogical disorder are created and re-created through interpersonal interactions, constitutive rules, conflicts, meaning making, monitoring, and control. Moreover, social pedagogical order and disorder together are influenced by the actors' practical actions in unlike situations in the social pedagogical context [18] (pp. 22–24), [36] (pp. 3–5), [4,16,24,44–46]. When a teacher meets a pupil, the exchanges between the two include the production, creation, negotiation, and adjustment of the social pedagogical order—and disorder—in teaching and other situations in the upper secondary school context. Indeed, these phenomena appear to be shaped and reshaped uninterruptedly in school situations, where a series of interactions and events plays out that are describable and observable, retold, presented, and reproduced in a range of interpersonal interactions, both during the school situation and after it has played out.

The vital point of the social pedagogical perspective is that it requires an analytical interest about the other, including the other's understanding of both social and pedagogical phenomena; the other's actions, founded on the understanding; and the other's interests, which are represented in connection with those actions [18] (pp. 22–24), [36] (pp. 3–5), [4,16,24,44–46]. This vital point is about obtaining an awareness and turning the analytical focus towards several factors. The first set of factors relates to identities: the different social identities of the actors involved (e.g., class, gender identity, ethnicity, victimhood) and the different pedagogical identities (e.g., pupil, teacher, successful pupil/teacher, or devalued pupil/teacher) that are acted out in circumstances and created and re-created (or constructed and reconstructed) and the interpersonal interactions involved (including

oral and written descriptions and narratives). The second set of factors involves features associated with social and pedagogical aspects, including social and pedagogical control, social and pedagogical codes, social and pedagogical monitoring, social and pedagogical preconceptions, social and pedagogical devaluation of actors, and the costs that are produced in interactions inside social pedagogical practice. A third set of factors within the analytical focus consists of variations in the descriptions, perceptions, narratives, and representations of the social and pedagogical aspects of teaching, learning, and nurturing. Finally, the analytical focus also captures the constructions, reconstructions, representations, productions, and reproductions of teaching, learning, and nurturing in the social and pedagogical senses [18] (pp. 22–24), [36] (pp. 3–5), [4,16,24,44–46].

The analytical ideas discussed in social pedagogical publications (e.g., a social pedagogical recognition, inclusive educational context, social pedagogical development, spatial dynamics in schools, and educational collaboration) are relevant to school practices. The primary relevance relates to the systematic quality of work carried out, or anticipated to be carried out, in the school context, and the secondary relevance relates to the scientific analyses (research) conducted inside the framework of research and development projects. The present study takes the analytical position that the inclusive situation in the school context and social pedagogical recognition in the teaching and other situation (i.e., social pedagogical recognition of both the pupil and the teacher) are two of the most significant analytical aspects of the teaching and other situation in the school context that support achieving the learning objectives (or other indicators of success in the practical work on the school context) in succeeding steps. These principles (i.e., inclusion and recognition) must be attained in the teaching and other situation in the school context as a prerequisite for other in-context goals the teacher seeks to accomplish across different educational alliances and in various educational situations. If the analytical basis discussed in the social pedagogical literature and applied in the present analysis is not attained in the teaching and other situation in the school context, then employee competence development, systematic quality work, and different education programmes that are carried out or probably will be carried out in this context may make less of an impression. Moreover, teachers will be less likely to make an impression in teaching the students, which is an essential component of education programmes in the school context.

Several social and pedagogical phenomena related to practical work in teaching students who use alcohol and drugs in the upper secondary school context remain unknown and need further investigation. The present article offers a thorough analysis of some of these phenomena through a comprehensive assessment centred on the research question.

4. Results: Interactions of Power and Social Pedagogical Recognition

In interactions of power and social pedagogical recognition in student narratives about professional actors (e.g., teachers, student coordinators, counsellors) in the upper secondary school context, which constitute the empirical material of the present study, accounts of varied treatment are created and re-created in relation to pupils who use alcohol and drugs. These images emerge from a context in which the professional actors have an interactive advantage in relation to these students. In this sense, the young people's narratives become a reproduction of the power interactions in this context. The reproduced power interactions in the student narratives about professional actors are presented as significant for the young people's inclusion, learning, change, discipline, and identity creation and re-creation. In these interactions of power, the pupils portray professional actors as *significant power-wielding others* and *rejected power-wielding others*.

4.1. Significant Power-Wielding Other

In the analysed narratives, reproduced power interactions can take different forms. One example is that the production and reproduction of the professional's actions creates and re-creates an image of the professional actor as a significant power-wielding other in the upper secondary school context—a professional actor who is depicted as inclusive,

engaged, empathetic, and respectful in relation to the pupil. The following empirical sequence from one interview provides examples of the significant power-wielding other. Two questions asked in succession during the interview were, “What role do other adults play for you? Do you encounter any other adults who are not teachers, such as the school counsellor or someone else from the student health service?”

Pupil: No. For example, he, Mino, the student coordinator or whatever you call it, I think it’s nice to chat with him, you know, like a friend, you feel like you’ve known him for years. He’s pretty chill to talk to.

Interviewer: Is he important to you at school? Does it mean a lot that he is there?

Pupil: Yes, it means a lot; when he’s not there, it’s boring.

Interviewer: Is that so?

Pupil: Yes.

Interviewer: In what way do you feel that he is important to you?

Pupil: I don’t know, when you don’t feel well, you know, he’s there for you, when you can’t do something, he gets you motivated, you know? For example, when you can’t stand to go to class, he tells me “come on”, “go to class”, “it’s good for your future” and stuff like that, so like a real friend, you know?

The student coordinator, Mino, is depicted in the empirical sequence above as a significant power-wielding other. The description of the actor produces an image of a good relationship between teacher and pupil that contributes to the creation and re-creation of meaningfulness and reliability in the relationship, which is highlighted in the narrative through the phrases “he gets you motivated”, “come on”, “go to class”, “it’s good for your future”. (From the empirical example above is not clear whether this is gifted to Mino by the pupil or developed from Mino’s training.)

The account that is shaped in the narratives is depicted in the study’s empirical material in varied forms. Occasionally, an *insignificant power-wielding other* is produced before the significant power-wielding other is depicted in the narrative. During another interview, the different student was asked, “Has one of the teachers or anyone else at the school meant something special to you, during this upper secondary school period?”

Pupil: There are teachers that you get closer with ... but, who have meant something to me, no.

Interviewer: No, okay. What is it, that teacher, what is it that those teachers have done that, that you think has been ...

Pupil: It’s not that, it’s the more open teachers who can come up and not just ask “how is your schoolwork coming along?” but maybe how I’m feeling, what I’ve been up to this weekend, if there’s something wrong, he can come and ask what’s wrong. Like that’s the kind of thing that draws teachers and a student closer. Which can ultimately mean that you can talk about school subjects in a different way than you can with teachers who don’t ask.

The teachers presented in the first sentence of the empirical sequence above are constructed as insignificant power-wielding others (“but, who have meant something to me, no”). The open-ended question posed during the interview contributes to the production and reproduction of the portrayal of a particular teacher as a significant power-wielding other (“What is it, that teacher, what is it that those teachers have done that, that you think has been ...”). This depiction highlights the importance of an engaged teacher both in relation to the educational and social aspects of a pupil’s life in the upper secondary school context and beyond (a teacher who asks questions beyond how schoolwork is going and expresses real concern if something seems wrong, opening the way to “talk about school subjects in a different way”).

The meaningfulness and reliability of the relationship between the pupil and professional actors (student coordinator and teacher) portrayed in the narratives above also contribute to the production and reproduction of the image of the successful treatment of a student in a social and pedagogical sense. The successful dimension appears to be an important starting point for the practical social pedagogical work with pupils who use alcohol and drugs in the upper secondary school context.

In the present study, the portrayals of successful social and educational encounters with pupils, as well as the portrayal of meaningfulness and reliability in the relationship between pupil and professional in the upper secondary school context, suggest that these aspects are especially important for the inclusion of these students in a learning context and for achieving positive change through the creation and re-creation of social pedagogical identities (e.g., successful pupil identity). The reproduction of the social pedagogical recognition of each other in the pupil–professional actor relationship appears to be significant for the interviewed pupils.

4.2. Rejected Power-Wielding Other

The depictions of power interactions related to the treatment of pupils by professional actors, as recounted during interviews with the students, vary in form. The series of images produced in the narratives draw attention to teachers who, for example, exhibit poor treatment, have poor attitudes, do not show a caring approach, and favour students with a Swedish ethnic background over students with a non-Swedish ethnic background. The following empirical sequence from a third interview provides an example of a teacher who is portrayed as a rejected power-wielding other in the upper secondary school context, who is in a “bad mood”, yells at students, and thus lacks an adequate pedagogical approach. The question posed during the interview, “Can you describe your perception of the teachers’ efforts in the school?” is answered with a concrete empirical example of poor treatment and attitude on the part of a teacher in relation to the pupil who provides the narrative and to other students who are present in the situation.

Pupil: Good, sometimes the teacher is in a bad mood, like yesterday.

Interviewer: Mm.

Pupil: In a bad mood, she kind of starts yelling at us, just because . . . She was out, then I came to class, and I didn’t know where we were going to work, but I came to class when she was out and then someone said we don’t have a teacher. They (the other students) were joking with me, so I just sat down, chatted with . . . She came and yelled at me, I told her, she said “I’m in a bad mood”.

The portrayal of a teacher as a rejected power-wielding other in the empirical sequence above creates and re-creates an interactive cementing of positions between actors in the reproduced situation. Interactions of power, in the interactive sense, are created during the daily events of the classroom and in different situations during instruction, in both the social and pedagogical senses. Interactive dynamics in the reproduced upper secondary school context appear to create a series of images of interactive discipline in the social pedagogical context (“She came and yelled at me”). In the pupils’ accounts, this discipline seems to occur in a subtle form and to result from the interactive exercise of power reproduced after the situations have played out. As such, interactive discipline does not appear to contribute to the social pedagogical recognition of either the pupil or the professional actor in the upper secondary school context. Interactive discipline, as depicted above, does not portray the teacher as engaged, encouraging, or inspiring in the relationship with the pupil (“I’m in a bad mood”) or as an actor important for the student’s inclusion in the social pedagogical situation in the upper secondary school context. The portrayal of the teacher above creates an image of a disengaged, unsupportive teacher, unmotivated in the relationship with the pupil, and as an actor who contributes to exclusion of the pupil in the social pedagogical situation in the upper secondary school context. This exclusion, in its ultimate interactive form, can lead to the invisibility of the pupil in this context.

The following empirical sequence from a fourth interview provides an example of the rejected power-wielding other who does not care about a pupil, in which the student is reproduced as invisible in the upper secondary school context—at least in relation to professional actors present, who are depicted as indifferent to the student's presence. The narrative is shaped during the interview with a pupil newly arrived in Sweden who is attending the introduction programme within the context of an upper secondary school. After the pupil talks about the teachers at the upper secondary school whom he met in primary school ("at first, it didn't feel like the teachers were even trying but that they went there to feed the information they were told to"), the pupil goes on to discuss experiences of the teachers' social pedagogical work in the upper secondary school context. The interviewer posed the question, "The upper secondary school then, the first time or when you went there, the two months, was there a teacher then?"

Pupil: No, not at all, it was like . . . They were working, it was completely new to me, I didn't know those teachers in that way. So the trust there . . . Well, trust is something I build over a very long period of time.

Interviewer: Yes.

Pupil: Uh, and I read people pretty quickly, well, pretty quickly. I feel like I can't talk to some people and so I don't talk to them.

Interviewer: . . . and nobody tried to come to you? You know, even if you don't want to talk to somebody, sometimes somebody at least tries?

Pupil: Uh, well, I was . . . I met with the school counsellor sometimes, sure, but it was mostly when it came to the enrolment at Blåkullaskolan, and nothing else. So I was discharged there, but it was nothing about my well-being or my schooling or anything like that.

Interviewer: And nothing from the student health service, other people, or anything like that?

Pupil: No, nothing and then it's those, so, that when you feel bad you learn to force a smile because nobody else . . . Because you know that it's no use to even show that you feel bad because it never goes well in the end anyway.

Interviewer: No, that's how it is, and then it's much easier instead to just smile and be happy, then nobody asks a lot of damn questions either because they don't care anyway.

Pupil: Exactly.

The upper secondary school context presents opportunities to achieve social pedagogical recognition in the pupil–professional relationship. Different actors that figure in the social pedagogical context of the upper secondary school, such as teachers, student coordinators, friends, sometimes family, the overall classroom environment, and other spatial environments, are depicted as important for students' learning, inclusion, and change in relation to the problematic use of alcohol and drugs. Because the important professional actors in the upper secondary school context (e.g., teachers, student coordinators, principals, and members of the student health service) are not reproduced as committed and instead are depicted as unmotivated and failing to acknowledge and include the pupil in the upper secondary school context ("it was nothing about my well-being or my schooling or anything like that"), these actors are portrayed as rejected power-wielding others. They are actors who, because of the interactive rejection, are limited in their ability to motivate the student during learning activities in the social and pedagogical senses; to engage and include the pupil in important social pedagogical activities; to motivate, engage, and include the student in social pedagogical activities that contribute to change associated with problematic use of alcohol and drugs; to prevent drop-out and academic failure; and to elicit *self-esteem* and *self-awareness* in the pupil. These factors are expected to create an important interactive starting point for the aims of achieving success in the

pupil's academic performance and creating new social pedagogical identities, such as the successful pupil.

In the present study, the reproduced power interactions related to the rejected power-wielding other produce a series of social pedagogical identities in the pupils' narratives. These identities are varied in their interactive form, consisting of both social and pedagogical aspects, as well as aspects of interactive order and disorder in the upper secondary school context ("Because you know that it's no use to even show that you feel bad because it never goes well in the end anyway"). The pupils' narratives, which contribute to production and reproduction of social pedagogical identities in an upper secondary school context, portray an image of professional actors who do not adhere to normative guidelines in teaching situations in the upper secondary school context with respect to the school's written and unwritten rules and routines, norms, values, and curricula ("she kind of starts yelling at us"; "it was nothing about my well-being or my schooling or anything like that"). The narratives also portray pupils who, in the social pedagogical sense, are produced through interactions of power, constitutive rules, meaning making, conflicts, control, and monitoring. The students moreover are created through the significant power-wielding other, insignificant power-wielding other, meaningfulness, reliability, responsiveness, rejected power-wielding other, interactive discipline, and interactive rejection, along with actors' (pupils and professional actors) reproduced practical actions in different situations in the upper secondary school context.

A social aspect of the social pedagogical identities created and re-created in the students' narratives of the rejected power-wielding other in this context is the *ethnic identity* [36] (pp. 3–5) of different actors (see in the empirical sequence below a verbal presentation from the primary school that is retold in upper secondary school, "it was very much that the teacher mostly paid attention to the Swedes, kind of, and we immigrants were just along for the ride"). The fifth empirical sequence produces a rejected power-wielding other, who is depicted in one pupil's narrative as a teacher from the primary school context—who, in practical social pedagogical work, is presented as favouring pupils with a Swedish ethnic background over pupils with a different ethnic background. When the interviewer asks, "Can you describe your perception of the teachers' efforts in the school?", the student replies:

Pupil: It really depends on which teacher it is and which lesson it is, I would say. Sometimes the teacher can give preferential treatment to their students; it's happened very often, and sometimes the teacher can be completely chill/ ... /.

Interviewer: Um, can you give an example of this kind of situation, when the teacher plays favourites with a student?

Pupil: This hasn't happened very much in this school but, for example, when I was in years seven, eight, nine, in Kampiby where I live, it was very much that the teacher mostly paid attention to the Swedes, kind of, and we immigrants were just along for the ride.

Interviewer: OK, so they favour "Swedes" you think?

Pupil: And then the teachers are usually Swedish.

In the portrayal of the rejected power-wielding other in the empirical sequence above, a series of ethnic identities is produced by the actors involved in the narratives. These actors are the pupil providing the narrative; other pupils reproduced in the narrative—both Swedish and those portrayed as 'immigrants'; and the teachers represented in the narrative, who are 'Swedish teachers' portrayed as favouring Swedish pupils. The series of ethnic identities produced in the depicted interactions of power in the upper secondary school context contributes to the construction of ethnic identities, which is an important interactive assistance element in the practical social pedagogical work in the upper secondary school context.

In the production and reproduction of the rejected power-wielding other in the three empirical sequences above, there is also the creation and re-creation of a series of interactive portrayals of *the other* in the upper secondary school context, the other's depictions of both

social and pedagogical phenomena in this context, and the other's reproduced actions based on interests that are reproduced as actualised in connection with the reproduced actions. In these depictions, a pupil *victim identity* [36] (pp. 3–5) is also created and re-created which in the verbal depictions relates in part to images of devalued pupil identities and in part to images of the rejection of the professionals' actions in the practical social pedagogical situations in the upper secondary school context.

5. Discussion

The aim of the present study is to contribute new knowledge about interactions of power and social pedagogical recognition in the narratives of upper secondary school pupils who use alcohol and drugs.

The element of certain actors commanding an advantage relative to others is significant in the analysis of the present study in two ways: first, in the representation of relationships between students who use alcohol and drugs and professional actors in the contexts of upper secondary school, and second, in the representation of the interactions of power, social pedagogical recognition, inclusion, learning, change, and identity creation in this context. For this study, therefore, the narratives of the pupils are analysed less in terms of static typifications and more in terms of situational and context-bound (institutionally positioned) interactions in the here and now [4,26–36].

In accordance with interactionism, constructivism, and the ethnomethodological approach [4,26–36], the study analyses how the pupils who use alcohol and drugs themselves use identity-related narratives, vocabulary, metaphors, status symbols, roles, in the day-to-day of the contexts of upper secondary school in Sweden, such as when they describe school conditions, talk about advantages in the interaction, formulate criticism, and process their experiences. Stories with this category of pupil can motivate compassion and build a distinct typification associated with the category. This typification may be connected with mental health issues, traumatisation, medication needs, and victimhood [4,26–36]. This work, however, also is associated with a particular status: The pupil possesses knowledge and skills that others do not. In the current study, we analyse both the content of informants' identity formation and its dynamic, i.e., how pupil identities are managed, used, challenged, and/or reinforced [4,26–36].

The narratives of students who use alcohol and drugs in the contexts of upper secondary school can include teachers, student coordinators, and counsellors. Interactional, social constructionist, and ethnomethodological perspectives capture the content of students' experiences and their social design, as well as the constituent and substantive aspects of personal accounts. The study thus adheres to the scientific theoretical and methodological traditions of the social sciences, in which verbal illustrations are regarded as both experiential and discursive.

In the narratives about teachers, student coordinators, and counsellors in upper secondary school contexts, pupils produce and reproduce a series of verbal representations about varied treatment by professional actors in relation to the student category of pupils who use alcohol and drugs. These verbal portrayals originate in a professional context in which the professional actors have an interactive advantage in relation to students who use alcohol and drugs, and in this sense, the student narratives about the behaviour of the professional actors in the upper secondary school context become a verbal construction of the interactions of power that flourish in that context. The interactions of power depicted in the narratives about professional actors are reproduced as important for student learning, change, discipline, inclusion, and identity creation [33,35,41–43]. These interactions are reproduced by the pupils, and through these reproductions, the interactions contribute to the production and reproduction of professional actors' agency or lack of agency in the different situations made in these narratives. In these constructions of interactions of power, a series of images of the professional actor is produced, which are classified here as "significant power-wielding other" and "rejected power-wielding other".

In the construction of the professional actor as a significant or a rejected power-wielding other in the upper secondary school context, four analytical categories are also created. The first is a social pedagogical identity [4,16,18,24,36,44–46], which in the analysis above is classified as social identity (e.g., alcohol and drug user, ethnic identity, victim identity) and pedagogical identity (e.g., pupil identity, teacher identity, desired successful pupil identity, desired successful teacher identity, invisible pupil identity). The second created and re-created phenomenon is social pedagogical interactions of power related to verbal representations of situational images, control, monitoring, invisibility, discipline, prejudice, devaluation, victimhood, and the other. Third among these phenomena are the varied descriptions, narratives, representations, and reproductions of social and pedagogical aspects of learning, teaching, nurturing, inclusion, change, and discipline. Finally, the fourth phenomenon consists of varied constructions, reconstructions, productions, and reproductions of learning, teaching, nurturing, inclusion, change, and discipline in the social and pedagogical senses.

In the verbal accounts of the different dimensions that the students highlight in their narratives, the importance of the professional actor's successful actions in the upper secondary school context is emphasised in both the social and pedagogical senses. The pupils' portrayals of these successful actions relate to meaningfulness and reliability in the relationship between the pupil and the professional actor and to success in the encounter with pupils who use alcohol and drugs. These social pedagogical aspects that are reproduced in the pupils' narratives are a particularly important dimension of success in relation to the goals of ensuring inclusion in a learning context of the students who use alcohol and drugs and of achieving positive change through the production and reproduction of social pedagogical identities in the upper secondary school context. A form of identity production that is sought after in the present context relates, for example, to a social pedagogical identity as a *successful pupil* who does not use alcohol and drugs—which predicts success and the recognition of the pupil in both the social and pedagogical senses. The pupils highlight the importance of the social pedagogical recognition of the pupil from the professional actor in the upper secondary school context, so that this recognition appears to be significant for the students' social pedagogical goals in terms of learning, teaching, nurturing, inclusion, and change.

Other dimensions presented in the narratives relate to interactive disciplining of pupils—which does not appear to contribute to recognition of their social or pedagogical identities or of the social or pedagogical identities of the professional actors in the upper secondary school context. In these narratives, the teacher is formed as disengaged, unsupportive, and unmotivated in the relationship with the pupil; exclusionary in the social pedagogical situation; or invisible to the pupil (and the pupil's social pedagogical identities).

All the important prerequisites for achieving social pedagogical recognition in the pupil–professional relationship are absent in the verbal portrayals when important professional actors, such as teachers, student coordinators, counsellors, head teachers, and members of the student health service are re-created as uninvolved, unsupportive, uninspiring, exclusionary, and invisible in relation to pupils who use alcohol and drugs. These professional actors are constructed as limited in their ability to achieve social pedagogical recognition in relation to the pupil because of an *inability* to perform several key actions related to social pedagogical activities in the upper secondary school context: include and engage the pupil in key activities; motivate the pupil to perform during these activities; create and re-create relevant activities that contribute to the pupil's learning, teaching, nurturing, inclusion, and change; prevent drop-out and academic failure; and promote self-esteem and self-awareness during interactions with the pupil as an important starting point for the social pedagogical goals of achieving academic performance and learning success and of forming new social–pedagogical identities—such as the identity of a successful pupil.

Two of the most important analytical elements to take into account in the upper secondary school context where it is expected that students will learn and be educated, taught, nurtured, included, and changed are the interactions of power and social pedagogical

recognition (i.e., both of the students who use alcohol and drugs and of professional actors, such as teachers, student coordinators, counsellors, head teachers, and/or members of student health services). This study shows that the fulfilment of social pedagogical recognition in this context in relation to this student population is an analytical interactive basis for fulfilling learning outcomes (or other measures of success in the practical work with pupils who use alcohol and drugs). This social phenomenon also seems to serve as an analytical interactive basis required to achieve in the different social, pedagogical, and learning situations in the secondary school context to gain any other measure of success for these pupils. In practical social pedagogical situations in upper secondary school contexts, the systematic quality work, competence development of professional actors, and various pedagogical trainings that are carried out or are expected to be carried out do not have the same impact without establishment of the analytical interactive basis we examine in the present analysis.

The present study contributes to the development of new knowledge on interactions of power and social pedagogical recognition through the narratives of upper secondary school pupils who use alcohol and drugs, thus actualising a wide range of questions that can be explored in future research or development projects. One question is how the conditions for learning, teaching, nurturing, inclusion, and change for this student population can be improved through better resource management, governance, and collaboration among different professional actors in school contexts. This overarching question provides an analytical basis for investigating seven additional themes: (1) Successes and obstacles in the work of teachers and other professional actors with pupils who use alcohol and drugs in relation to processes important for learning, teaching, nurturing, inclusion, and change; (2) Successes and obstacles in the school's organisation of this work; (3) Successes and obstacles in the organisation of this work in relation to processes important for resource management, governance, and collaboration among different professional actors in the school context; (4) The work conditions and prerequisites of teachers and other professional actors for creating teaching that contributes to the inclusion and learning of pupils who use alcohol and drugs; (5) The identity creation of pupils, teachers, and other professional actors during social pedagogical activities in school in relation to processes important for learning, teaching, nurturing, inclusion, and change; (6) The creation of shared collective identities in the pupil–teacher–other professional relationship, collective identities that the present study indicates can be considered important for learning, teaching, nurturing, inclusion, and change in this student population; (7) The creation of exclusion and vulnerability or inclusion and participation in the pupil–teacher–other professional relationship.

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