

A Comparative Study of Disruptive Behavior between Schools in Norway and the United States

A conceptual and empirical exploration of disruptive behavior in schools

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“The way to find out is to let these phenomena show themselves as they are in themselves” (H. L. Dreyfus, 2004, p. 266)

“teachers don’t simply teach content, they teach people” (Walker, 2009, p. 122)

“By publicness everything gets obscured, and what has thus been covered up gets passed off as something familiar and accessible to everyone” (Heidegger, 2008, p. 126)

Summary

This dissertation is concerned with how disruptive behavior appears in school. I emphasize the kinds of disruptive behavior that occurs during class, and how it manifests itself in the classroom when it occurs. The study is mainly concerned with issues inside the classrooms, but also moves outside the classroom by examining everyday disruptions in the lives of students. The focus is not on causal relationships, but on existential incentives for how students cope with everyday disruptions and disruptive behavior in schools.

The dissertation consists of two parts, one extended abstract and four articles. While the articles stand as individual scientific works, they also aim to build and elaborate on each other to have an internal coherence throughout the dissertation. Two of the articles are purely conceptual explorations and two articles introduce empirical data to the equation. The theoretical articles, written by myself, and the following articles are authored together with Professor Liv Duesund. The methodology used to collect the quantitative data is a mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches. Within the project, there are several master's theses conducted before the work within this dissertation. These consist of observational studies of disruptive behavior, which laid part of the foundation for the development of the quantitative questionnaire applied in this dissertation.

Article 1: *Being-disrupted and being-disruptive: Coping students in uncertain times* is the exploration of everyday disruptions. Building on Heidegger's being-in-the-world, I created the terms *being-disrupted* and *being-disruptive*. Using these terms, I analyze how everyday disruptions could influence students with regard to struggling with a fast-paced society, including pressures for perfection, loneliness and community, information and knowledge.

Article 2: *Disruptive behavior in schools and the human way of being* discusses teachers' abilities to manage disruptive behavior in classrooms. The article addresses their skills in behavior management. Issues addressed are the fear of intuitive action. The article discusses how rigid following of rules and principles could involve them not daring to take the risk of acting without knowing the outcome of their actions. In relation to this, the article addresses the concept of breakdown and teachers' coping with unknown situations and disruptive behaviors that they do not possess tools for managing.

Article 3: *Students' Perceived Experience of Disruptive Behavior in Schools. A Comparative Study between Schools in the US and Norway* address the frequency of disruptive behavior, how often and what kinds of behavior that occur, and students' tolerance of such behaviors. These issues are discussed in light of earlier research.

Article 4: *Students' Perception of Reactions Towards Disruptive Behavior in Norwegian and American Schools* sheds light on how students perceive reactions towards disruptive behavior. This includes their own and teachers' reactions. These issues are discussed in light of earlier research and the concepts of emotional involvement and responsibility.

Keywords: disruptive behavior, skillful coping, skill model, perception, human understanding, student perspective.

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1 Introduction

The following outlines the background of the thesis, research topics, definitions of terms central in the thesis, and the structure of the extended abstract.

1.1 Background

As a master's student in 2009-2011 I was recruited to the project "A Comparative Study of Disruptive Behavior in between Schools in Norway and the United States", led by Professor Liv Duesund. During a stay at the University of California, Berkeley (UCB) in 2010-2011, I conducted a qualitative observational study of disruptive behavior for my master's thesis. I first encountered phenomenology in lectures and discussions with Professor Liv Duesund. At UCB, I attended Dreyfus' course "Philosophy 185: Heidegger". This course, coupled with discussions with Dreyfus himself served as the inspiration for understanding human behavior in general and specifically in school and classrooms.

In 2013, I started my PhD and once again got to be part of the aforementioned research project. This time, the focus was to create quantitative measures. Data were to be collected in both Norway and the United States. I have had a status as visiting scholar at UCB since 2014, allowing me to gain access to schools and be part of an inspiring research environment.

1.2 Overarching aims and research topics

We are all forced to cope with disruptions in our everyday lives. When engaged in everyday activities such as holding a conversation, driving a car or attending class, we are at risk for disruptions from an abundance of sources. One such source is in our interaction with other people. For decades, students and teachers have been (and continue to be) troubled by disruptive behavior¹ in their classrooms (Hogan & Quay, 1999; Nash, Schlösser, & Scarr, 2016; Redl, 1975; Sharpe, Wheldall, & Merrett, 1987; Wheldall & Merrett, 1988). The problem seems to prevail despite the best efforts of researchers, schools, teachers and other practitioners. Kinds of disruptive behavior seems to be similar in character over time (Nash et al., 2016; Swinson, 2010; Wheldall & Merrett, 1988), but one could raise the question if there

¹ When "disruptive behavior" is addressed in this thesis, I refer to disruptive behavior in schools, unless otherwise noted.

is sufficient understanding of the phenomenon regardless of its familiarity. One way of addressing disruptive behavior is to draw up plans and principles for how to manage it (Bear, 2010; Levin & Nolan, 2010) and utilize strategies for praise, reward and disciplinary methods (Infantino & Little, 2005; Sharpe et al., 1987). These perspectives seem to build on the assumption that deliberate action based on knowledge, reflection and experience is the most fruitful way of approaching disruptive behavior. While this may be true, they say little about the ontological aspects of disruptive behavior in the sense of students' pre-reflective interrelatedness with peers and teachers.

A desire to understand relational processes in school through an ontological lens constitutes the theoretical background for this thesis. My inspiration stems from the thoughts of the prominent philosophers Martin Heidegger and Hubert Dreyfus. In his magnum opus, "Being and Time" (originally published in 1927 as "Sein und Zeit"), Heidegger embarks on a journey to analyze the concept of Being (Heidegger, 2008)² Dreyfus interprets, builds and elaborates on Heidegger by presenting an original account of human understanding through his writings on skillful coping (Dreyfus & Wrathall, 2014). Addressing the entirety of Heidegger's Being and Time would be impossible and outside the scope of this thesis. Therefore, I have found Dreyfus's writings and elements from his Model of Skill Acquisition (or skill model) fruitful in my quest to understand disruptive behavior.

The overarching aim of this thesis is to conduct:

A conceptual and empirical exploration of disruptive behavior in schools

Conceptual exploration

The conceptual exploration of disruptive behavior consists of articles 1 and 2. The purpose of article 1 was to examine *how students cope with everyday disruptions*. The article is an effort to explore and understand disruptive behavior in an interdisciplinary perspective. Included are Heidegger's being-in-the-world (Heidegger, 2008), Dreyfus' skillful coping (Dreyfus & Wrathall, 2014) and Liquid Modernity (Bauman, 2000). Addressed are interactions and interrelatedness both inside, and outside, of the classroom-context. Amongst these contexts are the community in which the student is a member, pressures for perfection and the

² As my German is limited, the article will refer to the English translation of Being and Time, published in 2008.

fragmentation of knowledge in modern times. The article further discuss two developed terms based on Heidegger and Dreyfus. These are being-disrupted and being-disruptive, discussing possible ways of how students could cope with everyday disruptions. This article is currently under review as:

Ødegård, M. (2017). Being-disrupted and being-disruptive: Coping students in uncertain times”.

Article 2 addresses *how teachers cope with disruptive behavior*. This article has the classroom as its context and discusses teachers’ management of disruptive behavior. Concepts addressed are breakdown (Dreyfus, 1991) and elements from the skill model (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986), specifically at the point where teachers have knowledge about disruptive behavior and how to manage it, while still encountering challenges in their efforts to manage disruptive behavior. This article is in Norwegian in Norsk Pedagogisk Tidsskrift as:

Ødegård, M. (2014). Uro i skolen og den menneskelige væremåte. *Norsk pedagogisk tidsskrift*. ISSN 0029-2052. (3), s. 203-212

In English:

Ødegård, M. (2014). Disruptive behavior in school and the human way of being. *Norsk pedagogisk tidsskrift*. ISSN 0029-2052. (3), p. 203-212

Empirical exploration

The empirical exploration consisted of a quantitative questionnaire administered to Norwegian and American students of the ages 15-17. The aim was to capture their perception of disruptive behavior.

Article 3 examines research questions addressing *frequency of disruptive behavior, which kinds of disruptive behavior occurs most often, and what students say about their tolerance of disruptive behavior*. The findings from the questionnaire addressing these questions are discussed in light of previous research on disruptive behavior. The article is currently under review as:

Duesund, L & Ødegård, M. (2017): Students’ perceived experience of disruptive behavior in schools: A comparative study between schools in the US and Norway”.

Article 4 examines research questions regarding *how teachers and students react towards disruptive behavior* and *how the reactions of teachers and students influence the students who are disruptive in class*. Findings from the questions in the questionnaire that addresses these questions are discussed in light of earlier research and Dreyfus' concept of emotional involvement and responsibility, which is a core aspect within the skill model. The article is currently under review as:

Duesund, L. & Ødegård, M. (2017): Students' perceptions of reactions towards disruptive behavior in Norwegian and American schools.

1.3 Definitions

The following will provide very brief definitions of terminology used in the articles.

Disruptive behavior

For the purpose of this thesis, disruptive behavior is understood as something observable and unobservable. The observable aspects of disruptive behavior are in focus in the quantitative study, while other aspects of disruptive behavior are discussed in article 1. Article 3 defines disruptive behavior as *“any behavior that is perceived sufficiently off-task in the classroom, as to distract teachers and/or class-peers from learning activities”*.

Skillful coping and the model of skills acquisition

Skillful coping is the essence of being-in-the-world and refers to human beings' everyday understanding and how they are able to intuitively find their way in the world (Dreyfus, 1991; H. L. Dreyfus, 2004; Dreyfus & Wrathall, 2014) . Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) present a skill model that illustrates a phenomenological account of skill acquisition through five stages: (1) novice, (2) advanced beginner, (3) competence, (4) proficient, and (5) expertise.

Being-in-the-world and everyday intelligibility

Heidegger (2008) outlines being-in-the-world as the essence of the human way of being. The hyphens used are there to illustrate how people continuously try to make their world intelligible and how they have an active relation to the world. Human beings are in an unmediated active and dynamic relation to both equipment and other people while

influencing, and being influenced by them (Heidegger, 2008; Kelly, 1999). Everydayness is where the self exists together with others, not only as an “I”, but as “one like many” (Heidegger, 1949). Everyday intelligibility refers to public and everyday practices like holding a conversation (H. L. Dreyfus, 2004). In this thesis, everyday practices includes going to school.

Mood

Moods are general ways of being and influence our entire existence (e.g. depression or happiness). The term is not the same as emotions, which are more specific and directed towards something (e.g. anger at another person). In essence, mood determine our perception of the world, how we relate to it and what matters to us (Dreyfus & Kelly, 2011; Dreyfus & Wakefield, 2014; Heidegger, 1949).

1.4 Structure of the extended abstract

Chapter 2 presents a literature review of disruptive behavior. The chapter addresses how previous research defines disruptive behavior and what previous research says about disruptive behaviors’ prevalence. The chapter also presents research regarding management of disruptive behavior.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology of the research. The chapter briefly addresses the theoretical papers before presenting the research design, participants in the quantitative study, research credibility (validity and reliability), the questionnaire, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 presents summaries of the articles.

Chapter 5 serves as the conclusion of the thesis by outlining theoretical and empirical contributions.

2 Literature review

This chapter extends and elaborates on the literature reviews presented in each of the articles. The chapter includes a literature review describing how research defines disruptive behavior and recommended measures towards such behavior. Within the section on definitions of disruptive behavior, I will present broad categories of disruptive behavior. Thereafter, I will address issues about managing disruptive behavior. Finally, I discuss the literature review in relation to the focus of this thesis.

2.1 Defining disruptive behavior

A wide range of terminology describes behavior that is undesirable in a school-context. Amongst these are “problem behavior”, “misbehavior”, “off-task behavior”, and “disruptive behavior” (Bear, 1998; Charles, 2011; Deitz & Hummel, 1978; Ogden, 2009, p. 10; Ruttledge & Petrides, 2012). Common for all these are that the behaviors not follow the teachers’ instructions and are not connected with completion of required tasks (Colvin, 2010). Behaviors are considered disruptive if they are inappropriate in the setting in which they occur (Charles, 2011). In a school setting, such behaviors go against expectations, rules and norms, damage learning and teaching activities while also hindering students’ social development (Duesund, 2014; Ogden, 2009). As research applies different terminology, I will only apply “disruptive behavior” to be consistent in the terminology used throughout the thesis.

In educational research, there seems to be a tendency to categorize disruptive behavior to illustrate its degree of seriousness. The most general categorization is to divide such behaviors as internalizing and externalizing (Hinshaw & Steinberg, 1992). The latter is the focus of this thesis. The following will address two ways of categorizing disruptive behavior, with one general and one more specific and relevant to this thesis. “The disruptive behavior continuum” (Reed & Kirkpatrick, 1998), illustrate different kinds of disruptive behaviors and their degree of seriousness. Other authors applying similar categorizations are: (Charles, 2011; Levin & Nolan, 2010; Sørli & Nordahl, 1998; Zionts, Zionts, & Simpson, 2002). Sørli and Nordahl (1998) present four categories of disruptive behavior, (1) behavior that impairs learning and teaching, (2) social isolation, (3) extrovert behavior, (4) behavior that breaches rules and norms. In their categorization, (1) is claimed to be displayed by nearly all

students at some point during their schooling, with talking without permission one example. Table 2.1 illustrates an interpretation of the disruptive behavior continuum, based on the resources cited in this paragraph.

Table 2.1: The disruptive behavior continuum

Minor	Moderate	Major
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking out of turn in class • Unable to sit still • Avoiding to work on assigned tasks • Talking back to teacher or being rude towards others • Happens occasionally and is displayed by nearly all students at some point during their schooling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar behaviors as in the minor category • Certain students display this kind of behavior regularly and are defined as "disruptive students" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence • Crime • Intoxication • Bullying • Displayed by a small number of students • Both physical and emotional consequences for the ones who are subjects to the behavior or display it themselves • Measures often implemented both inside and outside of school.

NOTE: For the purpose of this thesis, the continuum is interpreted as fluent and dynamic as it is possible for students to decrease (or stop), or increase the seriousness of their disruptive behavior. Section 2.5 addresses this by presenting a discussion of these issues.

As mentioned in the introduction, minor to moderate disruptive behavior is the focus of this thesis. The following will address prevalence of disruptive behavior.

2.2 Prevalence of disruptive behavior in schools

The following will provide an overview of research on the prevalence of disruptive behavior. Comparative studies and studies from the perspective of students proved to be hard to come by, so only a few will be cited. The remaining studies are from the perspectives of teachers.

2.2.1 Students' perception of disruptive behavior

In PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) 2012 (Kjærnsli & Olsen, 2013), 29% of the students in the sample reported that disruptive behavior distracts them in all, or most, lessons in mathematics. The number is 12% less than 2003. In PISA 2000 and 2009, disruptive behavior were measured in lessons in Norwegian, where 39% of students said that they got distracted in all, or most, lessons in Norwegian. The results are similar in the annual Student Survey in Norway (Wendelborg, 2012), where almost 1/3 of the students claimed to

have been disturbed by disruptive behaviors.³ Some examples from the annual student survey are that in 2012, 31.1% of students claimed that other students often disturb them and 24.8% disagreed to there being a good working environment during class in 2013. Furthermore, 28% claimed does not listen to the teacher, and that they are not being quiet. As seen from these results, disruptive behavior seems to be a serious issue amongst the Norwegian students who participated in this survey.

2.2.2 Teachers' perception of disruptive behavior

Sørli and Ogden (2014) did a study of problem behavior in a 10-year perspective. In the study, they examined disruptive behavior displayed by students from the teachers' perspective. The results in the study indicate that minor disruptive behavior has decreased during 1998-2008. In 1998, 60.1% of teachers experienced students talking out of turn, against 40.5% in 2008. Students hindering each other had also decreased, with 33% in 1998 and 21.6% in 2008. Unnecessary noise in the classroom was at 25.3 % in 1998 and 23.7 % in 2008. Breaching of class/group/school rules was at 25% in 1998 and 23% in 2008. Students leaving their seat without permission were at 22.2% in 1998 and 22.7% in 2008. Students who purposefully refused to work with assignments were at 23.5% in 1998 and 18.4% in 2008. The frequency of students arriving late to school or class was at 8.1% in 1998 and 9.2% in 2008. Rude comments or answers towards the teacher were at 6.2% in 1998 and 5.6% in 2008.

Harrison, Vannest, Davis, and Reynolds (2012) conducted a study where teachers answered the Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC-2) and Teacher Rating Scales for children and adolescents (TRS-C and TRS-A). The aim of the study was to identify behaviors displayed by children or adolescents that teachers need to manage in classrooms. Teachers evaluated 3600 students in 375 sites across 257 cities in 40 states. The results identified common disruptive behaviors. As adolescents are the focus of this thesis, the following presents an excerpt of the results regarding this group. Adolescent students were described as “generally distracted” (15.7%), “distracted from task” (16.24%), ”distracted during lectures”

³ The operationalization of PISA and the annual student survey is different the one utilized in this thesis. PISA and the annual student survey use “noise and unrest”. For a more detailed discussion of the weaknesses regarding this, I refer to article 3 together with Professor Liv Duesund.

(11.57%), “lacking concentration” (12.18%), “short attention span” (13.4%), “misunderstanding directions” (8.67% for), “required repeated instructions” (11.8%), “did not follow instructions” (9.85%), “excessive movement” (17.76%), “silliness” (9.05%) and “talking without permission” (12.61%). Wheldall and Merrett (1988) performed a study on which types of disruptive behavior primary school teachers find most troublesome. The 198 teachers who responded rated “talking out of turn” (47%) and “hindering other children” (25%) as the most troublesome behaviors. Such findings are supported by studies examining which kinds of behavior teachers at higher levels (secondary school and high school) find most troublesome (Houghton, Wheldall, & Merrett, 1988; Little, 2005) As such, disruptive behavior seems to be a concern at several levels of schooling, even though much of the research devoted to disruptive behavior of minor to moderate character are focused on children below high school level.

Overall, it seems like students and teachers alike find disruptive behavior to be a frequent and challenging issue that impairs their intended activities at school. This endorses the assumption that disruptive behavior is one of the main challenges in schools, and that extensive efforts need to be implemented to manage the issue.

2.3 Managing disruptive behavior

Since disruptive behavior seems to be a prevailing issue, I examined resources devoted to studies on management of disruptive behavior. This includes strategies intended to prevent disruptive behavior as well as strategies implemented after its occurrence. The following will address school-wide approaches, classroom management and behavior management.

2.3.1 School-wide approaches

School-wide approaches to disruptive behavior can involve implementing various programs by teaching staff to enforce positive behavior and provide sanctions towards unwanted behavior (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, & Leaf, 2012; Payne, 2015). The success of such programs rely on length of implementation, if they are guided by an underlying theory and if they have single- or multi component interventions. “School-wide Positive Behavior Support” (SWBPS) has gained increased enthusiasm from researchers, policy makers and practitioners (Bradshaw et al., 2012; Chitiyo, May, & Chitiyo, 2012). SWBPS is a three-tiered program developed in

the US with an adapted Norwegian version named “Positive behavior, interaction and learning environment in school (PALS)”. These programs aim to prevent or decrease disruptive behavior, promote learning and social development amongst students (Kelm & McIntosh, 2012; Sørli & Ogden, 2015). I will not go further in-depth on what these programs entail, but several researchers (Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010; Luiselli, Putnam, Handler, & Feinberg, 2005; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997; Tobin & Sugai, 2005) illustrate positive effects of such programs. However, there are also studies that put forth weaknesses in implementation and methodology of these studies (Lane, Robertson, & Graham-Bailey, 2006). Another issue with these programs is that they are rarely introduced at secondary and high school level, meaning that the findings are mainly applicable for lower levels of schooling. Lane, Wehby, Robertson, and Rogers (2007) studied the effects of such programs on high-school students, with students with internalizing behavior problems being most responsive to the program and students with externalizing disruptive behavior being moderately or non-responsive.

Therefore, school-wide programs may be successful, but there does not seem to be total agreement of their success even though there is considerable enthusiasm for such programs. Furthermore, they are seldom implemented at secondary and high school levels (Lane et al., 2006; Lane et al., 2007). The students in focus in this thesis are of 15-17 years old, and the schools involved in this study had not implemented such programs at the time of data collection. As this is the case, the thesis will not lay further emphasis on such programs other than to comment on their existence and potential outcomes. The following will address issues directly related to activities inside classrooms and interactions between students, peers and teachers.

2.3.2 Approaches in classrooms

In classrooms, teachers are the natural leaders and the ones that should oversee and regulate the learning environment (Pas & Bradshaw, 2014). It is imperative that teachers establish relations of high quality with students, meaning relations with low levels of conflict and that promotes learning. Such relations are likely to prevent the occurrence of disruptive behavior (O'Connor, Dearing, & Collins, 2011). Within establishing such relations, classroom and behavior management are relevant phenomena. The following address these, by shedding light on how they can be distinguished and the characteristics of the two.

“Classroom management is broadly defined as “the actions teachers take to create an environment that supports and facilitates both academic and social-emotional learning”” (Dicke, Elling, Schmeck, & Leutner, 2015; Evertson & Weinstein, 2006).

As seen in this definition, classroom management is a broad field. It does not only include promoting social-emotional development, but also academic learning. The definition does not say anything about which actions teachers may take. Embedded in the actions teachers may take we find teaching styles (e.g. authoritarian, permissive, authoritative), teacher-student interactions, as well as ability to establish rules and norms in the classroom (Levin & Nolan, 2010; Walker, 2008, 2009; Wilks, 1996). As a brief conclusion, classroom management can seem to be a very broad field. Describing it fully is too comprehensive for this thesis. The focus in this case is when disruptive behavior has already occurred. While classroom management can be a useful tool to prevent disruptive behavior, it is not always successfully implemented. When this is the case, teachers may suffer from exhaustion if they are not successful in their efforts to manage their classrooms and facilitate a quiet environment and good possibilities for the students to learn (Dicke et al., 2014; Levin & Nolan, 2010).

The difference between classroom and behavior management is illustrated by the following definition of behavior management:

“the teacher's’ ability to provide clear behavioral expectations and use effective methods to prevent and redirect misbehavior” (Dobbs-Oates, Kaderavek, Guo, & Justice, 2011, p. 421; Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2008, p. 44).

Looking at the two definitions of classroom and behavior management, they both mention that it should promote something. They seem to be positively charged and a kind of solution to issues that may arise in schools. The main difference is that classroom management seems to be a more general approach that promotes both social and academic development. On the other hand, behavior management seems specifically directed towards disruptive behavior. If this interpretation is correct, behavior management is a part of classroom management. As such, the terms complement each other and are both important measures towards preventing or decreasing disruptive behavior.

Classroom management

Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Myers, and Sugai (2008) conducted a systematic review of literature on classroom management to examine kinds of classroom management methods that had proven effective in earlier research. They synthesized their findings by claiming that successful classroom management relies on teachers' abilities to: (1) maximize structure and predictability, (2) post, teach, review, monitor and reinforce expectations, (3) actively engage students in observable ways, (4) use a continuum of strategies to acknowledge appropriate behaviors, and (5) use a continuum of practices to respond to inappropriate behavior. Finally, they present the Classroom Management Assessment (CMA). CMA is a checklist for teachers and observers consisting of questions based on the five elements described above. If the teachers answer "yes" to 80% of the questions on the checklist, they are "effective".

Jacobsen and Thorsvik (1997) present basic activities of a leader, with Overland (2007) applying these to what he refers to as the baseline activities of teachers' classroom management. The activities are: (1) planning and organizing teaching and learning, (2) motivating students, (3) recognition, (4) support, (5) clarification, (6) consultation, (7) surveillance, (8) delegation, (9) conflict management and team-building, and (10) network building.

There are also very simple techniques that can be effective in managing disruptive behavior. Although conducted on a very small sample, Allday and Pakurar (2007) claim that greeting students can be an effective tool to keep students who displayed disruptive behavior on-task during class. Patterson (2009) examined the effect of greetings on a student's out-of-seat behavior. The results indicated that the student's out-of-seat behavior was reduced when the teacher greeted the student, and engaged him in conversation on any topic with comments from the teacher ranging from compliments to encouragement, coupled with verbal prompts (subtle, but direct instructions regarding teacher expectations). In my own master's thesis, the student seemed to be more on-task when being greeted by the teacher when coming late to class combined with clear instructions on what the class was doing and which materials were needed (Ødegård, 2011).

There are also risks of disruptive behavior spiraling out of control when teachers fail to manage such behavior. Ratcliff, Jones, Costner, Savage-Davis, and Hunt (2010) performed a one-year study of 34 second and fourth grade teachers and their 588 students. Six

unannounced observations took place in each teacher's classroom for a total of 240 minutes. Principals had rated teachers as "strong" or "needs improvement". The teachers displayed either instructional behavior (those characterized as strong) or managing behavior (those in need of improvement). In the classrooms of those teachers who needed improvement, a cycle of behavior emerged. The cycle went as follows: (1) student misbehavior, (2) teachers' attempt to control the misbehavior, (3) student's persistence in continued misbehavior, (4) teacher retreating in frustration, and (5) an increase in student misbehavior. Results indicated that the teachers characterized as "strong" spent more time on instructional matters and their students spent more time on learning. Other research also seems to back this up. When teachers spend most time on instruction, disruptive behavior seems to decrease as supposed to when they continuously react towards disruptive behavior and actively try to manage it after its occurrence. Simultaneously, this is a simplification. Teachers do not only need to spend more time on instruction to prevent disruptive behavior. Other factors also play an important part. For example, the student's perception of the teacher and the teachers' perception of the students defines how their relationship is. In this calculation, I include chemistry, talent for teaching and student's abilities and aptitudes.

Behavior management

Put roughly, behavior management strategies in schools can be either proactive or reactive (Clunies-Ross, Little, & Kienhuis, 2008). Proactive strategies intend to prevent a situation from occurring (Bear, 1998). Examples are enforcing positive behavior or establishing clear rules in the classroom. Reactive strategies take place after the disruptive behavior occurs. Ideally, these provide "appropriate" consequences by causing an unwanted situation to stop, or not escalate (Befring, 2003). Researchers seldom recommend reactive strategies because they are more likely to cause teachers reacting negatively to student misbehavior. Negative reactive strategies can lead to students losing engagement and motivation, and perceiving that they are being treated unfairly (Clunies-Ross et al., 2008; Greene, 2014).

There are clear indications that proactive behavior management strategies are substantially more successful than reactive strategies (Kauffman, Mostert, Trent, & Pullen, 2010; Shepherd & Linn, 2015), one might ask the question why the current study examine reactive strategies at all. Interestingly, there is a gap between research and practice in classroom when it comes to this topic. While researchers continuously recommend the use of proactive strategies,

studies indicate that reactive strategies are much more frequent in classrooms (Clunies-Ross et al., 2008; Shepherd & Linn, 2015). Eighty-four percent of the teachers in the study by Clunies-Ross et al. (2008) reported to have a sufficient degree of confidence in managing disruptive behavior, 49.5% had “much confidence” and 25.8% were “extremely confident”

In addition to proactive and reactive strategies, literature on behavior management also addresses the issue of praise, rewards, incentives, sanctions, deterrents and reprimands (Infantino & Little, 2005; Sharpe et al., 1987). A crucial aspect in this approach is that teachers and students agree on which positive and negative reactions to their behavior has the most fruitful outcome. According to Infantino and Little (2005), there is a gap between what teachers and students prefer in this regard. Without going into detail, they conclude that students often prefer free time and positive letters sent home. Such expectations are not realistic as teachers cannot issue a letter home and provide students with free time just because they are behaving according to the rules in the classrooms. Students perceived that the most effective sanctions when disruptive behavior occurred were things like being sent to the principal’s office or an unfavorable letter sent home to their parents, something teachers seldom do.

2.4 Comparing legislations in Norway and the US

As this thesis is comparative, I wish to provide some insight in the legislations in the two countries. I do this to shed light on what legislations and policies in the two countries say about disruptive behavior. Analyzing American policy documents proved to be a bit more challenging than in Norway.

The Norwegian Education Act does not mention either of the words “disruptive” (Norwegian: “uro”) or “behavior” (Norwegian: “atferd/oppførsel”). The closest the Norwegian Education Act comes to approach disruptive behavior is in section 9a-3, the psychosocial environment that states:

*“The school shall make active and systematic efforts to promote a good psychosocial environment, where individual pupils can experience security and social belonging”
(Ministry of Education and Research, 2007, p. 40)*

Disruptive behavior poses a threat to both students' security and social belonging. It is uncomfortable and may cause frustration, stress, burnout, lack of motivation and slow down social development (Dicke et al., 2014; Duesund, 2014; Ødegård, 2014). The Education Act goes further and in the same section, it says:

“If any school employee learns or suspects that a pupil is being subjected to offensive language or acts such as bullying, discrimination, violence or racism, he or she shall investigate the matter as soon as possible and notify the school leaders, and if necessary and possible, intervene directly” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2007, p. 40)

The section says nothing about disruptive behavior categorized as minor or moderate. As stated in Reed and Kirkpatrick (1998), behaviors like bullying and violence fall under the “major” category. This begs the question if the legislations in Norway emphasize the disruptive behavior addressed in this study at all. If so, it is troubling. In addition, teachers are supposed to intervene “if possible”. This is understandable as major disruptive behavior can lead to physical harm. But as seen in the discussion in Ødegård (2014), not intervening in some way or another might be impossible as students and teachers are always interacting, especially when the disruptive behavior is of a minor to moderate character. In further examination, I studied the National Curriculum in Norway looking for any mention of disruptive behavior. Similar to the education act, it mentions the psychosocial environment and that it shall promote health, well-being and learning (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2006). In conclusion, it seems like the Norwegian school system does not directly address disruptive behavior in its most overarching documents.

The American Education act seem to address disruptive behavior and mentions the word “behavior” four times. Most notably, it says that schools may do the following when addressing the needs of all children:

“implementation of a schoolwide tiered model to prevent and address problem behavior, and early intervening services, coordinated with similar activities and services, coordinated with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act” (U.S Department of Education, 2015, p. 69).

This section addresses disruptive behavior in general, not only the ones categorized as major. Even though disruptive behavior is addressed, the word “behavior” is only mentioned four times in 449 pages in the American Education Act. It seems like legislations in the two countries say little about disruptive behavior and how to manage such an issue. This raises a

two-fold reflection. Firstly, disruptive behavior might be considered a local issue that schools are to take care of themselves. Secondly, it might be concerning that central policy documents and legislations do not address what is one of the most serious challenges in schools.

2.5 Reflections on the previous research

The previous research and literature warrants some reflections relevant to the focus of this thesis. Categorizing disruptive behaviors could prove advantageous due to providing classifications of different kinds of behaviors that may occur in classrooms and lead to understanding and identification of specific behaviors and which measures are appropriate to manage them. Major disruptive behaviors are often the focus in research (Hogan & Quay, 1999; Jaffee, Hanscombe, Haworth, Davis, & Plomin, 2012; Kaynak, Lepore, Kliwer, & Jaggi, 2015). The expressions of such behavior causes grave consequences to those displaying it as well of those who are victims of it. These kinds of behaviors could include disorders and the behavioral expressions are not always something schools or teachers can manage themselves.

The major kinds of disruptive behavior are not the focus of this thesis, as the root of disruptive behavior is not always a disorder. I focus on “minor” to “moderate”, which are the most common kinds of disruptive behavior and the categorization of disruptive behavior in the questionnaire referred to in this thesis includes such behaviors. Such behaviors could be interpreted as normal within the classroom ecology and depend on students’ relations with peers and teachers (Brown-Wright et al., 2013). However, these kinds of behavior could be misinterpreted as an expression of major disruptive behavior. There seems to be a disproportionate number of students referred to school counsellors for disruptive behavior. Counsellors receive referrals that are not proportionate with the behavior displayed. Further predictors of referrals are gender and race, which should not be relevant when referring students to counsellors and/or other institutions (Bryan, Day-Vines, Griffin, & Moore-Thomas, 2012). This is contrary to one aspect of inclusion, namely that there should be an understanding of social, emotional and educational issues that may affect students’ learning (Florian & Linklater, 2010; Nilsen, 2017).

Another issue worth commenting on is the one regarding the gap of the most effective measures towards disruptive behavior as perceived by students and teachers. While students

perceived that detention and being sent to the principal's office were most effective, teachers did not do this very often. Infantino and Little (2005, p. 504) goes on to say: "Unfortunately, many teachers are not using these deterrents". This conclusion is puzzling. If we are to have a learning environment that is inclusive and adapted for all, the question begs who such practices are favorable for. Excluding students who display disruptive behavior from class might be comfortable for the teacher and other students, but what about the ones who are excluded? And who is to be excluded when minor to moderate disruptive behavior is displayed by nearly all students at some point during their schooling? Although it is understandable that exclusionary practices can seem most effective for those not displaying disruptive behavior, it could seem like such practices involves avoiding the challenge disruptive behavior "for the greater good" rather than trying to manage it in the classroom.

Misinterpreting the nature of the displayed disruptive behavior also bears consequences for special needs education and general education. Special needs education often gets organized into smaller groups. Such groups consist of students with a wide array of difficulties. Misinterpreting behavior and wrongfully placing students in such group is an important concern as teachers often have neutral or negative attitudes towards including students who are receiving special needs education in mainstreamed classrooms (de Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2011).

For the purpose of this thesis, the disruptive behavior continuum is fluid and dynamic as students may decrease or increase their disruptive behaviors and move between and within the categories minor, moderate and major. Tolerance of other students and the teacher is also an important concern. In addition, behavior interpreted as disruptive in one classroom is not necessarily disruptive in another.

While categorizations of disruptive behavior could indeed be helpful, it is important to not take them too far. DeBruyn and Larson (2009) outlines 124 kinds of disruptive behavior. The terminology they apply includes "The Attention Demander", "The Bully", "The Disrespectful", "The Procrastinator" and "The Interrupter". The comprehensive list that they outline could provide negative consequences as it may close the reflections needed to understand students who display disruptive behavior. With such extensive categorization, there is a risk of stigma in the sense that the students get labeled by their behavior and not as human beings. A visible behavior is only part of the student, and not the student himself or herself. Labeling students could involve social stigma as they might struggle to get out of the

“box” they are placed in and be perceived negatively by teachers and peers. This poses a risk to inclusion an understanding of students (Bell, Long, Garvan, & Bussing, 2011).

Another approach that might be helpful when trying to understand disruptive behavior is asking the question if such behavior could be interpreted across different disciplines. Utilizing an interdisciplinary perspective could go further than telling us what disruptive behavior looks like in classrooms. It could also provide us with perspectives on what such behavior means and how to interpret it. Different disciplines provide examinations of backgrounds of disruptive behavior, as well as what disruptive behavior means. Causes for disruptive behavior could be boredom, misperception of teachers' intent, academic underachievement, misunderstandings, or just for fun (Redl, 1979). In addition to this, students may have problems in other arenas than school (Befring & Duesund, 2012), have poor mentalization skills (Duesund, 2014; Skårderud & Duesund, 2014), struggling with coping with their lives (H. L. Dreyfus, 2004) experience pressure from society (Bauman, 2000), and teachers' may provide inadequate reactions towards disruptive behavior (Banfield, Richmond, & McCroskey, 2006; Chaplain, 2003; Greene, 2014; Ødegård, 2014).

The section provided about previous research includes very few comparative studies, as they proved hard to come by. Disruptive behavior seems to be an issue in western school-systems. Schools in western countries do not use identical approaches and even though there are cultural similarities, there are differences with regard to aspects like culture, school-organization, teacher approaches and requirements for student achievement. This illustrates the need for comparisons and knowledge across countries to gain further understanding about disruptive behaviors across countries, cultures and contexts.

The literature cited on managing disruptive behavior to a large degree addresses reinforcements and sanctions towards disruptive behavior. Such programs often include behavioristic principles of rewards and sanctions towards specific kinds of behavior that all students and teachers are to follow (Nash et al., 2016; Payne, 2015). According to Payne (2015), extensive behaviorist principles used towards behavior management take little regard for students as active agents. When reviewing literature on managing disruptive behavior, terms like “plans” and “goals” are frequent. This made me wonder about the issue of intuition in classrooms with disruptive behavior. The literature rarely seem to address this issue. In the upcoming chapter, I will address the issue of intuition and skill-development in relation to disruptive behavior.

3 Theoretical framework

This chapter presents the theoretical framework used in this thesis. Since 2010, Hubert Dreyfus has been the main inspiration of my academic work, together with his readings of Martin Heidegger. Zygmunt Bauman's "Liquid Modernity" and "Community" came in 2014 when I found the need to put disruptive behavior in a social picture and not only as coping practices. In this thesis, I have included two conceptual explorations of disruptive behavior (article 1 and 2). Common for both these articles (as well as article 4) is utilization of "coping" and "skill" (Dreyfus, 1991; H. L. Dreyfus, 2004; Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986, 2014; S. E. Dreyfus, 2004). To address this issue, I concluded that I need to outline "The Model of Skill Acquisition" (commonly referred to as "the skill model") in its entirety. My rationale for doing so is that this model serves as the linchpin for the discussions provided in the aforementioned articles.

The skill model has come under some scrutiny. Questions asked are whether the model is only applicable to adult skill-acquisition (S. E. Dreyfus, 2004), if it mainly relates to our dealings with equipment, or if it does not account for culture and socializations influences on skill-development (Cash, 1995; Duesund, 1995; Duesund & Jespersen, 2004; Eriksen, 2011; Selinger & Crease, 2002). While pondering these issues, I found that Dreyfus actually accounts for such criticism by presenting what he calls Heidegger's basic theses. Two of these are:

"(a) People have skills for coping with equipment, other people, and themselves; (b) their everyday practices conform to public norms" (H. L. Dreyfus, 2004, p. 266)

In Dreyfus' view, skills do not only relate to usage of equipment, but also other people and oneself. Students do not only learn how to use equipment they come across in school, nor do they only need to learn academic skills like reading or arithmetic. School is also one of the core social arenas for students. While teachers and students are there to facilitate both academic and social learning, they are also agents that may distort these processes. Students also need to cope with themselves. An interpretation of this is that they need to cope with internal states like making sense of their surroundings on a personal and interpersonal level. Everyday practices referred to can be interpreted as going to school, or being-in-school (Ødegård, 2014), while examples of the public norms are explicit and tacit rules of the

classroom. To further underscore the sensitivity Dreyfus has about the social aspects of everyday coping, he draws on Heidegger and presents being-with-others (Dreyfus, 2013). In this case, being-with-others involves that students are attuned to each other and the teacher. As human beings are always in some kind of mood⁴, such attunement is a fundamental way of being-with-one-another (Dreyfus, 2013). Although this brief passage does not fully cover the skill models applicability in social situations, it provides some context to the upcoming discussion by considering the fruitfulness of a social approach in the skill model.

3.1 The Skill model

The following presents a description of the skill model, in light of how students cope with their lives at school and with other people. To present the skill model as not merely a linear model, I will address some of its phenomenological underpinnings.

3.1.1 Philosophical underpinnings of the skill model

Hubert Dreyfus has done extensive work on interpreting Martin Heidegger's philosophy. My own account of Heidegger is an interpretation of his original texts, but I mainly place myself within the Dreyfusian interpretations. In my view, Dreyfus' interpretations of the complex works of Heidegger provide fascinating accounts of how an incredibly complex (and occasionally vague) philosophy is applicable in everyday situations that require utilization of different skills. Even though Heidegger did not apply the word skill in his writings, Dreyfus sees him as the first philosopher that regarded skillful coping as the primary way of understanding ourselves and the world (H. L. Dreyfus, 2004; Eriksen, 2011).

According to Summers (2004), skills underlie nearly all domains of disruptive behavior. Skills people utilize can be anything from unreflective bodily movement (e.g. walking) to tasks that traditionally have been considered mainly cognitive, like chess and math problems (Eriksen, 2011). A core element in this thesis is trying to understand students' perception and

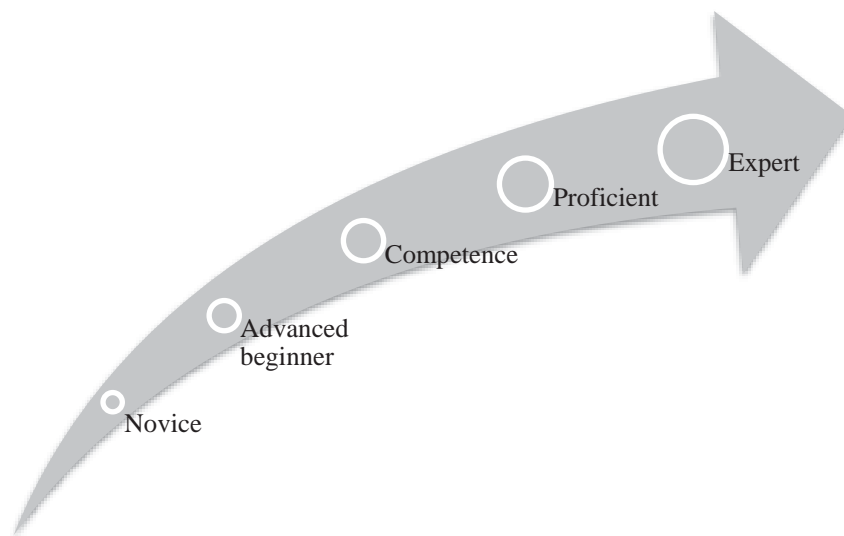
⁴ The term "attunement" is also frequent in Heidegger's work, meaning that we are "tuned in" on things in the world. Heidegger goes on to connect this to the concept of "mood", which he claims to be what constitute how we find ourselves in the world (Heidegger, 2008; Ratcliffe, 2013). Further discussion of the term "mood" is found in articles 1 and 2.

understanding of their world. Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986, p. 4) build on Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Wittgenstein, presenting human understanding as:

“a skill akin to knowing how to find one’s way about in the world, rather than knowing a lot of facts and rules for relating them. Our basic understanding was thus a knowing how rather than knowing that”

The skill model builds on this understanding by not being a linear way to achieving expertise, but rather as a way that we cope with the world. As such, the skill model does not only address cognitive reflection and learning, but also pre-reflective and non-mentalistic aspects of how humans cope with their being-in-the-worlds. Further issues addressed in the skill model are how human beings intuitively cope with the world around them, and how these processes influence them both academically and emotionally. Figure 3.1 illustrates the stages in the skill-model.

Figure 3.1: Illustration of the skill model



Equally important to the model is the term coping. The question asked is how do people cope with challenges in their daily lives. In this thesis, *everyday coping* is the point of departure for understanding how students cope with their lives at school. The term involves:

“everyday coping with things and people—involves explicit beliefs and hypotheses, these can only be meaningful in specific contexts and against a background of shared practices” (Dreyfus, 2014, p. 130).

⁵ The term being-in-the-world is more thoroughly addressed in articles 1 and 2. To avoid extensive repetition, it will not be addressed any further in this chapter.

In this case, “specific contexts” involves schools and classrooms and “shared practices” involves attending schools and students’ relation to peers and teachers. Another issue illustrated in the citation is “things and people”. Students need to cope with things in their lives (both material and psychological), as well as the people around them (specifically those in schools and classrooms). The following will provide a brief presentation of each stage in the skill model, including examples of how students may cope with school and disruptive behavior.

Addressing how students may cope with disruptive behavior is an issue that includes both pre-reflective and reflective components. They cannot avoid influence from it, but that they can cope with it on both a pre-reflective and a reflective level. On a pre-reflective level, (disruptive) behavior is direct and spontaneous reactions to ones surroundings. On the reflective level, or within “willed action” (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 2014), the action has its source in the self. The action is chosen and a behavior is displayed because the agent wished to do so and feels responsible for the action (Mandelbaum, 1969). These discussions present a potentially interesting aspect for the issue of students’ behavior in the sense that it can be chosen, a response or way of reacting to the surroundings. Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2014) present this discussion in relation to “ethical expertise” or the “social virtuoso”, which have practical wisdom and is a master of his or her culture. These terms address an everyday coping concerned with how we refine behavior based on experience from similar situations to the one we find ourselves in (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 2014; Eriksen, 2010). Benner (2004) applies the skill model to discuss how nurses develop skills within their practices. Similar to this, Eriksen (2010) discuss ethical, moral and intuitive decisions of soldiers within the framework of the skill model. These examples might seem as outside the scope of this thesis. However, their application is not. Benner (2004) and Eriksen (2011) discuss ethical behavior and apply it to different practices within different disciplines and contexts. As such, I find their discussions fruitful and inspiring for my own account of how the skill model relates to disruptive behavior and everyday coping in a school context.

3.1.2 Novice

The novice student is dependent on rules and recipes for actions and has no experience or understanding of the situation he or she finds themselves in (Benner, 2004; Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Duesund, 1995). Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2014) apply an example of a student

driver. When a student driver first enters a car, he or she needs to know the basic characteristics of the car. Amongst these characteristics, the student needs to get familiar with instruments of the car (steering wheel, clutch, gear). The student will also need to learn basic operations of these instruments. The instructor breaks down the environment into context-free elements that the student driver can recognize without possessing the skill of driving. H. L. Dreyfus (2004) also applies an example of a young child, with a basic rule for appropriate behavior in culture and society being “never tell a lie”⁶.

At the novice level, children have no experience with a classroom-context, including assigned tasks and which rules to follow. In addition, they are not yet familiar with the role of being a student. Nor do they have any experience with disruptive behavior during class. Children need to learn simple things like finding their ways to the classroom as well as rules for appropriate behavior. Another example of a novice student is the need for learning the alphabet before being able to read.

Teachers are novices when they are at an early stage in their education. In fact, they are not teachers, but student teachers. They are in need of schooling in how to manage their classrooms, and an abundance of situations will seem new to them without proper instruction. The novice teacher needs to get familiar with the curriculum that is taught, as well as utilizing strategies to facilitate learning in the best possible way.

3.1.3 Advanced beginner

When the novice gains experience in coping with situations and recognizes new aspects, he or she learns to apply general maxims as the foundation for action. In contrast to the rules and recipes followed by the novice, maxims followed by the advanced beginner are dependent on prior knowledge about the situation (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Polanyi, 1958). When the student driver has learned the basic features of the car, it is gradually understood that the need for shifting gear is not only when the speedometer is at a certain point, but also when the engine is racing (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 2014). A child never telling a lie might get into conflicts if his or her honesty hurts other people and is considered inappropriate by others. The child

⁶ Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2014) notes that this example is “greatly oversimplified and dramatic”. The presentation and discussion of the skill model applied in this section is by no means exhaustive, but applied as to illustrate that the skill model can also be applicable on social behavior and actions. Articles 1 and 2 providing further reflections and nuance to the discussion.

will then gradually replace the rule “never tell a lie” with the maxim “never lie except in situations when making everyone feel good is what matters (H. L. Dreyfus, 2004, p. 267).

When a student progresses through grades, he or she recognizes new aspects within the classrooms. The students might change classes and teachers and thus need to interact with unfamiliar people and surroundings. As schooling goes on, students gradually get more responsibility for themselves in the sense that academic demands increase in the form of tests and grades. When students get older, they might also experience that different teachers have different approaches within their classrooms when it comes to rules and what is considered appropriate behavior. It is common that tolerance for disruptive behavior varies between classrooms. Students experience that the rules they learned earlier are not necessarily facts, but flexible. In addition, the students can no longer only look to their teachers for right answers and what is considered appropriate behaviors. As students get older, peer-comparison become stronger, meaning that teachers are not the sole agents of feedback (and maybe not even the most important).

Benner (2004) refers to new graduates as advanced beginners. Newly graduated practitioners would have studied practices and principles relevant to their work, but will not yet have performed them in their profession and experienced actual responsibility for their actions. Novice teachers will have experience with teaching and facilitating learning for their students, but they are not able to be emotionally involved in the situations they are facing. Practitioners that are advanced beginners often rely on rules and principles found in textbooks. Teachers who are advanced beginners are emotionally detached and inflexible in their approach to student-behavior and teaching (Gottlieb, 2015).

3.1.4 Competent

When the advanced beginner gains experience and recognize more and more relevant procedures and elements, he or she might lose track of what is important in each situation. The performer may wonder how anyone can master the skill due to many alternatives for action. This stage is an “emotional rollercoaster” because the magnitude of information, possible procedures and tasks become overwhelming (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986). To cope with this overload, the student needs to learn to create a plan or choose a perspective to “filter out” alternatives for action. By choosing a few alternatives, it is easier for the student to understand the task at hand and to make decisions on what is important.

At the level of competence, Dreyfus moves from addressing children to addressing adolescents. When a young person becomes an adolescent, he or she has experience with when to tell a lie or not. He or she now recognizes several situations wherein this rule is appropriate or inappropriate. At the stage of competence, the adolescents are able to decide the objective of the situation, such as manipulating a person for his or her own good or establishing trust (H. L. Dreyfus, 2004). If the adolescent stands in a situation that he or she does not recognize, this becomes more complex. He or she is no longer able to lean on previous rules and experience, which can be frightening as the outcome of the situation is unknown. Herein lies the issue of a deeper emotional involvement in the task, which is the foundation for further development and especially within expertise (Eriksen, 2011).

A competent student will be aware of the rules in the classroom. If the student wants attention (regardless of it being positive or negative), disruptive behavior could provide this. In such cases, the behavior is “willed” (Mandelbaum, 1969), and the outcome most likely known. There are other situations however, where students do not “willfully” display disruptive behavior. Such situations can arise when assigning the student tasks that are too demanding, or as a reaction to disruptive behavior displayed by other students. Furthermore, adolescent students get additional academic and social demands. In contrast to the advanced beginners, they now need to choose which actions are appropriate in a certain situation. This task can be daunting because they do not know the outcome of their actions. Students need to “filter out” what is most important for them in a school setting. Such aspects could be academic achievement, social appraisal from peers and positive feedback from the teachers. If we connect this to literacy, the competent reader can comprehend text. However, the text may have many aspects that stand out as equally important. As such, it could be a big challenge to choose which aspects are most important and likely to be fruitful on an exam, essay or even in a doctoral thesis.

The competent teacher is likely to have experience in teaching and interactions with students. When disruptive behavior occurs, the competent teacher might be able to respond adequately in the situation (meaning that disruptive behavior stops or decreases). His or her actions continues to be based on choice and detached understanding, but he or she is emotionally involved in the outcome. One might claim that the competent teacher can respond appropriately in many situations when disruptive behavior occurs, but are not able to do so

when experiencing a new kind of disruptive behavior or the responses that he or she has applied before does not work as intended⁷.

3.1.5 Proficient

The proficient performer is emotionally involved in the task at hand and has an intuitive understanding of the situation, but still needs to make a deliberate choice on how to act (Benner, 2004; Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 2005; Eriksen, 2010). The student has accepted that choosing a path can be frightening and is now emotionally involved in the task, which enables further development of the skill (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 2014). The proficient student can now discriminate between what is important in a situation and set goals for what he or she wants to achieve. At the same time, the proficient performer is not guaranteed success. He or she lack experience with outcomes of situations where a goal has been set. When the student-driver approaches a curve on a rainy day and sensing that the car is going too fast, he or she must decide whether to slow down by using the breaks or just letting go of the gas-pedal. Important time might be lost in this process, but the proficient driver is more likely to navigate the curve successfully. The competent driver needs to, in addition to just assessing to break or letting go of the gas-pedal, assess the angle of the curve, look at the speedometer and evaluate the sensory experience of the car going too fast (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 2014).

Proficient students will intuitively know what is the right way to behave in the classroom or to approach a demanding task as they are better “attuned” to the classroom and those present. (Benner, 2004, p. 197) applies the term “attunement”, meaning “flexible fusion of thought, feeling and action”⁸. However, there is a vast amount of ways of reacting and fewer ways of observing what is happening (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 2005). For example, disruptive behavior can be contagious in classrooms (see article 4). Even though students know that they are not to respond to disruptive behavior by becoming disruptive themselves, many of them report that this occurs. Their intuitive response might be to display disruptive behavior themselves, but this is not appropriate in a classroom-context. As such, they are not yet able to act

⁷ These issues are further addressed in article 2, with Heidegger’s concept of breakdown (Dreyfus, 1991). I will not use teachers as examples in the following as this article specifically addresses the stage of competence and above in relation to behavior management.

intuitively in a way that benefits themselves and other students. In such cases, as Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005, p. 787) claim, the proficient performer must return to detached following of rules and maxims.

3.1.6 Expert

At expert level, the student is highly emotionally involved in the task. Where the proficient student needs to choose how to act, the expert student does so intuitively. Through vast experience the expert has learned how to respond to situations and distinguish what is important as well as how to act (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986, 2014). This has similarities with “absorbed coping”, involving a person intuitively responding to a situation or performing a task without thinking about what he or she is doing while performing the task successfully (Dreyfus, 1991). The expert driver does not need to evaluate possibilities for action when approaching the curve. He or she navigates the curve seamlessly by automatically and intuitively choosing the correct way of getting through the curve safely without losing time on reflection. In the words of Stuart Dreyfus:

“What must be done, simply is done” (S. E. Dreyfus, 2004).

H. L. Dreyfus (2004, p. 264) claims that “most children grow up to become “ethical experts who have learned to tell the truth or lie spontaneously, depending on the situation, without appeal to rules or maxims”. Herein lies a challenge in relation to disruptive behavior. The skill model says little about moral and normative standards (Eriksen, 2010). In a school context, such standards are unavoidable. It is not acceptable to disturb other students in their work, regardless of the behavior displayed is “willed” or pre-reflective. Although it might be unrealistic, the student who is an expert at everyday coping in school can intuitively find what is important in each class and each social situation that he or she encounters. This involves performing desired tasks with high quality, positive peer-interaction as well as being perceived positively by the teacher and peers. However, being an expert in all aspects of everyday life seems utopic. The idea of students as ethical experts by getting along and interacting positively is just one aspect of a much larger picture.

3.2 A comment on intuition

As seen in the literature review (chapter 2), there is little focus on the role of intuition in relational processes in schools and classrooms. Much of the literature cited provide plans, goals and desired outcomes. They seem to be characterized by cognitivist, behaviorist and rationalist views on how to manage disruptive behavior. As the skill model illustrates, intuition plays a major part in developing skills in any domain, and also in human behavior (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986, 2014). As schools include a large amount of social practices, it would be puzzling if there were no intuitive actions provided from students and teachers. A search for literature on intuition in relation to schools and behavior provided very few hits relevant for this thesis. There are some resources addressing the issue (Abshire, 1986; Lim, 2015), but it does not seem to be emphasized in educational research. The question begs if intuitive practices are at all researchable and if we ever will be able to know if a person is acting intuitively or deliberately. Observing, interviewing and surveying would probably not be sufficient to determine if people are acting intuitively and we might have to turn to neuroscience to get tangible indications on the matter (Eriksen, 2011). With this said, this thesis does not explore intuition empirically. It is part of the conceptual exploration, with everyday practices and coping the main points of emphasis. The role intuition plays in this thesis is the assumption that it is needed to go beyond restrictions of rules and prior knowledge and that a large amount of human behavior cannot be fully explained, including motives, reactions, moods and emotions. Although intuition is not directly studied, the applied theoretical framework and articles lays a foundation for further research on disruptive behavior and human behavior in a school setting in general. To finish this section, I wish to point out what Dreyfus calls the “radical innovator” as addressed in article 1. This is not necessarily an expert in a certain skill, but a person with an attitude of expertise, meaning that he or she behaves in a way that opens up the world (Wrathall, 2014). As disruptive behavior is an issue that has been troubling for decades, it might be fruitful to open up for a wide array of perspectives and analyses on the matter.

4 Methodology

As stated in the introduction (chapter 1), this thesis is both conceptual and empirical. The empirical part of the study was a quantitative questionnaire about disruptive behavior, administered to students. This chapter provides (1) overview of methods applied in the study, (2) research design, (3) sampling, (4) credibility (validity and reliability), and (5) research ethics.

The methodology in this thesis is based on mixed methods research, which is defined as:

“the type of research in which a researcher or a team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g. use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purpose of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration” (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007, p. 123).

Next to qualitative and quantitative methods, mixed methods are referred to as the “third paradigm” in research. Mixing methodologies allow researchers to provide strength and reduce weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative methods applied separately (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Johnson et al. (2007) emphasize that mixed methods researchers should let the research question guide their approach, as supposed to being “faithful” towards one direction within methodology and philosophy of science. Therefore, they introduce “dialectical pragmatism”.

“We specifically call our version of pragmatism “dialectical pragmatism”, because a philosophy for mixed research should carefully listen to ideas, assumptions, and approaches found in qualitative and quantitative research and in any other relevant domain (e.g. perspectives found in different academic disciplines, viewpoints of different stakeholders and social groups” (Johnson & Christensen, 2014, p. 32).

This citation serves as an explanation of the approach in the study. In addition to mixing qualitative and quantitative methods, I also draw inspiration from ideas within education, philosophy (Dreyfus, Heidegger) and sociology (Bauman) interdisciplinary perspective (including education, philosophy and sociology).

4.1 About the conceptual analyses (articles 1 and 2).

Before moving further, I wish to provide some comments on article 1 and 2. These did not take part in the methodological process discussed below. Articles 1 and 2 did not follow qualitative nor quantitative methodology. The two papers are conceptual analyses of disruptive behavior in school. After reviewing literature on disruptive behavior, I found that philosophical perspectives were lacking in the literature and not sufficient to communicate the interdisciplinary aims in this thesis. Both article 1 and 2 are based on the review of previous research (chapter 2), my own master's theses within the project. Other than that, the articles do not follow any specific procedure other than building on my previous work on Dreyfus and Heidegger, while expanding upon and introducing new perspectives (particularly those of Zygmunt Bauman).

4.2 The comparative perspective

The underlying goal of comparative research is to search for differences and commonalities and could reveal unique aspects of social entities (Mills et al., 2006). Specifically, this thesis falls within cross-national research (Porter & Gamoran, 2002), comparing results from Norway and the US.

To avoid repetition, this section will only point readers towards where comparative perspectives are discussed in this thesis as they are addressed throughout. Articles 3 and 4 compare the results found in Norway and the US. Section 2.4 compares legislations in Norway and the US, 4.4.3 illustrates differences and commonalities in the organization of the Norwegian and American school system and 4.7 compares and discuss ethical guidelines and legislations for research in the two countries.

4.3 Research design

Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011) and Johnson and Christensen (2014) point out that mixed methods researchers have a large degree of freedom regarding how they want to design their research, and how they want to mix methodologies. The following will briefly outline some of the most common designs of mixed methods research, with main emphasis on the design applied in this case.

“The four basic mixed methods designs are the convergent parallel design, the explanatory sequential design, the exploratory sequential design, and the embedded design” (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011, p. 68).

In the typology of mixed methods research designs, we find two fundamental dimensions. Firstly, the qualitative and quantitative components might be concurrent or sequential. Secondly, the qualitative and quantitative components could be of equal or different importance. A quantitative component might be supplemental to the qualitative or the qualitative supplemental to the quantitative (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011; Morgan, 1998; Morse, 1991).

This thesis uses elements from an exploratory and sequential design (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Table 4.1 illustrates the four phases in this study.

Table 4.1 Research design

Phase 1: Designing qualitative strand data collection	Phase 2: Analyzing data from the qualitative strand and developing questionnaire	Phase 3: Implementation of questionnaire and data collection	Phase 4: Analyzing data from the questionnaire
1. Develop observation schedule	1. Comparing qualitative data	1. Obtaining contact with schools and teachers	1. Coding data
2. Identify kinds of disruptive behaviors	2. Develop categories for questionnaire	2. Implement questionnaire in Norwegian and American schools	2. Analyzing quantitative data using statistical software
	3. Obtain approvals for conducting research in Norway and the United States		3. Presenting quantitative data
	4. Pilot survey instrument		
	5. Revising and finalizing questionnaire		

NOTE 1: This table is illustrated in article 3 and 4, but as a figure. It is presented as a table here to elaborate on the figure illustrated in the aforementioned articles.

NOTE 2: Phase 1 included more elements, but the table only illustrates my involvement in the study, which started at the qualitative data collection.

This study consists of four interrelated phases. The qualitative data served as a foundation for the categories in the quantitative questionnaire and the questionnaire findings elaborate on the

qualitative results phases. Exploratory sequential designs creates possibilities for: (a) exploring phenomena; (b) the quantitative data can be used to interpret qualitative data, and (c) qualitative data can be applied to create an instrument for collecting quantitative data due to previous instruments being determined as insufficient or non-existent for the purpose of the specific study (Creswell, Plano-Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003; Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Morgan, 1998; Morse, 1991). In this study, (a) and (c) are in focus. As there are few comparative studies on disruptive behavior and inconsistent use of instruments, these issues needed to was addressed with the purpose of exploration and clarification before collecting data. The next sections provide elaboration on these issues through a descriptive presentation of the research design.

4.3.1 Phase 1: Designing the qualitative strand and data collection

The purpose of the qualitative strand was to identify, categorize and characterize types of minor to moderate disruptive behavior observed during class. Norwegian students at master's level provided qualitative data by observing one student chosen by the teachers in Norwegian and American schools⁹. The samples consisted of students in the ages 12-17. The research group¹⁰ provided the master's students with additional training within observation and the use of a pre-developed observation schedule.

4.3.2 Phase 2: Analyzing data from the qualitative strand, develop questionnaire and sampling procedure

When analyzing the qualitative data, I applied excerpts from the theses describing the disruptive behavior they had identified. I then coded these in categories, looking for the most commonly reported behaviors. To adjust for cultural and contextual differences, the work of master's students in Norway and the US were analyzed separately. This involved taking into account how the schools and classrooms were organized physically (placement of students in classrooms), academically (teaching methods, class-size), as well as differences and commonalities in interactions between student-student and teacher-student (rules and norms in the classrooms). The categories in the questionnaire are on the results of the qualitative

⁹ When referring to the two cities in Norway and the US, I address a city in the eastern part of Norway and a city on the west coast of the US.

¹⁰ The research group contains scholars from Norway and the US, within the disciplines of education, special needs education, sociology, psychology and philosophy.

study identifying categories of disruptive behavior. The main categories in the qualitative data were: (1) wandering in classroom; (2) talking out of turn, subject-related, (3) refusing to carry out instructions from the teacher, (4) talking out of turn, not subject-related. The questionnaire consists of 23 items, described in section 4.4.3 and in appendix 1.

In the development of the questionnaire, I conducted three pilot studies in Norway and one in the US to validate the questionnaire. The questionnaire was then piloted on a sample of about 70 Norwegian students and 90 American students. To strengthen the validity of the questionnaire, I discussed the draft with scholars in the research group. I also had meetings with teachers (Norwegian and American) and students (Norwegian)¹¹ in the ages 15-17 to try to ensure that students were able to understand the questions. I used their feedback to refine the language and clarity of the questions. School officials in the US also provided assistance in translating the questionnaire to English so that it would be understandable for American students.

4.3.3 Phase 3: Implementation of questionnaire and quantitative data collection

The questionnaire was implemented in paper-and-pencil format and I was present in the classroom at all times during data collection. Implementing a questionnaire in paper-and-pencil format may increase the possibility for some students to be more comfortable with revealing information about their own and others' behavior (Eaton et al., 2010; Raghupathy & Hahn-Smith, 2013). Having a researcher present in the classroom while implementing the questionnaire increased the likelihood of the procedures of data collection going as planned. The presence of a researcher (myself) allows some control over issues like students' proximity to each other while simultaneously being able to answer any questions that students may have about the content of the questionnaire.

4.3.4 Phase 4: Analyzing data from questionnaire

All 23 items in the questionnaire have a response rate above 95%, which indicates that there is a very low likelihood that the missing data will distort the findings (Fowler, 2013). Based

¹¹ Due to approvals and legislations, I did not have the opportunity to have meetings with American students prior to the implementation of the questionnaire.

on this theoretical rationale, missing data was excluded from the analysis represented in articles 3 and 4. The statistical presentation is descriptive, aiming to make sense of and summarize a set of data (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). In the discussions in articles 3 and 4, the main emphasis is not merely on statistical significance as such differences might not always be substantially important. McCloskey and Ziliak (1996) notes one should also base analyses on substantial significance as a result can be statistically significant without having substantial importance. In addition to looking at differences, it was regarded as equally important to report and discuss commonalities in the data to see if perceptions of disruptive behavior in schools could be similar across the two countries.

Consistent with Lederman (1992), the statistical analyses in articles 3 and 4 are guided by the research question. To analyze the results, I used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). I created one dataset for the Norwegian students and one for the American and then merging the two sets of data. The aim of the research was to find differences and commonalities between all American and Norwegian students, American and Norwegian males, and Norwegian and American females. I created dummy variables of these groups, allowing me to find the differences and commonalities I was looking for.

Contingency tables and Chi-square test of homogeneity served as the main analytical tools to find differences and commonalities in the data. Such a test can determine if differences and commonalities exist between groups and, if appropriate, a post-hoc test can be conducted to examine where the differences between these groups are found (Agresti, 2007; Fleiss, Levin, & Paik, 2003; Hollander & Wolfe, 1999; Kateri, 2014). In the cases where the sample size was sufficiently high (expected count above 5), I ran pairwise comparisons to find where the differences were found, using a z-test of two proportions (testing for every possible combination between the proportions of groups). In the cases where the sample size was not sufficiently high, I ran the Fischer's exact test to find differences and commonalities.

4.4 Participants in the quantitative strain

I used a two-stage sampling procedure to find participants. Fowler (2013) describe this as (a) selecting schools and (b) selecting students from these schools. I excluded private schools to obtain samples that were as similar as possible across the two countries. The reasoning behind excluding private schools was that they are much less common in Norway and, more

importantly, I sought samples from schools that are available to all students regardless of socioeconomic background. I contacted principals at each school in the Norwegian city by letter and phone and e-mail. In the US, an employee from the school district helped me to contact teachers directly after gaining approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at UCB and school officials in the American city where I collected data.

4.4.1 Target-population

The target population was all students within all schools in one Norwegian city and one in the US. Only one school was fitting in the city where data got collected in the US. This might be a weakness, but the total number of students in the Norwegian and American city were similar as the school in the US contained a much larger number of students than the ones in Norway.

4.4.2 Inclusion criteria

Criteria for inclusion were all students between 15-17 years, mainstreamed in regular classrooms. These students were chosen as they are more likely to have experience with disruptive behavior, could more easily understand what the research entails, as well as being more resistant to risks in research compared to younger students (Committee for Protection of Human Subjects, 2015). Also, Norwegian students of 15 years of age are generally allowed to consent to research themselves and the requirement of parent permission can be waived (Norwegian Centre for Research Data, 2016). As the research was deemed to be of minimal risk, the IRB at UCB also approved to waive the requirement of parent/guardian consent.

4.4.3 Challenges in the sampling procedure

Some challenges occurred in the sampling-procedure. In the US, the students were more mobile than in Norway. The American students went from class to class throughout the day, while the Norwegians were more stationary in one classroom during the day. The American teachers had their own classrooms, in which they were stationary and the group of students varied. This involved the risk of getting overlap in the data in the sense of administering the questionnaire to the same students twice. To avoid this, I obtained a list over different teachers and classes they taught. I then sorted the teachers I contacted based on this list to make sure that they did not teach the same subjects. This was partly successful. In the latter stages of data collection, I met some of the same students twice. By a raise of hands, I asked

who had already answered the questionnaire and instructed them not to do it again. They adhered to this instruction.

Another challenge in the sampling procedure was the issue of how the Norwegian and American school systems differ in organization. Table 4.2 illustrates the ages of students when they attend each grade in Norwegian and American schools. The Norwegian school system is compiled of primary school, secondary school and upper secondary school. The American system is compiled of elementary school, middle school and high school.

Table 4.2: American and Norwegian school systems with ages and grades

American system			Norwegian system		
Level	Grade	Age	Level	Grade	Age
Elementary school	1-5	6-11	Primary school	1-7	6-13
Middle school	6-7	11-14	Lower secondary school	8-10	13-16
High school	9-12	14-18	Upper secondary school	Upper secondary level 1,2 and 3	16-19

As illustrated in the table, there are some differences in high school and lower and upper secondary school in Norway. High school in the US ranges from the ages 14-18, while Norwegian students in the same age attends both lower secondary and upper secondary school. Two things had to be taken into account relating to this issue. It could have been a solution to only contact upper secondary schools in Norway, as they are more similar to High schools in the sense of students being more mobile between classes. However, most of the upper secondary schools in Norway did not respond when I contacted them. The lower secondary schools proved to be more forthcoming. Even though there are differences between the American and Norwegian school systems, I do not regard this as a very big issue as the school system is not the subject for the study. The following citation serves to illustrate my approach.

“We do not study this particular organization, we study in this particular organization. The ideas, concepts and categories we formulate are general” (Petersen, Spilerman, & Dahl, 1989, p. 321).

To further strengthen the similarities between the Norwegian and American students, I ensured that the subjects taught were similar, specifically core subjects like Norwegian, English, science and mathematics. Electable subjects got excluded as they varied between the

countries. This means that all of the students in the sample have the following in common: (a) they are in the same age-range, (b) they have similar subjects with regard to organization and content, and (c) they are in public schools. The following table illustrates the sample in the quantitative strand of the study:

Table 4.3: Sample in the study

Sample	American students			Norwegian students			Total
	All	Female	Male	All	Female	Male	
Percentage	52,8%	27,6%	25,2%	47,2%	21,9%	25,3%	
N	609	318	291	544	252	292	1153

NOTE: There are no statistically significant differences between the groups in the sample.

As the table illustrates, there are somewhat more American than Norwegian students in the sample. This is the case as the access to American students proved to be larger than in Norway. One cause of this is that I visited only one large school in the US, where I spent a total of four weeks. Being present at this school nearly every day for a period of time made it easier to get in touch with teachers and ask them if they would like to participate in the research. However, there are no statistically significant differences in the table. A final comment in this section is that the data-collection in the US went smoother than in Norway. In several cases, the teachers in Norway had forgotten that I would arrive or had set up the appointment during lessons like Physical Education, which was outside the scope of the research as I wanted students in regular classrooms. One of the schools in Norway compiled a list over all the classes that I were to collect data, and the time I should arrive. This worked very well and stood out as the smoothest part of the Norwegian data collection. In general, the American teachers were more prepared and the data collection was more successful with regard to time spent on each session. However, these issues could also be caused by my limited experience with classroom research and my insisting to do it manually. As I collected the American data after the Norwegian, I had gained some experience from the Norwegian schools and had greater confidence in how to approach the data collection. Finally, the American legislations are more detailed than the Norwegian and provide information of required procedures when doing research on children and adolescents. For example, it was a requirement to have a brief information meeting with the class and teachers to inform them about the research. Only after such meetings was I allowed to re-enter classrooms and collect the data.

4.5 Research credibility

“We argue that because mixed methods research involves combining complementary strengths and nonoverlapping weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative research, assessing the validity of findings are particularly complex; we call this the problem of integration” (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006, p. 48).

The citation above illustrates some of the complexities in assessing validity in mixed methods research. What Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006) refer to as the “problem of integration” is the concern that both qualitative and quantitative methodologies bring their own issues of representation (capturing experience of subjects in words and numbers) and legitimation (making inferences or collecting findings that are confirmable, transferable or credible).

In this study, data were collected sequentially and the methodologies integrated in the development of the questionnaire. I will address issues of validity in qualitative and quantitative research separately. The main focus will be on the quantitative, as this is the primary focus of this thesis.

4.5.1 Validity and reliability of the qualitative data

Norwegian master’s students at the University of Oslo collected and analyzed non-participant, qualitative, observations between 2010-2014. Data were collected in both Norwegian and American schools. The aim of the qualitative studies was to identify categories of disruptive behavior. Senior members of the research group¹² provided the master’s students with an observation schedule and additional schooling in observation and how to use the observation schedule. The observation schedule also provided the master’s students with thorough instructions that they were to follow in their observations. In the additional schooling, it was also emphasized that the master’s students should strive to be “presuppositionless” (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009) in their observations, meaning that they should be aware of cultural issues and their own presuppositions when observing so to reduce potential bias. All of the master’s theses received excellent evaluations from examiners and can be regarded as important contributions to the field of disruptive behavior.

¹² By “senior members of the research group”, I refer to the head of the project Professor Liv Duesund and other members listed on the website describing the project (<http://www.uv.uio.no/isp/english/research/projects/disruptive-behavior-in-schools/>)

As with all qualitative research, the aim of the qualitative data in this study is not to generalize or replicate. Rather, it is about consistency in the data collection. This involves keeping meticulous records and documenting the analytical process (Bloor & Wood, 2006). Master's students kept records by using the observation schedule and describing how they implemented their observations. This allows readers to follow the process leading to their conclusions, and thus making sure that they address issues of reliability (Given, 2008; Kvale & Enerstvedt, 1989). A more extensive description of methodology, validity and reliability of the observations can be found in the master's theses of Fossum (2011), Solberg (2013), (Stavnes, 2013), (Valseth, 2013), (Lenvik, 2013), and Ødegård (2011), to name a few.

4.5.2 Validity and reliability of the quantitative data

Shadish, Cook, and Campbell (2002) outline a variety of different kinds of validity, namely construct validity, statistical conclusion validity, internal validity and external validity. Not all of these are relevant in this case. Particularly relevant in relation to the quantitative data in this case is construct validity and external validity (or generalization).

Construct validity

Construct validity is the concern that the research measured what it intended to measure and represents constructs in an accurate fashion (Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Shadish et al., 2002; Wentland, 1993). As a construct is a mental abstraction, it is paramount that researchers operationalize them and participants in a study understand them. When addressing construct validity in this research, I have tried to not only describe what I am interested in, but also make explicit what the abstractions used are similar to. Disruptive behavior in schools is both something observable, unobservable and a mental abstraction. The Norwegian part of the study applies the term “uro”, which does not translate easily to English. These terms are not necessarily overlapping and equivalent. “Uro” can refer to anything from an observable behavior to mental states. Other words that can be applicable to “uro” is “restlessness”, “unrest” and “disruptions”. Article 1 specifically address this issue and serves as a theoretical and exploratory operationalization of “uro” and “disruptive behavior”. When doing the study on students, I sought to make the term “disruptive behavior” understandable to them. The Norwegian students were given the same operationalization of “uro” as the Americans were given of “disruptive behavior”. In the quantitative strain of the study, I sought to measure

different kinds of observable, disruptive, behaviors. To be able to do so, I discussed the terms with the research group before and after each pilot study. In addition, I conducted a pilot with open-ended questions and had meetings and conversations with selected students to get an understanding of how students described disruptive behavior from their own perspective. I landed upon the following operationalization of disruptive behavior, presented to participants (students) both verbally and in text.

“Disruptive behavior in school is: when someone is acting in a way that disturbs other students and/or the teacher”

The idea of the definition of disruptive behavior provided above was to make it measurable in the questionnaire. By adjusting the definition of disruptive behavior through utilization of the voices of participants, I took measures to operationalized disruptive behavior so that both the participants in study, while also dedicating article 1 to illustrate its complexity goes beyond the measurable. By presenting both a measurable presentation of disruptive behavior, as well as a discussion based on philosophical, educational and sociological perspectives, I believe that I have put forth the complexity of “uro” and “disruptive behavior”, as well as making the observable aspect of such behavior measurable in the questionnaire.

Triangulation and emic-etic validity

The research utilizes elements of triangulation by including multiple data-sources, theoretical perspectives and methodologies (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). I used the observational data, discussions with research group, pilots of the questionnaire and discussion with students, teachers, IRB and school officials to make the questionnaire more robust and to examine disruptive behavior from multiple perspectives. This contributed to emic-etic validity (Brevik, 2015), meaning views of outsiders (researchers) and insiders (participants) (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). All results in the pilot with open-ended questions were given equal importance, but I cannot be entirely sure that I have represented the entire complexity of all participants in the main study’s perspectives. In the US, I had no opportunity to ask students open-ended questions or have meetings with them prior to implementation of the questionnaire. However, I received assistance from school officials to adjust the language and questions in the questionnaire. Although they are not insiders in the sense that they are participants, they have more experience and frequent contact with American students than myself. Their opinions and reflections are valuable and provided further substance to the

questionnaire. Worth noting in this case is that I talked to some American students after the study was conducted. They expressed an understanding of the questionnaire and reported that the questions reflected what was going on inside classrooms when disruptive behavior occurred.

External validity (generalization)

The findings are not generalizable to any great extent. I have only conducted the study in two cities and the samples are not big enough to generalize to the entire student-population in both countries. However, the results might have some degree of generalizability for the two cities if seen separately. There is no blueprint for how large a sample should be in order to be representative (Befring, 2015). To evaluate if a sample is representative it is necessary to take the sample frame into consideration, meaning the ones that has a chance of being selected for the study (Fowler, 2013). In this study, only students from two particular cities had the chance to be included in the study. For reasons of anonymity, I will not mention the entire sample frame (number of students in each city) as these numbers are easily available for readers and might breach the anonymity of the schools (the American in particular). As a rule of thumb, Befring (2015) outlines that a certain degree of representability can be present if the sample includes 10% or more of a population. This does not mean that the sample on this study is generalizable to the entire population, but it might have some generalizability to the population in the sample frame.

Reliability

Reliability is the concern if findings are consistent, replicable and independent of circumstances of the research (Brevik, 2015; Fowler, 2013; Johnson, 2014). Classroom-research can never be fully replicable. Subjective states are not always identical over time and students other than those I studied might perceive disruptive behavior differently. Classroom climate will vary, as will the general climate at schools. Also, disruptive behavior might change in character over time. However, previous research on disruptive behavior (see section 2) has been relatively consistent over time by reporting a high degree of such behavior both in Norway and in the US. Another issue with the research here is that the situations and period of time in which I conducted the study could have provided more or less disruptive behavior than what is the case in other points of time.

The reliability of results in the study are found in that the same procedures and questionnaire got implemented in both countries. This is referred to as “results reliability” (Brevik, 2015)

I also took measures to increase reliability by using consistent coding over time (Brevik, 2015; Carmines & Zeller, 1979). I analyzed the results after each session of data collection to examine if the results were consistent over the time-period in which I studied in both countries (about 8 weeks in Norway and 4 weeks in the US). The results provided similar frequencies within each country from one session of data collection to the next. There are also large amounts of commonalities in the Norwegian and American data. To ensure consistency, the results were coded and analyzed several times to examine if I had done errors in the coding of results and when entering them to SPSS.

Even though measures have been taken to ensure reliability, I cannot be entirely sure about whether this was successful. As people are involved in this research, a phenomenological argument might be fruitful. Both the perceptions of students, influence of the researcher and the procedures used could differ depending on the researcher as well as the students that participate in a study. A conclusion to this section is that the results might not be fully replicable over time, place and circumstance. Meanwhile, the procedures were rigorous and documented in detailed field-notes. If the research is to be replicated, documentation in ample detail is available as to conduct the research in a way that is as similar as possible.

4.6 The questionnaire

As much effort went into creating the questionnaire¹³, it warrants its own section that also touches upon issues of validity and reliability. The following provides a description of the questionnaires’ themes and items, as well as a rationale for the aims of each of the questions. I will also provide some reflections on strengths and weaknesses of the questions to address the validity of the developed questionnaire. The questionnaire addresses three main items and also includes background variables like gender, age, race and time lived in each country. As the questionnaire provided a large amount of data, not all questions are addressed in articles. Regardless, it could be fruitful to provide a brief outline of the questionnaires’ aims and purposes to (a) be transparent and (b) provide readers with rationales of why the questionnaire

¹³ The questionnaire is found in the appendix.

addresses what it does. Table 4.4 provides an overview over the themes and items in the questionnaire.

Table 4.4: Themes and items in the questionnaire

Themes	Items
Degree of disturbance	Which kinds of disruptive behavior students find most disturbing; and how disturbing they find this kind of behavior.
Displayed disruptive behavior	If other students had displayed disruptive behavior during the last week of being surveyed. If students had displayed disruptive behavior themselves during the last week Kind of disruptive behavior occurred most often
Reactions to disruptive behavior	How often did disruptive behavior occur. How students and teachers react towards disruptive behavior How these reactions affect students who are disruptive in class.

NOTE: This table is also represented in articles 3 and 4.

4.6.1 Aims of the questionnaire

The overarching aim of the questionnaire was to examine students’ everyday lives in school, meaning what goes on as seen through the eyes of the students. To measure this, the questionnaire went through extensive revisions, hoping that the questions reflected the students’ reality. This is a bold aim, and it is not possible for researchers to know whether the students’ reality is actually reflected or not. For example, close-ended questions leave out some nuances that could be important. Open-ended pilot and meetings with students, teachers and school officials might have contributed to reduce this issue.

4.6.2 Theme 1: Degree of disturbance.

Questions 5 and 6 address what kinds of disruptive behavior students find most disruptive, and how disruptive they find these kinds of behaviors. The idea was to provide indications about the seriousness of disruptive behavior. An answer consisting of only yes/no to whether students found disruptive behavior to be disturbing was regarded as insufficient as it does not provide anything else than indications as to whether it occurs during class. Previous research categorizes disruptive behavior broadly as minor, moderate and major. I aimed to categorize further within the categories minor and moderate to provide further detail and then examine how serious an issue students found these kinds of behavior.

4.6.3 Theme 2: Displayed disruptive behavior

Questions 7 and 8 address whether disruptive behavior occurs. The questions address the students' perspectives on disruptive behavior displayed by other students, as well as themselves. Which kinds of disruptive behavior that occurred most often, and how often they occurred are included in the questions. Asking students yes/no questions about the occurrence of disruptive behavior provides us with measures of prevalence of the issue. The questions specifically state "during the last week" so that students had indications of which period to reflect upon. The rationale behind doing so was that it is highly likely that the clear majority of students have experienced disruptive behavior at some point during their schooling. Implying that the students should think about a certain period of time allowed them to focus on recent events as I wanted to ensure that the students reported their current perception of disruptive behavior.

While focusing on recent events may be a strength of the questionnaire, a weakness could also be found in this question. By asking students only about the last week, some factors may have influenced their results. As an example, something might have been going on during the specific week that they were asked that could have influenced their perspective on disruptive behavior. The issue is that disruptive behavior might have been more or less prevalent from one week to the next. This weakness was addressed by conducting the study over a period of time and performing analyses after each session of data collection. By doing so, I wanted to examine if the results were consistent across all sessions of data collection. By doing these separate analyses, I found that the results were consistent. At both the American and Norwegian schools, the results from the first week of collecting data were similar to the ones found in the last week etc.; the period of time spent on collecting data was four weeks in the US, and 8 weeks in Norway. I wanted to spread out the data collection to control for the potential weakness in the "last week"-statement. Ideally, the time-period of data collection would have been the same number of weeks in both countries, but due to accessibility to students this proved to not be possible.

As stated in articles 3 and 4, I aimed to go further than the yes/no dimension of the occurrence of disruptive behavior. This is important to get more specific measures about the issue. The students were asked which kinds of disruptive behavior disturbed them during the last week. By doing so, I sought to obtain information about the most frequent kinds of disruptive behaviors that were found to be disturbing, as seen through the perspectives of the students

that perceived that they had been disturbed or had disturbed others themselves¹⁴. Adding to this question, students were asked how often disruptive behavior occurred. This allowed us to get further indications about the seriousness of the issue. Disruptive behavior can be regarded as a more serious issue if it is found to happen every lesson, as supposed to just once or twice every week. In our analysis, we included the perspectives of the students who had been disturbed while also providing measures on the total percentage by calculating percentages including the students who had not been disturbed. By doing so, a potential weakness may have been avoided. If we had only included answers from those who had been disturbed during the last week, we would not have had indications on the perspective of the total numbers of students. The reported answers of every student were given equal value, as supposed to only emphasizing those who reported disturbances.

4.6.4 Theme 3: Reactions to disruptive behavior

As illustrated in chapter 2, research on teachers' reaction towards disruptive behavior seems to be more extensive than research on how students react to this kind of behavior and research on the student perspective is lacking. Although previous research advocates that preventive measures are recommended, reactive measures towards disruptive behavior are much more frequent (see section 2.3.2). For this reason, I included measures about reactions to disruptive behavior to indicate the following: (a) students' perceived involvement in issues regarding disruptive behavior, and (b) students' perception of the teachers' ability to manage disruptive behavior and establish a learning climate promoting learning and social development.

The strength of these questions lies in their examination of students' everyday lives in school. To my knowledge, there is little research examining how students directly perceive their influence on other students when they are behaving disruptively. Furthermore, the questions provided possibilities for discussing relational processes after the occurrence of disruptive behavior.

4.6.5 Challenges in the development of the questionnaire

¹⁴ Even though it is an important issue, we did not include analysis of self-reported disruptive behavior ("have you disturbed other students during the last week?") as it was not regarded as part of our research questions in each article. This issue could be worth pursuing in later research.

While I have discussed the themes and items in the questionnaire, I also wish to address some challenges in developing the questionnaire. As my native tongue is Norwegian, I decided to first develop the questionnaire in Norwegian and then translate it to English. The translation provided some challenges. After getting the research approved by the IRB at UCB, they required a letter of support from school officials in the American city. The school board did not accept the initial draft because the language in the questionnaire would not be understandable for the students. After a meeting with the school board¹⁵, they provided comments to adapt the language so that it would be more understandable for the students. This may have contributed to increase the validity of the questionnaire, but also made it slightly different from the Norwegian. Particularly seen in question 5, the last category states: "I have not observed this behavior". The Norwegian category is "I do not find disruptive behavior disturbing". These are substantially different. In the cases where the categories are substantially different, we chose to exclude the questions from the analysis in articles 3 and 4. In hindsight, Likert scales throughout the questionnaire could have been beneficial to avoid these translational issues. However, this would have hindered us in utilizing the student perspective in the development of the questionnaire because I desired to have both questions and categories based on students' own perceptions rather than providing them with certain values. Overall, it could be claimed that the meeting and comments from the school board, as well as the feedback from the IRB, increased the validity of the questionnaire.

It could also have been possible to implement the questionnaire in English in both countries to avoid issues of translation. As English is one of the core subjects in Norwegian schools, one can expect that Norwegian students are relatively competent in English. This would have made us able to use an identical version of the questionnaire in both countries, with categories that would have been entirely comparable. However, this might have excluded some Norwegian students that are not proficient in English. If this had been done, the questionnaire would have put additional demands to literacy amongst the Norwegian students. This would not have been fruitful since an aim of the research was to provide equal opportunities for every student to participate.

Although the translational issues might be a weakness in the study, they are not too extensive as they are only relevant to a few categories and not the overall substance of the

¹⁵ As I was not in the US at the time of this meeting, my supervisor Liv Duesund attended the meeting.

questionnaire. In addition, the categories and questions that differ are not included in any analysis.

4.7 Research ethics

Ethical considerations should be a vital part of scientific enquiry (Befring, 2015). Researchers should not only focus on their theoretical stance, methodology and conclusions. It is also of vital importance to conduct research in an ethical manner. Before accepting (or rejecting) to participate in research, it is a demand that human subjects are thoroughly informed about aims, purposes, content and what the research entails. Furthermore, the subjects need to be protected by ensuring anonymity and confidentiality to not compromise their identity (Befring, 2015; Israel & Hay, 2006).

In research involving children and adolescents, it is especially important for researchers to consider ethical aspects as they are “vulnerable subjects”. This involves that they should not be expected to have the same mental capacity as adults when it comes to taking a decision to about participating in a research study (Fossheim & Ingierd, 2015).

The following provides an overview and discussion over the ethical considerations involved in the quantitative strain. The issue of research ethics proved prominent as I needed access to schools in two different countries. The ethical considerations in the study are also closely connected to validity. As with the design, the ethical considerations will be presented in phases to provide structure and overview. The approval process of this study went through four steps, presented in the table below.

Table 4.5 Steps taken to comply with ethical legislations in Norway and the US.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Examining ethical guidelines and legislations in Norway and the US	Assessing risks and choosing target group for the study	Planning and implementing the study

4.7.1 Phase 1: Examining ethical guidelines and legislations in Norway and the US

In phase 1, ethical regulations were examined in the Norway and the US. The issue of protecting human subjects is emphasized both in Norway and the US. This involves protecting subjects from potential discomfort and harms caused by participation in research. This is especially important for vulnerable subjects like children and adolescents. Children and adolescents cannot be equally resistant to harm and discomfort by partaking in research as opposed to adult subjects, nor can they be regarded as equally capable of agreeing to research as adults (Befring, 2015; Fossheim & Ingierd, 2015; National Committees for Research Ethics in Norway, 2006). In Norway, it is generally allowed for students at the ages of 15 and older to consent themselves (Norwegian Centre for Research Data, 2016). As the students in the study are 15-17 years old, Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) supported that they could consent to the research themselves. In the US, the regulations are not the same as in Norway. The most common way of consent in the US is by signed parent/guardian consent. This involves that parents receive a letter containing information about the study and a signature line where they are to sign if they agree/do not agree that their child can take part in the research. In the US, the IRB agreed to waiving the signed parent/guardian consent given that a letter of information was issued to parents and that the students provided signed assent to agree in the study.

4.7.2 Phase 2: Assessing risks and choosing target group for the study

Phase 2 involved choosing the target group for the study. The study seeks to get the student perspective on disruptive behavior since studies from the perspective of the students seem to be less common than studies focusing on teachers or other educators. This study can be considered to involve minimal risk, meaning that potential risks and discomforts are not likely to be greater than what can be expected in daily life (Committee for Protection of Human Subjects, 2015). As minor to moderate disruptive behavior is common in schools, the study involves little risk of harm and discomfort. In addition, the study does not focus on students with major disabilities. Only students that are mainstreamed in regular classrooms are included in the study. It was regarded as more ethically sound to only include these students they are more capable to understand what the study entails and more resistant to potential risk or harm caused by the research.

4.7.3 Phase 3: Planning and implementing the study

Phase 3 involved planning and implementing the study in Norway and the US. In Norway, it was sufficient to submit an application to NSD. NSD concluded that the study was not subject to notification as it does not collect any directly identifiable (or sensitive) information and due to it being conducted manually (in paper-and-pencil format). The principles who agreed to partake in the study in Norway signed a letter stating that they had agreed to the research. This was not a requirement from NSD, but was regarded as ethically important to have documentation that I was to be present at the schools. In the US, an application was sent to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at UCB. An application was also sent to the school board in the American city where the research was conducted. After doing so, a letter of support from the school board was sent to the IRB. In turn, they approved the research.

Contact was established with the American school through assistance from an educational specialist from the school district. She provided assistance in contacting teachers and gaining access to classrooms. Implementing the research in paper-and-pencil format was not coincidental. By doing so, the likelihood of students providing sincere and honest answers increases as the students might experience that they have a higher degree of privacy as supposed to when answering a web-based questionnaire (Eaton et al., 2010; Flint & Ross, 2010; Raghupathy & Hahn-Smith, 2013).

In Norway, there were some issues in the implementation of the survey. This included teachers not knowing about my arrival as well as some teachers in the pilot studies wanting to assist students. The former did not provide any challenge and only caused the sessions to take a bit longer than planned. However, the latter provided an issue as I needed to instruct teachers not to help any students and all questions from students should be directed towards me. The data collection in the US went smoother as all teachers and classes were available at the scheduled time. Another aspect of the smoother data collection in the US could have been that I had gained more experience from conducting the survey in Norway and used the opportunity to correct some of the issues that occurred in the Norwegian data collection. None of the students in Norway and the US expressed any discomfort during the study, but said that they found the study interesting and that it was easy to answer. Some of the teachers in the US also commented that the questions were clear and precise and that they found the research interesting and wished that I send them the dissertation.

To conclude this section, I believe that the research was conducted in an ethical manner. Also, I would like to point out that the process of gaining approvals in the US took much longer time than in Norway. However, this is not necessarily a bad thing. After the process of gaining approvals and implementing the research in the US, I believe that I have gotten valuable experience and an increased level of knowledge about the issue of research ethics.

A conclusion to this paragraph is that I believe that the American legislations and guidelines provide a more solid understanding of research ethics as they are: (a) more thorough, (b) provide more learning for the researchers and (c) ensure that research is carried out effectively with enhanced focus on the risk of harm and discomforts.

5 The articles

The aim of this thesis was to explore disruptive behavior theoretically and empirically. This overarching aim has been examined through four articles; two purely theoretical and two reporting and discussing results from a quantitative study. I am the sole author of the two first articles, and they discuss my theoretical standpoint. Therefore, these will be summarized first. The third and fourth articles are written together with Professor Liv Duesund, presenting empirical data and discussing these theoretically. No specific hypotheses went into the work with any of the articles as the aim was to explore, analyze and discuss. The idea of the articles in this thesis is that they should build on each other. Elements from the theoretical articles are applied in the empirical ones to have coherence between the articles.

5.1 Article 1: Being-Disrupted and Being-Disruptive: Coping Students in Uncertain Times

Title: *Being-Disrupted and Being-Disruptive: Coping Students in Uncertain Times*

Author: Magnar Ødegård

The main purpose of this article was to develop a theoretical frame to understand disruptive behavior in light of Heidegger's being-in-the-world and Dreyfus's skillful coping. Adding to the equation is the Heideggerian concept of mood and Zygmunt Bauman's Liquid Modernity. The article goes beyond the concept of disruptive behavior by addressing disruptions as a part of the "everyday" human existence. Disruptions can be external and internal in the sense that they are displayed and experienced. Through skillful coping and being-in-the-world, I draw up "being-disrupted" and "being-disruptive". While outlining such a distinction, I partly present a dualistic understanding. However, the terms are interrelated and serve as points of discussion and not fixed states. It is possible to experience both simultaneously. The core idea is that students could cope with their everyday lives in the sense of (a) stay in, or accept, an uncomfortable state (being-disrupted), or (b) cope with disruptions by opposing them and trying to change their situation (being-disruptive).

The article then goes on to introduce a three-fold discussion of disruptions that can occur in everyday lives of students. The first of these are "Certain/Uncertain", illustrating how students continuously experience pressures for being "the best". The second point of

discussion is “Alone/Together”, outlining how students may experience loneliness rather than community. Finally, the third part discusses “Informing/Knowing”, illustrating how a fast-paced society can distort and complicate the acquirement of knowledge.

The skill model underlies the entire article. The article addresses conventional expertise and the radical innovator (world-discloser). These concepts are used to illustrate that expertise is not always an issue of becoming the best in something, but also involves an attitude of expertise that can open up the world for new understandings. The article also considers that disruptive behavior is not only something that can be addressed by rules and recipes for action, but that it includes much more than what we can observe and react to as students and educators.

5.2 Article 2: Disruptive Behavior in Schools and the Human Way of Being

Title: *Disruptive Behavior in Schools and the Human Way of Being*

Author: Magnar Ødegård

Article 2 continues the discussion of existential aspects of disruptive behavior. Dreyfus and Heidegger are still prominent in the discussion, but while article 1 addresses coping with everydayness, article 2 addresses the issue of behavior management in light of Heidegger’s concepts of being-in-the-world, mood, breakdown and Dreyfus’ absorbed coping. The aim of the article is to apply these ideas on classroom-interaction, with behavior management as the example and the classroom serving as the context.

The primary focus is on how teachers utilize their strategies for behavior management and how they can be seen as a form of equipment. A core issue in the article is that it is unavoidable not to be affected by the situations we find ourselves in and how this applies to students and teachers as being-in-school. The article especially touches upon the skill model’s level of competence. Where teachers have learned several strategies and techniques for managing disruptive behavior, they will meet some situations where they do not have experience with the disruptive behavior and the situation they find themselves in. The article discusses how such situations may arise moods in the classroom that promote or impair

learning and teaching and how teachers' choices, actions and reflections always have their point of departure the mood of themselves, but also of the collective in the classroom.

Heidegger's (or specifically Deyfus' interpretation of) total and temporary breakdown serves as examples when teachers no longer are able to manage disruptive behavior intuitively based on their existing experience. The article further discuss how such breakdowns can be beneficial in strengthening the teachers' ability to manage disruptive behavior, given that they are emotionally involved and willing to take the risk of not succeeding in their efforts.

5.3 Article 3: Students' Perceived Experience of Disruptive Behavior in Schools. A Comparative Study between Schools in the US and Norway

Title: *Students' Perceived Experience of Disruptive Behavior in Schools. A Comparative Study between Schools in the US and Norway*

Authors: Liv Duesund & Magnar Ødegård

The third article, authored with Professor Liv Duesund, is the first of two empirical articles included in this dissertation. The article addresses three research questions. These are: (a) What is the frequency of disruptive behavior students state that they experience in Norway and the United States, (b) Which kinds of disruptive behaviors do students say occur most often in Norway and the United States and how often do they occur? and (c) What do American and Norwegian students say about their tolerance of disruptive behavior?

The article presents findings from the questionnaire, specifically in theme (1) degree of disturbance, and (2) displayed disruptive behavior. The findings in the article indicate that most students reported that disruptive behavior had disturbed them during the last week and a large number of students also reported that this occurred one or more times every day. The article discusses the findings in light of previous research on disruptive behavior, concluding that the high frequency of disruptive behavior is alarming, that practitioners need increased support from their education as well as in their daily practices.

5.4 Article 4: Students' Perception of Reactions Towards Disruptive Behavior in Norwegian and American Schools

Title: *Students' Perception of Reactions Towards Disruptive Behavior in Norwegian and American Schools*

Authors: Liv Duesund & Magnar Ødegård

Article 4, authored with Professor Liv Duesund, builds on article 3. In this article, the focus is on the questionnaire's third theme (reactions to disruptive behavior). Where article 3 had a more general focus in relation to previous research, the fourth article returns to elements of the skill model. Dreyfus' writings on responsibility and emotional involvement plays a central role in the discussion together with classroom climate. Also, we address the issue of academic achievement and social growth and whether the two should be given equal value as today's policies seem to favor the former. The article addresses the following questions: (1) How do teachers and students react to disruptive behavior? and (2) How do the reactions of teachers and students influence the students who are disruptive in class?

The article provides empirical support for disruptive behavior as an everyday phenomenon due to the high frequency of disruptive behavior. We further discuss how disruptive behavior could lead teachers and students to feelings of being de-skilled as it disturbs their daily practices and learning. We also discuss findings indicating that students report that their own reactions have little influence on disruptive behavior displayed by others. Issues raised are if students have sufficient sense that their influence on the classroom climate matters, if they are emotionally detached from it, or if they are considered as agents that need to be given further influence on the classroom climate. We present findings indicating that teachers' reactions mainly reduce disruptive behavior. However, the behavior does not stop and the reactions from teachers only seem to have some degree of influence and we raise the question if they are sufficiently educated within disruptive behavior and establishing a classroom climate.

5.5 Concluding remarks

As a conclusion to this thesis, I wish to address its theoretical and empirical contributions. The following presents a discussion of research contributions of the articles. I will start with

the theoretical articles (article 1 and 2) before addressing the empirical articles (article 3 and 4).

5.5.1 Theoretical contributions

One could say that Article 1 operates on a different level than the other articles. Article 1 serves as my main theoretical framework and standpoint when it comes to disruptive behavior and addresses everyday lives of students not only in school, but also as members of society. The article is purposefully broad in its scope. Its contribution could lay in its broad scope and application of Heidegger, Dreyfus and Bauman. To my knowledge, the community utilizing existential philosophy within education is rather small, with Liv Duesund being the first to introduce the skill model to education in Scandinavia. I realize that the articles' topic and discussions are bold and I wish to point out that I do not consider myself as a philosopher. However, I believe the article can be a valuable contribution to the field of education due to applying existential philosophy to a familiar phenomenon of students, teachers and researchers within education.

Where article 1 operates on a level of everyday lives of students in society as well as school, article 2 goes directly to the school-context. Like article 1, the article provides theories (to my knowledge) that are original in relation to disruptive behavior. Seen together, article 1 and 2 might illuminate the complexity of disruptive behavior as well as illustrating the need for an interdisciplinary perspective to have a further understanding of the phenomenon.

Elements of the discussions in articles 1 and 2 are also found in articles 3 and 4. The aim of doing so was to illustrate that the theoretical framework are not only useful on a theoretical level, but also for discussing empirical data.

5.5.2 Empirical contributions

The main empirical contribution of both articles is that they utilize the student perspective to a much larger degree than many other studies of disruptive behavior as well as comparing findings in two countries. The data illustrates that disruptive behavior is not just a local issue, but that it could be a challenge in western society in general.

Article 3 contributes to the research landscape by going beyond the yes/no dimension on disruptive behavior. The article provides indications that are more specific as to kinds of disruptive behavior occur and how often they occur. A contribution in this sense is to underline the seriousness of disruptive behavior of minor to moderate character. If such behavior happens every lesson or several times daily, it could present itself as a very serious issue as supposed to if it only happens occasionally. Article 3 also provides data on how disturbing students find disruptive behavior. This tells us something about how resistant and tolerant students are towards disruptive behavior and provides further knowledge about the seriousness of the issue in the sense that it provides specific measures of students' reported perception of its seriousness.

The empirical contribution in article 4 is found in students' perception of what could happen after disruptive behavior has occurred during class and its influence on the social environment in class. It also provides indications of their own belief in their abilities to be part of managing disruptive behavior, as well as how students perceive the teachers' influence when disruptive behavior occurs. The article also outlines how the skill model could be applied as a theoretical framework to the discussion of empirical data.

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Appendix

The following documents are included in the appendix:

1. Approval for research from Institutional Review Board in the US
2. Approval for research from Norwegian Centre for Research Data
3. Approval letter to Norwegian schools
4. Assent form for American students
5. Parent/guardian information form for American students
6. Questionnaire



COMMITTEE FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS
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NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

DATE: *August 25, 2014*
TO: *Elliot TUIEL, Education*
Magnar Oedegard
CPHS PROTOCOL NUMBER: *2014-04-6230*
CPHS PROTOCOL TITLE: *"A Comparative Study of Disruptive Behavior Between Schools in Norway and the United States"*
FUNDING SOURCE(S): *NONE*

A(n) *new* application was submitted for the above-referenced protocol. The Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) has reviewed and approved the application on an expedited basis, under Category 7 of the federal regulations.

Effective Date: *August 22, 2014*
Expiration Date: *August 21, 2017*

Continuation/Renewal: Applications for continuation review should be submitted no later than 6 weeks prior to the expiration date of the current approval. *Note: It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to submit for renewed approval in a timely manner. If approval expires, all research activity (including data analysis) must cease until re-approval from CPHS has been received.* See [Renew \(Continue\) an Approved Protocol](#).

Amendments/Modifications: Any change in the design, conduct, or key personnel of this research must be approved by the CPHS *prior* to implementation. For more information, see [Amend/Modify an Approved Protocol](#).

Three-year approvals: Minimal risk, non-federally funded protocols that are not subject to federal oversight may now be given a three-year approval period. Please see [Three Year Approvals](#) for information about which protocols can qualify for three-year approvals.

The addition of federal funding or certain modifications that increase the level of risk may require a continuing review form to be submitted and approved in order for the protocol to continue. If one or more of the following changes occur, a Continuing Review application must be submitted and approved in order for the protocol to continue.

- Changes in study procedures that increase risk;
- Addition of federal funds.

Unanticipated Problems and Adverse Events: If any study subject experiences an unanticipated problem involving risks to subjects or others, and/or a serious adverse event, the CPHS must be informed *promptly*. For more information on definitions and reporting requirements related to this topic, see [Adverse Event and Unanticipated Problem Reporting](#).

This approval is issued under University of California, Berkeley Federalwide Assurance #00006252.

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If you have any questions about this matter, please contact the OPHS staff at 642-7461; fax 643-6272; email ophs@berkeley.edu.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane Mauldon".

Jane MAULDON
Committee for Protection of Human Subjects



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Magnar Ødegård

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0318 OSLO

Vår dato: 14.11.2013

Vår ref: 36249 / 2 / JSL

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 08.11.2013. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

36249

Behandlingsansvarlig

Daglig ansvarlig

Uro i skolen

Universitetet i Oslo, ved institusjonens øverste leder

Magnar Ødegård

Etter gjennomgang av opplysninger gitt i meldeskjemaet og øvrig dokumentasjon, finner vi at prosjektet ikke medfører meldeplikt eller konsesjonsplikt etter personopplysningslovens §§ 31 og 33.

Dersom prosjektopplegget endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for vår vurdering, skal prosjektet meldes på nytt. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>.

Vedlagt følger vår begrunnelse for hvorfor prosjektet ikke er meldepliktig.

Vennlig hilsen

Vigdis Namtvedt Kvalheim

Juni Skjold Lexau

Kontaktperson: Juni Skjold Lexau tlf: 55 58 36 01

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

Avdelingskontorer / District Offices:

OSLO: NSD, Universitetet i Oslo, Postboks 1055 Blindern, 0316 Oslo. Tel: +47-22 85 52 11. nsd@uio.no

TRONDHEIM: NSD, Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet, 7491 Trondheim. Tel: +47-73 59 19 07. kyrre.svarva@svt.ntnu.no

TROMSØ: NSD, SVF, Universitetet i Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø. Tel: +47-77 64 43 36. nsdmaa@sv.uit.no



Vi viser til telefonsamtale 14.11.2013 hvor vi fikk avklart at spørreskjema for elever og lærere skal besvares på papir. Videre at det ikke vil foreligge kobling til hvilken skole elevene og lærerne er tilknyttet.

Personvernombudet kan på denne bakgrunn ikke se at det behandles personopplysninger med elektroniske hjelpemidler, eller at det opprettes manuelt personregister som inneholder sensitive personopplysninger. Prosjektet vil dermed ikke omfattes av meldeplikten etter personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at man ved transkripsjon av intervjuer eller annen overføring av data til en datamaskin, ikke registrerer opplysninger som gjør det mulig å identifisere enkeltpersoner, verken direkte eller indirekte. Alle opplysninger som behandles elektronisk i forbindelse med prosjektet må være anonyme. Med anonyme opplysninger forstås opplysninger som ikke på noe vis kan identifisere enkeltpersoner i et datamateriale, verken direkte gjennom navn eller personnummer, indirekte gjennom bakgrunnsvariabler eller gjennom navneliste/koblingsnøkkel eller krypteringsformel og kode.

Dear Principal at (name of school)
Address of school

Date: 17 March 2017

**Participation in research project “A Comparative Study of Disruptive Behavior
Between Schools in Norway and the United States”**

As principal of (name of school), I consent to allowing students at this school to participate in the
aforementioned project.

By signing this letter, I confirm that I have understood the provided information about the project. I
have also had opportunities to ask questions.

I understand that the participation is voluntary and that the school and its students are free to
withdraw at any time.

Signature
(Principal, name of school)



Name: Magnar Oedegaard
Postal address: Sem Sælands vei 7, 0371, OSLO
E-mail: magnar.odegard@isp.uio.no
www.uio.no



ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

A Comparative Study of Disruptive Behavior Between Schools in Norway and the United States

My name is Magnar Oedegaard and I am a Visiting Scholar at the University of California, Berkeley. I am working with my faculty advisor, Professor Elliot Turiel on a research study. I'd like to tell you about this study and ask if you will take part (be a "subject") in it.

What is a research study?

A research study is when people like me collect a lot of information about a certain thing to find out more about it. Before you decide if you want to be in this study, it's important for you to understand why we're doing the research and what's involved.

Please read this form carefully. You can discuss it with your parents or anyone else. If you have questions about this research, just ask me.

Why are we doing this study?

We are doing this study to find out if disruptive behavior occurs in your school and what students think about this kind of behavior. By disruptive behavior we mean when someone is acting in a way that disturbs other students and/or the teacher.

Why are we talking to you about this study?

We're asking about 600 students if they would like to participate. We're inviting you to take part because you are a high school student between 15 and 17 years old.

What will happen if you are in this study?

If you and your parents agree for you to be in this study, we will ask you to:

- Answer a questionnaire

You will be asked to complete a questionnaire about disruptive behavior in your school. This will take maximum 15 minutes.

If you don't want to be in the study, what can you do instead?

You can read in your textbook or work on assignments given to you by your teacher for the duration of the study.

Are there any benefits to being in the study?

There is no benefit to you personally for taking part in this study. However, we hope that the results of the research will help decrease the frequency of disruptive behavior in schools.

Are there any risks or discomforts to being in the study?

- You might get bored or tired and decide that you don't want to finish the questionnaire. If so, just stop answering the questionnaire.
- A possible risk for any research is that people outside the study might get hold of confidential study information. We will do everything we can to make sure that doesn't happen.

Who will know about your study participation?

You, your parents and the researcher are the only ones who will know the details of your study participation. If we publish reports or give talks about this research, we will only discuss group results. We will not use your name or any other personal information that would identify you.

To help protect confidentiality, the answered questionnaire will be stored in a safe in a secure building.

We plan to keep this information for 5 years, in case we or other researchers want to use it later for other studies. But we will follow the same steps we just described to keep it as confidential as possible.

Will you get paid for being in the study?

You will not be paid for being in this study.

Do you have to be in the study?

No, you don't. Research is something you do only if you want to. No one will get mad at you if you don't want to be in the study. And whether you decide to participate or not, either way will have no effect on your grades at school.

Do you have any questions?

You can contact us if you have questions about the study, or if you decide you don't want to be in the study any more. You can talk to me, or your parents, or someone else at any time during the study. You can contact Magnar Oedegaard (me) at **510-766-5056** or magnarod@berkeley.edu or Professor Elliot Turiel at **510-642-7972** or turiel@berkeley.edu

ASSENT OF ADOLESCENT (13–17 years old)

If you choose to participate in the research, please sign this form and complete the attached survey. To ensure that the survey is anonymous, separate this form from the survey when turning the form and survey in. Please put the signed form in a separate box/envelope from the survey.

Child's Name/Signature (*printed or written by child*)*

Date



A Comparative Study of Disruptive Behavior Between Schools in Norway and the United States

Parent Information

Dear Parent or Guardian,

My name is Magnar Oedegaard. I am a Visiting Scholar in the Department of Sociology at the University of California, Berkeley. I am working with my faculty advisor, Professor Elliot Turiel on a research study about disruptive behavior in schools. We are writing to inform you that your son/daughter has been invited to participate (be a “subject”) in this study. This letter describes what this participation will entail. If you or your son/daughter has questions about the research, please feel free to ask.

We are doing this study to find out if disruptive behavior occurs in your child’s school and what students think about this kind of behavior. By disruptive behavior we mean when someone is acting in a way that disturbs other students and/or the teacher.

Your child will receive his/her own assent form to read which s/he will sign before completing the anonymous questionnaire.

If your child agrees to participate, we will ask him/her to complete an anonymous questionnaire about his/her experience of disruptive behavior in school. This will take a maximum of 15 minutes and will be completed in class.

If your child does not wish to participate, your child’s teacher will give him/her a different activity to work on. Your child will be able to read in a textbook or do assignments given by the teacher. It will take the same amount of time as the research activity.

There is no benefit to you or your child personally for taking part in this study. However, we hope that the results of the research will help decrease the frequency of disruptive behavior in schools.

Your child might get bored or tired and decide that he or she does not want to complete the study activities. If so, your child can just tell us that he or she wishes to stop.

We will keep your child’s study data as confidential as possible. However, as with all research, there is a small chance that confidentiality could be compromised. We are taking precautions to minimize this risk. Your child’s name will not be linked to the questionnaire responses. The answered questionnaires will be stored in a safe in a secure building. If we publish or present results of this study, we will not use individual names or other personally identifiable information.

We plan to keep this information for 5 years, in case we or other researchers want to use it later for other studies. But we will follow the same steps we just described to keep it as confidential as possible.

You and your child can ask questions about this study at any time, now or later. You can talk to me at any time during the study. You can contact me at **510-766-5056** or magnarod@berkeley.edu or Professor Elliot Turiel at **510-642-7972** or turiel@berkeley.edu. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's rights and the treatment as a research subject, you may contact the OPHS, the office of UC Berkeley's Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects, at 510-642-7461 or subjects@berkeley.edu

Sincerely,

Magnar Oedegaard

INFORMATION

In this survey, I ask questions about disruptive behavior in school.

The survey is about examining disruptive behavior in your classroom, and what you think about this.

This study is anonymous. Do not write your name on any of the pages.

If there are some questions that you do not wish to answer, please leave them blank.

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOURSELF

1. Gender

- Male
- Female

2. Age

3. Race/Ethnicity

- White
- Black/African-American
- Hispanic/Latino
- Asian/Pacific
- Two or more races
- Other _____

4. If you were born outside of the US, how long have you lived in the US?

- 0-1 year
- 2-4 years
- 5-10 years
- 11 years or more

The following questions are about disruptive behavior. **Check only ONE box for each question.**

Before answering the questions about disruptive behavior, you need to read about what it is. You will find this on the next page.

QUESTIONS ABOUT DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR IN SCHOOL IS: when someone is acting in a way that disturbs other students and/or the teacher

5. Which kind of behavior do you find the most disruptive?

(Check one box)

- Students talking out of turn about things not related to the subject matter
- Students talking out of turn about things related to the subject matter
- Students refusing to carry out instructions given by the teacher
- Students who do not leave other students' equipment alone
- Students wandering around in the classroom
- I have not observed this behavior

a) From your answer above, how much does this disrupt your work? (Check one box)

- Completely
- Very much
- Somewhat
- A little
- Very little

b) If there are behaviors that disrupt your work, how noisy does it need to get to take your focus away? (Check one box)

- Very noisy
- Fairly noisy
- Somewhat noisy
- A little noisy
- Not very noisy

6. How much noise in the classroom last week disrupted your work?

(Check one box)

- Very noisy
- Fairly noisy
- Somewhat noisy
- A little noisy
- Not very noisy

7. Have you been disturbed by other students during the last week?

(Check one box)

- Yes
- No

a) If “Yes”, what happened most often? (Check one box)

- Students talked out of turn about things not related to the subject matter
- Students talked out of turn about things related to the subject matter
- Students refused to carry out instructions given by the teacher
- Students did not leave my equipment alone
- Students wandered around in the classroom

b) If “Yes”, how often did this happen? (Check one box)

- Every lesson
- 1-2 times each day
- 3-4 times each day
- 1-2 times during the last week
- 3-4 times during the last week

8. Have you disturbed other students during the last week?

(Check one box)

- Yes
- No

a) If “Yes”, what happened most often? (Check one box)

- I talked out of turn about things not related to the subject matter
- I talked out of turn about things related to the subject matter
- I refused to carry out instructions given by my teacher
- I did not leave other students’ equipment alone
- I wandered around in the classroom

b) If “Yes”, how often did this happen? (Check one box)

- Every lesson
- 1-2 times each day
- 3-4 times each day
- 1-2 times during the last week
- 3-4 times during the last week

9. How do other students most often react when someone is disruptive in class? (Check one box)

- They also get disruptive
- They ask them if they could be quiet
- They raise their voice and tell them to be quiet
- They tell the teacher
- Nothing

a) How does the reaction of other students affect the ones who are disruptive in class? (Check one box)

- They get quiet
- They become less disruptive
- Nothing happens, they are just as disruptive
- They get more disruptive

10. How do you most often react when someone is disruptive in class? (Check one box)

- I also get disruptive
- I ask them if they could be quiet
- I raise my voice and tell them to be quiet
- I tell the teacher
- Nothing

a) How does your reaction affect the ones who are disruptive in class? (Check one box)

- They get quiet
- They become less disruptive
- Nothing happens, they are just as disruptive
- They get more disruptive

11. What do you think is the best way for students to react, if other students are disruptive in class? (Check one box)

- Also get disruptive
- Ask them if they could be quiet
- Raise their voice and tell them to be quiet
- Tell the teacher
- Nothing

12. How do your teachers most often react, when someone is disruptive in class? (Check one box)

- Ask them if they could be quiet
- Raise his/her voice and tell them to be quiet
- Walk over to them and ask them if they could be quiet
- Walk over to them and tell them to be quiet
- Look at them in a strict way
- Send them into the hall
- Send them to "Campus Intervention"
- Call their parents
- Nothing

a) How do your teachers' reaction affect the ones who are disruptive in class? (Check one box)

- They get quiet
- They become less disruptive
- Nothing happens, they are just as disruptive
- They get more disruptive

13. What do you think is the best way for your teachers to react, when someone is disruptive in class? (Check one box)

- Ask them if they could be quiet
- Raise his/her voice and tell them to be quiet
- Walk over to them and ask them if they could be quiet
- Walk over to them and tell them to be quiet
- Look at them in a strict way
- Send them into the hall
- Send them to "Campus Intervention"
- Call their parents
- Nothing

14. Do you like your school? (Check one box)

- I like it very much
- I like it
- I do not like it, but I do not dislike it either
- I do not like it
- I do not like it at all

**This is the end of the survey.
Thank you for participating!**

Articles

List of articles:

Article 1:

Title: *Being-Disrupted and Being-Disruptive: Coping Students in Uncertain Times*

Author: Magnar Ødegård

Article 2:

Title: *Disruptive Behavior in Schools and the Human Way of Being*

Author: Magnar Ødegård

Norwegian version: *Uro i skolen og den menneskelige væremåte*

Article 3:

Title: *Students' Perceived Experience of Disruptive Behavior in Schools. A Comparative Study between Schools in the US and Norway*

Authors: Liv Duesund & Magnar Ødegård

Article 4:

Title: *Students' Perception of Reactions Towards Disruptive Behavior in Norwegian and American Schools*

Authors: Liv Duesund & Magnar Ødegård

Disruptive Behavior in School and the Human Way of Being

Magnar Ødegård

This article is published in Norwegian as:

Ødegård, M. (2014). Uro i skolen og den menneskelige væremåte. *Norsk pedagogisk tidsskrift*(3), 203-212.

Abstract

This article is part of the project “A Comparative Study of Disruptive Behavior between Schools in Norway and the United States”, which is a collaboration between Norwegian and American researchers. Disruptive behavior is one of the biggest challenges schools stand up against in both countries. My approach is exploratory and includes a discussion of Martin Heidegger’s term “mood” and Hubert Dreyfus’ “absorbed coping”¹, related to disruptive behavior in schools. Emphasis will be on the following: students’ and teachers’ active relation to each other and school, how disruptive behavior occurs and manifests in the classroom and if this may affect the teachers’ skills in behavior management².

“It is not wholly up to us how we will be affected by the situations we find ourselves in” (Dreyfus & Wrathall, 2007, p. 5)

Introduction

The philosophers Martin Heidegger and Hubert Dreyfus inspire this article. The topic of the article is disruptive behavior in relation to Heidegger’s ideas about the human way of

¹ During the spring semester of 2011, I was introduced to the philosophy of Martin Heidegger through attending the course Philosophy 185: Heidegger. Professor Hubert Dreyfus at the University of California, Berkeley, held the course. My interpretations of Heidegger draws inspiration from this course, Hubert Dreyfus and the English translation of Heidegger’s magnum opus “Sein und Zeit” (“Being and Time”). Heidegger’s original German version of “Sein und Zeit” is difficult to translate. His neologisms and terminology involves that translations to other languages should be carefully interpreted (Dreyfus & Wrathall, 2007). Dreyfus derived “absorbed coping” from Heidegger, and I will stick to Dreyfus’ English term.

being. I will provide a discussion of disruptive behavior in schools based on existential conditions.

Heidegger describes the human way of being as *being-in-the-world* (German: “In-Der-Welt-Sein”). Usage of hyphens is not coincidental. They describe that human beings are in close and active relation to the world around them. By “being-in-the-world”, people actively relate to both physical objects and other people. They influence and are influenced. A core issue of “being-in-the-world” is action. If one says “being in the world” without the hyphens, we are talking about human beings as physical and passive objects (Heidegger, 2008).

Thematically, this article discusses the relationship between students and teachers and how they influence, and are influenced by each other. By applying “being-in-the-world”, I illustrate how disruptive behavior influences students and teachers as active agents in school. I refer to this as “being-in-school”.

Disruptive behavior is one of the biggest challenges in schools and can take form of anything from talking out of turn to bullying, violence and crime (Duesund & Nilsen, 2013; Reed & Kirkpatrick, 1998; Zions, Zions, & Simpson, 2002). As many as 1/3 of Norwegian students claim to have been disturbed by disruptive behavior, and nearly half the time of teaching is spent on maintaining control in the classroom (Kjærnsli & Olsen, 2013; Wendelborg, 2012). An important task for the Norwegian school system is to promote health, well-being and learning. This entails that the teachers need skills in managing disruptive behavior and provide positive and negative consequences towards student behavior. Behavior management is a useful tool, but is not always effectively utilized (Colvin, 2010; Greene, 2014; Ogden, 2009). A philosophical approach to these issues involves discussing and analyzing the complexity teachers meet when they apply behavior management techniques to stop or prevent different kinds of disruptive behavior.

The relations to material objects and other people are core issues in “being-in-the-world” (Heidegger, 2008). Students’ relations to other people and learning are fundamental issues within educational science. I will examine if Heidegger’s “being-in-the-world” could be a fruitful term to understand why disruptive behavior manifests itself in classrooms and why teachers may have difficulties in managing such behavior.

A complete description of “being-in-the-world” would be too comprehensive. Two elements of “being-in-the-world” are discussed in this article. These are Heidegger’s “mood” and Dreyfus’ “absorbed coping”. “Moods” are states of mind that affect the interactions people have with the world. Dreyfus has derived “absorbed coping” from the philosophy of Heidegger and operationalized this term as successfully performing an activity without thinking about what it takes to perform it.

“Being-in-the-world” and disruptive behavior in schools

There is a difference between “being-in-the-world” and “being in the world”. “Being-in-the-world” is about how human beings actively influence and are influenced by each other. If one interprets a person as “being in the world”, one regards him or her as passive an object for pure observation (Heidegger, 2008). Utilizing the hyphens, teachers and students are regarded as active in their relation to each other and the classroom as opposed to observing each other as physical and passive objects. Social sciences have traditionally seen human beings as observable and distinguished human action and reflection as separate from each other. Examples of such perspectives are “she is in the house” or “he is at work”(Dreyfus, 1991). In this approach, we are talking about “being in”. It can look like human beings are regarded as physical objects that finds themselves at a certain place. Teachers and students “are in schools” as they are physically present. Human beings as “being in the world” sees the world based on distant reflection and theoretical analysis. They can choose what they want to relate to, as the world consists of observable objects. This causes them to have total control

over their existence as they are not necessarily interrelated with their surroundings (Heidegger, 2008). A teacher who regards students as “being in school” can choose if he or she wants to relate to the students and what they are doing, or do nothing at all. As such, the teacher can choose to manage the disruptive behavior or not. The teacher can choose whether the context will bear influence on him or her, or if he or she wants to influence the context.

A large amount of research on disruptive behavior in schools focusses on individual development, cognitive abilities and literacy (Duesund & Nilsen, 2013). This can seem compatible with an observing approach. The fault of the students (or environment) is observed and teachers can take theoretical distance to what they want to do with them. The perspective is turned towards an observable difficulty rather than the immediate interaction with the students. Teachers often expect much of the students regarding literacy and achievement, their aptitudes or difficulties, and their behavior during class. The stronger the expectations, the less available the teacher will be from being affected by the students (Hattie, 2012). The importance of human interaction seems to be undervalued. Through strong assumptions about the students, the teacher can be influenced by the thought of what kinds of disruptive behavior occurs rather than how these behaviors influence the classroom. The teacher and the students “are in school”.

Through “being-in-the-world”, human beings will have active relations to other people, situations and objects. Everything around the person will mean something. What human beings are involved in is not always a choice or subject to theoretical analysis. In schools, teachers must take into consideration resources (room, equipment, and physical environment), other people, and changing circumstances (when students go from being quiet to disruptive). All these things are part of the teaching as a profession and it is hard to imagine that they can be ignored. Examples of the active relation to the world is that “he is in love” or “she is busy with work” (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 43). An interpretation of this is that one cannot

choose to be in love or not. One can theoretically analyze being in love, but one would still pre-reflectively be in love. “To be busy with work” describes that a person is active in his or her profession rather than merely physically present.

There is a community of teachers and students who “are-in-school”. They are involved in the things that are going on, they act based on these, and there is a dynamic relationship between them. Teachers are not only physically present, but are “busy with students” and “engaged in teaching”. Students and teachers stand in close relation to each other and in a close relation with the school environment. Teachers influence teachers, students influence teachers and disruptive behavior may influence them all. They are dependent on the context. When disruptive behavior occurs, they cannot ignore the behavior, but must make choices based on a situation where disruptive behavior is present. Teachers and students are not passive, but active in the meeting with each other and the disruptive behavior.

Human beings also have an active relation to physical objects. A carpenter’s relation to the hammer illustrates “being-in-the-world”. The carpenter will relate to the hammer, give it meaning and use it as a tool. In this, there is a “for-what”³. The “for-what” illustrates that the hammer points to the nail and the nail points to the plank. This enables the carpenter to build tables, chairs, houses, etc. The “for-what” illustrates the close relation between human beings and the world. The hammer is not only there to be observed, it is also there to be useful for some purpose. By using the hammer, the carpenter will “be-in-the-world” and create meaning. It is the carpenter who ensures that the hammer is a tool rather a piece of wood with a metal head (Fløistad, 1993; Heidegger, 2008). Educational/special needs educational theory will search to serve a purpose in the field of practice. Theoretical principles on behavior management are not useful by themselves, but they are useful when they are implemented in

³ In the Norwegian version, I apply the term “brukssammenheng”, which I have not been able to find a suitable translation for in English. It is therefore substituted with “for-what”, even though this term (in my opinion) does not fully apply to the Norwegian “brukssammenheng”.

the meeting with disruptive students. When disruptive behavior occurs in the classroom, teachers are forced to act based on it because he or she is “in-the-classroom”. The teacher may utilize what he or she knows about behavior management. Behavior management is no longer a theoretical abstraction, but a practical tool to deal with unwanted behavior.

“Absorbed coping”, “mood” and disruptive behavior in schools

“Absorbed coping” involves performing an activity with success without reflecting upon what one is doing. A high level of skill is needed to do so. The context is “forgotten” and the activity is performed successfully and seemingly without much effort. To exemplify: when the carpenter uses a hammer for the first time, he or she needs to know what it looks like, what it can be used for and how to use it. The carpenter will be an amateur in the use of a hammer. A professional carpenter will “forget” details about the appearance of the hammer and how it should be used. At this stage, he or she will build successfully without reflecting upon the details of the process. In other words: the carpenter is in a state of “absorbed coping” (Dreyfus, 1991; Koschmann, Kuutti, & Hickman, 1998).

Behavior management is an important strategy for teachers in schools. Practice of high quality is developed in an exchange between reflection and action (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2008; Handal & Lauvås, 1999). To manage behavior, teachers should know why and when to do so as well as what kinds of disruptive behaviors to be manage. When the teacher gains experience in managing disruptive behavior, he or she may internalize theoretical principles. Sequentially, the teacher will get more skilled within this area. If the teacher gets sufficiently skilled, he or she might “forget” the theoretical aspects of behavior management and conduct it successfully and seemingly without effort. The teacher will then have achieved “absorbed coping” in the use of behavior management as a tool to deal with disruptive behavior.

“Mood” can be states of mind like angry, frustrated, happy, in love etc. Human beings always find themselves in a mood and it is one of the primary aspects of “being-in-the-

world". People are "tuned in" on the world and receptive to its influence. "Mood" is something that occurs in human beings without them being aware of it. Controlling these "moods" are therefore difficult. A "mood" tells a person how he or she feels in the current moment as well as how he or she will feel in the close future. This influences the person's interaction with the world (Dreyfus, 1991; Heidegger, 2008).

Disruptive behavior, or disruption, can be regarded as a "mood". It can also seem like disruptive behavior is difficult to control as it is a substantial problem in schools. Disruptions will affect the teachers' interaction with students. If the teacher is experiencing positivity or joy, he or she will relate differently to disruptive behavior than if he or she experiences frustration or anger. A person who is upset will be offended by things that he or she would have normally ignored if in a positive state of mind (Wormnæs, 2005). In conclusion, how teachers and students relate to each other will be dependent on what kind of "mood" they are in.

Disruptive behaviors often arise because of the community in schools (LeBlanc, Swisher, Vitaro, & Tremblay, 2007). It might therefore be fruitful to discuss if "moods" can cause disruptive behavior to become a collective phenomenon rather than an individual concern. Whether this affects the teachers' ability in behavior management may also be a relevant discussion. I will shed light on this in the following paragraphs.

"Mood" in the classroom

"Moods" create the foundations for the understanding of oneself, the world and other people. By "being-in-the-world", human beings will never be totally alone as other people may affect the concrete situation and the mind (Heidegger, 2008).

The social climate in schools is crucial for whether disruptive behavior occurs or not (LeBlanc et al., 2007). Teachers' and students' "moods" creates the foundation for how they understand each other and what goes on in the classroom. In addition, their "moods" affect

their behaviors and is a dynamic phenomenon that can be “contagious”. When relating to each other, people tend to exhibit the same kind of behavior (Fløistad, 1993). Influences from social situations affect attitudes, emotions and behavior. There is also a tendency that individuals adjust these to the majority in the group they are in (Cialdini, 2009; Wilson, 2002). “Moods” can be infectious in the classroom as it is a social community. This will have an impact on whether disruptive behavior occurs and if it becomes a behavior displayed by most students.

“Moods” seem to affect both teachers and students. When one student is displaying disruptive behavior, other students and the teacher are forced to relate to the disruptions. To display disruptive behavior may be the way students as “being-in-the-world” relate to the disruptive behavior displayed by other students. One student displaying disruptive behavior causes the risk of more students doing the same (House of Commons Education Committee, 2011). Disruptive behavior may be infectious and create a collective “mood” characterized by more students displaying disruptive behavior. The collective behavior in the classroom comes to display disruptive behavior and the display of this kind of behavior becomes the norm rather than the exception. Earlier in this article, I advocated that all kinds of disruptive behavior impair learning and teaching. More students displaying disruptive behavior will therefore ensure that the “mood” in the classroom itself threatens to impair learning and teaching.

Behavior that impairs learning and teaching, “mood” and “absorbed coping”

“Absorbed coping” is interrupted when an unwanted situation occurs. This is experienced as a “breakdown” as the activity is interrupted or forced to stop (Dreyfus, 1991; Duesund & Skårderud, 2003). “Breakdowns” happen when equipment no longer works, when

there is no longer order or when a situation gets out of control. These “breakdowns” are not always total. They can also be temporary (Dreyfus, 1991; Dreyfus, 1999).

A temporary “breakdown” may happen when the teacher experiences kinds of disruptive behavior that he or she has experienced before. On the other hand, a total “breakdown” may occur if the disruptive behavior is not experienced earlier or if it is too intense. The example of the carpenter may be applicable yet again. If the carpenter’s hammer breaks or is too heavy, the “breakdown” will be temporary if a new hammer is available. The “breakdown” will be temporary as the carpenter has new equipment available and thus found a solution to the problem. Through reflection, the carpenter has figured out through experience and reflection that it is useful to have an additional hammer available if the one he or she is using breaks (Dreyfus, 1991; Heidegger, 2008). This can be analogous to teachers and students meeting with “moods” that impair learning and teaching. Through reflection and experience of situations where disruptive behavior has infected the classroom, the teacher can “retrieve” his or hers existing knowledge about behavior management. If the behavior management techniques have worked in similar instances, it will be fruitful for the teacher to apply this knowledge and put it into practice. If the behavior is successfully managed, the “breakdown” is temporary because the disruptive behavior decreases and teaching can continue where it left off.

Disruptive behavior in schools is complex and dynamic as it can take many forms and occur in different situations. This means that some principles for behavior management are not universal. Situations may be similar, but always require a specific solution with some characteristic that is exclusive for each situation. When situations including disruptive behavior are similar, teachers can apply their prior experiences to restore a positive working environment in class. This may seem oversimplified. Because disruptive behavior comes in many forms, teachers will be at risk of encountering disruptive behavior that they have not

previously experienced. This causes the “breakdown” to be more challenging as earlier experiences and reflections are no longer applicable. The teacher will then experience a total “breakdown”. Total “breakdown” will happen for the carpenter when the hammer breaks and it is not possible to repair it or locate a new one. The carpenter will be forced to stop the activity and take an analytical stance including theoretical distance to the situation. He or she must derive a plan for how to locate a new hammer, repair the one he or she has or figure out what other tools that may be applicable. The broken hammer will be the main point of focus. As the hammer is broken, the carpenter needs to relate to the hammer in a new way by utilizing theoretical analysis about where to get a new hammer. Two alternatives present themselves in this total “breakdown”. These are theoretical analysis or intuitive action (Dreyfus, 1991; Heidegger, 2008).

The teacher may take a theoretical and analytical stance when meeting disruptive behavior that he or she has not experienced before. He or she will need to mentally step out of the interaction and context with the students to think about what to do further. If the teacher does not find a solution, he or she might be in doubt over lacking knowledge and resign when standing up against disruptive behavior. Another alternative for the teacher is intuitive action, but without knowing if what he or she is going to do will work.

Intuitive action may be scary. It bears with it a great responsibility for one’s own action as one no longer follow established rules and principles (Dreyfus, 1991). The teacher may fear a lack of control, bad classroom environment, low degree of learning and unhappiness amongst the students. If this is the case, the teacher can return to the theoretical and analytical approach. This is a less frightening option as the teacher can consult textbooks or search for advice elsewhere. Analogue to this is when the carpenter needs to be instructed in what a hammer is, what it looks like and how to use it. The teacher will step out of the situation and into theory. A problem with this is that teachers should not mentally remove

themselves from the classroom and leave the students to themselves. If the teacher stands still and does nothing other than thinking or physically leaves the room, the disruptive behavior will continue and maybe intensify. I choose to call the theoretical and analytical approach for “action-impairing” as the teacher does not act against the disruptive behavior due to a fear of doing something wrong.

A total “breakdown” may also be positive. It does not bear with it obstacles for adequate practice, but possibilities. By accepting the frightening aspects of risk and responsibility, the teacher can act intuitively. This is engaged action, which is a necessity for skill development. Engaged action means more for the practitioner than theory alone. It is in engaged action the practitioner has the sole responsibility for how he or she acts, rather than finding safety in leaning on theoretical principles (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986).. Total “breakdown” can be “action-promoting” as the teachers can choose to act intuitively and with engagement. The Norwegian National Curriculum promotes that teachers should be skilled and engaged communicators and supervisors. This can legitimize teachers’ intuitive actions as it brings with it engagement and involvement for what one is doing.

Knowledge acquired through intuitive action is called atheoretical knowledge. By acquiring knowledge in this way, the performer of an activity will be able to conduct situational distinctions including reactions. Deliberate reactions are replaced by intuitive behavior (that works adequately) and the performer could become more skilled in an activity. By reaching a higher level of skill, the possibility to reaching “absorbed coping” is triggered (Dreyfus, 1991).

Teachers regularly make the mistake of “forcing their will” on students when they try to manage disruptive behavior. Believing they are supposed to give the students a reason for why they want them to be quiet, they may come with statements like: “You will be quiet because I say so”. Students may react to this by increasing their disruptive behavior as they

may find this kind of behavior management to be unfair (Greene, 2014). This way of managing behavior may be a result of frustration or lack of knowledge. It is not based on theoretical principles, but is intuitive. Teachers forcing their will on students are examples of an inadequate way of managing disruptive behavior. However, it may bear fruit even though it is inadequate. The teacher's intuitive behavior management will mean more to him or her than the implementation of theoretical principles. After making a mistake, the teacher may reflect upon the intuitive actions that mean something to him or her and further develop the skill of behavior management. A new kind of disruptive behavior has been experienced and acted upon, and these actions can (and should) be reflected upon. Consequentially, the teacher has obtained a new component in his or hers experience with disruptive behavior and in his or her repertoire of behavior management. In such a case, a total "breakdown" trigger a possibility for "breakthrough".

Concluding remarks

"Being-in-the-world" may contribute to an understanding that teachers and students always must relate to the world and what goes on in schools, including disruptive behavior. Through "being-in-the-world", they are active in this relationship. Teachers and students have a dynamic relation to each other. They influence, and are influenced by each other. Disruptive behavior may therefore spread in the classroom and become a collective phenomenon. Teachers will always act on the basis of the context they find themselves in. When there is disruptive behavior in the classroom, actions of teachers (and their theoretical thinking) will emerge. A total isolation from the context is impossible. Through "being-in-the-world", teachers may never be fully educated within behavior management. Through intuitive action, engagement, involvement and "breakdown", further experience with disruptive behavior will arise. Through reflection upon intuitive action, teachers can acquire new strategies in behavior management and for each time become more suited to deal with disruptive behavior in

schools. Teachers are not static observers. Through “being-in-school”, teachers should be in continuous development, both as communicators, managers of behavior as persons. I choose to finish with a citation from Lawrence Stenhouse (translated from Norwegian):

“Teaching should not be considered as a static skill like riding a bike or accounting. Like all other highly ambitious art forms, it is a strategy in confrontation with an impossible task”

(Lyngsnes & Rismark, 2003).

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