Students’ acceptance to teacher interventions in the EFL classroom

Elevers godtagande av lärares åtgärder i det engelska klassrummet

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Preface

The workload of this examination paper has been equally divided between us. Regarding the literature review, we have split the amount of relevant books and articles between us. We have performed the data process together, as well as finished the examination paper. We wish to thank our supervisor Shannon Sauro for her supervision of this paper, as well as the partaking school and the participants.
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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to investigate EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students’ acceptance of teacher interventions to disruptive behavior in the classroom. As a method, qualitative research was conducted, including a collection of qualitative and quantitative data through a questionnaire, as well as a qualitative analysis. The respondents to the questionnaire were grade 7-9 students, located in the southern part of Sweden. The results indicate that the two interventions which both research and the study’s participants accepted, were Shorter recess and Quiet reprimand. Further, the interventions which research and the respondents somewhat agreed on, were Ignore, Stare, Approach and Parents/principal. Lastly, the two interventions which research and the participants disagreed on, were Stop it and Other room. There is a need for more research on students’ acceptance of interventions; therefore, we recommend future researchers to investigate it further.

Key words: intervention, disruption, disruptive behavior, misbehavior, treatment acceptability, students’ acceptance.
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1. Introduction

Disruptive behavior is a common phenomenon in classrooms (Manning & Bucher, 2007, p. 9). According to Cipani (2008, pp. 2, 16), school students of today are becoming increasingly disobedient, and teachers encounter disruptive behavior from pupils daily. McMahon & Estes (as cited in Kraemer, Davis, Arndt & Hunley, 2012, p. 163) believe that this interferes with academic success. A report by the Swedish Education Administration (Skolverket, 2012, pp. 59-60) showed that 90% of the teachers experienced a good classroom environment. However, one third of Swedish grade 7-9 students found disruptive behavior being present during most or all lessons in school, which is a deteriorated result compared to the same study conducted in 2009. Also, the study showed that barely half of the respondents thought that teachers lacked the ability to create a good working climate in the classroom.

The aim of this study was to learn about students’ thoughts concerning interventions used in the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom. This paper focuses on students’ attitudes towards disruptive behavior in the EFL classroom, namely student disruption during an individual task. We have experienced that student disruptions in the EFL classroom have a negative effect on peers’ learning, such as students talking out of turn, focusing on cell phones, yelling, and more. Students may interrupt a lesson in any subject; yet, when learning English as a foreign language, we believe that there is a bigger risk of losing focus on a task, compared to when students work and communicate in their first language. In this paper, there is a focus on grade 7-9 EFL students since we most probably will teach at this level.

The Swedish curriculum of compulsory school mentioned Swedish schools’ responsibility to teach and implement a good school environment for learning. Students are to take responsibility for their working environment, and they need to know about and take part in a democratic society (Skolverket, 2011). As future English teachers, there is a need for us to deal with disruptive students in the classroom, as well as implement the contents of the curriculum, as effectively as possible.

In 1982 (p. 3), Tattum wrote: “Teachers do face real problems when maintaining discipline in schools. These make for confrontations for which their training and past experience have
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not prepared them”. Even 30 years later, Haydn (2007, p. 21) still stated that “new teachers need ‘coping’ strategies to control pupils who are not engaged, until they become more accomplished at persuading pupils into learning”. After all, once a teacher is capable of dealing with disruptive behavior, there is a much increased possibility for students to be engaged in classroom activities (Cangelosi, 2008, p. 12).

Our expectation for this paper is that we will find possible answers to what techniques can be used by teachers when dealing with students’ disruptions during individual tasks in an EFL classroom. We believe that possible solutions to disruptive behavior may be provided by previous research as well as students. Elliot and Turco (1986, pp. 236, 278) claimed that students have the right to partake in decisions being made in the classroom, and students are the ones who can give a fair and true viewpoint of how to deal with disruptive behavior in today's classrooms. Therefore, we assume that students’ involvement in decision-making will decrease disruptive behavior.
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2. Literature Review

2.1 Key Concepts

Throughout this paper, there are a number of key concepts which need to be clarified. We start out by using the term classroom management, “a term used to describe the process of ensuring that classroom lessons run smoothly despite disruptive behavior by students” (Dictionary Sensagent, 2013). Another key concept used is disruption. There is no set definition for this term, but Kaplan, Gheen and Midgley (2002, p. 192) exemplified it as teasing, talking out of turn, getting out of one’s seat, and disrespecting others. We use disruption as a term to describe when a lesson is disturbed by an act causing disorder, interfering with learning or delaying the continuity of a lesson. As a synonym to disruption, the word misbehavior occurs, meaning “bad behaviour” (Oxford Dictionary, 2013); this has a direct connection to the verb misbehave, defined as to “fail to conduct oneself in an acceptable way; behave badly” (Oxford Dictionary, 2013). Also, we use the term disruptive behavior, representing “[a]ny action by students that threatens to disrupt the activity flow or pull the class towards an alternative program of action, and is related to attention, crowd control and accomplishment of work” (Doyle, 1990, p. 115).

We also use intervention, signified as an “action or process of intervening” (Oxford Dictionary, 2013). The verb intervene implies “[taking] part in something so as to prevent or alter a result or course of events” (Oxford Dictionary, 2013). In connection to this concept, we also use: positive interventions, such as public praise and home-based praise; negative interventions, for example public reprimand and home-based reprimand; and school-based interventions, which is when the intervention occurs in school instead of at home.

As this paper deals with student acceptability of interventions, the term treatment acceptability will be mentioned, which Kazdin (1981, p. 493) defined as “judgments of lay persons, clients, and others of whether procedures proposed for treatment are appropriate, fair and reasonable for the problem or client”. Wolf (1978, p. 206) acknowledged the importance
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of accepted treatments: "If the participants don't like the treatment then they may avoid it, or run away, or complain loudly. And thus society will be less likely to use our technology, no matter how potentially effective and efficient it might be". Elliott (1986, p. 25) summarized this problem for education: “In effect, an unacceptable treatment may be no treatment at all”.

2.2 Disruptive Behavior

Disruptive behavior is perceived differently by different people (Grossman, 2004, p. 263). Likewise, “what is perceived as noisy and disruptive by people outside the classroom might be a real learning environment where the students have the chance to express themselves and fulfil learning activities” (Quintero & Ramírez, 2011, p. 1). However, one definition is mentioned in section 2.1.

Some researchers have investigated Swedish teachers’ and students’ thoughts on disruptive behavior; nonetheless, the main focus has been on teachers’ viewpoints (Granström & Einarsson, 1998, Lindh-Munther & Widman, 1972). Still, Talikka (1990, p. 18) examined students’ viewpoints on disruptions. Based on a list of disruptive behaviors, the students were to choose the most annoying ones. The results showed that the most annoying behavior was not keeping up with a task, hence, asking the teacher what to do next or what page to be on. The second most annoying behavior was to chatter and talk loudly. The third most annoying thing was to answer a question without raising one’s hand.

2.2.1 Reasons for why disruptive behavior occurs

One may find advice on how to deal with disruptive behavior; yet, it is important to remember that there is always a background to disruption, which needs to be dealt with thoroughly (Kutnick, 1988, p. 189). Many arguments for why disruptive behavior exists have been given by researchers. Firstly, there can be a lack of interest or motivation, which may lead students to doing what they are not instructed to do (Quintero & Ramírez, 2011, p. 2). Today’s school system mainly focuses on the principle of obligation, whereas today’s children live by the principle of desire and pleasure (Steinberg, 1993, p. 35).

Secondly, adolescence equals puberty, a time that can be transforming as well as problematic (Quintero & Ramírez, 2011, p. 4; Rudolph, 2006, p. 75). Teenagers can also be
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affected by youth culture, which can cause pressure and expectations (Stensmo, 1997, pp. 9-10).

Thirdly, schools and teachers may cause students’ disruptive behavior. Kutnick (1988, p. 189) claimed that schools and their staff members have certain expectations of “normal” behavior, and that whenever a student deviates from it, s/he is called disruptive. Kaplan, Gheen and Midgley (2002, p. 203) stated that “the level of student disruptive behavior varies between classrooms, and ... the classroom culture ... – and more specifically, the classroom goal structure – is an important predictor of this variance”. The authors added that disruptive behavior tends to increase in classrooms where students are in competition with each other’s results and/or achievements.

Schools may cause students’ disruptive behavior through factors such as underfinancing, keeping too many students in a classroom, poor school and colleague support systems, insufficient physical environments and/or bad teaching rooms (Grossman, 2004, p. 48; Haydn, 2007, p. 16). Furthermore, teachers can be a source of disruptive behavior, through for example bad planning, poor instruction and inadequate classroom management techniques (Grossman, 2004, p. 48; Haydn, 2007, p. 16).

Lastly, students can act disruptively due to a combination of difficult pupils in a class, or because of factors that one cannot influence, such as the weather, the time of the day/semester, and what happened during the previous lesson (Haydn, 2007, p. 16). Other components are not getting enough sleep, not taking care of hunger, low self-esteem, low self-confidence, pain and disease (Grossman, 2004, p. 11).

### 2.2.2 Examples of disruptive behavior

Several authors have mentioned a variety of disruptive behaviors, of which some are shown in the list below that has been created by Houghton, Wheldall & Merrett (1988, pp. 42-3). In addition, we have added to the list (in parentheses) a summary of disruptive behavior which some authors (Samuelsson, 2008, p. 22; Haydn, 2007, p. 78; Cushing, Lane, Fox & Stahr, 2006, p. 202; Steinberg, 1993, p. 110; Belvel, 2010, pp. 161-162; Stensmo, 1997, pp. 9-10; Gant, Gendrich, Gendrich, Lahey, McNees & Schnelle, 1977, p. 196; Kyriacou, 2000, p. 25.) have written about. Also, we have added the last category (“Talking”) due to its absence in previous research.

- Being disobedient (not completing an assigned task, not being quiet when the
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- Being lazy/slow (slow beginning/finishing of work)
- Making unnecessary noise (calling out/shouting across the room, banging objects/doors)
- Being out of seat (wandering around, being out of seat)
- Showing physical aggression (pushing, poking)
- Being unpunctual (arriving late to lesson)
- Being untidy (not bringing equipment)
- Using verbal abuse (making inappropriate/offensive remarks to teacher(s)/classmate(s), name calling)
- Talking (interrupting others, talking to classmate(s), talking out loud)

2.2.3 Reasons for dealing with disruptive behavior

Evertson and Weinstein (2006, p. 116) declared that whenever disruptive behavior emerges, it shows that the regulations of the school/classroom are not working. The matter of dealing with disruptive behavior in the classroom is important, seeing that it affects the disruptive student, her/his peers and the classroom teacher(s) in a negative way (Chevalier, 2012, p. 7). Because of this, there are factors that compel teachers to act against disruptive behavior. Firstly, students suffer: “[D]isruptive behaviors impact the learning process, reduce instruction time, and make it more difficult for students to succeed academically” (Kraemer, Davis, Arndt & Hunley, 2012, p. 163). Further, children with disruptive behavior are at risk of developing social-emotional difficulties and aggressive behavior, which may lead to peers disliking them (McGoey, Schneider, Rezzetano, Prodan & Tankersley, 2010, p. 248).

Secondly, teachers suffer: “The majority of challenging behaviors that teachers address on a daily basis ... are not typically violent or intense, but are frequent and usurp great amounts of instructional time. Altogether, teachers report that issues related to challenging student behavior is the most difficult and stressful aspect of their day” (Scott, 2012, p. 192). In addition, Quintero & Ramírez (2011, p. 2) claimed that disruptive behavior may stop teachers from carrying out planned activities in the classroom.

Thirdly, teachers are obliged to do something about disruptive behavior. Cangelosi (2008, p. 367) claimed that “… a teacher is responsible for establishing an environment in which students are unlikely to feel insulted, uncomfortable, or inconvenienced ...”. Also, the
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Swedish curriculum for compulsory school stated that all schools should create a good developing and learning environment. Further, all teachers are supposed to encourage students into taking responsibility for their social school environment, as well as plan and evaluate the teaching in school (Skolverket, 2011, p. 15).

In the next chapter, we will mention certain techniques for dealing with disruptive behavior, namely interventions.

2.3 Interventions

As mentioned in section 2.1, interventions are used when a behavior is in need of change. In this paper, we use the term intervention in connection to when a behavior needs correction, in order to sustain a balanced classroom. There is a great number of interventions a teacher could use, and they should be adapted to specific students’ age, ethnicity and gender (Grossman, 2004, p. 101). Below, you find some examples and misconceptions of interventions, as well as some students’ perceptions of them.

2.3.1 Examples of interventions

According to Brophy (2008, pp. 43-4), teachers should use disciplinary interventions in the classroom, on account of them being used to change the behavior of a student who fails to adapt to expectations. This form of intervention is needed when the (mis)behavior is disrupting the classroom system. Even though interventions are a helpful aid, regulations of classroom behavior should exist to prevent disruptive behavior. They ought to be created by students and teachers, and finally approved by the school principal (Sveriges Riksdag, 2010:800, §5). However, there are times when disruptive behavior suddenly occurs in the classroom, thus, interventions are needed.

Turco and Elliott (1986, p. 279) have created a list of eight different intervention techniques, which will follow together with our own examples of these techniques; the interventions used for inappropriate behavior are negative and the ones used for appropriate behavior are positive:

- Public praise for appropriate behavior (the teacher tells the student “well
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- Private praise for appropriate behavior (the teacher tells the student in private that s/he did something good/well/appropriate).
- Self-monitored praise for appropriate behavior (a chart or checklist is used to track the proper behavior).
- Home-based praise for appropriate behavior (student gets praised at home instead of in school).
- Public reprimand for inappropriate behavior (the teacher tells the misbehaving student to stop, in front of the whole class).
- Private reprimand for inappropriate behavior (the teacher tells the student off in private).
- Self-monitored reprimand for inappropriate behavior (a chart or checklist is used to track the misbehavior).
- Home-based reprimand for inappropriate behavior (consequences of the student’s misbehavior take place at home).

Furthermore, Martens, Peterson, Witt and Cirone (1986, pp. 218, 221) mentioned signaled redirection as a useful intervention (when a teacher redirects a student’s focus through different signals such as eye contact) since it is easy to apply; also, the disruption of the normal class routine is minimal. Another technique is school-wide interventions which focus on all students in the school setting, where even staff members are involved in the implementation. Moreover, temporary intervention is an intervention technique where an inappropriate behavior is permanently turned into appropriately with a small amount of energy, time and/or disruption of class time. This is not a type of punishment but rather a respectful method to get students to act appropriately (Hagan-Burke, Burke, Martin, Boon & Kirkendoll, 2005, p. 407).

Two other classroom interventions are token economy and time-out. Token economy is a positive form of intervention, used to motivate students when they show an appropriate behavior. This is a strategy where an object (candy, trinkets etc.) is traded for a reward (Chevalier, 2012, pp. 3, 9). Time-out is a procedure where one removes the student(s) from the regular classroom activities; it is a temporary method designed to be boring or unpleasant (Grossman, 2004 p. 329).
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2.3.2 Students’ acceptance of interventions

Children should take part in the decision-making of their own misbehavior as they are qualified to assess the treatment being used. Also, students are more likely to be dedicated to decisions made if they become involved in the decision-making process (Scott, 2012, p. 204). Moreover, children’s participation increases the efficacy of a treatment (Elliott, Galvin, Moe & Witt, 1986, p. 236), and interventions are usually more successful when accepted by students. Also, if students find the teacher using the treatment with good intentions, it may change students’ misbehavior(s) (Elliott, 1986, p. 25). Elliott wrote (Ibid, p. 23) that when students are involved in decision making, their academic achievement is usually increased, and there are fewer dropouts.

Elliott (1986, p. 9) concluded that intervention methods are affected by the rater’s gender and grade, the intervention grade and the problem severity. Elliott mentioned the age difference being a factor for treatment acceptability ratings, where younger children prefer positive interventions to a higher extent than older children (1986, p. 31). Among 5th, 7th and 9th graders, pupils preferred positively oriented interventions (5th graders) and home-based interventions (7th and 9th graders) (Ibid, p. 31). Furthermore, a study by Elliott et al showed that 6th graders accepted individual teacher-student interventions, group reinforcement, as well as negative sanctions for the deviate child, such as getting sent to the principal’s office, staying in during recess and leaving for a quiet room (1986, p. 29). According to Elliott’s investigation (1986, p. 15) concerning the influence of children’s developmental level on their treatment acceptability ratings, home-based interventions was rated the most acceptable method, especially home-based praise.

According to Elliott and von Brock (1987, pp. 11, 141), students do not find positive interventions to be more successful or effective than negative ones. However, Elliott (1986, p. 24) explained that children who get to decide on teachers’ treatments mainly choose reinforcement rather than punishment, and added that reinforcements are preferred to be “immediate and enduring”. The most acceptable interventions for disruptive behavior were traditional interventions, namely principal’s office, staying in during recess and quiet room (Elliott et al, 1986, as cited in Elliott, 1986, pp. 26, 29).

If punishment has to be used by teachers, students want it to be “delayed and brief” (Elliott, 1986, p. 24). In addition, Turco and Elliott’s study (1986, p. 281) showed that students dislike negatively oriented and school-based interventions. According to Elliott,
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students find loss of recess and free time an unacceptable method for changing a behavior (1986, pp. 29-30). Several studies showed that students find public reprimand being the least acceptable intervention (Elliott, Witt, Galvin and Moe, 1986; Grossman, 2004; Elliott, 1986). In addition, Elliott, Witt, Galvin and Moe’s study (1986, p. 29) showed that students do not accept negative effects for a group when only one child misbehaves. Self-monitored reprimands are other interventions that have been rated as unacceptable or unsuccessful among students (Turco & Elliott, 1986, p. 280).

In summary, previous research indicated that students have opinions on treatment(s) that teachers use in the classroom. Studies have shown that pupils prefer interventions which take place in a private setting, and that there is a positive effect when pupils play a part in deciding on interventions.

2.3.3 Successful interventions

It is important to remember that students generally want fair rules, equal for everybody, and that interventions should be carefully chosen based on situations and circumstances (Charles, 1984, p. 15). To make interventions successful, teachers should try to select those that are appropriate for the particular context as well as a student’s problems (Grossman, 2004, p. 280). Yet, teachers should not expect every student to agree on a solution or rule (Scott, 2012, p. 204).

A study by Elliott (1986, p. 15) showed that home-based interventions were successful, home-based praise in particular. Moreover, Elliott, Witt, Galvin and Moe’s results indicated that the intervention ignoring was the most acceptable treatment for less severe behavior problems, in this case daydreaming. Furthermore, token economy (seen as the most complex intervention in this study) was rated as most acceptable in connection to severe behavioral problems, such as destroying property (Elliott, 1986, pp. 9-10).

Charles (1984, pp. 285-6) mentioned eight intervention methods for teachers to decrease disruptive behavior in the classroom:

- Sending signals to the student who is in need of support.
- (If failing the first intervention) getting close to the student and show one’s presence.
- Showing interest in the student’s work and being encouraging.
- Using humor to let go of possible tension.
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- Helping students if they get stuck during a task.
- Restructuring a sequence.
- Making sure to have routines. Explaining the set routines if something out of the ordinary occurs.
- Removing possible items that can be tempting for students to use (such as notes, rubbers [and in today’s world, cell phones]), in order to get discipline back on track.

According to Steinberg (1993, p. 25), several interventions can be used by teachers to improve students’ misbehavior, of which some are:

- Taking a deep breath before speaking (since this suggests that the teacher is in control of the situation).
- Approaching a student diagonally from behind (since this is less threatening than approaching from in front).
- Focusing the attention on what is supposed to be done (since the students’ need to know what the teacher expects).
- Speaking with a calm, clear and low voice (since this is a sign of control and less of a threat).
- Giving reasons for why students should do something (since this decreases the risk of students’ resistance).
- Using clear directions for appropriate behavior (since this increases the chances of the teacher being obeyed).

2.3.4 Less successful interventions

It is not successful to use an intervention when a behavior is not disruptive for sure since the action could be unjust (Grossman, 2004, p. 275). Steinberg (1993, p. 25) provided a list of interventions that should not be used in the classroom:

- Shout out loud across the room (since this can create anxiety).
- Stare at a student without saying anything (since eyes represent power and body represents influence).
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- Walk towards a student and tell her/him off in a loud voice (since this is threatening and discourages cooperation).
- Look and point at what a student is doing (since this focuses on what the student is not supposed to do).
- Talk faster, louder and/or with a higher pitch (since this suggests that the teacher is not in control of the situation).
- Stand close to a student (since this can make a student feel threatened).

Further, Good and Brophy (1999, p. 103) presented three other prohibited interventions. Firstly, one should not ask questions about misbehavior because it attacks the student. Secondly, teachers ought not to threaten a student or show who is in charge since this may lead to a power struggle between teacher and student; also, pupils may think that the teacher acts unfairly which can affect the teacher-student relationship negatively. Lastly, it is not recommended to nag about present or past misbehavior due to the fact that this increases the risk of conflicts with, and disrespect from, students.

Further, it is not recommended to send a student out from the classroom. The kind of disruptive behavior that causes a teacher to use this intervention, is called an unwanted stimulus, which will not be removed by using this type of intervention but rather be reinforced (Obenchain & Taylor, 2005, p. 10). Another way to intervene is to send a student to another (separate) room, or isolate the student, which is disputed (Grossman, 2004, p. 337). Moreover, it is not recommended to confront a student during class, due to possible disruption of the pupils’ learning process. This could also lead to a potential power struggle between teacher and student (Charles, 1984, p. 292). Other interventions are self-monitored reprimands, which have been rated as unacceptable or unsuccessful among students (Turco & Elliott, 1986, p. 280). Finally, teachers need to be aware of that so-called “nice” interventions can be too nice – and unsuccessful. In cases where teachers tell students off nicely, without the student changing the misbehavior, the intervention may be seen as non-serious, with the consequence of an undermined teacher role (Lind-Munther & Widman, 1972, p. 19).
The aim of this paper is to find reliable interventions for disruptive behavior in the EFL classroom to use as future teachers. We intend to find out what interventions students and previous research recommend for disruptive behavior(s) in the classroom; this is done through investigating previous research and EFL students’ acceptance of interventions. Our research question is as follows:

According to grade 7-9 EFL students, what interventions should teachers use when student disruption occurs during an individual task?
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4. Method

4.1 Searching for Previous Research

When investigating research material, we found relevant literature through searching for terms such as “interventions”, “disruptive students”, ”discipline in school”, “disruptive student behavior”, “classroom management” and “acceptability of interventions”. The databases used were ERIC, Summon and Google Scholar.

Some of the literature used is approximately three decades old; however, this has been the only relevant research available concerning our investigated area.

4.2 Ethical Guidelines

Based on ethical guidelines from the Swedish Research Council (2002, pp. 7-14), there are four requirements that researchers should follow: information, approval, confidentiality, and usage. Firstly, the information requirement demands researchers to inform participants about their participation in a research project; this was told to our participants both in writing (see Appendix B) and orally. Secondly, the approval requirement signifies getting the participants’ permission to take part in a study; we did not consider our questions’ answers to be sensitive nor private; because of this, we asked only principal(s) for approval to conduct our survey at the schools concerned, which is in line with the recommendations. Thirdly, the confidentiality requirement calls for the researcher(s) to hinder any unauthorized person to directly go through the collected material; this was done through keeping the questionnaires in a safe-keeping. In addition to this, we anonymized the questionnaires so that no one would be able to identify participants’ names nor locations. Lastly, the usage requirement ensures that gathered
Students’ acceptance of interventions data should be used for research only; to enable this, we orally informed the participants about the questionnaire being destroyed right after the study.

4.3 Qualitative and Quantitative Research

We have carried out an empirical study, by collecting data and drawing conclusions from it (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 16). Both quantitative and qualitative data has been collected, making sure that the participants have had the opportunity to both answer our set questions and to express their own opinions. Regarding the analysis, this has been done qualitatively. Qualitative research focuses on the participants and their own experiences regarding certain circumstances or situations (Heigham & Croker, 2009, p. 7), which has been our main focus. We did not analyze the results statistically but instead reported only the raw scores.

We have used triangulation design in this research, being best suited when using both qualitative and quantitative data at the same time. The design consists of collecting data and using both qualitative and quantitative approaches at the same time. After this, the results are compared (Heigham & Croker, 2009, p. 142).

4.3.1 Reliability and validity

When doing qualitative research, both reliability and validity is of great importance. Reliability can be described as “the trustworthiness of the procedures and data generated” (Roberts & Priest, 2006, p. 43). To enable reliability in our research, we conducted a pilot study, as well as assured participants’ anonymity and created a questionnaire based on previous research.

Validity concerns “how well the research tools measure the phenomena under investigation” (Roberts & Priest, 2006, p. 44). To achieve validity, one needs to be aware of bias in one’s research (Johnson, 1997, p. 283). One way of risking researcher bias is to be familiar with settings and people of the investigated area (Roberts & Priest, 2006, p. 44), and we have increased the validity in our research by not choosing any participating schools which we have had a connection to. In addition, the participants were able to add their own suggestions to possible interventions, to make sure that we would not steer them into certain directions.
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4.4 Questionnaire

In this research, a questionnaire was designed and used (see Appendix B). It was based on recommendations from previous literature, regarding disruptive behaviors, interventions, instructions, order of questions and level of formality. It was written in Swedish by reason of the respondents not having English as their first language. The layout of the questionnaire started with eight questions where each one had eight closed-ended answers and one optional open-ended. This was followed by an open-ended question; however, the answers to the question later turned out to be irrelevant since they dealt with disruptive behaviors rather than interventions. Because of this, the open-ended question will not be further treated in this paper.

Some benefits of using questionnaires are that a lot of information can be collected quickly, and the construction is rather easy (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 101). Some weaknesses in using questionnaires are: flaws in the formulation of questions, shortcomings in the data result process, and a hasty choice of participants (Johansson & Svedner, 2010, p. 30). Still, based on the context and setting, we found questionnaires to be the best option. The questions asked in the questionnaire were of attitudinal character, with the purpose of “... [finding] out what people think, covering attitudes, opinions, beliefs, interests and values” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 102).

Among the questionnaire-based studies we read for the literature review, the majority had closed questions. These studies had large amounts of participants, which originally was not the case in this study; therefore, we began with only open-ended questions. Yet, with time, the number of expected participants increased, and for this reason we chose to add closed questions.

Open-ended questions give the researcher a chance to find out what the respondents think of a certain kind of issue or topic (Heigham & Croker, 2009, pp. 201-202). Even though open-ended questions can be hard to interpret (Kothari, 2004, p. 103), the participants get to answer in their own words, and all the thinking is left to the respondents (Heigham & Croker, 2009, p. 9). Also, this method decreases the risk of bias from the interviewer (Kothari, 2004, p. 100), which is our aim as researchers.
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Closed questions are used in a questionnaire to collect numerical data, in order to see possible divergences and/or similarities. Respondents are provided with a limited selection of answers to pick from and these responses have been defined by the researcher in advance. (Heigham & Croker, 2009, pp. 201-2). Satisfactory closed questions need to be expressed in a clear way, in order to be understood by all respondents (Heigham & Croker, 2009, p. 204).

4.4.1 Data collection

Ejlertsson stated the importance of conducting two pilot studies before the real questionnaire is handed out (1996, pp. 32-3); this is done in order to find out whether the participants interpret the questions in the same way as the conductor. We distributed a pilot study to a small group of people, consisting of acquaintances. The choice of these participants was due to their ability to look at the questionnaire from another angle than us, as well as revealing redundant and irrelevant questions; this is of importance, according to Heigham and Croker (2009, p. 209). Next, some 9th graders tried the questionnaire out. The results showed that some questions and instructions were unclear; hence, we removed two open-item questions and we added the possibility for participants to add their own answer(s) to scenarios in the closed-item question section.

In regard to distributing information, we notified our participants about their part in the project. The information regarded who was responsible for the survey, where the survey was to take place, as well as the opportunity for the participants to get in contact with us. In addition, we gave our participants information concerning the data being used only for the particular study, and that it would be destroyed after usage.

4.4.2 Participants

In order to find suitable participants for our survey, we contacted a total amount of 44 compulsory schools. To ensure validity of the study, we chose partaking schools that we had no previous connection to. We started off by contacting only local schools in a southern city in Sweden but due to a small number of replies, we increased the range to the city’s vicinity. Ultimately, six schools were visited. We received 204 student answers, of which 198 were interpretable. Due to six students answering our questions through crossing the answers, instead of circling, we could not be sure of whether they preferred the intervention or not.
5. Results and Discussion

As previously mentioned, our research question is: “According to grade 7-9 EFL students, what interventions should teachers use when student disruption occurs during an individual task?” In this chapter, we will present the study’s results, which will be integrated with discussions based on previous research; the discussions will deal with students’ thoughts on disruptive behavior, as well as students’ viewpoints on interventions. In some sections, tables will be presented prior to the discussions. We also display two bar charts based on our findings, of which the second one is separated into three parts due to the large amount of student proposals. Also, in Bar charts 2:1-2:3, only 80% of the left axis is shown because of the biggest percentage being 72, thus, creating an easier reading of the charts.

It is important to note that we have translated students’ answers from Swedish into English. Also, once disruptive behaviors or interventions have been discussed, this will not be done again (though sometimes mentioned). Additionally, there will be no explanations of why an intervention has or has not been recommended by research; this is previously explained in sections 2.3.3–2.3.4.

5.1 Description of Abbreviations

Eight scenarios that have been used in the questionnaire, and their abbreviations, are presented in Table 1. Scenarios and abbreviations are preceded by “(number 1-8) – (CAPITAL LETTER A-H)”.

Table 1
Scenarios and their abbreviations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) The student starts talking (not whispering) about something not concerning</td>
<td>(A) Talk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students’ acceptance of interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(2) A student starts making some subtle noise, for instance humming</td>
<td>(B) Subtle noise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) A student walks in and out of the classroom several times during class</td>
<td>(C) Walk in and out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) A student screams something in the classroom</td>
<td>(D) Yell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) A student is texts or plays games on her/his cell phone</td>
<td>(E) Cell phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) A student is complains loudly about a task</td>
<td>(F) Complain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) A student arrives late to class, without relevant material</td>
<td>(G) Delayed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) A student says something mean to a classmate</td>
<td>(H) Mean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eight interventions and their abbreviations from the questionnaire are presented in Table 2. Interventions and abbreviations are preceded by “(number 9-16) – (lower case letter a-h)”.

Table 2

*Interventions and their abbreviations.*
Students’ acceptance of interventions

| (15) The teacher ignores the student | (g) Ignore |
| (16) The teacher approaches the student and asks in a low voice the student to be quiet | (h) Quiet reprimand |

5.2 Students’ Thoughts on Disruptive Behavior

5.2.1 Unaccepted disruptive behaviors
Eight scenarios have been presented earlier (Tables 1 and 2); Table 3 presents how disruptive our participants found them to be.

Table 3
Amount of students finding a scenario disruptive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenarios</th>
<th>Amount of students finding the scenario disruptive (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delayed</td>
<td>99,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yell</td>
<td>97,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk</td>
<td>96,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell phone</td>
<td>95,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>93,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk in and out</td>
<td>93,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtle noise</td>
<td>93,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complain</td>
<td>89,9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of all scenarios with disruptive behaviors, our findings showed that the participants found “Delayed” to be the most annoying one, followed by “Yell” and “Talk”. The least
Students’ acceptance of interventions

annoying scenarios among our participants were: “Complain”, “Subtle noise” and “Walk in and out”, together with “Mean”.

5.3 Students’ Acceptance of Interventions

In this section we will present two tables, followed by a discussion of the results. Table 4 shows our participants’ ratings of interventions for certain scenarios, and table 5 shows our respondents’ intervention proposals for certain scenarios. The discussion of the results is divided into eight parts, each part dealing with one scenario at the time. In each part, we firstly present the most popular interventions, followed by our participant’s suggestions of interventions, and the final part presents the least popular interventions.

Table 4
Students’ acceptance of interventions for specific scenarios.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenarios</th>
<th>Interventions</th>
<th>Amount of students accepting the intervention (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talk</td>
<td>Stop it</td>
<td>46,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quiet reprimand</td>
<td>42,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Approach</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short recess</td>
<td>15,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents/principal</td>
<td>6,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ignore</td>
<td>3,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtle noise</td>
<td>Quiet reprimand</td>
<td>38,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stop it</td>
<td>34,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stare</td>
<td>21,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other room</td>
<td>6,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short recess</td>
<td>3,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents/principal</td>
<td>3,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk in and out</td>
<td>Quiet reprimand</td>
<td>31,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short recess</td>
<td>30,8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students’ acceptance of interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stop it</th>
<th>Other room</th>
<th>Ignore</th>
<th>Stare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Students’ acceptance</strong></td>
<td>24,2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6,5</td>
<td>4,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Yell</strong></th>
<th>Stop it</th>
<th>Quiet reprimand</th>
<th>Other room</th>
<th>Approach +</th>
<th>Parents/principal</th>
<th>Short recess</th>
<th>Ignore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>52,5</td>
<td>16,1</td>
<td>14,6</td>
<td>12,6</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Cell phone</strong></th>
<th>Quiet reprimand</th>
<th>Stop it</th>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Ignore + Parents/principal</th>
<th>Stare</th>
<th>Other room</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36,3</td>
<td>21,2</td>
<td>16,6</td>
<td>13,6</td>
<td>12,1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Complain</strong></th>
<th>Stop it</th>
<th>Quiet reprimand</th>
<th>Ignore</th>
<th>Other room</th>
<th>Short recess</th>
<th>Parents/principal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32,8</td>
<td>24,2</td>
<td>12,6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4,5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Delayed</strong></th>
<th>Stop it</th>
<th>Short recess</th>
<th>Ignore</th>
<th>Parents/principal</th>
<th>Stare</th>
<th>Other room</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39,3</td>
<td>21,2</td>
<td>13,6</td>
<td>8,5</td>
<td>7,5</td>
<td>4,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Mean</strong></th>
<th>Stop it</th>
<th>Parents/principal</th>
<th>Other room</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38,3</td>
<td>33,8</td>
<td>13,6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students’ acceptance of interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>8.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stare</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignore</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5

*Student suggestions of interventions for certain scenarios.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Number of proposals</th>
<th>Suggestions</th>
<th>Number of suggestions = % of total amount of suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talk</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Tell off</td>
<td>9 = 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Send out from classroom</td>
<td>7 = 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tell off loudly</td>
<td>4 = 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contact parents/sent to principal’s office</td>
<td>3 = 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Give a warning</td>
<td>2 = 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtle noise</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Tell off</td>
<td>4 = 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Send out from classroom</td>
<td>2 = 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shorter recess</td>
<td>1 = 12,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Other)</td>
<td>(1 = 12,5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk in and out</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Tell off</td>
<td>12 = 42,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Send out from classroom</td>
<td>10 = 35,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Talk to student in private</td>
<td>1 = 3,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Other)</td>
<td>(4 = 14,3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yell</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Tell off</td>
<td>7 = 43,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Send out from classroom</td>
<td>2 = 18,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tell off loudly</td>
<td>3 = 12,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contact parents/send to principal’s office</td>
<td>1 = 6,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Other)</td>
<td>(3 = 18,7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell phone</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Remove cell phone</td>
<td>41 = 72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tell off</td>
<td>9 = 15,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contact parents/send to principal’s office</td>
<td>2 = 3,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Send out from classroom</td>
<td>1 = 1,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shorter recess</td>
<td>1 = 1,8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students’ acceptance of interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(Other)</th>
<th>(3 = 5.2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complain</td>
<td>Help student/explain task</td>
<td>16 = 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tell off</td>
<td>14 = 32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Change/remove task</td>
<td>4 = 9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Send out from classroom</td>
<td>1 = 2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Other)</td>
<td>(8 = 19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delayed</td>
<td>Tell student to go get material</td>
<td>20 = 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contact parents/send to principal’s office</td>
<td>7 = 10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tell off</td>
<td>5 = 7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Send out from classroom</td>
<td>5 = 7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Borrow material from classmate</td>
<td>4 = 5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Talk to student</td>
<td>3 = 4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ask about behavior</td>
<td>3 = 4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do not let student in</td>
<td>3 = 4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Give material to student</td>
<td>2 = 2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Other)</td>
<td>(17 = 24.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Talk to student</td>
<td>11 = 27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tell off</td>
<td>7 = 17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contact parents/send to principal’s office</td>
<td>7 = 17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Send out from classroom</td>
<td>5 = 12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Other)</td>
<td>(10 = 25)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students’ acceptance of interventions

Bar chart 1 (see Appendix A for bigger version). Accepted interventions according to students.
Students’ acceptance of interventions

Bar chart 2:1. Students’ proposals of interventions.

Bar chart 2:2. Students’ proposals of interventions.
In general, our participants found the three most accepted interventions being *Stop it*, *Quiet reprimand* and *Short recess*. The three least accepted interventions were *Stare*, *Ignore* and *Other room*.

This section will deal with our participants’ acceptance of interventions, based on the eight scenarios from our questionnaire; this is also shown through Tables 1-3 and Bar charts 1-2.

A) *Talk*: The most popular interventions were: *Stop it*, *Quiet reprimand* and *Approach*. Regarding *Stop it*, Haydn (2007, p. 40) mentioned a common mistake made by teachers in maintaining good behavior in the classroom, namely yelling at students. In addition, studies by Elliott, Witt, Galvin and Moe (1986), Grossman (2004) and Elliott (1986) showed that students find public reprimand unacceptable. Regarding *Quiet reprimand*, Elliott, Witt, Galvin and Moe found that students accepted this intervention (1986, p. 237). Regarding *Approach*, one should not use it as an intervention, as in approaching the student directly from the front (Steinberg, 1993, p. 25).

Our participants suggested a number of interventions. In summary, they were: *Tell off*, *Send out from classroom*, *Tell off loudly*, *Contact parents/Send to principal’s office* and *Give a warning*. Regarding *Send out from classroom*, Obenchain and Taylor did not recommend
that teachers do this (2005, p. 10); however, the Swedish Education Act (Sveriges Riksdag, 2010:800, §7) gave teachers the right to emit at student from the classroom, though the school is still responsible for the pupil. Regarding Contacting the principal or parents, our participants’ thoughts went in line with a study conducted by Elliott et al, mentioning that pupils preferred interventions such as the principal or parents dealing with a situation (1986, p. 237), and the same thing was concluded in a study by Turco & Elliott (1986). Regarding warnings, one needs to be clear and carry through with it, if needed (Haydn, 2007, p. 101).

The least popular interventions were: Ignore, Parents/principal and Short recess. Regarding Ignore, research claimed that teachers should never neglect students (Charles, 1984, p. 5). Regarding Short recess, studies showed that students find the intervention both acceptable and unacceptable, depending on the pupils’ age (Elliott, 1986, p. 29-30).

B) Subtle noise: The most popular interventions were Quiet reprimand, Stop it and Stare. Regarding Stare, this intervention ought not to be used (Steinberg, 1993, p. 25).

Our participants came up with their own interventions: Tell off, Send out from classroom and Shorter recess. The least popular interventions were Parents/principal, Shorter recess and Other room. Regarding Other room, Grossman mentioned it being disputed, meaning that there are no definite sources of whether the intervention is positive or negative (2004).

C) Walk in and out: The most popular interventions were Quiet reprimand, Short recess and Stop it.

The following interventions were proposed: Tell off, Talk to student in private (Quiet reprimand) and Send out from classroom. Turco and Elliott’s study showed that students prefer interventions to be as private as possible (p. 1986, p. 282). This was confirmed in Grossman’s study; however, the intervention should not be used often (2004, p. 328).

The least popular interventions were: Stare, Ignore and Other room.

D) Yell: The bar chart shows that the most popular interventions were Stop it, Quiet reprimand and Other room.

The suggested interventions were Tell off, Tell off loudly, Send out from classroom and Contact parents/principal. The least popular interventions were Ignore, Short recess and Approach together with Principal.

E) Cell phone: The most popular interventions were Quiet reprimand, Stop it and Approach.

When it comes to texting or playing games on one’s cell phone, our participants suggested different interventions; in summary, they were Tell off, Send out from classroom, Remove cell
Students’ acceptance of interventions

phone, Contact parents/principal and Shorter recess. Regarding Remove cell phone, Skolverket (2007, p. 6) stated that cell phones should not be used during class, and that in case it is disruptive, teachers have the right to remove until the lesson ends.

The least popular interventions were Other room, Stare and Ignore together with Parents/principal.

F) Complain: The most popular interventions were Stop it, Quiet reprimand and Ignore.

As to complain about a task, our participants recommended several interventions: Tell off, Send out from classroom, Change/remove task and Help student/explain. When it comes to Help student/explain, Charles claimed this to be a good intervention. Regarding Change/remove task, we have not found any previous literature on this intervention. The least popular interventions were Parents/principal, Short recess and Other room.

G) Delayed: The most popular interventions were Stop it, Short recess and Ignore.

Our participants’ proposals of interventions were Tell off, Tell student to go and get material, Give material, Ask about behavior, Do not let student in, Send out from classroom, Talk to student, Contact parents/principal, and Student borrows material from classmate(s). We have not found any previous research on the newly mentioned interventions (that we have not presented earlier in this section), namely Tell student to go and get material, Give material, Ask about behavior, Do not let student in, Talk to student and Student borrows material from classmate(s).

The least popular interventions were Other room, Stare and Parents/principal.

H) Mean: The most popular interventions were Stop it, Parents/principal and Other room.

When it comes to a student being mean to a classmate, our participants presented interventions such as: Tell off, Send out from classroom, Talk to student in private, and Contact parents/principal.

The least popular interventions were Ignore, Stare and Approach.

5.3.1 Preference of interventions for certain disruptions

In this section, we will present the opinions of students and research regarding interventions, when it comes to using them in certain scenarios.

Stop it: Our participants chose this intervention for all of the presented scenarios, and they were consistently positive about it. In contrast, previous research states that this is not an appropriate way of dealing with misbehavior (Elliott, Witt, Galvin & Moe, 1986; Grossman, 2004; Turco & Elliott, 1986). Regarding the variety of scenarios, it is interesting that Stop it
Students’ acceptance of interventions
could still be applied to all of them, and the reason for this could be the intervention’s possibly temporary effect. Students may find the intervention being sufficient forasmuch as its immediate effect; yet, it seems to have no severe side-effects.

**Stare:** This intervention was chosen for four scenarios, of which 50% of the participants found it being positive, while 50% negative. This partly contradicts research, which claimed that staring as an intervention should be prohibited at all times (Steinberg, 1993).

**Approach:** This intervention was chosen for four scenarios, out of which 50% of the respondents found it positive and 50% negative. The intervention was considered positive for *Talk* and *Cell phone*. There is no clear connection between the two of them seeing that *Talk* may be considered more vocal than *Cell phone*. *Approach* was considered negative for *Yell* and *Mean*. It is difficult to find an obvious link between the two scenarios due to the fact that *Yell* definitely entails loud noise, whereas *Mean* can be subtle. Research has consistently been negative to this intervention (Steinberg, 1993).

**Shorter recess:** Our participants selected this intervention for six out of eight scenarios, of which 33% were positive to it, and 57% were negative. Our participants were positive to teachers using this intervention for *Walk in and out* and *Delayed*. These scenarios can be both noisy and subtle, depending on the target student; however, irrespective of the manner of walking in and out from a classroom or being delayed, our participants may have found that one should make up for lost time. Our respondents did not accept this intervention being used for *Talk*, *Subtle noise*, *Yell* and *Complain*. In all these cases, the student makes some sort of noise – though subtle in *Subtle noise*. The reason for not choosing *Shorter recess* for the scenarios could be due to other interventions being more appropriate. Unlike our results, previous research has shown that *Shorter recess* has been equally accepted and non-accepted; different opinions have existed mainly due to age differences among respondents (Elliott, 1986).

**Parents/principal:** The results of our study showed that when this intervention was chosen, it was often seen as both positive and negative; out of the eight scenarios, four were seen in this way. The remaining four scenarios, and their suggested interventions, were divided by our participants into 50% being positive and 50% negative. Our respondents thought of this intervention as being positive when dealing with *Walk in and out*, as well as *Mean*; these two scenarios are quite different, and it is hard to see a link between them. Our participants were negative to the intervention when being used for dealing with *Subtle noise* and *Complain*; once again, there is no clear link between the two scenarios. According to research, students
Students’ acceptance of interventions

prefer situations being dealt with through parents or the principal; yet, it is not clear to what specific scenarios that this intervention may be used.

Other room: This intervention was accepted for all of the scenarios. Considering the variety of scenarios, it is interesting that the intervention suits them all. The reason for this view could be that the intervention is most definitely efficient in that the student (problem) leaves. In contrast, research claimed that teachers should never send a student out from the classroom.

Ignore: This intervention was chosen in seven out of the eight scenarios, of which 28.6% were thought of in a positive way, and 71.4% were negatively considered. The two scenarios where Ignore was accepted, were Complain and Delayed; a possible link between them could be loudness, where one might think that students would want teachers to react. Our respondents did not wish for this intervention concerning Talk, Yell, Walk in and out, Cell phone and Mean, of which the two first ones surely are noisy and the last three ones may be both noisy and subtle. Regarding noisy scenarios, it is surprising that students do not wish for the teacher to react. Most of our respondents’ answers concerning this scenario went in line with previous research, which stated that teachers should never ignore disruptive behavior.

Quiet reprimand: This intervention was consistently considered positive for Talk, Yell, Complain, Subtle noise, Walk in and out and Cell phone. The first three scenarios are undoubtedly noisy, whereas the rest can be either noisy or subtle. Our respondents never thought of this intervention as negative, which is completely in line with what research claimed, namely that Quiet reprimand is effective.

In summary, there were two accepted interventions that both students and research agreed on fully: Shorter recess and Quiet reprimand. These two interventions are similar to an extent, but only if a teacher announces Shorter recess in a subtle way; otherwise the interventions are quite the opposite from each other. Nevertheless, one could say that the consequences of the interventions are not the most severe. Also, it is possible that the effect of the two interventions is not powerful enough. Because of this, both students and research may accept these interventions to a high degree.

Then there were four interventions which contradicted prior research to some degree: Ignore, Stare, Approach and Parents/principal. The three interventions Ignore, Stare and Approach are, to some extent, similar regarding their subtleness. Yet, they differ considering the non-action of Ignore and the actions of Stare and Approach. Compared to these interventions, Parents/principal is also a subtle way of intervening, considering it usually...
Students’ acceptance of interventions

being performed after class; however, it is more severe. Possible effects of Ignore is either no effect at all, or a worsened behavior from a student; practically the same goes for Stare and Approach, with the possible effect of being only temporary. On the contrary, the effects of Parents/principal can be long-lasting. As previously mentioned, research does not recommend Ignore, Stare nor Approach. Still, some of our participants accepted these interventions; the reason for this could be that students find more vocal interventions being useless or disruptive. Regarding Parents/principal, some students may have accepted it because of its possible long-lasting effect. Others may not have accepted the intervention due to the fact that it did not suit our proposed disruptive behaviors, and also because of students being afraid of their parents knowing about the misbehavior, with a possible consequence being punishment.

Finally, there were two interventions which did not reflect prior research findings at all: Stop it and Other room, which have the connection of being public and easily noticed by others. The reason for the majority of participants accepting the interventions could be that disruptive behavior should be immediately managed by the teacher. Also, many students may find the intervention being effective.
6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study presents grade 7-9 EFL students’ opinions on what interventions teachers should use when disruptive behavior occurs in the classroom. Our intention with this study is for EFL teachers to be able to create a good learning and working environment in the EFL classroom. Our belief was that by involving students in the decision-making of interventions in the classroom, the risk of disruptive behavior would decrease.

The research question of this paper is: “According to grade 7–9 EFL students, what interventions should teachers use when student disruption occurs during an individual task?” This question was examined through student responses to a survey regarding the research question. The results showed that the two interventions which our participants fully accepted, along with research, were Shorter recess and Quiet reprimand; the four interventions that our respondents and research partly agreed on, were Ignore, Stare, Approach and Parents/principal; and the two interventions which our participants disagreed with research on were Stop it and Other room.

In this study, there have been limitations which may have affected the results. Firstly, some literature on our topic was read once the questionnaire had been created and handed out; therefore, there has been some literature that we have not fully used. Secondly, the instructions given orally and in writing may have been unclear or too complex for some participants, in regards to age, level of Swedish, possible dyslexia and the level of attention when receiving the instructions. Lastly, some questionnaires were not interpretable because of students not following the instructions to circle one or more interventions, but instead making crosses in the boxes.

We hope for teachers and researchers to gain an interest in students’ opinions of interventions in the classroom, as well as the benefits of pupils’ participation in decision-making on interventions. For future research on interventions in the classroom, we recommend investigators to capture pupils’ attitudes to certain interventions. Students are the main source of knowing how interventions are perceived. Due to a significant variation among students, there is a need for a variety of studies; in other words, studies need to take
Students’ acceptance of interventions

place in various settings, along with diversities of age, school surroundings and school contexts. Moreover, we could not find any information on the following interventions, which is why we recommend researchers to investigate them further: *Tell a student to go and get material*, *Give material to a student*, *Ask about a student’s behavior*, *Not let a student into the classroom* and *Student borrows material from classmate(s)*. As a final recommendation, we suggest that research is done on the consequences of interventions, as well as comparing results of different interventions.
Students’ acceptance of interventions

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Primary source
Questionnaire, created by Boel Ahlner and Emma Henriksson Thorsén, handed out September 27, October 1, October 3 and October 4.

Secondary source


Students’ acceptance of interventions


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Students’ acceptance of interventions

Appendix A

![Bar chart showing students' acceptance of various interventions]

- A) Talk
- B) Subtle noise
- C) Walk
- D) Yell
- E) Cellphone
- F) Complain
- G) Delayed
- H) Mean

- a) "Stop it"
- b) Stare
- c) Short recess
- d) Approach
- e) Principal
- f) Other room
- g) Ignore
- h) Quiet reprimand

Own response
Students’ acceptance of interventions

Appendix B

Elever attityder till lärarens ingripande i det engelska klassrummet

Kille □  Tjej □
Ärskurs:

Hej!

Den här enkäten handlar om hur du tycker lärare ska agera mot elever som stör i klassrummet. Du kommer få svara på hur du ser på olika situationer under en lektion.

Resultaten är anonyma och kommer bara ses av oss och användas i vårt examensarbete på Malmö Högskola. Resultaten kommer förstöras när arbetet är färdigt.

Tack för dina svar!
Emma & Boel

Tänk dig att följande situationer händer på en engelsklektion, när alla elever sitter tysta med en egen uppgift. Om du tycker att ett beteende är störande, ringa in ett eller flera alternativ på vad du tycker att läraren ska göra åt situationen.

1) En elev börjar prata (inte viska) med en klasskamrat om något som inte har med lektionen att göra.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a) Läraren säger &quot;Ståna nu&quot; till elevens, så att alla kan höra.</th>
<th>b) Läraren stänker på elevens utan att säga något.</th>
<th>c) Eleven förlorar en stund av sin rast.</th>
<th>d) Läraren ställer sig mycket nära elevens för att visa att den menar allvar.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e) Elevens skickas till rektorns som kontrollerar elevens förhållanden.</td>
<td>f) Läraren skickar elevens till ett eget rum. Elevens stannar där i 5 minuter, eller tills hon kan uppfräsa sig.</td>
<td>g) Läraren strävar i elevens.</td>
<td>h) Läraren går fram till elevens och ber hon i en låg ton att vara tyst.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eget alternativ:
2) **En elev börjar låta lite (t. ex. trummar med fingrarna på bänken eller nynnar på en lät).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a) Läraren säger ”Sluta nu” till eleven, så att alla kan höra.</th>
<th>b) Läraren stirrar på eleven utan att säga något.</th>
<th>c) Eleven förlorar en stund av sin rast.</th>
<th>d) Läraren ställer sig mycket nära eleven för att visa att han menar allvar.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e) Eleven skickas till rektorns kontor som kontaktar elevens föräldrar.</td>
<td>f) Läraren skickar eleven till ett eget rum. Eleven stannar där i 5 minuter, eller tills han kan uppför sig.</td>
<td>g) Läraren struntar i eleven.</td>
<td>b) Läraren går fram till eleven och ber hon i en låg ton att vara tyst.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eget alternativ: 

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3) **En elev går in och ut från klassrummet flera gånger under lektionen.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a) Läraren säger ”Sluta nu” till eleven, så att alla kan höra.</th>
<th>b) Läraren stirrar på eleven utan att säga något.</th>
<th>c) Eleven förlorar en stund av sin rast.</th>
<th>d) Eleven skickas till rektorns kontor som kontaktar elevens föräldrar.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e) Eleven skickas till rektorns kontor som kontaktar elevens föräldrar.</td>
<td>f) Läraren struntar i eleven.</td>
<td>g) Läraren går till eleven och ber hon i en låg ton att sluta gå in och ut ur klassrummet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eget alternativ: 

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4) **En elev stricker ut något i klassrummet.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a) Läraren säger ”Sluta nu” till eleven, så att alla kan höra.</th>
<th>b) Läraren stirrar på eleven utan att säga något.</th>
<th>c) Eleven förlorar en stund av sin rast.</th>
<th>d) Läraren ställer sig mycket nära eleven för att visa att han menar allvar.</th>
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<tr>
<td>e) Eleven skickas till rektorns kontor som kontaktar elevens föräldrar.</td>
<td>f) Läraren skickar eleven till ett eget rum. Eleven stannar där i 5 minuter, eller tills han kan uppför sig.</td>
<td>g) Läraren struntar i eleven.</td>
<td>b) Läraren går till eleven och ber hon i en låg ton att vara tyst.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eget alternativ: 

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5) **En elev smsar/spelas spel på sin mobil.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a) Läraren säger ”Sluta nu” till eleven, så att alla kan höra.</th>
<th>b) Läraren stirrar på eleven utan att säga något.</th>
<th>c) Eleven förlorar en stund av sin rast.</th>
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<td>e) Eleven skickas till rektorns kontor som kontaktar elevens föräldrar.</td>
<td>f) Läraren skickar eleven till ett eget rum. Eleven stannar där i 5 minuter, eller tills han kan uppför sig.</td>
<td>g) Läraren struntar i eleven.</td>
<td>b) Läraren går till eleven och ber hon i en låg ton att lägga undan telefonen.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eget alternativ: 

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48
### 6) En elev klagar högt på uppgiften.

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Eleven skickas till rektorn som kontaktar elevens föräldrar.</td>
<td>f) Läraren skickar elevn till ett eget rum, Eleven stannar där i 5 minuter, eller tills hen kan uppföra sig.</td>
<td>g) Läraren struntar i elevn.</td>
<td>h) Läraren går fram till elevn och ber hen i en låg ton att vara tyst.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eget alternativ:

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### 7) En elev kommer försent till lektionen och har inte med sig material.

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Läraren säger &quot;Sätt dig på din plats och börja jobba nu&quot; till elev, så att alla kan höra.</td>
<td>b) Läraren stirrar på elevn, utan att säga något.</td>
<td>c) Eleven förlorar en stund av sin rast.</td>
<td>d) Eleven skickas till rektorn som kontaktar elevens föräldrar.</td>
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<tr>
<td>e) Läraren skickar elevn till ett eget rum, Eleven stannar där i 5 minuter, eller tills hen kan uppföra sig.</td>
<td>f) Läraren struntar i elevn.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eget alternativ:

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### 8) En elev säger något elakt till en annan elev.

<p>| | | | |</p>
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<td>g) Läraren struntar i elevn.</td>
<td>h) Läraren går fram till elevn och ber hen i en låg ton att vara tyst.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eget alternativ:
Vad mer skulle störa dig på lektionen, som du eller en klasskamrat skulle kunna göra?

_________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

Tack för din medverkan! :)
Emma & Boel

Om du vill ta del av våra resultat, vänligen ange din e-mail-adress nedan:
_________________________________________________________________________________________

50
Hej!


Examensarbetet undersöker elevers attityder till stöd i klassrummet men p.g.a. att vi vill ha "direkta" och ogenomtänkta svar så ber vi dig att inte vidarebefordra denna information till eleverna vid eventuellt besök.

Vänligen hör av dig snarast möjligt.

Med vänliga hälsningar
Emma Thorsén och Boel Ahlner