
Classroom Management: what does research tell us?

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ABSTRACT The article reviews studies that focus on classroom management. The aim of classroom management is twofold. The first is to establish a quiet and calm environment in the classroom so that the pupils can take part in meaningful learning in a subject. The second aim is that classroom management contributes to the pupils' social and moral development. During an early phase, classroom management focused on pupil behaviour and discipline, and was rooted in a behaviourist understanding. This article shows that classroom management is now more about understanding the class as a social system. The findings show that several factors and conditions influence classroom management: the self-understanding of teachers and their mindfulness, the multicultural classroom, behaviour management, lack of knowledge on classroom management, knowledge of physical and social context, rules, relations and commitment, person-centred versus teacher-centred classroom management, an ecological perspective on classroom management and classroom management in connection with motivation and learning. The review article states that classroom management is just as much about managing learning processes when an activity is taking place as it is about creating peace and quiet so pupils can get down to work.

Introduction

According to Doyle (1986), classroom management has two purposes. The first aim of classroom management is to establish a quiet and calm environment in the classroom so that the pupils can take part in meaningful learning in a subject. The second aim is that classroom management contributes to the pupils' social and moral development, which means that it aims to develop the pupils academically and socially. The American researchers Stronge et al (2011) state that teachers have major influence on pupils' learning, and use as the point of departure for their study the question of what makes a teacher 'good'. The findings in the study, which also relates the teachers' teaching to pupils' learning, is that the manner in which the teacher manages the class, and the teacher's personal qualities and relations to the pupils, are the most important factors in the work on learning in school. They conclude that the crucial factor for improvement in school and for the pupils' success is the teacher. This is supported by several research findings (Nordenbo et al, 2008; Hattie, 2009). Several studies also indicate that pupils in classes where the teacher has good control of the class and also shows care for the pupils have higher cognitive achievements and more positive attitudes to the subjects than pupils who do not have such teachers (Brekelmans et al, 2000; Brok et al, 2004). Evertsen and Weinstein (2006, p. 11) use the construct 'warm demanders' when they speak of teachers who are warm, attentive, caring and supportive and who also set demands on their pupils. Such teachers balance between supporting, challenging and demanding effort from their pupils.

Behaviour problems in the classroom constitute one of the major reasons why teachers do not feel comfortable in their work (Lewis et al, 2008). According to Friedman (2006), the greatest frustration teachers experience is that they may be unable to develop good enough relations with their pupils, and that this may cause burnout. The perception some teachers have that they are unable to live up to the ideals that led them to the teaching profession in the first place often leads them to quit. A depersonalised school climate may also cause teachers to see youths more as learners of content rather than as individuals. For many pupils, lower secondary school is also the start of their declining motivation for schoolwork (Walker, 2009). Bearing this in mind, we can see that classroom management is a key and vital topic for teacher trainers and teachers. The research question that is pursued in this article is: What does recent research tell us about classroom management? The review is written in a narrative form, and the intention is that the article will contribute knowledge in this area and function as a thinking tool (Gudmundsdottir, 2001) for others who want to develop their knowledge on classroom management.

I will begin by describing in the methodology section how I found and selected the articles I highlight in this article before thematically presenting the studies and their findings. The concept of classroom management is linked to the American understanding of this term (Kreijlsler & Moos, 2008). During an early phase this tradition was focused on pupil behaviour and discipline, and was rooted in a behaviourist understanding. This article will show that classroom management is now more about understanding the class as a social system. In my closing reflections on the research findings I will first present the behaviourist and constructivist perspectives as a theoretical framework for understanding classroom management, before suggesting that there is a lack of studies in earlier research on the importance of teacher–teacher relations. I will end the article by pointing out the contextual nature of classroom management.

Methodology

Literature Search: rationale

In order to answer my research question I conducted a series of searches in the subject of pedagogy using the ISI WEB of Science and Scopus (searches undertaken 12 November 2012), using the search string ‘classroom management’, and covering the period 2008 to 2012, to probe the most recent decade of research. The Dutch researcher Wubbels (2011) states that in spite of teacher interest in classroom management there is limited research on this topic. According to Wubbels, ‘classroom management’ is a term that is not in fashion because it has often been related to behaviourist thinking, and relatively few articles feature this term in their title or as a keyword. Texts are instead furnished with such titles as ‘Managing Group Work in Heterogeneous Classrooms’, ‘Establishing and Maintaining Caring Communities’ or ‘External and Internal Motivation’ (p. 114). Wubbels comments that the publication of the *Handbook of Classroom Management: research, practice and contemporary issues*, edited by Evertson and Weinstein (2006), has filled a gap in our knowledge of classroom management. I have nevertheless chosen to focus my search by using ‘classroom management’ as the search string to obtain an overview of the research on classroom management presented in scientific articles. The intention was to obtain an overview of previous research published in international periodicals relating to classroom management. In the ISI WEB of Science, I had 270 hits on articles within the field of ‘Education and Educational Research’, and in Scopus, I had 269 hits. I have selected articles that deal with basic education, and more specifically articles dealing with lower secondary and upper secondary school. I have also included articles of a more general nature which do not state which school level they focus on. Most of the articles referred to are empirical texts detailing studies conducted in the school years stated. The articles may also function as thinking tools beyond these levels, as knowledge about classroom management deals with interpersonal relations and thus is useful on a general level. I have chosen not to include articles that deal with classroom management and newly educated teachers, classroom management in digital classrooms, and classroom management relating to pupils with special needs. Based on these choices, and from reading the articles, I ended up presenting research from 18 articles found on the ISI WEB of Science. I have also included two articles from Scopus based on the same choices and exclusions, and excluded articles already found on the ISI WEB of Science. These are articles that together give a good overview of research on

classroom management. The presentations also give insight into research findings from different parts of the world, thus providing both scope and depth.

Analysis Strategy

The intention, when reading through the articles, was to pinpoint the main findings presented in them. The content of the articles was further structured and reduced by coding and categorising the texts in open and axial analysis processes (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998) so that their essence was made reportable (Garfinkel 1967; Sachs 1992). The open analysis process, meaning that the categories are on the same horizontal level, resulted in the following main category: (1) Circumstances and factors that impact classroom management. This main category consisted of several research findings, and in order to structure these findings to make them reportable, the texts were placed into sub-categories by asking 'when, 'how' and 'under what conditions' does learning in school take place (Strauss & Corbin 1990, 1998). This axial analysis process resulted in the following nine sub-categories: (1) Teachers' self-understanding and mindfulness; (2) The multicultural classroom; (3) Behaviour management; (4) Lack of knowledge on classroom management; (5) Knowledge and physical and social context; (6) Rules, relations and commitment; (7) Person-centred versus teacher-centred classroom management; (8) An ecological perspective on classroom management; and (9) Classroom management: motivation and learning.

A review article is presented under its own heading because it has its own structure based on the articles it includes in the review. Thus the themes in the review article do not correspond to the themes developed on the basis of the other articles included in this review text. The review article does not deviate from the findings in the other presented articles, but gives supportive and expanded understandings about classroom management.

Below I present the findings from the articles this review study has included. The developed categories structure the presentation of the articles and their findings.

Circumstances and Factors that Affect Classroom Management

Teachers' Self-understanding and Mindfulness

The American researchers Jennings and Greenberg (2009) focus on the importance of teachers looking at themselves in interaction processes. In this context they point to teachers' social and emotional competence and their own sense of well-being. The researchers point out that teachers with this type of competence and who experience well-being are well positioned to contribute to supportive teacher-pupil relations. They also state that such teachers may be good classroom managers and role models for the pupils when it comes to desired social and emotional behaviour. The teacher may be able to contribute to a good class environment, which in turn contributes to the social, emotional and academic outcome of the pupils. The authors also add that factors within and outside school, such as teacher support, leadership, the school's social climate and norms, education policy guidelines and requirements, and teachers' private affairs, may have an impact on their social and emotional competence. The authors refer to Marzano, Marzano and Pickering (2003, cited in Jennings & Greenberg, 2009) and the concepts of 'mental set' or 'mindfulness'. The authors believe that this can be learnt, and state that being mindfully present is associated with good classroom management.

The Multicultural Classroom

In her review article, the American researcher Pane (2010) examines classroom management in multicultural classrooms in urban schools in the United States of America (USA). This article finds how important it is that teachers understand themselves and others in their own context if they are to fully understand their own predilections and differences, and those of others. Bearing this in mind, Pane finds that it is important for the teacher to include pupils' home conditions in school to take a proactive approach. The author highlights Lave and Wenger's (1991, cited in Pane, 2010) theory of practice communities as a useful theoretical framework for teaching that might help the

teacher manage all the pupils, thus also developing his or her own social and professional knowledge. In the context of the theory, she points out that meaning and communication are socially negotiated by individuals situated in a development process. Hence, the classroom becomes an arena for communication and development of meaning, based on the idea of actively including the background of everyone in the exchanges of meaning.

In their synthesis of research focusing on the impact race and ethnic background have on how teachers act in the classroom, the American researchers Gregory et al state that pupils with black, Latin and Indian backgrounds are more often expelled from the classroom when demonstrating unacceptable behaviour. The authors state, moreover, that this may be the reason why these pupils perform worse in school, and they claim that explicit attention on race and culture is required if this differential treatment is to be changed. Gregory et al (2010) refer to Gregory and Weinstein (2008) when they point out that teachers who demonstrated care *and* made demands were able to develop a trusting relationship and good cooperation with black pupils.

Based on their study of two teachers in multicultural classrooms, Milner and Tenore (2010) state that teachers who have knowledge about themselves and their pupils have a foundation on which good relationships can be built. One of the teachers in the study states that it is important to understand the power relationships between the pupils, using this understanding to help those pupils who have power to use it in a positive direction so they can help create commitment to learning in the class. This study shows that the teachers give the pupils insight into their own world by narrating about themselves, and that the teachers should try to understand themselves in relation to the pupils, the pupils' parents and the community of pupils. The teachers participating in the study also say that it is important that the pupils are seen as being part of a large community in the school, thus being the pupils of all the teachers. The school corridors became an equally important arena as the classroom for establishing and maintaining good relations. In their conclusion the researchers state that the main duty of the teachers at school is to create learning opportunities for the pupils, not to control them.

Behaviour Management

In a study involving pupils from Australia, Israel and China conducted by Lewis et al (2008), the pupils report that the manner in which teachers create good behaviour in the classroom influences their attitude to schoolwork and their teachers. The authors state that a positive and productive classroom environment is impossible to develop without good classroom management. Findings from their study show that the pupils' perceptions coincide across the three countries, and that the most important factors for good classroom management are *recognition* and *reward* for responsible behaviour, as well as *discussions* with pupils leading to agreed results. These are discussions with individual pupils on how their behaviour impacts others and on how to improve their own behaviour in the future. In this context the authors refer to research (Deci et al, 1999a, b, 2001, cited by Lewis et al, 2008) that underlines that recognition and reward may have a negative impact on the pupils' experience of their own competence and commitment, and to research (Akin-Little, Eckert, Lovett & Little, 2004, cited by Lewis et al, 2008) indicating that there are few if any drawbacks from external reinforcement, particularly when it is verbal and linked to pupil competence.

The study also finds that the strategies *hinting* and *involvement* have moderate importance. In the study, *hinting* is defined as the teacher describing what the pupil has done wrong, and that the teacher expects the pupil to stop doing this. *Involvement* means that the pupils in a class are allowed to contribute to the development of rules for good behaviour. Roache and Lewis (2011a) point out that the result of hinting may be that the pupils become aware of their own behaviour, but they do not feel that it is an abuse of power or the cause of conflict. Lewis et al (2008) found that *punishment* and teacher *aggression* have no positive impact on pupil behaviour. In another study, Mainhard et al (2010) conclude that disciplinary actions may occasionally be necessary, but that these may also undermine and even destroy the classroom atmosphere. The findings in their study support the idea that the teacher should use minor rather than major reprimands, and act with as little aggression as possible. In a study carried out in Australian, Chinese and Israeli classrooms (Romi et al, 2009), Romi (Israel), Lewis (Australia) and Katz (Australia) found that the pupils become more

responsible for their own behaviour and the behaviour of their co-pupils when teachers use inclusive techniques to promote discipline. This is also the result from a study conducted in secondary schools in Australia by Lewis et al (2012). This study shows that pupils must be given the teachers' explanation as to why an exclusion is necessary, and that the teachers need to warn the pupils before excluding them, and furthermore, hold a follow-up conversation, highlighting the impact of the misbehaviour on classmates if the pupils are going to feel responsible for their exclusion.

Lack of Knowledge on Classroom Management

Another study conducted by the Australian researchers Roache and Lewis (2011b) uses as its point of departure a study undertaken by Lewis et al (2008), and focuses on the perception of classroom management that teachers have. The study shows that the teachers may not be aware of how much they can influence pupil behaviour and that they will often use punishment together with aggressive behaviour to correct pupil behaviour. The fact that teachers may be aggressive towards pupils is also posited in a study conducted by Riley et al (2010) from Australia, where they find that teachers explain and justify aggression by referring to unacceptable pupil behaviour (attribution theory). Another explanation is that teachers want pupils to be focused on their tasks during class, and thus it is justifiable to use aggression to stop unsuitable behaviour that prevents concentration (efficiency theory). Another finding in this study is that the teachers do not connect their actions with any particular theory. The authors conclude that it appears that some teachers act without supporting their actions with theories on classroom management. The researchers state that teachers appear to lack an understanding of a theoretical framework that can guide them on how to manage the pupils.

Knowledge and Physical and Social Context

According to Lewis and Burman (2008), what teachers perceive as the greatest barrier to promoting pupil voices in their teaching is the lack of knowledge on, and experiences with, other approaches than punishment and reward, in addition to teachers' heavy workloads and high stress levels. Teachers also find that the size of the classroom and the number of pupils in the class, as well as lack of support from the school management, are factors that prevent them from developing a classroom management practice that strengthens the pupils' understanding of themselves and their choices and that undermine the opportunity to promote these in a democratic classroom. The researchers conclude that teacher management practices should be discussed and reflected upon in the context of professional teaching programmes in classroom management, and that teachers should be allowed to observe different practices as the basis for their own reflection.

Marzano (2011) sees the need for shared responsibility among the administration, teachers and pupils when it comes to creating good behaviour in school. He also draws attention to how teachers often feel that administrators do not support them in this work. Marzano points to the importance of teachers developing rules and procedures at the start of the school year, which they then continuously update and strengthen in the course of the year. According to Marzano, these rules and procedures should also be the point of departure for conversations with the pupils on behaviour. The pupils must be willing to be involved in co-determining the rules at school and in the classroom and must also be willing to support the enforcement of these rules. Marzano claims that many schools and teachers are struggling with classroom management, but that good classroom management is a requirement for good teaching and learning.

Rules, Relations and Commitment

A Dutch study undertaken by Tartwijk et al (2009), finds that 12 teachers who are seen as good classroom managers are focused on controlling and managing the pupils' behaviour. Their idea is to lead pupil activity, give the pupils clear rules, make rules together with the pupils, and also insist on compliance with these rules, while also placing demands on the pupils. They use humour to make their reprimands less serious, and they use rational arguments rather than power arguments

to try to prevent escalation of unacceptable pupil behaviour. A total of 9 of the 12 teachers who participated in the study attach importance to creating good relations and maintaining them. In this context they are talking about the relations between the teachers and their pupils. Three of the teachers state they try to create good relations between themselves and the pupils to make classroom management easier. Of the 12 teachers, 11 state that they are trying to improve the pupils' attention and to create commitment. They reward their pupils, without clarifying which rewards, and they administer regular tests. They strive to adapt their teaching to the pupils' level, background and interests, and to give reasons why various activities are initiated.

Person-centred Versus Teacher-centred Classroom Management

The American researchers Freiberg and Lamb (2009) argue for a person-centred classroom management. This type of management focuses on socio-emotional matters, meaning that the pupils should feel a sense of belonging to the school, and the focus is on pupil self-discipline. The authors ask rhetorically if there is no discipline in a person-centred classroom, answering that there in fact is much more. By being made participants and by sharing control in the classroom with the teacher, the pupils can develop self-discipline. They speak of self-discipline as having knowledge about oneself and the ability to find suitable actions for growth and development as a person. In a teacher-centred classroom the teacher is in control, giving the pupils instructions about what to do. In a person-centred classroom the pupils are given the opportunity to share responsibility. The authors state that the pupils want to know how much the teachers care before they want to know how much knowledge they have. They conclude the article by pointing out the importance of good relations and a good learning environment in the class, where the teacher helps the pupils develop academically, socially and emotionally. The Australian researcher Riley (2009) has found that it is more difficult for teachers in lower secondary and upper secondary school to develop close relations with their pupils than for teachers in the lower stages. The teachers on the highest levels teach a high number of pupils in a limited number of subjects, only meeting the same pupils a few hours in the course of a week.

An Ecological Perspective on Classroom Management

American researchers Osher et al (2010) talk about an ecological perspective on classroom management and claim that different activities create and maintain order in the classroom. The teacher's main duty is to facilitate for and maintain pupil cooperation in the ongoing activities and that this is what organises and creates life in the classroom. In such a perspective, classroom management is about creating conditions that involve the pupils in subject activities, and the attention is on the class as a group and on the direction and energy of the various activities that organise and guide the collective actions in the classroom. They define the ecological perspective within a pupil-centred pedagogy, and in this context point to the challenge presented by pupils without self-discipline. To support the pupils in their development, they highlight how positive behavioural support, such as recognition and discussion, should be a common way of dealing with pupils in school.

Classrooms are complex systems of individuals and groups, curriculums, aspirations and perceptions of connections, according to the American researcher Doyle (2009). He states that the teacher's actions and the pupils' involvement are part of an activity in a classroom in a given period of time, and that the classroom is a system of related activities powering what occurs in this classroom. Classroom management is in, and is played out in, the actions of the activities the teacher initiates in the classroom. The important task for teachers and pupils, according to Doyle, is to work together to create a context which forms the basis for interaction in a dynamic way. Teaching practices which have a person-centred orientation invite pupils to be active in the classroom, and such practices create the responsibility and sense of belonging that is required to establish and maintain productive learning communities. According to the ecological perspective, a person-centred approach is not sufficient. Such an approach will not in itself create actions and activities in productive contexts. For productive contexts to be maintained, the participants must

also feel they are respected and appreciated, according to Doyle. Thus the teacher becomes a key actor in creating good relations and productive activities.

Classroom Management: motivation and learning

A study carried out by the American researchers Anderman et al (2011) shows that several factors may impact pupil motivation for schoolwork, and hence their learning. This study comprises teaching and pupil perceptions of the teaching in social studies and natural science. Different subjects have been described as representing different communities with their 'histories, pedagogical traditions and status' (Grossman & Stodolosky, 1994, p. 182), but the researchers in this study state that the conditions and matters that are highlighted may apply across subjects. The pupils perceive teacher support, teacher expectations that they should understand and the social climate in the class as important in their learning process. The teachers who participated in the study demanded understanding through the use of searching questions in dialogues with the pupils, and they supported their pupils by asking open questions. At the start of teaching sessions the teachers presented key concepts and warned pupils about common mistakes. In addition to supporting the pupils in the language process, importance is attached to teachers establishing and maintaining a good relationship to the pupils. The pupils are encouraged to ask for help, and the teachers also show that they are enthusiastic about their subject. The teachers display interest in the pupils, an interest that also includes pupil life outside the classroom, and they use humour in their teaching. If the pupils' behaviour needs to be corrected, this is done discreetly so that the flow of the teaching is not disrupted. The study shows the importance of teachers being attentively present in their teaching, and that they are able to quickly understand what is happening, preferably before it happens. The teachers are also active parties in the process when the pupils are working in groups; they remind pupils so they are mindful of the time at their disposal and they support the pupils when they ask for help. In the conclusion of the article, the researchers state that what they have called 'supporting understanding' may promote the pupils' cognitive engagement, establishment and maintenance of good relations which may promote their emotional involvement, and that classroom management may contribute to good behaviour.

A Review of International Comparative Studies

A review study by Wubbels (2011) finds that the structure of teaching periods is quite similar in Western and Asian countries, but when it comes to discipline, the situation is different. The research shows that it is quieter and more peaceful in classrooms in South-East Asia, China and Japan than in Western countries. According to Wubbels, this is because the teacher enjoys more respect in these countries. The research also shows that teachers in the USA are focused on motivating their pupils and making them aware and attentive, while teachers in Japan focus on getting their pupils to solve difficult problems. The research shows that successful classroom managers focus their attention on learning and not on a noiseless atmosphere. Good classroom managers introduce procedures early in the school year without overloading the pupils. They model appropriate behaviour, and they stop unwanted behaviour before it develops into a real problem. The review study does not find clear differences between these countries when it comes to classroom management, but one difference is more prominent than others. There is less peace and quiet in Western classrooms than in Asian ones. Wubbels warns, however, against generalising too much, as, for example, there may also be differences between classrooms in the same country. He also states that different ways of managing a class may be rooted in cultural features, such as respect for authorities and wisdom, or attaching importance to learning goals that are more inclined towards learning by rote than to understanding. Hence classroom management may differ from one culture to the next, but, Wubbel concludes, the manner in which a teacher manages the classroom probably depends more on local circumstances than the culture.

Theoretical Perspectives in a Summary and Analytical Reflection

As mentioned earlier, classroom management has been related to behavioural thought, and this thinking continues to support ways of regulating behaviour. I therefore present this as a theoretical perspective, even if over time constructivist thinking has come to be the guiding light in the West. I also analyse and reflect upon the findings in the review articles in the light of relevant theory and research.

The Behavioural Perspective

In the behavioural view, learning is seen as an influence that causes a relatively permanent change in the knowledge or behaviour of an individual. In this perspective, the interest is in the effect external events may have on an individual (Hill, 2002). In school as a formal learning arena, change in a positive direction, needless to say, is desirable. The consequences of an action impact subsequent actions. Such consequences may be reward or punishment. In this perspective, consequences determine whether or not a person will repeat the behaviour that led to the consequences. Thus the motivation to carry out various tasks or behave in specific manners is understood in relation to the reward and punishment that is meted out. Hence this view of learning is based on what is called external motivation. This means that the pupils are actually not interested in the activity itself, but rather care about the gain they can achieve, for example in the form of praise or a good grade. The cause of the act may be localised outside the pupil (Reeve, 1996; Ryan & Deci, 2000), and those who are learning are seen as passive recipients or 'empty jars' to be filled with knowledge.

The Constructivist Perspective

In the constructivist perspective the idea is that knowledge is *actively* built in each individual during the learning process. The focus is on how learning may occur in different practice communities, and motivation comes from being a member of a community that appreciates learning. Learning which is understood as development of understanding and meaning then occurs in interaction between the person and the community he or she is living and acting in. Both sociocultural theory and Dewey's idea-based theory are situated within this perspective (Prawat, 1996). For both Vygotsky (1981) and Dewey (1900), mind was not a fixed thing, but an energy process of change and growth. Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934), the main reference for sociocultural theory, believed that there is a clear connection between language and intellectual thought (Vygotsky, 1978, 2000). Words used in social relations eventually become a part of the person and his or her thinking. John Dewey (1859-1952) does not give prominence to language as the 'tool of tools' but equates the ear, the eye and the hand as tools of experience and thus of learning. All the same, he claims that language has a large part to play compared to other tools because it can represent conditions that have lost their original quality in becoming social tools (Dewey, 1916). In other words, language as a tool also has a conspicuous place in Dewey's theory.

Both Vygotsky and Dewey looked upon the context in which individuals live and act as decisive for their learning and development. Learning based on social activity is the main message in Vygotsky's (1978) 'general genetic law of cultural development' (p. 57). He uses this law to explain the relationship between the external world and what happens in the individual. The development that takes place in the individual starts in a social, cultural and historical context. Vygotsky (1978) believed that development starts on an external social level before being transformed and made a part of an individual's intramental processes. He claimed that the individual is active in this internalisation or transformation phase, and he believed in the importance of formal schooling, introducing the concept of 'the zone of proximal development', which means that a child can do more with the help of a more competent adult or co-pupil (Vygotsky, 1978). According to sociocultural theory, the learning environment and the teacher thus have great impact on pupil development. The teacher with his or her experiences and knowledge may act as a 'competent other' (p. 86), helping pupils experience the class as a motivating learning community if he or she manages the class in a good manner. Dewey (1938) was also interested in how the environment could become a social source for people's experiences. He claimed: 'It ought

to be necessary to say that experience does not occur in a vacuum. There are sources outside an individual which give rise to experience' (p. 39). Dewey (1900) found that the mind cannot be regarded as an individual, monopolistic possession. The mind, he said, is developed in an environment which is social as well as physical, and social aims and needs have been most potent in shaping it. What then does the theory presented state about good classroom management, and which theoretical perspectives support the findings?

Summary and Analytical Reflection

The view of the behavioural perspective is that the learner is a passive recipient and that external motivation, such as reward and punishment, can help pupils to learn. In the constructivist perspective, the learner is looked upon as active in the learning processes, and the use of language in dialogues with other pupils and the teachers is an important tool that creates an interaction between individuals and the environment they live and act in.

The review of articles shows that a key to good classroom management is that teachers have good self-understanding and social and emotional competence. The teachers may then be supportive in the teacher–pupil relationship, serve as good role models for the pupils, and may be able to contribute to a good classroom environment, as shown as important in the constructivist perspective. In this context it is also pointed out that the teacher should be mindfully present in the classroom. 'Mindfulness' means that one is fully aware of what occurs both inside and outside oneself (Marzano, 2009; Hoekstra & Korthagen, 2011). This concept comes from Buddhism, but has recently influenced psychology in Western countries (Kabat-Zinn, 1990). A teacher who is fully mindful will see what may happen and then act (Marzano, 2009). This demands a teacher who has the skills to resolve incidents in a manner that benefits each individual and the class as a group. When the teacher contributes to building a culture where learning, well-being and health are promoted, she or he is a good classroom manager. According to Juul and Jensen (2003), teachers also become human together with the pupils when they are fully mindful of what is going on and able to know their own emotions, needs and body reactions in relation to what is going on around them. If a teacher is to manage a class in a good manner, an integration of person and function is required, precisely so he or she can be an individual human together with the pupils.

Teachers and pupils are continuously in a dynamic relationship with each other, which demands that teachers as carriers of responsibility are present in their practice so that they can adapt to the situation at all times. It is not unthinkable that pupils do not want to listen to a teacher who does not care about them. It is also easy to understand that good teacher–pupil relations will mean that the pupils will like their teachers, and that they will then be easier to manage. Research findings presented in this article show how important it is that everybody's background in a multicultural classroom is included in the exchanges of opinion between teacher and pupils in the classroom, and that this creates a social learning community.

According to Goleman (1997), pupil aggression, impulsivity and the lack of school motivation are caused by the teachers' inability to recognise and address emotions. In relation to emotions, the teacher may, according to Goleman, focus attention on four areas: the pupil's understanding of self; the pupil's mastering of emotions; the pupil's motivation; and social skills. When pupils develop such emotional skill it may lead to perceptions of well-being and self-esteem. Such practice depends on how the teacher deals with the whole human being, and it may also help pupils deal with themselves, or develop toward the ideal of self-regulation (Boekaerts et al, 2000; Zimmerman, 2001, 2006). The theory of self-regulation has moved from a cognitive perspective towards the belief in social processes where dialogue is an important learning strategy. Developments start on an external social level before being transformed and shaped into part of individual intramental processes (Vygotsky, 1978). Research also shows that pupils need teachers as managers when they are training to assume responsibility for their own learning in self-regulated learning processes, which may be focused on academic and social development (Postholm, 2011).

For the classroom manager it is vital to create peace and quiet in the class, and then it is important to make and comply with rules. According to the constructivist view of learning, pupils should be invited into dialogues and thus take part in making the rules so they understand the rationale and purpose behind them. Rules that apply to behaviour in class may thus be created in

the relation between teachers and pupils, and form the basis for a good learning climate. As we have seen, research shows that behaviour can be regulated in different ways. The concept of regulation in itself gives the impression of behaviour controlled externally, and that behaviour management may thus be related to behavioural thinking where the consequences of the actions affect subsequent actions. These consequences may be reward or punishment. As the research shows, it may be necessary that teachers enforce rules and that demands are placed on the pupils, but that this may also have a negative effect on the classroom atmosphere (Mainhard et al, 2011). Researchers point out that humour can help to tone down the severity of the reprimand, and that rational arguments that try to make pupils understand are better than arguments that signal teacher power over pupils (Tartwijk et al, 2009).

In person-centred classroom management pupils are made co-responsible and share control with the teacher, thus developing self-discipline (Freiberg & Lamb, 2009). According to Osher et al (2010) this is not enough. They promote an ecological view of classroom management, stating that order in the classroom is established through the various activities that are set in motion. The pupils are involved in activities in their subjects and the attention is on the class as a group. In these productive contexts it is also important that each pupil feels respected and appreciated. In an ecological view of classroom management the relations between teachers and pupils are influenced in a positive manner when the teachers use a learning-centred teaching style, which means, according to Opdenakker and Van Damme (2006), increasing the possibilities for learning, better integration of the pupils in the class and increased pupil participation. A meta-analysis of 119 studies involving more than 350,000 pupils shows that learning-centred teacher–pupil relations are associated with positive behaviour and good cognitive learning outcomes for the pupils (Cornelius-White, 2007). Thus classroom management also means management of learning, not just creating peace and quiet around one's work. Management is built into the activities the teacher organises, preferably planned in cooperation with the pupils, and the management continues in the course of the activity when the teacher, for example, demands understanding through penetrating questions in dialogue with the pupils, and when the teacher supports the pupils by asking them open questions during the learning process.

Wubbels et al (2006) point out that successful teachers demonstrate dominating (strict control) and cooperative (close ties) behavioural patterns. They state that newly trained teachers may fall prey to the temptation of being friendly with students (close ties) without first establishing control. The challenge is to establish control of the classroom while also being helpful, friendly and capable of understanding behaviour. As mentioned earlier, Evertson and Weinstein (2006) refer to this need to be demanding, controlling, helpful, understanding and friendly as being 'warm demanders'. In addition to this first topic of positive teacher–pupil relations, the two authors present three other topics relating to research on classroom management. The second topic concerns the importance of classroom management for pupils' social, moral and emotional development. The third deals with how management strategies, such as punishment and external reward, may impact the classroom atmosphere negatively. The fourth concerns how teachers must consider pupils' characteristics, such as age, ethnicity and cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds when they want to create a supporting classroom environment. The authors highlight how classroom management must support and facilitate for academic, social and emotional learning. These four topics are underlined and elaborated through studies and findings published in recent periodical articles on classroom management in lower secondary school and upper secondary school. They also highlight the importance of a teacher's self-understanding and the ability to be mindfully present in the classroom situation. This is important if the teacher is going to be able to see and understand what is going on in the complex classroom.

Doyle (2006) starts with an ecological perspective when describing classroom complexity, using six concepts. He designates the classroom as: *multidimensional* – many things happen on different levels; *simultaneously* – many events take place at the same time; *immediately* – events keep changing; *unpredictably* – events may often take unexpected turns; *publicly* – there are many spectators to the events; and *historically* – classes meet often over a long time, and common understanding, norms and routines are formed that affect the subsequent progress of the class. The work with the class as a social system involves interchanging between individual factors and the dynamic between them, and thus the group dynamic is important.

Concluding Comment

This review shows that the constructivist perspective is prominent in the way classroom management is understood and practised. We can, however, recognise forms of classroom management that have echoes of a behavioural paradigm. The aim of classroom management is to create and sustain productive and supportive learning communities. Hence, 'classroom management' comes under the leading theoretical perspective, and thus it can be claimed, contrary to what Wubbels (2011) thinks, that it is indeed 'in fashion'.

The ecological perspective is teacher-controlled (Wubbels, 2011), and as it is presented in theory and research, the teacher in relation to the class as a social system is the focus of attention. Teacher-pupil relations are highlighted. Even if research has suggested that pupils in school must all be the teachers' pupils (Milner & Tenore, 2010), no studies have highlighted teacher-teacher relations and their importance for a teacher's classroom management. In a recent study (Postholm, 2013), the participating teachers in lower secondary school point out the positive impact of dealing with pupils with *common expectations*. The teachers see the importance of having good mutual relations with the other teachers and of cooperating well together. In this collaborative atmosphere they agree on how to deal with the interaction processes with the pupils and parents and guardians to promote a good learning environment. In such a practising community there will be a personalised climate not only between teachers and pupils, but also between the teachers in the school.

Wubbels (2011) calls for caution in generalising from research studies on classroom management connected to specific contexts. Classroom management can differ from one culture to the next, but Wubbels claims how the teacher manages the class probably depends more on local conditions than culture. I would add that classroom management also will depend on the teacher. I have presented studies from beyond Europe's geographical and cultural boundaries. However, I think this broad and empirical scope can function as a thinking tool for researchers in Europe.

Research findings presented in this article show that teachers may not have enough knowledge about classroom management (Riley et al, 2010). When teachers acquire knowledge about classroom management, this does not mean that they can apply this in a technical or mechanical manner. The teacher must be mindfully present in his or her own classroom context and use theory as a thinking tool in classroom management. Klette (2007) maintains that few studies focus on the relation between teachers' effectiveness and teachers' subject matter knowledge. Meyer (2007) also suggests that pupils' involvement in learning processes in school should be increased. Further research could therefore focus on pupil involvement, the teachers' subject matter knowledge and how teachers are present in practice.

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