Teachers’ Skillful Coping with Disruptive Behavior in Norwegian and American Classrooms.

The Phenomenology of Teaching

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29.05.2019
Summary

Background

This master thesis is written as a part of the larger research project “Teachers Skillful Coping with Disruptive Behavior in Norwegian and American Classrooms”, led by Professor Liv Duesund. This research groups focuses on disruptive behavior in Norwegian and American classrooms and how teachers cope with and approach disruptive behavior in the classroom context. The project also aims to explore how teachers experience their own skills and practices when managing disruptive behavior. This study is a qualitative interview study with 4 teachers in American public schools exploring their experiences as teachers and whether the Dreyfus’ skill model could be applicable.

Research question

The aim of this study was to explore the experiences of teachers and the following research question was developed:

*In what ways could the Dreyfus’ skill model be applied when analyzing teachers’ experience with teaching?*

Methodology

Since this thesis is part of the larger research project “Teachers Skillful Coping with Disruptive Behavior in Norwegian and American Classrooms” I was required to apply a qualitative research methodology. I conducted 4 interviews with teachers in the US from the upper middle school and high school level, where the interviews were 20-40 minutes long. I was provided with an interview guide from the larger project with the possibility of adding a few questions of my own.

Result

The findings of this study suggest that following rules and procedures, although necessary in the beginning, could potentially be interfering with the flexibility and demands in a classroom context. In order for teachers to further develop their skill of teaching, it might be necessary to be emotionally involved in the situations and take responsibility for action and outcome.

When studying to become teachers, it could be positive for student-teachers to have a more
active role in the classroom and not become silent observers. Direct experience making
decisions and taking action may not be replaced by instruction and detached observation and
could maybe play a larger role in the education of teachers. Good teaching might be a result
of flexibility and the ability to be present in the situation.
Acknowledgement

There are several people who deserve acknowledgment and praise for helping me through this thesis.

First and foremost, I wish to thank my supervisor, professor Liv Duesund for the incredible possibility to study a full academic year at The University of California, Berkeley. This experience has allowed me to grow both academically and personally, and I thank her for giving me this opportunity. I also want to thank her for allowing me to be a part of the research project “Teachers Skillful Coping with Disruptive Behavior in Norwegian and American Classrooms”. Being a part of this project have been an amazing experience and made this year something extraordinary. Thank you so much for the continues support, interesting conversations and illuminating discussions during this time, and for inspiring me to become a better writer. It has been a privilege working with you.

Secondly, I wish to thank all the subjects in this study for wanting to participate and share their stories with me.

I also want to thank my parents and my brother for all the love and support during this year. Their backing and encouragement mean everything to me, and I will never be able to thank them enough.

Finally, I want to thank my partner Håkon for all the love and patience during this year. Your faith in me is never-ending and your encouragement is something I appreciate tremendously. Thank you for being my rock and my source of inspiration to become the best that I can be.

Jeanette Erlandsen

Berkeley, May 2019
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1 Introduction

In this section I will present the background and theme of this thesis, along with the research problem and an outline of the thesis.

1.1 Background

This master thesis is written as a part of the larger research project “Teachers Skillful Coping with Disruptive Behavior in Norwegian and American Classrooms”, led by Professor Liv Duesund. This research group focuses on disruptive behavior in Norwegian and American classrooms and how teachers cope with and approach disruptive behavior in the classroom context. The project also aims to explore how teachers experience their own skills and practices when managing disruptive behavior. I was introduced to this project by Liv Duesund in the spring of 2019 and I could not turn down the opportunity and privilege to be a part of this project.

As a teacher within special needs education, I am in a position to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable individuals in society. Through this position, I can strive for doing good, but I might also cause harm. As a teacher, I can advocate for those who do not have a voice of their own and believe in those who do not believe in themselves. On the basis of these possibilities’ teachers might be one of the most significant social roles in society. However, the role of teachers and the expectations of teachers have changed over time. This can be visible through the explicit directions in the curriculum and regulations set by the government, but also though the implicit anticipations society has for what teachers are supposed to provide for their students. In school, children need to have their social needs met, their curiosity peaked, their knowledge challenged, and especially they need to have someone believing in them. Every child deserves good teachers, yet do we fully understand what good teaching consists of or what aspects are more important than others in teaching? What do teachers think about their own skills and how do they experience their own teaching? What could it be that certain teachers may be better at teaching than others? Are there, for instance, any interpersonal characteristics that good teachers inhabit that others do not? These questions are what inspired me to write my thesis where I want to explore how teachers experience being teachers. Also, by applying the Dreyfus’ skill model as a tool of analysis, I want to explore what might make a good teacher an expert.

1.2 Theme
“The intuitive mind is a sacred gift, while the rational mind is only its faithful servant, but our society honors the servant and has forgotten the gift”. (Albert Einstein in Waks, 2006, pp.379)

As one of society’s most influential and important social role, teachers are given many tasks to fulfill and expectations of how to be a teacher. Being a teacher means working within a complex network of aspects and elements that together make up the limitations and possibilities within the educational context. Being a teacher is complex, and teaching is even more complex. How could it then be that some teachers leave such a profound impression on their students and surroundings? How is it that, when attempting to explain what these teachers do differently than others there might not be enough sufficient explicit words, rather explanations filled by emotions and metaphors? Could it be that good teaching is more them what can be explicitly explained? As written above by Albert Einstein (in Waks, 2006, pp.379) the rational mind may have been the focus of honor and worship in our society. Yet, could there be another way of describing skillfulness and expertise?

Teachers are expected to teach academic skills, manage the classroom, assist in the social and emotional development, building relationships with their students and their parents, and collaborate with colleagues and administration. Disruptive behavior is said to be one of the biggest challenges’ teachers face in school (Befring & Duesund, 2012; Duesund & Ødegård, 2018; Valseth, 2013; Ødegård, 2017). How teachers manage disruptive behavior and understand disruptive behavior could influence how teachers experience teaching. Yet, there might be teachers who excel in their work and leave students with more than empty content and are capable of managing disruptive behavior. Walker (2009, pp. 122; Ødegård, 2017) writes, that “the best teachers don’t simply teach content, they teach people”. But who are these teachers, and what makes them stand out? Teaching as a skill is not uniform or simply explained, it is experienced and performed in a variety of ways. I was introduced to phenomenology through my master studies at the University of Oslo. When learning about phenomenology I was inspired by the different ways it could help me to better understand myself, my role as a teacher and how I interpret the situations I find myself in. It gave me tools to reflect on what I see and how I identify the things I experience. Different from previous methods of understanding the human experience, phenomenology incorporates the experience of the individual both as a subject and object. This means for example that the individual is both a subject experiencing a situation and an object to be experienced in a situation (Duesund, 2003, pp. 22). Given this example, one way to apply phenomenology is to understand how situational experiences of a phenomenon can differ based on the individual. Subsequently, I was introduced to the Dreyfus’ model of skill acquisition. The model of skill acquisition illustrates the importance of involvement, intuition and practiced experience when gaining a skill like learning to drive a car or becoming a ski instructor (Duesund & Jespersen, 2004;
Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986). The experiences an individual then participate in shaped how the skill practiced and context is understood. Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986) present a skill model with five stages; novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient and expert. This model illustrates the transition from a theoretical and analytical way of learning and understanding the world, to an experience based and intuitive way of thinking. After reading more about the model it was interesting for me to examine how the model opens a new way of understanding skill development and how important experience with real situations might be for teachers when they develop their skill of teaching. This paper recognizes that teaching incorporates many elements and aspects, and the skill of teaching is not singular.

1.3 Research question

This study is based on an exploration of how teachers experience teaching and their own skills. Based on my interest in phenomenology and the acquisition of skill, the following research question was created.

*In what ways could Dreyfus’ skill model be applied when analyzing teachers’ experience with teaching?*

The intention of this research question is to explore the lived narratives of teachers and how they might experience teaching and their own skills. Also, this study aims to investigate in what ways the Dreyfus’ skill model could be applied when analyzing how teachers say they experience their own teaching and teaching skills. This research question may allow for a deeper dive into the thoughts and experiences of the teacher and how they might perceive their classroom context. As noted above, this study recognizes that the skill of teaching is not simple or uniform, neither is the classroom context. The skill of teaching is complex and involves many aspects, elements, interactions and relationships. Yet, I wonder if the Dreyfus model of skill acquisition could be applicable when aiming to analyze how teachers experience teaching as a skill. And if so, in what ways?

1.4 Disposition

I will begin this thesis by outlining a brief introduction into some of the feature’s teachers face through their works as a teacher and in the classroom context. The intention is to provide a window into the complexity of their work and some of the many element’s teachers have to manage. Because my
intention of this study is to examine teachers own experience with teaching, my opinion is that a better understanding of the context teaches face is necessary. Next, I will present an introduction to the theory of phenomenology. The reason for this is that the main model that this study aims to utilize is based on the perspective of phenomenology. Therefore, a brief introduction to phenomenology and the application of phenomenology in this study is considered necessary. Subsequently this thesis will present the Dreyfus’ skill model and some criticism of the model. After presenting the theory and background that the study is based on, I will describe the methodology and processes of the study. This will be done by giving a short description of the qualitative methodology and interviewing in research methodology. Subsequently, I outline the design of the study though preparations, recruitment and sampling, transcription and analysis. Afterward, I will give a description of the steps made to enhance the reliability and validity, before I present the ethical considerations and possible limitations of my study. Then I will present the findings and analysis, which I will discuss in light of the Dreyfus’ model of skill acquisition in order to explore in what ways the model could be applied when analyzing teachers experience with teaching. In the end, I will provide some critical insights into how my study could be done differently and then provide a short conclusion of the study and thought on further exploration.
# 2 Teaching and learning

As one of the largest and most important profession in society, substantial research has been devoted to exploring the work of teachers (Dahl, et al., 2016, pp.19). Teachers are found to be one of the most influential factors regarding students’ academic, social and emotional learning and development. Where the relationship between students and teachers are highlighted to be of especial importance (Ogden, 2009; Hattie, 2008; Duesund & Ødegård, 2018; Stroet, Opdenakker & Minnaert, 2013). Teaching and learning exist in a dynamic relationship, where the conceptual understandings of the two concepts develop and influence each other. How society understand the process of learning influence how teachers teach, and the understanding of how teachers are supposed to teach influence how students learn (Gottlieb, 2015; Loughran & Hamilton, 2016). Today’s society is in rapid change and teacher are faced with an environment influenced by globalization, social inequality, increase in use of technology, cultural diversity and environmental change (Dahl et al., 2016, pp. 24). All these factors contribute to create a diverse composition of students with many different backgrounds, skills, needs and strengths that teachers must address and work with. This diversity and contextual complexity could potentially lead to new expectations and skills teachers are required to accomplish.

## 2.1 Teachers and role expectations

The expectations of teachers are many. Teachers are supposed to be knowledgeable about the progress of their students and be aware of their needs; build curricular activities; follow rules and government regulations; work with parents and community expectations; and fulfill requirements set by their profession role (Dahl et al. 2017; Sandholtz, Ringstaff, & Dwyer, 1997). Expectations of teachers could refer to the norms, requirements and assumptions of what a teacher is supposed to do and provide for their students. Dahl et al. (2017, pp. 25) outline that the expectations of teachers could be divided into two levels; the micro level and the macro level. The macro level details the interaction between larger political and institutional actors that influence the way teachers execute their role, like politics, directives and professional role descriptions. The micro level displays the day-to-day executions and relations that a teacher is involved with every day. Such as teacher-student relationship, collaboration with parents, colleagues, administration and other school functions. The macro level here might signal larger outer forces that influence the structure and environments of teaching and how the profession of teaching should be executed. With the micro level there are more room for indivual and local differences influence by distribution of resources, school size, individual factors and school
policies (Dahl, 2017, pp. 26). With these levels outlined we can see that the environments that surrounds teachers are intertwined and dynamic.

Documents from the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (Kunnskapsdirektoratet) and The US Department of Education (USDE) state that the schools and teachers are expected to teach academic content; support and teach social, emotional and cultural skills; motivate their students; ensure student participation; provide adapted instruction after the needs of the child and to collaborate with the parents and community of the child. These are some general goals and directions from the curriculum in Norway “Knowledge Promotion” (2006) and “Every Student Succeeds Act” (2015) in United States (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2006; USDE, 2015). All these elements and features together are supposed to provide the students with the knowledge and skills to interact and succeed in society and help to develop capable citizens in society (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017, pp.5). Although teachers are expected to meet many requirements one element might stand out as more important in literature and research. Relationships, especially between students and teachers, have been found to be one the most important factors that contribute to student learning and development (Bø & Hovdenak, 2011; Dahl, et al. 2017; Hattie, 2008). As seen in the National curriculum in Norway, teachers are not only expected to teach academic skills and content. They are also expected to provide students with social, cultural and emotional skills in order to function and thrive in the society they face. Although the student-teacher relationships are at the core of learning, it does not stand in opposition to the academic elements of learning (Dahl et al., 2017; Westergård & Havik, 2019). The academic perspective and the relational perspective exist in a duality, not standing opposed to each other, but interacting with each other. This is one of the reasons that the teacher profession is so complex, where the quality of the relationships and the academic development are connected to each other. Yet, how does teachers handle all of these expectations, and what could possibly be the reason that some teachers are able to perform at a higher level within the large amount of expectations?

2.2 The concept of good teaching

Though time an extensive amount of research has been done in order to best articulate the concepts of good teaching (Duesund & Ødegård, 2018, pp.411). This is visible though the different educational reforms and policies, in addition to the body of research on student outcome and teaching practice (Gottlieb, 2015; Hattie, 2009). Education play an important part in society, where school is an important arena for interaction, socialization and growth. Given the important part education has in society, extensive focus has been placed on the question of “what works” (Gottlieb, 2015; Duesund & Ødegård, 2018). It is understandable to seek a better understanding of the factors and elements
promoting good teaching in order to educate teachers in how to best perform the skill of teaching. Yet, there could be some implications in the “production” of good teaching. In order to study teaching practice and student’s outcome one may have to explicitly objectify what these concepts consist of. In so, studies may focus on the visible factors in order to generalize what works in teaching and education. Many school reforms are based on the measurement of student achievement. Student achievement is often represented by standardized measures and relates to the effectiveness of teaching (Gottlieb, 2015, pp.14). This technical idea of learning could result in the concept of good teaching being reduced into teacher’s ability to facilitate learning quantified by standardized tests and measures.

Yet, this type of measure might only speak to the explicit and observable domain of education and might not be sufficient enough to in full capture what good teachers provide for their students. Gottlieb (2015, pp.51) argues that there might be 2 ways of conceptualizing teaching quality; the ordinary and technical. The ordinary conceptual understanding of teaching quality speaks to educative actions and results like inspiring lifelong curiosity, thirst for knowledge, impacting the course of a student’s life and seeing their needs. The technical conceptual understandings of teaching quality speak to the explicit elements and features that can be articulated like scores or observable behaviors. The technical sense of teaching quality can also be referred to as effectiveness or what works in teaching and have been an object of study in much of the previous research (Gottlieb, 2015, pp.52). These two perspectives of how to understand good teaching might provide an illustration to why it is difficult to define what good teaching consist of. It might be understood that good teaching consists of more than high levels of technical skill, that good teaching consists of something that one might be less able to describe explicitly in a generalized context because it is more contextual and emotional then rational.

2.3 Teachers and students interacting

Disruptive behavior in the classroom is argued to be one the most challenging phenomenon that teachers have to cope with in their role as teachers. Disruptive behavior has been linked to stress and frustration amongst both students and teacher, while also influencing the learning environment in the classroom and student social, emotional and academical development (Duesund, 2014; Duesund & Ødegård, 2018, Ødegård, 2019). Disruptive behavior is a broad concept relating to forms of student behavior that conflicts with teachers’ expectations and task requirements (Befring & Duesund, 2012; Duesund, 2014; Duesund & Ødegård, 2018; Ogden, 2009; Valseth, 2013; Ødegård, 2017). With an increasingly diverse environment, there might not only be teachers who struggle to adapt to the expectations from society. In an increasingly changing world where little no nothing is certain of final, it could be a stressful and difficult time to be a student (Ødegård, 2019, pp.4). With endless
possibilities and choices, pressure to perform and making decision for their future life, students might struggle with difficult emotions, in need of teachers who can see them for who they are and not only their behavior. How teachers respond to the various emotional and behavior responses the students display might affect how students perceive their teachers and in so affect the type of relationship that is formed (Duesund & Ødegård, 2018; Westergård & Havik, 2019). Teachers have a vital role in students’ academic, social and emotional development, and teachers coping mechanism regarding disruptive behavior could be influencing teacher’s ability to build positive realtionships with students (Duesund & Ødegård, 2018; Duesund, 2014). Teachers are, next to parents, the adult figures in children’s life they interact with the most. The quality of the interaction and relationship between the students and teacher could potentially also influence how the students behave around each other and the classroom environment. In the classroom a teacher could function as a role model, modeling types of behaviors, attitudes and interactions in the classroom (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2016, pp.13). In so, the reactions the teachers have towards students and their behavior could potentially influence the attitudes and realtionships amongst the students in the classroom and towards the teacher (Duesund & Ødegård, 2018, pp. 412). With this in mind it could be important for teachers to be aware of their own influence in the classroom in order to create a positive learning environment and positive relationships.

The literature on teaching and learning is extensive, and this section do not provide fully justice for the complex and dynamic relationship between the two concepts. The intention of this section was do provide a brief contextual outline of teaching and learning since the larger research question involves how teachers experience teaching. There are however many factors that influence the circumstances and quality of teaching, both from the social and cultural perspective as well as the teacher and student perspective. In addition, there are individual elements and structural elements that all work and interact together to form the environment where teaching and learning take place. As visible though this brief introduction to some influencing elements of teaching there are numerus aspects that teachers have to interact with in their role as teachers. How does then teachers experience be teachers? How teachers experience teaching is subjective, and most often experiences differ depending on who you ask. That is why a phenomenological perspective could be useful when trying to explore the experience of teaching.
3 Phenomenology

The term phenomenology comes from the Greek words *phainomenon* which translates into “that which appears” and *logos* that means “study”. Derived from these terms, phenomenology is the study of that which appears (Duesund, 2003; Wrathall, 2014). Phenomenology can be understood as the study of experience, and places emphasis on how individuals have their own perceptions and experiences of the world. It is a matter of describing the world as it appears, not resulting in facts about what is (Duesund, 2003; Wrathall, 2014). Through this thinking we might be able to explore how situations and experiences differ depending on the individual. For example, how teachers experience disruptive behavior or understands that type of behavior might differ depending on the teacher and classroom context.

3.1 Phenomenology and the Cartesian tradition.

Phenomenology is distinctively different from previous understanding of human experience. This is because phenomenology incorporates the experiences of the individual as subject and object at the same time. Phenomenology illustrates that the individual could be a subject experiencing a situation and equally be an object to be experienced in a situation. The body is a part of the whole, not a mute object existing separate from us or only something we have, it’s a part of who we are (Duesund, 2003, pp.23). Whereas within the Cartesian tradition or rationalist perspective, the understanding is that the body and mind are separated from each other and from the world (Duesund, 2003). As Rene Descartes writes “Cogito, ergo sum” I think, therefore I am, putting the mind before the body. This claim is questioned in the phenomenological perspective because phenomenology integrates the mind and body as a whole, within the context of the world, seeing them as inseparable (Dreyfus, 1991; Dreyfus & Wakefield, 1998; Wrathall, 2014). This illustrates that we might not be able to understand ourselves without the context of our surroundings (Duesund, 2003; Wrathall, 2014).

The phenomenological perspective highlights that individuals have their own experience and understanding of situations and the world around them (Duesund, 2003; Merleau-Ponty, 2005; Wrathall, 2014). Therefore in order to explore the lived experiences of teacher’s, phenomenology could be a useful tool to better understand the different perspectives of teaching. Next, I will present the Dreyfus’ skill model which builds on a phenomenological perspective. This because the model illustrates how an individual skillfully copes with the phenomenon as it appears for them (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Wrathall, 2014).
4 The skill-model

Though the past decade there have been increasingly focus on objectivity, generalized theory and articulation of formalized skill when describing human intelligence (Dreyfus, 1992 in Wrathall, 2014, pp.1). Yet, could there be a different understanding of human skillfulness and intelligence?

4.1 Skillful coping

Dreyfus’s introduces us to the concept of skillful coping. Skillful coping as Dreyfus explains it relates to how we as humans intuitively, intellectually and skillfully cope with the world though objects, individuals, situations and our self (Wrathall, 2014; Ødegård, 2019). Instead of connecting decisions and actions to rational assessment and reason, Dreyfus propose that skillful activity is another form of intelligence build on learning and practice (Wrathall, 2014, pp.3). In difference form the rational perspective of human intelligence, skillful coping incorporates the individual as a whole, rather than separating the mind from the body. In addition, the individual is understood to be interrelated with the world, where the individual and world influences each other (Wrathall, 2014, pp.2). This understanding of human intelligence was influenced by Heidegger’s concept of Being-in-the-world which understands the individual to have an active connection to the surrounding world and actively seeks to interpret and understand it (Wrathall, 2014; Ødegård, 2019). Being able to respond intuitively to our surroundings and not apply deliberation and assessment in the moment is, according to Dreyfus, the strength of human expertise (Duesund, 2003; Gottlieb, 2015; Wrathall, 2014). This understanding goes against the rationalist perspective that highlights objective, formalized and theoretical assessment and calculation. This rational understanding of human intelligence is referred to as calculative rationality (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986, pp.36). When studying how adults learned new skills, the Dreyfus brothers noticed that the learning process advanced though five stages, where the stages indicated five different levels of skillful coping.

4.2 The Dreyfus skill model

In 1986 Hubert L. Dreyfus and Stuart E. Dreyfus published the book *Mind Over Machine*. The book presents their ideas about learning and knowledge, their account to the complexity of human intelligence and how humans understands and make sense of the world around them (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Wrathall, 2014). They present a skill model with five stages; novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficiency, and expert (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2001; Duesund,
This model illustrates the transition from a theoretical and analytical way of learning and understanding the world, to an experience based and intuition-based way of thinking. They describe this transition as going from "knowing that" to "knowing how" (Benner et al., 1996; Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986). "Knowing that" refers to how one follows specific rules and procedures in order to perform a certain skill like driving a car. "Knowing how" is obtained through experience and practice by performing the skill, where direct experience and intuition replace the objective rules (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Wrathall, 2014). The Dreyfus brothers write that learning a new skill might be understood as going from abstract rules to concrete situations, and not the other way around as understood on the basis of the rationalist perspective (Benner et al., 1996; Dreyfus & Wrathall, 2014).

The Dreyfus brothers argue that skill acquisition can be understood differently than the traditional Cartesian way also referred to as the rationalist perspective. The rationalist perspective argues that intelligent or successful practice is accomplished on the basis of utilizing generalized rules that are applied in varying contexts (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Duesund & Ødegård, 2018; Gottlieb, 2015). In relation to teachers this could imply that teachers develop standardized strategies and rules that can be applied to many situations (Duesund & Ødegård, 2019, pp.411). Yet, according to the Dreyfus brothers, intelligent action might be more pre-reflective and based on intuition rather than rational though. This was radical new thinking because the Dreyfus brothers argue that instead of learning from concrete cases to abstract concepts, they argue that it might be the other way around (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Duesund, 2003; Wrathall, 2014). As articulated in the skill model the individual learns abstract concepts first and then transition into coping with singular cases through experience. For teachers this could imply that they start with abstract concepts and gradually learn to cope with situations as singular cases. This understanding of human intelligence might be providing an illustration to why we are less able to put into words the exact nature of an expert performance, like the expert teacher (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Gottlieb, 2015).

4.2.1 Novice

In the first stage of skill acquisition, the learner or performer is presented with decomposed, context-free rules and procedures through instruction or formal training (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2001; Duesund, 2003; Wrathall, 2014). The novice is presented with these context-free rules so they can more easily recognize situations that arise and guide the learner’s actions without the need of actual experience (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2008; Gottlieb, 2015). The skill is decomposed so that the performer can more easily navigate the usage of the skill, similar to how individuals learn to swim, ski or play tennis (Duesund & Jespersen, 2004; Dreyfus, 2001; Gottlieb, 2015.) One example
can be how children learn to behave in certain settings. They learn a set of rules for different situations like playing with other children or how to behave at a birthday party. Even though these skills require many different smaller skillsets, they might be presented to the child in a similar matter. These rules tell them how they are expected to behave, how to respond and how to act. Here one could understand the child to be at the novice stage, in need of instruction to successfully perform the skill of playing with other children or behaving properly in a formal setting. Consider another example, how one learns to interpret a person crying. When a person is young one may be taught that a person crying means that a person is sad, and in every situation where a person is crying the individual may think that sadness is the right interpretation. However, with increasing experience, one might learn that crying can be a response to many different things, happiness, irritation, frustration, sadness, physical pain, emotional pain and so on. As the person grow older and have increased experience with different situations and reasons for crying, one could learn to consider the context of the crying to better understand it’s cause or intention. These two examples could help illustrate how context-free rules are needed early on to help us to understand and guide our responses, however, these abstract rules do not fit every situation one may encounter.

In addition to this, in the novice stage the learner or performer has no prior experience performing the skill, in so they have no means of how to evaluate their performance with this skill. They will, therefore, do so by evaluating how well they followed the given rules presented (Benner, 1982; Dreyfus, 2001; Dreyfus, 2008; Ødegård, 2017). Benner (1982; Benner et al. 1996) relates the skill model to nursing. She explains that the most difficult task of a new nurse is that no rule alone can tell them what task to perform first on a patient in real situations. Because lack of experience they must follow context-free rules to perform task regard their patients, like measuring blood pressure, weight, pulse, and other requirements. The nurses evaluate their performance on how well they did all the tasks and completed them correctly (Benner, 1982; Benner et al. 1996). A new teacher who are just venturing into the field of teaching might evaluate their performance by how well they follow the set requirements of teaching and not the act of teaching in itself. They might be more preoccupied with the technical part of teaching as explained earlier by Gottlieb (2015, pp.51).

### 4.2.2 Advanced beginner

At this next stage, the learner has gained more experience in different situations. Through the increase in experience, the learner begins to understand that context-free rules do not always apply in every situation. The learner at the advanced beginner stages starts to get a sense of similarities between situations and distinguishes between different aspects of more or less importance in certain situations
These recognizable aspects transform into more general maxims that guide recognition and action. These maxims are different from the rules learn by the novice because they require prior knowledge and experience with the situation (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1985; Dreyfus, 2001; Ødegård, 2017). Let us continue with the example of the learning to interpret crying. The learner was first introduced to the rule that crying means sadness. However, the learner could encounter situations where sadness is not the right interpretations. Then the learner creates general maxims that tell the learner that crying might most likely mean sadness but not in every situation. Still, the advanced beginner is at an early stage in the acquisition of the skill and the individual still needs given rules and protocols to guide him or her. Experience has provided the performer with an opportunity to recognize situational elements in situations, yet the performer cannot stray from the standardized procedures or utilize intuition at this point (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2001; Dreyfus 2008).

4.2.3 Competence

At this stage, the learner has gained more experience and is now aware of some important aspects of different situations. However, at the competence stage, it is difficult to distinguish between aspects in relation to the specific situations that need attention (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2008; Duesund, 2003; Gottlieb, 2015; Wrathall, 2014). For example, students are diverse individuals and for a teacher there might be too many aspects to consider in a classroom context. Therefore they might choose to consider elements that are of highest importance to them in order to cope with the variety of students and their behavior. However, the sheer amount of aspects to be aware of may become too much, and the learner could feel overwhelmed. In order to cope with the sheer number of aspects, the learner needs to adapt a hierarchical view in order to help with decision-making (Dreyfus, 1992; Dreyfus, 2008). This hierarchical view helps the learner choose a perspective, goal or action dependent on what the desired outcome is. Dreyfus (2008, pp.35) uses an example of how children learn to lie. First children learn to never tell a lie. When the child then experiences that never telling a lie could possibly be hurtful, they might learn to never lie unless making people feel good is the objective. With increasing experience, the child understands that being truthful and when to lie is connected to the situation and desired outcome. When to lie and when to be truthful is connected to the intention the learner has for the outcome, like building trust, manipulation the situation, working for their own gain or cause harm to others (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1992; Dreyfus, 2008). The child has to choose a perspective to reach a desired outcome. The competent skill performer will in this stage learn to distinguish situation-dependent aspects in order to achieve specific goals (Duesund, 2003, pp. 66).
Choosing a perspective involves taking risks, with the possibility of both negative and positive outcomes. Since the learner has to make a free choice the performer feels more emotionally involved with the choice according to the skill model (Dreyfus, 2001; Dreyfus, 2008; Duesund, 2003). No procedural instruction can guide the choice they make and therefore the learner might experience emotional anxiety when having to choose what to do or what to focus on. Dreyfus (2001, pp.37) writes that the learner experiences an emotional rollercoaster, where the learner wants to use context-free rules to guide their action. However, such rules are hard to come by since there are too many contextual elements and aspects to take into consideration. Where the previous stages implied more emotional distance from the situation at hand, the competent stage requires more sense of presence in the moment and use of emotional involvement in order to respond to the situation (Dreyfus, 2008; Duesund, 2003). This places the competent skill performer more in connection with the situations. The learner is emotionally involved with the outcome of the situations, in so that a negative outcome is unwanted and uncomfortable. The outcome can mental and physical drawbacks like regret, stress, anxiety or sadness. In contrast, a positive outcome is desirable and can be resulted in happiness, joy, and satisfaction. These emotional responses leave strong memories in the performer and allows the performer to learn for their mistakes (Dreyfus, 2001; Dreyfus, 2008; Duesund, 2003; Gottlieb, 2015).

Yet, why do we need emotional engagement or to be involved in the situation? Dreyfus (2001, pp.39) asks the question, could the learner not reach the same goals when they are as detached as possible like the rationalist perspective claims? At the same times, he argues that learner could be detached from the emotional and handle the situation purely analytical. However, this could lead the learner to respond in a standardized and generalized matter, doing what they are supposed to or expected to do rather then what needs to be done in the specific situation. Managing disruptive behavior could then be understood as teachers applying learned strategies and deliberative “tools” rather than pre-reflective action (Duesund & Ødegård, 2018, pp.411). For teachers this could imply that they do not respond to students as unique individuals, but rather the objective features of their behavior. Students are not uniform in their reactions and if a teacher reacting in a generalized matter it might cause students to react negatively to the teacher or teachers could feel overwhelmed by their lack of skills to manage such behavior (Duesund & Ødegård, 2018, pp.411). Benner (1982, pp.405) found that nurses who were more emotionally involved in their work more often thrived in their job, they were less prone to burn out and experienced improvement of their skills. When the performer does not take a risk, they may be stuck in a rigid loop of following the rules, not able to act based on the situation at hand (Benner et al., 1996; Benner, 1982). Being emotionally involved in the situation allows the learner to be anxious about the outcome and experience joy if the outcome is positive. These experiences allow
the learner to advance in skill development by investing in their own intuition. This could imply that teachers who are not emotionally involve might be too focus on the construction of uniform rules and strategies, in so it could be difficult for teachers to change their practice and become stuck in their own patterns.

### 4.2.4 Proficiency

When the learner replaces the analytical rules and procedures with their experienced based intuition one could consider them to be proficient performers of the particular skill. After considerable experience, the learner can navigate the many aspects present in a situation. The learner now recognizes important aspects of a situation and spontaneously understand the situation and what goals to reach (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2008; Dreyfus, 2001). Yet, spontaneity is not only recognizing decomposed parts of something, it is an intuitive response to familiarity. Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986, pp.28) refers to intuitions as “holistic similarity recognition”. Intuition is recognizing whole situations on the basis of that memory as opposed to analytical deliberation. A proficient teacher may then be understanding a situation as a whole, rather than decomposed parts alone. In relation to disruptive behavior, students might no longer be understood on the basis of their actions, but as individuals acting and responding to a situation as a whole. In so the teacher intuitively understand how the situation might influence the students to react in a certain way and intuitively know what outcome to seek. Still, in the situation at hand, the learner at this level will be required to think about the reaction to the situation since action towards a goal is not fully automatic. The Dreyfus brothers writes that the learner has the intuition to sense what goal ought to be achieved, but do not have enough experience with what actions are best fitted to reach the goal (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2001; Dreyfus, 2008). A learner at this level will act intuitively and rational at the same time. Processing the information present in the situations and decide based on an analytical process. The learner will at the same time try to consider unforeseen events that may arise in different situations (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2001; Duesund, 2003). The process of analyzing the situation and applying prior knowledge to decide on the action is not made without consideration. A skilled performer at this stage will understand and experience the situation intuitively, but the process of analyzing and deciding is still done with focused thought and consideration (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1968; Dreyfus, 2001; Gottlieb, 2015).

### 4.2.5 Expert
The ability to apply discretion is the core of human excellence writes Duesund (2003, pp. 66). An interpretation of this may be that our ability to be involved in a situation and differentiate similar aspects from one another is what distinguishes the experts from the previous stages of the skill model. In the final stage of the skill model, the learner has gained a lot of experience with different situations and is emotionally involve with the outcome. With increased experience coping with different situations a pattern may begin to form, allowing the expert to form subclasses of the situations, which then can allow for quick interpretations and action (Dreyfus, 2001; Gottlieb, 2015). The analytical stance has been replaced by the experience, intuition and involvement (Dreyfus, 2001; Dreyfus, 2008; Duesund, 2003). The expert will often have trouble describing in words what lead him or her to the different actions or decision, the expert will just act by "knowing", a sensation of knowing what was right in that given situation or moment (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Gottlieb, 2015). However, this does not mean that the expert never considers his or her decision. As Duesund (2003, pp. 68) explains, unforeseen circumstances can create obstacles that cause the expert to fail. The expert might, therefore, take this experience into consideration and try for a different approach next time the expert is faced with a similar situation. At the same time, the main point behind the expert stage is that the expert has internalized and embodied so many experiences and situations that behavior feels like an extension of themselves (Benner et al., 1996; Duesund, 2003). One could even say that the expert acts not only by the situation at hand but as fully present in the situation seeing the situation as one whole rather than small pieces of the puzzle.

4.3 Some critiques of the skill model

The skill acquisition model has received some criticism. One critique proposed by Duesund (2003, pp. 69) is that the model does not fully explain how the expert thinks, reflects and evolve the rules and context. She proposes a six-step to the model which she calls the “innovator”. This stage is different from the expert through the restructuring of rules, processes, and goals in the situations. In this step, the expert can lay down a new foundation and redefine already existing procedures. The expert has developed new techniques that help shed new light on the skill and therefore proceeds the expert stage. Although Duesund (2003, pp.69) brings up a good point, Dreyfus might have already commented on this in later research. Later on, Dreyfus adds the step mastery to the model (Dreyfus, 2001; Dreyfus, 2008; Gottlieb, 2015). Mastery refers to how an expert is exposed to new situations and chooses to adjust his or her skill. In order to achieve this master level, the expert must be willing to cast away previous understandings and accept the new terms of the situation. The expert then may regress to previous stages in the model and learn new ways. For example, an expert teacher is only an expert
with the situations he or she has experienced, but when new situations arise the teacher might regress to previous stages and consider the new situation at hand. This might also relate to how the expert is only an expert at the situations he or she might have encountered, but with new situations the expert must adjust their understandings and knowledges about the world. Dreyfus (2008, pp. 37) illustrate that the mastery stage focuses on continues development where the performer is never satisfied with the execution of skill. For teachers this could relate to how there may not be one singular perfect way of being a teacher, rather several ways of being depending on the students and context.

Other critiques are that the model might only be about learning to use tools and that the model is only applicable to adults (Cash, 1995; Duesund, 2003; Duesund & Jespersen, 2004; Selinger & Crease, 2002). However, Dreyfus might answer these points by addressing his inspiration of Heidegger. Dreyfus argues that skillful coping is not only applicable to coping with tools or equipment, but also for coping with other people and the self (Wrathall, 2014, Ødegård, 2017; Ødegård, 2019). Coping refers to how we deal with the world that surrounds us and therefore this might mean that the skill model is used to understand how we as individuals learn understand ourself, other people and our use of tools. Although the examples Dreyfus often apply is related to adults, Dreyfus (2008, pp.35) also writes that one might also relate this model to understand how children learn to lie. Similar to the example given above about children learning to interpret a person crying. The same stages could apply, but it might be easier to understand the stages by exemplifying with adults. Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1992 in Dreyfus & Wrathall, 2014, pp.183-203) also exemplify how our ethical expertise can be understood on the basis of the skill model. Benner et al. (1996; Benner, 1982) also illustrates how the model of skill acquisition could be applicable to nursing. These examples may help illustrate how the skill model could not only address our use of tool but also our learning and development of cognitive and social skills.
5 Methodology

I had the privilege of working with the larger research project “Teachers’ Skillful Coping with Disruptive Behavior in Norwegian and American Classrooms” during my thesis. This project, led by professor Liv Duesund, aims to compare how teachers in American and Norwegian classrooms cope with disruptive behavior, how disruptive behavior affects the teachers and what skills teachers express to be important when working with students.

The research question sets the parameters for what a study will explore and how a study will be conducted (Befring, 2015; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Given the features of the research questions in this thesis, a qualitative research method is most fitting in order to collect and explore the personal narratives of teachers. Qualitative research, such as interviews, may also allow for a deeper interaction with the data (Kvale, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This study used semi-structured interviews with teachers, asking them to reflect upon their experiences of teaching, as well as their own skills of teaching. Since this study is part of the larger research project “Teachers Skillful Coping with Disruptive Behavior in American and Norwegian Classrooms” my research method is in line with this larger project, which also utilizes semi-structured interviews. The teachers were recruited through personal networks and snowball sampling. This involves that I ask individuals in my personal network to refer my study when addressing possible candidates that could fit my criteria. The inclusion criteria were that the participants had to be employed as a teacher in an American public school at the upper middle school or high school level for 2 years or more. These grade levels correspond to “ungdomsskolen” in Norway. In this next section, I will go further in depth on the method used for this study.

5.1 Qualitative research

Some central goals in research is to provide new insight into relevant concepts and perspectives and to eliminate prospective misconceptions (Befring, 2015, pp.10). There are many ways of doing research, mostly divided into two larger groups, qualitative and quantitative research. Though, a combination of the two is increasingly being applied in order to provide more strength to research findings (Befring, 2015; Creswell & Plano, 2018; Ødegård, 2017). While quantitative research methods focus on objectified data and statistical measurements, qualitative research focuses on the lived experiences, internal thought processes, values and attitudes of the research subjects (Befring, 2015; Richards & Morse, 2007). A qualitative approach could allow for a deeper exploration around different interpersonal topics and provide an opportunity to better understand how people experience their
everyday lives and interactions (Yin, 2016; Kvale, 2007). By using qualitative research, one might be able to explore the inner thoughts of the subjects or their own reflections on topics and situations.

5.2 Qualitative research and phenomenology

Phenomenology is both a perspective within philosophy and in research methodology. Broadly, the term phenomenology translates into the study of that which appears and can be treated as a reflective perspective into human meaning and perception (Duesund, 2003; Eriksen, 2011). In relation to research, one way of applying phenomenology is to better understand the lived world of the individual and perspective of individuals. In so, one might seek to better understand a phenomenon beyond the immediate manifestation (Eriksen, 2011, pp.36). Based on this understanding one could say that phenomenology does not concern itself with finding absolute truths, but rather to better understand a phenomenon by exploring how it appears and is experienced by the individual (Eriksen, 2011; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In my role as a researcher and interviewer, I must, therefore, be open and reflective to the different experiences my subjects describe and seek to explore how my teachers experience teaching in a non-judgmental and objective manner.

5.3 Interview as a research method

Within qualitative research, there are different ways of gathering data. The research question that guides this study is based on the exploration of the lived experiences of the subjects, therefore a semi-structured interview method was most fitting as the research methodology. This was also a requirement from the larger project I am collaborating with. A semi-structured interview attempts to describe and understand the lived experiences of individuals from their own perspective (Kvale, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Before conducting the interviews, an interview guide was created to provide structure to the conversation (Appendix 4). Since I am participating in a larger project, I was provided with 7 questions that were predetermined by the research group, with the possibility of adding some of my own. In the interview guide question, 2-8 were given by the larger project, while question 1, 9 and 10 were created by me. The questions have open endings which may allow the interviewer and subject to converse more freely around the questions and allow the subject to provide more depth to the answers as well. A research interview could be considered as a conversation between the researcher and the subject, guided by predetermined themes (Thaagard, 2011; Kvale, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Although a research interview could be viewed as a conversation there are asymmetrical power structures to the conversation. The two parts in the conversation are not
equal in control of structure, themes or the final analysis (Kvale, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). It is, therefore, my role as an interviewer to be professional, structured, clear, sensitive and objective when conducting interviews to provide a free space to communicate openly.

5.4 Recruitment and sampling

A population can be understood as the larger set of subjects that one wishes to examine (Kvale, 2007, Kvale & Brikmann, 2009, Yin, 2016). However, examine whole populations is not achievable, and so one selects from the large population a smaller researchable sample of subjects (Befring, 2015; Thagaard, 2011). A sample, therefore, refers to the individual subjects selected into the study. In order to examine the experiences of teachers, I had to target teachers specifically and select into my study a smaller subset of subjects. The teachers were recruited through my personal networks and snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is when the individuals already selected into the study recommends other individuals that fit the inclusion criteria into the study (Richards & Morse, 2007, pp.195). This means that I ask an individual in my personal network and individuals I interview to refer my study when addressing possible candidates that could fit my criteria. The inclusion criteria were that the participants must be employed as a teacher in a public school at the upper middle school or high level in the US and have worked as a teacher for 2 years or more.

I began the recruitment process by reaching out to individuals in my personal network who might be in contact with individuals that fitted the description and criteria. The initial search provided me with 2 subjects, in which then recommended my study to other individuals that fit my recruitments. This second search gave me 2 more subjects. In total, I ended up with 4 viable interviews.

5.5 Preparing for interviews

As a part of my exchange to UC Berkeley, I had the opportunity to take courses in sociological research methodology, where In-depth interview was one of the courses. This course was extremely helpful in preparing me for this study since I had the chance to learn the step-by-step process of designing and conducting an interview study. In addition to this, I performed a pilot interview in order to prepare for my interview question and myself as an interviewer. This pilot interview gave me the opportunity to test the formulations of my questions and myself in an interview setting. The pilot interview was quite helpful and made me aware of some concepts I needed to redefine and change for the next interviews. The interview was conducted at a time and place outside of my subjects’ work hours. In collaboration with the subjects, we found a place that was convenient and comfortable for the
subjects. I used the first part of the interview to get to know my respondents by asking them about themselves and if they had any thoughts or reflections about my topic. Next, I informed them about the study, providing them with the necessary information about their rights and how their data would be stored and gave them time to ask questions they might have. Before continuing to the questions, we talked about the letter of consent, giving them the opportunity to ask questions and sign it.

At the end of the interviews, I asked my subjects if they had anything to add or any comments for me before I thanked them for the participation. Immediately after leaving the subjects I wrote down my reflections about the interview, the atmosphere in the situation, my thoughts of the subject and any other external factor that could be of importance. The interviews lasted between 20 and 40 minutes.

5.6 Transcription and analysis

To transcribe implies to transform and in this case, to change the verbal word into written text, where forms of communication other than the verbal word could be lost (Kvale, 2007, pp.93). It is, therefore, my responsibility as a researcher to be as objective and reflective about my interpretations as possible. After conducting the interviews, I transcribed the interviews from an audio file into written text. This took between 8 and 12 hours depending on the length of the interview. I also supplement with field notes such as reflection made after the interviews, observations of emotion or facial expressions and notations of other external factors that might help to get a more holistic view of the interview setting. Transcripts serve different purposes and are therefore different and designed to be a tool fit for the purpose we set (Kvale, 2007, pp.98). Therefore, I must ask myself what type of transcription is more fitting to my research purpose? I then decided to transcribe the interviews following a literary style of what the subjects are telling me, rather than a verbal description of how they respond. In order to protect the confidentiality of my subjects they were given numbers 1-4 to indicate who they were, and I left out places, schools or names that could be disclosing their identities. The audio files were kept on an encrypted and password protected the physical disk, separate from the letter of consent and transcriptions.

5.6.1 Coding

When all the interviews were transcribed the next step was coding the data. This can be done in many ways, but I have decided to follow an open coding process presented by Corbin & Strauss (2008, pp.160). Analysis refers to the process of exploring something in order to get a better understanding of the object of study (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, pp.46). I order to analyze how teachers experience being
teachers I had to break the responses apart into smaller segments, which I then assigned codes. Coding can be understood as “deriving and developing concepts from data” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, pp.65). Coding is taking the raw data material and assigning concepts or labels to segments in order to break down the data. This process of assigning concepts is to not only label the data or make the data more tangible. It is also about working with the date in order to explore what the data could represent or what could be under the surface (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, pp.46). In the analysis of the interviews, I followed the process of coding that Strauss & Corbin (2008, pp.160) refers to as open coding. Open coding might allow for more brainstorming around what the data could be telling, were many potential interpretations could be made. This coding process began with me reading one interview at a time. First, without making any notations or codes, but only reading the interview transcript as a whole to get an idea of what the subject was telling me. Then, after reading the interview, I took one section at a time, reading it slowly and connection segments of words with a code or label. I then did this process to each separate individual interview transcript. After coding all the transcripts, I then compared the codes across the transcripts in order to get an idea of a larger pattern as well as distinguishing differences. Then I did what Corbin & Strauss (2008, pp. 195) refer to a comparative analysis where I compare similar conceptual sections to find similarities and differences in how teachers experience being teachers and their own skills.

At the end of the interviews, I asked my subjects if they had anything to add or any comments for me before I thanked them for the participation. Immediately after leaving the subjects I wrote down my reflections about the interview, some notes the atmosphere in the situation, my thoughts of the subject and any other external factor that could be of importance. The atmosphere refers to the subjective moods, feelings, and emotions I experienced in the interview situation and the connection I experienced with the subject. The interviews lasted between 20 and 40 minutes.

5.7 Validity, reliability and generalizability

Some important concepts that research have to address are the questions of reliability, validity, and generalizability. These concepts speak to the solidness, legitimacy and the transferability of the research (Kvale, 2007, Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, Richards & Morse, 2007). In this segment, I wish to address some steps I have made to strengthen the quality of my research study.

5.7.1 Validity
Validity often refers to the accuracy and the solidity of the research (Kvale, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Richards & Morse, 2007). In general, there are two rules that help guide the validity in qualitative research. The first is paying attention to how the question, data, and methods fit together. This relates to making sure that the data are gathered properly, stored and handled correctly and treated with responsibility. Secondly, it is being clear and precise when you describe the procedure and steps in your research (Richards & Morse, 2007, pp.81). Validity in transcription is more intricate than reliability (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, pp.185). Given that the verbal form and written form are distinctively different from their own sets of rules, there is no such thing as a true objective transcription (Kvale, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Validity is not a separate step a researcher takes in the end; it has to be a part of the whole process. Kvale & Brinkmann (2009, pp.248) presents three statements of validity the researcher could address through the whole research process to ensure the validity of the study. First, they say “to validate is to check” (Kvale, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Applying a critical look at the process of designing the study, conducting the study and analyzing the study, and trying to attend to as many potential biases as possible one might promote validity in the study. In this, the element of research bias could be addressed (Befring, 2015, pp.54). Researcher bias refers to the expectations, pre-understandings or presuppositions I as a researcher have and how my previous conceptions about a topic or subject could interfere with my interpretations (Kvale, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This said, a researcher will always be affected by pre-existing conceptualizations, however by being aware of how this might affect one’s judgment and interpretations one could help elevate the validity of the study. In order to be reflective on this, I tried to question the assumptions I made and ask myself what the basis of my assumptions was. I tried also to be reserved in my emotional expression in order to not guide my subjects in their responses. One other way I possibly elevated the validity of my research was in the interview setting. By repeating my interpretation of their answers back to them in order to indicate that I understood them correctly, gave them the opportunity to correct my misunderstandings and follow up if there were any confusion.

Next, Kvale & Brinkmann (2009, pp.251) say “to validate is to question”. When validating if the study examines what it intended to examine, we might have to ask ourselves, what are they saying and why? When asking my subjects about their experiences and thoughts, I have to reflect upon the possibility they might not be truthful to me. They might present answers that are more ideological or give me an answer they think I want instead of their own personal feelings. Therefore, when I analyze these responses, I had to be aware that what they were telling me might be ideal answers rather than facts.
They might not tell me actual truths about what they do in the classroom or how they approach students, but they might provide me with answers they think I wanted.

Lastly, they write “to validate is to theorize” (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, pp.252). It is not enough to have a clear and structured method to ensure validity. Validity also lies in verifying theoretical questions that arise from the data and theorize what the data is actually telling (Kvale, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In my research, I have tried to be aware of this by questioning the context and the stories the subjects tell me. Being a teacher is complex and there are many ways they might feel that their own personal experience shapes their ideas of what it means to be a teacher. By questioning the responses and being aware of the complexity of their situations I hope to raise the level of validity in my study.

5.7.2 Reliability

Reliability relates to how trustworthy and consistent the research findings are, and whether other researchers could reproduce the findings. In interviewing this relates to the question of the responses I get and if the answers will change in different settings or with different interviewers. In addition, it relates to the process of transcriptions and analysis, if different researchers could come to similar transcriptions and analysis as me (Kvale, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Reliability, in relation to transcription, connects to if what is written down is what the responder is actually saying (Kvale, 2007, pp.98). One way I tried to elevate the reliability of the transcriptions was to have a high-quality recorder and to listen to segments multiple times. In contrast to quantitative research where reliability is important to ensure generalizability, reliability in qualitative research focuses more on the strength of a systematic approach and if the study is documented precisely. This is because qualitative studies are more difficult to reproduce (Befring, 2015, pp.56). In my study, I did so by creating a project plan before I conducted my study. This was done in order to help me maintain focus and made sure that every step of the project was thought through before being conducted. I went through a course on the in-depth interview method during my fall semester exchange at the University of California Berkeley. This gave me some tools and experiences in how to conduct interview research that was useful when conduction my own study. Having little experience with data collection it was still an issue to be aware of, yet I tried to address it and be aware of how it could influence my research. Other ways I tried to strengthen the reliability in my study was to consider how I as a researcher could potentially influence my subjects. This is related to how I worded the questions and follow-ups in the interviews. I tried to avoid leading question or probes that could influence the response of the subjects. Also, by trying to be clear on what were my thoughts and what was the responses of my subjects could also help elevate the
reliability of my study. Being mindful of what they actually say and what were my interoperations of their meanings.

5.7.3 Generalizability

After addressing the questions of reliability and validity in the research findings, the next questions to address is generalizability (Kvale, 2007, pp.126). Generalizability refers to whether or not the findings are transferable to other situations and subjects (Kvale, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Qualitative research is often questioned for having too few subjects in order to make the findings generalizable (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, pp.261). However, it might not always be necessary to generalize if the aim is to conceive a better understanding of a larger phenomenon and not create knowledge that necessarily is universal. Stakes (2005, in Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, pp.262) argues that sometimes it is as important to have a better understanding of the phenomenon in itself and within certain contexts, rather than the ability to generalize it. In my study, I do not wish to uncover the universal truth about how teachers experience teaching. I want to explore how some teachers experience their own situations and if the Dreyfus’ skill model could be applicable in analyzing their experiences.

5.8 Weaknesses and limitations

Here I wish to address some weaknesses and limitations in my study. I have limited time and experience as a researcher and in so there could be different weaknesses and biases in my study that I need to address. Since this study has a small sample of only four teachers, there cannot be stated that my findings are generalizable to all teachers. However, this study might be used to gain insight into some teachers experience with teaching and how the skill model could be applicable to the analysis of their experiences. Another limitation of this study is that some of the teachers had the same number of years working as a teacher. It might be better to target more specifically teachers with different years of experience in order to see if there is any difference between the years of experience. One more limitation that could interfere with my results are my own influence as a researcher on my subjects. How I respond to what they say could potentially influence their answers, in so I tried to be as unresponsive as I could without being too little responsive to what they say. Bias in research might almost be impossible to avoid. Yet, being aware of these biases and how they could potentially influence the research and findings are important to possibly reduce their influence in the study (Kvale, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Richards & Morse, 2007). My subjectivity and preunderstandings could influence how I interpret the responses of my subjects. In order to be aware of this I tried to ask myself if my interpretations are based on what they actually say or what I think
they say. I also had to be aware of the social setting these teachers work within. The educational system is somewhat different in the US and Norway, in so I had to understand their statements in light of their own contextual surroundings. One way this was possible was through taking a course at UC Berkeley, Graduate School of Education studying organizational theory of education and other social services. This course allowed me to better understand the social context that teachers in the US work within and better understand how it could potentially influence their responses.

5.9 Ethical consideration

Research is guided by principles of research ethics (Befring, 2015, pp.28). These principles ensure that the research is conducted in a proper and responsible way. Before I could conduct my research study, I had to familiarize myself with the ethical regulation in Norway and in the US. This is because I conducted the study in the US, while the study also has to comply with Norwegian regulations. I submitted applications to The Norwegian Social Science Data Service (NSD) and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at UC Berkeley providing a description of the project and my process for handling and storing data. The NSD stated that I did not need to report my study and IRB stated that my study followed the guidelines for empirical research and posed no greater than minimal risk to my subjects (Committee for Protection of Human Subjects, 2019). Both the NSD and IRB provided me with a letter stating the approval of my research study (Appendix 1 and 2).

In my study, the ethical research principles are visible in the voluntary participation, informed consent and the requirements of confidentiality for my subjects. All the subjects in this study are participating voluntarily and are given information about the topic and focus of the study. They are also made aware that they can at any time withdraw from the study without having to provide a reason. The subjects are provided with a letter of consent (Appendix 3) that informs them about the intentions of the project, how the data will be handled and who has access to the data. They are also informed about their rights and who to contact if they wish to withdraw or have any questions. Steps were made to ensure the confidentiality of the subjects; they were given individual numbers (1-4) in all written forms of text and on the audio files. Both the audio files and the transcriptions were kept separate from the signed consent forms. The audio files were kept on a separate physical unity that was encrypted, and the files will then be destroyed at the end of the project. There is minimal risk of negative outcomes for the subjects who participate in the study since the questions revolve around their own personal experiences with teaching and reflections they might have about their own skills as teachers. Their response is confidential and will not be identifiable.
6 Analysis

In this next section I wish to present and discuss the findings of this study. I will do so by presenting some core elements in the skill model and use the data gather from the interviews to discuss the research question: In what ways could the Dreyfus’ skill model be applied when analyzing teachers’ experience with teaching?

The data in this study is, as noted above, collected through interviews with 4 teachers from three different public schools in the US. The teachers have varying years of experience from 2 years to 25 years. The teachers will be referred to by number, 1-4. The analysis and discussion will be split into the 5 stages of the skill model, where I aim to illustrate how the skill model could possibly be applied to analyze the experiences of these 4 teachers.

6.1 Novice: Performing the role

The contextual and situational sphere around teaching and learning involves many elements and features that a teacher needs to interact with. Gottlieb (2015, pp.59) writes “new teachers, like new tennis players, must start off by concisely and deliberately following certain rules and maxims”. This is similar to what Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986, pp.21) wrote about in the novice stage. As the skill model illustrate, the novice stage is recognized by the decomposing of situations into context-free rules and procedures that help the new skill-learner recognize specific characteristics of situations and guide action. These decomposed context-free rules are presented to the skill-learner through instruction (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2008; Duesund, 2003). It could be understood that teachers are presented these context-free characteristics, rules and features though formal training, educational programs and specific features from the school they work in. School features could for example be if the school follows different instructional programs or programs for school wide behavior management. The new teachers would then be presented with objective, decomposed and decontextualized descriptions of their responsibilities, tasks and expectations, and the objective characteristics of teaching. These features could for example be; how to generate a curriculum; procedures for managing the classrooms; strategies for classroom structure and motivation to enhance student learning; how to build relationships with students; objective features of learning strategies and characteristic of learning difficulties. In relation to disruptive behavior this could mean that novice teachers learn different strategies to prohibit or respond to disruptive behavior. Such strategies could involve creating rules for classroom behavior, how to respond to disruptive behavior or even what disruptive behavior is. Yet, disruptive behavior can be understood as a normative phenomenon. That could indicate that what is
understood as disruptive behavior might differentiate depending on the teacher and context. Novice teachers lack rich experiences with teaching and might therefore be more focused on the objective goals and visual features. They might also be more likely to rely on explicit procedures in order to perform the skill of teaching (Waks, 2006, pp.385).

Through formal education, teachers should know, in theory, how a classroom is supposed to function, what students are supposed to learn and how teachers are supposed to teach or manage behavior. Teachers might then have a theoretical idea of what characterizes a functional classroom, what behaviors are appropriate and what type of strategies are necessary in order to teach. When I talked to the teachers in this study, they explained similar experiences in their earlier years as teachers. They illustrated how their first times venturing into the classroom were to a large extent guided by the idea and principles for how teachers and teaching ought to be, as exemplified by Teacher 4.

*I think when I started I thought if I have more rules if I have more routines I won’t – I won’t have so many behavioral problems in that I’ll be able to teach more [laughing] … so that’s about me right that’s not about them learning that’s all about a teacher, what he wants to do (Teacher 4)*

In their first time in the classroom they did what they considered to be important in order to maintain control of the classroom and based on the idea of what students needed in order to learn. This idea of how the skill of teaching is supposed to be performed could stem for their formal education, in combination with the broader cultural and sociological idea of teaching and education. Education plays an important role in society by developing capable citizens who can participate actively in a society increasingly focused on knowledge and theory (NOU, 2015, pp.17). The American school system today is largely directed towards student achievement, effectiveness, accountability and management structures, visible though the document “Every Student Succeeds Act” (ESSA) (U.S Department of Education, 2015).

Yet, in an increasingly complex, diverse and globalized world an overt focus on explicit measurable skill and conceptually reducing learning to technical elements, one might miss the broader picture of what learning is about. Gottlieb (2015, pp. 58) argues that the technical concept of what good teaching consist of is derived from the technical sense of learning represented by student achievement data. If it is so that the educational system is supposed to develop skilled citizens capable of navigating a complex society, should not the teaching in schools represent the same complexity? If our schools are supposed to help students develop their ethical, moral, social and emotional skills in addition to their academicals skills, should not good teaching be focused on these elements as well? Could it be that by restricting teaching and learning to measurable components, we also restrict what counts as learning and development?
However, as stated earlier, teachers might need these broader, technical elements and rules in order to perform the skill of teaching in the beginning. This could resemble the technical skills that Gottlieb (2015, pp. 51) described and could potentially be related to the novice stage in the Dreyfus model, where the new teacher could be guided by “text-book” principles and features of teaching. Based on the quote from Teacher 4, one could interpret that teachers, by being guided by context-free rules for how a classroom is supposed to be structured, did not incorporate elements that were situational to the class itself because the teachers did not have the experience to differentiate. Teacher 4 might treat every class equal, rather than behaving differently depending on the class dynamic. As Teacher 4 said, that the earlier years were influenced by what “I” wanted. This might imply that there was little room for what the students in that particular class actually needed because Teacher 4 followed what the idea or thought of the right procedure in order to maintain control in the classroom and to be able to teach as much as possible. The quote from Teacher 4 could also illustrate that, when a new teacher steps into a classroom for the first time they carry with them their own idea of how the classroom is supposed to be and how they believe teaching will be performed. One could then postulate that regardless of the classroom situation the new teacher ventures in, they would do the same thing. This because they rely on decontextualized theory and knowledge for how teaching is supposed to function in classrooms as a whole and not the exact classroom that they are in.

One implication this decontextualized focus could have is that by holding students to uniform and standardized conceptions of learning and behaving, one might leave out the unique and personal elements of students. Students are different in many ways and by utilizing a decontextualize perspective, teachers might to respond flexibly to situations or students. A possible way this could affect students is that when they display disruptive behavior the teacher might respond in a standardized and uniform way. What this could imply is that when students display similar behavior, the teacher respond to the behavior and not the particular student. A teacher might not question why this student is displaying that behavior, but just responding to the behavior itself. This could potentially lead the student to become frustrated because they teacher only responds to the behavior by for example yelling or punishment. Also, it could lead the teacher to become frustrated because the teaching might feel that they are not doing their job right or do not have the tools needed to deal with disruptive behavior.

However, teachers are not black canvases before they go through formal education to become teachers. They are influenced by social norms of what correct behavior consist of and have their own experience as former students to guide them as well. In so it might be that the novice stage might be more applicable to individuals studying to become teachers and not teacher in the field. Benner et al. (1996,
pp.35) writes that a novice nurse is an individual still in nursing school and not yet a fully practicing nurse in the field. Though, Duesund & Jespersen (2004, pp.230) argues that a novice ski instructor might utilize prior experience with skiing, or even their own experiences being instructed from a skiing school in the past, even as novices. In so, novice teachers might lean on their prior experiences as students when they perform the skill of teaching.

Three out of four teachers in this study talked about how their prior experiences as individuals and as students has helped them as teachers. They mention personal background, upbringing and prior education as some sources of experience applicable to their teaching.

 [...] in my first year I didn't have much to go on [laughing] other than my own teaching experience – my own being a student (Teacher 1)

What Teacher 1 say here about utilizing past experience with being a student could resemble what Duesund & Jespersen (2004, pp.230) wrote about novice ski instructors. In so, one might think that the novice stage might be applicable to analyses how first year teachers experience teaching. A novice teaching might not have enough experience to stray away from decontextualized rules and procedures relevant to the novice stage, but they might still apply their own experiences as individuals in some parts of their teaching. The teachers in this study are teachers with 2 or more years of experience. It could then be possible that all the teachers in this study performs the skill of teaching in a way that resembles the next stage of the model, namely advanced beginner. Therefore, making it more difficult to utilize the novice stage to analyze their experiences. Possibly it could be that that the novice stage in the skill of teaching is more compatible with that of an individual in the teacher education program or a student-teacher and not a teacher in the school. In that setting the teachers learns techniques on how to teach, how to detect difficulties, how to manage the classroom and how to set up curriculum. Yet, the teachers in this study communicate situations and experiences in their first years that could resemble a teacher at the novice stage, and that their first year were largely influenced by following the guidelines of how teaching out to be. This might indicate that they followed decontextualized ideas of what the skill of teaching is composed of, which could then be related back to the novice stage in the Dreyfus model. In so that the skill model might be applicable to analyze their experiences with their first time in the classroom.

### 6.1.1 Evaluating performance

A natural goal when learning a new skill is wanting to achieve it and perform it well (Dreyfus, 2008; Duesund, 2003; Gottlieb, 2015). According to the skill model, when the novice skill-learner evaluates
their own performance, they have to analyze how well they followed the guidelines and procedures since they lack any prior experience with performing the skill (Benner et al., 1996; Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986). Guidelines in relation to teachers might be the clear, decomposed and context-free tasks and requirements set by the formal expectations of teachers.

I was also gonna say time management cause there’s so many – so much things that you are expected to do as a teacher and you do not have all the time in a day to do it uhm, and all – yeah and so being able to manage your time to be able to like – you know lesson plan, and grade, and hold tutoring and have – call parents and school responsibility or whatever... so being able to prioritize and know that like you may never get to all of your things but you can prioritize I think that’s another important skill (Teacher 1)

The role of teachers requires a lot of tasks and expectations as Teacher 1 illustrates, and what constitutes “success” in teaching could relate to many things. It could relate to more subjective feelings of established connections with students or more objective features like quantifiable test scores. If one applies the two concepts of good teaching that Gottlieb (2015, pp.51) outlined, one might postulate that the technical perspective of teaching focuses more on success though student achievement data, and that novice teachers might be more focused in the technical measurable features because “success” in this form is easier to track or see explicitly.

In the earlier years it might seem like the teachers in this study relied on more objective features when evaluating their performance, which is in line with the novice stage of the Dreyfus model. All the teachers agreed that there were many things they had to be aware of in their work as a teacher and many tasks they needed to fulfill in their jobs. If the Dreyfus’ skill model were to apply to teachers or teaching one could deliberate that the teachers evaluated their performance in the beginning based on them completing the objective and clear tasks required in their jobs, and the usage of measurable data like test scores, number of disruptions in the classroom and attendance. Novice teachers could therefore perhaps be evaluating their performance by viewing how they followed the requirements and ideas of how teaching ought to be. Not viewing how the skill teaching as a whole is performed, but rather if the smaller specific explicit tasks was completed in a satisfying manner. Then again, some aspects of teaching bight be perceived as more fulfilling or rewarding for the teachers than others, and in so making the teachers more focused on some specific elements than others. Seeing progress in the students and in oneself as a teacher might be easier in the beginning by focusing on explicit measures rather than subjective feelings. Or the teachers might be more skilled in some aspects of their role as a teacher, and therefore they might focus more on the tasks or elements they already are capable of handling. While tasks or elements they are less able to handle are pushed aside or ignored. Teacher 2
provided an example of how coping with conflicts in the classroom changed after the first year of teaching.

but I think that’s also like the really important thing like last year as a new teacher I was like saying I was gonna circle back to things and then forget or consciously not do it because oh that’s gonna be so much work or I don’t want to deal with that conflict or like I just want to go home and not make like that parent call and now I’m like it’s more work in the short term to like make that call home or do whatever but in the long run it’s... saves me so much labor, emotional and otherwise... (Teacher 2)

A possible interpretation of what Teacher 2 say is that the coping with conflicts were difficult in the first year, where forgetting or ignoring the issue could be perceived as a managing strategy. However, as Teacher 2 point out, this coping strategy was not sufficient and even though it was perceived as more work in the short term, it was better to address the issue then not doing it. An imaginable reason for this could be that Teacher 2 did not have the “tools” or strategies in order to deal with the conflict and in so not addressing the issue was a way of coping. Duesund & Ødegård (2018, pp.418) writes that the lack of reference to disruptive behavior management in governmental documents and guidance from educational departments could potentially leave teachers to be less capable to deal with disruptive behavior in the classroom. This could possibly mean that the skills learned or developed at the novice level are not sufficient to manage behavioral issues in the classroom, making it easier to ignore or not addressing the issues or blaming not having the sufficient strategies.

6.2 Advanced beginner: Experiencing variation

After formal training teachers should have some theoretical knowledge and understanding of what teaching is supposed to entail, some characteristics of different behaviors, teaching strategies and how to act properly in a classroom. Yet, this theoretical knowledge might not be enough to adequately manage the diverse set of individuals and interactions in a classroom. According to the Dreyfus model of skill acquisition, after gaining experience the advanced beginner begins to note situational aspects that makes situations differ from another, where the previous context-free objectives are not sufficient to describe features or guide action (Benner et al., 1996; Dreyfus, 2008; Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Duesund, 2003; Gottlieb, 2015). The situational aspects are then added to create instructional maxims built on personal experience (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2001; Duesund, 2003). This is because maxims are dependent on previous experience and are more situational than the objective context-free rules and features (Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2001; Dreyfus, 2008; Duesund, 2003). After experiencing different situations in the classroom, the teacher might begin to notice, for example, that the objective characteristics of student behavior or broader teaching strategies do not always provide
appropriate guidance in situations. Such objective features could be students who wander around in the classroom or display other forms of disruptive behavior. These forms of behavior could be understood differently depending on the teacher and context. Although students display similar behavior there can be many reasons behind their behavior. If a teacher responds in a similar manner to seemingly similar behavior, the teacher might not take into considerations the individual underlying causes. A teacher might then only respond to the specific behavior and not the student as a whole.

Benner et al. (1996, pp.77) writes that, in the advanced beginner stage the theoretical knowledge is strengthened with practical experience. This could resemble how new teachers may be expanding their knowledge when teaching in the classroom context. When teachers complete the formal training, they could have a foundation of theoretical knowledge. This theoretical foundation might then supplement with practical experience when they encounter and gain experience with students in the classroom as could be understood by the following quote by Teacher 3.

*I have a lot more students with special needs this year than I did in my previous two years and a lot of – a lot more kids with like challenging behavior issues this year than I have ever had in my previous two years and so they have sort of afforded me a lot more opportunities for growth (Teacher 3)*

What Teacher 3 could imply is that experiencing different types of learning disabilities or challenging behavior provided opportunities to grow in how to recognize and respond to these types of students and behaviors. These experiences that Teacher 3 had might then expanded the idea of what challenging behavior could be and how to respond in order to achieve a desired outcome, like calming the situation. The context of teaching is much comprehensive than can be explicitly objectified, and the advanced beginner teacher might begin to note situational elements that differ in situations. For example, Teacher 3 might now be more familiar with different types of learning disabilities or challenging after having gaining experience managing such behavior. Therefore Teacher 3 might be more aware of early signs that could potentially indicate learning disabilities or different explanations behind the challenging behavior. After experiencing multiple situations, the advanced beginner might be more inclined to consider the situation at hand, rather than the rule or maxim alone for determining action (Duesund, 2003, pp.65). In relation to Teacher 3, having more experience with challenging behavior might make Teacher 3 more able to recognize some kinds of behavior that the students display, and may then be more able to understand that some situations call for different approaches than others. Dreyfus (2001, pp.35) writes that objective features and rules cannot replace the power of real examples. One could interpret that, with teaching, no number of rules or objective features can replace the importance of experience when recognizing situational aspect. Being present in the
classroom context cannot be replaced by instructions or decomposed objectives, it has to be experienced by the individual. As novices, teachers learn theoretical knowledge about teaching. Yet, that theoretical knowledge does not alone describe all the distinct features of situations that a teacher could potentially find themselves in. These distinct features have to be experienced like Teacher 3 may illustrate. Here the types of situations that the teachers are exposed might help shape how they understand and respond to similar situations in the future.

All of the teachers in this study responded that their experience with the diversity of students helped them to better understand the different context of their students’ lives, and how the context may perhaps interact with their behavior in school. For example, Teacher 4 said that the student body was very diverse, where the students had different motivations for being in school.

*Yeah right, people first right, so, so and it’s funny because ... the population at our school has everything from kids of college professors to kids that are homeless so we have this huge gap of like why are they coming there, right, some of them are coming because their mom and dad are highly educated and they want to be highly educated too, other kids are coming there because it’s a warm safe place that’s not being on the street or being someplace else so, there’s a lot of reasons for them to come but for them to keep coming back, that’s my job... (Teacher 4)*

One possible interpretation of what Teacher 4 exemplify is that teachers have to be aware of the contextual background of the students and their motivations for being in school. From what Teacher 4 say, it could be understood that it is part of their job to take into consideration the different needs and motivations of their students. Thus, being aware of this and take contextual differences into consideration might require teachers to be open to the different needs of the students and the various roles a teacher might have.

However, in relations to the diversity of students needs and backgrounds, the teachers in this study said that knowing their students was an important part of their job. Not only for the sake of understanding what works best for their learning, but also the ability to be aware of their social and emotional wellbeing. Knowing in this sense was being aware of their usual behavior, their background and how they normally behaved in the classroom. Teacher 1 exemplified that being knowledgeable about the students in the class and responding in a more adaptable manner may prove more adequate than following generalized procedures.

*you know kids are people and ... they are not robots so they can’t like – they do not – things are gonna be changing the way that they respond to – act – so if you – I do not know, if you just go by the book or whatever sometimes ehm, and react in a certain way – they probably – they won’t respond well (Teacher 1)*
This example could be linked to the argument proposed by the Dreyfus brothers that following objective rules or maxims might only get us so far (Dreyfus, 2001; Gottlieb, 2015). One possible interpretation from what Teacher 1 says is that the students are complex individuals with their own backgrounds and experiences. The previous experiences that the students have and dynamics among them are affecting how they interact and behave in school. Therefore, if the teacher only “go by the book” as this teacher said, it might cause the teacher to respond in a matter not flexible enough for the needs of the student. The problem of “going by the book” could relate to what Dreyfus wrote about the novice and advanced beginner being detached from the situation (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2008; Gottlieb, 2015). By applying the abstract context-free rules and procedures the novice and advanced beginner are not attuned to the specific needs or elements of the specific situation. One could relate this notion of “following the book” as following the abstract rules and procedures. Because the novice and advanced beginner lack experience dealing with real situations it is necessary to follow abstract rules and principles to guide action or else a teacher might not know what to do in the situation. A novice teacher might follow the text-book procedures and features of what it means to teach, but with experience they begin to notice situational aspects that are of importance when they are coping with their students and their behavior. From the examples provided in this study one could postulate that a teacher at the advanced beginner stage applies the procedures they learned through formal training, but they add new aspects learned from experience to differentiate situations, creating instructional maxims that they use in their classrooms.

When talking about establishing rules of behavior in the classroom, several of the teachers explained that in their earlier years they tried to use strategies they received from colleagues or learned though formal training because they had so little experience. Their idea was that if they had pre-planned strategies, they were able to make quick decision in situations and be more consistent in their decisions. Teacher 2 exemplified this by saying;

_I did a really bad job of that my first year teaching because so much is trial and error and I think, like I walked into my second year of teaching working, like putting a lot of taught into how I wanted to establish those [rules of behavior in the classroom] and like talking to colleagues to get different strategies for that and before school started this year I wrote up a like disciplinary plan for myself of like if this then this_ (Teacher 2)

This might suggest that since the teachers in this study had little experience, they were more reliant on standardized procedures for creating rules in the classroom. What Teacher 2 say is similar to what Teacher 1 exemplified in the novice stage, where the teacher was more focused on the abstract idea of teaching rather than the actual situation. This could be another example of how teachers in the advanced beginner stage and novice stage are detached from their teaching environments. Based on
the responses from the teachers in this study, a teacher at the advanced beginner stage might be a teacher with previous experience which allow them to better recognize situations. Yet, teachers might still be reliant on analyzing the aspects of situations and applying strategies they have experienced to be successful in order to respond to the situation. This is coherent with Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986, pp.23) who claimed that although the skill performer learns to differentiate between situation aspects, they are still reliant on following the set procedures to navigate the situation and guide their actions. Teachers might recognize situational aspects of different forms of disruptive behavior, yet they still have to apply decontextualized strategies in order to manage such situations in the classroom.

6.3 Competence: Taking risks and emotional involvement

Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986, pp.20) refers to teaching as an area where elements and situations are often unstructured and interrelated. They continue to write that “such areas contain a potentially unlimited number of possibly relevant facts and features, and the ways those elements interrelate and determine other events are unclear” (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986, pp.20). What might be understood by this is that teaching is a dynamic and interrelated skill, where the context is often unstructured and with many possible outcomes. Teacher 2 provided an example of how teaching involves trying to manage many different elements and variables, and how the outcome might not always be predictable.

I was talking to a coworker the other day how it’s like this science experiment where this – like you actually can’t control any of the variables like you’d tweak one but then there’s always like gazillion others completely out of your control so you just tweak it and hope for the best and then also your simultaneously tweaking like ten others and then the students are tweaking on themselves and like who knows if like – if I push this button if this outcome will happen [...] (Teacher 2)

What Teacher 2 could be exemplifying here is that the dynamics of teaching is very complex, and no matter how much a teacher might try to predict or control the many elements, it may well be impossible. It could then be conceivable that Teacher 2 could feel overwhelmed by the amount of aspects to take into consideration when teaching and making decisions. This large number of possibilities might make a teacher feel stressed out or anxious because no clear rule or maxim could inform them of precisely what to do or how to navigate every situation they encounter. This example provided by Teacher 2 could illustrate what Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986, pp.23) wrote, that the number of identifiable elements present in situations might be too overwhelming for a teacher. One may perhaps interpret that the detached rule following, and the creation of maxims could reach its limits. If Teacher 2 were to create maxims for every possible situation, there would just be too many, and as
Teacher 2 responded, by tweaking one element it might affects many other elements in the process. Student behavior and reactions are often diverse, and their responses could be hard to predict accurately (Duesund & Ødegård, 2018, pp.412). With this overwhelming number of elements to consider and be aware of when teaching, teachers might decide upon a plan, perspective or goal in order to decide what to do in a situation. In other words, in order to deal with the situation at hand a teacher might have to decide for themselves what aspects are most important to address.

6.3.1 What is relevant

The skill model demonstrates that with an overwhelming number of elements and aspects to be aware of, a sense of relevance might be missing for the performer (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Gottlieb, 2015). In order to deal with this, the performer must decide what aspects are of more relevance or what goal is more important to achieve in situations. The Dreyfus brothers refers to this as a hierarchical view (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2001; Duesund, 2003; Gottlieb, 2015). A hierarchical view in relation to teaching could perhaps be understood as the question of what is most important to address in the specific situation. There could be many possible answers to that question depending on the situation and the teacher. Teacher 2 also provided an example of a situation where having to decide how to handle a situation could be based on the idea of what is most important to achieve.

"like I had a kid that’s was like really having a hard time one day he came at the class super late had an outburst started yelling at the student behind him for like putting his legs on his chair and then he started yelling at another student who was like don’t talk to him like that so there was this like three way argument happening and like I paused class and was like what’s going on like what’s going on like what like how can we de-escalate this, how can we handle this differently and he was just so upset and he was like [fake yelling] I don’t want to talk about it I don’t want to talk about it and I was kinda like okay everybody leave him alone like we’re circle back to it like the strategies I was trying was not – he was like just so escalated the strategies I was trying were not working so it’s like we’ll let this go for now circle back to it (Teacher 2)"

It could be interpreted that the strategies Teacher 2 is referring to are the maxims that the skill model presents in the advanced beginner stage. However, as pointed out by Teacher 2 above, the strategies were not working in this particular situation. By applying the strategies that Teacher 2 refer to, it could be possible that Teacher 2 only responds to the objective features and decomposed parts of the situation, and not the situation as a whole. It might seem that Teacher 2 could be experiencing the limits of rules and maxims in this situation. The situation did not resolve by applying strategies, according to Teacher 2. It could be that by applying strategies to this situation, Teacher 2 reacts and responds in a detached manner, responding to the features of the situation and not the situation as a whole. It could then be proposed that Teacher 2 could be faced with a choice, continue to apply
strategies based on situational elements of the situation, or leave the issue alone and come back to it at a later time. However, it may well be that no clear objective rule could guide the action of Teacher 2 in this specific situation, since the reaction of the students are not always clear or consistent. Even broad goals like “calming the situation” do not provide clear instruction on how Teacher 2 could reach that goal. It could then be that Teacher 2 had to make a free choice of what to do in order to respond adequately to the situation at hand and get the outcome that Teacher 2 hopes for. This decision might turn out in different ways, and Teacher 2 might not have any idea of the outcome. This could then be an example of how Teacher 2 takes a risk of action in a situation in order to calm the situation down. Taking a risk of action meaning doing something without the guarantee of knowing how the situation will turn out. This could relate to the skill model and how the skill performer takes a risk in order to achieve a desired outcome (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2001; Dreyfus, 2008).

Teacher 3 also illustrated a seemingly similar example when students ask questions Teacher 3 were not expecting or comes up with solutions to problems there were unfamiliar to Teacher 3. When asked how Teacher 3 dealt with these unexpected situations the response was;

Well, a lot of has to do with how much time we have, there’s – if it’s a moment when I think we have a little extra time or the time can be afforded, then I might ask the student to show it to the whole class like look at this different way that this can be done, if it’s – if it’s something that led them to a correct answer, if it’s something that was a mistake then I might quickly make a decision in my mind is it a really valuable mistake that a lot of students make and there’s probably other people in this room that are thinking the exact same thing and can I present this without putting the student in an awkward position where they feel stupid or they feel like their mistake is being exposed to everyone, if I can do that then – then I want to show that mistake to everyone I want the kid to talk about it, why you’d do it, why did you think of it that way, is anybody else think of it that way, if it’s a mistake that I think probably not that many other people are making and it’s a student that might be embarrassed by that then I might just gloss over and be like that’s interesting then move on [laughing] and then go talk to that kid like separately one on one a few minutes later if I can so, just kinda depends on a lot of different variables (Teacher 3)

Here one might interpret that Teacher 3 analytically deliberates around a lot of different elements, how the students might react, if there is enough time or if the question is valuable. This could also be an example where the teacher makes an analytical choice of what to do by considering the most important elements in the situation. If time were the most important element for Teacher 3 the question might be left without comment regardless of it importance. However, if Teacher 3 thinks that this question is a valuable teaching moment, the question could be commented on. Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986, pp.24) writes that “a competent performer with a goal in mind sees a situation as a set of facts. The importance of the facts may depend on the presence of other facts”. As Teacher 3 could be illustrating,
the choice made in this type of situation depend on what elements are present and what type of gain that the student could have. Then Teacher 3 must decide what elements is most important in this situation, to finish the plan for the class, to use the answer as a teachable moment, or spare the child’s feelings.

In this situation Teacher 3 describes there might be difficult to follow an objective rule or procedure that is valid in many situations. There might be to many situational elements that the teacher has to consider in order to make the right decision. Therefor Teacher 3 has to make a decision on what to do based on personal choice. This personal choice Teacher 3 makes may potentially be successful and the result might be what the teacher intended, or it could result in an undesired outcome. The student could become embarrass or angry at Teacher 3 for presenting the mistake or an important question that could potentially be valuable is left unarticulated. There might to be one clear procedure or rule than can guide Techer 3 in what to do, therefor Teacher 3 must make that choice alone. Based on the responses in the study, highlighted by Teacher 2 and Teacher 3, the competent stage could possibly be applied to analyze how a teacher might make decisions in a situation based on the situational elements present and their idea of relevant aspects. This could resemble what the skill model reefer to how a competent performer understands a situation based in the present set of facts (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Gottlieb, 2015). Subsequently the decision to react might then be based on the collection of elements present and the idea of what is most important to achieve in the situation. This could relate to the importance of choosing an overall goal or perspective in order to react and navigate among the many elements and aspects (Dreyfus & Dreyfus;1986, Duesund, 2003, Gottlieb, 2015). This personal choice of perspective or action could possibly make teachers more involved in the outcome since they have to decide upon this plan themselves and not rely on pre-set plans, procedures or strategies.

6.3.2 Responsibility and reflection

The skill model continues to describe that the competent performer has to take responsibility for the outcome in order to continue developing the skill (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2001; Gottlieb, 2015). It is not enough to only deliberate on the outcome, pondering what went wrong or not. The performer must let the emotional responses of the outcome sink in and affect the performer in the future (Dreyfus, 2001; Duesund, 2003; Gottlieb, 2015). A result that is desirable might bring out feelings of happiness, success and satisfaction, while in contrast an undesired outcome might bring a feeling of regret, anxiety or dissatisfaction. These experiences must, according to the skill model, affect the performer and make the performer question their own actions and responses in light of the outcome (Dreyfus, 2008; Gottlieb, 2015). These negative feelings leave a more profound memory then
the positive, which could lead the performer to avoid this result (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986, pp.26). In light of this, the experiences a teacher then have could potentially influence how the teacher understands a situation and acts the next time a similar situation arises. For example, if a teacher responds to a situation regarding disruptive behavior and the situation results in an undecided outcome like escalation, the teachers might feel sad or stressed out because the situation did not turn out as expected. Then, if the teacher takes responsibility for the outcome of that situation it could potentially lead the teacher to respond differently the next time such a situation occurs. Teachers do not learn these emotional responses by studying theory alone, these emotional responses need to be experienced by the individual. As a novice teacher you are not told how to feel in situations or what emotions teaching is supposed to give you. These feelings might only be experienced by being present in the classroom context.

Several of the teachers in this study tied reflection to their development as teachers. By reflection, as I understood it, was thinking and pondering about the choices made after the situation had occurred. Reflecting on whether the choices that they made could be done differently. Reflection on their part might allow them to deliberate and think about the situations they experienced and using this to develop themselves in order to better react the next time they find themselves in similar situations. Reflection could then be understood as a way of thinking about the outcome and actions in order to improve the next time. Teacher 1 exemplified this by saying;

[…] like maybe I could have done that differently uhm in that situation, and that just helps you to improve for the next day to like make a better decision if that situation were to happen again [...] (Teacher 1)

What Teacher 1 could be exemplifying here is that reflection is not only thinking about what went as planned and what did not, but letting the experience change the way they teach or react in situations that transpire. Reflection could then become a way of taking responsibility for their actions and seeing that situations could be handled differently, and in order to be better prepared next time they reflect on their actions and outcomes. Yet, reflecting on the outcome does not necessarily lead to change. Dreyfus (2008, pp.36) writes that it is important the performer takes responsibility for the unsuccessful or successful choices. A teacher might reflect on what they could do better, but without taking personal responsibility for the outcome or being motivated to change, it might be difficult to change or develop the skill further. Based on the quote from Teacher 1 being reflective might be a part of being involved. By believing that the situation could be handled or understood differently a teacher might begin the process of change because they are motivated to. Nonetheless, the teacher might not develop until they take responsibility for their actions and deliberate how they can act differently next time. By
choosing a course of action and caring about the outcome enough to allow it to change them, the teachers might be seen as competent performers who respond adequately in many situations with the possibility for developing the skill of teaching.

6.3.3 Involvement and taking risks

In this study, emotional involvement was referred to as personal engagement. The reason for this was that personal engagement was a concept the subjects might be more familiar with, while also could resembled the conceptual understandings of emotional involvement. This change of wording of a concept could potentially change the way the subjects understood the question and result in them answering based on different assumptions. Yet, after analyzing the responses from this study it might seem that the teacher related to the notion of involvement in the same manner as Dreyfus. Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986, pp.26) explains involvement as contradictory to detached decision making. When recognizing a large number of relevant aspects, the performer becomes uncertain of what to do. In order to deal with this uncertainty an involved performer chooses a plan of action based on their idea of relevancy in a situation. Their free choice among several aspects carries unknown outcomes and an involved performer invest emotionally in the situation and takes responsibility for the outcome, both desirable and undesirable (Dreyfus, 2001; Dreyfus, 2008; Gottlieb, 2015).

Several of the subjects in this study explained involvement in relation to teaching students how to be emotionally involved in the learning situation. Teacher 1 exemplified how being engaged as a teacher was important for teaching the students to be engaged.

I feel like if you are not engaged if your just like – just doing bare minimum and just getting by and you are not engaged [talking in a monotone voice] of course the students are gonna see that and their gonna – they – their like little sponges they gonna follow – they’re not gonna be engaged either (Teacher 1)

There are several elements in this segment that could relate back to the concept of emotional involvement. First, being involved could refer to how the teachers are engaged with the teaching practice and being teachers. Secondly, involvement could refer to taking responsibility for learning students to be involved in learning as well. Dreyfus (2001, pp.39) illustrates why involvement is an important aspect in teaching. He writes that teachers could be understood as role models for their students. If a teacher displays engagement or involved in their teaching, students might learn to be engaged and emotionally involved in the learning situation as well. If a teacher then is disengaged in the work, the students might also become disengaged and not emotionally involved. Based on the responses from the teachers in this study, they are in agreement with why involvement is important in
teaching. When asked how personal engagement could play a role in their teaching, all the teachers replied that personal engagement was very important for them. What Teacher 1 might imply in the quote above is that being engaged in teaching is important. Where, if a teacher is not engaged or involved with what they do, the students might not learn to become involved in learning either. This links to what Dreyfus (2001, pp.39) wrote about the importance of engagement in teaching practice.

In school, students learn more than academic content from their teachers. If a teacher then teaches in a detected manner, it might seem, based on the responses from the teachers in this study and the model of skill acquisition, that a teacher might not be able to develop their teaching skills further and the students might then learn to become detached themselves from the classroom context. Duesund & Ødegård (2018, pp.417) wrote that promoting a positive classroom climate should not only be the responsibility of teacher. Students are capable of influencing and intervening when disruptive behavior occur, but they need the skills to do so in a positive manner. They continue to write that schools should also address individual responsibility of behavior as well as individual responsibility of learning. This could possibly illustrate another important factor of why teachers need to be emotionally involved and engaged in the classroom context.

Teacher 1 continues to illustrate how being engaged is important, not only to teach the students to be engaged, but to further develop as a teacher.

*I guess if you’re not reflective you’re not engaged either cause if your – if you just like teach and like that’s fine you know okay I do the things I’m supposed to be doing at the school but if you’re not reflective then you – I don’t think you can really be engaged* (Teacher 1)

A possible interpretation of this could be that in order to become a better teacher or evolve the skill of teaching, the teacher must be involved and take responsibility for their actions. This is coherent with the skill model, where emotional involvement is required in order to further develop the skill (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2001; Duesund, 2003; Gottlieb, 2015). What Teacher 1 say could also be connected to the importance of taking risks in teaching. When Teacher 1 problematize “do the things I’m supposed to do”, it could mean that Teacher 1 see the problem of following the abstract idea of what a teacher is supposed to do, and not reacting to the needs of a situation. It may well be interpreted that, if a teacher never takes a risk and just follows the set protocols and strategies, they might experience lack of progress or being caught in a loop (Ødegård, 2019, pp.3).

An interesting difference emerged in the interviews in relation to involvement, teaching and development. 3 out of 4 teachers reported that they had developed as teachers with the increasing time teaching. The teachers who reported development with increasing years of experience stated that
reflecting how they practiced teaching was a tool of development. Reflection could be a way of taking responsibility for their actions and subsequently making them change their reactions accordingly. The one teacher that did not feel the same level of growth like the rest referred to teaching as a role performance even though this teacher had the same number years of experience as another teacher. It could be interpreted that this teacher might performed the skill of teaching similar to the rationalist perspective of teaching, doing what is expected based on objective rules and procedures. Not implying that this teacher is any less satisfactory as a teacher then the rest, yet by the characteristics of the skill model, this teacher might not experience development due to the lack of involvement. Dreyfus wrote that “in general, resistance to involvement and risk leads to stagnation and ultimately to boredom and regression” (Dreyfus, 2001, pp.38). It might then be that the teacher who did not experience development might not be emotionally involved and in so do not experience the same level of growth as the other teachers. This difference could possibly illustrate that in order for teachers to develop their skills of teaching they would have to be emotionally involved in teaching and take personal responsibility for their actions.

6.4 Proficiency: Developing intuition

The negative and positive emotional experiences of different actions and outcomes leave the competent performer with vivid memories of the chosen plan or action, and the consecutive result (Dreyfus, 2001; Duesund, 2003; Gottlieb, 2015). By being emotionally involved the performer actively avoids actions or methods that produced unwanted and negative outcomes in the past. Based on these memories of past action and outcome, the performer now “sees” situations as similar to past situations that the performer has experienced (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1985; Dreyfus, 2001; Dreyfus, 2008). This “seeing” of whole situations, instead of objective aspects, is only achievable, if the performer is emotionally involved according to the skill model (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2001; Dreyfus, 2008; Duesund, 2003; Gottlieb, 2015). The competent performer then increasingly replaces the objective rules and procedures with the ability to choose the right action in the situation by recognition of similar situations. This transformation could be described as the replacement of reasoned responses with intuitive reactions, and intuition is essential in the following stages (Dreyfus, 2001; Duesund, 2003).

In this study, intuition was referred to as a “gut-feeling”. The reason for this is that intuition have a broad meaning and a multitude of definition, and in order to make the concept and questions more tangible for the teachers, intuition was referred to as a “gut-feeling”. Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986, pp.29) explains intuition as “a product of deep situational involvement and recognition of similarities”.
Several of the teachers gave examples where it could be interpreted that intuition was applicable in order to make sense of their student’s behavior. Teacher 4 provided an example of how a gut-feeling could be important in the work of a teacher.

**Gut-feeling...It comes to more with...nonspecific behaviors of kids that you just have like – and it doesn’t always have – it doesn’t always deal with kids who are being abused, it can just be kids that are – you can just tell that they haven’t eaten, that there’s something outside of school that’s going on that’s impacting how their behaving in school and others that – that internal sense and I didn’t have it when I was teaching early on because I was just too worried about me and what I was doing but there more I teach there more I feel like I can (Teacher 4)**

One possible interpretation from what Teacher 4 exemplifies is that intuition, referred to as a “gut-feeling”, could help a teacher understand a behavior the student displays based on prior experience with similar situation where the same elements were present. Yet, instead of analytically analyzing the situations by its decomposed parts, the teacher might instead recognize the situation as a whole where the relevant elements stand out immediately (Gottlieb, 2015, pp.133). This immediate recognition could be understood as a holistic grasp of a situation, or a holistic similarity recognition as Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986, pp.28) refers to it. Prior experience is built on both the experience with the student present in the specific class or context, but also experience with students and individuals in the past. What Teacher 4 brings up at the end of the quote is an interesting notation. Teacher 4 explains that this “gut-feeling” was not present in the beginning. This might be because Teacher 4 did not have experience with similar situations and was not focusing on the situation as a whole. Instead Teacher 4 might be attending to the smaller elements of teaching and the concern of performing the skill of teaching after objective features and the technical elements of teaching that Gottlieb (2015, pp.58) describe. This statement might seem too align with what Duesund & Jespersen (2004, pp.228) wrote, that a novice ski instructor was more focused on teaching the student ski technique in a detached manner, rather than attending to the student as a person. It might be that Teacher 4 were more focused on teaching by the objective explicit features of teaching, rather than being involved with the students in the classroom context. This development of intuition that Teacher 4 might point to, could illustrate that teaching is not only the sum of smaller explicit parts.

Teacher 4 also point to “non-specific behavior” that the students portray. By saying non-specific Teacher 4 might indicate that it is not always clear and specific what the student do, but because the Teacher 4 have experience with similar behavior, the Teacher 4 is able to recognizer its importance when it occurs. A teacher at the proficient stage might then recognize a situation as a whole rather than the decomposed parts. Intuition could then be described as a sensation of familiarity based on experience with situations that are perceived as similar. Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986, pp.29) write,
“intuition or know-how, as we understand it, is neither wild guessing nor supernatural inspiration, but the sort of ability we all use all the time as we go about our everyday tasks”. In light of the quote from Teacher 4, the recognition of non-specific behavior could possibly be noticing of similarities to past situations by being present in the context, rather than a matter of guessing or mystical abilities.

Yet, these recognitions of behaviors or situations might not guide action. By seeing a child’s behavior and understanding it to be based on lack of food does not explicitly and immediately provide a guide to action. In the quote from Teacher 4, the distinction between proficient and expert could be present. Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986, pp.29) wrote that the proficient performer intuitively understands the task, but still uses analytical approaches when deciding upon an action. Teacher 4 provides examples of different recognition of situations like students who are being abused and students who have not eaten. It could possibly be that Teacher 4 recognizes situations like these because Teacher 4 has had many previous encounters where students display similar behavior. Yet, Teacher 4 might still be left with the choice of what to do, because Teacher 4 might not yet have sufficient experience with correct recognition, response and outcome. The proficient stage might then be understood as a steppingstone, where it is a matter of sufficient experience with recognition, action and outcome all together. It could then be possible that the proficiency stage could be applicable to analyze how teachers intuitively recognizes the meaning or importance of situations and behavior, but still are not experienced enough to act intuitively in response. Teacher 4 might know how the behavior of abused children look like or the behavior of children who have not eaten, but this may not immediately qualify for an intuitive response. This aligns with the skill models characteristics of the proficiency stage.

6.5 Expert: Knowing how

An expert, by account of the rationalist perspective, is deliberately applying rules and procedures in order to achieve an intended goal. This goal is present in the expert’s consciousness and the expert actively works towards the specific goal (Duesund & Ødegård, 2018; Gottlieb, 2015; Kvale & Nielsen, 1999). Based on the rationalist perspective, it could be derived that an expert teacher applies rules and strategies that are applicable in several situations. Yet, as illustrated by the teachers in this study, following rules and guidelines may not be the most sufficient or beneficial solution when interacting with students. Duesund & Ødegård (2018, pp.411) write that the immediate demands of the classroom context could illustrate that applying rules and principles may not always be possible. In so, the rationalist perspective might not be sufficient to accurately explain how teachers manage disruptive behavior in the classroom or respond in a flexible manner to situations. As exemplified by some of the teachers in this study, following protocols or strategies are not always adequate to manage situations.
involving students. By being involved in the situation, knowing their students and respond to the specific needs of the situations the teacher might be able to adapt their reactions to the specific students and context. Gottlieb (2015, pp. 135) describes that, in light of the skill model an expert teacher might not be a teacher who rigidity follows rules and protocols of how a situation should be managed but is rather characterized by flexible responsiveness to the demands of the situation.

Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986, pp.30) explains that an expert knows what to do based on prior experience and practiced understanding. They continue to describe an expert as an individual who “understands, acts, and learns from results without any conscious awareness of the process” (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1982 in Dreyfus & Wrathall, 2014, pp.34). The expert does not see a situation as decomposed parts and features, but rather as a whole. In so, by being deeply involved in the situation, the expert not only intuitively recognizes the situation, the expert also intuitively knows what to do. “They do what normally works” (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986, pp.31) without carefully deliberating alternatives. How could then the expert stage be relevant to teachers? In the interviews some of the teachers gave examples that could resemble similar understandings of teaching practice that could resemble the expert stage of the skill model. Teacher 1 provided an example where intuition was highlighted to be important in order to respond appropriately to a situation involving a student.

> just using your gut in situations like sometimes you do not want to make situations big you wanna like keep small things small right, like just knowing – that’s way knowing your students in situations maybe – they did something you know really ungracious like it’s out of character for the student (Teacher 1)

It could be imaginable that for Teacher 1 having a gut-feeling or intuition allows for knowing about the whole student and how to best respond to a situation regarding that particular student. It could be imaginable that Teacher 1 has previous experience with that student and has some form of relationship that allowed for a more flexible approach. The whole student might be referring to knowing what works and who does not, and how to best respond to the specific student. By seeing the holistic composition of a situation in relevance to the student Teacher 1 might be able to respond more flexibly then if Teacher 1 applied abstract strategies or rules. One may also get an idea that “knowing” as Teacher 1 refers to is hard to describe. Teacher 1 might not be able to explicitly describe what the situation consists of, because there is so many components and aspects. Yet, it could be imaginable that Teacher 1 has experience with that student and that type of situation, in so Teacher 1 knows intuitively what to do in order to manage the situation. Even though students may display similar behaviors, by adjusting to the specific student Teacher 1 might be able to be more entuned to the specific needs of the student.
Teacher 1 goes on to explaining why experience in a classroom context was important in order to cope with students.

_Cause you get experience with the students and like different things that they may encounter or like react with (Teacher 1)_

By having a multitude of experiences dealing with students at different levels, with different backgrounds and needs it might be understood that Teacher 1 were able to flexibly manage situations and students. Therefor they might be more able to perform the skill of teaching differently than strictly following rules or procedures. As mentioned before, following the book might not be sufficient in order to manage the complex and diverse situation a teacher might encounter in the classroom context. For Teacher 1 it might not be a rational decision of what to do, but rather an intuitive and immediate response of doing what has worked in the past. The expert now understands that different situations require different responses and reacts to situations in a flexible manner (Duesund, 2003, pp.68).

Intuition could also be expressed as experience “frozen into habit” where the habit is performed without conscious thought (Waks, 2006, pp.385). Teacher 1 might respond intuitively to the situation because Teacher 1 has experience with similar situations and intuitively knows what to do. This aligns with how the skill model presents expertise, as making intuitive responses to specific situations (Duesund & Jespersen, 2004, pp.229). Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986, pp.20) wrote that in order to manage an unstructured problem area, like teaching, the performer would need considerable amount of experience dealing with situations in that context. This could line up with the example provided by Teacher 1, that in order to respond in a flexible manner to students, experience is essential.

How could the expert stage then be applied to how teachers experience teaching? As mentioned before, the practice of teaching and learning are strongly connected. Gottlieb (2015, pp.58) writes that “the conceptual restriction of learning leads directly to a certain restricted view of the concept of good teaching”. Her he might refer to the technical sense of teaching and by understanding teaching as a technical skill might lead to the understanding that the skill of teaching could be accurately decomposed and simplified. This technical understanding of skillful teaching resembles the rationalist perspective of teaching, and that teaching consist of articulatable facts that are transferable (Gottlieb, 2015, pp.59). Yet, after interviewing the teachers in this study it might be understood that teaching consist of more than following rules and strategies. Teaching involves emotional, feelings and intuition, which are more difficult to explain then objective features. When the teachers in this study speak about a gut-feeling as an internal sense, they don’t use specific terms of how that feeling or sensation arise in them, they just recognize it and make immediate assumptions based on them. They relate it to as a sense of knowing, which could resemble what Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986, pp.16) calls
“knowing-that”. Knowing-that implies previous experience with similar situations and outcomes that make the performer recognize and act based on memory. Know-how is another form of intelligent behavior that focus on practiced knowledge gained through experience. This might be one possible illustration of why “reproducing” good teachers and articulating what an expert teacher does is difficult. Gottlieb (2015, pp. 134) wrote that one might know what a high level of skillfulness looks like, but that does not necessarily provide the possibility to explicitly articulate it. Passively observing what expert teachers does do not alone provide the necessary skills to perform at the same level. This because expertise is being emotionally involved in situations and responding intuitively based on experience without deliberation and analysis. The emotional involvement cannot be learned or replicated; it has to be experience by the individual performer.

A teacher could then be characterized as an expert with experience, being emotionally involved in the situation and intuitively responding to the needs of situation. Yet, is that enough to explain what good teachers do? Would not a teacher then be an expert at the situations previously encountered or if the type of situations in the context is stable? What then when new situations unfamiliar to the teacher occur? Some teachers might agree that at a certain level one is satisfied with the outcome and management of situations. This could then be strengthened if the context agrees to types of outcomes that the performer has. Yet, some teachers might never experience that level of satisfactions of their skill. How could then the skill model be applied to analyze their experience of teaching?

6.5.1 Mastery

Later on, Dreyfus (2008, pp.37) introduces another level to the skill model. This level is referred to as mastery can could be understood as an alternative way of understanding an expert. What separates the mastery stage and the expert stage is that the performer at the mastery stage is never satisfied with their own skills. These performers are constantly reflecting on how they can perform better and never imagines their skills as complete. As Dreyfus (2008, pp.37) write, performers at this stage is happily broods over their situation, always looking for ways to improve. When asked about their skills of teaching, two of the teachers talked about how the skill of teaching is never-ending. Teacher 1 brought forward the idea that a perfect teacher is not a stage, but a constant process.

Yeah, and I feel like would have never reached that perfect teacher because it’s like always something new – like you can teach in a different innovative way to teach the lesson in order to reach all of types of kinds you have in the class – cause like with the time changing there’s like never a – you can never a – to me you can never be like the perfect teacher, but you can always work towards it and that’s why I enjoy teaching it’s cause it’s – every day is so different uhm, [laughing] and I’m
constantly learning and I know – I love to learn and so ehm, yeah it kept me on my toes [laughing] (Teacher 1)

The statement from Teacher 1 might resemble how Dreyfus articulates mastery. It could also indicate that a perfect teacher is not a static stage. Teacher 1 emphasis that the circumstances around teaching and learning is always changing and teaching is as much about teacher learning as about the teacher teaching. This example provided by Teacher 1 could illustrate that the mastery stage might be applied to analyze how some teachers never feel satisfied with their skill of teaching. The writer Elena Ferrante wrote “certainly, the circumstances in which our hearts beat are always changing. And it’s this which in the end produces stories, always the same and always different” (Ferrante, 2016, pp.297). Students and teachers are human begins first and therefor unique in their own experiences and understandings, and every class composition is different. Teachers react and interact with students differently depending on the student, and classes have different dynamics. The mastery stage could be applied to analyze how some teachers always strive to become better, who might think that in order to reach the diverse set of students they will have to continue to learn as Teacher 1 say. Teachers who might think that they will forever be students themselves might be more able to respond in a flexible manner because they never stop adjusting to the need of the context.
7 Summary and possible implications

Here I wish to provide a short summary of the findings and analysis presented above, in addition to shortly present some possible implications of this study. As a new teacher one might learn about abstract concepts of what education, teaching and learning ought to be. One might learn theoretical knowledge on how to approach, communicate and interact with students and their families, how to prepare curriculum, how to manage classrooms and what education is supposed to provide. These conceptual aspects of teaching might be decontextualized in order for teachers to perform the skill of teaching without previous experience. In other words, the skill of teaching is decomposed to smaller, more tangible ways of performance and might be resulting in simplifying the skill of teaching. All these abstract ideas might be intended to prepare a teacher for what they might face in their role as a teacher, in their classrooms and with their students. As I interviewed the teachers in this study it could be understood that their initial time teaching was based on the abstract concepts of teaching, how teaching out to be. This could illustrate how the novice stage could be applied to analyze how teachers experience their first time in the classroom.

However, abstract rules and features might not be sufficient when a teacher is faced with the multitude of responsibilities and the diverse composition of students. Students are different from each other, with many needs and reactions which could result in many unpredictable situations. With experience the teachers were able to adapt more to the contextual situation they were teaching in by creating more sophisticated rules of practice, resembling the advanced beginner stage articulated in the skill model. The teachers in this study provided examples where they had to build strategies based in their previous experience, and with increasing experience they adjusted the strategies accordingly. These advanced rules and elements, maxims, might help teachers better understand the significance of aspects when present in different situations. Success in these initial stages are determined by accurately identifying aspects and features, and applying the maxims or rules adapted though experience. However, with the adaptation of more sophisticated rules, there might become an overload of elements, aspects, goals and perspectives to consider when teaching. The experiences the teachers in this study presented could exemplify how the advanced beginner stage could be applied to the analysis of their experiences. In addition, the advanced beginner stage could illustrate how the teachers in this study expanded their knowledge to both theoretical and contextual knowledge.

The teachers in this study provided examples of how complex and demanding being a teaching was, and how much they had to take into account when teaching. Even when they used strategies, they had developed it was not clear or consistent that they got the desired outcome they were looking for. When
trying to balance the situations and aspects the teachers illustrated that there were many elements to consider and still the outcome was not predictable. This experience could resemble the emotional overload present in the competent stage, where the performer seeks formal strategies but are not able to produce such fined grained strategies. In so, the performer must decide for themselves what is more relevant in relation to goal or perspective and then react accordingly. This choice bears the risk of failure since the outcome is not clear. Yet, some of the teachers expressed that this risk was necessary in order to develop as teachers. Being a teacher involves interacting with a diverse set of students, and in order to do so the teachers had to be diverse in their skills of teaching. By being reflective on how their actions or skills of managing situations could be different, the teachers might experience emotional involvement and taking responsibility for their actions. This could resemble the requirement for emotional involvement that the skill model illustrates in order to further develop a skill. Several of the teachers explained that with experience they were able to gradually be more aware of the context of their teaching, how to interact with students and how to respond to situations. They explain that experience and reflecting on their practice was essential in order to further develop as teachers. This may be an example of how the competent stage could be applicable when analyzing the complex setting that teachers experience and how these teachers experienced developing their skills of teaching.

The proficiency and expert stage of the skill model could be used to analyze how intuition may possibly be relevant to teaching. Several of the teachers in this study spoke about knowing their students and the usage of “gut-feelings” as a teacher. This could indicate that emotional involvement and pre-reflective action could be part of how teachers perform the skill of teaching and manage situations in the classroom. Therefore, the skill model might illustrate how the skill of teaching could be more then following preset rules and recipes, and that practical knowledge might surpass the theoretical knowledge in teaching. That the detached rules and strategies of the novice are like training wheels that one might need early on but cannot replace the involved skillfulness of the expert. What could possibly be the case is that teachers start off with large conceptual understandings about teaching and education, and with time they gradually learn to make decision about teaching and learning in the smaller moments that goes by every day. An expert teacher might then be an expert because the teacher makes decision based on actually experiencing what works in specific situations. This type of teacher could be making decision based in involvement and intuition, which might allow for more flexible and situational decisions. It might then be that there is no uniform perfect way of teaching, because it consists of flexible and situated decision making related to the context and students where teaching occurs. This might be the reason that “production” expert teachers might prove difficult. By following recipes and direction the teaching might be, according to the skill model,
detached to the situation and not able to flexibly respond to the immediate demands of the situation. Even though teachers might start from the same basis with the same theoretical knowledge, teachers own practice and experiences are not so easily transferable. The expert is developed through involvement and experience, learning from past situations and taking responsibility for actions.

7.1 Some possible implications and further investigation

Although this study is not generalizable to the large population of teachers, there could be however some indications of this study. Experience, making own choices and taking responsibility for the outcome are some elements of learning a new skill that is hard to instruct or teach to new teachers. Duesund & Ødegård (2018, pp.418) write that student-teachers most often are being silent observers and not active participants in the classroom context. This might make it difficult for the student-teachers to gain insight into the flexible and emotional nature of teaching since they are not emotionally involved in the situations. In so, students-teacher might gain more from their time in the classroom if they have an active role during their education. Furthermore, this study might be utilized to gain insight into how experience, emotional involvement and intuition may be important factors when teachers cope with disruptive behavior in the classroom in order to flexibly cope with the situation at hand. Another implication this study could have is to explore how teachers might need to be emotionally involved in their role as teachers and not shy away from being guided by their emotional responses.

Lastly, I want to present some concepts that could be appropriate to focus on in this study but where not addressed given the limits of this research study. However, they might be utilized to further explore how teachers experience teaching and how they cope with disruptive behavior. The first concepts that could be addressed in further research is mentalization. Mentalization is defined as the ability to see oneself from the outside and others from the inside, “to give meaning to own and others behavior in the light of inner motivation, like feelings, thoughts, desires and needs” (Skårderud & Duesund, 2014, pp.152). This concept could be applied to analyze how teachers understand the classroom context, student’s behavior and their own influence on student’s behavior. It could also be related to the discussion of subjectivity and objectivity of the teachers experiences with students and their behavior. Contextual factors like social and cultural differences, the educational system in the US, race and ethnicity might be influencing how the teachers experience teaching in a much larger way then pointed out in this study. Further investigation into the contextual implication would be necessary to better understand the framework that these teachers work within, and the structural implications on how teachers experience being teachers.
8 Conclusion

In this final section I wish to brief present the content and procedure of this study. This study was a qualitative research study aimed to explore how teachers experience teaching. This was done through 4 interviews with teachers in the US and by applying the Dreyfus’ skill model in order to analyze their responses. The first section of this paper intended to provide some insight into the environment of teaching and learning. Furthermore, the study outlined, in short, the phenomenological perspective and continued to describe the Dreyfus’ skill model. After this I described the methodology for collecting data for this study and the process of analyzing data. Then I presented the data gathered and discussed how the skill model might be applied to analyze how the teachers in this study experience teaching, where the main focus is the role of development, emotional involvement and intuition in teaching.

This study was a small study done by a master student and the findings in this study might not be generalizable to the larger population of teachers. However, these findings might help explore the phenomenon of teaching and how teachers experience teaching. Though this study the aim has been to explore; in what ways could the Dreyfus’ skill model be applied when analyzing teachers’ experience with teaching?

The skill model might be applicable to illustrate that a new teacher is in need of rules and procedures to guide action. Yet, in order to further develop the skill of teaching, teachers might need to emotionally involve themselves in the situation and base action on their own experiences of what works rather than simply following guidelines and rules. Personal experience and emotional involvement cannot be replaced by instruction or detached observations. If a teacher does not become emotional involved in the skill of teaching, they might handle situations as objectively as possible and only respond to the visible and explicit features of a situation. This could prove difficult because of the highly complex and interactive nature of teaching and learning, where situations are often unclear and unpredictable. The skill model could be applied to explore the flexible nature of good teaching, where intuition and holistic understandings of situations are central.
Resources


**Skillful coping: Essays on the phenomenology of everyday perception.** Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chap. 8


Dreyfus, H. L. (2008). *Skilled coping as higher intelligibility in Heideggers Being and time (Spinoza Lectures).* Assen: Koninklijke Van Gorcum


Appendix

Appendix 1: Approval letter from Norwegian Center for Data research (NSD)

28.1.2019
Meldeskjema for behandling av personopplysninger

NSD NORSK SENTER FOR FORSKNINGSDATA

NSD sin vurdering

Prosjekttittel
Teachers’ skillful coping with disruptive behavior in Norwegian and American classrooms - What makes a good teacher great?

Referansenummer
488900

Registrert
31.10.2018 av Jeanette Erlandsen - jeaneer@student.uio.no

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon
Universitetet i Oslo / Det utdanningsvitenskapelige fakultet / Institutt for spesialpedagogikk

Prosjektansvarlig
Magnar Odegård, magnar.odegaard@isp.uio.no, tlf:

Type prosjekt
Studentprosjekt, masterstudium

Student
Jeanette Erlandsen, jeanneer@gmail.com, tlf: 91782710

Prosjekteriode
31.12.2018 - 30.05.2019

Status
28.01.2019 - Vurdert

Vurdering (1)

28.01.2019 - Vurdert

Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen så fremt den gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet med vedlegg den 24.01.2019, samt i meldingsdialogen mellom innmelder og NSD.

MELD ENDRINGE

https://meldeskjema.nsd.no/vurdering/fb0ef5071b-c1d8-44d5-810c-9cc9af5075ea

1/3
Dersom behandlingen av personopplysninger endrer seg, kan de være nødvendig å melde dette til NSD ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. På våre nett sider informerer vi om hvilke endringer som må meldes. Vent på svar før endringer gjennomføres.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET
Prosjektet vil handle alminnelige kategorier av personopplysninger frem til 01.11.2022.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG
Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra de registrerte til behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vi er vurderer er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 og 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekräftelse som kan dokumenteres enten skriftlig (manuelt/elektronisk/e-post) eller på lydopptak, og som den registrerte kan trekke tilbake. Lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen vil dermed være den registrertes samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a.

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER
NSD vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen om:

- lovighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a), ved at de registrerte får tilfredsstillende informasjon om og samtykker til behandlingen
- formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger sørres inn for spesiﬁkke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke behandles til nye, uforenlig formål
- dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysningene som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet
- lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER
Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: åpenhet (art. 12), informasjon (art. 13), innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18), underretning (art. 19), dataportabilitet (art. 20).

NSD vurderer at informasjonen om behandlingen som de registrerte vil motta oppfyller lovens krav til form og innhold, jf. art. 12.1 og art. 13.

Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

FOLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER
NSD legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidentsialitet (art. 5.1. f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må dere følge interne retningslinjer og/eller rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET
NSD vil følge opp underveis og ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet/pågår i tråd med den behandlingen som er dokumentert.

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Kontaktperson hos NSD: Anne-Mette Somby
Tlf. Personvernjennester: 55 58 21 17 (tast 1)
Appendix 2: Approval letter from Committee for Protection of human Subjects (CHPS), Institutional Review Board (IRB) at University of California Berkeley (UC Berkeley)
Appendix 3: Letter of consent given to subjects

Do you wish to participate in the research project

Teachers’ Skillful Coping with Disruptive Behavior in Norwegian and American Classrooms:
What makes a good teacher?

Do you wish to participate in a research project where the goal is to examine what makes good teachers great? In this letter, I will present information about the goals of the research and what your participation will entail.

Purpose
The purpose of the larger study is to investigate how teachers cope with disruptive behavior in schools. This includes, strategies of managing disruptive behavior, approaches to teaching, knowledge about one’s own skills and how they relate to their own practice.

The study will be based on the following research question:

1. What makes a good teacher?

This study is part of a larger project at the University in Oslo, Department of Special Needs Education.

Who is responsible for this project?
The University in Oslo (UiO), Department of Special Needs Education is responsible for this project.

This project will be a part of a comparative project between researchers at the University of California, Berkeley and the Department of Special Needs Education at UiO.

Why are you asked to participate?
The sample in the study constitutes of teachers in public schools, where 4 teachers will be asked if they want to participate.

What does your participation entail?
The project contains a 20-30 minutes interview. The interview will be recorded if the subject agrees to this.

Participation is voluntary
Participation in this project is voluntary. If you wish to participate you may withdraw at any time without having to present a reason. All information concerning you will be anonymous. There will be no negative consequences of your participation if you withdraw or do not wish to participate.

Your privacy - how we store and use your information
We will only use your information to the purposes described in this letter. We will handle your information confidentially and in accordance with the privacy policy.

- Access to the data material will be limited to Professor Liv Duesund, Postdoctoral Fellow Magnar Ødegård and master student Jeanette Erlandsen (me)
- The data material for interviews will be encrypted and stored on physically isolated hardware at the Department of Special Needs Education, UiO.
Participants in this study will not be recognizable in publications from this study.

**What happens to your information when we finish the research project?**
The project is scheduled to end 11.01.2021. The recordings will be kept until 11.01.2022 and then destroyed.

**Your rights**
As long as you are identifiable in the data material you are entitled to:
- insight into which personal information is registered about you,
- to correct information about you,
- to delete information about you,
- to get a copy of your personal data, and
- to send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or the Data Inspectorate about the processing of your personal data.

**What gives us the right to process personal information about you?**
We process information about you based on your consent.

On behalf of the University of Oslo, the Department of Special Needs Education, NSD - The Norwegian Center for Research Data AS has considered that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with the privacy policy.

**Where can I find out more?**
If you have any questions regarding this study or the larger project, or you wish to exercise your rights you may contact:
- The department of special needs education, at the University in Oslo, by contacting Jeanette Erlandsen, (Jeanette.erland@gmail.com, +1 5106931265) or Liv Duesund (liv.duesund@isp.uio.no +4741497909) or Magnar Ødegård, (magnar.odegard@isp.uio.no, +4790629218).
- Our privacy representative: Maren Magnus Voll, personvernombud@uio.no
- NSD – Norwegian Center for Research Data AS, by email (personvernombudet@nsd.no) or by phone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Best regards

Jeanette Erlandsen
Master student

Liv Duesund  
Project manager  
(Researcher)  

Magnar Ødegård  
Project manager  
(Researcher)
Statement of consent
I have received and understood information about the Teachers' Skillful Coping with Disruptive Behavior in Schools project and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I agree to:

☐ Participate in an interview

I agree that my information is processed until the project is completed, approximately 11.01.2022

(Signed by project participant, date)
Appendix 4: Interview guide

Introduction

1. How long have you worked as a teacher?

Questions about your profession as a teacher

2. What do you think is the most important aspect of your work as a teacher?

3. What would you say is your most important skill as a teacher, and why?

4. Could you describe the importance a “gut feeling” has in your work as a teacher?

Questions about you in the classroom

5. How do you establish rules for behavior in your classroom?

6. How do you think your students perceive those rules?

7. Could you describe how you establish relations to students?

8. Could you describe challenges you encounter in establishing positive relations to students?

Additional

9. In which ways has your experience as a teacher influenced your teaching?

   a. Probe: is there a difference between before and now?

10. In which ways could personal engagement play a role in your teaching?