

Disquietness in Schools

A case study based on the observations of pupils with disruptive behavior during class

Kristine Mathiesen og Stine Sæther



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utdanningsvitenskapelige fakultet, Institutt for spesialpedagogikk.

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Summary

Background:

This thesis is a part of the pilot project “Disquietness in Schools”. The project is led by Professor Liv Duesund. The thesis is a case study where the aim is to identify characteristics of disruptive behavior of two pupils during class. The behaviors that are focused on in this study are ranged as the highest frequent behavior in schools today. Based on the observations we found it relevant to elaborate on environmental factors that may be influencing to the behavior.

Research problem:

In accordance with a qualitative approach, we choose to have an exploring focus to the phenomena that was to be studied. Therefore we formulated our research problem after the observations were made, and on the basis of our data material.

What characterizes the disruptive behaviour of two pupils during class?

In order to answer our main research problem, we have developed three research questions that we consider to cover its components.

- *What characterizes the pupils` disruptive behavior?*
- *What characterizes the reactions the pupils receive for their disruptive behavior during class?*
- *In which situations do the pupils behave disruptive / not disruptive?*

Methodology:

We used a pre-structured design that was required by us to implement by the pilot project “Disquietness in Schools”. We conducted qualitative observations along with the use of a pre-structured observation form. Five observations of each of the two target pupils were conducted in this study. We chose three observations of each Informant to include in our analysis. We categorized our findings to best analyze and interpret our results. These categories are constructed based on our observations.

Results:

Our results show that what mostly characterized the disruptive behavior of both Informants were sitting physically calm on own chair, disrupting either themselves with non subject related activities or other peers by approaching them verbally. The non subject related activities that the Informants were disrupting themselves with was mainly apparently day dreaming, playing with pencil, calculator etc, or drawing. This behavior leads to less learning for both of the pupils. On task behavior was represented only to a lesser extent compared to off-task.

When it comes to the reactions the Informants received for the disruptive behavior we found a tendency to ignorance of the disruptive behavior, both from the teachers and the peers. As long as the behavior did not seem to interfere with the teaching situation or the other pupils` right to learn, the behavior was in most cases ignored. We did not find this reaction to be effective. Punitive reactions were also commonly used as a consequent to the disruptive behavior. The punitive reactions most commonly used against the pupils in our study were detention, being moved out of the situation and being sent out of class to be dealt with by special education teachers. The punitive reactions to the behavior did not decrease the behavior. We saw a tendency to continuance when the behavior was met with punitive reactions. Verbal feedback was another approach our Informants received as a consequence for their disruptive behavior. Results of the feedback differed according to how the reaction was given. In situations where the pupils were called out in front of the class the behavior had a tendency to continue. In situations where the pupil was approached by the teacher in a calm and orderly matter the behavior stopped for a short period of time. Nonverbal communication was rarely used as a reaction. The few times this approach was used it seemed effective.

The organization and structure of the classroom were other key aspects in our findings. In two of the three classes observed the pupils were arranged in a group setting. Our Informants had in these situations trouble getting started on their tasks and were easily distracted by peers. The structure in the classes we observed was characterized by what we describe as loose. We interpreted that the pupils in several situations found this loose structure of the classroom as confusing and their behavior came as a reaction to this.

Acknowledgement

The long and interesting period of writing our master thesis has come to its end. As we spent our semester writing the thesis in the USA, we have gotten the opportunity to experience a different culture and we have made memories that we'll remember for the rest of our lives. Most importantly, we have through this period gotten the opportunity to investigate and elaborate on a phenomena that we find very interesting. The disruptive behavior during class is a phenomenon that is considered as one the most frequent problems schools struggle with today. Being an observer in a school in a foreign country has provided us with new and valuable knowledge and expanded our perspectives. However, implementing such a study abroad has also challenged us along the way. Writing our master thesis in another language than our mother tongue is one worth mentioned.

There are many people that deserve our appreciation. One of them is our supervisor, Professor Liv Duesund at the Department of Special Needs Education. First and foremost we want to thank you for giving us the opportunity to be a part of this comparative pilot project "Disquietness in Schools". Your strong involvements during the whole process and your constructive advices along the way have been invaluable to us. We would also like to thank Professor Liv Randi Opdal and Professor Elliot Turiel for enlightening and valuable conversations on respectively methodology and cultural aspects. The Faculty of Education, University of Oslo does also deserve a special thank you for providing us with financial support through the master scholarship. Further, we would like to express our appreciation to the school, pupils and teachers that contributed in making this study possible.

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1. Introduction

In this introductory chapter we will present the background and intention of the study along with our choice of focus and research problem.

1.1 Introduction and background information

This thesis is a part of the pilot project “Disquietness in schools”, led by Professor Liv Duesund at the Department of Special Needs Education. By autumn 2009 we were introduced to this project which is a comparative study between Norway and USA of disruptive behavior in schools. After several conversations with Liv Duesund and a meeting with Professor Trond Petersen, chair of sociology at UC Berkeley, we found this pilot project of “Disquietness in Schools” very interesting and decided to write our master thesis as a part of the project. There are 80 bachelor students in Norway and 9 in Berkeley involved in this project. This thesis represents the only master student involvement in the pilot project.

From internship experiences from schools and through several conversations with friends and family of us whose work are in schools, we have become more and more curious and concerned about the phenomena of disruptive behavior in schools. We also remember our experiences from our own time in school, and it is still in fresh memory that disruptive behavior occurred to a large degree. One question we have asked ourselves is; how does disruptive behavior emerges during class, and what do the teachers do about it?

As we started searching for literature about the phenomena, we found highly relevant studies both from the United States and Norway that communicated a big concern on the issue. One of these studies are the results from *PISA*; “*Knowledge and Skills for Life. First Results from PISA*” (OECD, 2001) that stated that teachers in Norwegian schools report on the highest level of disquiet behavior and disorder in the classroom compared to the other countries in this survey. The pupils in Norwegian schools also seem to agree with their teachers; three out of ten students report in the annual “Elevundersøkelsen” published by The Norwegian Educative Directorate (2009) that they often, or always, are disturbed by other pupils in teaching situations. These results are supported by Terje Ogden who stated to the

newspaper *Gudbrandsdølingen* in 2006 that disruptive behavior and disorder are the biggest problems Norwegian schools are faced with today. In the USA we found results concerning this matter investigated in the 2008 Phi Delta Kappa/ Gallup Poll of public attitudes toward Public Schools. Discipline problems was rated second to funding as the public's biggest concern about education in the United States (Jones and Jones, 2010). Beyer (1998 in Butchart and McEwan 1998) point out that discipline and classroom management have always been concerns for teachers, administrators, and teacher educators. The issue of control seems, according to the author, to have become a greater problem in the last half century.

The results from the studies mentioned above shows that the topic of disruptive behavior in school requires further examination.

As a part of the pilot project we will write our master thesis with emphasis on what characterizes the disruptive behavior and if there might be possible connections between disruptive behavior and observable aspects within the environment. Juul and Jensen (2002) state that when it comes to disruptive behavior and disorder in school examining the behavior itself will not be sufficient in order to solve this problem. According to them it is necessary to analyze the relations between teachers and pupils (*ibid.*). We have chosen a systemic understanding of behavior problems and therefore we do understand the behavior as a function of different conditions in the learning environment. During our observations and our interpretations of these we found various elements within the teacher's exercise of classroom management, that we wished to elaborate further in this thesis. The teacher's exercise of classroom management is mentioned in the literature as one of the factors within the learning environment which can be both reinforcing and preventative of problem behaviors (Aasen, Nortug and Ertesvåg, 2002; Nordahl, 2002; Nordahl, Manger and Tveit, 2005).

Disquiet and disorderly behaviors in school are often in the literature described as synonyms to the term "major behavior problems". Our focus in this master project will not emphasize this group. Ogden (2002) states that behavior problems also include actions that are disturbing to the learning environment. According to Ogden (2002) these problems occur in almost every classroom and must therefore be recognized as regular problems. The disruptive behavior that we wish to focus on in this thesis is the type of behavior that we

consider to be problems that teachers have to deal with on an everyday basis. Our study is a case study, which has only a limited selection of Informants; we therefore expect our results to have limited value concerning the aspect of generalization. In this study our focus is to make a description as thoroughly as possible of two pupils with disruptive behavior during class. This behavior is to be considered a highly frequent problem in today`s schools. We hope that our results of this study may contribute to a greater understanding and a deeper knowledge of the phenomena “disruptive behavior” during class.

1.2 Research problem

In accordance with a qualitative approach, we chose to have an exploring focus to the phenomena that was to be studied (Fangen, 2004). Therefore we formulated our research problem after the observations were made, and on the basis of our data material.

What characterizes the disruptive behaviour of two pupils during class?

Our intention is to identify different ways that disruptive behavior emerges during class, and try to see them in relation with observable environmental factors in the classroom. These are factors that we consider to be a part of the teachers` exercise of classroom management. We will try to achieve this aim by using a descriptive approach in our observation and presentation of our results. Further, a discussion of aspects within the term classroom management as an influencing factor will be presented.

1.2.1 Research questions

In order to answer our main research problem, we have developed three research questions that we consider to cover its components. The questions were formed on the basis of our data material, and guided us trough the work of structuring and analyzing. The questions will also form the basis of our chapter concerning presentation and discussion.

- *What characterizes the pupils` disruptive behavior?*
- *What characterizes the reactions the pupils receive for their disruptive behavior during class?*
- *In which situations do the pupils behave disruptive / not disruptive?*

We consider the first questions focus being to identify the behavior of the pupils. The next two questions intent to describe observable aspects of the learning environment. These are aspects that we found relevant and to have a significant influence on the behavior, based on our data material.

1.3 Overview of the thesis

Our thesis includes 5 chapters. The 1st chapter is an introduction to the theme, focus and purpose of the study. The main research problem, along with four research questions, is also presented. The 2nd chapter is a review of the theoretical framework that has emerged in light of our data collection. We have chosen to divide this chapter into two main sections concerning respectively the phenomena of behavior problems and the exercise of classroom management. The first section elaborates the term of behavior problem and different perspectives to understand its origin. The next section focuses on the teacher`s exercise of classroom management, and is closely related to the first section. In the 3rd chapter we will present the methodology that was used implementing our study. Further, we will discuss the aspects of validity, reliability and ethical considerations. Our results and following discussions will be presented in chapter 4. Our research questions form the basis of the structure in this chapter. This chapter will also include any additional discussions and reflections we might have. Chapter 4 will also present a summary of the main results of the study. Chapter 5 will include our final considerations.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Behavior problems

During childhood and adolescent's years it is expected that the child should acquire and understand the society's norms and interaction patterns. The child shall then become socialized into the society and become a unique individual as well as a part of their society and culture (Frønes, 1998). Within this society, the child will meet all the expectations of how he or she should behave in various situations. Violations of these standards or expectations can under certain circumstances be considered as behavioral problems. However, during childhood, every child will at some point show types of behavior in which the social environment will perceive as problematic. These kinds of behavior problems include both the three year old in his despite age, and the teenager defying parents' rules. Such situations can be described as normal behavior related to growing up. Other examples of more severe forms of norm-and rule violations are stealing, bullying, minor forms of vandalism and experimenting with drugs. These are all problems that are not uncommon in today's society. A key question is where to draw the line between such normal behavior problems and more serious and deviant behavior problems. Another important perspective is the cause of the problem behavior, and how such behavior can be prevented or eliminated.

The focus in this study is disruptive behavior during class that interferes with the learning situation. Other terms that are often used to describe this kind of behavior are disciplinary problems, motivational problems and learning inhibited behavior. All of these terms fathom the behaviors that are focused on in this study. When teachers are asked what they consider to be their biggest challenges in the teaching situation, there are many that answer behavior- and disciplinary problems. In a Norwegian study conducted by Terje Ogden (1998), concerning learning environment teachers reported motivation and discipline problems to be the most severe problems they were faced with daily in school. Behavior problems represent an ambiguous concept, and it needs further clarification. In this chapter we will present and discuss different perspectives to understand the concept of behavior problems. The theoretical perspective on what causes behavior problems that forms the basis of this study, will also be presented in this chapter.

Ogden (2002) refers to a taxonomy which he has divided into four parts, and the severity of the behavior can be understood in the context of the individual's adaptation resources, and how extensive psychosocial burden the behavior inflict the individual. With this in mind Ogden (2002) divides problem behaviors into in the following categories:

- 1. Serious and comprehensive behavioral problems*
- 2. Distinct behavior problems*
- 3. Developmental and situational problems*
- 4. Discipline and well-being problems*

(Our own translation)

Serious and comprehensive behavioral problems are also referred to as multiple problems. In despite of this being a relatively small group, the school appears to have difficulties relating the pupils in this category. Behavior problems within this category may include acting out, crime, truancy, psychosocial problems, psychosomatic problems and developmental problems. The problems of the pupil appear in several contexts, and it is often required a more comprehensive measure than what the school alone is able to provide (Ogden, 2002).

The distinct behavioral problems may concern mental health problems, learning difficulties and difficulties in the care situation. Difficulties may be due to several factors such as late maturing or social difficulties. This group of behavioral problems can also be described as serious behavioral disorders or antisocial behavior. Kaufmann (1987) defines anti-social behavior as behavior that violates with the social and ethical norms, and is damaging to other people and themselves (ibid.). The characteristics of this group may be fighting, bullying, humiliation and threats against other students, theft, robbery, vandalism, burglary, escape from home, being out at night and absence from school. These students may be in considerable risk for later behavioral problems such as serious crime, drug abuse and violence (Nordahl, Manger and Sørliie 2003, Ogden, 2002). Although these problems can have a significant impact on both the pupil and the environment, these pupils can also function adequate in certain arenas.

Development and situation specific problems are related to specific events or problematic situations in life where the demand of adaptation and coping exceeds the child's competence. The child may show a problematic behavior in relation to a situation that presents a big change in the child's life. Examples of this are when the child is forced to switch schools, that the child's parents are getting a divorce, or when the child goes through puberty. Such problems are often of a temporary nature (Ogden, 2002).

The last category is described as discipline and well-being problems. The term can also be referred to as a learning disruptive behavior and it may apply to all students in school. This behavior makes it difficult for the teacher to teach, and students may have difficulties concentrating. Behavior can be characterized by turmoil and noise (Arnesen, Ogden and Sørli, 2006), and students interrupt and interfere with each other or with the teacher. This behavior is often associated with the school and classroom, and in this way the behavior may be understood as a reaction to the school's demands and expectations (Doyle 1986; Nordahl 2000; Ogden 2002).

Nordahl (2000) uses another term that is very similar to the last category Ogden (2002) mentions in his taxonomy. This term is referred to as learning and teaching disruptive behavior. This behavior refers to the fact that the behavior interferes with both the student's learning process and the teacher's act of teaching. Because this behavior comes to expression during class with other students, it is not necessarily a problem behavior that is expressed in other situations outside of school and classroom (Nordahl, 2000). This behavior is also reported to be the highest frequently behavior problem in schools (Levin and Nolan, 1991; Nordahl et al., 2005) Typical characteristics of this behavior are day dreaming during class, distraction, being uneasy and disrupt peers. These are behaviors that are considered being discipline problems. Seen isolated, this type of behavior does not concern very comprehensive or major problems. However, it will contribute to significant consequences to the learning environment where these types of behavior problems are highly frequent. Nordahl et al. (2005) also point out that this is problems are related to the context of school. This means that the different environmental factors in school may contribute to the occurrence, maintainer and reinforcement of the behavior. Further, the extent of behavioral problems, largely depends on the quality of the social and academic learning conditions in schools (Nordahl et al., 2005).

The middle school and the adolescent years often represent a period of transition where the boundaries and authority will be tested. At the same time, many relationships go through a testing phase. This may involve challenges to those who are close, but this behavior is nonetheless seen as normal. Such revolt may be particularly relevant to students' relationships to adults. This can be expressed by showing opposition to the teachers who are people of authority. The limits may be discussed and the teacher's ability to provide consequences is tested. Thus, much of the problematic behavior is normal behavior, but where is the limit for calling this behavior a problem behavior that is deviating? Aasen et al. (2002) point out that behavior that is exercised in the wrong places, at the wrong time, in the presence of the wrong people, and in an inappropriate scale is perceived as a behavior problem. Thus, it is the behavior's frequency, degree of intensity, duration and scope that determines whether the behavior is normal, or should be characterized as behavior problem. This needs further explanation.

Frequency refers to how often the behavior repeats itself and whether it has established itself as a regular behavior pattern of the pupil. An example of this can be a student that regularly shouts out inappropriate words in the teaching situation. Intensity indicates the efficacy of the pupils' behavioral expressions. This may, for example, concern how a student expresses negativity to a teacher, he does not like. Duration refers to whether certain actions have repeated itself over a longer period of time, or whether the action patterns have a longer duration than is usual for the specific age group. Duration also refers to what to be expected being natural behavioral reactions in difficult situations. Behaviors like this can appear in relation to such as if the pupil is experiencing a divorce or death of a close relative. Finally, the scale indicates something about how context-dependent the problem behavior is. This means if the problem behavior emerges only in certain situations or arenas, or if this behavior is recognized in several of the students' arenas (Aasen et al, *ibid.*). If the problem behavior is reflected only at school, and not at home or in other recreational activities, there is a reason to believe that there are factors in the school environment that promotes problem behavior. Nordahl et al. (2005) add an additional dimension that they call intent. This means if the behavior can be rational and understandable from the students' perception of reality.

These various dimensions mentioned are ways to assess the severity of the behavior problems. There is also a relative element in each dimension. Teachers and schools have different tolerances for what is acceptable and not acceptable behavior. For example, the

intensity of the behavior can be judged differently, depending on the environment the student is situated in. This perspective shows us that what is perceived as a behavior problem is both age-, person-and context-dependent. The experience of problem behavior may therefore vary from class to class and school to school. This means that the behavior must be evaluated in light of the context it occurs in. This coincides with a systemic and ecological perspective which forms the theoretical framework of this study. These perspectives will be presented in the next section.

2.1.1 Perspectives on behavior problems

The systemic perspective is the basic theoretical understanding of this study. This chapter will therefore begin with a brief account of what is meant by a systemic theory. The last part of the chapter will present an ecological perspective. This is a model that forms the backdrop for the theoretical understanding in this study and we believe this perspective shows how the problem behavior is reflected in the interaction between the individual and the environment.

2.1.2 A systemic understanding

A systemic theory is a generic term for ways of thinking within various empirical sciences that use the concepts of system and model (Nordahl et al., 2005). A social systemic theory is thus an overall approach to human activity, where different theories overlap, and each on its own way provide appropriate perspectives in the understanding of the different behavior problems.

Within the social systems the communication and interaction between individuals and the environment are central factors. Through this there are established social structures and patterns. These structures and patterns will again effect the subsequent interaction. This way, the individual and the environment are in a mutual interaction with each other (Nordahl et al., 2005). Interaction is a key concept in systemic understanding, because in addition to the mutual interaction between the individual and the environment mentioned, there are the various systems that are in an interaction with one another. This means that the various systems are closely related to each other. This way, experiences and values within a social system effect the actions of another social system. This can be exemplified by the pupil who

brings negative experiences with adult persons at home, and passes it on to the school's teachers. Other social systems that are in relation to each other as well as family and school, may, for example be friends and peers. In accordance to this, it will therefore be an important consequence of an understanding of behavior problems to survey the various systems that are of importance to behavior problems (ibid.). The work with the structures and patterns that sustain or reinforce problem behavior within these systems will represent a key element. For example there may be elements in a teacher-student relationship or a student-student relationship that reinforce the behavior problems.

In this thesis we emphasize on the pupils` disruptive behavior and the related system factors that are components within the classroom management. The factors includes structures and patterns that have the potential to prevent and correct the problem behavior. These structures and patterns may also seem sustaining and reinforcing to the behavior problem. In accordance with a systemic understanding this means that behavior problems cannot be understood with one-sided focus on the factors within the individual, but as a function of different conditions in the learning environment. Our observation and interprets led us to the focus on aspects within the system factor of classroom management. This is referred to as a factor that may affect both reinforcing and prevention of problem behaviors (Nordahl et al., 2005; Aasen et al., 2002; Nordahl, 2002). The environmental factor of classroom management will be elaborated more detailed in the following chapter.

The pupils who are just sitting there without doing anything or they act out being flamboyant or noisy are often referred to as pupils with behavioral problems. Through such a concept it is easy that this becomes the dominating perception of the student`s character and that he or she gets labeled. This can also lead to the surrounding environment experiencing an exemption from the responsibility for the behavior. Such an understanding is closely related to the individual focus as long as was prevailing in the understanding of the problem behavior (Nordahl and Sørli, 1998). However, in recent decades it has been a shift in relation to this. Where the focus previously was on the individual - or environmental explanations, it is currently focusing on both factors in the individual, family, school, even aging group and the community outside of the individual as explanations of problem behavior. This provides a systemic understanding of behavioral problems, where the

relationship between the individual and the environment is understood as a two-way process (Nordahl et al., 2005).

Thus, the term behavior problem involves ambiguous concepts, in which have several different reference points to it. Learning and teaching disruptive behavior was the behavior we noticed that the two pupils we were observing showed most of. This thesis will therefore concentrate on this type of behavior. Ogden (2002, pp.16) defines this behavior as; "A mutually reinforcing behavior and conflicts involving several students, and that leads to a lack of tranquility in class or work effort and therefore leads to a deficient learning environment." (Our translation)

The definition above emphasizes on the social processes and the group behavior, which lead to problem behavior in class. In this thesis we are also concerned with the behavior in which are disruptive to the individual alone and are involving passivity and refusal of work. Slåttøy (2002) refers to Norsk Lærerlag's (1998) (Norwegian Teacher Association) definition of behavior problems. The definition is based on Ogden, Nordahl and Sørli. "Behavior problems can be understood both as extraverted and introverted behavior. Behavior problems are behaviors that reduce or inhibit own or others process of learning" (Our own translation)

This behavior impairs the pupils' own learning process and his or hers development, and hampers a positive interaction with others. The learning environment will thus be inhibited and developed in a negative direction.

2.1.3 Ecologic perspective

It is the pupils observed disruptive behavior that is the main focus of this study. As stated above, the behavior cannot be understood isolated. Our findings from the data material show factors within the classroom management that we were interesting in elaborating further in this thesis. These are factors that may be related with the behaviors different students show, and it also represents factors in the learning environment that can affect this behavior. In a bio ecologic perspective these are factors that mutually affect each other. The individual's behavior, according to this perspective, is always to be understood as the result of the interaction with the environment. The behavior will thus be seen as a function of the

interaction between the individual and the environment, where the social structures and patterns are current (Aasen et al, 2002).

Within the educational literature, the term “ecology” is often used in relation to systemic theories in which we have described above. A systemic perspective focuses on the social systems around an individual. Originally, ecology is a biological term that refers to the study of living organisms in natural environments (Apter, 1982). When we use the term ecology in relation to people, the terms social ecology or developmental ecology are often used.

The ecological perspective has in the past few decades undergone an evolution. In the beginning the theoretical perspective was developed as a reaction to the very individual-oriented psychological theories and therefore the environment as an important factor for the human development was strongly emphasized. Nowadays, the emphasis is more lightly to be on the process of interaction between humans and the environment, called proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006.). This way, the bio psychological factors in humans are of equal importance for human development as the environment is. This is clearly expressed by Bronfenbrenner in his later work where he uses the concept of the "bio ecologic perspective" rather than the "developing ecological perspective" when he refers to this perspective (ibid.).

It is the quality of the proximal processes that are given decisive importance. This means how the inhibitory or promoting factors within the person or the environment will affect his or hers development. That means that the quality of proximal processes, relations with parents, teachers and peers, can determine to what extent a student's difficulties are evolving negatively. As an example, two students with similar severe social and emotional problems may be facing two different kinds of development, negatively or positively, depending on whether the relations with their social environment are characterized by qualitative good proximal processes or not (Aasen et al., 2002). The relations between the individual and environment are simultaneously in an ongoing development and in an interaction process. This means that the person is both a producer and a product of development (ibid.).

There are various characteristics within the individual that are emphasized in the bio ecologic perspective. Biological dispositions such as attention deficit, impulsivity, lack of aggression control or lack of interest in the environment can both initiate and maintain the proximal processes. In addition, the person's abilities, knowledge, experience and any

injuries or disorders of the organism affect the person's development. This perspective distinguishes between three different types the bio psychological characteristics of the individual: biological dispositions, resources and requirements (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006). Requirement characteristics refer to the pupil's ability to promote or inhibit reactions from the surroundings. Passivity or hyperactivity will be examples of demand characteristics that promote different reactions in the environment. The bio psychological characteristics will always be in interaction with each other, and at the same time they are in interaction with the environment.

The environment is in the bio ecologic perspective seen as a set of systems at that operate with four different levels where the degree of closeness to the person and the level of abstraction separate them (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This means the students' physical and social environment, the students' context. The micro system is the system that is closest to the person. Within this system we find the family, class, hobbies and friends. Activities, roles and relationships are thus the key factors in this system. This system is considered as the primary environment of the individual, where experiences are made and the reality created (ibid.). In this study the micro system of the class is the most central.

The relations between the various micro-systems constitute the meso- system. It will have a significant positive impact on the individual whether these relationships are characterized by many and varied contacts, as well as the absence of value conflicts. Unless the relations between micro-systems are good it can lead to relational contingent behavior problems (Aasen et al., 2002). Examples of meso- systems are the relationship between school and home, or between parent and children.

There is a great importance of having a bio ecologic perspective on problem behavior in school. This is because the behavior is understood as a product of an interaction between the bio psychological characteristics of the individual, and the interaction between the physical and social environment, which make up the interaction between person and environment (Aasen et al., 2002). The consequences of such a perspective are to examine both the bio psychological characteristics of the individual seen in correlation to the contextual conditions in the environment and then examine the interaction between these. To examine why behavior problems occur an observation on what happens in the interaction between the

different environments the learner is a part of must be conducted, it is also necessary to examine the context the relations occur in. This is correlating to our focus of this thesis. Apter (1982 pp.57) defines behavioral problems as: "Ecologist typically does not consider emotional disturbance located solely within a child, but prefer to look at a disturbed ecosystem, in which disturbance can be more profitably viewed as a *"failure to match"*. When an ecosystem is out of balance it can cause a mismatch between the demands of the environment and the individual's qualifications. If the individual fails to meet the requirements it can result in lack of adaption to the environment (Klefbeck and Ogden 2003).

What the expectations and requirements are will vary from environment to environment. Behavior problems should therefore be considered in relation to current standards, expectations and the context the behavior occurs in. In a classroom there will be different standards and requirements that are related to behavior and conduct. Those pupils who fail to meet these requirements can be described as students with "failure to match" (Apter, 1982), and the behavior that occurs can be explained as a mismatch between individual conditions and the environmental requirements. Behavior problems may also be seen as a consequence of concentration difficulties, bad relationship with the teacher, a desire to assert themselves in class and at the same time escape the difficult task. This way, the bio-ecological perspective allows us to see how a number of factors may explain the behavior problems. The most effective measures will thus be those that affect both the student directly on a biological and / or psychological level, and measures in the environment. Examples of environment can be the class or home conditions or both. It has in this study been necessary with a limited focus. The context of this study is therefore the class.

2.1.4 Factors representing risks

As elaborated above, this thesis is based on an understanding of the environment being in a constant interaction with the individual. In literature there are several factors within both the individual and the environment that are proven to be a greater risk to the development than others. Nordahl et al. (2005) describe how problematic behavior can be better understood in the context of risk factors.

Children who are exposed to risk factors are according to Klefbeck and Ogden (2003) more likely to be led into negative paths in their development than children who are not exposed to these factors. Such paths can be described as social chain reactions in which a number of negative events in life are contributing to a reinforcement of the deviance (ibid.). The children exposed to so called risk factors are only affected negatively if they at a later point in life are exposed to stress they do not manage to cope with. Risk factors refers to both individual and environmental factors in a child`s life. Individual risk factors can be described as factors such as difficult temperament, attention deficit, hyperactivity, health issues and challenging behaviors. When it comes to the environmental risk factors these can be represented i.e. situations at home characterized by conflicts and negative influences by peers. The level of risk is not only determined by the severity of the factors, but also the duration of the exposure (Ogden, 1999). The most central individual characteristics among those who are disposed to behavior problems are impulsivity, aggressiveness, low IQ, neurobiological and genetic disorders, poor academic achievements, comprehensive truancy, low social competence, depression, anxiety, poor or excessive high self-esteem, low scores in verbal skills, perception and memory. A circle of friends involved in criminality and violence, along with positive attitudes to crime are of the highest risk factors among young adolescents. (Nordahl et al. 2003).

When it comes to family related risk factors that includes lack of cohesion and involvement, weak social and emotional bonding between parents and child, inconsistent or aggressive way of being disciplinarians, lack of follow-up of the child, parents` drug abuse, crimes within the family, problems with poor economy, poor social network, high level of conflicts a negative relation between parents and school, police and other social services (Sørлие, 2000). Rutter, Giller and Hagell (1998) refers to a few more risk factors related to the environment and to the home situation. These factors also include broken homes, single parents, neglect, large families and growing up in a disorganized residential area. The school as a social context can also include several risk factors to the child. A learning environment characterized by low motivation for school, low grades and negative attitudes towards the school is referred to as risk factors. Other risk factors within the context of school are inconsistent policies and enforcement of these, poor relations between teachers and pupils, a learning environment characterized by conflict and little support, loose structure, limited pupil-engagement in the learning act, teacher having low competence in teaching along with

too few and little thoughtful policies for prevention and dealing with problematic behavior (Ogden, 2001; Sørli, 2000).

Children exposed to many factors of risk are in danger of being excluded from several social environments of importance, and they lose opportunities to control their own lives and destinies. However, abilities and competence combined with a strong social network will often function as protective factors. Such protective factors may contribute to a better coping of burdens from risk factors. Among factors that have proven in reducing risk of developing severe behavior problems, are individual factors such as lack of genetic vulnerability, a balanced temperament, high IQ, good verbal skills, being a female and a positive social orientation. (Ogden, 1999)

2.2 Classroom management

As pointed out in the previous section, classroom management is referred to as a factor that may affect both reinforcing and preventative of problem behaviors. The classroom management is an important part of the learning environment. In accordance with an ecologic and systemic perspective, we understand classroom management as a factor in interaction with the pupil, that may affect his or hers behavior negatively or positively. In this section, we wish to elaborate this further. We have chosen to focus on two aspects within classroom management, which are of importance for pupil behavior. These are the teacher`s reactions to the behavior and the teacher`s way of organization; both physical environment and activities conducted during class. These two aspects were chosen on the basis of the observations made. Another aspect which is mentioned in classroom management literature as of great importance is the relation between teacher and students. To observe the quality of the relations between teacher and pupils represent difficulties, because relations are influenced by subjective experiences or feelings. On the basis of this and of our data material, we have chosen not to emphasize on this aspect in our study. However, we are aware of the significance of this element within a teacher`s ability to exercise classroom management, and we have an understanding that teacher reactions are a part of the relation to the pupil. We have therefore chosen to refer to this aspect in the following and link it closely to reactions and expectations to form a backdrop of our understanding.

The classroom can be described as a microcosm of the school environment, broader community and culture. According to Befring (2008) the school can in many ways be seen as a reflection of the society with all its prejudices, conflicts and rivalries. The challenge is to create the best environmental conditions possible for those who need it the most. Children are in school to learn; they are expected to learn the academic, social and emotional skills needed in adult life. The optimal classroom environment is not necessarily one with the highest academic scores or the most well behaved pupils. A classroom that comes across as a miniature community where values, ideas and curriculum are sustainable can better be described as optimal. When classrooms are characterized by disruptive behavior, both the teaching and the learning environments are affected (Levin and Nolan, 1991). It hampers the students' ability to learn and is also the primary cause of job-related stress in the case of the teacher (ibid.).

To manage to obtain a profitable classroom environment will be benefitting to both students and teacher. "Teachers who are effective managers have greater job satisfaction (Leslie Debb, 1991 in Levin and Nolan, 1991). Classroom management is first and foremost a matter of creating classroom environments in which all pupils present feel safe and comfortable and as a result of this are able to maximize their learning of skills necessary in life (Jones and Jones, 2010). Ogden (2002) describes classroom management as a teacher's competence to create learning situations that are characterized by peace and order, promote pupils' attention and motivate them to action. He further points the factor he thinks is the most important factor in achieving good classroom behavior to be the teachers skills on group management (ibid.). An accepting and including learning environment is characterized by mutual respect and positive teacher-pupil interactions and relations (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2005). In such a learning environment it is fully accepted to ask for help, need time to manage tasks and also to not manage every task given. Likewise, it should also be accepted to be a clever and motivated student. By working towards these standards, there will be made more room for acceptance of both the pupil's strengths and weaknesses (ibid.). When an environment mentioned above is created pupils make a high percentage of good choices and, as a consequent of this, their learning is enhanced (Levin and Nolan, 1991).

Levin and Nolan (1991) provide a number of principals they find basic when it comes to the subject of classroom management. We have chosen to present three of these principals we find especially relevant to our study. They state that the most important factor in

determining classroom environment is the teacher's behavior. They base this principal on the fact that both the teacher's verbal and non-verbal behaviors influence the pupils' actions. In connection with this principal Jones and Jones (2010) state that effective classroom management requires the teacher to consider their own values and beliefs as these affect the pupils they are working with. Levin and Nolan (1991) continue with the statement that the teacher is responsible of taking on the role of the instructor. This also includes being responsible for employing techniques that maximize the pupils on-task behavior. In every relation both parts are responsible for the relation. Moreover, it is a difference in who is the most responsible part, depending on the equality within the relation. In a teacher-pupil relation the teacher, as an adult, is responsible for establishing a good relationship to his students. This is best done in cooperation with students mentioned above. When it comes to problem behavior it is the adult who has the main responsibility to change his / hers behavior and the relation to the pupil (Nordahl et al., 2005; Webster Stratton, 2000). This view corresponds with Juul and Jensen (2002) who state that in the relationship between an adult and a child, the adult is always responsible for the quality. Goldstein and Brooks (2007) state that the teacher has to recognize that the foundation for learning and a safe and secure climate in the classroom is the relationship the teacher forges with the students.

Jones and Jones (2010) write that good classroom management should enhance the pupils' sense of ownership of the curriculum. When the sense of ownership is enhanced the pupil will feel a greater responsibility and a sense of personal efficacy regarding their own learning (ibid.). Goldstein and Brooks (2007) support this view when they state that pupils will be more motivated to learn when they feel a sense of ownership for their own learning and education. The teacher must recognize this fact and help the pupils demystify the concept of learning styles so the pupils easily can find the style which maximizes their learning. Levin and Nolan (1991 pp.1) are clear when it comes to the teachers' responsibility in the classroom situation. They state that:

Teachers who have clearly developed ideas of (a) the relationship between teaching and discipline; (b) the factors motivating students to behave as they do; (c) their personal expectations for student behavior; and (d) a systemic plan to manage misbehavior have classrooms characterized by a high percentage of on-task student behavior

Combined the four components in this statement summarize what we think is the essence of classroom management.

On the basis on our findings and results from the data collection we have chosen to focus this chapter on two significant components concerning classroom management; the teachers` responses the disruptive behavior along with their expectations, and their ability to structure and organize the physical environment and the academic curriculum.

2.2.1 Teacher`s reactions

Teachers` approaches to classroom management are impacted by their own values and life experiences (Jones and Jones, 2010). How they organize their classrooms and respond to discipline problems is influenced by their own life experience. To be a successful teacher and able to create an optimal classroom environment a great amount of responsibility is on the teacher himself. A significant amount of research indicates that students` academic achievements and behaviors are influenced by the quality of the relationship between themselves and their teachers (Goldstein and Brooks, 2007). Positive student-teacher relationships are connected to the students` responses to school and an increase in the student`s academic achievements (ibid.). Young people seek models to assist them in their development and much of their behavior is influenced by the behaviors of adults who play significant roles in their lives. Goldstein and Brooks (2007 pp. 63) state that: "Research indicates that individuals are more likely to model the behaviors of people whom they view as possessing competence and control over resources and who are major sources of control, support and reinforcement- characteristics possessed by teachers"

A successful teacher understands the lifelong impact he obtains on the students life (Goldstein and Brooks, 2007). What the teacher says and does in the classroom has an enormous amount of influence on their students` life. As most teachers understand that they are influential adults in their students` lives, many are not aware of the extent of their impact (ibid.). It is important that the teacher understands that he has the opportunity to be a significant other (Goldstein and Brooks, 2007) in a student`s life and that even the smallest gesture or word spoken can in fact have a lifelong impact. A significant other can be defined as a person who is present in one`s life and who can provide support and portray himself as a good role model. Small gestures as smiles, a moment to speak alone and a sense of respect are all elements found in a significant other. What is important to remember is that many

teachers are not aware of the fact that they are or have been a significant other to a student. The teachers must therefore always strive to maintain positive relationships to his students.

Although the specific decisions the teachers make regarding their relationships to their students vary, dependent on among other things the students` age there are still a few basic elements related to teacher-student relationships that are relevant across grade levels. One important question related to this is how open and involved the teacher wishes to be with his students. Goldstein and Brooks (2007) divide the level of involvement and openness into three different categories of teacher-student relationships. They are characterized by:

-Almost complete openness, in which the teacher shares a large amount of personal information and express their personal values with their students.

-Openness when it comes to topics related to school environment, limited sharing of aspects concerning their out-of-school life.

-An almost exclusive focus on role-bound relationship, which means no sharing of personal feelings or opinions, but merely performing instructional duties.

(Goldstein and Brooks 2007, pp. 64)

Letting the students know their teacher as a person, on the level comfortable to the teacher, also involves allowing the students to be comfortable announcing their views about topics, though they sometimes will be different from the teachers. Even if the teachers agree upon all of the discussed principals of good classroom management, it is not certain that they are implementing these principals the in their everyday teaching situation the way they are meant to. The teacher`s mindset is according to Bjørnsrud (2008) crucial intermediary between intention and practice, because it will affect how the intentions are interpreted, understood and how it will impact in practice. On this basis the teacher`s mindset is emphasized as a form of competence that it is essential to be aware of within the school. In order to develop a school with room for everybody and reconnaissance of the individual, it requires that everybody within the institution agree upon perspectives, commitments and follow-up (Nilsen, 2008). Teachers who show a generous and accepting attitude and ability to familiarize themselves with the individual pupil's situation will have the opportunity to get a key position in relation to safeguard and supervise pupils who show psychosocial and social problems (Befring 2008).

A key aspect when it comes to the interaction that the teacher shares with his students is the one concerning reactions to unwanted behavior from the student. The teacher must understand that one of his or his or hers main functions is to be a disciplinarian in the true sense of the word; that is, to perceive discipline as a teaching process rather than a process of intimidation and humiliation (Goldstein and Brooks, 2007). Young adolescents are involved in so many changes to their identity that their egos are fragile and they tend to personalize almost everything (Jones and Jones, 2010). The goal must therefore be to provide the student with the disciplinary information in a matter in which it is likely that the student would listen. Children are sensitive to praise and criticism given by adults (Jones and Jones, 2010). Critical remarks will not improve the students' behavior- as described previously it may result in the opposite. If the teacher yells at the student in front of the class it is more likely that the student focuses on the teacher's way of reacting instead of reviewing her own behavior and possibly changing it. In many cases, if the student is called out in front of her peers she will continue the unwanted behavior since she doesn't wish to lose face (Slåtøy, 2002).

Teachers often find disruptive behavior more noticeable and will therefore respond to it more often than on-task behavior. Behavior that is given much attention has a tendency to repeat itself, be that disruptive or non-disruptive behavior. It will therefore be in the best interest to acknowledge positive behavior (Webster-Stratton, 2000). The reactions to positive behavior may involve social amplifiers as "praise" and a "thank you" from the teacher, or amplifiers in terms of activities that the pupils like, shorter school hours or other privileges and benefits (Ogden, 2002). However, Patterson, Reid and Dishion (1992) state that use of admonitions, praise for alternative and positive behavior hardly ever lead to the end of the bad behavior. This means that positive reactions given as a consequent of on-task behavior, may lead to an increase of this behavior, but not necessarily to the end of the bad behavior.

It is an advantage if the teacher as often as possible uses natural, positive consequences to confirm the good behaviors, i.e. when pupils are quickly done with routine work and can get extra time for optional activities. The same way, praise for good work done will function as a natural, positive impact, and students can receive recognition on student exhibitions, theatrical productions or other events (ibid.). Ignoring the students' unwanted behavior is also used as a strategy against disruptive behavior. This can be seen as positive in the sense that the unwanted behavior was not given attention. On the other side the teacher may have

chosen this approach to the behavior based on the type of behavior that was shown. As long as the students don't show outgoing and interfering behavior towards the other students the teacher may choose not to respond to the behavior. Use of admonitions, praise for alternative and positive behavior and ignoring the negative behavior do hardly ever lead to the end of the bad behavior (Patterson et al., 1992).

Discipline problems will effect, as mentioned before, both teachers and students in a negative way and in relation to this it is crucial that teachers do not to allow their personal feelings play a role in their interactions with students. It is important to distinguish between the student as a person and their actions. It has been documented observable differences between teachers' interactions with disruptive and non-disruptive students (Levin and Nolan, 1991). This may be a result of the perception and expectation the teacher has of the pupil with a problematic behavior. According to Aasen et al. (2002) the teachers' perception of the pupil will, even if the teacher is not aware of the fact, influence his or hers actions and reactions towards the pupil. It is the school that interprets and enforces the consequences of the behavior of the pupils. Theories that analyze such social control are called labeling theories (ibid.). Generally speaking, these theories are concerned about deviance and behavior problems as a process. According to this, there is always a development in the deviance. The most important factor in a career of deviance is the reaction from others. In school the pupils with behavior problems may get a label it is hard to get rid of. To these pupils, this label can result in a self-fulfilling prophesy that might be reinforcing to the negative behavior; that the label is something they have to live up to (ibid.). This might result in the disruptive student acting in a certain way to punish the teacher, which again causes the teacher to avoid interaction with said student, except from when it is necessary to deal with the inappropriate behavior (Jones and Jones, 2010). Teachers avoid confrontations and reject pupils. They can give the impression that the pupil must leave the group / class or be taken care of by "specialists" (Ogden, 2002). According to Aasen et al. (2002) it is of great importance that the school and teachers do not place the pupils with a problematic behavior into a labeled category, but instead try to find measures and strategies that help preventing and reducing the unwanted behavior. A deficient perception and understanding of the pupil who is misbehaving may lead to less applicable actions towards the pupil. This might affect both the pupils learning results, and the personal and social development (Nordahl et al., 2003).

A certain perception of the pupil may also result in certain expectations that correlate with the perception or the label the teacher has given the pupil. The teacher is as mentioned been assigned the role of the leader and the instructor in the classroom situation. It is therefore in its place to link the students underachievement's to the teacher's low expectations. Although the term teacher expectations is widely used and its effects often referred to, its exact meaning is paid little attention. What are expectations? In an everyday use of the term it might refer to the student's current academic performance, expectations about the future or expectations about behavior and effort shown by the individual student (Pelligrini and Blatchford, 2000).

There is a distinction between expectations that are descriptive and those who are meant to form the basis for change. If the teacher shows low expectations and little belief in the student's ability to change, the prognosis for the student are not good. If the teacher however have low expectations, which may be realistic based on previous experience, combined with a strong belief of change, the improvement in the student's achievements may be high (ibid.). How the teacher communicates his expectations to the student may be crucial for the student's classroom behavior. There are probably different subtle and varies ways that expectations are communicated to the student, and these approaches can be received in multiple ways by the individual student. Expectations may be reflected in the tasks and opportunities the student is given in class, in the tone of voice, facial and non-verbal expressions, comments on work and the natural interaction and feedback given by the teacher (ibid.). There are many concerns about the matter of teacher feedback, if the expectations are not accurate and open to corrective feedback, they may affect the learning opportunities of the individual student. This may occur if the expectations are based on stereotypes, the students' social status or their personal appearance (ibid.).

Even if teachers as far as possible try to affect the pupil's behaviors by using positive consequences and reactions, there will in some situations be necessary to stop the unwanted behavior. Behavioral correction should be used when other reactions are not successful, and when both the teacher and the class are aware that something is wrong (Ogden, 2002). In today's school use of authority and negative consequences are among the most difficult issues to bring up. The school has made a settlement with the culture of punishment of pupils, but there is still no doubt that the conflicts between students and teachers and now and then get out of control and leads to adverse reactions, from both teacher and student.

Most teachers do not want to appear authoritarian or punitive, but at the same time they recognize the need for preventing and stopping certain types of negative behavior (ibid.). On the basis of this, it is detected an ambivalence within the opinions concerning the use of negative reactions in school, which has lead to the issue hardly ever is being brought out in daylight to be discussed. When teachers hold back on using negative consequences, and at the same time the difficult pupils is putting them under big pressure for action, teachers might react in other ways that may be negative for the pupils (ibid.).

Punitive reactions are commonly used towards unwanted behavior. Such reactions include reprimands, penalties, loss of privileges and detention and can be said to be a behaviorist approach to problem behavior. The punishment is given as a direct consequent to the behavior and young people may obey at the time the consequent is given. However, in the long run, punishment doesn't change the student's underlying desire to misbehave or the reasons why said desires exist (Stanley, 1998). Punishment may appear to be a logical consequent from the teacher's point of view. To the child, however, punishment is embarrassing, demeaning and painful (ibid.). Effective negative consequences are reactions that are effective to reduce or stop unwanted behavior, but there are not "aggressive", exaggerated or seem like "retaliation". This may involve natural consequences like for instance that the pupils must clean up after themselves or make them do additional practical things in the breaks and spare time, the loss of privileges (to be held inside in parts of the recess or excluded from desirable activities), contact with parents, or "time-out" where they for a limited period of time stay in another room under proper supervision (Ogden, 2002). Loss of privileges and "time-out" has proven to be effective as negative consequences in the work of changing negative behavior (Patterson et al., 1992). They are used as negative consequences to the unwanted behavior, but only after the pupil has received a clear request from the teacher to stop the behavior. The teacher should then inform the pupil that if he doesn't stop acting out right away, she is going to lose a privilege.

Concrete and understandable feedback should be given when disruptive behavior occurs. This will help the student understand what is expected of their behavior in the given situation. Instead of describing the student as a bully or bad, the teacher should focus on describing the unwanted behavior. This way, the distinction between the student's behavior and the student's personality is made. Correspondently this will be favorable to the student

because she will not have to live up to a label given by the teacher, i.e. the class clown or trouble maker (Nordahl, 2002).

Rules are of course necessary in all classrooms, to maintain order and to ensure predictability for the students. The rules should be short, simple and few. This is to ensure that the students are able to understand and remember them. Additionally wanted behavior should be described in positive phrases (Ogden 2002; Arnesen et al. 2006; Webster-Stratton, 2000). To ensure that these rules are effective the teacher has to play an active role in the enforcement of said rules. The teacher has to point out when a rule is broken and follow through with a consequent. The punishment has to fit the crime and be given as near the violation of the rule as possible (Nordahl et al., 2005). This way the teacher's reactions will be predictable and consistent and the students learn the fact that the teacher expects them to act appropriately (Webster-Stratton, 2000).

2.2.2 Organization

The other main factor in classroom management we have chosen to emphasize on is how the physical environment in the classroom and the academic curriculum are structured and organized, and if this way of organizing is favorable to the pupils or not.

The most obvious way of looking at the effects of classroom environment is in terms of its physical structure (Pelligrini and Blatchford, 2000). This involves the seating of the students, how they are placed in relation to each other and the teacher. It is the teacher's decision how he wishes to organize the physical environment of his classroom, but it is important to have in mind that the seating of the students may have an effect on their behavior. There are several different ways of placing the students and not all of these are ideal for all students. The students can be placed in circles, u-shapes, groups or the more traditional rows, according to what the teacher finds appropriate (ibid.). Not all students benefit from sitting in groups or other arrangements where there is a lot of interaction with peers. Several studies have compared the students' on-task behavior in relation to the seating arrangement in the classroom.

Axelrod et al. (1979 in Pelligrini and Blatchford, 2000) found more disruptive and less on-task behavior in groups opposed to the more traditional rows. Wheldall et al. (1981 in

Pelligrini and Blatchford, 2000) conducted a study in Britain where they observed 6 classes over a period of two years. Seating arrangements were organized for two weeks at the time, first in groups, then in rows, then in groups again. Their findings were that the on-task behavior increased when the students were placed in rows. Bennett and Blundell (1983 in Pelligrini and Blatchford, 2000) support these findings when they saw a marked improvement of quantity of on-task behavior when the students were placed in rows. The teachers who participated in this study expressed that classroom behavior improved in rows opposed to when the students were placed in groups. They also reported an increase of talking and chatting between the students when they were placed in groups. The students opinions were divided, some of them favored the quiet atmosphere in rows, but disliked the restrictions of space. Other studies however, have found opposite results where on-task behavior decreased in rows and signs of student withdrawal was apparent (Rosenfield et al. 1985; Weinstein, 1987 in Pelligrini and Blatchford, 2000).

Goldstein and Brooks (2007) state that all students yearn to be successful learners in school. But the fact is, far from all students are successful learners in school, and there is a great variety of reasons to this. The teacher must in each case ask himself why a student is not learning and how the teacher can help the student by adapting their teaching styles and instructional material to meet the students` needs (ibid.). All students have their own unique "island of competence" which consists of their academic skills, the way they like the curriculum to be structured and the placements etc in the classroom (ibid.). The teacher must at all times strive to apply himself to a strength-based model that identifies and reinforces the individual student`s island of competence.

In correlation to this it is relevant to mention Howard Gardner`s theory of multiple intelligences (Armstrong, 2009). Gardner`s theory challenges traditional beliefs in education and cognitive science. According to a traditional definition intelligence is something a person is more or less born with, a capacity that is possible to measure by using standardized tests. According to Gardner, intelligence is more than this. In 1983 he defined seven different intelligences, and in 1999 he added two more. He claims that all humans have a different intellectual composition of intelligences and that we all possess the different intelligences in various amounts. Each individual possesses all nine intelligences, and according to Gardner, possibly additional undiscovered ones. The intelligences can all be nurtured and strengthened or ignored and weakened (Armstrong, 2009). The nine intelligences are:

- Visual/spatial
- Verbal/linguistic
- Mathematical/logical
- Musical/ rhythmic
- Intrapersonal
- Interpersonal
- Naturalist
- Existentialist

According to the multiple intelligence theory, identifying each student's intelligences has strong ramifications in the classroom situation. If the teacher is able to identify the students' composition of intelligences he will in a greater sense be able to accommodate different students according to their orientation to learning. The learning situation can be improved by taking the different intelligences into consideration (Armstrong, 2009). By identifying individual students' strengths the teacher will be able to facilitate situations where the students succeed. One of the greatest obstacles to learning is the fear of making mistakes and feeling embarrassed or humiliated (Goldstein and Brooks, 2007).

Student behavior can also to a great extent be connected to activity type. Motivated students are more willing to put the extra effort into their schoolwork. The education is to encourage the students by defining specific goals and facilitate varied activities to reach these goals (Norwegian Educate Directorate, 2006). The students are to be given, but also be able to choose, tasks. Tasks that are challenging and provides them with an opportunity to explore the curriculum, alone or in a group setting (ibid.). Gump (1967, in Pelligrini and Blatchford, 2000) reports in his study that student involvement was highest in teacher-led small groups, followed by whole class activities and teacher presentations and lowest for individual studies and student presentations. Behaviors seen as problematic are also affected by activity type. Silverstein (1979, in Doyle 1986) conducted a study in the fourth grade that showed that unwanted behaviors were more commonly found during seatwork than in a small group or a whole class setting. A great deal of the responsibility for learning the curriculum is often

given to the student herself and not all students are disciplined enough to organized their own learning.

3. Methodology

In this chapter we will introduce and describe our methodical approach. Our methodological choices were limited and had to be made in accordance with the pilot projects guidelines. We used a pre-structured design that was required for us to implement. A qualitative observation was required along with the use of a pre-structured observation form. In the first section we will thoroughly go through our methodical approaches and discuss them in relevance to our project. The next sections will include a broad description of the actual process of the study as it occurred.

3.1 Qualitative methodology

Our use of observation as a research method corresponds to a qualitative design which is based on observation, interview and dialogue (Vedeler, 2000). The intention of the qualitative method is to obtain the correlations and relations between individuals and the environment (Løkken and Søbstad, 2006). This correlates with our research question.

A qualitative method has several strengths to it. One is that it is a good way to understand the meaning for the participants in this study; of the events, situations and actions they are involved with. A second strength is that one can easier understand the particular context within which the participants act, and the influence that this context has on their actions. What typically features a qualitative research is that it is only a relatively small number of individuals or situations that are being studied, and in the analyses the individuality of each of these is being preserved (Maxwell, 2005). This is a contrast to quantitative methods which usually consist of collecting data from large samples and aggregating the data across individuals or situations.

Unlike quantitative methods that focus on objectifying the research process by keeping a distance between the researcher and the subjects, a qualitative method aims to be more about proximity (Kleven, 2002). Proximity along with certain flexibility qualitative methods provide in the data collection situation, can give the researcher more insight and knowledge on various issues than quantitative methods can do. The strength of qualitative analysis is

comprehensive assessment of individual cases (ibid.). A qualitative investigation means thereby to try to understand the participants' perspectives. The researcher's focus should be on peoples' everyday actions in their natural context. It is also important to be aware of the fact that the researcher's gaze may be affected by the researcher's theoretical standpoint and their own experiences (Postholm, 2005). We will return to this in the chapter on validity.

In a qualitative study one can have either a structured approach, or an unstructured one. Both approaches include advantages and disadvantages. Prior to our study, we discussed this thoroughly.

Miles and Huberman (1994, pp. 17) warn that:

Highly inductive, loosely designed studies make good sense when experienced researchers have plenty of time and are exploring exotic cultures, understudied phenomena, or a very complex social phenomena. But if you are new to qualitative studies and are looking for a better understood phenomenon within a familiar culture or subculture, a loose inductive design is a waste of time. Months of fieldwork and voluminous case studies may yield only a few banalities

In addition they also specify that a certain pre-structuring reduces the amount of data one has to deal with (ibid.). Based on the fact that we were both new to qualitative studies and our research was taking place in a close to familiar culture, we landed our discussion on implementing a partly pre-structured approach. This means that we laid out a tentative plan for certain aspects of our study in considerable detail, but we left open the possibility of substantially revising this if necessary. We also had to follow the guidelines from the project, which were pre-structured to a certain degree. We will come back to this in detail later in this chapter. This procedure also corresponds with a hermeneutic approach. We also learned that our pre-structured procedure did function as a form of pre-analysis, which modified and helped us in the analytic work that is required as a part of the process in the study.

3.1.1 Scientific theory

A hermeneutic approach means a doctrine of interpretations and it emphasizes interpretation of a statement or a data material by focusing on a fuller and deeper meaning than what immediately appears (Dalen, 2004). In hermeneutics a single phenomenon is understood in the light of a whole (ibid.). To understand what characterizes the disruptive behavior in school, we are of the opinion that the behavior must be understood as a part of the context

and in conjunction with each other. Hermeneutics is central in qualitative research in the sense that the data is not only described, but also be seen in context and interpreted. Within a hermeneutic approach to the data material, researchers must strive to obtain a valid understanding of the meaning (Wormnæs, 2005). Clifford Geertz (1973) emphasizes that a qualitative text should contain so-called thick descriptions. This means that the analysis of the data is not only describing the data, but also interprets them. In contrast to the so-called thin descriptions, the thick descriptions include the researcher`s interpretations as they emerge through the observations and interviews (ibid.). In other words, it is the researcher using thick descriptions that has the ability to express his reflections on what he has collected.

Odd Wormnæs (2005) argues that within the hermeneutics there is a perception that all understanding is determined by prior experiences and understandings. Further, he argues that an understanding is formed in an interaction between a whole and a part. When the researcher thoroughly studies a phenomenon, he or she can gradually increase the ability to see individual situations in their context (ibid.). This can provide the researcher with a better understanding of the relations and conjunctions as a whole, and also contribute to an achievement of a renewed insight and deeper understanding of individual situations separately (Befring, 2002). One of the challenges associated with a qualitative research method is to understand the phenomena that is being interpreted as part of the context. In our case, one of the challenges is to see the disruptive behavior of the two target pupils in relation to the environmental factor in the context; classroom management. This is a part of one of our research questions, and we will come back to this in our discussion in the 4th chapter.

3.2 Observational research

As a part of the pilot study focusing on disruptive behavior in school we will in this master thesis try to identify what characterizes the disruptive behavior of two pupils during class, and try analyze if there is a possible connection between this observed behavior and the social environments. The factor classroom management will in this thesis represent the particular factor in the social environment that we wish to focus on. In order to do this we find it necessary to examine what the term “disquiet behavior” consists of in observable

behavior. We will also elaborate on the organization and structure within the teaching situation, and also what characterizes environmental reactions to this behavior. For these examinations, observation as a research method is considered as a suitable method of collecting data.

Observation as a research method is a useful instrument when it comes to describing children or adults in everyday situations and in their natural context (Vedeler, 2000). Observation is described by Vedeler (2000) as a direct method in the sense that the researcher is situated where the phenomenon is unfolding. According to Fangen (2004) a main purpose in observational research is to describe what people say and do in natural settings, not structured by the researcher. In our opinion this master project correlates with this method by the necessity for a true setting in the natural context, rather than directly obtained from the participants situated within the setting which may be carrying bias. Selecting observation in preference of other methods can therefore provide more correct and accurate information about what we want to study (Vedeler, 2000).

Jorgensen (1989 pp.13) lists certain minimal conditions to be present in order to implement a participant observation

- *the research problem is concerned with human meanings and interactions viewed from the insiders perspective*
- *the phenomenon of investigation is observable within an everyday life situation or setting*
- *the researcher is able to gain access to an appropriate setting;*
- *the phenomenon is sufficiently limited in size and location to be studied as a case.*
- *study questions are appropriate for case study*
- *the research problem can be addressed by qualitative data gathered by direct observation and other means pertinent to the field setting.*

In our opinion, these conditions match our project description. A participant observation may also range within different types of roles (Jorgensen, 1989; Vedeler, 2000; Fangen, 2004). We made a decision on our role to be partly participant in order to collect our data. A partly participant observation is the most common role in observational research, and the ideal is to participate in the social settings, yet not in the specific environmental activities (Fangen, 2004). More specific, we decided our role to be what Vedeler (2000) calls observer as a participant. In our study this meant that we did not take an active part in the activities going on during class. Our aim during this study was to make our participation as little unpleasant

as possible for the participants during our time spent observing. In order to blend into the setting and become close to a part of the environment, we tried to participate in the daily actions of classroom-life and followed the social rules of the setting.

Whether or not we can trust the results and conclusions of a study depend on to what extent the researcher is aware of his own strengths and weaknesses as an observer. This also includes the researcher's own beliefs on what is being studied. Observational research also provides some challenges. We will go into detail on these in the section regarding validity. However, there is broad agreement among scientists when it comes to the benefits of observation as a method in research. The advantages weigh heavier than the disadvantages, and this research method is one of the best ways to study a certain phenomena in its everyday setting (Jorgensen, 1989; Vedeler, 2000; Fangen, 2004; Løkken and Søbstad, 2006).

3.2.1 Classroom observation

Observation is described by Vedeler (2000) as a systematic collection of information about the physical and social world as it appears to us through our senses, but the observation also implies that we must reflect and find meaning in the information we receive (Vedeler, 2000). In the educational context, observation is described as to observe something that has educational significance (Bjørndal, 2002). The pedagogical importance in this context is whether the pupil's interactions with his social environment contribute to his behavior being more or less quiet in the tutorial. In daily life, we observe all the time, and when we observe we interpret. By interpreting what we observe, we give the events meaning, even though our interpretations can turn out to be both right and wrong. When observation is used as a research method, the method is used to find answers to the research questions that are asked (Vedeler, 2000).

The purpose of using observational research in schools is multifaceted. Among other things, the general public is interested in what goes on in school. Observation is also used to evaluate and develop own practice, assess student behavior, teaching and learning practice, and evaluation of the school's overall business (Vedeler, 2000).

3.3 Informal conversation

Informal conversations are in the literature described as natural conversations for collecting information in which always happens without planning (Cazden, 1988; Gall, Gall and Borg, 2007). As Gall et al. (2007) point out; observational research is more *time-consuming* although it is of a great value to get the data directly from the participants. Because of the limited time for a master study, informal conversations were used as a supplementary method in obtaining background information of the chosen school, the class and Informants. The informal conversations with the teachers were conducted during breaks.

3.4 Design

In educational research, one wishes to describe the phenomena in a thorough manner (Vedeler, 2000). We aimed on finding characteristics of the pupils` disruptive behaviors, and the behaviors possible connections with the environmental factor of classroom management. With this focus we chose case as the design.

3.4.1 Case study

The case study approach, defined as the detailed examination of an aspect, has come in and out of favour to researchers over the past decades as they have explored various possibilities of investigating a problem (George and Bennett, 2005). It enables understanding of complex social phenomenon i.e. human relations and events (Yin, 2003).

We choose Gall, Gall and Borg`s (2007) definition to case study research that states that: "case study research is the in-depth study of one or more instances of a phenomenon in its real-life context that reflects the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon" (Gall et al., 2007 pp. 447) Yin states that case studies are empirical studies that investigate a phenomena by using numerous sources. The questions "why" and "how" are frequently used. At the same time the borders between the phenomenon and the context are vague and the researcher has little or no control over the events (Yin, 2003).

A case study is used to shed light on a specific phenomenon, which can be defined as a process, an event, a person or other items of interest to the researcher (Gall et al., 2007). In

our study the phenomenon chosen to focus on is disruptive behaviour in a school setting. Once the phenomenon of interest is clarified the researcher can select a particular instance of the phenomenon to study, a case. A substantial amount of data about the specific case is collected and chosen to represent the phenomenon. Data is often collected over an extended time period, and various methods of data collection are used (ibid.). In this study we have used two different methods of collecting data; our primary method, which are classroom observations. Informal conversations were used as a supplementary source of information.

Typically case studies involve fieldwork where the researcher interacts with the participants in the everyday settings. The goal is to learn about the phenomenon from the perspective of those participating in the study. Yin (2003) also emphasizes the importance of studying the phenomenon in its natural context.

For the most part, the cases of interest in education and other social sciences are people and programs (Stake, 1995). We strive to understand them, and we appreciate them, both for their uniqueness and their commonality (ibid.). Many case studies in education are carried out in classrooms or other locations in school (Gall et al., 2007). This is also the status of our study. The data collecting process was conducted over a period of 6 weeks in a junior high school class located in California, United States of America. Our primary method of collecting data was as already mentioned observation; the methodology of participant observation generally is practiced as a form of case study. This involves the detailed description and analysis of an individual case (Becker, 1958 in Stake, 1995)

Researchers generally do case studies for one of the three following purposes; to produce detailed information and descriptions of the phenomenon, to develop possible explanations for it or to evaluate the phenomenon (ibid.). The last mentioned is often the focus when evaluating a program. In our case the purpose of the study is to examine and conceptualize the phenomenon. We have a descriptive approach to the phenomenon, where thick descriptions are the goals. A thick description is statements that re-create the situation and as much of its context as possible. These statements are accompanied by meanings and intensions in that situation (Gall et al., 2007). In this study we strive to collect the thick descriptions through the methods of observation, logbook and informal conversations.

3.5 Participants and sampling procedure

The guidelines for who we should be focusing on as participants for this study were given by the pilot project “Disquietness in school” (Duesund, 2010). The participants were to be pupils that had a disruptive behavior that appeared to be disturbing to him/herself, to fellow pupils, or to the teacher. The pupils were not to have a diagnosis or disorder, and they should be a part of the regular teaching situation during the observations.

Gaining entry to a school in Berkeley was arranged by our supervisor in corporation with the Berkeley Schools Volunteer Program. The two classes that we were to observe in were chosen by our contact teacher at the school. After getting familiarized with the two classes during two days in each class we were, according to our guidelines given by the pilot project, to choose in corporation with the teacher what two pupils to focus on (Duesund, 2010). The pupils were to be regarded as disruptive by the teacher and by us as we had been observing them during the two days getting to know their behavior patterns (ibid.). In order to collect rich data material from the Informants, a purposeful sampling was applied. As Gall et al. (2007, pp. 178) point out, “in purposeful sampling the goal is to select cases that are likely to be information-rich with respect to the purposes of the study”. The number of cases in this study is small, which allowed us as researchers to seek depth of the information from the cases (Patton, 2002).

3.6 Implementation of the observations

Prior to observational research, Vedeler (2000) points out the importance of observational training. It requires a good portion of skills in order to implement a thoughtful, prepared and focused observation in a context of research compared to the spontaneous, random observations. As a part of the research project, we participated in two lessons lead by Professor Liv Randi Opdal, with the duration of two hour each. The lessons included a technical briefing of the methodology of observation along with practical tasks aimed at the focus of the project; disruptive behavior in schools. We also have experience with observing children, making thorough descriptions and separate relevant details from the less relevant though our previous work with children. We planned our observations thoroughly and we

were well prepared. We also had a clear conception of what our task was, and what was to be focused on during the observations.

Proper authorization is necessary in every research study. Prior to the observations an application was submitted to NSD. Since we were not to collect sensitive personal information we received a response that this study was not notifiable. Ten observations were conducted in this study. Prior to the observations, we were located in the classroom for two days in each class to get familiarized, and make the pupils and the teacher get used to our presents. The observations we made these first four days getting familiarized, have not been included in our collected data material. Our aim during all of our observations was to make the participants feel as comfortable as possible with us being in the classroom. The teachers also told us that the pupils were used to having adults observe them from time to time. Our experience after the first observations confirmed this to a certain extent. The pupils did not seem very concerned about our presents, and we felt free to sit in corners of the classroom observing almost as what Vedeler (2000) calls a completely independent observer. This means that we tried to be as invisible as possible and blend into the environment. We wanted to make it as clear as possible to the pupils and the teacher that we were there only to observe, and not to engage in the teaching situation or other activities along with the teacher. We tried to signalize this message by keeping ourselves in the background, and by not initiating contact with the pupils. If the pupils approached us to ask for help or with questions, we tried as best as we could to lead them to the teacher.

In participant observations, the main data are descriptions and quotations (Vedeler, 2000). The descriptions must be specific and factual, accurate and comprehensive, without irrelevant details. One cannot observe and describe absolutely everything that happens. In addition to descriptions that give a descriptive picture of reality, the descriptions also include the observer's interpretations, evaluations and reflections. These should be separate from the purely descriptive description of the observation. In order to make as good descriptions as possible, and separate the description and interpretations in an orderly way, an observation form was developed by Liv Duesund, Liv Randi Opdal and Sven Nilsen, all members of the research group "Disquietness in school". We contributed in adapting the observation form to suit our study by translating it into English. This form was to be used by all the students that were participating in this pilot project. This form included a section for description and one for interpretation for each of the five observations.

This method coincides with what Løkken and Søbstad (2006) call current protocol, and we also used log books. These methods are less time-consuming to use and interpret than other observation methods, and therefore it became more realistic to take advantage of this in terms of our time schedule (ibid.). We envisaged that by using immediate records of the storyline in the appropriate circumstances, it would provide a more accurate picture of what we had seen, rather than using other methods. The observation form was very open, and did not have rigor categories. This kind of form was very useful for us because we had no idea what kind of behavior we would come to see, and because we wanted to be as open and not biased as possible. We were glad that we had a couple of days to identify and getting familiarized with each of the two groups of children. We were in advance told which of the pupils to focus on by our supervisor at the school. This was pupils she thought had the most disruptive behavior.

In retrospect, we discussed whether the fact that we did not choose the actual pupils all by ourselves may have contributed us being somewhat colored by what we had been told. With that said, we believe that we, in despite of this, managed to be critical and meet the pupils open minded. For example, we found that one of these pupils that our supervisor had pointed out did not fit in to our focus of this study. One of the reasons why, was because our supervisor told the pupil straight to his face that we were going to observe his behavior. While getting familiarized we found that he did not have much disruptive behavior at all. This may be because of his awareness that we observed him. To ensure the validity in the thesis we therefore made a decision to focus on another pupil who, in our opinion and with the literature we were familiar with concerning this in mind, showed a more disruptive behavior.

Prior to the observations, we had reflected on the fact that we were two observers. We decided to attend and observe the same situations, rather than divide us between the two classes. This way we could coordinate our notes in the wake of an actual situation, and ensure the validity of the results. We followed the project's guidelines for the observations (Duesund, 2010), and therefore we conducted ten observations during February 2010 of two target students. We conducted five observations on each student's behavior. The first observation in each class lasted for 45 minutes and the intension was to capture observable disruptive behavior by all the pupils. It was aimed to be a general observation to observe the class as a whole. During this observation we got data material which was useful in the

composition of the categories. This observation is not included in our analysis of the two pupils' behavior. The three main observations of each pupil lasted for 15 minutes each and were conducted respectively in the beginning of the class, in the middle, and in the end of the class. The last observation on each student lasted ten minutes and was conducted during recess. Since our focus in this thesis concentrates on behavior during class, the last observation will only be used to support the informal conversations on the pupils' background information concerning the social aspect. During the observations field notes were taken for supplementary information.

The observation took place in different lessons; science, social smarts and literature. We chose to observe in different subjects because we wanted to have a variety within the observations of each student and see them in interaction with different teachers working with different subjects and activities. Implementing our observations, both the pupils and the teachers knew they were being observed. The teachers also knew which pupil we were observing, which can also be mentioned as a threat to the validity. We will come back to this aspect later in the section concerning validity. The pupils in the two classes were not aware that we had our focus on one particular pupil's behavior. This may have helped us getting observation on how the two pupils behave on an everyday basis, and therefore provide strength to the aspect of validity. Nevertheless, this may also be an issue in terms of the ethical aspect. We will return to this later in this chapter.

3.7 Implementation of the informal conversations

The informal conversations contained the following aspects: background information of the two pupils that were focused on, and teachers' opinions about the two pupils. Notes were taken after these conversations. We had informal conversations with both the assistant teacher in the classes and our coordinator at the school, both familiar with the two pupils we were focusing on.

3.8 Processing observational data

The hermeneutics emphasizes that we should reflect upon and find sense in the data collected, and view the data in the context they occur in (Wormnæs, 2005). A hermeneutic approach to the analysis means that the researcher divides the data into smaller segments, takes a closer look of what they consist of, and how the different parts are in relation to each other and to the whole (Løkken and Søbstad, 2006). In accordance with the hermeneutic approach we reflect upon and find meaning in the information we receive. Our data will be interpreted in light of the physical and social context and viewed in a holistic context. During the implementation there has already been made a number of interpretations. During the analysis the data material will be categorized and labeled in order to symbolize the key features and qualities in light of the questions we have set and the focus we have chosen.

Vedeler (2000) states that the analysis of the data can be made shortly after the data is collected. In some cases, the analysis controls the further data collection. We had some elements that we focused on before we began observing, some emerged along the way, while others we came up with during the analysis. In observational research, the process of data collection and the data analysis will affect each other mutually. According to Løkken and Søbstad (2006) there are three phases you go through when conducting observation as a research method. These three are described as the observation, the description and interpretation of the observed (*ibid.*). In Chapter 4 we will describe and interpret our findings, but first we will briefly go through how we have analyzed and interpreted the data from the observations.

3.8.1 Transcription and analysis of observational data

Before we got started with the observations we had few opinions about what we would come to see in relevance to our focus. The elements we want to base the analysis in this study on are those that emerged during data collection and reflections we had parallel with the observations. We conducted what Vedeler (2000) calls an inductive analysis of our observational data. An inductive analysis means that patterns, themes and analytical categories are derived from the data, and including definitions of key concepts, in our case the concept of disruptive behavior among others, may arise later in the analysis (*ibid.*). Operationalization we have made on the concept of disruptive behavior is first and

foremost based on the observations, and then supported with theory. The different categories are therefore less influenced by the theory we had read prior to data collection.

According to Løkken and Søbstad (2006) a description of the data material represents the first step in the analyzing process. After we were done with all our observations, we wrote all collected material into our computers, making sure all the participants were strictly anonymous. We then tried to look for any repeating patterns within the behavior we had observed. Further, we compared the different observations with each other to see them in relation. In our process of analyzing, we wanted to look for what the observable disruptive behaviors consisted of, and which types of behaviors that appeared to be the most frequent during our observations. We also analyzed in what situations the disruptive behavior most often occurred in, and how the environments reacted to the behavior. All of these aspects mentioned are discussed through their own research question, and combined they form the basis for answering our main research problem.

After going through our observation protocols, we found that there were a lot of similarities between the two pupils and their disruptive behavior during class, but also a few differences. We found this interesting, and chose to use these findings actively in the process of analyzing. By comparing the observed situations of the two different pupils, we wished to find variations and similarities between them. After going through the observations we constructed four different categories that represented the pupils' behavior observed and four different reaction categories. The categories concerning characteristics of the pupils' behavior was constructed on the basis of the first three general observations. During these observations we saw various behaviors represented. We chose to systemize the behavior represented into four categories. The categories concerning reactions were made on the basis of our collected data material. After categorizing the different behaviors and reactions and identifying ways of organization, we wanted to present and discuss them through our research questions. These findings will be presented and discussed in chapter 4.

3.9 Validity and reliability

It is close to impossible that a research study can be in complete control of all variables. It is therefore of great importance for researchers to ensure the quality of the empirical results by

illuminating factors concerning validity, reliability and generalization. Generalization is about whether or not the results of the study can be transferred to similar situations and be considered as the truth for all similar situations. We have implemented a small and very limited study, and therefore we expect our results to have a limited value concerning the aspect of generalization. However, we believe that situations that we have described, interpreted and discussed are situations that are to be considered typical within many classrooms today. If our results can be used in other and maybe larger studies, our results may provide a basis for typical features within the phenomena “disruptive behavior during class” that can contribute to enhance the results of our study (Yin, 2003). The results and findings in this thesis are based on the behavior of two particular pupils in certain situations. On this basis, we have come to the conclusion that we will not emphasize the aspect of generalization any further in this thesis.

3.9.1 Validity

Validation is about being critical, asking questions and to interpret on how the disclosures of our findings truly are a reflection of the events we describe and analyze (Kvale, 1996). Validation is a process where you ask questions check and interpret theoretically, but it is not a strategy to create accordance between our results and the real world (ibid.). Vedeler (2000) defines validity as the degree of correct conclusions one can draw on the basis of results from a given data collection. She states that the validity is about the entire research process, and it should be an important element throughout the entire research project, from the very beginning all the way to the final (ibid.). The validity of our research is a question about what other theoretical and methodological approaches we could have used. For example, it would have been interesting to implement interviews with the teachers and the pupils, to learn more about how their own experiences are concerning the focus in this study. A qualitative interview would also have provided more strength to the observations, as a triangulation of methods. However, we chose to only observe, as the focus of our study and the interest of the research project was a descriptive identification of the observable phenomena disruptive behavior in schools. After the pilot project, however, our results may contribute to valuable information which can be used in a later qualitative research including interviews.

Validation is also about how we handle the concepts of “disruptive behavior” both through our observations and our theory chapter, to define analytical categories. Another aspect is whether our categories are suitable to provide information that describes the relevant patterns and main features, that would be relevant to interpret.

Using observation as a research method may include many threats to it. A threat may be the decisions taken in relation to what is observed. To achieve the purpose, it is important to define a clear purpose for the observation. The participants may also represent a threat, because if the sample is not representative of the population, the observation has little research value. Another threat that we have discussed during this study is the fact that those that are being observed may change behavior, because they know that they are being observed (Hammersley, 1990). For example, we noticed that Informant 1 turned around looking at us several occasions during our observation, like if he wanted to see if we wrote something about him. The fact that we were two “strangers” observing and writing down notes may have contributed to a different behavior both from the pupils and the teachers. We tried to protect the validity concerning this aspect by making our presents as comfortable as possible. The students did not seem to pay too much attention to our presents, and the teacher said that they were used to being observed from time to time. We also tried to make ourselves harmless by presenting ourselves and telling about them that we wanted to learn about what pupils are doing in American schools. The teacher knowing which pupil that was being observed might also have had an influence on his/her way of behavior towards the pupil of our focus.

A third threat concerning the validity is our subjective interpretation of what is being observed. As observers we are never entirely free of subjective interpretations, because the observer as a person has theoretical and experience-based knowledge of the phenomena being observed. Vedeler (2000) describes this as “bias” and points it out as one of the most critical threats to validity in observational research. Such bias can be defined as subjectivity and coincidences in the observations, and also the characteristic of the observer (*ibid.*). As an observer you are always influenced by attitudes and past experiences, and as an observer such personal “bias” will at some extent influence what is observed. For this reason, the conclusions can represent signs of a subjective approach. On the other hand we feel like we have tried to ensure, as best we could, the validity concerning this aspect by making maybe

the most important decision regarding the methodology. That is the choice of being two researchers. With two people observing the same situations in the school, we could subsequently compare the current protocols with each other and thus discuss and interpret the results right after the situations happened. This may have led to what we believe is a more accurate and more valid picture of the disruptive behavior shown by the two pupils, and may also contributed to a more valid discussion of aspects within classroom management as influencing factors. Two researchers may understand one and the same phenomena in different ways. This may form the basis for meaningful discussions, as well as contribute to the researcher's ability to see the relevant phenomena from different angles (Løkken and Søbstad, 2006). Considering the fact that we have been two observers during the entire process of this study, we find that this has led to a more critical look at our own data, the choice of relevant theory and analysis of our results.

In the current protocols and log books, we were concerned about making a distinction between description and interpretation. Our observation form which is described in section 3.6 helped us with this distinction and the form represents strengths to the validity. We wanted to make the descriptions on the behavior we observed as objective and value neutral as possible when we were trying to figure out how the disruptive behavior actually unfolded during class. By being aware of separating the descriptions from the interpretations, we believe that the validity of our research results was ensured in the best possible way. Vedeler (2000) also states that, in addition to descriptions of the actual course of events, it is essential to write down the physical setting, participants and any events prior to the situation, when one records an observation. We therefore tried to record this type of information each time we started a new observation.

3.9.2 Reliability

Hammersley (1992) defines reliability as the degree of consistency by obtaining the same result in repeated situations by a different researcher or by the same researcher. Thus, it is a question about if the results are verifiable or not, and it is according to Vedeler (2000) first and foremost related to a hypothetic-deductive research with a quantitative approach. However, since the quality of the data material in observational research depends on the

observer, it is traditional being concerned about the aspect of reliability to be applicable for this approach as well (ibid.)

Whether a research-study is reliable or not, is related to in which degree the data is free from random errors of measurement (Kleven 2002). It can detect whether the technical quality is good enough to capture the essence of importance in the classroom situation. The issue of errors of measurement is related to the concept used, the operationalization of concepts, and if the categories functions as parameters and indicators. The classic concept of reliability is related to the reliability of the measurement of the individuals within the actual time of the measurement (Kleven 2002). This means that the results can not necessarily be reproduced at the next measurement, because it may have occurred changes in the meantime. No matter what kind of empirical data that is used, it is important to ask the question about how the random errors may have affected the data. Questions like what time of day and the day the observation is made may also affect the results. The results also depend on what the observer finds relevant and choose to focus on and interpreted in a given situation (Kleven 2002).

When it comes to the question about verifiability, we wish to emphasize the fact that we have observed two pupils in a period of three weeks. We can therefore only say something about these particular pupils` behavior in this particular period. If we at a later point had gone back to the school and observed the pupils again, there is a possibility that the situation could have changed from the previous observation periods.

3.9.3 Ethical considerations

All research is regulated by strict ethical laws set out in the legislation (Dalen, 2004).

Research`s ethical obligations are regarding, among other things, the relations between scientists and the individuals that are being studied (Den nasjonale forskningsetiske komité for samfunnsfag og humaniora [NESH], 2006). The ethical challenges we will be facing during our work with this master thesis will partly depend on our choice of methods, which in our case will be observations (Kvale, 1996). We had prior to the observations thought through and prepared for the ethical challenges we considered to be relevant during the implementation of our study. During the process we have also spent much time discussing these challenges. We will now elaborate on the ethical considerations we have discussed during this study.

It has been a priority to ensure the pupils' and the teachers' confidentiality and anonymity. We have emphasized anonymity in our collected data by using terms as "Informant 1" and "Teachers" on the ones involved. The name of the school and its exact location will not be possible to identify in our thesis. As observers in a classroom where disruptive behavior occurs, it is possible that the teacher may think that we are specialists evaluating his or her job. To show respect and humility will therefore be an important element in our approach. Proper permission from the school authority was arranged by the pilot project prior to the study.

Another ethical consideration we are up against is the use of minors as Informants. NESH (2006) states that children who participate in research have particular requirements for protection. Their needs and interests must be protected in other ways than in research with adults as participants (*ibid.*). Both prior to and during the observation period, we were concerned about the involved pupils needs. Beforehand we had decided that we should end the current observation if we got the impression that the pupils were uncomfortable with us present. This proved not to be relevant to us. We were prepared to receive questions from the pupils, as it was inevitable that they would notice that we observed them and wrote notes along the way. With this in mind and the fact that NESH (2006) states that the child's own consent is needed when the child is old enough to express it, we decided to give the pupils information about our presents. We gave information about who we were and that we wanted to observe them to learn about how American schools are like. We made it clear that they were free to ask any questions they might have. Because we wanted to observe the behavior as it occurs in everyday situations, we considered that only limited information about the exact focus of the observations were to be given to the pupils to ensure the validity.

Consent given by the parents is required when children under 15 years are participating in research (Datatilsynet, 2004). We made an informative consent form (attachment 1), that our supervisor at the school gave to the parents. We have also told all parts involved that they could withdraw from the examination at any point during the process.

4. Results and discussions

In this chapter we wish to present our data material and findings of our observation and informal conversations. We will start with a brief presentation of the case, and then we wish to present and discuss our observational findings respectively through the four research questions presented in section 1.2.1.

4.1 Case description

Below we will introduce information about the two pupils and the subjects we are observing in. This information is data we collected through our informal conversations with the teachers.

4.1.1 The pupils

Informant 1

Informant 1 is a 12 year old boy. He is born in America, and he comes from an African-American family. The boy speaks American, and this is his mother tongue and only language. His address is with his step- grandmother, but he says that he lives with his dad, who lives in another town. The teachers think that the reason that he has another address on the papers than where he actually lives is because the parents want him to go to a Berkeley School instead of the local schools, which has a bad reputation. His dad and his biological mom do not live together. The teacher says she doubts they have ever finished high school. His dad has had many women, and has several children with these women. Informant 1 says he has three stepmoms and he is also in touch with his biological mother, who lives near his dad. He has six siblings. One older brother is in jail. It is a history of drug abuse in his family. His dad was recently arrested for possession of both drugs and weapons. He also sells drugs. His mother does also have a history which involves drug abuse, and the teacher believes that Informant 1 was exposed to drugs while still being in the womb. One of the teachers also thinks his mother spent time in jail while being pregnant with Informant 1. He is now being tested for special needs.

One of the teachers said before we met Informant 1 that “he is so bad”. One of the other teachers (that had just recently begun to teach the class) told us that he was warned against Informant 1 and his behavior. This teacher found the warnings exaggerated. What the special-needs teacher thinks characterizes his problematic behavior is that he often targets those who are shy and cannot stand up for themselves. He may also threaten other children and smack them. He draws pictures of penises and other sexual related subjects. He also does sexual-related gestures to other peers to get attention. He is described as “streetwise”, and he is liked by many of his peers with the same kind of background as him. He is described as a kind of leader type. He is respected, but many pupils fear him, and therefore they do not like him that well. He has been suspended approximately 30 times this year. He was also retained in fifth grade, and he is therefore one year older than the others. This is something that has seemed to bother him according to his teacher, and she says he feels stupid because of it. He is also a bit overweight, so his teacher thinks this may also be an issue to him.

When it comes to his strengths, the teachers says that he seem to work hard when he is taken out of class and sits by himself. He feels motivated and proud when he accomplishes subject related tasks. He is also open about his background and tells the teachers about how the situation at home is like. The teachers also point out that he seems academically smart, and does the tasks well when he is motivated. Test shows that he scores age adequate in cognitive abilities. In spite of this information, the special-needs teacher doesn't think his future is very bright academically, and fears he will drop out of high school at an early stage.

Informant 2

The second Informant is an 11 years old girl. She comes from a family that origin in this town. She lives in an apartment two blocks from school with her mother and brother. Brother is two years older. Father died when she was three years old. He got run over by a train. The teachers say that she has shown signs that this incident represents a troubled memory for her. Her mother is educated on college level. Her mother works late hours in the neighboring city. Because of this there is lack of follow-through with the mother. The children spend a great amount of time home alone. The teachers say that she has often talked about wanting her mother to be more at home. She comes from a Jewish background and goes to Hebrew-school twice a week

She was moved from one class to another in the beginning of the school year because of a disruptive behavior. She rarely completes her work and doesn't do her homework. According to the tests she performs adequate to her age as she scored within the average range of cognitive abilities. They say she is a smart girl but that she lacks self-discipline. She is very popular among her peers. The teachers say they believe that she will be successful in life, but not in school.

4.1.2 The school

The school in which we conducted our data collection is a middle school located in the Berkeley school district, California USA. The school is a public school that teaches a large amount of pupils from the 6th to the 8th grade and has over a 100 employees. This includes teachers, office staff and counselors. The school organizes the classes and the academic curriculum after six ideals that are meant to insure that the individual student will be valued as an individual and at the same time as a contributing member of a nurturing and equitable learning community. These ideals are equality, academic excellence, community action, respect for self and others, nonviolence and leadership. The school offers a range of after school activities and has an active sports department. Among the sports that are practiced at this school we find soccer, baseball, basketball, track and field and others. Other activities the school offers are drama classes, chess club, math club and dancing. The school also offers after school home work assistance to the students. This involves different teachers staying behind after the school day has ended and being available to students that might need assistance with their homework. The students are given grades in all subjects and must obtain a passing grade in twenty of the twenty-four semester classes during the seventh and eighth grade to be able to graduate.

4.1.3 Subjects in which observation took place

During our data collection we observed the students' behavior in three different classes. This choice was made to get a variety in the classes observed and see possible differences in the students' behavior in the different classes. We did not find this to be the case. The three different classes we observed was science, literature and social smarts.

In science class the students were organized in groups of four. The class was characterized by a, in our opinion, loose structure where the students most of the time worked independently. The focus of the class during the period of the time we were observing was energy sources. The students had selected one energy source each and worked on a poster presenting this source. During our observations the students also took a test in science.

In literature class the students were organized in a semi-circle. The environment of the classroom was for the most part a quiet one. The students were to read in books they had chosen themselves for a reading project the entire school was engaged in. The students sat and read in their individual books. In one of the classes we observed the entire class was engaged in a task that was done in plenary.

The third class we conducted our data collection was an elective called social smarts. In this class the students were arranged in groups of four. The curriculum of this class consisted of training the students' social skills. The goal was for the students to learn the necessary social skills to function in the society. These skills were trained through watching movies and discussing them in plenary. This class was characterized by student participation and teacher-led activities.

4.2 Research question 1: What characterizes the pupils' disruptive behavior?

In order to present the following data material concerning research question 1 in an orderly way, we have chosen to present the categories first. We then present the results by describing Informants 1 and 2 separately and try to categorize the behavior in accordance to the categories presented. In section 4.2.4 we will sum up the findings and compare the two Informants by highlighting similarities and differences. In section 4.2.5 we will discuss our findings in light of the previously presented theory in chapter 2.

4.2.1 Categories of the pupils' behavior

The categories of the pupils' behavior are developed on the basis of the data material collected, especially after conducting the first general observation were several types of behavior by the whole group of pupils were represented. The categories are also developed

with the theory presented in chapter 2 in mind. There will always be different opinions of what characterizes a disruptive behavior in real life and it depends on several things. For instance, teachers can have a higher or lower threshold for tolerance changing from day to day. To what extent the pupils in this study are characterized as disruptive, depends on what is defined as disruptive behavior. The purpose of these categories is to describe what kind of behavior the pupils show in situations where they are described as disruptive, and the extent of this behavior.

Category 1- Walk around / move around in the classroom without disturbing fellow students or teachers: This category is intended to capture situations where students walk around the classroom without disturbing. Examples of behavior that this category includes are: sharpen the pencils once to two times during the observation, drink water from the sink, pick up food from the food station

Category 2- Physical and verbally disturbance on own chair / seat in the classroom: This category is intended to capture situations where the pupils are emerging as physical and verbal disruptive at their own place in the classroom. Situations where the pupils get up from his/her place are not included in this category. Examples of behavior that this category include are: talking with peers about non-subject related themes, picking on verse pencil, books and pencils; drums with fingers on the desk thereby making noise, speaks out loud without permission from teacher

Category 3- Physically and verbally calm on own chair / seat in the classroom without doing subject related tasks: This category intends to capture situations where the pupils are physically and verbally calm, but are disrupting themselves by for example putting their head in their hands and apparently daydreaming, glance out of the window, browse in books, draw / write non subject related things.

Category 4- Physically and verbally calm on own chair / seat in the classroom involved in subject related tasks: This category intends to capture situations where the students are shows an on-task behavior such as; writing and reading, raising their hands and answer teachers questions, reading out loud on teachers request, working on and discussing subject related tasks in groups

4.2.2 Informant 1

Observation number 1:

The first observation was done early in the morning, and it was the first class of the day. The subject was literature, and the pupils were supposed to read in a book of their own choice that they have been reading lately. During this first observation, the analysis of the data material shows that Informant 1 most of the time was disturbing himself. This fits under the 2nd category described above; physically and verbally calm on own chair / seat in the classroom without doing subject related tasks. He entered the classroom approximately five minutes late, and it does not seem that he knows what to do. The other pupils have been told what the task is before he entered. First, he just sat there without doing anything for a couple of minutes. The following is taken out from the observation form and describes the first minutes of the observation period, which is conducted the first 15 minutes of the class:

He sits down on his seat without doing anything (sits totally calm, glances around in the classroom for a while). He tries to speak with his peer next to him. He receives no response. He scrolls in his binder, which he has taken out of the bag laying on his desk. The other pupils are reading quietly. He takes up some pencils from his desk and comment to himself "god damn it!" Then he looks out of the window again.

During the minutes this sequence lasts, Informant 1 did not do anything on-task related. He played with his pencil, looked out of the window and it seemed like he had trouble concentrating on what to do next. This behaviour can be described as calm and not disrupting in relation to the others, but he was disrupting himself by being more concerned about other things surrounding him than starting concentrating on task (looked out the window, played with pencils, looked in his binder) He was also trying to get attention from one of his peers by approaching him verbally. This behaviour is described in the third category; physical and verbally disturbance on own chair / seat in the classroom. He was verbally trying to get another peer`s attention, while it is totally quiet in the classroom. He also shouted out “good damn it” out loud, and a few peers looked up from their books and seemed disrupted by his behavior.

What happened next in this observation was that the teacher asked if he is “waiting for something”. He said “no”, and he was left by himself again. He then wrote on a paper and

laughed out loud of what he has written. This was behavior that was both distracting to him and the other pupils around him. The teacher eventually gave him a book to read in. The following is taken from the observation form and describes what happens after he has received the task on what to do:

He opens one of the books he has been handed and turns to the first page. He is looking at the first page, and then out in the classroom. He turns around looking at one of us for a few seconds, and turns back again. He looks out in the classroom again.

09.00: He contraptive apart the eraser from the pencil, this act lasts in about two minutes. Then he stretches. He scrolls a bit in the second book he has been given. Looks out of the window, looks at another student and then stretches again. He is looking at another student who has gotten up from his seat. The teacher walks around in the classroom, and is now right behind him. He scrolls several pages ahead in the book in front of him. He looks around the classroom again.

During this observation it is clear to us that Informant 1 was not reading a single sentence when he scrolled in the books. One of us was sitting close by Informant 1 during this observation, and can therefore perfectly see what he was doing. Our interpretation is that he scrolled several pages to make the impression to the teacher that he was reading. This behavior we observed during this sequence tells us that he was calm on his own seat, but was distracting himself with other activities like playing with pencil, gazing out of the window, and was concerned with other pupils rather than the task. The behavior that clearly characterized Informant 1 during this observation was the behavior that is described under the third category; physically and verbally calm on own chair / seat in the classroom without doing subject related tasks, but he also made a few verbal disruptions, which is best described under the second category; physical and verbal disturbance on own chair / seat in the classroom. Category 1 and 4 were not represented in this observation.

Observation number 2:

The subject was science, and the pupils were going through the homework of the day. During this observation, the teacher was standing by the projector and explained how to solve tomorrow`s homework. Informant 1 typed numbers into his calculator during the whole time

the teacher was speaking. During this sequence Informant 1 was not paying any visual attention to the teacher, and may for this reason have missed valuable information on how to solve a math problem. The teacher was then asking for everyone to take out yesterday's homework. The following are excerpts taken from the observation form and describes what Informant 1 did the rest of the observation;

All the other pupils take up their homework from their bags. He stretches his arms. He does not pick up any homework. The teacher wonders if anyone wants to come forward and show how they have solved yesterday's homework. One pupil comes forward and shows how she has solved her homework by using the projector. The teacher comments. He stretches his arms again. Another student comes forward and shows how he has done the homework. He is still playing with his calculator. He raises his hand and asks an assistant teacher to get him a pencil. She gives him one. He scribbles down numbers on a piece of paper. He is typing something on the calculator. Someone goes by in the hallway outside the classroom (the door is open) and Informant 1 greets him. Informant 1 continues to type on the calculator, and writes down the numbers he gets.

This “typing on the calculator” behavior could be interpreted as a partly on-task behavior because he could have typed the mathematic problems for homework into his calculator. However, after the class is over it emerged that the numbers he has been typing and calculated during the observation was about how much money various rap artists make. He proudly presented his findings to a fellow pupil and comrade after the end of the class. The behavior we observed during this second observation shows that he made no noise, nor is disruptive to either the teacher or the other pupils. He was disrupting himself by not doing the tasks required during the class. He showed a behavior that is described as the third category; physically and verbally calm on own chair / seat in the classroom without doing subject related tasks. None of the other categories described were present in this observation.

Observation number 3:

The subject was elective class, and the focus of today's class was a movie about bullying which they were supposed to discuss and write a text about after watching it. The first 5 minutes of this class he was sitting quietly watching the movie. The teacher stopped the

movie when it was ten minutes left. The following underneath describes what happens after the teacher turned off the movie:

The teacher asks the pupils what they think happened at the end of the sequence. Three pupils raise their hands in the air. Informant 1 is one of them. The teacher asks him to answer, and he responds adequately. The teacher acknowledges him

The behavior we observed during this sequence was an on-task behavior, which fits into the fourth category describes as; physically and verbally calm on own chair / seat in the classroom involved in subject related tasks. He both paid attention to what the teacher was saying and responded adequately upon the teacher's request. This also indicates that he was paying attention through the first five minutes where the task was to watch the movie.

What happened next was that the pupils were asked to write a review. The task was to write about something in the film that they could relate to in their own lives. The others started on the task that was given. This is taken out the observation form and describes the next observable behavior of Informant 1:

He pushes down a book that belongs to the girl next to him, to the floor. The girl next to him does not notice it. He laughs. He has eye contact with another student sitting a few desks away from him, and they laugh together. Informant 1 asks the girl "where is your book"? Then he grins and flips his cap.

This behavior is to describe as category three behavior; physical and verbally disturbance on own chair / seat in the classroom. He was disrupting the girl by trying to annoy her. He seemed like he was trying to get attention from another peer by doing such an act. The teacher soon came over and gave him a pencil and told him to start writing what he remembered from the movie. The following is taken from the observation form and describes what happens next;

He is completely quiet and writes. He leans down on the desk while he writes. The teacher rolls in his wheelchair between the students and helps them. 14.45: He has written two sentences so far. It is completely silent in the classroom. He makes gestures to his fellow pupil that he interacted with earlier. He is trying to talk to the

girl next to him, she does not respond. 14.47 The teacher interrupts and asks if anyone can tell him what they have written so far. The teacher and the pupils are talking together in plenary about the film. He suddenly shouts out the word "fag" and then he is laughing. The class is at its end.

The first part of this sequence shows an on-task behavior. However, he did not hold his concentration for long. He was trying to get other pupils' attention, and was shouting out a insulting comment aimed at another pupil's opinion about the movie. This behavior can be described as verbally disruptive on own seat, and fits under category number 3. Seen the observation as a whole, shows that he had both an on-task behavior that category 4 describes combined with a disruptive on own seat behavior like described in category 2.

4.2.3 Informant 2

Observation number 1:

The subject was literature, and the pupils were supposed to read in a book of their own choice they had been reading lately. The first 10 minutes were characterized by a behaviour that fits under category number 2. While the peers were totally quiet and seemed to be reading, Informant 2 was constantly making verbal approaches to those next to her and nearby;

Informant 2 is in her seat. Looks down and into her book. Whispers something to the girl in the seat next to her. Her eyes wanders the room, she kicks her feet into the air. Chats with the girl next to her and giggles. Looks at the page in the book for 15 seconds before she starts chatting with the girl next to her again. 10.31 am Browses the book. 10.33 am looks at the teacher. Whispers something to the girl sitting next to her. The teacher leaves the classroom to speak to another adult. Picks up a flyer from the desk next to her, talks about what is on it to herself out loud. 10.35 am she is still talking to the girl sitting next to her. She asks if she has returned the book is had borrowed from the girl. A pupil enters the classroom, he catches her eye.

Our interpretation is that she had a hard time concentrating on the task. She was easily distracted and seemed as if she was trying to get attention from peers. This behavior was characterized by verbal disturbance on own chair / seat in the classroom which is described

as category number two. The rest of this observation she was trying once more to make a verbal approach to a fellow pupil, but she got no response. After this she drew on a sheet of paper before she started fixing her hair. Then the observation ended. Our interpretation is that during this observation she had done little to no reading at all as we have observed. Our analysis of the material shows that she has a behavior mostly characterized by category two.

Observation number 2

The subject was literature. Prior to the observation, Informant 2 had been placed outside the semicircle because she was chatting with peers next to her. She was placed in the back of the classroom faced against the wall. The assignment was that the pupils were going to take turn in reading the story out loud. While the peers were taking turn reading, she played a little with her pencil. This is an excerpt from the observation form:

12.59: The teacher forgets to include her as the story is read, and Informant 2 has to remind the teacher that she is present and wants to read. She stands up and reads her paragraph. Sits back down. She seems to pay attention to what is done in class. She knows where to start when it is her turn to read.

This indicates an on-task behavior, which is described as category 4. She paid attention to what was happening, and did the task required by her. After she was done reading, she seemed a little restless:

Interrupts another pupil in his reading by saying her eyes are sore. Interrupts the teacher by shouting out "no he won't" as a reply to a statement made about the drama teacher. The teacher turns and looks at her. She looks down. 13.06 pm She rests her head in her hands. Open and closes the blinds.

In this sequence we observed two verbal interruptions within a short time interval. This coincides with a behavior described in category number two. She also interrupted herself by playing with the blinds; this may indicate a behavior placed within category number three. Seen observation number two as a whole, her behavior was characterized by mostly on task-behavior, (category no. 4), but she interrupted verbally a few times. Therefore also category two is represented. She was playing with the blinds, but since the task was to listen as other pupils were reading, we cannot say for sure that she was not having an on-task behavior. She

might have been listening. Therefore we will exclude category number one and number three in this second observation.

Observation number 3

The subject is science, and the pupils are seated in groups of four. The pupils' assignment was to work on a poster they have been working on earlier. The task was individual. This class was characterized by a loose structure, and this made it harder for us to place Informant 2 into our categories described. For the ten first minutes, Informant 2 was sitting in her group chatting with the other pupils. It is a question of who is disrupting who, as they were chatting back, and took initiatives in chatting with her. This is an excerpt from the observation form;

10.05 Informant 2 is speaking to two fellow students, they are discussing jeans brands. She sits in her seat and speaks to the boy across from her. Rests her head in her hands. 10.10 Still speaking to the boy across from her. Has not worked on her poster yet. Another pupil approaches her, starts talking about cream cheese. When he returns to his seat Informant 2 continues talking to the boy across from her. A girl from the neighboring group calls her name. The teacher asks the pupils to calm down and clear their stuff.

This shows that Informant 2 was not able to concentrate in any on-task behavior, but neither were the fellow pupils. We choose to place her behavior into category two- physical and verbal disturbance on own chair / seat in the classroom. However, there were a lot of environmental factors that triggered this behavior. This is an issue we wish to discuss below, in the section called "discussions". The next that happened during this observation was that the teacher told the pupils to pack their things together and listen to what she had to say. She then talked about homework for tomorrow and asked them to write it down;

The teacher goes through tonight's homework. Informant 2 looks at her ruler while the teacher speaks for two minutes. She does not write her homework down. She gets up and asks the teacher if she is allowed to leave the classroom. The teacher says no. She sits back down. The teacher is calling the names of the students who are allowed to leave. The bell rings. Informant 2 is still sitting in her seat; her name has not been called. Has to stay behind after class. 10.20 am Observation ends.

In this sequence she was not paying attention to the teacher's request of writing down homework. She also interrupted the teacher by asking to leave before the class has ended. She can here be described both with category two and three.

4.2.4 Summary

The analysis of Informant 1 shows that Informant 1 was through observation one mostly coded with the third category; category 3- physically and verbally calm on own chair / seat in the classroom without doing subject related tasks. He also had a few verbal interruptions which fits the description of category 2. Observation two shows a behavior that completely fits the description of category 3. In the third observation, we noticed a change in the sense that Informant 1 had more on-task behavior. This on-task behavior was combined with a verbally and physical disruptive behavior which is described in category two. An analysis of the observations all together shows that what characterized the disruptive behavior of Informant 1 was a behavior that combined the two categories; number two and three. The behaviors were characterized by an on- own-seat behavior, not concentrating on tasks, disrupting himself by apparently daydreaming and disrupt other peers with verbal approaches.

The analysis of Informant 2 shows that through the first observation, she was mostly coded with category number two- physical and verbally disturbance on own chair / seat in the classroom. She was mostly the initiator in approaching peers verbally. Trough the second observation she was most of the time coded with category three; showing an on-task behavior. The disruptive behavior in which appears in the end of the observation was characterized by category two, being verbally disruptive. The analysis of the third observation shows a combination of category two and three. An analysis of all three observations shows that also Informant 2 had a combined behavior. She was coded with both category three and two. What characterized Informant 2's behavior was an on-own- seat-behavior, not concentrating on tasks, and to a large degree the initiator in chatting with peers.

If we compare the two Informants` behavior, we find that the behavior coincides to a certain degree. Both pupils showed a behavior that disrupt themselves and kept them from concentrating on tasks. None of the pupils were coded with category one, and the present of category four was minimal compared to them being coded with category two and three.

Informant 1 was in the analysis a little more often coded with category three, while Informant two was coded slightly more often with category two. Within category two there were also differences. While Informant 1 often did not get a response of the verbal statements he made, Informant two seemed like she initiated a two way conversation to a larger degree. Our interpretation is that she got feedback from peers in a more positive way when she was verbally disruptive. Both seemed to have a hard time getting started with tasks, and were therefore often coded with category three. They were sitting calmly at their seats, but were not doing what they were supposed to do. Both were coded with an on-task behavior over a certain period of time. (Informant 1 during the third observation; and Informant 2 during the second observation) This is something we will be discussing in research question three. Both of these on-task behaviors were replaced with a verbally disruptive behavior after a short period of time (category 2). This may indicate that they had problems concentrating for more than a short period of time.

4.2.5 Discussions

In the previous sections we have presented the data material concerning characteristics of the pupils` behavior by using a descriptive approach. In this section we wish to discuss the findings, in accordance to the research question and the previously presented theory.

The analysis shows that the behavior problems we have been observing to a large extent coincide with what we described in the chapter 2 as a “learning disruptive behavior”. Both internationally (Levin and Nolan, 1991) and in Norway (Nordahl, et al., 2005), this behavior is pointed out as the most frequent. This was also the most frequent behavior within the classroom situations that we observed. Informant 2 had verbal approaches to peers as one of her most frequent disruptive behaviors. The behavior mentioned by Levin and Nolan (1991) as the types of behavioral problems most teachers have to deal with every day are small talking, laughing, whispering and yelling. Small talking seems to be a behavior that Informant 2 was characterized by during most of the observations. This is supported by the teachers through the informal conversations, when they said she was popular and had a lot of friends. As interpreted in the summary, she seemed to receive more positive responds to her verbal approaches during the class than Informant 1. Informant 1, on the other hand, often got ignorance for his verbal approaches. The teachers told us in the informal conversations

that he had friends, but not particularly in his class. Many of the pupils feared him, and that may be why he did not receive that much responses to his verbal and disruptive behavior by peers. He seemed to have one peer that he often tried to communicate with. They were making gestures aimed at each other, but as we have observed, only at Informant 1's initiative. One interpretation, which the informal conversations supported, is that he was a leader type which was feared and therefore respected by peers.

What we feel needs to be discussed further, is to what extent this behavior we observed stood out as deviant from the rest of the group of pupils. As mentioned in chapter 2, Aasen et al. (2002) point out that behavior that is exercised in the wrong places, at the wrong time, in the presence of the wrong people, and in an inappropriate scale is perceived as a behavior problem. Thus, it is a question of frequency, degree of intensity, duration and scope. Our analysis shows that both of the Informants were to a lesser extent coded with category four which includes on-task behavior. During the observations of Informant 1, we found that he was frequently disrupting himself or other peers to a larger extent than the peers were. His behavior of disrupting himself, and not the others seemed to dominate his behavior and lasted during the whole two first observations. He did have an on-task behavior during observation three, but he interrupted verbally and physically by acting out negatively in relation to two fellow pupils.

Our interpretation as observers in a classroom with the whole group of pupils is that Informant 1's behavior during the observation was deviant from the others when it comes to frequency, intensity and in an inappropriate scale. When it comes to Informant 2 we noticed that she had a more intense need of communicating verbally with peers. This, along with disrupting herself by not doing subject related tasks was in our interpretation characterized by high frequency, intensity and in an inappropriate scale. This may include all of the observations made of her, except observation number three. The class was during this observation characterized by a loose structure and the level of noise was extremely high. All of the pupils were talking loud at the same time, so in this case Informant 2's behavior was not more frequent, intense or inappropriate than the peers'. We feel it is important to reflect upon these interpretations, to remind ourselves seeing the behavior in its social context. It is also not possible for us on the basis on 45 minutes of observation to make any general conclusions about the pupils having a problem behavior as it is defined by Ogden (2002).

The purpose of the first research question was to describe the characteristics of the disruptive behavior. The descriptions we have made can therefore only be applicable within these observations. However, the informal conversations supported our empirical findings. The teachers were describing both the Informants as disruptive. While the description of Informant 2 coincided most with our observation, we feel that the information given on Informant 1 did not coincide in the same way. We were told that he often bullied around and that he had a very “bad behavior”. We got the impression that they meant his behavior was extremely deviant. During our observations, we did not get that impression, and we saw many similarities between him and Informant 2. We have reflected upon if he was being labeled more negatively than Informant 2, in despite of very similar behavior. This was supported by the elective-class teacher, saying he was warned against the behavior of Informant 1, and that he did not think the warnings were truthful after teaching Informant 1 for a few weeks. However, as stated in both chapters 1 and 2, teachers may have different tolerances of what they consider being problematic behavior. Another aspect as mentioned earlier, is the possibility that Informant 1 usually shows a different behavior than what we have been observing during 45 minutes. The behavior in recesses and breaks may also interfere with the teachers` opinions of Informant 1.

4.3 Research question 2: What characterizes the reactions the pupils receive for the disruptive behavior during class?

In the section above we have described and discussed what characterizes the pupils` disruptive behavior during class. In the following section the reactions the pupils` receive as a consequence of their disruptive behavior will be the focus of the discussions. Based on the observations we have made during our data collection it came apparent that it is the teachers` reactions to the behavior we found most noticeable. Teacher reactions to the behavior will therefore be the primary focus used to discuss this research question. As mentioned in chapter three one of the main functions of the teacher in the classroom situation is the one of the disciplinarian.

A classroom characterized by disruptive behavior affects both the teaching and learning situation (Levin and Nolan, 1991). The teaching situation is affected by the teachers`

attention being paid in a great sense to the disruptive behavior. Teachers often find disruptive behavior more noticeable than non-disruptive behavior and will therefore pay this behavior more attention than the non-disruptive behavior. Behavior that is given attention has as mentioned before a tendency to repeat itself (Webster-Stratton, 2000). How the teachers choose to deal with the disruptive behavior will therefore have an impact on the classroom environment and will reflect the teachers' style of classroom management. On the basis of our data collection and the theory on classroom management we have divided the reactions the Informants received to the unwanted behavior into four different categories. In the following, these four categories will be presented and correspondently our findings will be placed into one or more of the categories. Extents from the observations will be cited in order to exemplify and place the reactions into the different categories. The findings will be discussed in a later paragraph.

4.3.1 Verbal feedback

Any occasions when the teacher verbally addresses the unwanted behavior it is included in this category. Variations of verbal correction can be i.e. saying the pupils' name, telling them to calm down, or telling them what they are supposed to do. We found in our data collection that verbal feedback to the behavior was commonly used as an approach to address the disruptive behavior. There were variations in the verbal feedback, in both the teachers' tone of voice and the way they choose to give feedback. In some cases the feedback was given in front of the entire class, in other cases the pupil received feedback in a more private setting by the teacher coming over to his/her seat or spoke to him/her after class had ended. The following situation is taken from our observations;

Informant 1 is sitting at his desk, playing with some pencils. He throws them in the air and catches them in his hand. He looks out the window and comments to himself; "god damn it". The teacher approaches him and asks; "are you waiting for something?" Informant 1 replies "no". The teacher hands him a book and tells him to read.

In this case the pupil was approached in his seat and the teacher spoke to him in a soft and friendly tone of voice. The impression is that she is interested in him getting started on the

task that is given, and is trying to help him do so. However, we have also seen examples of the behavior being corrected in front of the whole class with a more firm tone of voice;

The subject is science; the pupils are working on posters on energy sources. Informant 1 is in his seat; he is playing with a calculator. The teacher calls him out; "You have to get started with your poster. It is your responsibility to learn, it is not my reasonability that you learn something".

The teacher spoke to Informant 1 from across the room; the whole class was able to hear what was said. We observed that when the pupils were approached with explanation of what the pupil was to do and clear expectations of change of behavior this would have a positive effect on the pupils behavior. The situation bellow describes another type of approach;

Informant 1 is flipping his cap. The teacher comes over and asks him if he has got a pencil. The pupil replies no. The teacher then gives him a pencil and says to him: "Now I want you to write down what you remember from the movie. Informant 1 sits completely still in his seat and writes.

In this case we perceived the teachers approach to the behavior as calm and with clear expectations of what he wanted the pupil to do.

4.3.2 Non-verbal and physichal feedback

This category includes all gestures and non-verbal correction conducted by the teacher. This may be a look, the placement of the teacher in relation to the pupil, a hand on the shoulder and eye contact with the pupil. Here is a situation that was enfolding during elective class;

The subject is social smart. Informant 1 is sitting in a group of four. Chatting with the boy across from him. The teacher rolls his wheelchair over and places himself next to Informant 1.

The teacher`s placement causes the pupils to quiet down. The teacher stayed placed next to Informant 1 during the duration of the class. Another situation we observed confirmed this assumption that the teachers` placement influences the pupils` behavior;

The teacher is out of sight. She has left the classroom and went into a small storage connected to the classroom. Informant 1 turns around and starts talking to his peer. They smile and laugh.

As soon as the teacher left the room Informant 1 turned around and started talking to a classmate. They constantly paid attention to the storage door so they would be able to see when the teacher reentered the room.

We could also see the placement of the teacher as an effective approach to eliminate disruptive behavior when it came to Informant 2 as in the following situation;

The teacher is walking around the classroom supervising the task. Informant 2 is in her seat, constantly looking around to see the whereabouts of the teacher. When the teacher is close to her, she sits still looking down into her book. When the teacher is in a different part of the classroom Informant 2 starts talking to her peers again.

Informant 2 was at all times concerned with the placement of the teacher and regulated her behavior accordingly. The following situation is another example of non-verbal reaction;

Informant 2 is in literature class. The task is to read in a book they have chosen themselves. The teacher is talking to another pupil about what they are going to do in drama class later that day. Informant 2 interrupts the teacher by shouting out "no he won't" to a statement one of her peers made about the drama teacher. The teacher turns around and looks and Informant 2. Informant 2 looks down.

In this case the reaction the pupil was met with body language and eye contact. The teacher used these non-verbal gestures to tell Informant 2 that she doesn't accept her behavior. She didn't use any words, a look from the teacher was what it took for Informant 2 to understand that her behavior was unwanted. We could also observe cases where the teacher started approaching the pupil, but then something else came up. The pupil still changed his/her behavior due to the fact that the teacher was aware of it;

Informant 2 is still speaking to the girl next to her. The teacher is walking around the classroom making sure all the pupils are on-task. She notices Informant 2 and her peer chatting and start walking over towards them. Another teacher then enters the classroom and require the first teacher's attention. She holds and starts talking

quietly to the other teacher. Informant 2 and her peer stop talking and focus their attention to their books

In this case the teacher didn't have to approach the pupil to stop the unwanted behavior. The behavior stopped when the pupil realized that the teacher was on her way over to speak to her. She might have thought that she "dodged a bullet" when the second teacher entered the classroom and if she had continued with her chatting there might have been more serious consequences.

4.3.3 Ignoring as feedback

We have chosen to include a category called ignoring the unwanted behavior. When the Informants were met, in our opinion, with ignorance to the disruptive behavior the findings are placed in this category. In the situations when the teachers did not respond to the unwanted behavior, and instead continued with what they were doing prior to the disruptive behavior, we chose to place the reaction in the category of ignoring the unwanted behavior. We saw this strategy as one commonly used by the teacher. We found this reaction so prominent that we found it reasonable to make it into a separate category. The following is taken from our observations, and represents a situation which can be interpreted as ignoring the behavior;

The teacher is standing in front of the class and explaining tonight's homework. Informant 1 is sitting at his desk typing something into his calculator. He seeks contact with the boy across from him and they start laughing. The teacher is still explaining the homework.

While Informant 1 and his peer were talking and laughing the teacher continued with the explanation of the homework, not giving the unwanted behavior any attention. In another case we observed Informant 2 was able to get up, walk around and leave the classroom while the teacher continued going through the task given;

Informant 2 gets up and leaves her seat. She walks around the classroom before she leaves the classroom. The teacher is still going through the task the pupils have been working on.

4.3.4 Punitive reactions to the behavior

Punitive reactions are commonly used against disruptive behavior. Such reactions include reprimands, penalties, loss of privileges, detention and being sent out of class. The punishment is given as a direct consequent to the pupils' unwanted behavior and may seem like a logical consequence from the teachers' point of view. To the pupils' however, punitive reactions are often perceived as unfair and may result in retaliation from the pupils. The following example is taken from our observations;

Informant 1 enters the classroom later than his peers. He is approximately five minutes late. He gets attention from the teacher. She says he has to put his name on the blackboard for five minutes of detention.

In this case we saw a boy who came a few minutes late for class. Before he had reached his seat the teacher told him he was going to have to stay five minutes in detention after school that day. Informant 1 wrote his name in the blackboard and presumed to his seat. During our data collection we had to abort our observations on several occasions because Informant 1 was sent out of class. We were told by the teachers during informal conversations that he was often suspended for days and that it didn't pass one week without him getting suspended. When Informant 1 was sent out of class, he was sent to the special education center to be dealt with by special education teachers. Detention as reaction is something we observed in the case of Informant 2 as well;

Informant 2 chats with the girl next to her. The teacher tells Informant 2 to put her name down for ten minutes of detention.

The teacher told Informant 2 to put her name on the detention list. The girl she was talking to did not get a reaction. In other cases the punitive reactions took place inside the classroom situation;

Informant 2 is placed outside the semicircle. She has trouble seeing the teacher and the blackboard. She is placed at a desk facing the wall. She was placed her two minutes into class for speaking to her peers.

In this situation the pupil was punished for speaking to her peers when she was not supposed to. A consequence to this was placement outside the semicircle, which was a very

unfortunate placement for her, as she was not able to see neither the teacher nor the blackboard without sitting sideways in her seat. This was also a reaction form we observed being used in the case of Informant 1;

The subject is science. The class is organized in groups of four. Informant 1 is placed alone at a desk behind cardboard games and books. He is not able to see what is done at the projector in the front of class. The teacher has placed him here as a result of disruptive behavior in classes prior to this

In this case the pupil was being punished for a crime he had not yet committed. The teacher placed him outside the group setting based on former experiences with this pupil.

4.3.5 Summary

As we observed the pupils` disruptive behavior we also took notice of how the teachers reacted to this behavior. There were several different approaches being used to eliminate the unwanted behavior, some more effective than others. A verbal approach to the behavior was commonly used, and there were variations to the verbal feedback given to the behavior. In some cases the teacher seemed irritated and spoke to the pupils in a strict tone of voice from across the classroom. In these cases the entire class was able to hear what the teacher said to the pupil. Other situations were characterized by a more soft tone of voice and clear expectations of wanted behavior were communicated from the teacher to the pupil.

We also observed that the pupils` behavior was met with ignorance as a consequence. Ignoring the behavior as a strategy was more common when the behavior was characterized as disturbing to the pupil him/herself. If the behavior seemed disturbing to the other pupils in the class or affected the teaching situation to a great extent this form of reaction was rarer.

The pupils also received non-verbal feedback to their behavior on multiple occasions. There were a number of variations in non-verbal feedback being used in the different situations. One variation of this that we observed frequently was how the teacher placed her/himself in relation to the Informants when they acted disruptive. The Informants were at all times very aware of where the teacher was placed in relation to themselves. When the teacher walked over to stop the unwanted behavior, just the fact that the teacher was approaching the pupil was enough to decrease the behavior. Another variation of non verbal communication the

Informants were met with was the teacher's use of eye contact. In some cases a look from the teacher in the Informants' direction would be enough to stop the behavior, in other cases the teachers had to make eye contact with the Informants for it to have effect. In the cases where the teacher locked eyes with the Informants the teachers for the most part had a strict look on their face and the look they gave could be interpreted as firm.

In some cases punitive reactions were used to deal with the disruptive behavior. The punishments we observed most frequently were the use of detention and the pupil being sent out of the classroom to be dealt with by special education teachers. On more than one occasion the punishment was given during the first five minutes of class. Detention was given as a consequence when the pupil came late, chatted with peers or did not pay attention to the activities being acted out in class. If the teacher told the pupil that he/she was given detention the pupil had to get up from his/her seat, walk over to the blackboard and write his/her name on the detention list. For each time their name was written it meant five minutes of detention for the pupil. We also observed that the Informants were punished in situations where their peers acting the same way were not. In some cases we interpreted that the pupils did not know what they were supposed to do and that this could be linked to the disruptive behavior. Instead of being told what the task was they were being punished for not doing what they were supposed to be doing.

4.3.6 Discussions

In the previous paragraphs we have described the different reactions used to deal with the disruptive behavior in the observed classroom situations. The Informants were both met with approaches from all of the categories named above.

We found a tendency by both the peers and the teacher to ignore the disruptive behavior when it did not disturb the other pupils in the class or the teaching situation. The teachers seemed to ignore the behavior as long as the only one affected by it was the pupil him/herself. The peers used this approach to turn down unwanted initiative from the Informants. This approach to the behavior can be explained from three different perspectives. One is that the teacher and the peers choose to ignore the disruptive behavior thinking that if it is not given attention it will eliminate itself. In the cases of the peers this was often also the result of the ignorance. When the disruptive pupil did not receive feedback on his/her

initiative it resulted in the disruptive behavior decreasing for the time being. As mentioned earlier; behavior that is given attention has a tendency to repeat itself (Webster-Stratton, 2000). Ignoring the behavior can therefore be perceived as a logical strategy against unwanted behavior, thinking that it will eliminate itself. By ignoring the behavior it is not given attention and may decrease in scope. On the other hand ignoring the bad behavior does hardly ever lead to the end of the bad behavior (Patterson et al., 1992). This was the clear tendency in our data collection. In the situations when teacher met the Informants with ignorance towards the disruptive behavior, the behavior did not decrease. Another assumption is that the teacher chooses to ignore the behavior as long as it does not affect the other pupils or the teaching situation to a great extent. In our data collection ignorance as an approach was commonly used when this was the case; as long as the only one noticeable affected by the behavior was the pupil him/herself the teacher ignored the behavior in many cases. The result in many of these situations was that the mentioned pupil sat an entire class without getting any work done.

Another way of interpreting the ignorance of the behavior is that the teacher is not aware of the off-task behavior. The teacher's attention may be in another place and she is basically not aware of the disruptive behavior. In light of the before mentioned loose structure that characterized most of the classes we observed this may be the case. The classes were characterized by a significant level of noise, from chairs being dragged across the floor to pupils speaking among themselves on task related issues. It may have been the case that the teacher did not notice the disruptive behavior that appeared in form off the Informants sitting in their seat without attending to their tasks. The teachers may have thought that as long as the pupils are located in their seat they are behaving on-task. It is a complicated choice for the teacher when considering use of ignorance as an approach to eliminate disruptive behavior. Behavior that is given attention has a tendency to repeat itself; ignoring it will seem logical. On the other hand, ignoring the behavior does not eliminate the disruptive behavior (Patterson et al., 1992). The teacher must therefore thoroughly consider both the positive and negative consequences of using this as a reaction towards the disruptive behavior they experience in their classroom.

From the Informants' perspective ignorance as a reaction to their behavior can also be interpreted in different ways. One way of seeing it can be that the teacher does not care that the Informant is acting this way. The intention of ignoring the behavior is not communicated

to the pupils and they may feel that the teacher has given up on them and does not care how they behave during class. This may lead to continuance of the disruptive behavior. The pupils can also interpret this form of reaction as “getting away” with the behavior. If the pupils think that the reason why their behavior is being ignored is that it is not noticed by the teacher. The pupil may in these situations think that they have outsmarted the teacher and that they can get away with this type of behavior.

During our data collection and observation we found the use of punitive reaction to the behavior as an approach commonly used. The pupils were physically moved away from the situation, they were sent out of the classroom to be dealt with by others and they were given detention and loss of privileges as a consequence to their behavior. Discipline problems will affect the classroom environment negatively and the teacher must in each situation try to keep their own personal feelings from playing a role in the interaction with the disruptive pupil (Levin and Nolan, 1991). It is important to distinguish between the pupil as a person and their actions. The pupils possess a number of good qualities as individuals in spite of the fact that they act in a way that break the rules of the classroom.

Punitive reactions towards the behavior is a difficult issue to address; today`s school has made a settlement with the culture of punishment of pupils, but the question of what lies in the term punishment must in this case be addressed. Is it not considered a punishment to be called out in front of the entire class to sign up for detention or to be physically moved away from the other pupils and placed face in for the remainder of the class? On the other side the teacher has a responsibility to fill the role as the disciplinarian in the classroom (Goldstein and Brooks, 2007), and must show the pupils that certain types of behavior will not be tolerated in his/hers classroom. Most teachers do not want to appear authoritarian or punitive, but at the same time they recognize the need for preventing and stopping certain types of negative behavior (Ogden, 2002). If the behavior doesn`t receive any consequences it will send a signal to the pupil showing the behavior and the rest of the class that this type of behavior is tolerated by this specific teacher. The teacher has a responsibility to provide a suitable learning environment that fathoms all the pupils, and certain types of behavior does not belong in a suitable learning environment. On the other hand, use of punitive reactions towards the behavior does not change the reasons for why the pupils act as they do. The consequence may eliminate the behavior for the moment, but the underlying reasons and explanations are not addressed (Stanley, 1998).

In the case of our study we found that the punitive actions did not affect the disruptive behavior to an extent worth mentioning. When detention was given as a consequent, the pupils walked over, wrote their name on the detention list, returned to their seat and resumed the disruptive behavior. In the cases where the pupils were moved away from the situation these were also the cases. Informant 2, who was in many situations categorized with a verbally disruptive behavior, tried even harder to initiate contact with peers as she was placed outside the social setting in the classroom. Effective negative reactions are described in the theory chapter as consequences that seem “natural” in the situation and this way is not perceived by the pupils as retaliation from the teacher (Ogden, 2002). As a natural consequence, contact with parents is mentioned. In the cases our Informants, the teachers reported through informal conversations that there was a lack of follow-through between the school and the pupil`s parents in both cases. This may be discussed as a factor in why the disruptive behavior continues. The parents are the ones with the primary responsibility for the upbringing of the children and if the values of the parents differ from those of the teacher and school the pupil may be placed in a difficult position. Loss of privileges and “time-out” has been proved effective consequences to disruptive behavior (Patterson et al., 1992).

An important factor in implementing the use of such reactions is that the pupils prior to the consequence have been given a clear request from the teacher to stop the unwanted behavior. In the cases of our Informants, we found that the punitive reactions were the first type of reaction they received. An example of this was when Informant 2 was moved out of the semi-circle after two minutes of class for chatting. She had not received an oral request of stopping the behavior she was engaged in prior to being moved out of the semi-circle. This may have resulted in that she might have found the punishment to be too strict and unfair. When the punishment is understood as unfair from the pupils point of view, the pupils tend to focus on the teacher`s reaction instead of investigating their own behavior. The focus becomes to stand their ground and not lose face and this may result in continuance of the disruptive behavior (Slåttøy., 2002). In Informant 2`s case we cannot claim that this is what happened, we can just state the fact that when she was moved away from her peers her disruptive behavior escalated.

The use of punitive reactions to the unwanted behavior is a complex question due to the fact that the teacher in most cases does not wish to come across as authoritarian. At the same time some pupils will put pressure on the teacher to react against the behavior and the teacher is

then put in a compromising position. It may be against his/her values to punish the pupils using negative consequents, but the need is apparent to signalize to the pupils that certain types of behavior is not accepted.

In other situations we observed during our data collection, the Informants were met with verbal feedback to their disruptive behavior. This feedback was naturally most of the time given by the teacher in charge of the specific class. The goal, as in all disciplinary situations, must be to provide the pupil with the information given in a matter that is most likely that the pupil will listen. Children are sensitive to criticism and praise given to them by adults and they tend to personalize almost everything (Jones and Jones, 2010). The pupils in our study were in the 6th grade, which meant they were 11 and 12 years old at the time of the observations. This is a sensitive age for children where they go to many changes to their personalities. Critical remarks will not change the pupils' disruptive behavior (ibid.). When the pupils are met with critical remarks; they may focus on the nature of the remark instead of the message the person giving the remark is trying to send. The pupils may in these cases be more concerned with the teacher's way of reacting instead of reviewing their own behavior (ibid.).

In several situations we observed the pupils were called out for their disruptive behavior in front of the entire class. The pupils were in these situation either spoke loudly to when the rest of the class sat quietly engaged in on-task behavior or given a verbal feedback from across the room. With this in mind it would be relevant to ask how the pupils understood the feedback that was communicated to them. Were they able in situations where they had been called out in front of their peers to interpret the feedback in a constructive way, or was the public reaction the focus of their interpretation. Goldstein and Brooks (2007) state that one of the biggest obstacles to learning is the fear of failing and being humiliated. In these situations it is reasonable to reflect upon to what extent the Informants were experiencing a humiliation by the public reaction they received for their behavior. Could this humiliation interfere with the possibility to change their behavior?

In other situations we found that the verbal feedback was given with clear instructions and expectations to what the pupil should be doing. The pupil did in these cases receive specific and constructive feedback on the behavior accompanied by clear expectations to change this behavior. Emphasizing on what is recognized as positive behavior and acknowledging this

behavior may lead to a change in the pupils' behavior. If the pupils are given praise for behaving in a certain way, it may lead to repetition. In our data collection we saw this when Informant 1 was asked to answer a question in relation to a subject-related movie. He answers adequate and the teacher acknowledges him. During much of this class Informant 1 was on-task and paying attention to what was going on. If the positive on task behavior shown is a result of the positive attention given from the teacher will be speculative to state, but behavior that is given attention has a tendency to repeat itself (Webster-Stratton, 2000). It will therefore be logical to say that praising good behavior will lead to more good behavior.

The final category of reactions the pupils received to their disruptive behavior is the one we have described as nonverbal communication. This type of communication is also primarily one between the pupil and the teacher. As mentioned in the summary we this was a form of feedback rarely used towards the behavior in our study. Only once during our data collection was eye contact used to react to the disruptive behavior. In this case it worked. We find it relevant to ask why this form of reactions was not more commonly used. One answer can be that the teachers might not think of this as a strict enough reaction. The teacher might think that the pupil will not pay attention in order to catch the nonverbal hints sent by the teacher. In our observations we found that the pupils were concerned with the teachers' placements and actions at all time. Another answer to this question can be that the teachers are not aware of the effect nonverbal communication may have in the situations. If these are forms of reactions they are not used to giving they might not be aware of its effects. The use of nonverbal communication is among others mentioned in a study Kounin conducted in 1970. The aim of this study was to describe teachers that succeeded in obtaining a suitable classroom. In relation to the disruptive pupils, the teachers that were described in this study had eye contact with these pupils to stop and prevent the disruptive behavior.

During our observation, we observed that the teacher used nonverbal communication as she moved towards the disruptive pupil. She was probably on her way over to give some sort of verbal reaction but another teacher entered the room and required the first teacher's attention. This way she was prevented from walking over to Informant 2. What we observed in this situation is that the pupil stopped the disruptive behavior although the teacher did not reach her desk. The placement of the teacher in relation to the pupil showing disruptive behavior is a factor in nonverbal communication that we found significant in relation to the behavior. This factor was used as a reaction form in the sense that the teacher moved towards the

location of where the disruptive pupil was placed and the behavior decreased. The Informants in our study were at all times concerned with the teacher placement in the classroom. They were noticeable more on-task when the teacher was nearby. The teacher's placement as a preventive measure to the disruptive behavior is something that will be addressed in the next research question. All observations considered we found that nonverbal communication was an effective but rarely used reaction in relation to the pupils' disruptive behavior.

This research question has focused on the reactions the pupils receive to their disruptive behavior. As the teacher is expected to be the leader in the classroom this also involves being the main disciplinarian. This research question has for this reason been influenced by this. It is impossible to speak of reactions towards the disruptive behavior without mentioning the teacher as the one conducting these reactions. The teacher has a responsibility to provide a suitable classroom for all the pupils and this includes dealing with pupils who don't behave in an orderly matter.

The pupils that showed disruptive behavior did also receive reactions from their peers. As mentioned earlier a commonly used reaction was the ignorance of the disruptive behavior. This often resulted in a decrease of the disruptive behavior. Other types of reactions the Informants received from their peers were of a character that can be seen as all other than positive. This was reactions that encouraged and reinforced. This could be that the peer engaged in the conversation initiated, laughed at the behavior shown and in other ways encouraged the behavior.

The adolescents' situation is that peer relations will depend upon social status among the peers, and this status must be achieved, perceived and maintained (Nordahl, 2000). The schools' playground and the classrooms represent arenas where peer relations develop and these relationships form the conditions for the pupils' actions. The relations between peers in school can therefore be closely linked to the pupils' behavior in school, as well as their commitment, their motivation and the results in learning (ibid.). The classroom and the school as a whole represent social arenas where the pupils' actions are characterized by rewards from their peers (ibid.). The same way the teacher may have labeled the pupil a certain way the peers may have labeled the pupil. The pupils may in this case feel obligated to act a certain way to live up to their reputations. These types of reactions from peers can be

seen as very unfortunate to the pupil showing the disruptive behavior. The pupil may want to act in a different way, but the peers expect him/her to show disruptive behavior. Based on our observations, we cannot say that this is the case when it comes to our Informants.

4.4 Research question 3: What characterizes the situations were the pupils are showing a disruptive/not disruptive behavior?

In the sections above we have described and discussed what characterizes the disruptive behavior and the reactions the pupils receive for this behavior. We are of the opinion that all behavior must be interpreted in relation to environmental factors. In the following section these environmental factors will be the focus. We have on the basis of our observations found it relevant to focus on two key categories of environmental factors in the classroom. One of these categories are the physical frames in the classroom, primarily how the teachers have chosen to organize the classroom regarding placements of the pupils in relation to each other. The other key factor we have chosen to emphasize on is how the teachers have chosen to structure and organize the pupils' learning situation. How the curriculum is adapted to the pupils' different learning styles and to what extent the teaching situation is characterized by teacher-led activities.

4.4.1 Physical organization

The physical frames of the classroom are something the teacher has little or no control over. A classroom has been assigned the teacher; it may be small, with bad lighting and so on. The teacher is still able to arrange the classroom as she pleases; the placement of the pupils is up to the individual teacher. She can arrange them in the way she sees best suitable for the class, which may be in groups or rows. How the pupils are placed in relation to the blackboard and the projector must also be taken in to consideration when arranging the placement of the pupils. During our observations we experienced several different ways of placing the pupil, some were more fortunate than other when it came to the frequent of disruptive behavior. The following are taken from our observations;

Informant 2 is placed outside the semicircle. Her desk is placed by the wall, faced against it. To be able to see the teacher and the other pupils she has to sit sideways on her chair. The teacher has handed out a short story and the assignment is related to this story. The story is read out loud and the pupils take turn reading it. They read one paragraph each.

In this situation Informant 2 had been placed outside the semi-circle as a consequence of disruptive behavior. The placement however, was not favorable to her. She was not able to see neither the blackboard nor the teacher as her desk was faced head-in against the wall. To be able to pay attention to what was going on in class she had to sit sideways in her seat. As the pupils took turn on reading from the story, Informant 2 had to remind the teacher that she was present in order to get her turn. The placement of Informant 2 did not only make it difficult for the pupil to pay attention in class and see the other pupils and teacher, it made it difficult for the teacher to see and include Informant 2 in the task given.

This placement did not eliminate the disruptive behavior; we would say it contributed to the opposite. Informant 2 became more intense in her approaches to interact with the other pupils when she was placed outside the semi-circle. At several occasions she tried on engage in contact with her peers, and also with the teacher's assistant. She did not receive any response to her attempts to interact with the other pupils. A question of whether the placement of Informant 2 has an impact of this rejection can be relevant to ask. We also observed Informant 2's behavior when she was placed with the others in the semi-circle. The following situation described is taken from our protocols;

The desks are arranged in a semi-circle. Informant 2 is in her seat. She looks down and into her book. She whispers something to the girl in the seat next to her. Her eyes wanders the room, she kicks her feet into the air. Chats with the girl next to her and giggles. She looks at the page in the book for 15 seconds before she starts chatting with the girl next to her again.

In this situation she was not able to engage in any on-task behavior. The constant chatting with the girl next to her may have come as a result of the seating arrangement in this specific class. Informant 2's behavior seemed distracting both to herself and the pupils seated near her.

In the case of Informant 1 we also observed several situations where the placement of the pupil was anything but favorable to his learning conditions;

The pupils are placed in groups of four. Informant 1 is not placed in one of these groups. The teacher has placed him on a separate desk away from the other pupils. On this desk there are several board games on top of each other and a stack of books blocks Informant 1's view of the class. The teacher assistant removes some of the books so Informant 1 is able to see the blackboard and the projector.

In this situation Informant 1 was placed outside the group setting as a prevention of disruptive behavior. The teacher had previous experiences with Informant 1 and chose to place him there as a preventative measure. Informant 1 was not given a chance to prove that he was able to behave; when the class started he was immediately moved to a separate desk away from the other pupils. During this observation Informant 1 was not engaged in any on-task behavior. He sat in his seat and typed numbers into his calculator as the rest of the class were going through the curriculum in plenary. His behavior can be characterized as disruptive to himself, but it did not seem to interfere with the other pupils' ability to concentrate. In other situations we observed that when Informant 1 was placed with the other pupils in the groups of 4, he showed both disruptive and on-task behavior;

The pupils' desks are divided into groups of four. Informant 1's desk is placed in one of these groups of four. He sits quietly while watching the movie. The teacher is sitting right next to him.

In this situation Informant 1 was placed in a group of four with his peers. The teacher had however placed himself in his wheelchair right next to him. This caused Informant 1 to be able to be placed in a group setting but still engage in on-task behavior with his peers. A situation later in the same class shows the complicity of this choice as the teacher has to move away from Informant 1 to assist some of the other pupils;

Informant 1 pushes down a book that belongs to the girl next to him, to the floor. The girl next to him does not notice it. Informant 1 laughs. He has eye contact with another pupil sitting a few desks away from him, and they both laugh. Informant 1 asks the girl "where is your book"? Then he grins. He flips his cap, and the teacher comes over to see what is going on

The teacher moved away from Informant 1 for a few minutes to interact with some of the other pupils. As soon as the teacher had his focus elsewhere Informant 1 took advantage of the situation and pushed his peer's book to the floor. He sought eye contact from his friend a few desks away and they started laughing. The teacher then had to react to the disruptive behavior. In this case his disruptive behavior was characterized by it both disturbing other pupils as well as himself. We also observed Informant 1 when placed in a semi-circle. These situations were characterized by a significant amount of disruptive behavior;

Informant 1 sits down at his seat without doing anything. He talks to the peer next to him. He receives no response. He scrolls in his binder, which he has taken out of the bag laying on his desk. The other pupils are reading quietly. He picks up some pencils from his desk and comment to himself "god damn it!" He looks out of the window.

In this situation Informant 1 was placed in the semi-circle with his peers. His peers were focused and on-task, but Informant 1 seemed to be unable to get started with what he was supposed to do. He tried to interact with the pupils closest to him, but received no response. This behavior is our opinion distractive to himself; it did not seem to bother the other pupils in the class. They ignored his attempts to interact with them and continued on the task given.

4.4.2 Organization of learning activities

The other key factor we have chosen to elaborate on the basis of our observations is how the teacher chooses to organize the curriculum and the activities during class. In this category we include aspects of how the classes are being planned by the teacher, how he/she chooses to teach the curriculum and to what extent the learning situation is teacher-led or has a more loose structure. Expectations towards the pupils are also an issue that will be addressed in this section.

During our observations we found that the teaching situations were characterized by a loose structure much of the time. The teacher gave the pupils a task and it was the pupils responsibility that the task given was finished when it was supposed to. The teacher had a more supervising role, making sure that the pupils were on-task and provided assistance if necessary.

Informant 2 is in her seat. The task is to read quietly. She seems unable to get started on what she is supposed to do. She sits in her seat, looks around the room, plays with her hair and initiates communication with her peers. The teacher does not seem to be interested in helping her get started. She walks around the room making sure that the pupils are quiet. She then prepares for the next activity that the class is going to do.

In this situation it was clear that Informant 2 was unable to get started with the task given by the teacher. She sat in her seat, for the most part quietly without doing any subject-related. The pupils being given the responsibility for their own learning was something we observed at several occasions. The loose structure of the teaching situation was apparent even when the class was taken a science test. The following is taken from our observations;

There is a lot of noise, chatting, chairs being dragged across the floor, people walking around, pencil sharpening, in the classroom. The pupils start working on their posters as they are done with their tests. Informant 2 spends a while longer than her peers on her test and it seems that some of the noise is disturbing her. She spends a lot of time looking around the classroom and it seems that she has trouble concentrating.

In this situation the class had taken a science test. The teacher gave the instructions that when they were finished with their test, they should continue working on their posters. This resulted in the fact that there were pupils walking around in the classroom, speaking to each other, and collecting supplies they needed to work on their posters when some of their peers were still taking the test. Informant 2 was clearly disturbed by this setting and was not able to concentrate properly on the test she was given. She seemed more interested in finishing so she could speak to her peers and work on her poster as well; *It seems that this loose structure in the classroom poses a challenge to the pupil. Informant 2 is unable to get started with her assignment.* This statement is taken from our interpretation that we wrote down during our observations. We base this assumption on other observations made in classes where the teaching situations were characterized by more teacher-led activities. During the following session the pupils are arranged in a semi-circle. Informant 2 on the other hand is placed outside the circle due to the fact that she was speaking when she was not supposed to. The

class is reading a short story out loud. The teacher leads the activity, and tells the next pupil when to start reading. It is completely silent in the classroom;

12.59 pm Informant 2 is in her seat, she is looking down and into her book. It is her turn to read. Stands up and reads her paragraph. Sits back down. She seems to pay attention to what is done in class. She knows where to start when it is her turn to read

The activity was characterized by all the pupils knowing exactly what to do and they were all paying attention to what the teacher said. In the case of Informant 1 we could also find a decrease of disruptive behavior when the class was characterized by a teacher-led approach;

In this class the pupils are to watch a movie about bullying, in which they will discuss and write a text about after seeing it. The movie is stopped by the teacher. The teacher asks the pupils what they think happened at the end of the sequence. Three pupils raise their hands in the air. Informant 1 is one of them. The teacher asks him to answer, and he responds adequately. The teacher acknowledges him.

Informant 1 was engaged in the activities the teacher presents to him. He took an active part in the discussion and seemed to be concentrating on the film that was showed. He receives acknowledgement from the teacher for his answer to the question asked. Informant 1 looked proud.

The pupils are then asked to write a review. The task is to write about something in the film that they can relate to in their own lives.(....) The teacher gives him a pencil and says: "Now you must write down what you remember from the movie (.....) Informant 1 is completely quiet and writes.

The teacher gave Informant 1 concrete instructions on what the task was. In previous observations we had the impression that Informant 1 did not know what the task given was. In this situation the teacher approaches the pupil`s desk and engages in a dialogue with him where he instructs him on what he is expected to do. The following describes what happens next;

Informant 1 leans down on the desk while he writes. The teacher rolls in his wheelchair between the pupils and helps them. It is completely silent in the classroom. The teacher cuts in and asks if anyone can tell him what they have written so far. The teacher and the pupils are talking together in plenary about the film.

The class was characterized by primarily teacher-led activities. The teacher gave the pupils a task; let them work on it in intervals of approximately five minutes before he engaged the whole class in a discussion and continued with a new task in relation to the one given previously. During this class Informant 1 was able to focus his attention towards subject-related assignments, in contrary to when the responsibility is on the pupils to learn. We also observed at one occasion that Informant 1 did not profit on a teacher lead approach;

The teacher goes through the task by using the projector. The teacher is standing at the projector chalkboard and explains the pupils what to do. She shows them a task and tells them that this is the homework. She writes it on the projector. Informant 1 is sitting typing on his calculator. The teacher asks all pupils to take out yesterday's homework. Informant 1 is still playing with his calculator.

This situation is characterized by the teacher leading the activities. Still Informant 1 is not paying attention. Informant 1 is not attentive to the task given and does not start the task simultaneously with his peers. The pupils were told that this was their homework and what they didn't get done at school they would have to finish at home. It seems like Informant 1 did not noticed that the teacher gave a message. We tried to interpret why during our observation. We both interpreted that seating may have influenced the behavior to a certain degree. In this situation he was placed more or less "isolated" on his own desk, while all his peers were sitting in groups of four. His desk was placed inconvenient in terms of seeing what was happening on the projector. The teacher did not once as we observed turn her eye his way to engage him in the activity.

Another key aspect in this situation is the one of clear expectations communicated from the teacher to the pupil. The teacher in this situation gave the pupil clear instructions on what he expected from him. In other situations we have had the impression that Informant 1 did not know what was expected of him;

Informant 1 opens one of the books on the first page. He is looking at the first page, and then out in the classroom. He turns around looking at one of us for a few seconds, and turns back again. He looks out in the classroom again. It seems to us that Informant 1 does not quite know what to do. The teacher has not given him any instructions or explanations on what to do when he entered the class. The other pupils were told about this before Informant 1 came into the classroom.

In this situation Informant 1 was approximately five minutes late for class. During these five minutes the teacher had told the class what the agenda of this class was. When Informant 1 entered the class, his peers had already started on the task given. Informant 1 on the other hand sat down and did not seem know what was expected of him. The teacher did not instruct Informant 1 on what the task was. The fact that Informant 1 not did not get informed of what the task was may have resulted in him sitting at his seat the entire observation without doing anything on-task.

4.4.3 Summary

In this section of the analysis we have focused on the situations where the pupils were disruptive and non-disruptive. We were interested in exploring what characterized these situations. We have in this thesis chosen an ecological approach where the behavior of the pupil needs to be understood in an interactional perspective with influencing factors in the environment. During our observations we found two key factors in the environment that influenced the pupils' behavior to a certain extent. These factors were the physical organization of the classroom and how the activities were carried out in the classroom. The role the teacher plays as the instructor and leader in the classroom and the expectations that were communicated to the pupils are in our interpretation a part of how the activities were organized during class.

During our observations we found that the classroom structure often was characterized by being loose; the teacher assigned a task and the pupils worked on the given task without much interference from the teacher. The teacher had a more supervising role, and walked around in the classroom making sure that the pupils were on task. We found that much of the

time we observed this setting the Informants were not on task. They had trouble getting started with subject-related tasks and at multiple occasions, and we had the impression that they did not know what was expected of them. In these situations the teacher gave the pupils the responsibility for their own learning, and what they did not finish in class would be their homework for the next day. The loose structure of the classroom was also apparent when the class was taking a science test. As soon as the pupils were finished they were allowed to get up from their seats, walk around, chat with each other and resume in working on a project concerning energy sources. The pupils who had not finished their test continued working on their tests as their peers walked around the classroom. Our impression is that this form of organizing a test was not favorable for the pupils who needed more time finishing.

Another factor that influenced the pupils' behavior was the seating arrangements in the different classes. During our observations the pupils were arranged in groups of four or in a semi-circle. At numerous occasions the Informants were taken out of this setting and placed by themselves. In the case of Informant 1, this was done as a preventive measure based on the teachers previous experiences with the pupil. In the case of Informant 2, she was placed outside the semi-circle as a consequence of disruptive behavior. The result of the placement outside the groups and semi-circle did not however eliminate the disruptive behavior. In case of Informant 2 we found that when she was placed away from her peers, she tried to initiate contact to a greater extent than when she was placed with them. In case of Informant 1, he did stop initiating, but he did not do any on task either. He disrupted himself on his own seat most of the time sitting outside the group.

The placement of the teacher in relation to the disruptive pupils was also a factor we observed as relevant. The Informants were at all times concerned with the whereabouts of the teacher. When the teacher was nearby, the disruptive behavior decreased. As did the disruptive behavior increase when the teacher was out of sight or occupied elsewhere. When the teacher placed his wheelchair next to Informant 1, he was able to engage in on-task behavior in a group setting. As soon as the teacher left to assist another group Informant 1 resumed his disruptive behavior. We also found that even if a preventive placement of Informant 1 seemed to enable him to disturb his peers, it did not make him do more on task work. He was placed outside the circle of plenary activities, and the teacher did not include him into the activities so he was able to engage more.

The degree of teacher-led activities also had an influence on the pupils' disruptive behavior. As mentioned above we found during our observations, classroom that were characterized by a very loose structure and where the responsibility to learn was given to the pupils. The teachers filled a more supervising role. In these situations the extent of disruptive behavior escalated and the result was often that the Informants were not able to engage in any on-task behavior. Most of the time they were sitting on own seat in the classroom, disrupting either themselves or tried to engage in conversations with peers. During the classes where the teacher played a more active role in communicating the curriculum to the pupils, we found the opposite. The pupils were able to pay attention and knew at all times what the task given was. In these situations the teacher communicated the expectations of what he wanted the pupils to do in a clear and orderly fashion. When the class did tasks in plenary this also had a positive effect on the behavior of our Informants. They were concentrating on the task given, and cooperated with their peers on finishing it. The only exception to this is Informant1, when he was placed at an inconvenient place, which in our opinion interfered with his ability to follow what was going on.

All factors considered, we found that both the physical environment, with emphasizes on the placement of the individual pupil, and the organization of the activities during class made from the teacher influenced the behavior to a great extent. There are of course both positive and negative consequences linked to the different styles of teaching and organizing the classroom. This will be discussed in the following section of the chapter.

4.4.4 Discussions

The placement of the pupil as an influencing factor on the behavior was given much attention in the previous section. This is a result of our observations, where we found the aspect of placement to be a major factor considering the pupils behavior. During our observations the various seating arrangements were in groups of four or in a semi-circle. These forms of arranging the pupils' seating are commonly used in today's school as an alternative to the more traditional row seating. The pupils seated in rows were something that did not occur at all during our observations. The most common arrangement was in groups of four. This organization is, as all others, associated with both positive and negative effects. One of the

positive is that the social interaction between the pupils is enhanced. The social environment within the class can be strengthened. This also correlates with the large focus these days on working together in groups on projects. However, not all pupils benefit from sitting in groups or other arrangements where there is a lot of interaction with peers. Not all pupils are able to concentrate on their task and at the same time having the opportunity to chat with their peers in the immediate distant. Some pupils need a more structured and controlled teaching strategy, implemented by an absolute adult. Our Informants seemed, in our interpretation, to provide of this way of organization in order to engage in on-task behavior.

Another key aspect that can be used as an argument against the more social arrangements of the pupils is the one concerning chatting and interaction between the pupils during class. Several studies conducted on the behavior in the classroom show coherence between the seating of the pupils and the degree of disruptive behavior. Axelrod et al. (1979 in Pelligrini and Blatchford, 2000) found more disruptive and less on-task behavior in groups opposed to the more traditional rows. Wheldall et al. (1981 in Pelligrini and Blatchford, 2000) conducted a study in Britain where they observed 6 classes over a period of two years. Seating arrangements were organized for two weeks at the time; first in groups, then in rows, then in groups again. Their findings showed that the on-task behavior increased when the pupils were placed in rows. Bennett and Blundell (1983, in Pelligrini and Blatchford, 2000) support these findings as they saw a marked improvement in quantity of on-task behavior when the pupils were placed in rows. The teachers who participated in this study expressed that classroom behavior improved in rows opposed to when the pupils were placed in groups. They also reported an increase of talking and chatting between the pupils when they were placed in groups.

In light of these studies it would be relevant to ask questions about the phenomenon group settings during class. Why is this form of organizing the pupils so common if it leads to more disruptive behavior during class? Some pupils do of course benefit from group tasks, and the pupils need to learn at an early age how to cooperate with others on solving tasks. In today's society the ability to cooperate on assignments and tasks is expected and the pupils need to practice their cooperative skills in the school setting. This can easily be done as a part of a group assignment. However, the pupils can be placed in groups for a specific assignment and in this way practice their interpersonal skills during the given task. When the task is finished the pupils can be placed in other arrangements more favorable to the pupils with disruptive

behaviors. We must however see it on the other hand; not all pupils benefit from sitting in groups, similarly do not all pupils benefit from sitting alone in a row setting either. Another study made on seating arrangements in the classroom reported that when the pupils were organized in rows signs of pupil withdrawal was apparent. (Rosenfield et al.,1985 in Pelligrini and Blatchford, 2000; Weinstein 1987 in Pelligrini and Blatchford, 2000).

Another major problem with this seating arrangement is when one or more of the pupils are placed outside this setting by the teacher. We saw this in both Informant 1 and Informant 2`s cases. The pupils were placed outside the group or semi-circle by the teacher and were left completely to themselves. How will the pupil placed outside the classroom community feel about his/her place as a part of the group? How will this affect the social inclusion in the class?

The placement of the teacher in relation to the Informants was also an aspect in which we found significantly related to the behavior. We found that the Informants were at all times concerned with the whereabouts of the teacher. This can also be seen in relation to the placement of the pupil. We observed Informant 1 in the class called social smarts, where he was placed in a group of four with his peers. The teacher was situated next to him and Informant 1 was able to concentrate on the task given. However, the teacher had to move in order to assist another pupil elsewhere in the classroom; Informant 1 resumed his disruptive behavior as soon as the teacher turned his back to him. This example shows the complicity of the choices the teacher has to consider when it comes to the placement of Informant 1. As he chose to place himself next to the pupil in the first place, we make the assumption that he was concerned with the pupil`s behavior, but he was willing to give him a chance to function in a social seating arrangement. This seating was successful as long as the teacher was placed next to the pupil, but as soon as he had to attend to other business Informant 1 started picking on the girl sitting across from him.

The teacher had a difficult choice in this situation; if he decided to remove Informant 1 from the situation this may affect Informant 1 negatively. He may feel segregated from his peers and result in a negative experience from this class. However; the teacher had a responsibility to protect the other pupils` right to a peaceful and nurturing learning environment and in this case he was not able to provide that for the girl Informant 1 was picking on. The teacher was put in a difficult situation, should he remove Informant 1 from the situation or reevaluate the

seating arrangements for the entire class? In the last case scenario the entire class would be punished for the actions Informant 1 might commit when placed in a group setting again. On the other hand the teacher was not able to focus all his attention on Informant 1 and be placed next to him at all times. He had to attend to the other pupils needs and this involved leaving Informant 1's side at several occasions. This led to the question of if a teacher assistant would be an asset in these situations? A teacher assistant may function as an asset if Informant 1 is able to function in a group setting, but the question must be asked on how this assistant should be used in the classroom. If the assistant's primary task is to supervise and correct Informant 1's behavior this may have a stigmatizing effect on Informant 1. He may feel that there is something wrong with him since he is assigned an assistant to control his behavior.

The structure of the teaching situation was something we observed as a major influence on the pupils' disruptive behavior. Most of the classes we observed were characterized by a loose structure with few teacher-led activities. In these situations the Informants had problems concentrating on the task given. Their behavior was characterized by being disruptive to themselves; they were not able to get started on their tasks and the situations were characterized by a low degree of on-task behavior. A question we ask ourselves is; could the activities in the classroom be organized differently to decrease the extent of disruptive behavior?

We found through our observations that when the activities were more teacher-led, the pupils were more likely to behave on-task. When the teacher engaged in an active role as the communicator of the curriculum, the Informants were concentrated on the task given. Especially when the tasks were done in plenary by the entire class we found this to be the case. The pupils took an active part in the assignments when it was expected that all pupils took part in the activity. This view is supported by Gump (1967 in Pelligrini and Blatchford, 2000) who conducted a study on activities in the classroom in relation to on-task behavior from the pupils. Gump further reports in his study that pupil involvement was at its highest when in teacher-led small groups, followed by whole class activities and teacher presentations. It was lowest for individual studies and pupil presentations. This corresponds with our findings; as we observed a low degree of pupil involvement when the pupils were expected to engage in individual studies. On the other hand, the pupils have to be able to

work on assignments individually and need to retrieve practice doing this in a school setting. Individual tasks are therefore necessary to achieve this competence.

Every pupil has his own island of competence that consists of strengths, learning style and so on (Goldstein and Brooks, 2007). By identifying these preferences and strengths, the teacher will be able to adapt the learning environment to the individual pupil. If the teacher is able to identify the pupils' composition of intelligences he will in a greater sense be able to accommodate the different pupils' own orientation to learning. The learning situation can be improved by taking the different intelligences into consideration (Armstrong, 2009). By identifying individual pupils' strengths the teacher will be able to facilitate situations where the pupils succeed. However, being situated in the class as observers we see the difficulties the teacher might struggle with in achieving this goal. There is a class of close to thirty pupils and it would be difficult to adapt the activities and tasks given to all the pupils. In the theory chapter we have elaborated the teachers' responsibility in organizing the activities on the bases of the pupils' strengths in order to provide the pupils with experiences of being successful learners.

The classes we observed were characterized by different activities that focused on different qualities within the individual pupil. The pupils were given tasks that challenged them on different skills, such as verbal, mathematical, visual and interpersonal. In the social smart class the task given was meant to strengthen the pupils' intrapersonal skills as the subject was bullying and the pupils were asked to link the content to their personal experiences on the field. The school also emphasizes the nature, and offers garden class that nurtures the pupils' naturalist skills as they grow vegetables and fruits and learns the pupils about valuable lessons on the earth. In the science class different types of intelligences were nurtured as the pupils in the project were to make a poster on a self chosen energy source, they were to write information on their source, draw pictures and build models of how their energy source works in the practical life. The pupils were this way able to find components within the task they succeeded in more than others. On the basis on our observations we are not able to conclude whether the different types of activities were chosen by the teachers on the basis of the pupils' strengths, but we observed a wide range of activities that seemed to provide the pupils with positive experiences on different levels.

Pupil behavior can also be linked to teacher expectations. In this chapter teacher expectation refers to the academic expectations communicated from the teacher to the pupil. Expectations of behavior based on the pupils' background and previous experiences will be discussed in the section concerning additional discussions. During our observations we found a link between the expectations communicated from the teacher to the pupil and the pupil's behavior. When the teacher gave clear instructions and it was obvious that when the pupil knew exactly what to do the frequency of disruptive behavior decreased. There is, as mentioned in chapter 2, a clear link between pupils' underachievement and low teacher expectations. This can be interpreted as low expectations based on the pupil as a person, this will be discussed in the next section. Another finding was when the teacher did not communicate the specific expectations for a given task; the pupil was less likely to perform on-task.

We have in the light of this research question described, analyzed and discussed the organization of the classroom in relation to the pupils behavior. We understand that the issues we have addressed are complex and that there are no right and wrong answers when it comes to how the teacher chooses to organize her classroom. The purpose of this section has been to reflect the possible connections between the disruptive behavior and the organization of the classroom, focusing on the physical placement of both pupils and teacher and the various activities chosen by the teacher.

4.5 Additional discussions

In this section we wish to reflect upon and discuss aspects and thoughts concerning our results, which are not necessarily bounded to our research problem. However, with us having a systemic focus and a holistic perspective, we feel that it is important to reflect upon these aspects. We want to make it clear that it is not possible from just observable behaviour and pure descriptions to make a conclusion on the cause or the origin of the behaviour. We will therefore reflect upon and discuss how other non-observable factors may be significant in *an understanding* of the observed behaviour.

4.5.1 Social background

As described in section 2.1.2 the various systems within an individual's social context are mutually affecting each other. The various social systems surrounding an individual are therefore closely related. Experiences in one social system can affect the actions of another social system. Slåttøy (2002) mentions that one of the three primary causes to behavior problems is closely related to conditions in childhood and environmental factors outside the borders of the school. In relation to Informant 1 there are a lot of troubled events in his family history, and some of these events are still ongoing. Informant 1's background is characterized by drug abuse by his parents, lower education, crime and several changes in his family structure as his dad, which he lives with, keep changing girlfriends. All these are factors that in literature are described as risk factors in order to develop behavior problems (Nordahl, et al., 2005). As exemplified earlier in chapter 2.1.2 the pupils may bring their negative experiences with the adults at home to the school setting and take it out on teachers. It is impossible to say to what extent these events in Informant 1's social background are affecting him negatively. We can only reflect upon the effects of these experiences in light of previous research on such risk factors.

Another side effect of having such a troubled social background is if the social background becomes an explanation of disclaiming responsibility from the teachers' side. The problems that Informant 1 shows may be understood as a result of his troubled background and the teacher might not see room for improvement. In section 2.2.1 we wrote about teacher expectations and the distinction between expectations that are descriptive and those who are meant to form the basis for change. Further, we stated that if the teacher shows low expectations and little belief in the pupil's ability to change, the prognosis for the pupil will not be good. We are not making any suggestions that this is the fact in this case. However, the teacher did in the informal conversations express that she had no beliefs in him coping that well in the future.

According to what we wrote in section 2.2.1 the teacher may have low expectations, and they may even be realistic based on previous experience. The difference is that it has to be combined with a strong belief of change. This perspective of the pupil may contribute in enhancing the pupil's achievements. As we wrote in chapter 2 it is important to distinguish between the pupil as a person and their actions. The teacher also described Informant 1 as

”so bad”, which indicates more a quality labeled on the individual rather than describing his behavior. This may reinforce a perspective of him having a quality as “bad” rather than having a behavior that is bad. We did interpret on the basis of our observations that especially Informant 2 was getting more strict consequences for the same behavior as peers. One example is when Informant 2 was chatting with a peer, and she was the only one getting the negative attention from the teacher in terms of being placed outside the semicircle. Another excerpt from our observations tells of a high level of noise, with many pupils chatting, but only Informant 2 gets the teacher`s attention for it.

There is also the aspect of Informant 1 being retained a whole year. This may have, in a negative way, affected his expectations of coping with school in general. At worst, this may again contribute to Informant 1 giving up on trying achieving engagement in subject related tasks and in more accepted behavior in school. This assumption may be supported by the teacher saying during informal conversations that he feels stupid because of the retaining. The teachers also state that his social status is as a leader type, being feared by many peers. This type of labeling may contribute of the maintenance and reinforcement of a problematic behavior. He is expected by the both teacher`s and peers to act in a “bad” way, which may result in self-fulfilling prophecy as described in chapter 2.

As when it comes to Informant 2, she had a different background than Informant 1. She did have a troubled memory concerning the loss of her dad in a train accident. The teachers also said she indicated that she wanted her mom to work less and be less absent from her and her brother. Loss of a significant other can lead to traumatic experiences for children, and may affect the ability to concentrate at school. The teacher did not have a positive view of her academic future either, but the difference in talking with the teacher about Informant 2 compared to Informant 1, was that she did believe in her succeeding in life in general. We noticed that the teacher did, in our opinion, speak of Informant 2 in a generally more positive way than Informant 1.

4.5.2 The aspect of gender and ethnicity

There is also an aspect in relation to problematic behavior of gender and ethnicity. The extent of problem behavior is according to Nordahl et al. (2005) clearly related to gender. In fact, being a boy seems in itself to represent a risk factor (ibid.). However, while the issues of

discipline and management are ambiguously tense enough on their own, they become even more so as other variables are introduced into the quotation. According to McCadden (1998) there is one variable that stands out as particularly problematic, and it is that of ethnicity. Brian M. McCadden has written a thesis on this aspect. His study included a “black pupil” and a “white teacher”. He referred to the African-Americans as “black”, because that was the term he noticed the African-American used when referring to themselves. As we proceed presenting his study, we will also use the term “black boys”. McCadden (1998, pp.111) points out that one should not underestimate “the fear loathing, and anxiety involved in the symbolism that a white power-holder disciplining a black, relatively powerless person conveys.” His study, which was a limited case study of one class, showed that the black boys more frequently got timed out and got negative attention such as verbal warnings from the teacher. He also saw the white boys getting away with more than the black boys were. He further tries to explain this phenomena in light of the white middle class` values of hard work, organizational adherence, independent work, task and product orientation who seemed to be stifling the black boys. According to McCadden, the black boys seemed to be prevented from expressing their blackness, their apparent creativity, collectivism, energy, and aptitudes by a teacher centered control. He further reflects upon if there was a lack of presenting the curriculum in different learning styles, a la Gardner`s (as presented in chapter 2) multiple intelligences. He supports his study by referring to Ladson-Billings (1994 in McCadden 1998), which have seen a similar tendency. Her studies on the variable of ethnicity also support the assumption of African-American pupils more often getting negative reactions for their behavior than white pupils. McCadden (1998) and Ladson-Billings (1994 in McCadden 1998) both reflect upon if the reason of this might be that the white teacher has a perception that black pupils needed to be controlled more than other children. According to McCadden (ibid.) this resulted in the teacher`s perception of the black boys in her classroom as bad, and again this became the perception of peers as they started asking; why is always Michael getting timed out?

What we are trying to reflect upon by presenting these studies, is that the teacher`s possible perception and labeling could origin in a non-reflected understanding of African-American pupils. Especially boys, as the results of these two studies above suggest. This is only a reflection, and we are not concluding or making any assumptions that any of the teachers have such an understanding. However, Informant 1 did seem in our interpretation to be more

labeled than Informant 2. He was the apparent Informant who fitted perfectly into our focus as “he is so bad”. As we wrote in the chapter on methodology, we were also given a second Informant, which was also an African-American boy. However, we wanted to eliminate him from our studies due to the fact that he did not have a disruptive behavior as we observed during the days getting familiarized. We can only reflect upon such controversial studies as the two presented, and if our experience being presented to two black boys as the ones with the most problematic behavior, is a coincidence or not.

4.6 Summary of significant findings

In this section we wish to sum up what our main findings are, and try to tie together the loose ends. The main research problem in this thesis was to find what characterizes the disruptive behavior of two pupils during class. Further we have also asked what characterizes the social and physical environments where the behavior occurs. These environmental factors are aspects that are included in our understanding of classroom management. We have asked these research questions in accordance with our main research problem to better understand the behavior in its context.

Our results show that what mostly characterized the disruptive behavior of both Informants were sitting physically calm on own chair, disrupting either themselves with non subject related activities or other peers by approaching them verbally. The non subject related activities that the Informants were disrupting themselves with was mainly apparently day dreaming, playing with pencil, calculator etc, or drawing. This behavior leads to less learning for both of the pupils. On task behavior was represented only to a lesser extent compared to off-task. The teacher did not seem affected in the process of teaching by the pupils when they were coded with category 3; physically and verbally calm on own chair / seat in the classroom without doing subject related tasks. When the pupils were coded with category 2, physical and verbal disturbance on own chair / seat in the classroom, it did seem to disrupt the teacher more in the act of teaching. When the pupils were verbally disruptive it also seemed to disrupt the peers in their learning process. We found that the Informants were, seen the observations as a whole, more disruptive than their peers. The behavior they showed were in our interpretation defined by them being bored or did not know what to do.

When it comes to the reactions the Informants received for the disruptive behavior, we chose to categorize these into four different categories. We found a tendency to ignorance of the disruptive behavior, both from the teachers and the peers. As long as the behavior did not seem to interfere with the teaching situation or the other pupils' right to learn, the behavior was in most cases ignored. In these cases, the Informants did not receive any attention for their behavior or any responses to their initiatives from fellow pupils. Especially Informant 1 was often rejected when he tried to initiate conversations with his peers. The teachers seemed to be of the meaning that as long as they did not disturb anybody else than themselves, the disruptive behavior was ignored. As a result of this, the Informants for the most part sat on own seat, verbally and physically calm, but without being able to engage in subject-related activities.

Punitive reactions were also commonly used as a consequence to the disruptive behavior. These reactions were of course given to the pupil by the teacher, who is the main disciplinarian in class. The punitive reactions most commonly used against the pupils in our study were detention, being moved out of the situation and being sent out of class to be dealt with by special education teachers. At two different occasions detention was given as a consequence within the first five minutes of class. When detention was given, the pupil had to get up from his/her seat, walk over to the blackboard, write his/her name on the detention list and return to his/her seat. We found that the pupils rarely were given a warning prior to the punitive reaction. In the situations the Informants were given detention, we did not find this to have any effect on the disruptive behavior. This might be related to the fact that the pupil has already received punishment. A possible interpretation is that the pupil may think that the damage is already done, and the punishment has been given, why bother to change behavior now. The worst thing that could happen is more detention.

In several cases the Informants were physically moved out of the situation; the group or semi-circle setting. They were placed alone, often somewhere they had trouble seeing and paying attention, for the remainder of the class. In these situations we did not find the disruptive behavior to be eliminated, we would say to the contrary. When the Informants were placed outside the social placement in the classroom they became more active in initiating contact with their peers. We see this in connection to the fact that they are placed alone in a different part of the classroom. It is easy to imagine the humiliation this might represent for the pupil. In these cases it is reasonable to draw the conclusion that the pupil

continues the disruptive behavior in order to maintain his/her position in the classroom and not to lose face. The teacher's reactions are in these situations the primary focus of the pupil. They do not use the time to evaluate their own behavior. In several cases we had to abort the observations due to the fact that the Informants were sent out of class. When this happened they were sent to the learning center where the special education teachers attended to them.

Verbal feedback was another approach our Informants received as a consequence for their disruptive behavior. We found that in many cases this feedback was given with the fellow pupils as witnesses. The teacher did in many cases call the pupils out from across the classroom. As a result, this act received attention from the entire class. In other cases the teacher approached the pupil at his/her desk and spoke with a low voice. In these situations clear instructions and expectations were communicated to the misbehaving pupil. The results from the two different approaches did differ a bit. In the first case where the pupils were called out in front of the entire class we saw a tendency to continuance of the behavior. We see this in connection with what is mentioned above about humiliation and the how the reaction is interpreted by the pupil. It is also possible that the pupil feels that he/she has to fill a role and continue with the disruptive behavior. The relations between peers in school can be linked to the pupils' behavior. The classroom represents a social arena where the pupils' actions are characterized by rewards from their peers (Nordahl, 2000). In the situations where the teacher approached the pupil at the desk the result differed to an extent. The disruptive behavior did in these cases decrease or stop when the reaction was given. It did not, however, last very long. The pupils resumed with their disruptive behavior shortly after the reaction was given.

The last category of reactions we observed was the one of nonverbal communication. We found this to be a category rarely used. We observed the use of eye contact once and it seemed to have a positive effect on stopping the unwanted behavior. In retrospect, we asked ourselves the question of why the teachers did not use nonverbal communication to a greater extent when it seemed to have a positive effect the disruptive behavior. The teachers' placement in relation to our Informants was a factor that influenced the disruptive behavior. Once during our observations we found that the disruptive behavior decreased by the teacher moving towards Informant 2 when she acted disruptive. The teacher was however detained from reaching the pupils desk due to the fact that a second teacher entered the room. Still, the reaction had an effect and the pupil engaged in on-task behavior. We also found that the

disruptive pupils were at all times concerned with the whereabouts of the teacher and the behavior decreased when the teacher was nearby. When the teacher moved away from the pupil, the disruptive behavior increased.

The placement of the teacher as a preventive measure is something we found relevant when discussing the situations in which the disruptive behavior occurred. As mentioned before, the pupils were concerned with the teachers placement at all times and adjusted their behavior accordingly. We understand that it would be difficult for the teacher to stay placed next to the disruptive pupil throughout the class; we are mentioning this measure because it seemed effective.

The seating arrangements of the pupils were also a factor we found extremely influencing to the disruptive behavior shown in class. In two of the three classes observed, the pupils were placed in a group setting. The groups consisted of four pupils in each group. We found this seating arrangement to be unfortunate to the pupils we observed. They had trouble concentrating and seemed unable to get started on their tasks. They were easily distracted by their fellow pupils. In the third class we observed, the pupils were placed in a semi-circle. This arrangement offered the same challenges to our Informants. At several occasions they sat an entire class in their seats, initiating contact with their peers and not getting any work done. Not all pupils benefit from the social seating arrangements that are commonly used in today`s school. We found that our Informants did not benefit from these arrangements at all. They were unable to concentrate on the task given and easily distracted. They initiated interaction with their peers at multiple occasions during class.

The structure of the class was also an aspect that we found influencing on the extent of disruptive behavior. We found that in classes where the structure was loose, there were usually independent tasks that characterized the teaching and learning methods. The use of these kinds of teaching activities seemed to cause our Informants trouble concentrating and engaging in on-task behavior. In these situations the level of disruptive behavior increased. In several situations we interpreted that the pupils found the loose structure of the classes confusing and their behavior came as a reaction to this. One example is when Informant 1 entered class 5 minutes late. During these previous five minutes, the teacher had presented the task and his fellow pupils had started working on it. Informant 1 was not told what the

task given was and spent most of the time during this class checking his binder and looking out the window.

In situations where the teacher engaged in a more active role in communicating the material to the pupils and the activities were teacher-led, the disruptive behavior decreased. We found this especially relevant in the social smarts class where Informant 1 took an active part in the teacher-led discussion concerning the film about bullying. Informant 2 did also benefit from teacher led activities that were conducted in plenary. An example of this was when the class read a short story out loud. Informant 2 kept her eyes in her book and knew exactly when to begin reading. A common factor in both these situations is that the expectations from the teacher were made clear to the pupils. The pupils knew exactly what the task was and what was expected of them. We found this to be a factor that reduced the disruptive behavior during class.

Our results show what characterized the behavior of the pupils observed in this study. During our observations we found that environmental factors had, through our interpretations, a significant influence on the pupils` behavior. For this reason we chose to emphasize on these aspects in our study.

The results also show that there is much valuable information included within a short time limit in a classroom. It is therefore, in our view, useful for teachers to implement a thoroughly observation of the pupils with problematic behaviors in order to search for possible sources that may cause the unwanted behavior. To what extent such thoroughly observation is possible to carry out in real life is another question. Unfortunately, time and economy are probably elements that need to be considered.

5. Final consideration

As a part of the pilot project "Disquietness in Schools", we got the opportunity to write a master thesis concerning case studies of disruptive behavior during class. It was in the projects interest to find characteristics of disruptive behavior for further research. Our thesis had therefore the aim of indentifying such behavior. We also tried to see the behavior in the context it occurred in. We were surprised finding behavior that mostly disrupted the Informants themselves. We did not see much physical disturbance, as moving around etc, as we might assume there would be a lot of. This resulted in the teacher most of the time leaving the pupils alone, as long as they did not disrupt the others. We find this unfortunate when it comes to the two Informants` own learning outcome. These results are only based on a limited case study, but teachers leaving unmotivated pupils who have hard time concentrating by themselves as long as they do not interrupt the act of teaching is mentioned as common in literature (i.e Doyle, 1986).

The school is supposed to be an arena of learning and development. As a part of our understanding, there are several factors surrounding the child that might affect the behavior. The teacher`s exercise of classroom management is, as stated before, mentioned as one of the factors within the learning environment which can be both reinforcing and preventative of problem behaviors (Aasen et al, 2002; Nordahl, 2002; Nordahl et al., 2005). We have discussed several observable aspects within classroom management that we believe, on the base of our observations and with theory in mind, to have a certain affect on the pupils in this study. The impact of the teacher and his/hers interaction with the pupil as significant in the pupils life, should be given a more thoroughly thought. Within the classroom, the teacher is probably the most important factor affecting the pupils` achievement, well being and behavior, and it is of importance that teaching and learning are recognized as interacting activities (Arnesen et al., 2006). If the results we have interpreted are correct, and the teachers to a certain degree ignores the self-disrupting behavior, it might indicate that the teacher understand learning as an automatically result of the act of teaching.

There is also the aspect of social background. Both of the pupils seem to have troubled backgrounds to a certain degree. Especially Informant 1 seems to have a lot of risk factors present in his life (Rutter et al., 1998; Nordahl et al., 2005). In our interpretation the teacher

seems to have “given up on him”. She do not see a bright future and the way he is spoken about, both to us and in present of other peers is characterized by a negative label. As we have written in chapter 2, this might result in a self-fulfilling prophecy. The teacher, that we have mentioned as one of the most significant environmental factors related to behavior problems in schools, should emphasize seeking more and deeper knowledge on the phenomena “disruptive behavior”.

The behaviors that are focused on in this study are ranged as the highest frequent behavior in schools today (OECD 2001; Ogden 2006; Jones and Jones, 2010). Maybe there should be implemented a measure in a systemic perspective by the state`s school authority, that focuses on providing teachers with more knowledge on the phenomena disruptive behavior and what to do about it. As our study represents a limited case, with little value of the aspect of generalization, we have reflected upon what kind of knowledge that would be relevant and of importance in our case study particularly. We found that especially Informant 1 in our interpretation was spoken negatively of. We also observed a few cases where our Informants were getting more negative responds for the behavior compared to peers. On the basis of our previous experiences we do understand how difficult it is to work with children showing problematic behavior on daily basis, how exhausting and time consuming it can be. However, it is also our understanding that what kind of perception you have of these pupils might affect your work positively or negatively. A focus on changing the perceptions and beliefs among teachers might be a place to start. An increased focus on implementing knowledge on behavior problems in schools today may represent a significant step in changing established and in some cases negatively perceptions and beliefs.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Consent form.

To whom it may concern.

We are two Norwegian exchange students from UC Berkeley. We are currently involved in a project concerning children`s classroom behavior. The project is a corporation between the University of Oslo and UC Berkeley. The aim of the project is to compare classroom behavior between the two different countries. The project emphasizes behaviors that are disruptive to the child itself and to the teaching situation.

We are going to spend several weeks this semester as volunteers/interns at Middle School. In association with this we wish to observe the pupils in 6th grade during class. This will include observing your child in this context. The duration of the observations will be 3* 15 minutes and one observation for 10 minutes during recess. The observations and the results are strictly for university use.

In order to implement this observation, we will need your consent. We guarantee that all of our collected data material will all be strictly anonymous and be non-recognizable.

Please sign below to give your consent.

Yes, I allow Stine Sæther and Kristine Mathiesen to observe my child in the classroom context.

Signature

Date

Thank you for your corporation.

Sincerely,

INTERNSHIP REPORT: 2ND YEAR OF BACHELORS`DEGREE 2010:**OBSERVATION: DISQUIET BEHAVIOR IN SCHOOL/PRESCHOOL****Appendix 2: Observation guide.**

This internship report is related to the students` internship their 2nd year of bachelors` degree in special needs education. The internship assignment involves observation of pupil/child behavior in school/preschool.

Focus is: students` experience of disquiet behavior in school/ preschool, i.e. behavior that appear disturbing to the pupil/child him/herself, to fellow pupils /other children and/ or to teacher /educator.

This report is to be submitted to supervisor at the end of the internship, for approval and signing. The signed report is to be submitted to Professor Liv Duesund at UCB after completed internship.

Key elements in observation:

The student must have attended two days of the internship PRIOR to observing. The first two days are used by the student to familiarize her/himself with the class/group.

The class/group as a whole is to be the focus of the 1st observation. 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th observations are individual observations where, in cooperation with the teacher/educator, the student chooses which pupil /what child that is to be the focus of the observations. The pupil/child who is selected is one that from the teachers experience shows disquiet behavior to a greater or lesser extent.

Every student in each group chooses one pupil/child each to focus their observations on. (different pupil/child for each student) Student observes the same pupil/child throughout the series of observation, starting at the 2nd observation.

The 2nd, 3rd and 4th observations are made either in the beginning, during or at the end of class/ group session. (See guidelines for observation) The 5th observation is made during recess/playtime.

Student has to provide the correct time for when observation starts and ends.

During individual observation the student is to describe what the pupil/child does/says etc. and any interaction with others during the observation period. Key questions are: What is happening? Who is doing what?

The student must try to distinguish between descriptions and interpretations. In the interpretation the student must try to assess whether the behavior described can be understood as disquiet behavior.

Observations are presented in an anonymous form, in which neither single pupils or location can be

recognized.

1st observation: in class / group session

Observe what happens in class/group session during the course of one hour.

Observation is to be made on the 3rd day of the internship. Choose which class hour during the day to focus on.

Task: (use the form below)

- a) Describe what happens during class/ group session (cf. handout)
- b) Try to interpret your observations. (cf. handout)
- c) Write down any questions/comments you might have to your observations and interpretations.

Date:	Type of institution: (school/preschool)	Grade/age group:	Subject/activity:
Number of pupils/children in class/group:	Observation starts at:	Observation ends at:	Total time elapsed:

Description:	Interpretation:

Questions you may have to what is described and interpreted:

2nd observation: Individual observation of disquiet behavior.

One single pupil in the class /one single child in the group session.

First 15 minutes of class/group session.

OBSERVATION IS TO BE MADE ON THE 4TH DAY OF THE INTERNSHIP.

15 minutes (continuous) observation IN THE BEGINNING OF class/ group session.
Selection of pupil/child is made in cooperation with teacher/educator.

Task: (use the form below)

- a) Describe what happens during class/ group session (cf. handout)
 b) Try to interpret your observations. (cf. handout)
 c) Write down any questions/comments you might have to your observations and interpretations.

Date:	Type of institution: (school/preschool)	Grade/age group:	Subject/activity:
Number of pupils/children in class/group.	Observation starts at:	Observation ends at:	Total time elapsed:

Description:	Interpretation:

Questions you may have to what is described and interpreted:

3rd observation: Individual observation of disquiet behavior.
One single child in the class/ one single child in the group session.
15 minutes halfway through class/group session.

OBSERVATION IS TO BE MADE ON THE 5TH DAY OF THE INTERNSHIP.

- 15 minutes (continuous) observation HALFWAY THROUGH class /group session.
Observe the same pupil/child as you did previously.

Task: (use the form below)

- a) Describe what the pupil/ child does/says etc. and any interaction with others during the 15 minutes. (cf. handout)
 b) Try to interpret your observations. (cf. handout)
 c) Write down any questions/comments you might have to your observations and interpretations.

Date:	Type of institution: (school/preschool)	Grade/age group:	Subject/activity:
Number of pupils/children in class/group:	Observation starts at:	Observation ends at:	Total time elapsed:

Description:	Interpretation:

Questions you may have to what is described and interpreted:

4th observation: Individual observation of disquiet behavior.
One single pupil in the class / one single child in the group session.
15 minutes at the end of class/group session.

OBSERVATION IS TO BE MADE ON THE 6TH DAY OF THE INTERNSHIP.
 15 minutes (continuous) observation AT THE END of class/ group session.
 Observe the same pupil/child as you did previously.

Task: (use the form below)

- Describe what the pupil/child does/says etc. and any interaction with others during the 15 minutes.(cf. handout)
- Try to interpret your observations. (cf. handout)
- Write down any questions/comments you might have to your observations and interpretations.

Date:	Type of institution: (school/preschool)	Grade/age group:	Subject/activity:
Number of pupils/children in class/group:	Observation starts at:	Observation ends at:	Total time elapsed:

Description:	Interpretation:

Questions you may have to what is described and interpreted:

5th observation: Individual observation of disquiet behavior.
One single pupil during recess/ one single child during playtime.
10 minutes during recess/playtime.

OBSERVATION IS TO BE MADE ON THE 7TH DAY OF INTERNSHIP.

10 minutes (continuous) observation during recess / playtime

Observe the same pupil/child as you did previously

Task: (use the form below)

a) Describe what the pupil/child does/says etc. and any interaction with others during recess/playtime. (cf. handout)

b) Try to interpret your observations. (cf. handout)

c) Write down any questions/comments you might have to your observations and interpretations.

Date:	Type of institution: (school/preschool)	Grade/age group:	Subject/activity:
Number of pupils/children in class/group:	Observation starts at:	Observation ends at:	Total time elapsed:

Description:	Interpretation:

Questions you may have to what is described and interpreted:

Main results

Describe what you consider to be the main results of the observations you have made, seeing the observations in relation to each other. Emphasize the results concerning disquiet behavior:

Learning profit

Describe what you consider you have learned from doing observational fieldwork during the internship:

Submission

Completed by the student:

Internship report is submitted (in stapled paper edition) to supervisor on/..... 2010

Students name/signature:

Approval

Completed by the supervisor:

Internship report is: approved not approved.

Date: 2010

Supervisors signature:

Responsible for the composition of observation guide: Professor Liv Duesund, Sven Nilsen and Liv Randi Opdal.

