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The Pedagogisation of the Employee

Introduction

In year 2000 a new practice was introduced at the Sølund care centre: the competence review (Care centre Sølund 2001). The competence review was introduced as part of an extensive organisational and managerial review of the overall mode of operation at the care centre. Under the heading of "base values" processes were organised through which every section of the care centre were programmed to re-describe themselves. The aim was to ensure that management and co-operation would be based on values rather than rules. The base values implied that the staff at the care centre could be observed from a different perspective. The understanding of staff was radically redefined. This redefinition did not pertain to a designation of new tasks and roles but to a displacement of the very relationship between person and role. The relationship between person and role were to be defined as an inner self-relation of the individual employee. The task became a question of creating and recreating the relationship between oneself and one's role in relation to the continuously occurring challenges perceived by the individual employee in the base values for the development of the care centre.

The competence review was one among several tools to reach that goal. The competence review, in other words, was a specially designed *self-technology*. The competence review prescribed a dialogue between manager and employee about the competence development and developmental goals of the employee. The dialogue was guided by various technologies intended to direct the employees' expectations for the dialogue. One was a specific preliminary home assignment in which the employee was asked to interview a close colleague about own qualifications. The employee had to ask questions like: "What do you think I am good at when working together with you? In relation to which areas do you feel I could improve myself and learn more about co-operation? The employee was also expected to prepare for the review by inquiring with his or her spouse: "In which areas could you *imagine* that I have good co-operative skills at my job?" and "Which two things do you *believe* it would be good for me to improve and learn about in relation to co-operation?" The home assignment is designed to make use of the private, safe, and trustful space and thus open up a competence perspective on the employee before the dialogue is continued in the public space with the manager where it really counts, where competence is urgent. The home assignment has been designed in a way so that the employee first obtains an outside perspective on himself as competence before the interview with the manager where the employee is to present himself as competence. The interview with "the close other" is basically a preparation for the employee's self-interrogation: What am I good at, what are my strong and weak sides, and how can I become better? Here, the next technology element is introduced: a contract agreement for the employee's competence development. The agreement looks like this:

Contract agreement for competence development for **Name:**	
I will particularly strive to improve: (list three things)	Comments (e.g. how these relate to the base values and competencies, is a helper required, time frame, etc.)
Suggestions for collective courses/instruction etc. for the entire department staff	Comments (e.g. how these relate to the base values and competencies, is a helper required, time frame, etc.)
I will work to obtain more knowledge/ better qualifications within the following areas.	Comments (e.g. how these relate to the base values and competencies, is a helper required, time frame, etc.)

Date:

Signature:____

As can be seen, the agreement form is divided into a right and a left column. The left column gives promises for action. The right column, however, is at least as interesting. Here, the employee has to justify and condition his promises for action. In other words, it is not sufficient to simply do something, there has to be good reasons and preferably reasons that define the employee's competence development within the whole of the care centre. Thus, the employee has to reflect himself as competence but also has to reflect this reflection in relation to the whole. The co-ordination of competence development and the whole is the responsibility of the employee. The agreement has to include three things that the employee agrees to improve. Why precisely three? In order for the promise to be a promise that involves self-reflection it cannot be too light. One promise is insufficient. It is like writing down the first thing that comes to mind. However, too many promises are also too easy. That would result in a long unordered and un-prioritised list, which, due to its exuberance, would express neither reflection nor promise. Finally, the employee and only the employee has to sign the agreement. But what does a signature mean in this context? It signifies nothing short of a contractualisation of the employee's self-relation. The employee incurs a contract about himself and with himself with the manager as sanctioning authority.

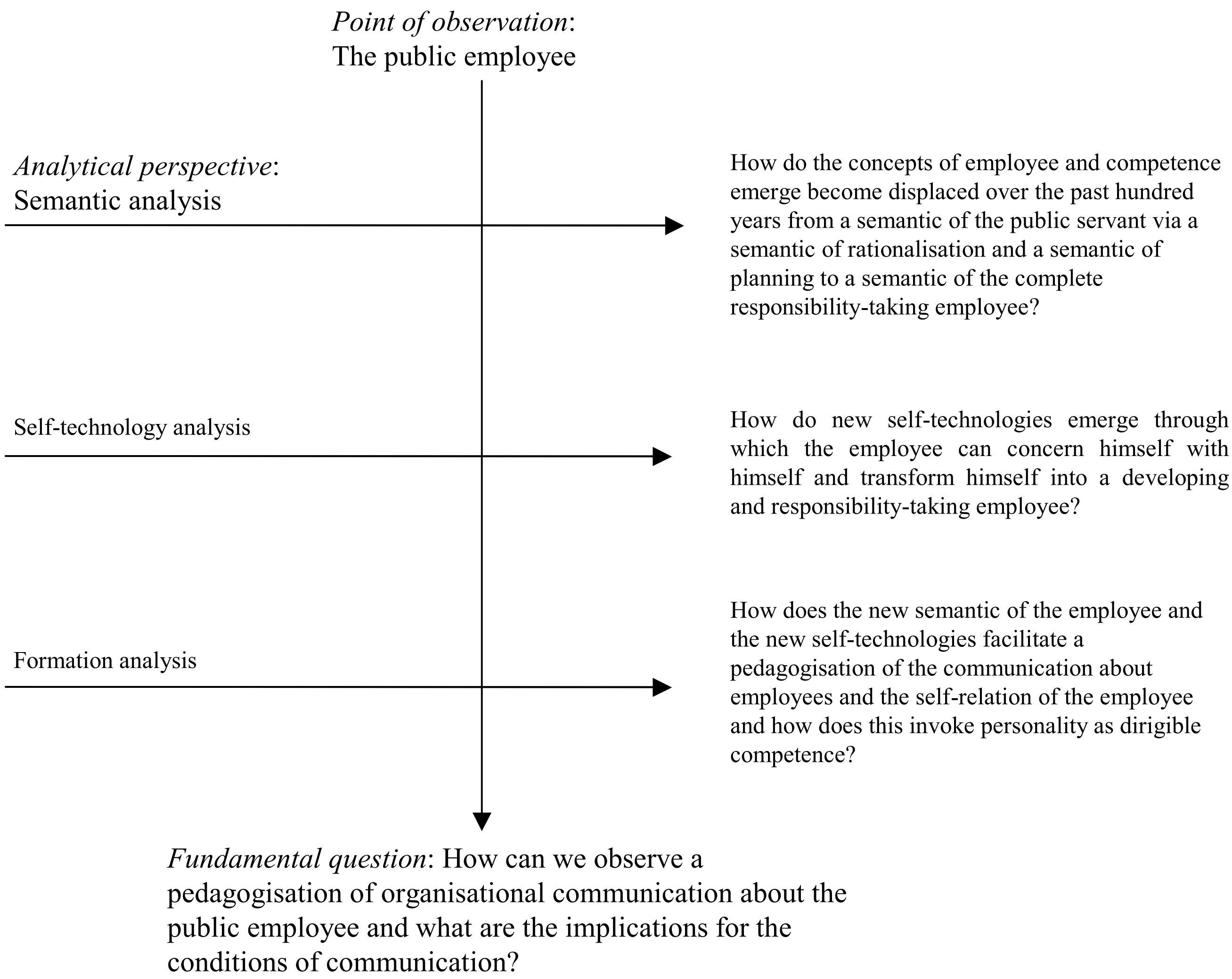
How has this type of self-technologies become possible in the public sector? Which circumstances have led to them and what are the concomitant possibilities and conditions for personnel management? That is what this article addresses. I will in particular follow one trend. I will argue that what happens is a pedagogisation of the arrangement in the public organisation of the relationship between organisation and state. This pedagogisation, however, does not stand-alone. Parallel with it is a passionisation of the work relationship, but although these movements happen simultaneously, this article will restrict itself to focusing on the pedagogisation and its characteristic features.

The pedagogisation does not only imply the introduction into the public organisations of a particular logic. From the 1990s, the pedagogisation obtains a specific form directed at the self-relation of the employee. This form manifests itself through a dislocation of the concept of competence. The core personality of the individual employee is defined as competence with a great number of implications.

Analytical Strategy

The article employs three complementary analytical strategies: a semantic analytical strategy primarily inspired by Niklas Luhmann and Reinhart Koselleck, a self-technology analysis inspired by Michel Foucault, and a formation analysis inspired by Luhmann (for a more detailed explanation and discussion of their analytical-strategic complementarity see Andersen 2003). The three analytical strategies are all strategies for second-order observation. They are strategies for the observation of what is communicated and observed in the communication and within which framework of possibilities. Through the insistence in the strategies on second-order observation they become barren in relation to providing explanations in the same way that they are unable to answer questions of being. In other words: The three strategies provide a sophisticated how-perspective but is unable to inquire about why or what.

The fundamental question in the article is: *how* can we observe a pedagogisation of organisational communication about the public employee and what are the implications for the communicative space. *How* is the angle different in the three analytical strategies. I have attempted to sum this up in the below figure:



In a Foucaultian sense, two archives form the basis of the article. The first archive consists of a few hundred documents from the public sector in Denmark in the period from 1900 until today. These are exclusively so called reflexive administrative texts. I have not included scientific works from that period but only texts in which public institutions and, occasionally, central individual government officials reflect on public employment. By reflexive texts I mean not staff issues or documentation of individual decisions but policy considerations in which concepts appear in an elaborated form backed up with argumentation. Mainly, these texts consist of commission recommendations, public reports and campaign papers and more substantial debate contributions and articles in departmental journals. What ties them together as an archive is their articulation of the public employee and his premises with regard to competence. Obviously the public employee and the theme of competence have not had a stable signifier throughout the period and a part of the analysis has been to seek out conceptual equivalences in time and space. The article draws from the archive without presenting it as a whole. This has been done elsewhere (Andersen 1995, Andersen 2000, Andersen & Born 2001). The first archive is primarily used in the semantic analysis. By focusing on the concepts of employee and competence a particular trail is dissected. The analysis becomes more focused but at the same time it consciously makes itself blind to possible sidetracks.

The second archive consists of a number of staff policy tools and concepts primarily from the last phase of the history of the employee from 1987 and on. This is what I will subsequently call self-technologies. I have attempted to collect these on as broad a scale as possible through 1) literature retrieval which primarily led to tool kits from The Ministry of Finance, Kommunernes Landsforening (Local Government Denmark) and the Municipality of Copenhagen, 2) Internet searches which provided a large number of concepts from consultancies whose market is the public sphere and from quite a few municipalities and 3) personal inquiries to municipalities and public organisations which provided quite a few detailed concepts and tools and evidence of substantial local development within the field. The latter was a result not of systematic collection but of intuitive listening to the jungle drums. Together they establish an archive of a few scores of concepts and tools but with some overlap in fundamental technology elements. This archive will be employed in particular in the self-technology analysis. The formation analysis has no independent archive but is built upon the two previous analyses.

In order not to tire the reader with an extensive introductory conceptual exercise in relation to the three analytical strategies I have chosen to present the analytics and their concepts as they become actualised in the analysis and only to the extent that they do so. Thus, I am not going to engage in an extensive introduction to or discussion of all the theoretical and more fundamental analytical-strategic preconditions of the article. This has already been done by me and others (Andersen 2003, Andersen 1995, Bredsdorff 2002).

The semantic history of the employee

Below I will provide a brief outline of the history of the concept of the employee in the Danish public sector. My primary aim is not to explain the development. It is merely to point out some of the central displacements in the history and understanding of employee competences. The basic assumption is that the creation of meaning is condensed into concepts over time. Concepts are, so to speak, meaning condensates. Thus, they are loaded with a multitude of meaning and can never be unambiguously defined. Rather than logical units, concepts should be understood as horizons of meaning. Concepts have no essence. They contain no positive meaning. On the contrary, they obtain meaning through their matching counter-concepts. The counter-concepts define the restrictions for the use of the concepts and provide them with the characteristics of the horizon of meaning. Thus, it is operations of differentiation that create meaning and it is their history, which is sought described through a semantic analysis.

If we follow the distinction through which the employee is historically created, we may trace four displacements and a total of five semantics in the period from 1848 until today.

Concept/counter-concept

1848~1919	**1916~1987**	**1924~1970**	**1970~1987**	**1987~**
Government official/ Politician	Public servant/ Employee appointed on a contract basis	The employee as human potential/ The employee as physicality	The flexible employee/ The localised employee	The responsibility-taking employee/ the responsible employee

At first, we can establish a semantic of the *government official*. It remains open whether this semantic can even be defined as a semantic of the employee. As it is, the government official is not articulated as employee-in-organisation but as a particular position in the political system. With the introduction of democracy it becomes important to distinguish between politics and administration. Without such a distinction, the political battle cannot be limited to a battle over government power, but also becomes a fight for he government machine (Andersen 2000). The conceptual couple of government official/politician is basically an equivalent to the distinction between administration/politics in which an official is precisely what a politician is not, that is, not political but neutral, not deciding but implementing, not biased but objective, not personal but obliged by the law, etc. The reference for the conceptual couple of official/politician, thus, was the political system rather than the public administration as organisation.

Not until around 1916 does the Danish Government services recognise itself as organisation and we can establish a dislocation of the conceptual couple of government official/politician towards civil servant/contract based employment. We are beginning to see a *semantic of the public servant*. This displacement does not happen over night, rather, it is a reorganisation of the entire understanding of the state, the government official, the relationship between position, rank, and role, and much more. In this context it suffices to point out that the displacement implies a final settlement with the legal profession's understanding of themselves as a particular social class, a particular class among other classes, beyond as well as below the legal profession. The legal profession saw themselves as the only ones without class affiliation, which is why they were able to represent the common interest of society. The dislocation challenges this notion and slowly but surely the legal professionals loose their monopoly of positions as government officials. With the concept of the public servant, the reference is not the political system but rather the state as organisation. Thus, the public servant is formed as employee-in-organisation. The counter-concept is contract-based employment. The public servant is precisely what a contract-based employee is not. This can most poignantly be illustrated by citation, here of Kofoed, one of the architects behind the public servant reforms of 1919. The quote is taken from an article which was written in relation to the reform of the Statute relating to Public Servants in 1928: "However, with a rapidly changing staff, with a staff where individuals still consider whether a change of job might improve their circumstances, it would be impossible to develop and nurture good traditions of the office (…). (If contracts were to be introduced) it would mean to abandon and loose the advantages of the existing system with respect to stability and solidity" (Kofoed 1928). The private employees who are appointed on a contractual basis are defined as striving for short-term profit as opposed to the long-term social interest. The position as public servant is a position for life and good reasons are given to justify this design. One set of reasons pertains to the fact that someone employed on a contractual basis is under the thumb of his or her superior. The lifelong position is to ensure the material independence of the public servant in relation to his superior as well as to the citizens who are affected by his administrative decisions. The second set of reasons refers to the creation of the state as an organisation that is built on experience. As pointed out in the above quote, stability and solidity are considered basic preconditions for development. Lifetime employment creates material security for the employees so that they can fully and completely devote themselves to their job, gather experiences through the years and continuously develop the office and its societal responsibilities.

From around 1924 another dislocation arises with the concept of the employee as human potential. It is open for discussion whether this represents an actual dislocation or merely a "superstructure" of the public servant semantic. The new *semantic of rationalisation* rationalises and scientificates the relationship between employee/organisation which was initially installed by the concept of the public servant. Rationalisation in this context means "the opposite of impulsivity; under the rule of the principle of rationalisation, the emotional factor is repressed. Thus, it becomes a deliberate, systematic battle against all systems of routine, against any unconscious wasteful practices with respect to work, energy, raw material, and time"(Bern 1930). In this way, the semantic of rationalisation employs a schematic in which explicitly substantiated scientific practices are placed on the positive side as opposed to practices which can be said to be unsubstantiated and based on emotions, habits, routines, and the subconscious that are almost all placed on the negative side. Rationalisation basically consists in a transfer of practices from the negative side to the explicitly substantiated side. This gaze of rationalisation is also directed at the employee: "It is, however, a sad fact that most people are only capable of thinking rationalisation in terms of Dictaphones and other – usually costly – machines. The most effective rationalisation, however, is the one that concerns *people*. This is in short what ends bureaucracy" (Lundbye 1952).

From 1970 the *semantic of policy planning* formulates a concept of the flexible employee. As opposed to prior views, the employee is no longer observed from the individual institution but from an inter-organisational totality of planning. Through flexibility from organisation to organisation within the state, the employee can obtain insight into the unity of society and unify the generalist and the specialist.

Finally, from 1987 the *semantic of the employee who takes responsibility* is introduced and the conceptual couple, thus, becomes the employee who has responsibility versus the employee who takes responsibility. With the ideal about adaptability part and whole become opposites. With a quote from the Department of Administration from 1987: "each individual has to see his function within a comprehensive view and not just as the sum of single issues" (Administrationsdepartementet 1987). Whereas Kofoed's 1920s ideal was for the employee to be able to devote himself to his job and leave the overall structure to the superiors, it is now regarded as a problem if the employee does not display "any particular initiative with respect to the general situation of the institution but (particularly) focuses on single cases" (Administrationsdepartementet 1987). Initiative is given a lot of weight and subsequently a new concept of responsibility evolves where having responsible is defined as opposed to taking responsibility. Having is reactionary and passive. Taking responsibility, in turn, means to accept the ideal of flexibility and to look at one's job through the eyes of the organisation. The responsibility for actively taking responsibility is primarily a sense of responsibility in relation to the development of the organisation, and the responsibility is expected to appear in the form of initiative, desire to develop, and involvement: "It is by virtue of enterprising employees who want to develop and involve themselves and who are capable of adapting quickly and flexibly, that the state is able to comply with the new challenges and create the best solution in the interest of society at large" (Ministry of Finance 1998). Subsequently, however, the active responsibility also becomes directed at the employee: "The employees must be responsible for their own development. The employees should not leave it to the management to ensure their professional and personal growth. Through continuous development and obtainment of qualifications it is possible for each employee to increase his or her own security both in relation to the workplace and in relation to the job market as such" (Ministry of Finance 1994).

Different chains of equivalent values relate to the different conceptual couples. One could say that the conceptual couples organise employee expectations in different ways. I have tried to sum them up in the below table where it becomes clear how significant the semantic shift is.

Words of honour at different times

The public servant as legal subject	The employee as human material and potential	The specialised generalist	The employee who takes responsibility
Lifelong faithfulness Loyalty Diligence Conscientious Formally qualified Objective	Power of judgement Social ability Empathy Capacity for practical administration Ability to express oneself clearly, easily, and fluently Openness to improvement Mental care and hygiene Service minded	Flexibility Adaptability Insight into developments in society General into other administrative areas	Openness to change Adaptability Involvement Initiative Understanding of the whole Self-responsible Competence development Taking responsibility A complete person

The plus words in each of the columns are taken from the numerous articles, white papers and reports that form the basis of the study of the semantic history. The columns can be read as reeling off plus words but they become more interesting if one inquires about the regularity of the dispersal of the plus words in each of the columns. One can conduct a small test of just how radical the semantic displacement is by placing the left column plus words in the right column. The regularity of the words in the right column excludes the words in the left column. They are incompatible. It does not bode well for the employee if he, in a competence review, is characterised by the leader as diligent and conscientious, since he more than likely is not simultaneously considered to be involved and as someone who takes responsibility.

The shifts in the perception of the employee are simultaneously related to a shift in the concept of competence. When linking the concept of "competence" to the concept of "adaptability", "competence" looses its referential self-evidence. In the phase of the constitutional state, competences were given formal competences. In the semantics of rationalisation and later of planning, the notion of continuing education emerges. At this stage, competences are still givens, no longer merely as competences defined by the educational system but as defined by the state, e.g. through the Danish School of Administration.

Everybody needs to sit through the same courses on things like rationalisation and budgeting and the courses are repeated year after year. In the semantic of the employee who takes responsibility competence can no longer be defined in a stable way. The Ministry of Finance states that “long life knowledge no longer exists” (Ministry of Finance 1998b: 25). It seems like it is even impossible to define the topical and relevant competences over time on an organisational level. Rather, the question of competence is linked to the individual scope and responsibilities of each employee.

Displacements in the concept of competence

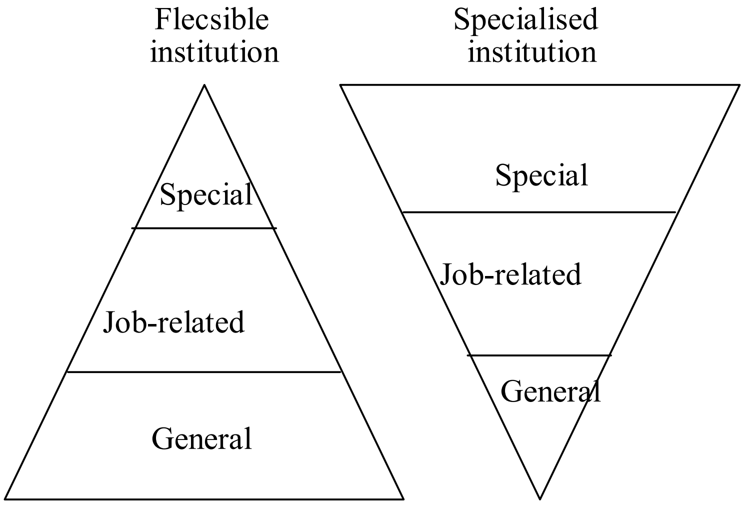
Public servant as legal subject	**The employee as human material and potential**	**The specialised generalist**	**The employee who takes responsibility**
Competences are given as formal qualifications that are screened and handled by the educational system	Attempts are made to make recruiting more scientific so that formal qualifications are merely one among several deciding factors in the evaluation of applicant competences.	The government formulates specific generalist qualifications which are then propagated through courses in the central system of continuing education	Competences are no longer externally defined. The employee must be able to function both as competence resource and as strategic self-developer.

The responsibility, which I pointed out above becomes a responsibility for one’s own competence development and for the balancing of own competence development with the needs of the organisation and the labour market. As formulated by the Ministry of Finance in 1994: “The employees must take responsibility for their own development. The employees should not leave it to the management to handle their professional and personal development. Each employee must take an active stance on his or her possibilities and needs for development so that he or she is ready to face the new challenges and competence requirements (...) But the employees must make their own contribution and take advantage of the possibilities for development which their daily work offers. Through continuous development and obtainment of qualifications it is possible for each employee to increase his or her own security both in relation to the workplace and in relation to the job market as such” (Ministry of Finance 1994: 18).

This notion deprives the concept of competence of any content except for its self-reference: Being competent becomes a matter of personal competence development. The most important quality becomes the ability to regard oneself as incomplete. Thus, the central competence is no longer located in the relationship between the employee and an external object, which is to be mastered but instead in the employee's relationship to himself and the mastering of this relationship. It is expected of the employee that he can relate to himself as competence and competence potential. In other words, the employee is required to double as the part that observes as well as the part that is observed as competence.

This becomes clear in a report from the Ministry of Finance where competences are divided into three categories: Special qualifications, job-related qualifications, and general qualifications. Special qualifications are characterised by basic knowledge of a specific area. Job-related qualifications consist in professional basic qualifications, which apply to many types of workplaces. And finally, general qualifications relate to the employee's comprehensive view, the ability to communicate and cooperate, adaptability and other social competences.

Following this division, organisations that hold many special qualifications become observable as passive and rigid: "The narrow and specific qualifications do not increase adaptability on the part of the employees or the institution" (Ministry of Finance 1995: 198). By contrast, organisations with many general social competences become observable as flexible and adaptable: "The effective institution values a broad basis of general qualifications in its employees, which provides them with a preparedness for change so they can enter into different tasks and other ways of solving the problems" (Ministry of Finance 1994: 200).



Knowing a lot about something equals incompetence in relation to competence development and change. Specialised qualifications can represent an adaptability problem. Thorough knowledge of a specific area simply constitutes the counter-concept of adaptability and readiness for change. In turn, the employee's relationship to himself becomes the most important competence. A comprehensive understanding, ability to communicate, cooperation, and flexibility represent competences oriented at the holder of the competences. Personality becomes competence.

Self-technologies

In his sociology, Simmel distinguishes between position and vocation as two different ways in which a person can become an individual. Correspondingly, Foucault makes a distinction between subjecting and subjektivation (E.g. Foucault 1997, Foucault 1998). With *subjecting* Foucault refers to the fact that an individual or collective is proclaimed subject in a particular discourse or semantic. The individual or collective is offered a specific space in the discourse from which it can speak and act meaningfully in a particular way. Or in more Luhmannian terms: the individual or collective are made relevant for communication in a particular way. Foucault speaks of *subjectivation* when an individual or collective is not merely made subject but also desires to be subject. In Luhmannian terms this means when, for example, the system of consciousness adapts the same measures of relevance as the communication. Thus, subjecting signifies the space where one receives oneself, whereas subjectivation signifies the space where one *gives oneself to oneself* (Schmidt 1990).

The distinction is nor merely theoretical. It is also a distinction between two different types of demands on the one who is to become subject. In that way, the distinction is highly relevant in the context of the semantic history of the employee. The semantic history can only be recounted as the history of the subjecting of the employee. The way in which an individual appropriates that space offered to him by the communication is not observable. What is interesting, however, is that the semantic of the complete person, through its subjecting of the employee, itself distinguishes between subjecting and subjectivation where the former constitute the counter-concept of the latter. This happens in this form:

Taking responsibility (subjectivation)	Having Responsibilty (subjecting)

The form of subjecting
of the complete employee

This form is only found in the semantic of the responsibility-taking employee. Only in the semantic about the complete employee is it required of the employee to personally assume his responsibility for the organisation. By contrast, in the semantic of the public servant, the entire conceptual construction serves to make this form of subjecting impossible. The concept of duty meticulously divides role and person in favour of assuming a role. Professionalism in the public servant semantic requires for the employee to disregard subjective criteria for decisions. This also applies to the celebration of the pecuniary independence in the relationship between the employee on one side and his superiors and the citizens on the other side.

The above form of subjecting is a *form of transformation*. It invokes the one holding responsible to cut across the difference and *take* responsibility. It invokes the employee into invoking himself. The invocation does not pertain to becoming an employee but to the fact that the employee gives himself a vocation.

The question is how this self-transformation comes about. Foucault opens up the question in his study of self-care by introducing technology as mediation. Foucault distinguishes between four types of technology: production technologies, sign technologies, power technologies, and self-technologies. He sees the latter as technologies that allow for individuals to influence operations that concern their own body, soul, thoughts, control, and mode of existence so that they are able to transform themselves and achieve a specific state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality (Foucault 1997). In other words, self-technologies are procedures that prescribe how the individual is to define, maintain and develop its identity with a view to self-control and self-awareness (Foucault 1997). The purpose of these technologies is for the self to address itself [1].

Foucault gracefully skips over how to generally perceive of the concept of technology. Luhmann provides a definition which I think might make the question more productive: Technology is simplification and operates with the difference of unreduced/reduced complexity by delimiting that which operates reliably and can therefore be repeated from the rest of the world which is excluded. From a communication-theoretical perspective, technology is based on ascription of causality by selection of one connection between a number of possible causes and a number of possible effects (Luhmann 1990). In relation to self-technology, it is a matter of simplification of the cause-effect correlations that are ascribed to self-education. Behind the concept of the competence review, for example, lies a certain amount of notions of the relationship between responsibility, learning, confidence, and self-awareness that are sought simplified in the concept in a manageable and repeatable way in order to obtain a particular effect, that is, responsibility for one's own learning.

If we take another look at the semantic of the employee it seems appropriate to distinguish between two different types of technologies concerning the constitution of the subject. For purposes of clarity I will limit myself to the technologies that are based in the semantic of the public servant and that of the complete employee respectively. It is only following the latter that we are able to speak of technologies of the self.

Based on the technological prescriptions regarding subject formation in the two semantics I believe to be able to justify two very different types of technologies. I will term the first ones technologies of interpellation and will only term the latter technologies of the self. Hence my claim is that a displacement happens, not only semantically but also in the shape of a technology leap in relation to the constitution of the employee.

By *technology of interpellation* I understand the prescription of operations through which someone can invoke an individual or collective in order for the individual or collective to manifest itself as subject and recognise itself as subject-in-a-discourse. Thus, I define technology of interpellation as technologies that support the subjecting of the individual as employee-in-an-organisation.

By *self-technology*, on the other hand, I understand the prescription of operations through which the individual, having received itself through subjecting, is able to go through a transformation so that it can give itself to itself in order to reach a particular personal goal or condition. Thus, I define technologies of the self as technologies through which the already interpellated employee is able to transform himself from a state of having responsibilities into taking responsibility whereby the employee puts his own development on the agenda and takes responsibility for it.

In the below table I have summed up some of the technologies. The lists are far from complete in the same way that the individual technologies have not by far been analysed sufficiently as such. In relation to the semantic of the public servant we can establish the formation of a substantial number of technologies of interpellation from the lifetime position via loyalty to formal job descriptions. They have that in common that they point to the individual as a subject of duty and that they disassociate person from role and persuasion from professionalism.

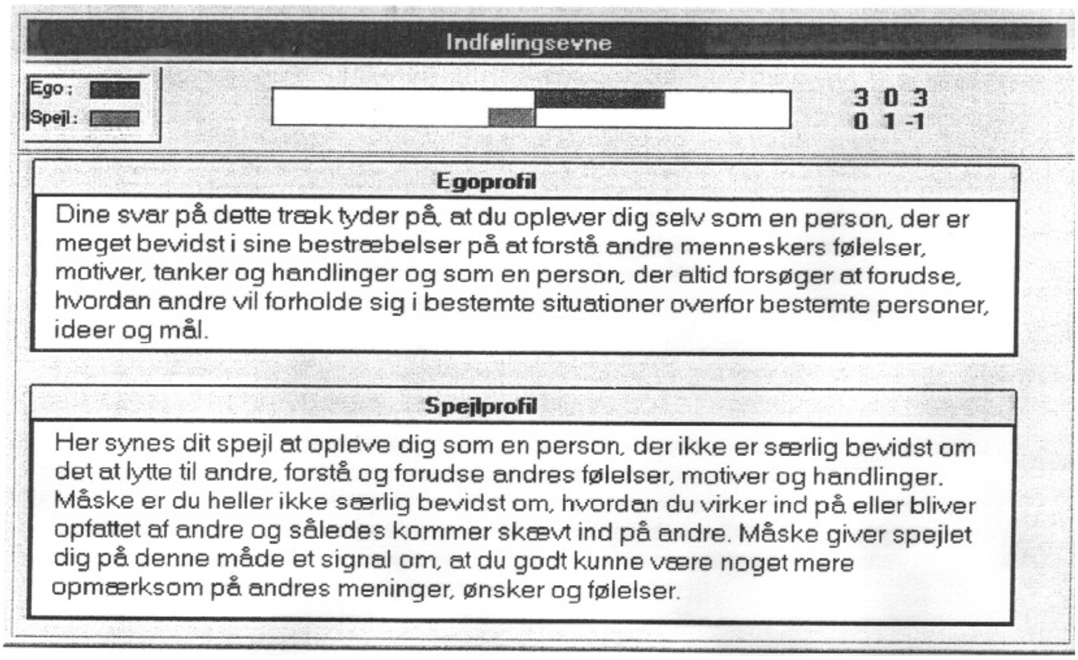
The public servant	**The responsibility-taking employee**
➢ Lifetime positions ➢ Loyalty ➢ Formal channels of information and instruction ➢ Order instruction ➢ Formal job descriptions	➢ Competence reviews ➢ Performance interviews ➢ Development reviews ➢ Competence profiles ➢ Personal development contracts ➢ Management reviews ➢ Assessment of contentment ➢ Management contracts ➢ Employee contracts ➢ Individual wage negotiations ➢ Staff policy reports ➢ Mutual employee supervision

	➢ Contact and status interviews ➢ Courses in personal development
Technologies of interpellation	**Technologies of the self**

However, with the concept of the responsibility-taking employee a range of new technologies emerge. Some of the technologies of the self are not new but have been redesigned to serve purposes of self-technology that they did not previously serve. As an example, this is true of contentment assessments. But the new technologies all have that in common that they serve as prescriptions for ways in which the employee can give himself to himself and become a responsibility-taking employee. I analysed one of these technologies in the introduction, namely the competence review. I will briefly elaborate on a few other examples.

One example of a self-technology is the competence profile, employee profile, and mirror profile of the consultancy Garuda. The *employee profile* is described as a tool that is meant to function as the basis of dialogue between employees and managers in order to fully utilise the potential of the employee and promote quality of life and self-esteem at the job. The profile is based on a particular model of the person, the so-called head-heart-leg model, where "head" refers to competences regarding the ability to analyse, organise and come up with ideas, "heart" refers to competences regarding the ability to cooperate, gain acceptance of ideas and establish relationships of trust, and finally "legs" refer to competences regarding the ability to take on an independent responsibility for results and carry solutions into effect. The individual employee in front of the computer composes the employee profile. The employee has to fill out a questionnaire, and subsequently the computer puts together a personal profile with nine personal characteristics divided between head, heart, and legs. The result is a graphical representation that provides an overview of the intellectual capacity and degree of freedom of the employee, his emotional capacity and openness, will-power and dynamics. Contrary to other profile tools that I have seen which generally distinguish between visible proficiencies and hidden deep psychological qualities, Garuda strongly stresses a de-psychologisation. There cannot be any psychological mysticism or sense of a kind of deep psychological disclosure. The ideal of the test is openness, comprehensibility, and transparency. In this way the technological design helps the employee to view his personal profile in an objective and scientific way. The profile helps the employee to an objective division of himself and his personal profile and it is implied that the employees can use the profile to discuss job development with the manager, that they will be able to evaluate themselves and each other with a view to cooperation and teams, and, not least, that the employee can define a strategy for his personal development based on the profile (Garuda 2002a, 2002b).

The tool can be extended, for example with a mirror profile (Garuda 2002c). *The mirror profile* is a question of "seeing yourself through the eyes of others". The background for this profile is the fact that employees often hold preconceived notions of each other, thus maintaining specific roles and patterns. Moreover, these preconceived notions are often false and lead to misinterpretations of the intent, goals, and behaviour of the colleagues. The problem is described as talking at cross-purposes because there is a lack of precise words and concepts for articulating the impression of the other person. The mirror profile provides a solution because the head-heart-leg-model contains precise concepts that are neutral rather than value-laden. Like before, the employee has to fill out a questionnaire in front of the computer, not only with respect to himself but also with respect to his perception of the other person. Thus, when printing the profiles, the individual employee can make an objective comparison between his self-perception and the other person's perception. This is called the ego and the mirror. The computer creates a graphical and a textual comparison, which might look like this:



(**Translation of the figure**: headline: *Capacity of empathy*, Spejl: Mirror, *Ego profile*: Your answers to this personality trait suggest that you see yourself as a person who is very conscious in your efforts to understand the feelings, motives, thoughts, and actions of other people and as a person who always tries to predict how other people will react in specific situations to specific people, ideas, and goals. (Spejlprofil) *Mirror profile*: Here, your mirror seems to perceive of you as a person who is not very conscious of listening to other people, understanding and predicting the feelings, motives, and actions of others. Maybe you are also not very aware of the way you affect or are perceived by other people and thus you might get a bad start with people. Perhaps this is a way for the mirror to signal to you that you might consider being more sensitive to the opinions, wants, and feelings of other people.)

Accordingly, the idea is for the two colleagues to subsequently get together to discuss the formulated text. Some of the requirements are: a discussion of whether it is a fair mirroring, providing concrete examples of situations that match the profile, and discussing advantages and disadvantages with respect to the personalities and behaviour. The profile technology thus prescribes operations through which the employee can get at a distance of himself, objectivise himself, reflect own personal competencies possibly in a comparison with expectations from the surrounding environment, and enter into a dialogue with colleagues about himself in a neutral and self-distant way. The clever thing about the mirror profile technology is its multiplication of the self-reflection. First, the employee obtains a distance to himself and builds the notion of an objective view of himself as resource. Then a colleague is tricked into providing his personal perception of the employee, not by facing the employee who the process is about but by answering neutralising, de-intimidating singular questions in front of the computer about the personality of the colleague. Finally, the relationship between the self of the employee and the other person can be isolated as an object in the world for shared conversation and self-reflection without feeling exposed and allowing for anything to be said. Everything is on a piece of paper on the table and it is filled with computer interpretations and coloured graphs as if it were the company accounts. The personality has become a measurable and comparable variable with both plus and minus values.

Another example is assessments of employee satisfaction. Originally, these were not self-technologies, but rather technologies tied to the semantic of rationalisation as a tool for the controlling eye of the manager to assess workplace satisfaction. The assessments were used to objectivise satisfaction and motivation. Generally, these assessments expanded into enormous questionnaires, and with computers it became possible to work up even a large material. Today however, they serve as more than a scientific survey for the manager. They are thought of as more of a conversational tool for a shared dialogue in the workplace about the workplace. Therefore, they need to be brief and comprehensible, otherwise they cannot direct any communication. One example is the questionnaire in the municipality of Copenhagen for the local staff policies accounts (Københavns Kommune 2001). It consists of a total of 31 questions with 6 reply categories from 0-5. The questionnaire only takes up one page. Employees are asked to give points from 0-5 based on statements such as: “My manager appreciates employees who show initiative” and “My job is interesting and exciting”. Each employee fills out a questionnaire and subsequently an average is worked out. The anonymously returned questionnaires ensure that possible problems do not become linked to the person who points out the problem. Moreover, in this way the problem is not reduced to a particular person’s perception of the world (Oh, that was just Susan…). The purpose of the questionnaire is not to produce management information. The questionnaire is seen as a conversational tool: “The precondition of a good result is that everybody who has filled out the questionnaire is involved in the subsequent discussions. When everyone is involved in explaining and evaluating the replies, you create a shared foundation for future work” (Københavns Kommune 2001). Things that could not have been said directly are now articulated by means of allocation of points on specific statements.

A third example is *performance reviews*, including the sub tool “cards on the table”. Here, I have chosen to define my point of departure based on a concept developed by the municipality of Græsted-Gilleleje (Lind 2001). Græsted-Gilleleje municipality defines the purpose of performance reviews as: 1) Ensuring a shared conception and acceptance of the work situation and clarifying the conditions, qualifications and future of the individual employee, 2) Creating more involvement by balancing requirements and expectations, give and receive feedback on the current work effort and 3) greater adaptability. The municipality of Græsted-Gilleleje makes a distinction between performance reviews and a conversation about the performance review. In the conversation about the performance review which might take the form of a staff meeting, the performance review is discussed, negotiated and agreed upon as a contract about performance reviews. The contract pertains to the conditions for the review specified as: 1) The premises under which employee and manager meet, 2) The presupposition with which one meets the other person. The contract is binding in order for the meeting to be as unbiased as possible, 3) Respect. The contract defines the limits of the use of private information, 4) Definition of the topics that can be included in the review. On one hand, it is important to challenge oneself and on the other hand to state how personal and private the review should be. Performance reviews should constitute a space for the personal issues that are not normally talked about but the setting for the review must be agreed upon before the performance review, 5) Agreement about the topics that are not to be included in the performance review, e.g. agreements that personal relationships can be discussed but not other colleagues, 6) Agreement about the shared responsibility for the contract and 7) agreement about a re-negotiation of the contract.

Through this kind of contract the municipality of Græsted-Gilleleje seeks to establish the basis for the performance reviews to fulfil their purpose. Contracts are to create security, discipline and motivation in relation to the performance reviews.

As part of the performance reviews a method has been included called “cards on the table”. The purpose of the method is to bring the question of personal talents and competences into the conversation. In short the method functions like this: A while before the performance review the manager gives the employee 2x10 blank cards. The employee is told to carefully reflect his or her competences and personal resources. On one set of cards the employee writes down ten competences that he or she considers the most adequate. Subsequently these are copied to the other set of cards. The first set of cards now has to be prioritised with 1 as the highest and 10 as the lowest. The cards are given numbers. This might for example look like this:

Set 1		Set 2	
1 Involved	6 Overview	Involved	Overview
2 Responsible	7 Loyal	Responsible	Loyal
3 Flexible	8 Focused on development	Flexible	Focused on development
4 Caring	9 Precise	Caring	Precise
5 Good observer	10 Inspiring	Good observer	Inspiring

The employee now gives the manager the unnumbered set of cards. After this, it is the manager's task to evaluate the employee based on the competence categories that he has received from the employee. The manager prioritises and numbers his set of cards so that they are in accordance with his view of the employee. The cards represent the manager's preparation for the review. At the review, the employee starts by putting his or her cards on the table and the manager now has to inquire about the key words on the cards. It is expressed in the concept that the manager is to provide the service of not understanding. The manager should inquire about the meaning of the different competences and the employee then has to explain it so the manager understands. After the conversation about the understanding of the words, the manager now puts his prioritised cards on the table and explains the prioritisation. Now, the two sets of cards are both on the table, side by side, and the manager now tells the employee his perception of the employee. The different perceptions become clear and these now become the topic of the conversation. The fundamental question is: "where is there obviously a need for learning?". The manager removes his cards and leaves only the cards of the employee on the table. These are written down. The concept is that the employee can take pride in these competences. Subsequently, the employee chooses two competence card which will be the focus of further attention. In the subsequent review these two cards represent two goals for development which should be transformed into operative goals. As a part of the operationalisation the manager should ask the employee questions like: What are you planning to do? In what way will this become apparent? How will other people know? How will you be able to measure whether you have reached your goals for learning? The questions are asked in order for the employee to elucidate his goals to himself!

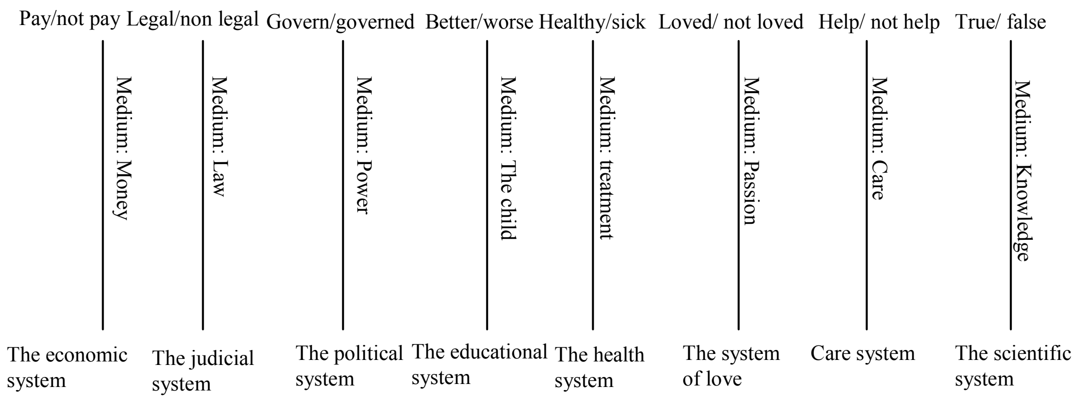
By means of this "cards on the table" method the employee is forced to objectify himself as competence resources. Moreover, the employee is forced to reflect on whether his self-perception is reasonable; whether the employee could be perceived differently by others. The employee becomes conscious of his strong resources and these are recognised when written down. Subsequently this paves the way for the employee to discuss his weaker sides although these are never defined as weak. The method is designed in such a way that the employee himself points out which competences need development. The manager is merely creating the procedures for the review. What is central is not the manager's evaluation. What is central is the fact that the employee is invited to transform himself and his competences into a self-project by setting goals for his own learning of personal competences. Thus, "cards on the table" represents an obvious example of a self-technology designed to make the employee take responsibility for his own self-development.

What emerges from these different self-technologies of which I have only described a few is a form of *self-service*. The personnel departments, personnel management, managers in general and behind them different private and public consultants create themselves as a self-service, not in the common sense of the word but as a way of servicing the self-relation of the employees. They become a form of self-service station, offering technologies to the employees through which they can give themselves to themselves with the purpose of personal competency development and the ensuing security, growth, and happiness.

Pedagogisation

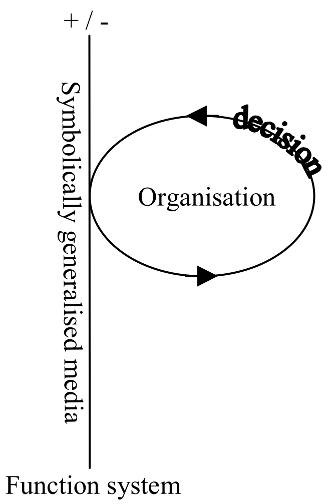
Until now, I have argued the formation of a new semantic in the sense of a new reservoir of concepts about the complete responsibility-taking employee. Moreover, I have argued that this reservoir provides a redefinition of the concept of competence. Competence becomes individualised as the competence for personal competence development. Furthermore, I have argued that this new semantic also finds expression in a technology leap in the organisation's relations with the employee through the creation of a number of self-technologies, and I have tried to exemplify the principles of operation behind the technologies. Now I will argue that the new technologies introduce a particular form of pedagogically coded communication, which inflicts certain rules on the communication about the employee.[2] My basic assumption is that modern societies are differentiated into a wide range of function systems each with its symbolically generalised media and each their binary codes or logics which excludes communication between the function systems. I have tried to demonstrate this in the below figure which does not, however, include all existing function systems.

Function systems, codes and medium



Each function system is linked to a symbolically generalised medium of communication. These media of communication constitute a kind of language, which makes improbable communication between communication participants who do not know each other possible. The media of communication are termed *symbolic* because they are condensed around singular concise symbols. In the economic system of communication the medium is money and the symbol is coins, notes and now also credit cards. Furthermore, symbolically generalised media are *general* in the sense that the medium can be used to communicate about anything. As an example, it is possible to communicate about everything through money. Everything can be priced. Finally, all symbolically generalised media establish *binary codes* for communication. Code is understood as a basic and unambiguously binary preference that distinguishes between a positive and a negative value. The positive value constitutes a fundamental striving or motive in the communication but without a specification of the motive. The negative code value serves as a reflective value and is particularly useful for controlling the value of activities with respect to that which has not been said or which could have been said. Moreover, the fact that the code is binary means that it divides the world in two. The entire world can be perceived from this code. For example, the medium of money leads to the code to have/not have where it is obviously better to have than not to have, and the entire world can be summed up in this code, in that which I have and that which I do not have. When the communication links up with a symbolically generalised medium it has to therefore connect with either the plus side or the minus side of the code. There is no third value. That also means that two media cannot be formed simultaneously. When connecting through the code of economy, everything has to be perceived economically. When connecting through the code of justice, everything has to be perceived in terms of legality. In other words, the codes are ways of seeing which exclude each other. Contrary to the function systems, the organisational systems do not have their own symbolically generalised media in the same way that they – and for that reason - do not have their own binary code. Organisational systems are a kind of decisions machines that communicate through decisions. On the other hand, decisions cannot be communicated in the organisations in the first place without the formation by the decision of one of the media of the function systems. This does not define the organisation as a subsystem of a function system but it establishes a structural connection. Organisations and function systems, thus, constitute the environment for each other, but organisational systems are always linked to at least one function system by profiting on their symbolically generalised media.

The relationship between function system and organisation



Depending on which medium of communication the organisation forms, the communication is coded differently with different implications for the way the communication closes on itself and defines certain observations as meaningful and others as mere noise.

My assertion is that the self-technologies and the semantic of the responsibility-taking complete employee who is also responsible for own development open up for a pedagogisation of the employee. In other words, it opens up for allowing the communication about the employee to happen within the code of pedagogy. This is not insignificant. In fact it imposes specific possibilities for development, a specific boundary for meaning and specific blind spots on the communication. In other words, it initiates a specific communication regime.

Obviously, it is the concept of competence that opens up for this pedagogical logic of communication. When competence seizes to only be something, which is externally given, managed by the educational system, and becomes something that has to be defined internally in the public organisations, the organisational communication becomes pedagogic. I will return to the question of how that happens. First, I will introduce the particular pedagogical form of communication.

According to Luhmann, the general symbolic communication medium of pedagogy is "*the child"*(Luhmann 1993b), meaning that communication in pedagogy happens by means of the child. This pertains to a particular historic context of the emergence of the distinction between child and adult in the 1700s. The distinction between child and adult dismantles the idea that a child is that with which it is born. Instead, the child is perceived as workable. What the child turns into becomes dependant on the environment that forms it. In the pedagogical communication, one does not speak with the child, the child is someone by means of which communication takes place. The child is the object of forming in the pedagogical communication. What it is to be formed depends on the pedagogical program. The forming can pertain to complaisance, morality, creativity or something else.

Thus, the distinction between child and adult is a distinction that guides observation in all pedagogical communication which makes a distinction between *potential* and *perfection*, between that which is not finally formed but open to forming (child) and that which has completed its form and can therefore no longer be formed. The fact that the child is a *general* symbolic medium of communication means that there are no restrictions for which kinds of knowledge can be imprinted in the medium. In principle, the child can be formed into anything, a tyrant, an artist, an environmentalist, etc. The fact that the medium is *symbolic* means that the child is the symbolic and recognisable expression of the medium to be communicated about. The symbol is, however, variable and can be replaced by pupil, student, or course participant (and is therefore independent of biological age). Regardless of the symbol the distinction stands: child/adult ~ workable/complete.

The binary *code* that the child as medium caries is better/worse in terms of learning (Luhmann 1989: 100-106). In a pedagogical communication everything is seen in this perspective. Everything is observed with a view to perfecting. Thus, it is a *correctional code* in which one can either link up with the code's positive preference value, for example through considering ways to improve the pupil/student/course participant, or with the code's reflexive side by considering why the results are lacking even after applying the most contemporary pedagogical methods. Obviously, the code is also employed in continuous evaluations and tests of the child's competencies: passed/failed, strong sides/weak sides, etc. Pedagogical communication is always a question of correction with a view to perfection. In practical terms this means to either motivate improvement or reprimand failure to do well. Everything else lies without the pedagogical field of vision.

From the perspective of the pedagogical function system, the function is the forming of man. From the perspective of society's other systems of communication the contribution of the pedagogical system of communication is *sorting*. Children/students/course participants etc. are sorted through the communication according to learning competencies and qualifications. At the same time, this entire sorting process provided by the pedagogical system constitutes the crux of the paradox on which the pedagogical system is based. The paradox emerges when applying the pedagogical code to the code itself: Is the code better/worse itself good or bad at generating learning? Very often different pedagogical discussions jump to the problematic solution of distancing themselves from sorting, examination and the like although these are basically a necessary result of pedagogical communication as such. It is not possible to observe people through the code of better/worse without simultaneously examining and sorting them according to their degree of perfection in relation to an established or imagined goal. The sorting of people is basically an inherent result of pedagogical communication even if it is also clear that sorting does not necessarily contribute positively to the motivation to learn.

I will now return to the semantic of the employee. The articulation of the employee as human potential in the semantic of rationalisation opens up for communication in the code of pedagogy about the relationship between employee and organisation. From this point on, the established communication does not observe the employees as educated adults but as “children” who have a continual potential for being formed. The semantic of rationalisation transforms the employee into the medium “child” and the Board of Administration and, later on, the Danish School of Administration, establish themselves as capable of defining the competencies that “the employed children” need in order to become perfect adults. Generally, the educational programs in the Board of Administration and at the Danish School of Administration concern the fact that the employees need to acquire new competencies such as dictation, phone service, budgeting, etc. Consequently, not only the educational system but also the administration itself now manages the sorting service. Thus the sorting continues in the workplaces with the result that the employee is continuously under examination.

However, the self-technologies and the semantic of the responsibility-taking employee from 1987 represent a significant displacement of the pedagogical codification. The organisation no longer wants to be responsible for the definition of what can be regarded as a relevant learning horizon for the employees and thereby for the knowledge and competencies that the employees are supposed to acquire. Instead the organisations produce competence reviews and profile tools that call on the employee to see himself as competence and to define goals and strategy for own competence development. How do you see you strong and weak sides? What is your strategy for self-development? In which ways do your competence goals relate to the mission of the organisation? And how can we help you to carry out your strategy? These are standard questions in many competence reviews. Thus, in a particular way it becomes a question of self-learning.

This produces five radical effects: First of all, the relationship between form and medium is defined as an internal self-relation. The communication about the employee as equivalent to the medium of the child no longer only takes place in structures in the employee’s environment. First and foremost, the competence review, employee profile, mirror profile and many other self-technologies make it possible for the employee to become medium. The employee is called on to divide himself into form and medium. In competence reviews etc., the employee is to present himself as both strategist and competence. The individual employee becomes a *creator of himself as medium*: educator and child in one!

The second effect of this is that the self-relation of the employee becomes pedagogically codified. It is expected of the employee to relate to himself as an object of learning within the code of better/worse in terms of general education. One sees oneself through pedagogical eyes. The employee is called on to constantly correct himself through personal competence strategies with a view to perfecting. Thirdly, the question is: perfecting for what? The new self-technologies all highlight personality. The most important competence is the competence for competence development. And this competence is regarded as one that concerns the employee as person. *What is to be corrected is the personality*. Not only is the employee seen as a child. He also has to see himself as a child. Moreover, he has to see his own self, his personality as childish and incomplete, as someone who needs to continuously be made compatible with the norm of adaptability. The pedagogisation of the employee calls on the employee to learn to see his personality as incompetence and to correct it. Fourthly, there is a particular side to the personalisation of competence. When continuous competence development, preparedness to change, and adaptability become equal it actually means that one of the most important qualities of competence for competence development becomes the ability to maintain oneself as medium. When the buzzword is lifelong education, it becomes a question of postponing "adulthood" indefinitely. The problem is the question of how to maintain and circulate the medium of child so the employee is able to ceaselessly shape and reshape himself as medium, that is, how to regenerate the pedagogical medium despite constant forming. Unlearning, thus, becomes as pertinent as learning. This problem of the circulation of the medium is operationalised in the semantic of competence through a division of competences into general, job-related and specialist competencies, where general competences increase the workability and the maintenance of the medium whereas specialist knowledge exhausts the medium and reduces workability. Consequently, the circulation requires for the employee to let go of his specialist knowledge. One has to be prepared to replace a professional identity linked to extensive knowledge about a narrow field in order to maintain oneself as medium. Disloyalty to one's past with respect to knowledge and experience becomes an employee virtue. Finally, when the relationship between form and medium is transformed into an inner self-relation, the sorting function of pedagogy is moved into the employee. Obviously, when employees program their own learning, they themselves are responsible for the consequences of possible "programming errors".

In effect, the sorting function is sought internalised in the employee, a form of self-sorting of "my strong and weak sides", of the tasks I am capable of performing and not performing, etc. When personal qualities become central competences, this self-sorting is not only something for which one is responsible but something that concerns one's self. It becomes a question of *self-sorting of one's personality*.

Conclusion

Today, many buzzwords concern the knowledge society and the competence society, lifelong education, flexibility, and creative work. We comply with these concepts when confronted with them in discussions. They cannot be argued. One might as well go against the future. These words ARE the future. They are like lanterns on the horizon, guiding our way. The question of course is whether some of these lanterns do not take us into too shallow waters. Happily and without fear we sail towards shipwreck. Who would think to disregard a lantern? My point is that all these lanterns, put out in the name of the competence society, could possibly lead to the shipwreck of the individual. Individuality, personality, and the self are put at stake in the pedagogisation of the employee. I will abstain from concluding on all the points of this article but simply put forth some question that in my opinion are productive to the discussion:

- Does ignorance not become equal to openness if specialist knowledge becomes an impediment for change?
- When openness, preparedness for change, and dialogue are articulated as competences, does that mean that personality traits such as being introvert, careful, meticulous, and shy become observable as incompetence? Is that desirable?
- How far can we go in defining human qualities as competences? And are we able to and should we define such a limit?
- If personal integrity presupposes a reconciled relationship between a person's past and present, do the self-technologies and expectations about disloyalty in relation to one's past not lead us beyond the question of identity? In fact, personal identity vanishes as a relevant question.
- How to avoid that all the good and liberating visions of lifelong education and a creative job turn into its opposite and become a "regime of the good" with internalised self-sorting?

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[2] Elsewhere I have demonstrated in which way this pedagogisation does not stand alone but is over-coded by the code of love (Andersen & Born 2001).