

Constructing the adult learner

- a governmentality analysis

Andreas Fejes



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Writing a dissertation is to some extent a lonely task, but also a collective one. The lonely part refers to all the weeks, days and hours of closing the door to your office, apartment, etc. as a way to have some quiet time to read and to write. Collective, as you work in an environment where you on a daily basis discuss issues related to research with colleagues during coffee breaks, lunches, at seminars, etc. Further, you discuss issues related to your work with friends and relatives. They want to know what you are doing and you have to find a way to explain it in a few sentences that make it sound interesting and comprehensive. Thus, as the task is both individual and collective, the discourse of writing a dissertation requires some acknowledgements on the part of the author which now follows.

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Andreas Fejes

Linköping, March, 2006

1. Introduction

Would you agree that lifelong learning seem to be a mantra which we can hear everywhere; from policy makers, the media, our boss, our colleagues at work, our teachers and even maybe from our friends? Usually, it seems as if lifelong learning refers to us as humans who learn during our entire life, not only at school, but also during our leisure time, at work, etc. Thus, it seems as if we are constructed as adults who learn all the time. How come we speak of adults as learners? My hypothesis is that it has some relation to how lifelong learning and adult education are discussed today related to ideas about governance. How do we reason about adult education? Is adult education a way to include people in society; to give adults a first or a second chance and/or is it a way to free people from constraints in their everyday life, e.g. to acquire the prerequisites to be able to participate in the political apparatuses in Sweden such as voting, etc? Further, is adult education spoken of as a way of increasing the prosperity of Sweden, a way of minimizing state expenditures?

Adult, higher and liberal adult education is repeatedly spoken of in such a way in official documents produced today. Educating the adult population is presented as one of the most important political goals on the agenda, as a way of constructing a good and prosperous society where there are both gains for society and the individual (e.g. SOU 1998:51). It would be interesting to try to analyse what kinds of effects such a way of speaking constructs. In one way, one might say that my starting point in this dissertation is to see how concepts such as lifelong learning and inclusion, central in the discussion on adult education in Sweden, are more or less taken for granted. The way we speak about such concepts might seem to be the 'only' way to speak of them. Everyone should 'of course' be included in society. But 20 years ago we did not speak of lifelong learning to the same extent and in the same way, or of inclusion in the same way. Thus, the use of such concepts in their specific forms today probably has a relation to how the adult learner and the governing of such a subject are discussed. The idea that we learn all our lives constructs a specific adult learner; one who is constantly learning. Thus, the way we speak of adult education and all our everyday practices are part of creating such an adult learner. We have what Mitchell Dean (1999) calls a problematic of government; a situation in which questions about government and of how one should govern arise. As an illustration I will take an example from one official text concerning adult education.

Lifelong learning should be a real possibility for all – from the early stages of life and throughout life. In a society where education and knowledge become more and more important for the welfare of society, every individual's opportunities for lifelong and lifewide learning must be promoted. This requires a well developed infrastructure for lifelong learning in which everyone's knowledge and competencies needs to be acknowledged; everyone needs to be supported when making important choices and everyone is given access to the learning they need; at the time, in the way, within the preferred area of education, and at the level needed. Increased collaboration between society, working life and the individual is needed if this is to become a reality instead of only a wish for the future. In the last few years, extensive changes have been initiated aimed at strengthening the individuals, the labour markets and society's demand of lifelong learning (DS 2003:23, p. 7).

In the above quotation, we can discern several statements, which influence who the adult learner should become. First of all, there is an idea that knowledge and education are central aspects of the wellbeing of Sweden. Therefore, the citizens need to participate in lifelong learning. Not only are they to be educated, but also the knowledge already gained is to be acknowledged. Lifelong learning is a continuous and lifelong process of learning that takes place in different settings; you are never free from learning. Further, there is an individualisation of the adult. He/she has to choose by him/herself what to, when to, how to and what level of education to participate in. Someone should support the person in such choices, but the choices should be made by the adult him/herself. The individual is part of a society and working life. These three actors need to cooperate as a way of creating a desirable future. Such ways of reasoning are in line with several narratives concerning adult and higher education today. Everyone needs to be included in lifelong learning, but not through a 'state' dictating who and in what way. Instead, the individuals are encouraged to be their own decision makers in their lives; they should desire participation in lifelong learning. No more is there a 'state' deciding what to do and what not to do. We should be free!

But as a researcher, the question is not to acknowledge such narratives. Instead, it is to scrutinise it, try to understand it from different viewpoints. One might want to see what the constraints are for each person to be able to become free of these constraints – to empower disadvantaged, oppressed groups and to change society. In such an analysis, the focus might be on structural aspects in our society and its practices such as gender, poverty, illness, organizational ownership, etc. and how they limit the possibilities for certain groups to act and/or to learn (e.g. Brown 2005, Endresen & Von Kotze 2005, Gouthro 2005, Yoon ng & Cervero 2005). Another perspective

might be to analyse how lifelong learning contributes to the good of the people. How can education and learning be organised as a way of enabling us to face the future and its challenges (e.g. Barnett 2000a, 2000b, Gibbons 2002, Soden & Maclellan, 2005)? Yet another perspective, which I have employed in this dissertation, might be to try and analyse these texts as producers and products of discourse. Discourse defines what can and cannot be said, what is included and excluded. It is an interest in power relations where power is seen as productive; it produces certain kinds of subjects (Foucault 1980, 1981). Further, discourse constructs ideas of who the adult learner should become and a specific idea of how governing is to be conducted. Discourse is specific to time and space. What can be said about the adult learner today might not have been the case 50 or 100 years ago. Thus, the problem today seems to be how a country will be able to shape its citizens as educated subjects who are responsible individual actors as a way of creating a prosperous society. What makes it possible to speak about adult education and the adult learner in such ways today?

In this dissertation, I will problematize narratives about adult education and the adult learner in our own time by contrasting it with other cultural and historical situations. What are, according to these narratives, the problems we face today and how can adult education and the adult learner be a solution to these? What makes it possible to speak about the subject in the way it is spoken of? Is the way of speaking about the subject the only way? How has it been spoken of earlier on? In what way is the subject to be governed? What rationalities of governing are constructed? What kinds of practices of exclusion are created? In sum, my interest is to analyse the rationalities of governing created in the discourse of adult education and how techniques of governing fabricate specific adult learners.

I have not limited the material I have analysed to a specific institution as my interest is in the construction of the adult learner. Instead, I have analysed official documents concerned with both adult education, higher education and liberal adult education as a way of answering the questions posed. The relation between these different institutions is specific to time and space, and thus it is problematic to exclude one or the other from this study in relation to the divisions made in the discourse today¹. Further, as I am interested in

¹ Today, adult education, liberal adult education and higher education are defined as different kinds of institutions concerning the level of education, what the target groups are, what kind of pedagogical approaches they use, etc. Further, research on these institutions is divided into different areas of research. There are separate conferences for adult education (and liberal adult education) research and higher educa-

questions of discourse, relational power, subject constructions, etc., the most logical choice for me has been to be inspired by two concepts from the Foucauldian toolbox; governmentality and genealogy. I will discuss these concepts later on.

The dissertation is divided into two parts. The first one consists of a synthesis based on the four articles, which make up the dissertation. The synthesis consists of six chapters. In the next chapter, I will outline the theoretical framework used in this dissertation and specify the aim of the dissertation. This will be followed in the third chapter by an outline of the analytical approach, some methodological considerations and a discussion of the empirical material analysed. In the fourth chapter, I will turn to research conducted in the field of governmentality. Firstly, related to educational research and secondly, related to research on adult, liberal adult and higher education. The fifth chapter contains summaries of the four articles on which this dissertation is based. Some general conclusions made in this dissertation will be discussed in the sixth chapter.

The second part (the appendix) consists of the four articles. They are in order of appearance:

1. Fejes, A. (2005) New wine in old skins: Changing patterns in the governing of the adult learner in Sweden. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 24(1), 71-86.
2. Andersson, P. & Fejes, A. (2005) Recognition of prior learning as a technique for fabricating the adult learner: a genealogical analysis of Swedish adult education policy. *Journal of Education Policy*, 20(5), 595-613.
3. Fejes, A. (Accepted for publication, minor revisions) The planetspeak discourse of Lifelong learning in Sweden – reconstituting the adult educable subject: a genealogical analysis of rationalities of governing. *Journal of Education Policy*.
4. Fejes, A. (submitted) European citizens under construction - the Bologna process analysed from a governmentality perspective.

tion research. Thus, there is a discursive construction of what is and what is not within the frames of e.g. higher educational research.

2. Theoretical perspective

I draw on two concepts from the Foucauldian toolbox, governmentality and genealogy as guidance in the analysis made. The former refers to a specific way of viewing questions of governance and the latter refers to a specific way of viewing history. These concepts have been further elaborated on by other researchers and this will be included in my discussion of the issue. In this chapter, I will outline a theoretical perspective with a focus on governmentality. Genealogy will be elaborated on in the next chapter when I discuss my analytical approach since it can be seen as a specific perspective on how to view history.

Foucault had as his project to dissolve taken-for-granted truths and universal claims. Thus, he did not want to construct a coherent system of ideas to which he would have to adapt. There should be no meta-theory construct. Instead, he changed definitions of how to speak about different concepts during his career. Thus, summarising his theoretical ideas is an impossible task. Instead, I will try to outline some of the concepts that are important in relation to this dissertation. As a way of framing the concept of governmentality, I will start by discussing the concepts of power and knowledge. These are two central concepts in Foucault's reasoning about governmentality and genealogy. His view of power as relational and productive is different from what one usually might think about power. Another central question within governmentality studies concerns how the subject is being constructed, something I will discuss in the second part of this chapter. I will continue with a discussion of the concept of discourse, which is central to the understanding of how power and knowledge operate and how subjectivity is constructed. After outlining these different concepts, I will focus on the concept of governmentality and some of its central features based on the discussion so far. Lastly, I will state the aim of the dissertation.

Power and knowledge

Because Foucault wants to question the commonly accepted truths operating in different historical practices, knowledge and power become central. The focus is on the question of "how systems of knowledge organize our *being* in the world through the construction of rules of reason, the ordering of the objects of reflection and the principles for action and participation (Popkewitz et al 2001, p. 5)". The historical relations between power and knowledge, which operate within different kinds of institutions such as the mental hospi-

tal, the prison, etc., are important. In what way do such relations regulate the behaviour of those who are brought within the boundaries of such institutions? For example, in *the history of sexuality: the will to knowledge* (Foucault 1990a), the emergence of the perverse individual is analysed. Foucault argues that during the 18th century sexuality was controlled through Christianity, canon law and the civil law. For example, you should confess the desires of the flesh in your confession as a way of being a good Christian. The focus was on the question of how the obligations of marriage were fulfilled. Married life was thus subject to rules that had to be followed. Threats to the marriage such as homosexuality, bestiality, infidelity, etc. were condemned by law.

During the late 18th and early 19th centuries there is a shift in how to control sexuality. The natural laws of marriage and the inner rules of sexuality are separated. The focus is on the sexuality of those who do not love the other gender such as the child, homosexuals, the insane, criminals, etc. The church has now been replaced by medical science, which defines what kind of sexuality is normal and abnormal. Thus, sexuality now becomes an issue for the public authorities that can be related to the emergence of the population as an economic and political problem. No longer do the authorities have to deal with a 'people', but with a population and all of its characteristics such as nativity, health, fertility, frequency of sickness, etc. No longer is the good of the nation only related to the amount of inhabitants, their quality and pattern of marriage. Now, it also becomes related to everyone's sexual behaviour, which becomes the target for analysis and intervention. No longer should the population become maximized. Instead, it should be regulated through nativity, by means of encouraging/restraining mechanisms according to the needs of society. Sexuality becomes a public effort in a relation between the state and the individual. Thus, sexuality is now spoken of in other ways, by other people from other points of departure and with other intentions – the discourse of sexuality has changed.

What we see is how the demand made on the population to speak about their sexuality, as in the Christian confession, is still present during the 18th and 19th centuries. But now you need to speak about it in other ways than before as there is another production of knowledge related to another functioning of power. Instead of power functioning as a prohibition (the law), it now spreads everywhere and reinforces itself and the object (the deviant person) it works upon. Now, the deviant person is made into an individual who has a life history and the perverse sexuality is inscribed in the person's body, named and categorised. The mechanism of power, which hunts such deviances, makes claims to remove it. But the effect is the opposite as the power transforms deviance into a system of classification where each deviant behav-

our needs to be specified. As it has become a medical phenomenon, one needs to search for the deviances within the person's soul, his/her body and actions – power enters everywhere. Confessional practices are not only related to sexuality. As will be argued in this dissertation, confessional practices can be seen everywhere today. Each person should desire to speak about themselves, e.g. in relation to the study counsellor. Educational, psychological and sociological sciences produce knowledge about the adult learner as someone who is to be self-directed and a constant learner, thus categorising those who are not constant learners as deviant. Such deviances need to be normalised through adult education.

During the 19th century, sexuality was problematised in medical and psychological terms and today, the adult learner is problematised in educational, psychological and sociological terms. Such ways of speaking about sexuality and the adult learner do not emerge outside of or in opposition to power. Instead, they are developed at the site where power operates, and they are a starting point for the operation of power. Such a way of reasoning about power is one of the distinct characters of Foucault's theorising. Power and knowledge are not external to each other, nor are they identical. Instead, they are intertwined in a correlative relationship, which is determined in its historical specificity (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983). For power to operate, it needs to be grounded in knowledge about the things it operates on and in relation to. Knowledge about the deviant (produced by e.g. medicine) constructs the deviant as abnormal (an operation of power).

Usually, one relates power to governing in a specific way. The one who governs is the one who has the power, which Foucault (1980) calls the repressive hypothesis. He questions such a view. Instead, one of his starting points is that power is not something that a person inherits and which can be used against others. It is not a thing, a commodity or a position. Nor does power have any essence. Therefore it cannot repress people. Instead, power is relational. Foucault argues that power:

must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its insert or consenting target; they are always also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application (Foucault 1980, p. 98).

Foucault emphasizes the power produced in the micropractices of relations, such as in a classroom, a prison, a factory, etc. Everyone is undergoing and exercising power at the same time. Therefore, power should be studied in its extreme points of exercise, where it is in an immediate relationship with the object (its target) and where it installs itself and produces its effects (Foucault 1980). An example of such an analysis can be found in Foucault's discussion of the examination in relation to the prison (Foucault 1991). The examination combines the modern forms of power and the modern form of knowledge – that of the individual. Through examination the subject is constantly placed under surveillance and this produces knowledge about the subject, which can constitute the foundation for the governing of it. As will be discussed later, it is in such relations that the subjects are constructed.

I will take a related example from the third article in this dissertation to illustrate the relation between power and knowledge. In the article, I discuss the figure of thought of the educable subject and trace it back to the early 20th century. The conclusion is that the figure has been present during the last 80 years, but that it differs in how it has been present. For example, in the present time the idea of the educable subject is part of the discourses of adult education and lifelong learning. Everyone is seen as being educable since everyone can be part of lifelong learning. Thus, a specific subject(position) is created (the lifelong learner), which is based on knowledge derived from the social sciences and statistics. Through such sciences, knowledge is produced about the population, which is then used as a starting point for defining what a 'good adult' (a lifelong learner) is. Thus, a specific kind of knowledge is a condition of possibility of speaking about the lifelong learner. The power relations define what is good and bad, drawing on the knowledge produced at the same time as those relations define what is and is not acceptable knowledge.

To conclude, Foucault does not intend to make a theory out of power. Instead, he is proposing an analytics of power. Power is a “more-or-less coordinated...cluster of relations” in which one needs to “provide oneself with a grid of analysis which makes possible an analytic of relations of power (Foucault 1980, p. 199)”. Such an analysis will make it possible to map the effects of those power relations. One such effect is the construction of specific truths (discourses). “We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth (Foucault, 1980, p. 93).” For modern society to function, we must all speak the truth. Power always tries to register the truth and it institutionalises and rewards it. We are subjected to the truth since it produces the true discourses, which are the bearers of the specific effects of power. These effects determine our mode of living. So power does not only constrain, it is also productive. Another

effect of power relations is the construction of subjectivities, a discussion I will now turn to.

Constructing the subject

One of Foucault's interests was to study knowledge as social practice. Through the analysis of power/knowledge relations, the constitutions of the subject can be studied as a 'decentering of the subject'. This represents a shift from studying the subject as an a priori entity to studying it as something bound to historical specific practices. For example, instead of studying blacks you study blackness, instead of studying homosexuals you study homosexuality (Popkewitz & Brennan 1998). Thus, instead of studying subjects as agents (a priori), the focus is on studying the specific historical practices, the discourses produced by and producing these practices and what different subject positions are constituted through it. As there are many different discourses, which are not always coherent, multiple subject positions are created. Thus, there is a decentering from the notion of a coherent self to a notion of multiple subjectivities (Chappell et al. 2003). In his writings, Foucault presented several ideas about how subjectivity is created, but all in some way relating to the idea of the decentering of the subject. He argued that the goal of his work has been to:

create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects. My work has dealt with three modes of objectification that transforms the human beings into subjects. The first is the modes of inquiry that try to give themselves the status of sciences....In the second part of my work, I have studied the objectivizing of the subject in what I shall call "dividing practices."....Finally, I have sought to study – it is my current work – the way a human being turns him- herself into a subject (Foucault 2003b, p. 126).

In the articles, the analytical focus has been on the second and third (especially the third) of these modes of how human beings are transformed into subjects. However, the first mode is part of my reasoning in relation to the second and third since the emergence of sciences is a central component of how subjectivity is shaped. Through the emergence of a new kind of knowledge, new techniques of governing such as the numerical grading, hierarchical observations, etc. were made possible. These techniques are not only based on, but they also create, a new kind of knowledge – the scientific knowledge. Science emerges out of a power and knowledge game (Olsson 1997) where knowledge and power are closely related, as discussed in the former part of this chapter. Science sets the limits for what is and is not ac-

cepted as knowledge. With this mode of transforming humans into subjects in mind, I will now turn to a discussion on dividing practices and technologies of the self.

Dividing practices

In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault (1991) sets out to study how a specific form of power operates and is part of the construction of specific subjects. The focus is on the emergence of a specific discipline technique, which constructs the modern individual as a 'docile body', an object of knowledge and a target for the exercise of power. It is an analysis of the technologies of the object (the body as object) and its objectification (object for knowledge production). The practice studied is the prison. It is not the materiality of the prison that interests him. Instead, it is the practice of discipline created through the prison. What kind of discipline procedures are embodied in this institution? Discipline is not the same as institutions; instead it is something that operates within the institution (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983).

In his study of the prison, Foucault (1991) focuses on the idea of Bentham's panopticon. This was an architectural construction in which the prisoner was always visible. The cells were arranged in a circular order with a tower in the middle, which made it possible for constant surveillance of the prisoner. The prisoner was left to him/herself with no contact with the other inmates. The complexity of the system made it possible for constant surveillance without anyone watching the prisoners as they never knew when someone was watching. The "panopticon brings together knowledge, power, the control of the body, and the control of space into an integrated technology of discipline (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983, p. 189)". It locates bodies in a specific space and it distributes individuals in relation to each other for hierarchical organisation. It makes individuals or populations observable and productive. Such power can control and transform bodies (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983).

The panopticon can serve as an example of how Foucault reasons about power, knowledge and discipline. As mentioned above, through the panopticon, the subject is placed under constant surveillance. Such a situation forces the subject to turn inwards and reflect upon his/her crime and punishment. By directing the punishment both towards the body and the soul, the aim was to create a behavioural modification. The process was performed through the precise use of administrative techniques of knowledge and power. Success was achieved if the punishment created a 'docile body' (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983). Through surveillance, knowledge was gathered about the prisoner, which was the foundation of the application of the technique itself. The knowledge gathered can be related to the development of the human sciences,

which turned its attention towards humans, their ways of functioning, and the ideas of how to improve them.

As mentioned before, discipline is a technique, not an institution. It operates within different institutions (such as the school, the hospital or the factory) in relation to authorities or the juridical apparatus. Its way of working is, as in the case of the panopticon, to act on the body with the aim of changing it. The body is seen as an object to be divided and analysed (knowledge) as a starting point for the application of power; a construction of a micro-power, which is the key to the disciplinary power (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983). Through the disciplinary power the individual is invented: “Discipline ‘makes’ individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise (Foucault 1991, p. 170)”. The individuals are objects to be divided and analysed, at the same time as they are the starting point for and foundation of the exercise of power. Foucault (2003b) calls this procedure of subject construction a dividing practice. Through knowledge gathered about the subject, the normal and abnormal is constituted.

Central to the disciplining technique is the examination. It combines the process of surveillance and normalising judgement. “In this ritual, the modern form of power and the modern form of knowledge – that of individuals in both cases – are brought together in a single technique (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983, p. 158).” Such a procedure makes the object of power (the individual) visible through surveillance and knowledge gathered in dossiers while power itself seeks invisibility. In sum, the individual is invented through a specific crossing of power and knowledge. “He is the product of the complex strategic development in the field of power and the multiple developments in the human sciences (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983, p. 160).”

In relation to this dissertation, I can take the example of recognition of prior learning (validation) discussed in the second article. In it, we can see how validation emerges in a specific power/knowledge relation. The individual who is to validate his/her knowledge needs to take some tests (written, practical, oral), which validate that he/she has the knowledge required for a certain degree. These tests act as surveillance and normalising judgement. What is normal and abnormal is defined on the basis of the knowledge gathered about the subjects. Through the process of validation, the person might be constructed as a competent subject, one who has the required knowledge. If not, the person is categorised as not competent. Thus, the subject is constructed on the basis of a specific kind of knowledge (with its foundation in the social sciences and statistics). Knowledge is the basis of the formation of power relations in which subjectivity is created. At the same time as power is

the basis of the formation of the accepted kind of knowledge, it regulates what is possible to say or not.

Technologies of the self

The reasoning about the subject as an object and a docile body to be changed through a dividing practice is, in Foucault's later work, combined with ideas of the subject as an ethical subject to be changed. In his work on the history of sexuality Foucault (1990a) is interested in the relationship the subject has to him/herself. The relation is divided by Foucault (1983) into four different parts, which have been further elaborated on by Dean (1999) as a starting point for analysis. The first part concerns the ethical substance; it is the material to be worked upon (*what to govern*). For example, Foucault argues that in a general way, the ethical substance today is feelings, which are to be worked upon. It could also be the 'soul' in today's penal discourses. In relation to the articles in this dissertation, I would argue that it is the 'desire and will to learn' that is the substance to be worked upon, e.g. you should desire to become a lifelong learner through self-work upon your 'soul'.

The second aspect is the question of *how to govern* this ethical substance. What are the techniques used to change ourselves into becoming ethical subjects; the self-forming activity? What techniques are used to normalise individuals? For example, they could be spiritual exercises or surveillance and normalisation used in the classroom. In the articles, I discuss techniques of guidance, risk calculation, auditing, etc. These all work upon the 'soul' of the adult subject shaping our desires in specific ways. The third aspect is the mode of subjection referring to the way in which people are invited to recognise their moral obligations. *Who are we when we are being governed?* What is the basis of our moral obligations? For example, we might be the active participant in adult education, or an active jobseeker, etc. In the articles, it is the risk groups such as the unemployed, immigrants, social security dependants, persons with a low education, etc, who are to become lifelong learners and active participants in adult education. The fourth aspect is the teleos of government, which refers to ideas about the ethical subject we are to become through the work upon ourselves. *Why do we govern* and *why are we being governed?* In my analysis, I argue that the teleos of government is a welfare society where Sweden and Europe should be in the forefront of the world.

What the questions above points to is an interest in seeing how people are shaped so as to work upon themselves. In his books on the history of sexuality, Foucault (1990a, 1990b, 1992) studies how this subject is constructed by a process of subjectification. Through the idea of sexuality, bio-power (an interest in the manipulation of the body) spreads itself into the

innermost of the individual; into the soul. Central in his reasoning is the idea of technologies of the self. These are technologies, which the individual uses to effect changes on him/herself, e.g. the confession, which can take different forms such as study guidance as discussed in the first article. The problem with analysing these technologies is, according to Foucault (1983), firstly that they are invisible. They do not need the same material apparatuses (e.g. a specific space such as the prison, the classroom, etc.) used when producing objects. Secondly, the technologies are often linked to the techniques of directing others, e.g. pupils in educational institutions. One can compare this to the technologies of discipline in which an authority effects changes in a mute and docile body. But the modern body is not mute and therefore technologies of the self must be analysed (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983). One of the main technologies Foucault elaborated on was the confession. He saw this as a central component of the technologies of controlling populations, and society. In relation to the confession, a series of subjectifying procedures were developed to interpret these confessions instead of objectifying procedures for controlling bodies. Therapeutic interventions were used on the subject instead of the corrective interventions on the docile bodies (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983).

The concept of technologies of the self are used especially in the first and fourth article in this dissertation. In the first, I discuss the idea of guidance and risk calculation. When entering adult education, the adult learner meets a study counsellor who will guide the person in his/her choices of education. This is a two-sided process in which the adult is encouraged to make decisions by him/herself about what to study, how to study, when to study, etc. You should 'open up' your inner self to the counsellor and share your desires and fears as a way of getting guidance on what kind of choices you can make. Thus, you are constructed as a subject who should work upon yourself to become a self-directed, autonomous individual. Similar reasoning is employed in the fourth article where I discuss self-examination in relation to the technique of auditing. As a teacher at a university, you have to know what standards must be reached. Through a process of auditing, those standards are constantly evaluated, thus making the universities and the practice of the teacher into a visible, calculable and governable space. You should be made to desire to reach those standards through different techniques.

Discourse

Before I enter into a discussion on the concept of governmentality I want to discuss what consequences the Foucauldian approach used in this dissertation has on how I view text and discourse. Based on such a framework, I view

everything as text in the analysis performed. Everything in the world is seen as linguistic, cultural and social. Thus, there is no natural truth 'out there' to be found. Texts are seen as linguistic discourses which refer to other linguistic discourses. As everything such as subjects, objects, science, etc. has already been named and interpreted, everything can be seen as text (Gustavsson 1999). There is no correspondence between what we say and the 'reality' as 'reality' is apprehended through our understandings and interpretations of it (Beronius 1991). Thus, there is no pure meaning behind the text, or a pure meaning that a text refers too. You cannot say that there is something outside of the text (Gustavsson 1999). Instead, the catchword that nothing exists outside of the text should be understood as a stance where the 'nothing' must be apprehended in the social manifestation of itself. In a discourse analysis, the focus is on the meaning production constructed through text, and there is no direct relation between the meaning produced in text and the 'outer world' (Neumann 2003). Thus, the 'nothing' is not in focus in a discourse analysis. Further, there is no difference between those texts that are designated as literary or those as non literary (Mills 1997). I view all texts as discursive practices which form social reality.

If everything is text, then where is the context? In this dissertation I am interested in the context as 'context in text'. The texts analysed produce discourses and contexts of which such discourses are part. Consequently, the idea that context and text are separate is dissolved. The texts analysed are themselves the context, as 'reality', or what we apprehend as reality is constituted through text. Thus, the epistemological consequence is that knowledge of the world can only be gained through discourse. However, there might be a 'reality' outside of discourse, but that was not of any interest to Foucault nor is it of interest in this dissertation. He did not deny that there was a pre-existing reality or that there is a materiality to events. Instead, he argues that it is only through discourse that we can apprehend reality (Mills 1997). My ambition is that such a way of reasoning about reality will make it possible to produce results that give us a basis for reflection on adult education today, which is different from what other perspectives can give us. For example, I will try to reflect upon the present without the idea that there is a true hidden agenda behind the texts, or that there is a mastermind or agent who has planned a series of events. Instead, my ambition is to try and see what the discourse of adult education consists of, what is possible to say and not to say and to analyze what made it possible to speak in such ways. Thus, it will hopefully open up a space for reflection on adult education today.

How does text relate to discourse? During his career, Foucault made several different definitions of discourse thus making it impossible to fix any definition. Instead, my discussion of it should be seen as a short introduction

that does not cover all the aspects. It will be followed by a discussion on how I have applied the concept in my dissertation.

Discourse is, according to Foucault, “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak (Foucault 1972, p. 49)”. Such practices produce meaning, form subjects and define what is and what is not possible to say within specific institutions and societies in different historical times – who can speak when, where and with what authority (Foucault 1981). Thus, discourse does not only use signs to designate things, it also produces them, as I elaborated on when discussing power and knowledge. Further, discourse is made up of a group of statements belonging to the same discursive formation. Statements are not grammatical entities restricted to sentences. Objects such as a map or a picture can be statements if they are representations of something (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983). Further, the statements are specific to time and space and it is possible to define the conditions for them to emerge. Together they construct knowledge about the object of which they speaks. The discursive formation is defined as:

Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements, such a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations), we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a *discursive formation* (Foucault 1972, p. 38).

Thus, a discursive formation is an ordered regularity between a number of statements, concepts, objects and thematic choices. These are different in time and space. According to Foucault, the statements exists, while the regularity between statements is constructed by the discourse analyst (Åkerström Andersen 2003). One might say that when conducting a discourse analysis, the researcher constructs a discursive formation by defining a regularity between a number of objects, statements, concepts and thematic choices. Drawing on the above, a discourse could be seen as made up of a discursive formation.

Further, a discourse exists through the discursive practices; or the discursive practice is made up of the exercise of discourse. It is a social practice forming social reality (Winther Jorgensen & Phillips 2002). Thus, the focus of the researcher is on analysing these practices which are:

a body of anonymous, historical rules, always determined in the time and space that have defined a given period, and for a given social, economic,

geographical, or linguistic area the conditions of operation of the enunciat-
tive function (Foucault 1972, p. 117).

A discursive practice consists of collections of rules, which define the objects of which it speaks (the objects which are possible to speak of) – the conditions of the possibility to speak about something in the way spoken of. For example, a discursive practice can be the specific rules of the social sciences, which allow it to produce certain pictures of the adult learner, something that changes over time. Further, it can be the methods used by religion, politics, media, etc, as a way of constructing statements about the objects of which it speaks (Lindgren 1993). As elaborated on earlier, it is in these discursive practices that power and knowledge operates to define what is normal and abnormal. Thus, the only way for us to study discourse is to do it through the study of discursive practices.

In the analysis made, I use the concept of discourse in a pragmatic sense. Discourse is defined as a set of statements about something that orders ‘reality’. Statements also produce certain figures of thought² (ideas) that are part of a discourse; e.g. a figure of thought of the educable subject, of the autonomous subject, the individual, etc. These figures of thought make up the discourse, but are not identical to it (Asplund 1979). As Hultqvist (2004), I view such figures of thoughts as historical parts of the discourses which mobilise the subjects. Further, the statements regulate and define what is normal and abnormal, what can be said and what cannot be said. For example, I speak of the discourse of adult education in the sense that there are, in different discursive practices, statements made about what adult education is and is not, e.g. who is the student, teacher, what is learning, how is teaching to be practiced, what is adult education to become, etc? To give an illustration, we can see how statements are made about adult education as a means of making people employable, of including them in society, of making them into good citizens, etc. Other ways of speaking are not possible, such as speaking of adult education as a demoralisation project. If such a statement is made, it will be excluded and categorised as abnormal.

It is important to note that the text I am constructing is in itself constructed by and part of the construction of the discourses I am analysing. As a researcher, I am as much a position in the discourse as the adult learner. I cannot stand outside of the discourse, but I can try to take a critical analytical

² Figure of thought is a concept commonly used in studies taking a similar approach to mine, for example, Petersson (2003) and Hultqvist (2004). In the text, I will use idea as synonymous to figure of thought so as to make the text more readable (to avoid too many repetitions of the same word).

stance in relation to the present time as a way to create a starting point for reflections on it.

Governmentality

Foucault did not elaborate extensively on the concept of governmentality. Instead, the concept has been developed after his death by other researchers. But, in his later work, Foucault (2003b) focuses on the governability of subjects. What rationalities of governing are constructed in specific historical spaces? The focus of his analysis is on the emergence of the modern social state. Through it the exercise of power has become more finely meshed, expanded and scattered. The result is increased governability through regulations, standardisations of peoples conduct, etc. (Hultqvist & Petersson 1995).

Governmentality helps us to understand the advanced forms of modern exercise of power and its different expressions (Hultqvist & Petersson 1995). Dean (1998, 1999) has suggested that the study of government can be approached through analysis of cases in which the practice of governing is put into question. These are practices where actors are forced to pose questions about how to govern. He calls such an approach the study of problematisations. The analysis is focused on how it is possible to reason about governance in the way reasoned. If we relate it to this dissertation, the focus is on analysing the problematisation of how to govern the adult learner. According to the analysis performed in my articles, there are narratives today that question the present order of things. Sweden and Europe are on the verge of lagging behind the rest of the world if certain measures are not taken. Thus, questions are posed concerning how best to govern the adult learner.

Liberalism, Neo-liberalism and advanced liberal rule

What is being analysed in a governmentality analysis are liberal rationalities of governing, which I will now elaborate on. Liberal does not refer to liberalism as a political ideology. Instead, it refers to a more broad mentality of how to problematize governing which cannot be linked to a certain political party, etc. Such a mentality is almost expressed everywhere (Hultqvist & Petersson 1995). One can say that liberalism is a mode of governing. Foucault (2003a) argues that we can see how there has been a process of governmentalization of the state during the last few hundred years; a change from a repressive centralized power of the prince to punish, to a more decentralized way of governing through institutions and the subjects themselves. As statistics and science emerged, population was constructed as an entity that could be measured and governed. Statistics was the condition of possibility for the population to emerge. The interest in the body was no longer in its reproductive

function, but on the possibility of manipulating it. In relation to such a development, we could see the emergence of bio-power as a coherent political technology. Bio-power is made up of two parts; concern for the human species and interest in the body as an object to be manipulated. The analytical focus for Foucault is to study what kind of rationality of governing this kind of political technology is part of/and is constructing; and the techniques it is associated with (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983).

Such a shift in governmentalities has also been elaborated on by Rose (1996). One of his main themes is to analyse how we are being governed in a time of 'advanced' liberalism and how it came that the obligations of the political authorities have been extended to areas seen as non-political, such as workplaces, homes, schools, etc.

Rose (1996) argues that during the early 19th century, liberalism produced certain problems that had to be governed; such as how to govern in the interest of morality and order and how to restrict the government in the interest of liberty and economy. The experts (knowledgeable persons) emerged as a solution to the government of such an opposition between public and private (e.g. philanthropists, the positive sciences, the scientist, etc.). The experts could be different people or groups of people who had ideas of what social problems there were and programmes for how to solve these problems. These political forces did not only try to regulate behaviours through laws, authoritative state agencies, etc. They also did so by utilising and instrumentalising authority other than that of 'the state'. Thus, governing 'at a distance' was made possible where a clear distinction was made between public and private.

During the late 19th century and early 20th century, such a way of governing was questioned. Instead, a new formula for the exercise of rule called the 'social' emerged with the idea of a 'state of welfare' at the core. Earlier, the authority of expertise was tied to the idea of and the division between public and private, now it was tied to the political formal apparatus of rule. The negative consequences of industrialism were to be governed through society. Political authorities were to be the ones to guarantee the freedom of both the individual and the capitalist enterprises. The state was transformed into a centre that could govern persons distant from it; a social state. Expertise was central through its productions of truths, which made governing at a distance possible in another way than before.

In the middle of the 20th century, such modes of governing were questioned as the state of welfare was problematised as failing. Neo-liberalism emerged as a fairly coherent rationality of governing, which, like liberalism, was sceptical to political governance. But nevertheless, it constructed the 'real' as possible to diagnose and to cure. According to such a rationality of

governing, new strategies of government are needed (Rose 1996). Combined with such rationality of governing was a process of decentralisation of institutions in different networks of power. Today, governing is practiced through alliances between different authorities, which seek to regulate the economy, social life and the life of the individual. Thus, the concept of freedom has been reconceptualised. Now, we are defined as autonomous and active individuals who seek self-realisation (Hultqvist & Petersson 1995) in the name of freedom. As Burchell (1996) argues, neo-liberalism:

constructs a relationship between government and the governed that increasingly depends upon ways in which individuals are required to assume the status of being the subjects of their lives, upon the ways in which they fashion themselves as certain kinds of subjects, upon the ways they practice their freedom (Burchell 1996, p. 29-30).

One could say that neo-liberalism (like liberalism, but in other ways) promotes a specific form of freedom as a way of integrating the self-conduct of the governed into the practices of government.

Based on a neoliberal governmentality, Rose (1996) tries to analyse a more durable transformation in rationalities of governing, which he calls advanced liberal rule. Advanced liberal rule seeks to degovernmentalize the state and its different practices of governing. Instead of governing through society, advanced liberal rule asks if it is possible to govern without governing society; to govern through the regulated choices of the citizens. A distance should be created between the decisions of the political institutions and other social actors. Expertise, which during the early 20th century was tied to the political apparatus, which should speak the truth and thus govern at a distance through society were now replaced. Instead, an expertise, which is disconnected from the political apparatuses and relocated within a market governed by ideas of competition, accountability and consumer demand, emerges. It seeks to regulate the choices of each citizen instead of governing through society. There is a responsabilisation of the experts, where they can no longer handle demands made on them by referring to their own criteria of truth. Now they need to refer to a 'purchaser-provider' market, thus they are assembled in a new relation of power. Through the provision of choices, the citizens should desire self-fulfilment and thus they are created as autonomous actors who choose their own paths in life. Everyone needs to become an expert on him/herself; to be knowledgeable in relation to one's self-care. You are governed through your freedom, not as a citizen of society but as a member of heterogeneous communities to which you feel a responsibility. Such governing is not conducted through techniques of the state; instead it is con-

ducted through techniques acting in the name of freedom (choices) such as commercial, television programs, goods, etc. (Rose 1996).

Drawing on the above, we can see how there are some central components in a liberal rationality of governing. Firstly, there is the relation between public and private. Over the last few centuries, this relation has shifted; from a clear division to a more blurred one where the private interest coincides with the public. Secondly, the concept of freedom is central as it is created by and is a prerequisite of a liberal governmentality. People need to acknowledge themselves as, and act as, free individuals who are part of a society with certain obligations. Such an act by the individual is the foundation for a governing where one willingly accepts responsibilities and tasks such as to define and guarantee the maintenance of a specific freedom (Hultqvist & Petersson 1995). Thirdly, experts are central to a liberal rationality of governing even if it has shifted in form; from being decentralised from the state, becoming tied to the political apparatuses of the state, and today becoming decentralised in a market of competition and consumer demands. Today, we can see how there is an autonomous expertise, which is the answer to the question of how one can limit the political domain and yet regulate the behaviour of the population. The liberal rationality of governing today is dependent on such relations; the relation between the political strategies and expertise, and the relation between the expertise and the free citizens (Hultqvist & Petersson 1995).

How to govern?

As can be discerned from above, governmentality refers to mentalities/thoughts concerning how governing should be practiced. Governmentality focuses on the articulation of different kinds of rationalities of government, not on what constitutes the correct way of governing. Such rationality is always based on, or has a relation to, an idea of what to govern. Things and objects do not have a static meaning. Instead, they are always open to reinterpretation made through the scientific choices of concepts and theories. It is the aim of governmentality to make the power political circumstances and mentalities visible that make it possible for us to create these specific interpretations (Hultqvist & Petersson 1995). Thus, the main focus of a rationality of governing is on how to govern, the conduct of conduct – how to lead the governing. The concept of conduct points to several meanings; to conduct is to lead or guide, and it also means to conduct oneself (ethical aspect) in a self-directed way in certain situations; our articulated set of behaviours which often are seen as possible to judge in relation to certain norms. All these meanings merge in the concept of governmentality; governing attempts to

shape our behaviour according to a particular set of norms and ideas. It is not done through laws. Instead, the rationalities of governing are inscribed into different tactics which shape the conduct of the population by working through our desires, aspirations and beliefs (Dean 1999). Foucault expresses it:

... the finality of government resides in the things it manages and in the pursuit of the perfection and intensification of the processes it directs; and the instrument of government, instead of being laws, now come to be a range of multiple tactics (Foucault 2003a, p. 237).

Thus, an analytics of government focuses on what to govern, how to govern, what the conditions are for governing and what the rationalities of governing are. It is important to note that governing does not attempt to determine people's subjectivities. Instead, in relation to the productive aspect of power, governing shapes, promotes and attributes subjectivity. Subjects should be made into active ones who confess their desires in life. At the same time as the subjects becomes active, there is also the possibility for them to fashion different meanings and subjectivities. Social practices and subjectivities are never fixed (Edwards 2006). Thus, the subject construction discussed in the articles should not be seen as oppressive and fixed. Instead, they should be seen as constantly fluctuant.

So far we have seen how there are several concepts and ideas that are central in relation to governmentality. To be able to analyse governmentalities of the present, one needs to analyse the specific power/knowledge relations present in the discourses and how such relations contribute to the production of specific subjects, practices of exclusion, etc. One way of perspectivising such an analysis of the present is by performing a genealogical analysis, which will be discussed in the next chapter. But first, I will state the aim of this dissertation.

Aim of the dissertation

The aim of this dissertation is to problematize and perspectivise the construction of the adult learner in the present time. How is such a subject constructed today through different techniques of governing in the practices of adult, liberal adult and higher education and what historical traces are there in such a construction? Further, the aim is to analyse what rationality of governing such governing practices are created by and create, which will be related to rationalities constructed earlier on.

3. Analytical approach

In the previous chapter, I discussed the theoretical perspective I adopt. Following such reasoning, I will now elaborate on the analytical approach used, which is closely related to the theoretical perspective. Firstly, I will discuss the genealogical approach used in the first three articles. Secondly, I will discuss how I have conducted the discourse analysis in the four articles and what challenges there have been. This will be followed by a discussion of how one might evaluate the quality in a discourse analysis. Lastly, I will make some reflections on the material analysed.

Genealogy – a history of the present

In the previous chapter, I discussed some basic concepts in the Foucauldian toolbox and the governmentality approach. Such reasoning is related to the genealogical approach developed by Foucault (1977). With the help of genealogy, my aim is to perspectivise and to question the taken-for-granted ideas of the present. Such an endeavour is not only carried out by means of Foucauldian inspired analyses. For example, one of the main tasks for a critical theory analysis is to make explicit how dominant ideologies make people believe that certain ways of organizing society are in the best interests of everybody. Such an endeavour is normative in the sense that it is based on a political theory, which has changing society as its objective. The theory is valid if it has the capacity to inspire action (Brookfield 2005). Foucault opposes such a way of conducting an analysis. He did not set out on a quest to find solutions or alternatives to problems in the present (Foucault 1983). Instead, he wanted to do a genealogy of problems where the focus is on analysing the problems emerging in specific historical and cultural practices. What made it possible for these problems to emerge and what effects of the historical-specific relations of power and knowledge are there?

I'm not looking for an alternative; you can't find the solution of a problem in the solution of another problem raised at another moment by other people. You see, what I want to do is not the history of solutions, and that's the reason why I don't accept the word "alternative". I would like to do genealogy of problems, of *problématiques*. My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to a hyper- and pessimistic activism (Foucault 1983, p. 231-232).

Thus, genealogy does not seek to uncover any true hidden meaning and show us alternatives of how to act as a way to free us from the constraints defined by the dominating ideology. Instead, as everything is dangerous, the task is to problematize problems in the present through the use of history as a toolbox. Of interest are those practices, institutions and ideas in the past, which are part of the present. Genealogy follows the descent of the problems and ideas in the present as a way to:

identify the accidents, the minute devotions – or conversely, the complete reversals – the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value to us; it is to discover that truth or being do not lie at the root of what we know and what we are, but the exteriority of accidents (Foucault 1977, p. 146).

Thus, you should not write a linear history from a previous time to a later one. Instead, lines of descent and emergence are traced through nonlinear trajectories as a means of identifying the circumstances that gave birth to those things that still continue to have meaning to us. We use the past to question narratives of progress and the taken-for-granted ideas of the present time. Such an endeavour is normative in the sense that it does not prescribe what the results are of such questioning. Dean (1999) calls it an ‘exemplary criticism’ as opposed to prescription and foundational critique. Thus, it is another way of doing critical research than, for example, critical theory.

Genealogy was developed during the later part of Foucault’s (1972, 1977) career in opposition to the history of ideas. History has usually been seen as a process in which we are to create order out of chaos. We need to tell a story where causality is in the foreground as a way to explain our past and our present. For example, Marxism focuses on explaining the development of society in relation to the base and superstructure where materiality (the base) is used as an explanation of events in history (Beronius 1991). Foucault (1977), based on Nietzsche, argues that history should instead be seen as a process of discontinuities, temporality and without essence. The focus is on re-establishing systems of subjection by tracing the emergence of events, which arise in a play of domination. Such plays are temporary, specific to time and space, and they contain uncertain relative strengths, which produce non-calculated consequences. In these battles there is no pre-existing subject. Instead, they emerge and their roles are constructed and played out in different practices (Beronius 1991).

We can relate such reasoning to what I discussed earlier on about text. By interpreting social reality in our everyday life we create meaning. ‘Real’ objects might exist but they are meaningless without us relating them to other

objects and through the use of language. Thus, we make interpretations by using language. Those interpretations are analyzed by the genealogist. The analytical focus is on the circumstances that make it possible to interpret reality in the ways we do specific to time and space. These circumstances have a relation to how knowledge operates and how discourse is organized.

Thus, the researcher interprets interpretations, which are part of a play of domination, and maps out the strategies employed to make certain interpretations the dominating ones. In the play of domination, the discourse of adult education is created based on specific relations of power and knowledge, which I discussed in the theoretical chapter. The aim of a genealogical study is not to acknowledge science and its aspiration for truth telling. Instead, the ambition is to study it as a practice, like any other practice that ‘does’ things (Hultqvist & Petersson 1995). In what ways do science and knowledge participate in the production of practices of governing and the one being governed? Thus, the different relations of power, which define the practice of adult education, are not the product of a continuous history. Instead, the power relations exist through different disruptive dimensions of time and space (Popkewitz & Brennan 1998).

In other words, genealogy is an analysis of ideas in the present time. These ideas are traced back in time and the circumstances in which they emerged are analysed. The aim is to describe how governing practices are constituted and how they operate (what the effects are of the power operating). This specific form of history has also been called a history of the present where history is seen as “an understanding of the present and of collective memory as the weaving together of multiple historical configurations that establishes connections that make for the common sense (Popkewitz et al 2001, p. 4)”. It is the historical configurations that are focused on, and the researcher tries to trace them back in time. It is the things taken for granted in our present time that are challenged. The perspective is:

... introducing a critical attitude towards those things that are given to our present experience as if they were timeless, natural, unquestionable: to stand against the maxims of one’s time, against the spirit of one’s age, against the current of received wisdom (Rose 1999a, p. 20).

A history of the present focuses on those configurations of rationality and power that constitute the problematic of the present. Further, it has to do with the specific ways we ask questions and formulate answers about our present time (Hultqvist & Petersson 1995).

Foucault (1983, p. 237) argues that there are three domains of genealogy possible, all of which in different ways are part of his studies. First, there is

“an historical ontology of ourselves in relation to truth through which we constitute ourselves as subjects of knowledge”. Second, there is “an historical ontology of ourselves in relation to a field of power through which we constitute ourselves as subjects acting on others”, and lastly there is “an historical ontology in relation to ethics through which we constitute ourselves as moral agents”. According to Foucault, all three of these domains were present in *Madness and civilization* (2002). In *The birth of the clinic* (2003c) and in *The order of things* (2001) the truth domain was present. The power domain was used in *Discipline and punish* (1991) and the ethical domain in the *History of sexuality* (1990a, 1990b, 1992). If we relate these reflections to what has been discussed earlier, there are clear similarities between dividing practices and the second domain; and similarities between technologies of the self and the third domain. What I focus on in my dissertation is mostly the last domain, the one about ethics (even if I also to some extent discuss the second one). My interest is in the relationship the subject has to him/herself in relation to the dominating governmentality.

Conducting the analysis

As I argued before, the perspective I adopt, based on Foucault, is anti-essentialistic, i.e. there is nothing but text. Everything is made up of and constituted through text, thus there is no ‘reality’ outside of the texts analysed (however, there might be a reality outside of the text, but that is not of interest in this dissertation). What I do in my analyses is to make interpretations of interpretations. Everything has already been interpreted in a specific way related to time and space and I make interpretations of those interpretations. Further, I try to see how discourses operate and make certain ways of reasoning the logical way to reason. As history contains ruptures, I view historical material as a toolbox from which to select pieces as a way to perspectivise the present. Thus, what I select from the historical material is decided by the analysis of the present.

How, then, have I applied the Foucauldian perspective adopted in this dissertation? The ideas presented in the theoretical chapter and above, concerning genealogy, have guided me in my analysis. In some discursive approaches there are very distinct and clear guidelines on how one proceeds with the analysis. For example, in the critical discourse analysis based on Fairclough (1995, 2002) there are different levels of discourse which should be analysed. It is problematic to construct such a framework in studies based on Foucault. The reason is that he himself changed the way he performed his analysis and he did not give any clear guidelines on how to carry out a dis-

course analysis. Instead, he stated that his books should be regarded as tool-boxes:

All my books...are little tool boxes...if people want to open them, to use this sentence or that idea as a screwdriver or spanner to short-circuit, discredit or smash systems of power, including eventually those from which my books have emerged...so much better (cited in Mills 1997, p. 17, referring to Patton 1979, p. 115).

Thus, my ambition has been to construct a theoretical framework based on Foucault as a way of answering the questions posed. I have borrowed some of his concepts and they have acted as a searchlight when reading the documents. I have been interested in passages expressing power relations, posing problems and solutions to problems, speaking about the adult learner, society, future, the state, etc. More specifically, when performing a governmentality analysis there are a few questions that guide the analyst, according to Foucault (1983) and Dean (1999), as a way to analyse the rationalities of governing. Taking my point of departure in their reasoning related to what I do in this dissertation, the more general questions posed in the material are the following ones:

- What are the problems to be solved – what is the problematic of government?
- What is the teleos of governing (what future should be created)?
- What subject should be governed and what is this subject to become?
- How should governing be practiced (what kinds of techniques for governing are created)?

The research process

The research process is a process of curiosity, interpretations, re-interpretations, etc., which is not easily structured in a coherent way. But as a way of presenting my research process I have tried to structure it in seven general steps, which all in some aspects have been intertwined. The overall aim of the dissertation and the questions posed in the paragraph above constitute a background to this process.

1. Read through the documents from the present time, focusing on what central concepts and figures of thought the discourses being analysed consists of (e.g. the discourse of adult education or the discourse of lifelong learning). Of interest have been passages where power relations and subjectivity constructions seem to be present, where prob-

lems about governance are posed, etc. These concepts and passages have been quoted in a document together with my first reflections on what these passages say and how one might interpret them.

2. Read through the quotations and reflections on the quotations several times as a way to see what discursive formation I can create. Such a formation is created by drawing together statements uttered in different texts. Thus, I as a researcher construct the discursive formation. Guiding questions are: How does the formation take shape? How are the discourses constructed and what central figures of thought do they contain? My analysis is written down in a new document.
3. Now, I go back to the documents to re-read the pages where the quotations I have used in the analysis can be found. Is there anything new I want to add to or something I want to change in the analysis?
4. A more coherent story is created in which I focus on aspects I found to be interesting to pursue in relation to the overall aim of this dissertation, e.g. the figure of thought of the educable subject, or the technique of assessment (validation), etc.
5. If my article is to be limited to a governmentality analysis, as in the fourth article, I now continue to work on the text and relate it to research conducted by others.
6. But if I am performing a genealogical analysis, as in the first three articles, I now turn to documents produced earlier on in history. The starting point in the analysis of these documents is the discourses of adult education. What do they consist of? How are they constructed? But I especially focus on the figure of thought I want to trace back in time. For example, in the second article we ended up with two different figures of thought which constructed the competent subject through the technique of assessment (validation). These figures were experience and ability. When analysing the documents produced earlier on, those figures acted as a starting point. Were they present earlier on? If so, what other figures of thought were they combined with? What role were they assigned in the discourse of adult education earlier on?
7. If necessary, I now go back and re-read the documents analysed. Further, I relate my analysis to other researchers and I try to construct a coherent and convincing story.

The process of analysing and writing with a Foucauldian perspective has not been without problems or surprises. I will now reflect on some aspects of those issues, starting with my role as a researcher.

If I am analysing discourse, what is my position in such a product? Firstly, I would argue that I speak from a subject position of a researcher, which makes me as much part of the production and as a product of discourse as other subjects. Further, the position of a researcher might be assigned a specific 'value' in relation to other positions in the discourse. However, I have not performed such an analysis of my own position. Nevertheless, one might say that the discourse allows me to produce a text with its specific characteristics, which are assigned a knowledge producing position in the discourse. The text I produce is part of the construction of the phenomenon studied at the same time as the text is a product of discourse.

Secondly, I am also part of the construction of the discourse of Foucault. Through the use of his concept I participate in the production of what the Foucauldian discourse consists of and what position it is assigned in the discourse of social and educational science. We can relate the last statement to the research overview done of studies carried out in the educational field using Foucault (Chapter 4). The different texts discussed produce, and are a product of, a discourse on how Foucault should be understood. Some interpretations I make are within the limits of the discourse, others might not be, which will be decided by the research community. As researchers, we are all the upholders and protectors of such a discourse.

Another reflection on myself as a researcher is my role in the academic discourse. Writing a PhD dissertation has its own regulations and borders. You are allowed to write the dissertation within certain frames, which are constantly under production. In my case, I have chosen to write a dissertation by publication. Such a choice is not very common in educational research in Sweden. Then how come I have made such a choice? One answer has to do with more practical arguments such as dividing the project into smaller parts as way of making it easier to see the 'end' of the project. Another answer could be more related to how science is governed today, where international peer-reviewed articles are assigned more value in the discourse than other kinds of publications, e.g. a dissertation as a monograph. In this sense, PhD students, and other members of academia, are governed in accordance with a specific path presented as desirable.

Fourthly, in my role as a researcher, the process of writing this dissertation has not been without surprises. In an endeavour such as mine, I should, as a researcher, try to take some steps back and try to view things from afar. What might seem to be the 'deepest' questions can turn out to be the most superficial ones. Studied from the right distance and with the right vision, everything is visible (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1983). When I have been analysing the texts, the interpretations made have been outlined in a process of many re-interpretations. The final interpretation might have been preceded by

several others. I think this has to do with how we often take ‘dominating’ ideas as taken for granted in our everyday life. For example, lifelong learning is something I take for granted in my everyday life. I might even promote the idea as it appeals to me in some respects. Everyone should, of course, be given the prerequisites to participate in lifelong learning. Then, when I take on the role of a researcher who perspectivise such taken-for-granted ideas, there are some surprises. For example, when performing the discourse analysis, the idea of lifelong learning as all-inclusive fades away. Instead, the analysis maps out how the power relations in the discourse create practices of exclusion, something the rhetoric of lifelong learning opposes. The effects are the opposite of what is spoken of. Other surprises emerge when contrasting the present with the past. For example, the change in the discourse of how the adult subject is constructed make more explicit how ideas such as educableness, talent, experience, etc. travel in time and space, and in all discourses studied, these ideas participate in the construction of ‘the other’.

One problem when performing a discourse analysis, where power is central in relation to the construction of the subject, is that one might overemphasise the constraining and/or enabling effects of discursive power. One might fall into the trap of becoming deterministic (Chappell et al 2003). For example, when discussing the discourse of adult education today, one might argue that the adult learner is trapped in a system of power relations. We are constructed as always learning and in need of education every now and then if we are to avoid marginalisation. Is this the only way to reason about the self? Are we trapped in this discourse? One way of handling such a problem is to recognise that ‘individuals’ are part of many different discourses that interact, clash and compete with each other, thus, opening up the possibility of new meanings, understandings and knowledge in relation to the self (Chappell et al 2003). In this dissertation, the focus has mainly been on the discourses of adult education and lifelong learning, which makes it important for me to point out that we are not only part of the construct of a single position in the discourse, but many.

Another challenge has to do with how I as a researcher construct my text. As has been argued, I am part of the discourse I am analysing. Thus, there is no way I can argue that the story I construct is the only way to do it. Another researcher would probably do it in another way as we are constituted in relation to time, space and discourse. However, my ambition is to try to diagnose the present as a starting point for reflections about it. As argued by Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983, p. 105): “The genealogist is a diagnostician who concentrates on the relations of power, knowledge, and the body in modern society”. Thus, the ambition is not to try and tell the story of how it really was. Such an endeavour is impossible. Some readers might ask if the consequence of

my arguments is a relativism of ‘anything goes’. Can the researcher make any construction he/she likes and still call it research, or can he/she call the analysis made as good as any other analysis of the issue performed? Such questions refer to ideas of how to evaluate the quality of a discourse analysis, a discussion I now turn to.

Quality in a discourse analysis

Questions about validity and quality arise in relation to the questions posed in the last section. How can one judge if the discourse analysis carried out is valid. Staffan Larsson (2005) has defined some central aspects, which one should bear in mind when evaluating the quality of qualitative studies. It is important to bear in mind that Larsson’s account of quality is a tentative one. He does not argue that each criterion is suitable for all studies carried out. Further, his account is foremost based on ideas from ethnography, phenomenology, phenomenography and hermeneutics. Thus, one might ask if it is appropriate to discuss it in relation to a discourse analysis. I argue that some of the criteria are appropriate to discuss in relation to my study.

One of the criteria Larsson (2005) discusses is the *discourse criterion*, which means that the results in a study should be scrutinised by the research community. Are the arguments presented in the study capable of withstanding other arguments and interpretations? I would argue that this is a really important criterion of discourse analysis as it often takes a somewhat relativistic stance (which, of course, a lot of perspectives in social and educational sciences do today). This criterion can be combined with another criterion, which is important for a discourse analysis; the *heuristic value* which concerns how convincing the character of the text is. In qualitative studies it is essential that you can describe the phenomenon studied in a ‘new’ way, thus making the story and its capacity to convince the reader essential. It has to do with to what extent you manage to get the reader to understand a phenomenon in a ‘new’ way. In this dissertation, one might argue that the criterion of heuristic value will be met if it manages to destabilise the taken-for-granted ideas of the present. Thus, if the study is well conducted the reader should have been convinced that he/she can see adult education and the adult learner in another way than before.

These two criteria are similar to the ideas concerning quality in discourse analysis presented by David Howarth (2000). He argues that the quality of a discourse analysis is judged on the narrative it represents. If the reader finds the reasoning and arguments presented reasonable, then it is valid. Further, it is a question for the research community to define what is ‘good’ and ‘bad’ through peer review systems, etc. Similar arguments are put

forward by Mitchell Dean (1999). He argues that a study “should be judged in the terms of its coherence, clarity, completeness and, above all, capacity to convince (Dean 1999, p. 10)”. Further, he argues that to evaluate it, one should compare its intelligibility and the understanding it creates with other accounts. Thus, a governmentality analysis is not a subjective relativistic enterprise where ‘anything goes’. It has to be scrutinised and evaluated in relation to the criteria mentioned above (and other criteria determined by the research community).

Empirical material

I have chosen to analyse official documents, thus leaving other kinds of texts outside the dissertation. My reasons for such a choice are both theoretical and pragmatic. The theoretical argument is that texts are in themselves part of different discourses, which assign texts different subject positions. All positions in a discourse are part of the production of the discourse in itself, but some positions are created as more important than others. Such a creation is related to the historic specificity of the practice, thus it changes over time. Neumann (2003) pursues a similar argument when he argues that one way of trying to map out texts that are important in the discourse is by analysing which texts are often referred to. In my case, I have chosen official documents (SOU) as they are assigned a certain position in the discourse of today. According to Johansson (1992), official documents (SOU) play an important role in the governmental decision-making process. These documents are the products of discussions and political considerations and act as a basis of decision-making in the parliament. Further, they depend on the production of knowledge in society and can be seen as an important expression of the ambition of political power to govern (Olsson 1997). Thus, my view is that these documents are an important part of the construction of the knowledge object I am interested in, i.e. they could be a good foundation for interesting results and they can tell us something about the present time.

However, I am aware that such a choice leaves out other kinds of perspectives and results. What about the conflicts, the reservations made, the different opinions, etc, which were expressed during the meetings when these documents were produced (Olsson 1997)? What about other documents which might not have the same status, but which present the issue in another way? These are all relevant questions. However, I argue that it is still of interest to analyse these official documents since they are assigned a specific position in the discourse. Further, they are products of specific historical spaces and an analysis of them will be able to tell us something interesting about the changing contours of the present.

Such a theoretical argument is also a bit pragmatic as I have not myself conducted a discourse analysis of how different kinds of texts are created as speaking from different subject positions. Instead, I have referred to research outside the analysis made in the dissertation (Johansson 1992, Olsson 1997). However, even if those texts are not analysed as discourse, they tell us something about the character of official documents. When choosing the texts to be analysed, one might argue that there are texts missing that should have been analysed. My response would be in line with the argument put forward by Neumann (2003) that no matter what the extent of the discourse is, it will be possible to analyse it by drawing on a limited number of central references. Thus, you have to be able to say, at a certain time and with a good conscience, that you have read enough, but not everything.

Now that I have outlined my theoretical and analytical approach, I will turn to a discussion of what kind of research has been conducted in the field of adult education using Foucauldian perspectives. In what terrain can I place this dissertation?

4. Foucault and adult education

In this section, I will construct a story in which earlier research relevant to my dissertation will be discussed. In no way am I arguing that the story is a complete one, or that my way of constructing it is the only way to do so. However, my ambition has been to introduce the concepts used in the dissertation in relation to what phenomena have been studied using these concept and how others have applied them. Thus, the focus is on the use of Foucault in adult education research, especially the use of governmentality in relation to the adult learner. What has been done and how has it been done? The overview have been constructed by reading books found when searching in libraries for literature in the area, by searching in different journals, the Internet, through suggestions from colleagues, people met at conferences and by looking at the references referred to in studies using concepts from the Foucauldian toolbox. It will not be a complete overview, but hopefully it will introduce the area of research in a comprehensive way. As will be seen, my starting point is in research on governmentality, not genealogy. The reason for this is that genealogy as a perspective is often combined with governmentality in the theoretical framework as is the case in this dissertation. For me, genealogy is a perspective on how to view history that helps me to analyse the governmentalities of the present. Thus, the starting point is governmentality.

According to Dean (1999), the concept of governmentality seems to have started to be used to a greater extent in the early 1990s, and at the end of the 1990s, its time had arrived. Such a development can be related to the fact that Foucault gave his lecture on governmentality in February, 1978. It was first published in English in a journal in 1979, thus not giving it a broad audience. Not until 1991 was the lecture presented to a larger audience as a result of its publication in an anthology in English (Burchell *et al* 1991). Since then, several anthologies on the theme of governmentality and genealogy have been published outside of the educational field (e.g. Hultqvist & Petersson 1995, Barry *et al* 1996, Dean & Hindess 1998, Neuman & Sending 2003, Johansson & Lövgren accepted for publication).

One of the most quoted writers using the idea of governmentality today is the English researcher Nikolas Rose (1996, 1999a, 1999b). In his books and articles he mostly theorizes on how the ways the subject is being governed have changed over time. His books are for the most part theoretical and the empirical material is limited. In one way, one could say that Rose tries to make a more general overview of how governmentality has changed over

time based on governmentality studies conducted by other researchers. Such an endeavour has both strengths and weaknesses. In one way, it provides a starting point for reflections on the present on a more general level. In another way, it might turn into a meta theory of governmentality, which counters the project of Foucault where there are no meta theories and no progress in history that can be fixed. As Dean (1999) argues, such generalisations are made difficult and contested by the substantive nature of the governmentality research. At best, it can be a second-order and tentative activity.

Another central figure in the governmentality literature is the Australian researcher Mitchell Dean, who has published several texts using the concept of governmentality. He has written both a theoretical and methodological text (Dean 1999), empirical text (Dean 1998) and he has been editor for an anthology in this area of research (Dean & Hindess 1998). In his book *Governmentality: power and rule in modern society* (1999), he outlines different aspects of governmentality and its use; a more theoretical/methodological book. A guiding concept in the analysis made is Foucault's notion of the conduct of conduct. He argues for an approach he calls an analytics of government, which focuses on the "attempts to rationally affect the conduct of others and ourselves (p. 198)". In some of the chapters, he illustrates different aspects of the modern forms of power such as pastoral power, bio-politics, and liberalism. Further, he develops methodological suggestions as how to apply the concept in research. Dean argues that through the use of Foucault, we can contribute to a critique of political reason, but not make a complete study of politics and power relations.

In the following, I will discuss research conducted in the educational field drawing on ideas from Foucault. Firstly, I will discuss the use of Foucault in educational research on a broad basis. This will hopefully give us a broader understanding of the concepts applied. In order to focus even more on the phenomena studied in this dissertation, I will finish the exposé by discussing the uses of Foucault in research on adult education at a more general level and in relation to the adult learner. As my focus is on the adult learner and how concepts from the Foucauldian toolbox can be applied in this area of research, I will leave more general 'non-Foucauldian' research on adult education in Sweden, or research on the adult learner using other perspectives than mine, outside of the text.

Foucault and education

Although Foucault (1991) mentioned the school as a modern institution where the disciplinary power was produced and exercised, he never did enter the educational area of research. Nor did educational researchers start to use

his ideas more extensively until the late 1980s and early 1990s. Before 1990, the use of Foucault's ideas was almost completely absent in educational research (Olssen 1990). One of the exceptions is Hoskin (1979, 1982, 1990), who draws on ideas from Foucault's (1991) *Discipline and punish* when analysing the prehistory of examination. He sees examination as a disciplining technique and argues that the modern examination still represents, since antiquity, rationality and authority. But it has been implemented in new ways. The disciplinary technique has become invisible. He develops his thoughts several years later (Hoskin 1993) where he proposes that education is the foundation for understanding the genesis of disciplinarity and the growth of disciplinarity's power. The focus is on how the development of the educational practice – where the examination, the numerical grading of it and writing are central – created a student who learned to learn under constant examination. Examination (assessment) is a central theme in the second article in this dissertation where we discuss validation in Sweden (recognition of prior learning) as a technique which fabricates specific adult learners.

A first anthology on the theme Foucault and education was published in 1990 (Ball 1990) where the focus is on education and its relationship to politics, economy and history in the formation of humans as subjects. Most of the contributions draw on ideas from *Discipline and punish* (Foucault 1991), especially the idea of dividing practice; how school in many different forms divides pupils into the normal and the abnormal. A couple of the contributions use the idea of genealogy as a way to analyse the urban schoolteacher and the emergence of physiology, others combine Foucault with the Gramscian concept of hegemony. After this book was published, there has been a major increase in the use of Foucault in educational research. Several anthologies have been published on the issue, for example, *Foucault's challenge* by Popkewitz and Brennan (1998) and *Dangerous coagulations* by Baker and Heyning (2004). A general trend can be seen where there has been a shift in interest, from the idea of subjects as objects and docile bodies (*Discipline and punish*) to a greater interest in Foucault's later work and his interest in the modes through which the subjects are constructed by themselves (technologies of the self) and to the idea of governmentality.

Popkewitz and Brennan (1998) draw together scholars from different areas of research who apply ideas from Foucault to educational knowledge objects, thus giving the book a 'broad' presentation of how ideas from Foucault can be applied in educational research. Some of the contributions focuses on a history of the present in relation to e.g. childhood, the educated subject etc, others focus on how power operates on bodies in school, pedagogy, etc. A similar book is edited by Baker and Heyning (2004) in which they collect different contributions that use Foucault in the study of educa-

tion. The term 'use' is problematised by the editors. In itself, the term defines a 'correct' and a 'false' application of Foucault, which can be seen in the different contributions. Some of the contributing authors argue that they apply Foucault whilst others distance themselves from the notion that Foucault can be applied. The contributions span a wide spectrum of 'Foucault studies'. Some chapters make a historical excursus as a way of problematizing phenomena such as school uniforms, the state, teaching, etc. Others focus on analysing concepts from the Foucauldian toolbox such as freedom in addition to contributions that reflect upon the use of Foucauldian tools such as care of the self, etc.

To conclude, we can see that ideas from the Foucauldian toolbox have become a major inspiration in educational research. A wide variety of phenomena are studied, and there are numerous approaches. In the next part, I will turn to the area of adult education and adult learning. Can we see similar patterns as regards how Foucault is applied?

Foucault and adult education/adult learning

We have seen how educational studies based on concepts from the Foucauldian toolbox have increased in the last 15 years. How is it if we focus on research on adult education? In my search for literature in this area it turns out that Foucault is part of the repertoire of perspectives used in research on adult education and adult learning, but not as extensively as in the area of education and in the area outside of education. This chapter is organised based on the division made by Baker and Heyning (2004). According to them, the use of Foucault's ideas in educational literature in the last 25 years can be divided into three parts: "historicization and philosophizing projects with relativization emphases; denaturalization projects without overt historical emphases with diversity emphases; critical reconstruction projects with solution emphases (Baker & Heyning 2004, p. 29)".

The first category has drawn on archaeology and genealogy to analyse what the conditions of possibilities are for certain discourses to take uphold. The focus can be certain subjects such as the child, the teacher, the educated person, etc. or on analysing and historicizing Foucault's work. A starting point is often a certain subject position where the focus is to study what the conditions of possibilities for its emergence are. An example is this dissertation where the starting point is the adult subject, how it is constructed, what the conditions of possibilities for its emergence are etc. The second line of studies often relates a concept from Foucault to other concepts in a wider discussion such as on the 'self' or 'reason'. It has a more philosophical tendency. The third line of research is more oriented towards a sociological

Foucault. Concepts such as power-knowledge, discipline, surveillance and governmentality are central. It might be about categorisation within a specific institution, how concepts change meaning between places, etc. My dissertation is also a part of this line of research as my focus is to study how a different rationality of governing is created in the discourse of adult education today compared to earlier on and how certain ways of speaking are legitimised, others not. I will now discuss research conducted on adult education and the adult learner in relation to these three different categories.

Historicization and philosophizing projects with relativization emphases

My search for literature in the area of adult education/adult learning indicates that there is a limited number of studies taking on the task of historicising different subject positions and/or discourses. I have found four examples so far.

First, we can see how lifelong learning is analysed and historicised by Wilson (1999), drawing on ideas from Foucault. The historicising part is not extensively developed, but it is part of the argument posed. He argues that the rhetoric of lifelong learning and the learning society is a disguise for the exercise of power. Taking his point of departure in Foucault's concept of knowledge-power regimes, he wants to study how subjectivities of dependence are created through the profession of adult education. The focus is on how power is created and used in adult education in the case of educational planning theory. He argues that planning theory has been remarkably stable since the 1930s. Its division of planning into assessment, needs, what to learn and how to learn, evaluations and the teacher's practice of these construct a discipline dependency in which examination is central. Planning theory is construed as a technology of examination. Thus, the adult educator participates in the creation of a mode of domination where the students are created as subjects of the discipline objectification process.

Another historicising project was carried out by Jonsson (2002) in which he studied the public library as a governing practice by means of a discourse analysis based on Foucault and his archaeological and genealogical approach. The aim was to analyse how the decision makers of public libraries apprehend ideas concerning the functioning of public libraries. He argues that the decision makers construct themselves as passive inflators who guide the visitors so that they can find what they expect to find at the library. One hope is that the visitors are activated by their visit to the library, thus transforming them into participating citizens. The conditions of possibility making such a construct possible are the idea of self-education, criticism of the concept of

education and assumptions about the free market economy and the liberal idea of democracy.

Anna Bjuremark (2002) partly uses a historicising approach in her dissertation. Her focus is on the governmentalities operating in the dean's council at one university in Sweden. She wanted to analyse the new kind of governance, which have emerged in higher education in Sweden in the last few years. Her dissertation is in the form of an ethnographic study where she attended meetings, held interviews, etc. and she also used historical material such as official documents. Using the concept of governmentality, she focuses on how power and governmentalities operate in the council. Using the genealogical approach, she analyzes historical material and argues that figures of thought operating in the present have historical trajectories. She concludes that a new management discourse has arisen where the aim is for the university to ensure the future need of manpower in society.

A more thorough historicising project clearly drawing on genealogy is conducted in an extensive research project by Hultqvist et al (2002). Practices studied are correctional treatment, the library, public health and teacher education, thus framing them within the area of adult education/adult learning. They argue that today, we can see a pedagogicalization of the state. The notion of pedagogy, a way of governing that has been present in education for a couple of centuries, is spreading to other practices besides the school. We can see how the discourse of pedagogy, with its specific ways of reasoning and expressing itself, is inscribed in the practice of correctional treatment, the library, public health, teacher education, etc. In the third article in this dissertation, I argue that lifelong learning can be seen as an expression of this new rationality of governing and as a pedagogical technique that is inscribed in different practices not only concerned with formal education. It is also inscribed in the person's everyday life. You are constructed as a subject learning all the time, during leisure time, at work and in education. Such a way of reasoning about learning seems to indicate a new way of reasoning about how to govern and what to govern.

The project conducted by Hultqvist et al (2002) could also be placed in the two other categories of research. In one way, they discuss the idea of the learning society as a technology that "orders, interns and encloses the possibilities of one's life (Popkewitz et al 2005, p. 2)". The analysis is made using the concept of cosmopolitanism in the study of education, public health and crime prevention. It is a historical excursus, at the same time as it is a problematisation of the concepts of cosmopolitanism and the learning society in relation to governmentality. Thus, as a more philosophical text, one might place it in the second category. Further, the ideas of governmentality,

power/knowledge, etc. are central in the analysis made and therefore they could also be placed in the more 'sociological' category of studies.

Thus, as can be seen, the study carried out in this dissertation seems to be one of very few in the field of adult education/adult learning using the idea of genealogy as a way to historicise the adult learner today. Further, the categorisation of these studies might be problematic as some of them are quite 'broad' in their approach.

Denaturalization projects without overt historical emphases with diversity emphases

A more philosophical task is carried out by Jan Masschelein (2001, 2004) who problematizes the concepts of the learning society and Bildung in relation to ideas from Foucault. Governmentality is one of the concepts discussed, but it is not foremost a governmentality analysis. Instead, it is a problematisation of some concepts in relation to e.g. governmentality.

In one article (Masschelein 2001), the focus is on how the discourse of the learning society can be understood using Hanna Arendt's ideas of life, and Foucault's idea of bio-power and governmentality. He argues that the discourse of the learning society can be understood as a way for the individual to survive. Our survival is always threatened and learning is a way to meet these threats through problem solving. The content of learning is not of importance. Instead, it is each individual's ability to learn how to learn. Thus, the problem in modern society is how to motivate people to learn. What makes it possible to speak about learning and living (lifelong learning) at the same time is the fact that the raw material is seen in terms of information or knowledge instead of goods. He concludes that "a human world is not about the preservation of bare life, but always about the life of *someone* (2001, p. 18)".

He continues his use of ideas inspired by Foucault when analysing the concept of Bildung. He and a colleague (Masschelein & Ricken 2003) argue that Bildung has long lost its role as a point of resistance. It is not, as argued by some, the opposite side of existing power relations. Instead, drawing on Foucault, it can be seen as a "privileged medium through which certain power apparatus ('un dispositif de pouvoir') has been invested (p. 139)". Bildung stresses the idea of distancing oneself as a way of reflecting and countering power relations. The authors argue that this is problematic as today we are seeing the establishment of a government of individualisation in which the idea of distancing oneself is a part, not as a way of countering power relations. Instead, the individual is constituted and governed through the power relations.

Masschelein (2004) continues his elaboration of the concept of Bildung, drawing on Foucault's ideas of power when investigating the role of critical educational theory. He argues that Bildung has been a central concept used by critical theorists which refers to the ability of the human to reflect about him/herself and his/her surroundings as a means of emancipating him/herself from social developments and constraining relations. Bildung is about an autonomy and critique. He argues that such a construction is also made by the thing it opposes as autonomy and critique is claimed by everyone. Thus, using Foucault's conception of power, he argues that the autonomous, self-reflective life is not something to counter power relations, instead it is a particular kind of historical figure of self-government traversed by power relations.

As can be seen, this area of research in adult education/adult learning also seems to be limited. Of course, my overview is not all encompassing and there are probably several other studies that might fall into this category.

Critical reconstruction projects with solution emphases

The most common Foucauldian approach in adult education research seems to be a more 'sociological' one. The focus is often on concepts such as governmentality, power/knowledge, surveillance, etc. and how subjectivities are shaped and governed within specific practices. First, I will discuss research conducted outside Sweden and second, research conducted in Sweden.

Research conducted outside Sweden

One often cited writer in the area of adult education/adult learning is Richard Edwards. He has written extensively on adult education, lifelong learning and the adult learner, drawing on post-structural theories, e.g. ideas from Foucault (Edwards 2002, 2003). In an article together with Usher (Edwards & Usher 1994), ideas from Foucault are used to analyse the concept of competence and how power operates through and by it. They argue that competence, as part of the discourse of learning, defines what vocational education is about. Further, it creates practices of self-regulation as it defines what is normal and not normal, what is competent and what is incompetent. Competence has a persuasive function. Who would not want to be competent?

In later works, Edwards combines tools from Foucault with actor network theory. In one article (Edwards 2002), governmentality is used as a tool to analyse the role of lifelong learning in the mobilisation of civil society and the creation of an enterprising self (subject). Actor network theory is used to study the micro-practices in which this self is constructed, thus problematizing the specific mobilisations in play. The argument posed is that lifelong

learning is a technique which supports the process of governing and shaping of enterprising selves. We all need to work on ourselves (technologies of the self) to be able to achieve our desires. Further, practices of lifelong learning refashion actor networks and thus discipline techniques are re-ordered. “Mobilizing lifelong learners as a strategy of governmentality does not overlay existing practices but, rhizome-like, seeks to re-fashion current actor-networks (Edwards 2002, p. 361).” For example, the technique of observation is refashioned through the use of the Internet in education. Wherever you are (and whenever) you can log on, you will in some way always be visible to the teacher and to your peers. Thus, the idea of Foucault’s panopticon widens.

These ideas are developed in a later article (Edwards 2003). The focus is on the significance of lifelong learning in the changing contours of governing. Edwards argues that the discourse of lifelong learning is a strategy of governmentality and technologies of the self. The self is constructed as something to be worked upon by oneself instead of worked upon by others. Thus, ideas from Foucault is used to analyse how certain subjectivities are deployed in the discourse of lifelong learning and actor network theory is used to illustrate how different subjectivities are mobilised. The latter is a way of seeing how the desire to mobilise constructed in policy texts manifests itself in social practice. The results show how different subjectivities are constructed, some more in line with the one constructed in policy documents, others not.

The development of a framework where ideas from Foucault is combined with actor network theory has been continued by Edwards together with Nicoll (2004). In an article, they outline a theoretical framework to be used when analysing workplace learning. They argue that there are different ways in which the workplace is mobilised as a symbol of the economic health of a nation and in which different goals are to be realised, e.g. economic competitiveness and social inclusion. Foucault’s concepts of governmentality and power/knowledge are used to analyse the subjectivities and the ways of governing constructed. By using actor network theory, the authors want to study changes in workplace learning as a way of seeing how governmentality and discipline is reconfigured and through it, learning and subjectivity. “Workplace learning and the power exercised in and around workplaces can be seen, therefore, as actor-networks in which participants and participation are ordered in time and space. The very ordering of space and time and the actors mobilized embeds a range of pedagogical practices (p. 167).” They argue that workplace learning reorders different actor networks, which involves a reordering of discipline and governmentality.

Similar ideas are presented by Edwards together with Clarke (2002) when analysing specialising practices related to the idea of flexibility. Such practices mobilise different actor networks and create specific subjectivities,

which can be related to the idea of lifelong learning. Further, he studies the guidance practice as a site where power relations order the subjects in different actor networks (Usher & Edwards 2005). They argue that Foucault's ideas and actor network theory are in many ways similar. But what is different is that Foucault locks us up in a cage where there are and always will be regulative practices. Actor networks are also regulative practices, but the way power works through the networks is more flexible and open to change.

One can say that Edwards and his colleagues focus on how the subjectivities of the adults in adult education and workplace learning are shaped through different techniques related to a dominating governmentality. Thus, concepts such as technologies of the self, power/knowledge, etc., become central.

Mitchell Dean (1998) takes a similar approach (concerning subject construction and governmentality) in his empirical studies on how the adult subject in Australia is governed, where the focus is on the 'official' problematisations of how to govern the young unemployed. The starting point in the study is the notion of governmentality, which is used to analyse the policy texts. He argues that it is the social and personal effects of the unemployed that should be governed, such as their isolation from social networks, marginalisation from the labour market, etc. Two groups are distinguished; those who are job ready and those who are at risk of long-term unemployment. Consequently, different methods need to be deployed for these two groups. One of the techniques used to govern these subjects is an activity test, which forces them to demonstrate active job seeking as well as training them in such an activity. The reason for such a way of governing is an idea of reciprocal obligation. You need to be an active party in your unemployment if you are to receive support, thus constructing a specific relation to the self. You must be an active citizen taking full responsibility for your future; an entrepreneur of the self. A teleos of government is discerned in the analysis where the goal is to create an active society in which everyone is always ready to become employed. We can relate Dean's analysis to the idea of lifelong learning. As a way of becoming an entrepreneurial self you need to take the responsibility to always update your knowledge as a way of becoming employable, thus becoming a lifelong learner.

The subjectivity of the adult is also problematised in an anthology *Reconstructing the lifelong learner* (Chappell et al 2003). The adult learner (the lifelong learner) is analysed through different practices. A common ground shared by the authors is an interest in pedagogies and an analysis of different pedagogical practices using the idea of technologies of the self. The aim of contemporary education seems to be to change the self. Accordingly, this is

an important perspective when analysing educational processes. The focus is on the learner identity and its changing contours.

The relationship between education and identity is outlined in the first chapter and is followed in the second chapter by a general discussion of the concept of identity. The second chapter ends with an outline of a post-structural plural definition of identity, which is more thoroughly elaborated on in the third chapter where the idea of a narrative identity is posed; a definition that focuses on the political dimensions of identity such as identity politics. Identity is seen as something constantly changing, with no essence, and it cannot be related to a 'true' self. Instead, identity is constructed through reflections upon oneself through narrative, i.e. the individuals construct narratives, which have relations to and draw upon available ontological narratives that change over time and space. There cannot be a self without a relation to other selves. The authors apply this framework to different practices where the focus is on "the relationship between specific pedagogies and identity formation and change (Chappell et al 2003, p. 6)"; self-help books, work-based learning, corporate culture training, HIV/AIDS education, gender education and sex offender education. In the book, it is implied, through these choices of practices studied, that pedagogical processes do not only take place in school settings, but also in practices in everyday life and workplaces. Learning moves outside formal schooling.

Subjectivity construction from a Foucauldian perspective is also carried out within the area of higher education. Anita Devos (2004) studies how subjectivity is constructed in a women's research programme at an Australian university, drawing on the concept of governmentality. Her ambition is to see if such professional programmes can create a space in which women create other subject positions than those dominating within the discourse of academic lives. She argues that the discourse of self-examination, reflection and self-improvement are part of the construction of the female researchers' subjectivities. Further, she argues that these programmes provide a way of creating other subject positions than the dominating ones if women work together. Through these programmes the dominating discourse of the good researcher can be questioned. Thus, the female researchers can move between a position of a good researcher and that of one who resists the discipline.

Another analysis of higher education using a Foucauldian perspective was carried out by Nóvoa who, together with Lawn (2002), edited a book, *Fabricating Europe*, which brings together several critical and deconstructive approaches to European educational Policy. Nóvoa (2002) himself analysed educational policy documents produced by the European Union during the first two years of the 21st century. He focuses on three things that have influenced our way of thinking about educational policy; the agenda-setting by the

media, the planetspeak discourse of the experts and the excesses of the past and future. The first refers to the strong influence the media has on agenda setting today. Discourses that dramatize educational issues are being spread where concepts such as efficiency, market, choice, responsibility, etc. are central. The planetspeak discourse of the experts refers to how experts mobilise discourses that transcend national borders. These discourses have no structural roots, no origin, they are taken for granted and are suggested as solutions to our problems. The excesses of the past and the future refers to how the past is used to legitimate the European institutions at the same time as a future is invented to legitimize the same thing. Nóvoa uses these three lenses to analyse European educational documents and to discuss the Bologna process, a reform of higher education in Europe today, as a way of contributing to a more critical analysis of European educational policy.

A more practical approach is taken by Stephen Brookfield (2001, 2005) when he discusses how ideas from Foucault can be tools for unmasking power in adult education practices. He relates Foucault to a critical theory tradition and argues that Foucault's reasoning about how power reproduces itself is inspired by Marx without Foucault acknowledging it. Brookfield argues that adult educators often take a stance where they see themselves as liberating and empowering the students. For example, the teaching practice is seen to be designed in a more equal manner with the chairs being in a circle, with group discussions, learning contracts, etc. Foucault offers a tool for adult educators to question such a view and to acknowledge that power is everywhere. As educators, we are always part of power relations and the practices we create in the name of equality (e.g. the circle) are as much a part of power relations as other ways of organizing the classroom. Through the circle, the students become visible to the gaze of everyone. Further, they are encouraged to confess their inner desires in relation to the topic at hand.

Research conducted in Sweden

If we turn our attention to research on adult education using ideas from Foucault in Sweden, we can see how the majority of the studies are only influenced by Foucault to some degree. Concepts from Foucault are often combined with other theoretical frameworks.

Helene Ahl (in press) draws on Foucault's notion of power/knowledge when she sets out to critique the concept of motivation. She argues that studies carried out concerning adult's motivation are often based on interviews with adults. The problem with such a starting point is that we easily take it for granted that there is an entity called motivation. In the article, the author wants to criticise such a view. She does so based on an extensive literature

review in the area of motivation in adult education. Concluding, she argues that the discussions of motivation privileges a Western, individualistic understanding of man. A dichotomy is created between the individual and the collective and between man and woman, where the man is constructed as the norm. Further, motivation theory is an exercise of power where the unmotivated person is constructed by the policy makers, researchers and educators. It is they who make the unmotivated persons a problem.

An analysis of different subjectivities of the adult learner was carried out in a dissertation by Assarsson and Sipos-Zackrisson (2005). Ideas from Foucault are used in a pragmatic sense combined with discursive psychology. The dissertation is an ethnographic study in three different settings; municipal adult education, liberal adult education and distance adult education. Their aim was to see how the different participants in these educational institutions stage their identities. Identities are seen as discursive constructions negotiated in social arenas. Ideas from Foucault are used as a way of understanding the relation between institutions and subjects. Using governmentality, they wanted to try and understand how a discourse such as lifelong learning produces different technologies, which regulate what counts as knowledge and what the relationship between actors should be. Further, to understand agency, they used discursive psychology. They conclude that there are different strategies adopted by the adult learner in adult education in relation to the studies; e.g. adaptive or defiant where the first refers to the student adapting to the demands made by the study program, and the latter refers to students who resist those demands.

A pragmatic use of ideas from Foucault was also made by Carlén (1999) in her dissertation where she wanted to understand how a group of low-educated people working at a factory perceives education. She drew on several different theories in her analysis, structural and post-structural. Foucault's discussion on disciplining techniques and 'body' (Foucault 1991) was used to analyse the disciplining practices expressed by the workers in the interviews.

Tools from Foucault are used by Andersson and Bergstedt (1996) who studied disciplining practices in adult education. They argue that lifelong learning can be seen as both a dividing practice and a technique for self-discipline. Using a general introduction to Foucault's writing, they argue that lifelong learning is made possible through a well-defined self-consciousness. The individual need to create his/hers learning supported by his/her ability for self-reflection. Further, they argue that Foucault's conception of 'the care for the self' is useful when analysing lifelong learning. Through knowledge, the human being should learn to understand him/herself and his/her surroundings.

In his study of assessment and the Swedish scholastic aptitude test, Andersson (2000) uses some Foucauldian ideas in part of his discussions. He argues that a limited number of formal tests force the subject to exercise self-discipline when studying. On the other hand, he argues that a continuous and more informal assessment (apparently more free and fair) might lead to the experience of constant surveillance and examination.

Lumsden Wass (2004) makes a pragmatic use of Foucault's concept of discourse combined with critical discourse analysis. She uses Foucault's definition of discourse when analysing the adult education initiative (AEI) in Sweden, which took place in 1997-2002. It was a 'new' investment in adult education by the state with the aim of raising the level of education for those with the lowest level of education. The state funded 100,000 study places each year. Lumsden Wass wanted to try to understand how the AEI introduces new ways of speaking of and understanding municipal adult education. She focused on the discursive construction of the AEI, municipal adult education and the techniques that operate to spread a discourse of a 'new' adult education. Foucault's concept of discourse was used on a general level to define discourses. But, as the author argued, she wanted to study a process in progress. Therefore she needed more concrete tools than those offered by Foucault. Thus, she used part of a framework created within the critical discourse analysis with the aim of analysing how language constructs the social reality of the AEI and the 'new' adult education. She argued that there are five different discourses operating in the texts analysed, which, together, construct the discourse of the renewal of adult education; a discourse of governance, of marketing, of cooperation, of individualisation and of learning.

Research overview – conclusions

As can be seen, quite extensive research has been conducted based on tools from the Foucauldian toolbox. Such research has taken place in many different areas of research such as health and social sciences, cultural studies, etc. As has been argued, the use of ideas from Foucault in educational research has increased considerably since the late 1980s and early 1990s. Further, the phenomena studied and the approaches employed have varied widely. In the last ten years, governmentality studies seem to have become one of the dominating Foucauldian approaches in educational research.

If we turn our attention to Foucauldian studies in the area of adult education, we can see how it has expanded in the last few years, both internationally and in Sweden. The phenomena and approaches vary. However, more sociological approaches seem to be the dominating ones with a focus on governmentality analysis or analysis of disciplinary power. Concepts from the

Foucauldian toolbox are often combined with other theoretical frameworks, e.g. critical discourse analysis, discursive psychology, actor network theory, etc. Further, more historical genealogical analysis seems to be limited. We can also see how documents seem to be the most common empirical material. For example, only a few studies use ethnography as a method, but they seem to often combine ideas from Foucault with other theoretical perspectives.

Thus, the study carried out in this dissertation seem to be something not done in this area of research. Focusing on the adult learner and the subject constructions made is in itself not 'new'. As can be seen in this chapter, in research the adult subject has been focused on in several different ways, both inside and outside the field of adult education as well inside and outside of Sweden and inspired largely by Foucault and by combining his tools with other theories. But what is new is firstly the ambition to try and make a Foucauldian inspired analysis of Swedish adult, liberal adult and higher education where the focus is on the adult learner and where the epistemological consequences of such theoretical choice is acknowledged. Secondly, the genealogical historical approach seems to be relatively 'new' in this field, especially if we relate it to Swedish adult education. Thirdly, Swedish adult, liberal adult and higher education policy does not seem to have been analysed earlier in the same way as in this dissertation. Thus, I argue that this dissertation in several ways contributes to this area of research. Hopefully, it will contribute to the discussion of adult, liberal adult and higher education today and to the discussion of how Foucauldian approaches can be useful in research on adult education.

5. Summaries

The empirical part of this dissertation consists of four articles. All of these problematize the adult learner in different ways. The first focuses on the techniques of guidance and risk calculation and how these are similar today compared to the mid 20th century. However, they are in some way different and they construct different adult learners. This article was a first empirical effort to try to see if the perspective adopted would present interesting results. The article contributed to a discussion of how governing is conducted today in the practice of adult education and how ideas in the present are not new. I developed the analysis of dominating governmentalities and the subject being governed in the second article where the main focus is on recognition of prior learning (validation) and how it, as a technique of examination, fabricates specific and different subjects of today related to the last 50 years. Through the analysis of official documents concerned with adult education and higher education, I was able, together with my colleague Per Andersson, to end up with results that point to how there is a competent adult constructed today based on ideas of specific experience.

Drawing on the experiences from the first two articles, where the fruitfulness of the perspective adopted and the empirical material analysed (official documents from different practices) were apparent, I chose to develop the analysis made in the first article with a specific focus on the dominating governmentality of the present. This was done by broadening the empirical material in time and practice as I analysed a text concerning liberal adult education from the early 20th Century. Further, I chose to focus on a specific figure of thought; the educable subject. Such a figure is part of the present discourse of lifelong learning and I trace it back to the 1920s. The results show how it is present in all the documents analysed but that it is part of different configurations of thought, which construct different rationalities of governing. These rationalities are related to what Rose (1999a) calls the “social state” and the “enabling state”.

Having had the opportunity to perspectivise the dominating rationalities of governing and the adult learner constructed today through tracing nonlinear trajectories back in time, I wanted to find a new angle to the phenomenon studied. I chose to make a contemporary comparative analysis of texts about higher education in Sweden and Europe. In the last article, the focus is on the rationality of governing constructed in texts about the Bologna process, a reform of higher education in Europe. Through the comparative study I was able to obtain results that point in the direction of both sameness and differ-

ence. There is a European citizen under construction constructed in both in the Swedish and the European documents. However, there is a difference in the way such a citizen is constructed, which points to how ‘planetspeak’ discourses take shape differently in the local (the national).

I would argue that the ideas of what the different articles should be about and how the analysis should be conducted have emerged during the time I have been involved in this PhD project. After realising how fruitful the analytical approach could be in the study of the adult learner and the dominating rationalities of governing I decided to have it as a guiding perspective in this dissertation. Further, after the first article had been written, I also decided to broaden the scope of material; not to limit myself to what we in Sweden usually call adult education (the discourse today). Instead, I let the phenomenon of interest be the guiding principle when choosing practices to analyse, broadening it to include higher education and liberal adult education. But, of course, I have constructed my own borders, e.g. I have left out material, which could have been of interest such as research reports, publications from study organisations, from schools, transcriptions from observations and interviews, etc.

In the following I will summarise the articles more extensively.

New wine in old skins: changing patterns in the governing of the adult learner in Sweden

In contemporary policy texts concerning adult education, we can see that concepts of individuality, employability, competitiveness, lifelong learning, etc., are central (DS 2003: 23, SOU 2001: 78). Such concepts are part of the creation of the discourse of adult education today and the construction of the adult learner. As these concepts seem to be new in the practices studied, the question is if a different subject is constructed and different techniques are used to govern such a subject than was previously the case.

In this article, I have analysed the discourse of adult education in Sweden today as a way to see what kind of rationality of governing is constructed. The focus has been on analysing what kind of subject is created in the discourse of adult education and what kinds of techniques are used to govern such a subject. More precisely, the techniques of guidance and risk calculation have been analysed. Using the Foucauldian concept of genealogy, I have traced ideas constructed in the documents today back to the mid 20th century as a way of seeing how the subject and the techniques constructed today differ and/or are the same. Such an endeavour aims to question the taken-for-granted ideas of the present. Official documents have been analysed based on the Foucauldian concepts of governmentality and genealogy. The article is

divided into three parts. The first discusses the subject constructed in the reports from the present and the mid 20th Century. In the second, the idea of equality and how it has changed is discussed. The last part discusses guidance and risk calculations as techniques for governing.

Overall, I argue that there has been a shift in governmentality in the last 50 years in Sweden; from a more 'direct' governing through institutions to a self-governing where each individual should govern him/herself. To illustrate this, we can first turn to the construction of the adult learner today and compare it to the mid 20th century. Today, we can see how everyone should be part of lifelong learning. We should learn our entire lives, not only in formal situations but in all contexts. Further, the adult need to be mobilised as a way of taking responsibility for his/her own life (SOU 1998:51). In this way, an autonomous, self-governing individual is constructed.

If we compare the adult learner constructed today with the mid 20th century, we can see how a talented/gifted³ subject is constructed instead. Those who should study were the persons who were seen as belonging to the reserve of talent. An idea of an inner essence is constructed. Each person is seen as being born with a potential that dictates to what level of education he/she can study, and what kind of work he/she is suitable for. If you choose according to your potential, you will be happy in life. This potential could be measured by means of tests, interviews, etc., thus making it possible to define the talented and the not talented. Further, you should not decide by yourself whether to study in the first place as there was a board of exemption that decided if you were talented or not (SOU 1952:29).

During both periods analysed, there is a discourse of economy present. Adult education is a way of making a better future and improving the economy of Sweden. But, as argued, such a discourse is part of the creation of different subjects. A similar way of reasoning can be seen in how equality is discussed. Today, there is an idea of removing all the structural obstacles that might prevent someone from studying. Thus, everyone should be able to study if equality is to be a reality; an individual equality. In the mid 20th century, there where a more collectivistic view of equality. Everyone, no matter from what class he/she came should be able to study if he/she were talented.

³ I use the concept of talent, gifted and ability in my articles as a translation of the Swedish concept of 'Begåvning'. As can be seen, I have not decided to use one of these concepts all the time depending on when the articles were written. In discussions with my language editor, and while reading different texts I have tried to use a translation that best suits the argument put forward. My hope is that a non-native Swedish speaker will understand the arguments put forward in line with the idea of "Begåvning".

But other structural hindrances were not removed. Thus, what we see is a shift in governmentality, from more 'direct' governing to a situation where there is governing from a distance. You are to be made into a self-governing subject, which is achieved by means of different techniques.

When analysing the techniques of guidance and risk calculation, we can see how the above statement about different governmentalities is supported. Today, study counselling is presented as a way for each individual to have the possibility to be supported in the process of choosing education. It is a two-sided process where the counsellor and the adult together discuss the future. The guidance counsellor gives advice on what kinds of choices can be made. Further, the counsellor presents facts about what the future labour market will look like for different vocations (SOU 1998:51). Thus, there is information, which the individual can use when planning what to study. You are, as an individual, encouraged to make your own choice based on the options presented. Further, you should make your own risk calculation based on the information gathered. Thus, the guidance counsellor acts as a partner who supports the individual. As a result of the deployment of the dialogue pedagogy and of drawing up individual study plans when the choice has been made, there is a construction of an autonomous, self-choosing and self-governing subject. Thus, the dialogue pedagogy, the individual study plan and the information about risk act as governing techniques.

If we trace the ideas of guidance and risk calculation back to the mid 20th century, we can see how they are present, but in other forms. Two concepts are used; advice and guidance. The way these concepts are used is central in understanding the differences from today. As argued, there is a process where the talented adults should be located. Based on intelligence tests, etc., you are given advice on whether you are suitable to study or not. Thus, the choice is not solely yours to make. The board of exemption decides who should study or not. If you are categorised as talented, you will be given guidance on what courses you can study to be able to apply for higher education (SOU 1952:29). Thus, the idea of advice implies a one-sided activity where someone decides for someone else. Further, in such a process of deciding who should study or not, the board of exemption makes a risk calculation to see if a person will generate revenue for society if they are allowed to study. Thus, there is a more direct governing where the adult is governed through 'society'.

To conclude, in the article I argue that we can see the emergence of new ways of governing the adult subject. As Nikolas Rose (1996) argues, we live in a time of advanced liberalism, which brings with it a new formula of rule. This formula is dependent on experts, but not in the same way as before. It does not attempt to govern through 'society' as before; instead, it tries to

govern through the regulated choices of the individual citizen – the conduct of conduct. This shift can be seen in the material analysed. There has been a shift from a one-way relation, where it was ‘society’ that governed the adult subject, to a two-way relation where the dialogue pedagogy is central and where the adults are supposed to govern themselves. The adult learner of today should be an autonomous and enterprising self.

Recognition of prior learning as a technique for fabricating the adult learner: a genealogical analysis of Swedish adult education policy

Today, according to contemporary narratives about adult education, we live in a knowledge society where knowledge is stressed as one of the most central factors for a prosperous future. If knowledge is not developed, there is a risk that Sweden will not continue to be a prosperous society (SOU 1998:51, SOU 2001:78). Similar narratives are repeated in texts on the European level (European Commission 2001). In relation to such a discussion, the idea of competence is central. Society needs to use the competence people already have in a good way. We cannot afford to have people entering formal education to study such things they have already learned in other settings (SOU 2001:78). Such an idea is called validation (recognition of prior learning). It is a process where the individual’s prior knowledge will be assessed and documented. In this article, we focus on validation and how it, as a technique of examination, fabricates a specific subject; the competent subject. Further, our interest is in analysing what kind of governmentality is created in these narratives on validation. More precisely, we are interested in the following questions: What kind of subject does the technique of validation construct? How does it work as a governing technique? What kind of rationality is it based on/does it create? To answer these questions, we have analysed eighteen official documents concerning adult and higher education in Sweden during the last half century based on the Foucauldian concepts of governmentality and genealogy.

Our analytical starting point is the present time. In narratives on adult and higher education, there is an idea that the already competent subject should be assessed and have his/her competencies and knowledge documented. Such an idea is presented as new and is paralleled with the idea that those not competent need to participate in adult education (SOU 2001:78). Thus, there is a specific competent subject constructed through the narratives on validation. In the article, we take the competent subject as a starting point. What makes the competent subject competent? We analyse and answer the question by employing two figures of thought; experience and ability. Our

analysis has enabled us to discern three different ways of constructing the competent subject during the last half century and we have called them: ability means competence; general experience and ability means competence; specific experience means competence. We have used these as a structure for the article.

During the mid 20th century a talented subject was constructed. The subject who should study in adult and higher education was the one with ability. Ability/talent could be measured through intelligence tests, interviews, direct information from teachers, etc. By carrying out tests, a board of exemption could determine who should study or not (SOU 1952:29). We argue that this is an example of what Foucault (2003b) calls a dividing practice. The adults are constructed through knowledge gathered about them. You are categorised as talented/not talented. As talent/ability to study was a central idea during this period, we have called it ability means competence. If you had the ability to study, you were constructed as a competent subject.

During the 1960s and especially during the 1970s, we can see how the idea of ability is paralleled by an idea of experience. Ability is presented as important in the discussions on recruitment to higher education. According to the texts, there are people from lower social groups who have the aptitude to study, but they have not had the chance to do so (SOU 1970:21). Further, there is an idea that people without the formal merits should be able to enter adult education if they have the aptitude to do so (SOU 1965:60). Thus, the idea of ability is present but it is paralleled by an idea of general experience.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, two new techniques for governing potential students were introduced, the 25:4 system (first 25:5) and the Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test (SweSAT). Both these techniques are based on the idea of assessment, but in different ways. In the 25:4-system, everyone who is 25 years or older and has four years of experience from working life has the basic eligibility to enter higher education. Here, experience is construed as competence in a general way; irrespective of what the subject has done during these years, it is acknowledged in the process of entering higher education (SOU 1970:21, SOU 1974:71). Thus, we have both the figure of thought of ability and general experience as central in the construction of the competent subject. These ideas are combined in the SweSAT, which was constructed as an admission test for higher education. It is a general multiple-choice test, with similarities to an intelligence test. It could be described as a test of general ability, constructed to measure and rank the persons who take the test in order of preference related to the ability to successfully complete any higher education course or programme (scholastic aptitude). Thus, the test is used in the selection process to gain admission (SOU 1970:21). As there are two different ideas, general experience and ability, constructing a

specific configuration of thought, we have chosen to call the period of the 60s and 70s general experience and ability means competence.

Today, in the narratives on validation, there is an idea that you can assess the entire person and the knowledge he/she has gathered during his/her life in all different settings, not only through formal schooling. The assessment can be carried out by means of interviews, documents from employers, earlier education, etc. (SOU 2001:78, DS 2003:23). It is more or less taken for granted that experience means competence; if you have experience you are also competent. But it is not the same as during the 1970s when general experience was acknowledged. Instead, the focus is on a specific experience. You need to have specific competencies to enter a specific vocation or a specific education (SOU 1998:165, SOU 2004:29). Further, we can see how the idea of ability is still present although it has been marginalised. The idea put forward is that there are other abilities and talents, which are relevant in relation to certain educational programs in higher education, than those abilities measured in the SweSAT and by means of grades (SOU 1995:71). As I said above, this idea of ability has been marginalised, but what can be seen is a shift from an idea of a more general ability/talent during the mid 20th century and the 1970s to an idea of a more specific ability. Thus, the shift in the discourse concerning ability is similar to the shift from a more general experience to a more specific one. As the competent subject constructed today is the one with specific experience, we have chosen to call the present time specific experience means competence.

Based on the above, we argue that the use of examination as a technique for governing has changed during the last half century, and thus different subjects are fabricated. Further, such a shift is part of changing governmentalities. Today, the subject is constructed as being aware of the wide range of experience gathered in his/her lifetime. It is up to the subject to seek adult education guidance so that he/she can be measured and made aware of his/her knowledge and competencies. In this way, the subject is measured more thoroughly than before. There is a governing of the soul (Rose 1999b) going on, where the subject is expected to be autonomous and self-governing. By laying bare our inner desires in conversations with experts such as study counsellors, psychiatrists, doctors, etc., we get advice on which paths we can choose in our lives. In all this, we ourselves have to choose, and in this way we are created as autonomous subjects. In the process of validation, you are also made aware of the fact that everything you do counts and can be subjected to assessment/evaluation. This is a way of governing from a distance where no one tells you what to do. Instead, you make the decisions yourself. The rules laid down by society are thus in themselves ways of governing the adult subject. You know what is required and then you try to acquire it. Such

a way of reasoning about governing is different from earlier times analysed, when the adult subject was governed in a more direct way, such as having his/hers talent evaluated as a way to see if studying was an option.

The planetspeak discourse of lifelong learning in Sweden – reconstituting the adult educable subject: a genealogical analysis of rationalities of governing

In contemporary narratives, the participation of all citizens in lifelong learning is presented as essential for the wellbeing of Sweden and Europe. Further, it is a promise for the betterment of all people (SOU 1998:51, European Commission 2001). Such narratives can be related to what Hultqvist et al (2002) call the pedagogicalization of the state. The notion of pedagogy, a way of governing that has been present in education for a couple of centuries, is spreading to other practices besides the school such as correctional treatment, the library, public health, teachers' education, etc. In this article, I will argue that lifelong learning can be seen as an expression of this new rationality of governing and as a pedagogical technique that is inscribed in different practices not only concerned with formal education.

Lifelong learning can also be seen as a planetspeak discourse, a way of reasoning that seems to have no structural roots, no social locations and no origin. It is part of a 'worldwide bible' that is on every tongue and it seems to provide solutions to the problems faced. It travels through the world and is inscribed in different countries and practices where it takes different forms (Nóvoa 2002). The specific case of Sweden discussed in this article can help us to understand this planetspeak discourse as being historically related to the problem of governing and its changing contours in the present time. More precisely, in this article I will focus on questions such as: What visions of the future are constructed in the policy documents? How are the subjects constructed as being and what are they to become? What kinds of techniques are created to govern these subjects? As a way of answering these questions I will trace the figure of thought of educable. In what way has it been present in the discourses analysed? Official documents concerning adult and liberal adult education have been analysed based on the Foucauldian notions of governmentality and genealogy.

I argue that the texts on adult education today construct everyone as educable. Everyone has the possibility to become part of lifelong learning as we learn all the time in all settings. However, there are risk groups that need to be identified and supported as they are at risk of being excluded from lifelong

learning (SOU 1998:51). Thus, the discourse of lifelong learning contains an idea that everyone learns all the time and that we are all part of lifelong learning. But the specific power relations in the discourse define *all* as being certain groups and one effect is the construction of ‘the other’, the one not able to participate in lifelong learning. But they have the potential to participate in lifelong learning if they are given the appropriate support. Thus, they are constructed as educable; a general educableness. The current power relations in the discourse define what is normal and abnormal. Other relations would have defined lifelong learning and its limits in other ways. As I discuss above in the theoretical chapter of this synthesis, Foucault argues that power and knowledge are intertwined. In this case we can see how the power relations are based on knowledge produced by the social sciences and statistics which defines what is normal and not normal.

The subject constructed today has a relation to ideas about the future and society. If certain measures are not taken, and if the lifelong learner is not made a reality there is a risk that Sweden will lag behind the rest of the world. Thus, there is a governing in the name of the future, where the future is spoken of as being real. Such reasoning is combined with an idea that society is constantly changing. There is a need for the subject to be adaptable to such changes. I argue that these narratives construct, and are part of, a neo-liberal mode of governing where there is no ‘direct’ visible governing. The state is constructed as ‘the enabling state’, which should make it possible for subjects to make their own choices and it is in the choices and actions of the subjects themselves that the state is inscribed (Rose 1999a). By enabling the subjects to become autonomous, self-regulated actors responsible for their own futures, the future can be controlled, but not planned.

If we trace the figure of thought of the educable subject back to the mid 20th century, instead of a lifelong learner there is a construction of a gifted subject. Each person is seen to be born with an inner essence/potential of what he/she can become in life. A person’s potential (ability) can be measured by means of tests (SOU 1952:29). Thus, some people are constructed as educable, others not; a construction of a conditional educableness. Instead of compensating those who do not have the prerequisites to study (as in the present time), each person should be encouraged to follow his/her inner potential. The inner potential is measured based on the statistical and psychological sciences and through such calculations, the gifted/not gifted are created. ‘The other’ is the one not gifted enough to participate in adult education or the one not choosing according to his/hers inner potential instead of the one not participating in lifelong learning as is the case today.

We can see how the subject constructed in the mid 20th Century is related to narratives about the future. But instead of a changing future not being pos-

sible to control as today, there is an idea that you can plan the future by dimensioning adult education in relation to the number of gifted people. Thus, instead of an adaptable self-responsible subject, there is a gifted subject constructed who should choose the path in life that his/her inner essence foretold. A board of exemption, which tests a person's talent, should give clear advice about where to go in life. The subject should then choose a path in life by him- herself, but limited by his/her inner potential. Thus, a distancing state, planning the future, is constructed as a result of which an active subject emerges in relation to a more 'direct' and 'visible' governing than is constructed today.

Tracing the idea of the educable subject back to the 1920s we can see how there is a political responsible citizen created in the texts. Such a subject should learn about social issues and become prepared to make good political decisions (SOU 1924:5). As is the case today, the entire population is the target of education and everyone is seen as able to learn; a general educableness. A similarity to the idea of lifelong learning seems to be present. But today, learning is constructed as a norm and something that always happens. In the texts from the 1920s, learning is something that happens through participation in liberal adult education. Thus, it is a more of an institutionalised process of governing compared to today. Through liberal adult education, the subjects can be changed and educated. It is a question of civic education, cultivation of the intellect and the creation of good habits during leisure time (SOU 1924:5). We could say that the population is constructed as an entity that is to be governed and improved; it is a question of the fitness of the population. Everyone is the target of liberal adult education, but the present power relations in the discourse define all as meaning some groups; those who have not reached the correct cultural level. Thus, there is a construction of 'the other', the one not able to make good political decisions and one who should participate in liberal adult education.

We can see how the idea of the future merges with the idea of the subject, but in other ways than today. There is an idea constructed that people will be dangerous to society if they do not become properly educated. If people only attend some lectures without reading suggested books, there is a risk of superficial education (SOU 1924:5). Liberal adult education should aim at activating the citizen to start to self study; a kind of self-governing practice similar to today. But the main difference is that in the text from the 1920s, society is seen as being possible to plan through institutional legislation. The lectures to be held, the books to be read and made available, etc. should be decided by the 'state'. Further, we can see how there is a social language present in the discourse. There are references to "social hygiene" both explicitly and through the ideas of regulating the books available, etc (SOU

1924:5). Such language is borrowed from the social sciences, which, during this period, emerged as a central component in the creation of a practice of governing. Thus, we can see the construction of the ‘social state’, which regulates the behaviours of the population through institutional legislation instead of the ‘enabling state’ constructed today (Rose 1999a).

What the analysis shows is that the idea of lifelong learning today is made up of figures of thought that were present earlier on, but in different ways. Further, narratives on education and an educable subject always seem to create practices of exclusion. I also argue that the analysis show how narratives on lifelong learning, as constructed in texts on adult and liberal adult education, are part of a more general trend in society. As Olsson and Petersson (2005) put it, this discourse can be seen as inscribing itself in society as a whole; society is construed as a learning society. The notion of “school as society” has turned into “society as a school”. In such a society, as has been argued in this article, the educable subject is a necessary construct; if you are to learn you have to be educable. Adult education is constructed as a crucial part of making this society a reality.

European citizens under construction – the Bologna process analysed from a governmentality perspective

One of the major changes in higher education today is the Bologna process, a declaration signed by 45 nations, both members of the European Union and several other countries (Bergen Communiqué 2005). It aims to harmonise the higher educational systems in Europe. In texts on this issue, there are ideas of comparability, mobility, transparency, flexibility, shared European values and diversity put forward as means of creating a European educational space. As the narratives about this issue seem to construct the Bologna process as a process in which sameness is to be created out of difference, it would be interesting to study how, according to the narratives, this problem is constructed and how it is to be solved. Further, as this is a process which takes place both on a European level and in several different countries it would be interesting to relate the discursive construction made through European texts to constructions made in texts from one nation; more specifically, Sweden.

Questions I ask are: In what way do ideas circulating in the discourse of higher education (for example, produced in texts on the Bologna process) construct the European citizen as a way of solving the problem posed? Who should the European citizen become and how can this be realised through the practice of higher education? Are the problems posed, the solutions proposed and the subject constructed in the same way in the Swedish discursive con-

structions? European and Swedish texts concerning the Bologna process are analysed based on the Foucauldian concept of governmentality. In the article, I argue that we can see the construction of a neo-liberal mode of governing where the subjects (countries, universities, teachers, students, etc.) should be made into autonomous and self-governing subjects.

In both the European and Swedish documents there is an idea of threats from the surrounding world being constructed. If certain educational measures are not taken, there is a risk of Europe and Sweden lagging behind the rest of the world. One of these solutions is to transform the citizens into educated citizens who can get a job anywhere in Europe; they need to become flexible and mobile (Bologna Declaration 1999, European Commission 2001, Ministry of Education 2005). Such ways of reasoning about the future are similar to how I have argued in the third article in this dissertation. The future is constructed as constantly changing. Thus, the subject needs to become adaptable and flexible as a way of handling such a future. You need to take the opportunities presented to you (actively), otherwise there is a risk that you will become excluded and categorised as part of 'the others', the ones without the suitable level of education (European Commission 2001). We could say that this discourse is almost a totalising one where there is only one thing about the future you can be certain of; that it is a future of change. You cannot stand outside the changing future, but you can meet it by making choices and thus becoming flexible.

We can see how the subject is constructed as an active one. Not only is the student to become an active participant, but also the nations and higher education institutions are constructed as active subjects (Bergen Communiqué 2005). There is a responsabilisation in which the subjects themselves are made the vehicles of action. If you do not act in a responsible way and contribute to the process, there will be a risk of failure. There is no 'direct' governing where the subjects are told exactly how to act. Instead, a prosperous future is presented as desirable combined with different options on how it is possible to act. Then, it is up to the subjects to make their own choices. Such a subject is part of the solution posed; the Bologna process through which higher educational systems in Europe are to be made transparent (Berlin Communiqué 2003, p. 3). Thus, higher education, the students and teachers are made into visible, calculable and governable spaces, ideas part of a neoliberal governmentality. Thus, there are similar problematics constructed in the European and Swedish documents.

Further, we can see how narratives in the European documents construct a European citizen who shares European values and who feels a sense of belonging to a common cultural space (Bologna Declaration 1999); a construction of a European essence. But these ideas are combined with ideas of

respect for diversity. Thus, difference should be made into sameness, at the same time as difference should be respected. The ideas of sameness and difference are also constructed in the Swedish texts, but in a different way. Instead of a European cultural space there is a construction of a national space through ideas of systems. With reference to Swedish traditions, it is argued that we have traditions, which are good and should not be changed by the Bologna process (such as our grading system) (DS 2004:2, Ministry of Education 2005). What we see is the construction of a Swedish citizen made up of 'traditional' Swedish ideas. The texts create something 'specifically Swedish' related to ideas about systems. But still, the Swedish texts construct an ambition to be part of Europe and the Bologna process. Therefore, I argue that what we see is a Swedish European under construction. The Swedish subject is supposed to become a European based on Swedish traditions.

Further, the idea of diversity is constructed in the Swedish texts referring to 'respect for other cultures' (Ministry of Education 2005). As similar ideas about respect for cultural diversity are part of the European narratives, I would suggest that these 'Swedish' ideas are part of the idea of shared European values. Thus, similar ideas are part of the European and Swedish narratives in the discourse of higher education as a way of handling the problems posed. Another similarity, which might be seen as a difference, is the construction of a European cultural space and a Swedish space. The seemingly obvious difference is that different spaces are constructed. But I argue that these are part of the same technique for constructing sameness. Constructing difference is a central condition of possibility for the emergence of the technique of diversity; respect for diversity. Through the use of diversity, nations should desire participation in the Bologna process, thus being part of a process of sameness.

Several different techniques are constructed in the texts analysed. I argue that one of the central ones is the technique of auditing. The texts present ideas about how each higher education program needs to be audited as a way of checking whether they maintain good quality, something which should be done by national agencies. Further, these agencies should in themselves be audited by a European agency, to ensure that they maintain good quality (Bergen Communiqué 2005). Thus, I argue that auditing as a technique for governing inscribes itself in the entire higher educational system. Through it, teachers, students, higher educational institutions and nations are transformed into visible, calculable and governable spaces.

In conclusion, I argue that the texts on the Bologna process construct and are constructed through a neoliberal governmentality which aims to shape the conduct of each and every subject. Different techniques are inscribed into each space and these techniques acts, in a way, to mobilise the subjects into

becoming self-monitoring, self-governing subjects. Further, I argue that such narratives also create practices of exclusion. For example, through narratives of European shared values and a common cultural space, nations and citizens outside such a space are excluded.

6. Discussion

The aim of this dissertation has been to analyse what kind of rationality of governing is created today in Sweden in relation to the adult learner. What future should be created, how should such a future become a reality, what adult learner should be created and how will such a subject be governed? These questions have been elaborated on by analysing the practices of adult, higher, and liberal adult education, using the Foucauldian concepts of governmentality and genealogy. The analysis has been made on a discursive level where questions of a 'reality' *par se* have been left out. Instead, my starting point is that social reality can only be apprehended through discourse. Thus, my analysis has focused on discourse, how it regulates what is and what is not legitimate to say and do, how it constructs ideas of what is good and bad, etc. The concept of governmentality has made it possible for me to make such constructions explicit and to relate them to ideas of how governing should be conducted. Through the use of genealogy I have been able to perspectivise the present time by showing how figures of thought present in discourses today are not new ones. Instead, they have taken a different shape, thus creating different subjects and different rationalities of governing. The aim has been to destabilize our taken-for-granted ideas about the present.

In this chapter, I will first discuss the results from the four articles in relation to the aim of the dissertation. The focus will be on questions of what should be governed, why govern, what rationality of governing is constructed and how to govern. Such a discussion will then be related to the possibilities for resistance in discourse. Secondly, I will make some reflections on the research process and thirdly, I will discuss possible paths for future research.

To govern and to be governed – constructing a lifelong learner

A central question for governmentality analysis is: what is the thing to be governed, i.e. what is the substance to be governed (Foucault 1983, Dean 1999)? One might call it the ethical substance as expressed by Foucault (1983) or a governing of the soul as expressed by Rose (1999b). The analysis made in the articles shows how there is a constant learner (lifelong learner) constructed in the discourse of adult education. We can see how there is an idea that everyone needs to work on their relation to themselves as a way of positioning themselves as specific kinds of learners – those who are learning

all the time. Such a construction should be desired by everyone, and thus I argue that the substance to be governed (fostered) is the desire and the will to learn (Edwards 2006). According to the narratives, learning is not only related to formal settings, but also to non-formal and informal settings such as family life and leisure time. We are always learning and should desire to always learn. Such a construct is related to the question of why govern? Why is there a need for lifelong learners?

According to different narratives, which can be seen in all four articles, Sweden (and Europe in article four) needs to have a highly educated population if it is to be able to compete with the surrounding world. At the moment, it is said that we are living in a society undergoing rapid change where knowledge is an increasingly important factor in life. The speed of knowledge and information is increasing and somehow such a situation must be handled. 'Objects' of competition are knowledge and information-processing skills. Further, other countries and regions of the world are developing fast, which threatens the positions of Sweden and Europe. Such problems must be handled. Arguments are put forward that there are people who do not have the prerequisites to learn, and thus they risk being marginalised. For the welfare of society and of each individual, everyone needs to become educated. If educated, and if being in a state of constant learning, the citizens will become flexible and adaptable to change. The solution put forward is education and systems of lifelong learning, which will enable the citizens of these spaces to contribute to the continuing prosperity of a country/region. Thus, the teleos of government constructed is a prosperous welfare society which can compete with the surrounding world. Sweden and Europe should be in the forefront of economic and educational development. As a way of reaching such a future the citizens need to be properly educated.

The lifelong learner is a contemporary construct. Texts from the mid 20th century contain ideas that Sweden needs a highly educated population to be able to maintain good living standards. The needs of the labour market have to be met. Thus, the adult who did not have the chance to study as a youth, but who has the ability to study, should be encouraged to do so. The texts state that everyone is born with a certain potential, which should be developed in life as a way of achieving happiness. A person's ability can be measured using different tests, and in this way persons with an aptitude for studies can be recruited to adult education. Instead of transforming everyone into constant learners, as is the case today, everyone should work on the desire to find the 'correct' position in the world according to one's potential. Another difference from today is that governing in the mid 20th century is related to the needs of the labour market and to 'threats' of the negative development of living standards. References to the surrounding world are not as emphasised

as in the documents from the present time. However, the teleos of government in the mid 20th century is similar to the present time. A prosperous future should be created where Sweden has a good living standard. Adult education participates in the construction of such a future through the recruitment and construction of talented adults.

In texts from the early 20th century the problematisation of government is focused on how the citizens will be able to make good political decisions in relation to the introduction of everyone's right to vote. The good of the nation is dependent on a stable political life where everyone is educated to become good political citizens. The problematisation of government of the adult is not related to the labour market as in the texts from the mid 20th century and today, nor is it problematised in relation to 'threats' from the surrounding world. Instead, governing is related to 'threats' from within the nation (the superficially educated citizens). Thus, the international character of threats is absent. The politically stable society can also be seen as part of the teleos of government. If everyone is properly educated, they can make good political decisions, which will make the society stable and prosperous. Liberal adult education is proposed as a solution to make such a future a reality. Through it, the adult is constructed as a learner in the sense that everyone is seen as having the possibility to participate in liberal adult education. But it is a specific group, those without the prerequisites to make good political decisions, that is the target of liberal adult education. Work should be done on the population's desire to become good political citizens.

Thus, we can conclude that the adult as a lifelong learner is a contemporary construction related to specific ideas of why governing should be practiced. To continue the argument, the next question would be: what rationality of governing are such ways of reasoning constructed from and constructing?

Rationalities of governing

My main argument in this dissertation is that different texts produced in the present time concerning adult, higher and liberal adult education are constructed by, and construct, a neoliberal governmentality, which has specific effects as regards who the adult learner should become. He/she should become an autonomous, self-choosing and self-regulating self who should take responsibility for his/her own life by becoming a lifelong learner. The 'state' is not seen as an actor who governs. Instead it is an epistemological pattern of assumptions (Hultqvist 2004) about governing which change over time and space. Today the 'state' is constructed as the 'enabling state' (Rose 1999a), which should make it possible for the citizens to make their own choices and it is in the regulated choices of each and every citizen that the state is in-

scribed. To govern is to get the subjects to govern themselves – the conduct of conduct. But this does not mean that the ‘state’ is governing less than before or that it is absent from the governing process. Instead, the art of governing has changed and assumed new forms where the ‘state’ has become more distant from the governing practice. Thus, the adult learner is one who governs and one who is being governed. Such an argument is supported by the genealogical analysis made in articles one, two and three. It has enabled me to perspectivise the neoliberal rationality of governing constructed today with rationalities constructed earlier on. For example, when analysing texts from the early 20th century, there are ideas that the future can be planned through institutional legislation. The adult learner is one who is made into a political responsible citizen. To become such a citizen one must participate in liberal adult education where one listens to lectures and reads books, which are approved and decided on by the ‘state’. I argue, in line with Nikolas Rose (1999a), that there is a ‘social state’ constructed in the documents from the early 20th century – a state that should plan the future.

We can relate such a result to the discussion on liberalism in the chapter on my theoretical perspective. In the material analysed, we can see a shift in the relation between public and private. In the early 20th century, the future was seen as being possible to plan. Each individual had a responsibility to contribute to the good of the entire population. The expertise of the ‘state’ intervened in private life e.g. those not mature enough would be denied certain literature. They would be dangerous to the welfare of society if they did not become educated. A similar construction of the relation between public and private is present in the mid 20th century. Through processes in the form of statistics and intelligence tests, the population could be measured and the future could be planned. Experts, such as a board of exemption, directly intervened in the private life of individuals to define who should and should not study in adult life. However, there seem to have been a shift in how one reasons about the subject. In the mid 20th century, the adult was supposed to become actively involved in his/her own life by choosing paths in life according to his/her inner potential. There should be a desire to make a ‘correct’ choice as you will then live a happier life. Thus, the private (your own choices) and the public (the will to govern) become the same.

Today, we can see how the division between public and private seem to have vanished. Learning is constructed as a norm, and you as an adult are responsible for always learning, in all settings, throughout your life as a way of creating a good future. You must realize that you are a learner whose learning is never complete. Thus, you should be the producer of knowledge. Everyone needs to become the ‘experts of themselves’ (Rose 1996) where they become educated and knowledgeable in relation to their selves. The ones

who do not take responsibility for themselves will become ‘the other’, the one who does not have the prerequisites to learn. If such a case, they will need to be placed in programs where they participate in an ethical re-programming where the will to learn is shaped. Thus, they are transformed into active citizen with the prerequisites to make their own choices in order to reach self-fulfilment (Rose 1996).

We can see such a construct in the discourse of lifelong learning where those at risk, such as the long-term unemployed, social-security dependent, immigrants, etc., need to acquire the prerequisites to participate in lifelong learning through participation in adult education. Without those prerequisites, they are categorised as ‘the other’, and thus they should be the focus of social policy where work should be carried out on their will to learn. If we compare this to the earlier part of the 20th century, ‘the other’ was the one who was the target of interventions by experts. The talented one who did not do what his/her inner potential predicted was defined and encouraged to enter adult education. Such a change in relations does not mean that no governing is practiced. Instead, it has assumed new forms. Governing techniques have been detached from the political apparatuses and been reconceptualised in a market of choices. For example, the study counsellor no longer tells the adult what to do. Instead, he/she presents possible choices in a dialogue with the adult. Another example is the idea of validation. The adult is presented with the option to have all kinds of knowledge recognised formally, thus he/she know that everything he/she does counts. Through the choice of becoming a constant learner who wants to have his/her knowledge recognised, the adult will become happy and reach self-fulfilment, at the same time as the public teleos of government will be reached. One’s desires merge with the teleos of government. Government has turned into practices of self-government. I will now turn to the question of how such self-government is shaped.

Techniques of governing

The lifelong learner is constructed as one who should desire to always learn. I have argued that such a construction is related to a neoliberal governmentality. My next question concerns how governing is conducted. What techniques are constructed to shape the ethical substance of the adult? Several techniques of governing have been analysed in this dissertation, e.g. guidance, risk and the future, examination (validation), etc. I will now elaborate on some of these techniques as a way of showing how the subject is constructed as a constant learner. My arguments will be based on the articles, but I will take some of the analysis a bit further than in the articles.

Guidance is a central part in the discourse of adult education in Sweden today. There are ideas about the adult as an entrepreneur who should choose education by him/herself. Not only what to study but also when to study, where to study, how to study, etc. To make such a position possible, guidance is proposed as support for the adult, which is elaborated on in the first article. In the relation between the adult learner and the guidance counsellor, several techniques are produced, all of which shape the ethical substance of the adult. First of all, we have the two-sided relation where the counsellor should give advice, and the adult should choose. This is a two-sided relation based on a specific pedagogy (the dialogue pedagogy). Secondly, such a two-sided relation is also embedded in the idea of an individual study plan. The plan should be created in a dialogue between the adult learner and the counsellor. Such a relation produces an adult subject who should work on his/her desires in life by being active and responsible. You have the freedom to choose, but not the freedom not to choose.

We can see such a relation as a practice of confession. We have the one making the confession (the adult learner) and the confessor (the study counsellor). Foucault (1990a, 2003b) argues that confession emerges in the Christian faith as a path to salvation through the control of one's desires. Today, such a practice has spread in society and we make confessions in many different practices. Not as a way of achieving salvation but as a way of achieving our desires in life and imposing self-regulation, e.g. in the practice of guidance, in relation to one's love, to one's friends, to one's doctor, lawyer, teacher, etc. Such reasoning can be related to Foucault's discussion on the shift from disciplinary power to one of pastoral power and self-discipline. There is a change from one situation of making changes to a mute and 'docile' body to a situation where the subject makes changes to him/herself through technologies of the self. In the confessional relation, the one making the confession is enfolded in power as he/she becomes subject to the authoritative discourse of the confessor. Through such a relation, knowledge about the adult learner is created at the same time as the adult learner is fabricated on the basis of such knowledge. Acknowledging the confessional practices means that you also acknowledge the legitimacy of such a practice (Usher & Edwards 2005). Thus, the learner making the confession has accepted being positioned as a specific kind of learner – one who constantly learns and whose learning is never finished (Edwards 2006).

Guidance and the dialogue-pedagogy can also be seen as an expression of a more general tendency in the changes in rationalities of governing. Today, interaction is presented as something central in the discourse of adult education. You need to interact with others in order to be presented with choices possible to make and as a way to become active and take responsibil-

ity for your own future. Guidance is one governing practice where this can be seen (others could be group work, the use of problem-based learning, etc). If we turn our attention to the mid 20th century, we can see how interaction is not part of the relation between the study counsellor and the presumptive student. Instead, as can be seen in the first article, there is a one-sided relation where the counsellor evaluates the adult's potential and then advises the person about what path is suitable in relation to his/her potential. Thus, interaction can be seen as a contemporary technique of governing. As Petersson (2003) argues, today we can see the emergence of a new order of responsibility where there is a shift from a centralised and hierarchical form of governing to a decentralised and horizontal one. Through such a form of governing, the individual is constructed as an autonomous, active person who takes responsibility for his/her life. Such a subject construction is related, as discussed above, to a change in the rationalities of governing where the constantly changing future needs to be handled by constructing a flexible, adaptable population.

Another technique of interaction is the idea of risk. Risk (danger) has always been part of our society, but it is not a pre-existing reality. Instead, "it is a mode of thought that regulates those risks that are inherent to this mode of thought. This way, risks are fabricated, regulated and normalized (Hultqvist et al. 2003 p. 5)". As has been discussed in the first article, risk is part of the relation between the adult learner and the study counsellor. The counsellor should make a presentation of what the labour market looks like to provide the adult with a basis on which to make a decision about what to study. Here, the adult learner needs to uncover his/her inner desires once again and relate them to the risks he/she calculates in relation to the presentation made by the counsellor. Thus, the adult is fabricated as an acting, choosing individual. Further, risk can be seen as a technique where interaction is not in the foreground. As discussed in the third and fourth articles, ideas of a constantly changing future are related to an idea of risk. The texts analysed construct visions of a bad future, which is seen as part of the present and as being 'real'. Thus, the future can be seen as a spatial concept used to activate the citizens to become constant learners as a way of minimizing risks. Certain choices need to be made if the bad future is to be avoided.

Examination (assessment/validation) can also be seen as a technology of the self, even if the emphasis in the second article is on dividing practices. Through the construction of systems of measurement, the subject is made into a calculable self who is open to comparisons and interventions. Foucault (1991) refers to examination as a disciplining technique in which the 'docile' body is shaped by the gaze of examination. A dividing practice is created in which the adult is made into an object of knowledge production followed by

a process of subjectification in which the adult subject is constructed. Thus, the normal and abnormal is created. In the case of validation, not only formal knowledge should be assessed, but also informal knowledge. What we now see is a trend where the informal and non-formal competence/knowledge should be transformed into formal knowledge. Thus, a greater part of life will be placed under the gaze of examination. Here, I would argue that examination cannot only be seen as a disciplining technique, but also as a technology of the self. Since the adult subject knows that everything he/she does might be valuable in a formal sense (the person can have the informal knowledge transformed into a formal document), a specific planning of everyday activities can be a way of attaining the desires in life. Through the existence of validation as an option, the adult is made to reflect on his/her desires in life and how they can best be attained. Thus, the subject positions him/herself as a learner who constantly learns, in all settings throughout his/her life. Validation becomes a technology of the self where one should work on one's desire and will to learn.

Power, freedom and resistance

A central question in the dissertation has concerned the relation constructed through discourse between the adult and learning. When analyzing official documents, when reading newspapers, when speaking with students I teach, etc. the idea of lifelong learning is often mentioned in relation to an idea that everyone should always have the possibility to enter education at any time in his/her life. Further, you should also be keen on learning new things as a way of being able to acquire a job and being able to move between different jobs. What I think is striking is the emphasis on learning as a way of handling oneself in the world. Such ideas seem to be taken for granted, an argument I have pursued in this dissertation. What I have wanted to do is to question such reasoning. To show how our way of arguing is specific to time and space, and how it is related to the current relations of power, which are produced by and produce discourse. What we can see in the present discourse is how lifelong learning is inscribing itself in society as a whole. Society is constructed as a learning society. The notion of "school as Society" has turned into "Society as a school" (Olsson & Petersson 2005). Further, the aim of adult education is constructed differently than before. If liberal adult education was to make citizens into political responsible subjects during the early 20th century, and adult education was to make the talented adult become what their inner potential predicted in the mid 20th Century, adult education today should transform the adult into a constant learner. However, institutional education does not stand by itself as a promoter of the learning subject. We can see how the

discourse of lifelong learning is part of the construction of many different practices in society.

Let us take the example of TV shows where we can follow the work of a nanny expert, fitness expert or an expert on sex life. These programs are offered to anyone who wants to learn more about specific issues. Their design invites us to become learners. They shape our desires to be a good father or mother, or our desire to be a healthy person with a good sex life. Similar topics are a major part of the content of newspapers today. There are innumerable places where we can get advice on how to fulfil our desires, and these advices works upon our will to learn – we want to learn how to have a good life. There are many other examples one might take. But my point is to show how the will to learn is emphasised in many different practices, which are not only related to school. It seems as if we are never free from learning. There are always practices that try to foster our will to learn. If one were to speculate a bit, it would be interesting to think about what the effects of such reasoning are on us as adults? Do we need to constantly learn or are there possibilities for resistance?

If one were to take a critical theoretical perspective, power and freedom would be seen as opposite concepts. The one being oppressed is not free, thus you need to acquire the tools to be able to resist and to empower yourself. Such a way of reasoning implies a notion of power as domination. From a Foucauldian perspective, relations of power are always present in, and are a prerequisite of, human relations. Power, freedom and resistance are not seen as oppositional concepts; instead, they are seen as interrelated. Thus, processes of freedom and resistance are always present in discourse. Further, one could say that most things are about processes of both discipline and freedom, which are interrelated and dependant on each other (Olsson 1997). As I have argued, a specific form of freedom is a necessary construct in a neoliberal governmentality, one which emphasises each individual's capacity to act and to make choices.

One example from the dissertation is the discourse of adult education, which offers the population the possibility to gain the prerequisites (the will to learn) to get a job and to attain one's desires in life. Such an offer also constructs the adult subject as one who should be active and make choices by him/herself. If you choose to study, you do so by exercising your freedom and capacity to act as a way to attain your desires in life. At the same time, when entering adult education, you become the target of different disciplining and self-regulating techniques of governing, which seek to shape you into a learning subject. Thus, power is both enabling and constraining. The adult who chooses to study might find pleasure in disciplining him/herself through examinations, drawing up a study plan, etc. But such pleasure should not be

seen as a product of only repressive power as the choices have been made in relation to your freedom. As argued, power and freedom are intertwined and cannot be separated. Freedom is exercised through choices and by regulating ones own conduct. However, one can also choose not to enter adult education. In making such choice, the adult try to resist the discourse of lifelong learning, but he/she is still subjected to the discourse of individual choice. One could also say that the adult try to resist the idea that our will to learn is put at stake in the contemporary political ambition to govern. However, he/she cannot resist not making any choices. In such resistance, there is a process of shaping subjectivity other than the adult subject as a constant learner. As Foucault argues, there can be no power relations without resistance and there are “always movements in an opposite direction, whereby strategies which coordinate relations of power produce new effects and advance into a hitherto new domains (Foucault 1980, p. 199-200)”. Thus, other positions than the lifelong learner are possible, but such positions, as I have argued, are categorised as being part of ‘the others’ who are in need of an ethical re-programming (Rose 1996) as a way of becoming constantly learning subjects.

What I have tried to show in this dissertation is how the ways we reason today are not the only ways of reasoning about adult education and the adult learner. In one way, it is a way of making possible a:

reevaluation of those values by which we are ruled or governed, showing the humble and mundane origins of the supposedly pure and transcendent, revealing the lies, falsehoods, deceptions and self-deceptions which are inherent within these attempts to govern us for our own good (Rose 1999a, p. 282).

My hope is that such an analysis has contributed to perspectivising adult education and the adult learner in a new way as a contribution to a discussion on our present. Where are we today and what has made such a position possible?

Reflections concerning the research process

When performing an analysis such as the one in this dissertation, one might ask if I as a researcher am constructing a too neat story of progress; from one rationality to a second, on to a third, from a bad one to a better one, etc. Firstly, I would argue that my ambition has not been to make value judgements of the rationalities analysed. Instead, I have tried to analyse how different rationalities have been constructed in different cultural practices. But as a researcher, I do not speak from a value-free position. Rather, I am part of

the discourse I am creating, thus making me as much part of the neoliberal rationality of governing as any other person. Such a position effects how I write, how I analyse and the pre-understanding I have concerning the phenomenon I am analysing. Thus, it is the reader who must judge how convincing the story I have constructed is, and if, where and when I fall into the trap of making value judgments.

My ambition has been, in line with Foucault (1977), not to write a story about progress. Instead, it has been to map out the rationalities of governing constructed, which partly answers the question of a too neat story. What I have done is to analyse a history containing ruptures and irregularities, not progress. Figures of thought travel in time and space, creating different rationalities of governing. Further, in the analysis made, I point to the complexity of the discourses and the rationalities created. For example, in the third article I argue that the idea of the educable subject has been present during the last 80 years. The autonomous subject of today is in some way similar to the subject created in the early 20th century. Then, the adult subject participating in liberal adult education should start study circles with friends and relatives, which seem to create an autonomous subject. But, when related to other figures of thoughts present in the discourse, we can see how the adult learner of the early 20th century is not autonomous. Instead, he/she is a subject governed through institutional legislation where the future was seen as being possible to plan. Thus, the seemingly neat story of progress should be viewed as a story of ruptures, irregularities, re-configuration and complexity.

In addition to the question of a too neat story, there is the question of discourses as totalising. In the analysis made, I have focused on the discourses of adult education and lifelong learning. Even if I have tried to point to the complexity of the discourses and how history contains ruptures and discontinuities, one might think that there is only one discourse which totalises everything. The discourse of lifelong learning, where everyone should learn all the time, might seem to be the only way to reason about the adult learner today. However, I would argue that there are always several discourses present with some becoming the dominating ones and others are being marginalised. This is related to the specific relation of power operating in discourse. As I have shown through the genealogical analyses, the discourses change through time and space. Ideas that are central in the discourse of adult education during the mid 20th century might have become marginalised today. For example, the idea of heritage (ability) has become marginalised in the present discourse of adult education. This does not mean that the idea cannot be uttered. But if it were uttered today, in Sweden, in relation to adult education, it might be categorised as abnormal. However, if ability is uttered in a space

other than in Sweden, or in relation to another discourse in Sweden, it might participate in shaping dominating discourses.

I would argue that the fruitfulness of the theoretical perspective used in this dissertation mostly lies in its way of creating an analytics of the present in which our taken-for-granted assumptions are scrutinised. The genealogical approach has allowed me to problematize central concepts and ideas, which are part of current discourse of adult education. Thereby, it has been possible to show how ideas in the present time have trajectories back in time, but also how they differ in the way they are produced. For example, the idea of the educable subject has, at least, trajectories back to the 1920s. But the adult subject constructed today is different from the subject constructed in earlier periods, which is related to other figures of thought that are part of the discourses. Therefore, the second concept used in the analysis can be useful – governmentality. Through the use of governmentality I have a tool that allows me to problematize these similarities and differences. For example, the educable subject of today can be seen as part of a dominating rationality of governing where ideas of the active, self-regulating subject are created. If we then compare it with the discourse, which the educable subject was part of during the 1920s, we can see how there are other ideas present constructing another kind of rationality of governing. Thus, these similarities and differences can provide a space for reflection on the present time.

One of the strengths of the concept of governmentality is that it widens the concept of government. Not only is it concerned with governing through lawmaking, the police, decisions in governmental organisations, etc., it also concerns our everyday life, all the relations we are involved in, not the least the relation to oneself. We can relate such reasoning to Foucault's (1980) view of power. There is not someone, such as the nation-state who has and uses power on someone else. Power is relational and circulates everywhere, operating on everything. Taking such a stance makes it possible for us to analyse government as something wider than the government of the nation-state. It relates the government of ourselves, the government of others and the government of the state (Dean 1999), which makes it possible for us to show the complexity of how government is being conducted. The focus is not on social, economic and political circumstances that shape thoughts. Instead, the focus is on how thoughts operate within the taken-for-granted ways we do things (Dean 1999).

I argue that the way I have conducted this analysis makes it possible for us to gain another perspective on today's adult education. Policy texts are assigned a 'central' subject position in the discourse today, which makes them an interesting material to analyse as a way of constructing the discourse

of adult education. It provides a critical space for reflections on our taken-for-granted ideas of our present time; a way for us to question them.

Future research

This dissertation is one of many contributions to research into adult education. As has been argued, it has contributed to perspectivising Swedish adult education in a specific way not done before. However, it is not an all-embracing study, and it points to several interesting research questions for the future. I will mention two of those.

First of all, a question I have often reflected on, and which a lot of people I have met at conferences, seminars, workshops, etc. have asked is: But what is happening in the classroom and in practices where the adult learner is participating? Are they really becoming what are stated in policy documents? My answer has been that such questions have been outside the scope of this dissertation as the focus has been on policy documents and how these construct the adult learner. However, such questions open up a possibility for future research into adult education practices of different kinds. One way would be to take a constructivist stance and to ask how the adult learner is constructed in the everyday practice of adult education. Is it the same subject as the one constructed in policy documents? Such a study would probably have to be based on observations and interviews, but the theoretical perspective might vary. If one wants to try to understand the discourses, the subjects and the governmentalities created in the practice of adult education, Foucault could be a starting point.

When making observations and carrying out interviews, one is confronted with the question of how to view the material gathered (as in all kinds of research). One way is to view the material as text and producer and products of discourse. The single individual in the classroom is not of interest *par se*. Instead, it is the subject positions created in the discourse through the text material analysed that are of interest. Interview material and observations are analysed as text, which forms social reality. Such an analysis would be interesting to pursue, guided by questions of what discourses and rationalities of governing are created in the everyday practice of adult education. The analysis of such material would be similar to the analysis made in this dissertation as the material would be seen as text. What kind of rationalities of governing are created through the texts? What subject is being constructed and how should governing be conducted? How do the results relate to the analysis made in this dissertation, i.e. relate to discourses constructed through policy texts?

If one is more interested in how different actors construct/negotiate their identity or if one wants to focus more on a process in progress, a combination of some ideas from Foucault and other theories might be useful. For example, Lumsden Wass (2004) combines Foucault with critical discourse analysis and Assarsson and Sipos-Zackrisson (2005) combine a governmentality analysis with discourse psychology. Thus, the idea of the subject only as a position and not an actor is somewhat redefined. Others have tried to combine Foucault with other theories where the view of the subject is maintained. For example, Edwards (2002, 2003), Edwards and Clarke (2002), Edwards and Nicoll (2004) and Usher and Edwards (2005) combine ideas from Foucault with actor network theory. However, in the texts by Edwards and his colleagues, the material analyzed is policy, not interviews and observations. They analyse documents and form a framework, which is supposed to be a starting point for an ethnographic study. How to handle the issue of the subject would be a question for the future in relation to the design of the above-mentioned study.

Another interesting research question to pursue is to continue the more comparative research on educational policy in Europe as done in the fourth article. According to different narratives, the development of the European area of higher education is a central process in European integration today. As it is a process, which is not within the scope of the decision making of EU, it serves as an interesting and specific form of international educational policy making. The process of creating such an area has an impact on each country participating as well as the universities, teachers and the students. Thus, such a process is especially interesting as regards governmentality studies as it points to a situation where the way governing is conducted is being questioned; a problematic of government (Dean 1999). Further, such a process is part of the construction of the European citizen. More general questions one might ask are: In what way do discourses created in European texts relate to texts produced in specific participating countries? How do texts from different countries relate to each other? What rationalities of governing are created in the different texts? What adult subject is being constructed? Here, it would be interesting to collaborate with scholars from other countries in Europe so as to be able to compare discourses produced in different countries. How do planetspeak discourses and figures of thought travel in space and how are they inscribed in the locality of different nations?

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