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**Teachers´ understanding of disruptive behaviour: A cross cultural,  
mixed methods study of primary teachers´ perceptions, attributions  
and actions.**

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to my mother, my partner and my grandma as without their support none of this would have been possible.

Dedico esta tesis a mi madre, mi pareja y mi abuela, sin los cuales nada de esto hubiera sido posible.

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## **Abstract**

This thesis explores how disruptive behaviour is perceived, attributed and dealt with by primary school teachers in Biscay (Spain) and South Yorkshire (UK). In order to do so, the research has used two approaches; a questionnaire and an interview using a mixed methods research approach.

The questionnaire explored teachers' perceptions of disruptive behaviour and how they responded to it while the interview explored all three aspects of the research: perception, attributions and actions. 68 teachers provided responses for the questionnaire and six interviews were conducted. The qualitative results were analysed using Applied Thematic Analysis while the quantitative results were analysed using descriptive statistics, the Mann-Whitney U test and the Z score proportions test.

The overall results from this thesis were that teachers from both contexts mostly perceived disruptive behaviour similarly with some differences: Teachers from South Yorkshire tended to perceive disruptive behaviour as less serious than teachers from Biscay. This was statistically significant in four out of the eight behaviours listed on the questionnaire. Teachers from both contexts tended to describe disruptive behaviour as aggressive. When they were asked in the interview they highlighted the impact disruptive behaviour has on educators, other children and the child that is displaying the behaviour. They also spoke of how disruptive behaviour impacts on the teaching and learning process and on normal functioning of the classroom.

Participants attributed disruptive behaviour to within-child, family and school variables, Biscay participants also spoke of the influence of society upon disruptive behaviour.

Participants from South Yorkshire focused more on within-child factors while participants from Biscay spoke more at length about school based variables.

Finally, participants also responded similarly about how they would deal with disruptive behaviour, both in the questionnaire and interview. Overall, most represented codes within the questionnaire were the same for both contexts: “punishment, remind of rule and talk to the child”. However, participants from Biscay emphasized the importance of getting support from outside agencies when dealing with disruptive behaviour as well as working jointly with families. South Yorkshire participants focused on the importance of the relationship with the child and understanding the disruptive behaviour when having to deal with it. They also placed a lot of importance in working jointly with families and having a whole school approach.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## **1.1: Introduction**

In this chapter, I explore the reasons for doing this piece of research. I will then go on to explore my positionality so as to be transparent about my own reasons to pursue this topic. I will then outline the general organisation of this research.

This thesis examines teachers' understanding of disruptive behaviour by exploring their perceptions, attributions and actions towards it. This research focused on teachers from Biscay in the Basque Country (Spain) and South Yorkshire in England. Disruptive behaviour is the underlying reason why some children will go on to be excluded from schools and is also closely linked with a category of Special Educational Needs in England. This thesis aims to explore teachers' understanding of disruptive behaviour and, as this research has been conducted in two different contexts, to compare and contrast teachers' understandings.

## **1.2: Positionality**

Positionality is understood as someone's worldview based on their socio-cultural, historical and economic influences (Savin-Baden & Howell Major, 2013). With the intention of understanding how this research has been formulated, it is important to understand the authors own world view and perspective. In order to do so, I aim to explore my own positionality and where the interest for this research came from.

I was born and grew up in Biscay. My primary, secondary and higher education took place within the Basque Education System. I was a mostly well behaved student but I never shied away from making my opinions heard. My peers and I went through our education without really experiencing much of a punishment for our behaviour in the classroom apart from an occasional reprimand. I grew up in a post-industrial coastal

town with a 10% unemployment rate in the 90s and early 2000s. I would say it is fair to say that my circumstances would be quite similar to those of some of the children that I have worked with in South Yorkshire.

When I first moved to England to take part in the Doctor of Educational and Child Psychology course, I was fairly shocked at the fact that so many children were being excluded from education. When I first visited a Pupil Referral Unit, I found it hard to imagine that enough children and young people had been permanently excluded from education as to require the creation of such a place. This consternation about negative outcomes for young people followed me through the three years of training and that is why I think I decided to explore this issue in more depth.

I have mainly been trained on quantitative research methods. I used to be part of a neuropsychology research group and, therefore, my way of thinking about problems benefits from being systematic. This is why I chose to conduct this study using mixed methods. I wanted to explore the issue from as many different angles as possible, maintaining validity but being able to support my findings with different types of data. I wanted to explore this issue as pragmatically as possible.

### **1.3: Structure of my Thesis.**

I provide a critical literature review which can be found in Chapter 2. In the literature review I explore what is understood as disruptive behaviour and how it has been studied in different ways, looking at how disruptive behaviour is perceived, attributed and acted upon. I then explore the legislation frameworks that set up how to deal with disruptive behaviour both in Biscay and South Yorkshire. I then examine links between disruptive behaviour, exclusion and Special Educational Needs. The Literature review finishes by considering why it is important to do comparative studies that analyse the concept of disruptive behaviour and what can be learned from this research. At the end of the

literature review the reader can find the research questions that this thesis will be exploring.

Chapter 3 explores how the study has been conducted; it provides an overview of the epistemology and ontology of the study, the ethical considerations that were taken as well as the characteristics of the participants. The methodology chapter also provides an overview of the design of the study and how the data analysis process has taken place.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the questionnaire. Exploring the different sections and providing comparisons and contrasts between the data from the Biscay context and the data from South Yorkshire.

Chapter 5 presents a critical analysis of the findings from the interviews. This section not only outlines the findings but also makes links with the critical literature.

Finally, Chapter 6 concludes this thesis by presenting a discussion which responds to the research questions that were set up on Chapter 1. The discussion also explores how the findings of this thesis can be applied to Educational Psychology in practice as well as its strengths, limitations and further research.

#### **1.4: Basque Education system compared to England's Education system**

This research was conducted in two different education systems. In order to have an understanding of how these systems compare and contrast, I am going to explore them.

The Basque education system is designed and managed by the Basque Government Education Department. England's education system is designed and managed by the Department for Education (DfE). The Basque country has two official languages, Basque and Spanish (Euskadi, n.d). When children enrol in a school, parents can decide which is going to be the main language of instruction, children will still have to learn Basque, Spanish and English regardless of which is the main language of instruction,

the difference will be that the main language spoke in the classroom will be one or the other. Nowadays, it is difficult to find schools that offer Spanish as the main language of instruction; the norm has increasingly become Basque (Euskadi, n.d). In England the main language of instruction is English and some schools will offer other modern languages as part of the curriculum, especially in KS2 as it is mandatory (DfE, 2013b). It is up to the school to decide which language they offer, e.g. French, Spanish, German. There are different types of schools in the Basque Country: there are public schools (schools that are funded completely by the Basque government), these are called “Ikastolas” and their main language of instruction is in most cases Basque (Euskadi, n.d). There are also “concertada” schools (schools that are funded partly by the Basque government and partly by fees charged to parents), these schools offer more of a variety on the languages of instruction. Most “concertada” schools are religious in nature. Finally, there are private schools which are fully founded by parental contributions.

In England there are a variety of school types as well. There are state schools and comprehensive schools which are funded by the government (GOV, n.d). There are faith schools which focus on one particular religion while still following the national curriculum. There are also free schools and academies. These schools receive money by the government but have more freedom to set their own curriculum or adaptations to it (GOV, n.d). Finally, there are independent schools which operate like private schools in the Basque Country, they get founding from parental contributions (GOV, n.d).

In order to become a teacher in the Basque country you need to do a four year university degree in primary education, this will allow you to become a primary school teacher. If you wish to teach in secondary schools or post 16 provisions, you need a four year university degree in a subject of your choosing and a one year master’s degree in Secondary Education with a specialisation in the area that your original degree will allow (e.g. somebody with a degree in Physics will be able to teach Maths, Physics,

Chemistry, Science etc). For either route you will have to do a placement at a school and be supervised by a qualified teacher (Universidad del Pais Vasco [UPV], n.d).

In order to become a teacher in England you need to have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). In some types of school such as academies or free schools it is not a requirement that teachers have QTS but most of them do. In order to achieve QTS you can either do an undergraduate degree (3 years) or a one year post graduate degree if you already have a degree. There are postgraduate programs that allow teachers to achieve their QTS while on the job (School direct) (Prospects, 2018)

Years of schooling are quite similar in the Basque Country and England but there are some differences. Compulsory education in Spain is between the ages of five to 16. In the Basque Country, children attend pre-school from the age of three to five. Then they move on to primary school, where they go from Y1 to Y6; children will start Y1 when they are six years of age and leave in Y6 when they are 12. Students then go to secondary school where they do four years of `Educación Secundaria Obligatoria` (mandatory secondary education). For students to get their Secondary Education Certificate they need to have passed all subjects in the last year of secondary school. All children and young people must be in education between the ages of six to 16. Children cannot be home educated, this is forbidden across Spain. If young people fail more than two of the core subjects (Spanish, Basque, Maths and Topic), it is up to their tutor (lead teacher for the year group) and parents to decide whether the young person needs to re-take the year. This can happen twice, once in primary and once in secondary. This means there will be some young people leaving education in their second year of secondary education, as they will have turned 16. This in Spain is considered as school dropout as these young people will not have acquired their secondary education certificate.

In England compulsory education is from the ages of five to 18. Children can attend nursery from the ages of two to four. From the age of five, children will attend Foundation year and then move on to Y1 of primary; children will finish primary in Y6 being 11 years old. Then they move on to secondary education where they start in Y7 until Y11, finishing at the age of 16. In Y11 students will sit a set of exams, GCSEs, (General Certificate of Secondary Education) that will provide them with qualifications for further study or to access the workforce (GOV, n.d).

A regular class in a school in the Basque country will have 25 students maximum (as a legal requirement) (Euskadi, n.d.) and one teacher. If any of the pupils has been identified as requiring support due to medical needs there may be an additional adult trained as a career for children with particular needs, these circumstances however are not common. Children will form part of a class and they will engage with the curriculum within their classroom (apart from PE, art, music and English which may take place in another classroom). In secondary school this is also normally the case. Young people are not separated in sets in secondary school.

In the UK there is not a statutory limit on class sizes (Full fact, 2017), the average class size for primary and secondary in the UK as per 2016 was 27 pupils to one teacher (Full fact, 2017). However, in my work I would say that I regularly encounter class sizes of more than 30 children, especially in primary settings. Teaching Assistants in England are a profession that can be regularly found within classrooms; they make up 27.8% of the workforce in schools. On average state schools will hire one teaching assistant per every two teachers, this is across primary and secondary (DfE, 2018a). Teaching assistants is not a job description that can be found within Basque schools.

Finally, as alternatives to mainstream education in England, we can find alternative provisions and special schools. Alternative provisions are defined as: “education



arranged by local authorities for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education; education arranged by schools for pupils on a fixed period exclusion; and pupils being directed by schools to off-site provision to improve their behaviour” (DfE, 2013a, p3). It is difficult to know the exact number of alternative provisions out there but it is estimated there are around 351 pupil referral units (one category of Alternative provision) in England (DfE, 2017). Special schools are defined as schools that educate children with special educational needs under the following categories: communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social emotional and mental health and sensory and physical needs (GOV, n.d.). There are 82 special schools in the Yorkshire and Humberside area, supporting 9.572 young people with Special Needs (Local government association, 2017). In contrast, in the Basque Country there is not an equivalent for alternative provision and there is only one state funded special school which supports 37 pupils (Gaton, 2015). More than 90% of students identified as having a Special Educational Need are registered in mainstream schools; the other 10% attend private schools (Alonso, 2017). Most young people with SEN will be part of a regular mainstream classroom. Some who may have more significant difficulties, will be part of a ‘Special education classroom’; these classrooms are part of and on site of a mainstream primary or secondary school. There were 437 such classrooms in the Basque Country in 2017, supporting 5,028 students (Alonso, 2017).

## **Chapter 2: Literature review**

### **2.1: Introduction**

In this literature review I will first present what is understood as disruptive behaviour, providing an historical exploration of previous conceptions as well as definitions. I will then explore how disruptive behaviour has been studied, by looking at how it is perceived, attributed and acted upon. I will then explain how disruptive behaviour is dealt with in Biscay and South Yorkshire as this research is based on those contexts. The literature review goes on to examine how the concept of exclusions and Special Educational Needs link with disruptive behaviour. The literature review finishes by exploring what can be learnt from this research and identifying the research questions.

### **2.1: What is disruptive behaviour?**

The media likes to paint a picture of schools in crisis, wild children and ineffective discipline (Peal, 2014; The Guardian, n.d.). Situations of conflict and bad behaviour in schools are a serious concern for teachers and have become a standard discourse in education (Ball, Maguire & Braun, 2012). To be able to understand how disruptive behaviour is understood nowadays, it is important to take into account what came before and what pieces of legislation or phenomena are having an impact on it.

Discussions around children's behaviour within education are longstanding. For example, the historic Elton Committee (DoES, 1989) attempted to explore the extent of disruptive behaviour in UK classrooms; this was as a response to public concern. The report that was produced by the committee emphasized the role of teachers as agents of change and as managers of children's behaviour. It advocated for stronger discipline,

but, at the same time placed most of the responsibility for responding to disruptive behaviour (DB) on schools.

In 2005, the Steer report (DfES, 2005) was published, which was within the framework of Every Child Matters legislation. This report, very similarly to Elton's, looked at children's learning behaviour and proposed recommendations for schools. It highlighted the need for systemic cultural change in schools in order to promote positive learning behaviours. It proposed systematic audits for behaviour systems in school and emphasised the need for explicit teaching of social and emotional skills. The Steer report tried modernising the discourse around behaviour moving towards a more systemic approach rather than by only talking about strengthening discipline.

Between the Coalition government (2010-2015) and the Conservative government (2015-2018), legislation has experienced a return to the idea of discipline and clear behaviour policies. It is also important to note that academisation has continued to expand, which provides more power to individual schools and distances them from working within a Local Authority framework or being supported through School Improvement Teams. Zero tolerance behaviour policies are also a new phenomenon that is expanding among schools. Zero tolerance is a concept imported from the United States of America. It can be understood as a strict enforcement of regulations and bans what schools perceive as undesirable behaviours or objects (American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008). Zero Tolerance policies in the USA are heavily linked to a response to school shootings and, although the UK's version of it is not as extreme, it is suspected to be contributing to the rise in exclusions in the country (Staufenberg, 2018).

DB can be defined in many different ways. One definition taken from the Spanish literature is: "behaviour that is consistent, voluntary and reiterative that stops the normal

development of a classroom. It blocks the teaching learning process and coexistence in the classroom”. (Arce-Fariña, Miguez & Vazquez-Figueiredo, 2013, p.61). One definition taken from the UK literature describes DB as: “any behaviour that is sufficiently off-task in the classroom, as to distract the teacher and/or class peers from on-task objectives” (Nash, Schlösser & Scarr, 2016 p.168).

If we look at the two definitions, firstly, it is easy to see how general and vague they are; in this respect they are very similar. “The normal development of a classroom” is not defined and, therefore, countless events could alter it. The UK definition talks about “off task behaviour”, by that definition a child vomiting because they are sick could be considered disruptive behaviour. These are typical definitions within the literature and it clearly highlights the problem with defining DB, as DB can be presented in different ways. However, it can also be noticed that the Spanish definition seems to be focusing more on the repetitive aspect of DB, “consistent and reiterative”, while the UK definition does not focus on this aspect. Furthermore, both definitions emphasise the impact DB has on the teaching and learning process, “distract from on-tasks objectives” and “blocks the teaching-learning process”. Finally, the Spanish definition speaks about coexistence. The concept of coexistence is used in the Spanish education literature to refer to relationships in the classroom, relationships among teachers, students and peers (CIE-IDEA, 2005). Therefore, the Spanish definition also talks about how DB impacts on relationships. As it has been established, it can be difficult to define DB in detail as it has been used to encapsulate a variety of behaviours ranging from physical aggression, such as punching, to speaking out of turn. This is why it is difficult to define and to handle such a concept, when it is used; it is difficult to know for certain what is being described unless observable behaviours are used. Measuring Tools are a useful source for understanding what is normally referred to as DB. Examples include the: Behaviour at school Study Teacher Survey (Sullivan, Johnson, Owen & Conway, 2014), Discipline

in Schools Questionnaire (Adey, Oswald & Johnson, 1991), Disruptive behaviour Scale (Martino-Alvarez, Alvarez-Hernandez, Castro- Pañeda, Campo Mon & González González de Mesa, 2016) and School Violence Questionnaire (Alvarez, Alvarez, Gonzalez-Castro, Nuñez & Gonzalez-Pienda, 2006). These are all measuring tools that provide an indication of the degree of DB that is being displayed within a school or a classroom. These tools rely on observable behaviours such as “being late for class” or “making distracting noises intentionally” (taken from Sullivan et al, 2014, p.49) to measure DB. This present research has based its understanding of DB in part on examining these measuring tools.

DB is believed to greatly impact on the teaching and learning process. 81% of teachers in Spain regarded DB as the main negative behaviour students in secondary school display (CIE-IDEA, 2005). Furthermore, students themselves also place DB as the main cause of conflicts in schools (Marchesi & Perez, 2004). Two out of five teachers in the UK reported low levels of disruption in every lesson daily (Ofsted, 2014). Managing classroom behaviour effectively seems to be a universal challenge for teachers all over the world (Hallam & Rogers, 2008). Pupils’ misbehaviour is cited as the primary reason for leaving the teaching profession for half of the newly qualified teachers in the USA (Greene, 2009). In Australia, students’ misbehaviour was identified as a key stressor for teachers (Clunies-Ross, Little & Kienhuis, 2008). Regarding how disruptive behaviour affects peers, in a recent study 29% of young people reported their daily lessons being disrupted by their peers; 43% of pupils reported that noise created by their peers “always or often” made it difficult to concentrate (Layard & Dunn, 2009). It is clear, therefore, that DB is not only a stressor for teachers but that it impacts all aspects of the classroom, peers and children themselves. It is clear that DB is seen as an issue not only in the UK and Spain, but worldwide.

If we look at what exactly DB looks like, the Elton report (DoES, 1989), for example, found that the most common forms of misbehaviour was talking out of turn and work avoidance. Beaman, Wheldall and Kemp (2007) in their research in Australia found that although teachers said DB was a great concern for them, the most common DB they encountered was talking out of turn. In 2014, Ofsted published a survey asking teachers about disruptive behaviour. Two fifths of the 723 teachers surveyed said talking and chatting happened in every lesson. It seems that although DB has very real consequences for teachers (burnout, dropping out of the profession) the studies point to DB in the classroom being relatively minor behaviours rather than aggressive or violent. To conclude, it seems that DB is a complex and not a well defined concept within the literature. However, DB has been explored a great deal quantitatively through measuring tools, which actually provide a clearer picture of what is understood by DB rather than vague definitions that refer to “the normal functioning of the classroom” or “off tasks behaviour”.

### **2.3: Ways of understanding disruptive behaviour**

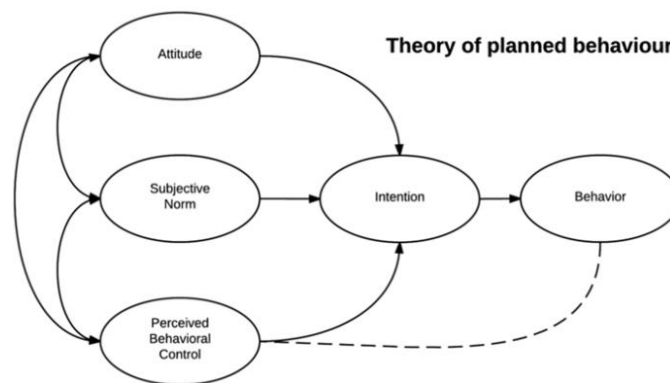
There are many ways a phenomenon such as DB could be understood and explored. In the literature, we can find that disruptive behaviour has been explored by looking at three aspects: how it is perceived (MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Muñoz de Bustillo, Perez & Martin, 2006; Myers & Pinta, 2008), who is to blame for it (Johansen, Little & Akin-Little, 2011; Croll & Moses, 1985; Miller, Ferguson, Moore, 2002; Miller, 1996) and what can be done about it (Clunies-Ross et al, 2008; Little, 2003; Carroll & Hurry, 2018). DB is also quite entangled in the literature with the label of Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) or its predecessors Social Emotional Behavioural Difficulties, as the behaviours that these labels comprise are normally described as disruptive as well. DB is also closely connected with the reality of exclusions, as it is seen as a reason for

exclusion (DfE, 2018b). Therefore, for this literature review, I am going to be further exploring all those areas.

### **2.3.1: Perception of disruptive behaviour**

To understand disruptive behaviour and teachers' response to it some authors have used the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). This theory states that future behaviour is a reflection of personal attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Attitudes refer to whether the action is seen as positive or negative for the person. Subjective norms refer to the belief of the person on whether society would see the action as something positive or not. Finally, perceived behavioural control refers to the perception of how difficult or easy the action is. See below for a visual representation of the planned behaviour theory:

*Figure 1: Theory of planned behaviour*



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MacFarlane and Woolfson (2013) used this theory for their study in the UK. They looked at the attitudes and behaviours of adults towards including children classified as having Social Emotional Behaviour Difficulties in mainstream education. 111 teachers participated in the study and in their results they found that teachers' beliefs and behavioural control predicted teachers' intention to include children identified as having SEBD. This means those teachers that held more positive beliefs towards those children

and that felt they could impact the situation were more likely to have the intention of including children identified as having SEBD. Furthermore, the study showed that teachers held similar beliefs in regards to children identified as having SEBD regardless of amount of training. However, teachers that had more training but less experience working with children identified as SEBD, had more positive feelings towards them, while teachers that had more experience, had more negative attitudes towards them. Finally, they found that subjective norms (as measured by teachers' perception of their head teacher's perception towards children identified as having SEBD) was a predictor of teachers' behaviour towards these children. This emphasizes the importance of head teachers encouraging positive attitudes towards children that have been classified as SEMH. It also emphasizes that changing adults' perceptions of children perceived as having SEMH is key because, otherwise, adults are less likely to intervene and support them.

In the Spanish context, Muñoz de Bustillo et al (2006) analysed all behaviour reports filled in the year 2002/2003 on a particular secondary school; 512 reports were analysed in total. The researchers were aiming to identify the type of behaviours that led to the creation of a disciplinary action (in this case the report). They wanted to see if they could develop a differential "profile" of the undisciplined student. Their results showed that the types of behaviours that characterise indiscipline in the school were behaviours that affected the development of the lesson, especially, those that created an interruption in the teaching through inadequate behaviour such as disobedience towards the teacher.

They also found three profiles of indiscipline. They achieved this by looking at what categories of misbehaviour tended to be presented together on the reports. The most common profile was that of the student who is "immature" and with "instructional maladjustment"; this student would interrupt the lesson, would verbally abuse his peers and would tend to not work. The second profile is that of an "unmotivated student",



who would present with a passive attitude and tend to not engage with the academic work. The last profile would be that of the student who is “rebellious or argumentative”, this profile would portray a student that creates the disruption through disobedience and that would cause a confrontation with the teacher.

I believe Muñoz de Bustillo et al’s (2006) study provides us with interesting insights about how adults tend to interpret behaviour. I would like to look closely at how the authors describe the different student profiles. Some of the wording that Muñoz de Bustillo et al (2006) use in creating the profiles of students is quite subjective; “instructional maladjustment” or “rebellious and argumentative” are terms that do not clearly describe behaviours. Furthermore, they focus on the child as the cause, not exploring how the system plays a role. It is unfortunate that, probably, due to the fact that their work was written as an academic paper and is, therefore, limited in length, the reader cannot get further insight into how those profiles were constructed.

By reviewing the literature regarding how children who display DB are perceived, it is quite clear that adults perception of both the child and the behaviour is going to have an impact on how adults behave towards children (MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013). Due to this, perceptions, attributions and actions can be understood as closely connected. Furthermore, studies show that the way adults perceive children will have a significant impact on the child’s perception of him or herself, as teachers are significant adults in children’s lives (Myers & Pinta, 2008)

### **2.3.2: Attributions of disruptive Behaviour**

Attributions are described by the Oxford Dictionary as “the action of regarding something as being caused by a person or thing”. There are a series of psychological theories that try to explain attributions, one of the most popular is Weiner’s attributions theory (2006). For Weiner, attributions are classified using three causal dimensions:

Locus of control, stability and controllability. Locus of control refers to whether we think the causes of behaviour are something internal or external, a personality trait would be an internal locus of control while the fact that it is winter would be external. Stability refers to whether something can change or is immutable. Finally, controllability refers to whether something can be controlled or not, for example, our skill is something that we can control whereas mood or luck is uncontrollable.

Johansen et al, in 2011 did a study in which they explored teachers' attributions of behaviour in the classroom in New Zealand. They used a questionnaire with 42 teachers. The results were that 76% of participants considered DB to be attributed to parenting. 60% of teachers believed the child that was displaying DB was controlling the behaviour and 61% of teachers believed that the behaviour was unlikely to change. These results are quite interesting as, even though, teachers mainly attributed DB to external factors (parenting), they believed the child had control over it (therefore controllable) and that it could not be changed (stable). These results go against the framework of Weiner's attribution theory (2006), which suggests that external attributions, such as parenting, are not controllable and can be changeable. These results highlight the importance of testing theoretical frameworks within studies just to make sure that participants' responses will support the established theory, unlike they did in Johansen's et al study.

The attributions around disruptive behaviour have been widely studied in the UK. Studies have repeatedly shown that teachers attribute problems around behaviour to parents and home circumstances as well as to within child attributions. Croll and Moses (1985) surveyed 428 school teachers, and found that 66% of them attributed misbehaviour in school to parental variables. In the Elton report (DoES, 1989), parents and home factors were judged by schools to be a major issue affecting pupils' disruptive behaviour. Miller, (1996) performed 24 interviews with primary school teachers. He

concluded that the most frequent attributions for children misbehaviour were: within-child attributions (physical or medical factors, need for praise, lack of acceptance of social norms) and parental attributions (lack of management strategies, punitive or violent home, absent parents).

Conversely Miller, Ferguson and Moore (2002) also looked at how parents attribute disruptive behaviour. Parents in contrast to teachers believe that DB could be attributed to “fairness of teachers” (e.g. pupils are unfairly blamed, teachers are rude to pupils), “pupil vulnerability to peer influences and adverse family circumstances” (e.g. other pupils tell pupil to misbehave, parents let pupils get away with too much) and “differentiation of classroom demands and expectations” (e.g. too much class work was given, class work is too difficult) as the main reasons why pupils misbehave in the classrooms. Parents in Miller’s study seemed to attribute DB to a variety of factors, some school based variables (“fairness of teachers”) and to outside influences (“pupil vulnerability to peer influences and adverse family circumstances”).

Miller, Ferguson and Byrne (2000), also assessed the attributions of pupils with the following results: Pupils attributed “fairness of teacher’s actions”, “pupil vulnerability” and “strictness of classroom regime” as the main reasons why they misbehaved in the classroom. For Pupils’ “adverse family circumstances” was considered to be the least important of the factors, while teachers and parents perceived it to be more significant. It seems that when it comes to attributions, there is a lack of concordance between the views of teachers, parents and pupils (Miller et al, 2000). It also seems that all parties involved tend to attribute DB to variables outside their control: teachers tend to attribute DB to parenting and within-child variables while parents and pupils to school and outside influences.

In the Spanish context, Martino-Alvarez et al, (2016) validated a questionnaire that evaluated the way DB was perceived by teachers. They used their questionnaire with 346 participants and the results showed that participants attributed the increase of DB to lack of rules and limits in the family, a general change in society and lack of coordination between the family and school. Similarly to UK studies, teachers in Spain appear to attribute DB to family variables.

### **2.3.3: Actions towards disruptive behaviour**

Regarding how DB is dealt with, Clunies-Ross et al, (2008) in their study in Australia asked teachers to fill in a questionnaire about what approaches they used in their classroom, reactive or proactive. They then observed teachers in order to compare observations with the results of the questionnaire. They defined proactive approaches as those that lessen the likelihood of DB, by altering the situation before problems escalate. Reactive approaches were defined as actions following DB which were remedial in nature and tended to be a negative response towards the behaviour (Little, 2003). In their results, they showed that teachers reported using more proactive strategies and that the reactive strategies they used were ones that they were more likely to focus on rewards and punishment. There was a strong relationship between the self-report data and the observations, although authors remark that there were significantly more participants that took part in the questionnaire than those that participated in the observations. The questionnaire had 97 responses versus 20 observations that were carried out. Therefore, this relationship should be taken with care. Teachers showed more proactive approaches towards academic behaviour while they showed more reactive approaches for social behaviour. The authors noticed that, even if there were more proactive approaches being employed, there was a significant imbalance in terms of which type of behaviour they were focused on. They recommended that more

proactive approaches should be employed towards social behaviour (e.g. talking out of turn).

Martino-Alvarez et al (2016) in Spain, did a study on teachers' perception of DB in the classroom. They found that teachers believed that in order to improve DB in the classroom there was a need for more coordination between services and more teacher training.

Another study that is relevant is that of Carroll and Hurry (2018) in which they present a literature review of effective approaches to support children classified as having SEMH. They conclude that approaches that ensure the following are the most successful: delivery by qualified and committed professionals, practical and functional environmental support, effective behaviour management plan, relevant effective social skills programmes and robust academic support and evaluation. Carroll and Hurry also highlight the fact that there is not that much of an evidence base for wave 2 (group) or 3 (one to one) interventions and that actually universal approaches (which focus on the whole school), are most effective and best evidenced. They also note that the approaches that are found in mainstream education and specialist provision are very similar.

#### **2.4: How is disruptive behaviour dealt with in Biscay?**

As Biscay is part of the Basque Country, legislation is set up by the Basque Government. This is due to the Basque Country being an area of Spain with special competences in education and economic matters. DB in the Basque country is classified either into "behaviours contrary to coexistence" or "behaviours that greatly harm coexistence" by the Basque Country Education Department (BOPV, 2008). The table below provides a breakdown of what type of behaviours would be in each category.

*Table 1: Disruptive behaviour in the Basque Country*

| <b>Behaviours contrary to coexistence</b>  | <b>Behaviours that greatly harm coexistence</b>   |
|--|---|
| Unjustified lack of punctuality or absenteeism.  | Acts of great indiscipline, insults or offences towards a member of the school community.                               |
| Behaviours that may impede or make difficult the right and duty of learning.   | Reiteration of behaviours that are contrary to coexistence.   |
| The systematic rejection of coming into the classroom with the necessary materials to perform the tasks required for learning. | Serious physical or emotional aggressions, discrimination and lack of respect towards a member of the school community. |
| The acts that perturb the normal development of the activities in the school.  | Faking identity, falsification or stealing of documents.  |
| Acts of indiscipline and disobedience towards the teachers or other member of the school community.                            | Serious damages caused to the building or objects in the school.  |
| Cause damage to the school premises.   | Unjustified acts that perturb the activity of the school.   |
| The incitation or stimulation to the perpetration of an act contrary to the rules of the school.                               | Acts that endanger the health of the school community.  |
|  | Not completing sanctions.   |
|  | Threatening or coercing a member of the school community.   |
|  | Humiliation, sexist or racist comments towards a member of the school community.  |

The table presented above has been translated from the official bulleting of the Basque Country, a document that summarizes policies in schools (BOPV, 2008). Therefore, the table is a representation of the guidelines schools get from policy makers around disruptive behaviour.

Behaviours that are considered to greatly harm coexistence will trigger the creation of a “report” (BOPV, 2008). The school has to record what has triggered the creation of a report and how the behaviour is going to be corrected. This is done by senior management. If the report is about behaviours that greatly harm coexistence the record is also sent to the “inspection organisation” (similar to Ofsted) which makes sure that the case has been dealt with appropriately (BOPV, 2008).

Descriptions of what constitutes behaviour contrary to coexistence or behaviours that greatly harm coexistence are subjective. These behaviours are not functionally defined and therefore can lead to different interpretations depending on who reads it. All the behaviours described on table 1 could fit neatly into what is understood as DB in the literature as I have explored on the “what is disruptive behaviour” section of this literature review.

The ways of dealing with behaviours that greatly harm coexistence can vary, depending on the criteria of the senior management team. This is a list of possible outcomes (BOPV, 2008).

- Doing tasks in the school grounds outside the academic hours. These tasks will contribute to the better development of the school activities or repair the damages caused by the student.
- Temporal prohibition of participating in the extracurricular activities for a maximum period of three months.
- Change of class group.

- Exclusion from certain lessons for a period of more than six days but less than two weeks.
- Exclusion from the school for a period of more than six days but less than a month.
- Change of school when there is going to be a permanent exclusion but the student is still subjected to obligatory schooling.
- Permanent exclusion from the school. (BOPV, 2008)

As it can be seen, the possible outcomes for a child who is displaying what is considered behaviour that harms coexistence are laid down within the legislation. This provides pupils, schools and parents with a framework of what is a reasonable outcome.

### **2.5: How is disruptive behaviour dealt with in South Yorkshire?**

South Yorkshire is part of England, therefore, the statutory guidance set by the Department of Education will be in effect. The statutory guidance that regulates behaviour is titled “behaviour and discipline in schools: Guidance for governing bodies” (DfEDoH, 2015). It stipulates that all schools should have a behaviour policy which covers:

- Screening and searching pupils
- The power to use reasonable force or make physical contact
- The power to discipline beyond the school gates
- Pastoral care for school staff accused of misconduct
- When a multi-agency assessment should be considered for pupils who display continuous disruptive behaviour

It is up to schools and governors to create this behaviour policy and to follow it. There is not further guidance on what type of behaviours should be considered as disruptive or further guidance on how they should be disciplined. Behaviour policies across schools,



therefore can vary widely. England offers very little legislation on what is disruptive behaviour and how to deal with it in schools. This is left up to schools to determine and interpret. This lack of clear guidelines contrasts with legislation in the Basque Country, which is still vague when defining DB, but at least provides schools with a clear list of possible outcomes for children. The UK's legislation leaves these decisions up to schools, which has created the space for the rise of zero tolerance behaviour policies that has already been mentioned.

Some responses to DB taken from South Yorkshire schools behaviour policies are the following (Sandringham, 2015; Outwood Grange Academies trust, 2019, Fir Vale School, 2018; Tapton school, 2017):

- Time out in a buddy classroom (in-school exclusion)
- Time out within the classroom
- Monitoring of behaviour by the learning management team
- Creation of an individual pastoral plan to be reviewed with parents and senior management.
- Fixed-term exclusion
- Reminders of positive behaviour
- Leaving the lesson and going into an isolation booth
- Detention after school
- Full day in an isolation booth
- Modified timetable
- Missing playtime

## **2.6: How is disruptive behaviour linked with exclusions?**

The academic literature makes it clear that disruptive behaviour is a day to day occurrence within education, which creates difficulties in the school context for both, teachers and students. A good way of assessing how much of an impact disruptive behaviour has on schools, is by looking at exclusion data, as exclusions represent the most extreme form of punishment a school can give for disruptive behaviour.

In the South Yorkshire and Humberside area 605 young people were permanently excluded (0.07% rate) and there were 59,170 fixed period exclusions (7.2% rate) in primary schools, secondary schools and special schools in the year 2016/2017. The rate of exclusions refers to the number of students who have been permanently or temporarily excluded compared with the overall student population within South Yorkshire and the Humberside. Of those permanently excluded, 225 were due to persistent disruptive behaviour (37%), this being the category with the most number of exclusions (DfE, 2018b).

If we look at the reasons for exclusion in the table below:

*Table 2: Reasons for exclusion UK*

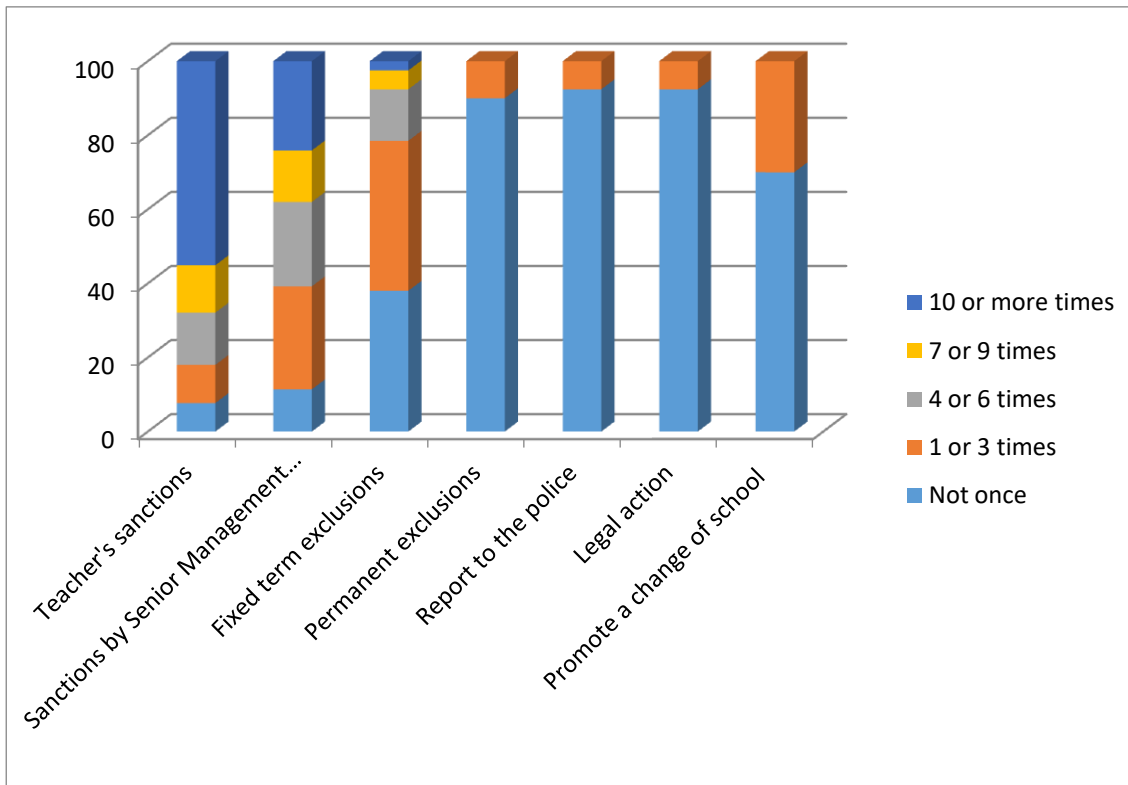
|   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Physical assault against a pupil                    | Drug and alcohol related        |
| Physical assault against an adult                   | Damage                          |
| Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil  | Theft                           |
| Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult | Persistent disruptive behaviour |
| Bullying  | Sexual misconduct               |
| Racial abuse  | Other                           |

I would argue that most of the descriptions above would fall under the umbrella of how DB is understood in the literature. “Verbal abuse, theft, bullying, physical assault” are all descriptions of behaviours that are represented on questionnaires that aim to measure DB or conflict in the classroom (e.g. Behaviour at school Study Teacher Survey (Sullivan et al, 2014), Discipline in Schools Questionnaire (Adey et al, 1991), Disruptive Behaviour Scale (Martino-Alvarez et al, 2016), School Violence Questionnaire (Alvarez et al, 2006). Also, going back to the definition used in the “what is disruptive behaviour” section of this literature review. The behaviours described in table 2 could be considered “off task” so they fit within the definition of DB. All behaviours stated above except sexual misconduct have been represented as descriptions of DB within the literature. Therefore, it is clear that behaviour that is considered disruptive by staff can lead to the exclusion of children from school.

In the Basque context, as has been stipulated, a child performing a behaviour that greatly harms coexistence could receive a temporary exclusion (up to 1 month) or a permanent exclusion but this is not the only outcome. From my own experience, exclusion is an outcome that is unlikely. Unfortunately, the Basque country education department does not produce data regarding reports for behaviours that greatly harm coexistence or any data on the number of exclusions in the region. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain to what degree DB in Basque Country classrooms is an issue and how it has been dealt with.

However, a study dealing with school coexistence in the Basque Country (Ararteko, 2006) explores this issue. The researchers interviewed 80 secondary school head teachers regarding disciplinary actions. The results are displayed in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Number of times during the school year 2004\2005 the following actions were taken. Percentage of answers by head teachers.



The Basque country has 337 secondary schools, providing education for 77,169 students. The previously mentioned study represented approximately 23% of all secondary schools in the Basque region in 2005/2006. Although this data is not ideal, it is the closest approximation that can be found. If we look at the results we can see that 90% of head teachers reported not permanently excluding any pupils during that year while 10% of head teachers reported permanently excluding 1 or 3 times. 40% of head teachers reported using temporary exclusion within the year 1 or 3 times while 38% reported not using temporary exclusions at all during the year. A small percentage 7.6% reported using temporary exclusions 7 to 10 times during the year. This data seems to imply that temporary and permanent exclusion are rare within the Basque Country's Secondary schools system. It is very difficult, to draw comparison between the data available for SY and the data available for B. B's figures referring to exclusion only represent self

reported information from head teachers and only in secondary schools. Due to the lack of official data looking at exclusions in the Basque Country it cannot be said for definite that exclusions in the Basque Country are lower than in SY but from the available information and my own experience of working in Biscay, that seems to be the suggestion.

It is important to highlight that a lot of children displaying DB will experience school exclusion. Research has shown that receiving one exclusion immediately puts a child at risk of receiving following exclusions and has been shown to have a negative effect on their academic achievement which in turn affects job prospects for them in the future (Carroll & Hurry, 2018).

### **2.7: How is disruptive behaviour linked with Special Educational Needs?**

DB has started to be understood as being part of SEN within the UK. The Code of Practice, referring to the SEMH category, states: “children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour” (DfEDoH, 2015, p.98). The code also speaks of children displaying DB as a possible representation of an underlying need not being met. Before the term SEMH was used it was known as Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD). These categories were initially an attempt to modernise schools’ and society’s perception of children who when displaying DB were generally considered to be “naughty” “sad, bad or mad” (Armstrong, 2014). SEBD was first recognised as a legal term within the code of practice in 2001 (DfE, 2001). The creation of these categories was an attempt to move the discourse forward, to stop seeing DB as due to children being naughty or bad, but as an expression of an underlying need that needed to be met instead.

It is important to note that those children classified as having SEMH needs are disproportionately represented on the exclusion data compared with other types of SEN or children that are not classified as having an SEN (DfE, 2018b). On the exclusion data from the academic year 2016-2017, pupils with identified SEN accounted for around half of all permanent exclusions (46.7%) and fixed period exclusions (45%) in England. Pupils on SEN support were 6 times more likely to receive a permanent exclusion than pupils without SEN support (DfE, 2018b).

Therefore, it is worth wondering how beneficial it is for children to be identified with SEMH if this category is supposed to make them be seen as children worthy of support and protection when adults have identified they have a Special Educational Need, but they are being disproportionately represented when it comes to school exclusions.

Teachers describe children identified as having SEBD as some of the most professionally challenging to deal with (Armstrong, 2014). This is probably linked to the fact that pupils' misbehaviour has been shown to have a negative impact on teachers' stress, wellbeing and confidence (Lewis, Romi, Qui & Katz, 2005).

The SEMH category has its detractors. Thomas and Glenny (2000) for example highlight the lack of papers regarding the prevalence, robustness and legitimacy of the term SEMH. They believe SEMH supports the subtext that the real cause of disruption is the child and stops systems from analysing their own practice. When professionals attribute DB, they tend to focus on within-child or family attributions and this is reinforced with the term SEMH which also places the school system as an afterthought. The notion of whose needs are being met, the need for calmness and order is not questioned, believing that the idea of meeting needs is benign even when it stands to reason that the need for order and calmness are the schools' not the child's. That is, the

placement of blame or responsibility within the child stops adults from thinking about the environment children are made to inhabit.

In contrast, Spain does not have a clear SEN category that represents children who are displaying DB. The closest approximation represented within the Basque education system is children who have been identified as having a Special Educational Need under the category of “Students from an unstructured or disadvantaged background” or “SEN due to great educational maladjustment” (BOPV, 1998). The first category refers to children who have been raised within a different culture to the Spanish one or are from disadvantaged backgrounds. This is considered a temporal SEN and the needs of the pupil will be met within mainstream education. The guidelines encourage schools to adapt the curriculum and methodologies in order to motivate and engage such students. The second category refers to children who are not yet adapted to the education system, e.g. because they come from a different country or because they were not previously in education. This is the official definition which does not really make it clear which observable issues the child may be experiencing, therefore leaving the category quite open to interpretation. These needs are supposed to be met within mainstream provision and the legislation highlights the importance of working with other agencies in meeting these children’s needs (social services, mental health services). Again, within this category schools are encouraged to be flexible with their planning, curriculum and methodology to meet these children’s needs. These two categories of SEN need in the Basque country seem to represent outside-child attributions, as the first category seems to imply more contextual or cultural issues while the second category points to school variables being the issue.

## **2.8: Why the focus on disruptive behaviour and why across nations?**

Cross cultural studies are important if we want to understand complex phenomenon. Different countries have different ways of responding to the same or similar problems, as we have established in this literature review. Comparative research can offer deeper understanding and different ways of perceiving and solving the same issue (Ember & Ember, 2000).

On this research I have decided to focus exploring teachers' understanding of DB in Biscay and South Yorkshire. My background as a bilingual researcher allows this. I have focused especially on DB as it is an easily translated term both linguistically and conceptually. This is an important consideration as other concepts, such as SEMH, do not have a simple linguistic or conceptual translation between England and Biscay, just as we have seen in this literature review.

The review of literature has highlighted that disruptive behaviour can lead to negative outcomes for children, such as exclusions from education and this is especially the case in the UK. In addition, DB itself is a broad term which may be understood differently by a variety of participants.

There is very little research that compares teachers' views and understandings of DB from different contexts. The present research would offer a further contribution to its understanding and use.

In order for us as Educational Psychologists, to understand fully the phenomenon of DB we have to be able to understand in depth how the people who deal with it on a daily basis, such as teachers, understand it. Having a deeper understanding of how DB is understood by teachers will allow us, as Educational psychologists, to challenge views if necessary, to seek better outcomes for children.



Finally, analysing two contexts with different laws and ways of dealing with DB from a legislative perspective is useful. As we know, the final outcomes for children in these two contexts is different, the UK has a higher rate of exclusion than does the Basque Country. This raises questions worth of investigation for example whether differences in teachers' understanding DB can explain differences in exclusion rates.

I believe a deeper understanding of how teachers understand DB will be helpful for Educational Psychologists. According to the theory of planned behaviour, an individual's attitudes towards a person or subgroup are highly likely to influence their subsequent actions (Gwernan-Jones & Robert, 2009; Ajzen, 1991). We have seen in this review of the literature how the concept of DB can be usefully viewed by looking at how it is perceived, attributed and acted upon. I believe it is useful to follow this same breakdown of the concept in my research. In regards to teacher's perception of disruptive behaviour, I think it will be useful to measure how disruptive teachers perceive certain behaviours to be. Although there is extensive research on this topic in the UK (DoES, 1989; Miller, 1996), it is outdated and there is very little within the Spanish literature. Furthermore, it will be key to analyse attributions of disruptive behaviour, again, there is research on this from the UK's perspective (Miller et al, 2002) but it is dated. The Spanish literature, on the other hand, has hardly explored attributions using qualitative methods. Finally, actions towards DB are relatively underrepresented in the literature. There are several studies from Australia (Clunies-Ross et al, 2008), as I have explored in the "actions towards disruptive behaviour" section, but there are not many studies looking at how disruptive behaviour is dealt with according to teachers in the classroom in the UK and Spain.

This literature review has mainly highlighted that although there are studies exploring all these aspects of DB, there are few to none that explore perceptions, attributions and actions of teachers together. Furthermore, there are none that do so as well as comparing

two contexts. The contribution of this research will be in exploring perceptions, attributions and actions while comparing Biscay and South Yorkshire teachers' understanding.

In accordance with this, my research questions for this thesis are going to be:

- How is disruptive behaviour perceived by primary school teachers in Biscay and South Yorkshire?
- What is disruptive behaviour attributed to by primary school teachers in Biscay and South Yorkshire?
- How do primary school teachers in Biscay and South Yorkshire respond to disruptive behaviour.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **3.1: Introduction**

In the methodology chapter I am going to first start by providing an overview of the methodological underpinnings for this thesis. I will then go on to describe the ethical considerations that were taken into account for this research and how they were resolved. This chapter continues with an in depth description of the participants who took part in the research and a breakdown of the research design. Furthermore, I will explore the methods used to gather data for the research. After this, I explore how the data was analysed, using qualitative and quantitative methods. The chapter finishes by providing information on how the time was managed and the overall strengths and limitations considering its quality and rigour.

### **3.2: Methodological underpinnings: Epistemology and ontology.**

Ontology is the study of reality whereas Epistemology studies the nature of knowledge and therefore what methods we use to gain that knowledge (Willig, 2013). This thesis is based on a mixed methods design. Mixed methods studies are defined as: “the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methodologies in a single study” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010, p 289). Therefore, a mixed methods study can yield both quantitative and qualitative data. This methodology provides a series of research benefits and limitations compared to only using one methodology.

It has been claimed that the downfall of mixed methods is the fact that by mixing two methodologies, the paradigms underpinning them will conflict with one another, and therefore their epistemology and ontology (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Three solutions have been suggested to this paradigm problem. A-paradigmatic stance could be taken,

ignoring the matter altogether and therefore ignoring epistemology and ontology. However, no research is paradigm free and therefore; it would be problematic not to address the issue. A multi-paradigm stance could also be taken, in which each part of the research would use a different paradigm, the problem with this is that in the literature, it is not made clear how paradigms are to be mixed and how to do so (Hall, 2013). Furthermore, it can be difficult to combine different epistemologies and ontologies in the same study. Finally, another possibility would be to select a single paradigm approach, which supports both qualitative and quantitative approaches, in this case pragmatism would be the chosen paradigm.

Pragmatism has gained support as a stance in mixed methods research (Feilzer, 2010; Johnson & Onwuegbuzier, 2004; Morgan, 2007). Pragmatism looks at “solving practical problems in the real world” (Feilzer, 2010). Truth in pragmatism is defined as “what works” in relation to the research that is being conducted. A pragmatic researcher will support using whatever philosophical or methodological approach that works best for the research that is being conducted (Robson & McCartan, 2011). Pragmatism ontology views reality as something that can be renegotiated, something that is constantly changing and is integrated in light of its usefulness (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Furthermore, pragmatism’s epistemological stand point is using the best method or methods that solve the problem at hand. Pragmatism believes in analytical eclecticism and methodological synthesis, which at times has led academics to believe that what pragmatism wants is to collapse epistemology and ontology into one (Feilzer, 2010). Pragmatism links the choice of approaches (epistemology) to the purpose and nature of the research (ontology) (Creswell, 2003).

I believe my research benefits from using a mixed methods approach, as it provides me with quantitative information that will help the research provide an overview of the situation and a wider description. I will then use qualitative methods to explore the

phenomenon in depth. Using mixed methods has allowed me to answer different types of research questions, such as exploratory and confirmatory questions. It has provided me with the possibility to make stronger inferences as I can go more in depth into the data using qualitative methods while being able to extend in breadth by analysing a bigger sample through the quantitative aspects of the research. Finally, using mixed methods has allowed me to explore questions looking at different viewpoints through the use of different types of data, both qualitative and quantitative.

This research will be a small scale comparative study looking at how teachers perceive, attribute and act towards disruptive behaviour. The study focuses on primary school teachers as this is the population that has been less studied in terms of their relationship with disruptive behaviour in the classroom in both South Yorkshire and Biscay. Furthermore, the data shows that permanent exclusions within the primary schools in South Yorkshire have remained the same while fixed term exclusions have increased (DfE, 2018b), which means there is clearly an issue around disruptive behaviour in primary schools. I also believe it is important to think about how this is understood within primary schools if we want to be able to prevent exclusions and change teachers' attitudes within secondary schools.

### **3.3: Ethics**

This research was subjected to an Ethical review from the School of Education (Sheffield University) in which an application was made describing the research and the materials that were going to be used (see appendix: approval letter). This Ethical review panel ensures that the research adheres to the ethical guidelines set up by the University of Sheffield. I also attended a Research Ethics & Integrity (Workshop) on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2017 in the University as part of my training. As part of the questionnaire I

included an information sheet and an informed consent section (see Appendix: information sheets and questionnaire).

This research upholds the ethical principles set up by the British Psychological Society in the Code of Human Research Ethics (2014). The first ethical principle is *Respect for the autonomy and dignity of people*. Psychologists value all people equally and we are sensitive to the perceived authority dynamics over possible participants in regards to their privacy and self determination (BPS, 2014). This research required its participants to agree to provide their informed consent. Before the research started, participants needed to read an information sheet describing the objective, what the research would entail and the possible effect on the participant, how the data was going to be stored and what would happen with the result of the research (see Appendix: information sheets and questionnaire). This research did not ask for personal or offensive information, I aimed to ask participants to provide me with just the information that was relevant.

The second ethical principle is *scientific integrity*. This refers to making sure that research is designed reviewed and conducted with quality and integrity. Research should contribute to the development of knowledge, if a research is poorly designed or conducted it undermines the participant's contributions. This research project has been approved by the University of Sheffield and has been supported by my supervisor throughout its development, ensuring that this research has quality and value.

The third ethical principle is *social responsibility*. Psychologists have a duty for the welfare of humans and therefore should always try to avoid unnecessary disruption for participants. Psychology aims to generate knowledge that supports positive outcomes for people. The aim of this research is to inform practice and to help professionals reflect on how to get better outcomes for young people by looking at differences and similarities between practice in two different countries.

The last ethical principle is *maximising benefit and minimising harm*. Psychological research should always aim to maximise benefits and minimise harm at all stages. As researchers we should consider our research from the point of view of the participant and therefore, how it can potentially affect them. In this research I have sought to avoid harm to participants by ensuring that the risk of harm is no greater than that encountered in ordinary life (BPS, 2014). As part of the research process, participants maintained the right to abandon the research at any point if they wished to do so. Participation was voluntary and contact details were provided for myself, my supervisor and the university ethics department in case any participant felt that they had been harmed in any way. Furthermore, participants remained anonymous through the research, they were not asked to provide their name and minimal personal information, they were only asked to specify their gender.

This research also adhered to the Data Protection Act (Data Protection Act, 2015). The Act regulates the processing of information relating to individuals; it regulates how to obtain, hold, use and disclose such data. This research complied with the eight principles stated on the Data Protection Act which are: Data was fairly and lawfully processed; data was used in its raw form, that way biases were avoided. Data was processed for limited purposes, it was clearly stated on the information sheet how data would be used for the research and what that involved. The data gathered was adequate and relevant, no more data than necessary was asked from participants. Data was up to date, the whole research project took around one year to complete, therefore, the data was still relevant and up to date. Data was not kept for longer than necessary, recordings and questionnaire responses were saved until the thesis was evaluated. The data was processed ethically and in line with the participants' rights. The data was secure at all times and not transferred to other countries without adequate protection. Data gathered

was securely stored using secure measures such as encrypting documents and protecting them with passwords.

### **3.4: Participants**

#### **3.4.1: Quantitative**

The sample for the questionnaire consisted of teachers from primary schools in the regions of Biscay and South Yorkshire. In total 68 responses were gathered; 30 from South Yorkshire and 38 from Biscay, please refer to Questionnaire results for a full breakdown of the participants' information.

All participants chose to participate in the study on a voluntary basis. They were presented with a consent form that was a prerequisite to completing the questionnaire (See appendix information sheets and questionnaire). The sample is non-probabilistic as it is small and will not provide the study with enough statistical power to generalise findings beyond the surveyed sample (Robson & McCartan, 2011). The sample size constraints were due to the time frame in which the research needed to be produced. Data gathering needed to take place between January and March 2018 and in between that time period there were 17 research days allocated, which is the time provided within the framework of the Doctoral course to do research related activities. For the research to be statistically significant, the questionnaire would have needed to be completed by around 260 to 350 people, based on the total population of around 4.774 teachers that teach in Biscay and South Yorkshire (DfE, 2018c; Eustat, 2017). To determine this I performed a Power Analysis (Statistics Solutions, n.d.) which allows researchers to determine the sample size needed to detect an effect, in this research case, a difference between two samples. This means the sample represented in this study comprises around 0.7% of teachers in South Yorkshire and Biscay. Therefore, this research will not have statistical significance and its results could not be taken as



generalizable to the wider population of these regions. The results of this study represent the participants who took part in the study and allows us get a better understanding of how those participants understand disruptive behaviour.

Participants were first contacted through email, the school's email address was taken from the primary school admission guide that provides contact details for all primary schools in a given area, these were sought for South Yorkshire. Schools were sent an email that read:

*“To whom it may concern*

Hello, my name is Raquel Avila. I am a trainee Educational Psychologist from Sheffield University. As part of my training I'm conducting a piece of research, and would be most grateful for your assistance with it. I'm exploring the concept of disruptive behaviour and how this may be understood by primary school teachers .

I would appreciate it if you could please circulate this email among your teaching staff?

This questionnaire should take up to 10 minutes of your time.

Thank you very much.

Raquel Avila

Trainee Educational Psychologist.

Link to the questionnaire: <https://goo.gl/forms/9fNtQOr5Rja6zJ9e2>”

Regarding participants from the Basque country, the same procedure was followed, using the webpage colegios.es, which provides contact details for all primary schools in Biscay. 350 emails were sent to schools in B and SY. Due to the fact that there was an especially poor response rate from Biscay, I decided to visit schools in person. I visited

six schools, I printed copies of the questionnaire which I left in the school's staff rooms with an envelope for staff to place their finished copies in. I then came back to the schools a couple of days later to pick up the completed questionnaires.

#### 3.4.2: Qualitative

In total I conducted six interviews, three in Biscay and three in South Yorkshire. Participants who completed the questionnaire were asked to provide their contact details if they wanted to participate in the interview, as otherwise I would have no way to contact them. This is because the questionnaire did not ask for personal information. Interview participants were chosen at random from those who provided their contact details. Seven participants from South Yorkshire and eight from Biscay provided their contact details. The names of the people who provided their contact information were allocated a number. Then using RANDOM.org participants for the interview were randomly selected. This allowed for a non-bias selection of the interviewees. I contacted the selected interviewees through email using the contact details they had provided and arranged a time and a place for the interviews. I met five of the participants in their schools and one of the interviews was conducted through Skype as requested by the participant.

#### **3.5: Overview of the experiment/design**

This research is set out to present a small scale comparative study looking at how disruptive behaviour is perceived, attributed and dealt with by teachers in primary schools within the South Yorkshire (UK) and Bizkaia (Spain) regions.

Before the research started, I did a pilot study. The pilot study followed the same structure as the final study but on a very small scale. It used the two forms of data collection, the questionnaire and an open ended interview. The questionnaire was tested for face validity by 12 trainee Educational Psychologist in the UK and by four primary

school teachers in Spain. Face validity is the idea that a question, is measuring what the researcher created it to measure. A series of mock interviews were also conducted in order to fine tune the interview schedule, one primary school teacher from Spain participated on this pilot. Doing the pilot study allowed me to fine tune the items that ended up being the main focus of the questionnaire, making sure they were specific and understandable. It also helped me develop the interview questions to make sure that they covered the research questions fully, looking at perceptions, actions and attributions.

This research had two phases.

#### 3.5.1: Phase 1: Questionnaire

The final version of the questionnaire was devised using the feedback and reflections from the pilot study, please see appendices to see the full questionnaire. The questionnaires aimed to gather information regarding research questions one and three (perception of disruptive behaviour and how it is dealt with). Data from the questionnaire was analysed quantitatively using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentages) and qualitatively using Applied Thematic Analysis (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012) for further information on the analysis please see “data analysis” section.

#### 3.5.2: Phase 2: Interview

A structured interview was developed using feedback from the pilot mock interviews and discussions with my research supervisor, see the interview section in methods for further details. Interviewees were selected randomly from those participants who had provided their contact details during the questionnaire. Six interviews were conducted in total, three in South Yorkshire and three in Biscay.

The following table shows a breakdown of how the different phases of the research connect with the research questions, which methodology was used to address the questions, how it was analysed and the number of participants.

*Table 3: overview of the research*

| <b>Research question</b>  | <b>Method used to address it</b>   | <b>Analysis</b>  | <b>Participants</b>  |
|---|--|--|--|
| How is disruptive behaviour <u>perceived</u> by primary school teachers in Biscay and South Yorkshire?      | <i>Questionnaire:</i><br><br>Bull's eye section  | <i>Quantitative:</i><br><br>Frequency, percentages and Mann-Whitney U Test | 68 participants in total, 30 from South Yorkshire and 38 from Biscay |
|   | <i>Interview:</i><br><br>-How would you define disruptive behaviour in the classroom?<br><br>- What do you think is the effect of disruptive behaviour in the classroom?<br><br>- Can you give me examples of disruptive behaviour you have experienced in your classroom? | <i>Qualitative:</i><br><br>Applied Thematic Analysis                       | 6 interviews in total, 3 in South Yorkshire and 3 in Biscay          |
| What is disruptive behaviour <u>attributed to</u> by primary school teachers in Biscay and South Yorkshire? | <i>Interview:</i><br><br>- Why do you think these behaviours happen in the classroom?<br><br>- Do you think environmental factors influence disruptive behaviours?<br><br>- Do you think people's responses influence disruptive   | <i>Qualitative:</i><br><br>Applied Thematic Analysis                       | 6 interviews in total, 3 in South Yorkshire and 3 in Biscay          |

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  | behaviour?   |  |  |
| How do primary school teachers in Biscay and South Yorkshire <u>respond to disruptive behaviour?</u> | <i>Questionnaire:</i><br><br>How disruptive behaviour is dealt with section  | <i>Quantitative:</i><br><br>First analysed using Applied Thematic Analysis. Codes were displayed using frequency and percentages and Z score for two population proportions was used to determine significance | 68 participants in total, 30 from South Yorkshire and 38 from Biscay |
|  | <i>Interview:</i><br><br>-What do you think can be done about disruptive behaviour in the whole class setting, in the whole school setting and in the whole country? | <i>Qualitative:</i><br><br>Applied Thematic Analysis   | 6 interviews in total, 3 in South Yorkshire and 3 in Biscay          |

### **3.6: Method**

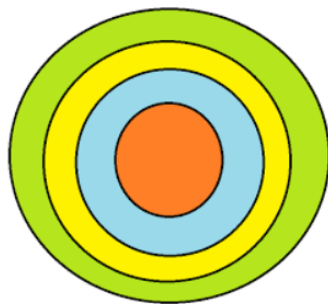
#### **3.6.1: Questionnaire**

The questionnaire began by asking participants for informed consent (See appendix: information sheets and questionnaire). Informed consent is valid when the participants “consent freely to the process on the basis of adequate information” (BPS, 2014). The questionnaire was divided into three sections, the first section asked participants to provide some basic information. The second section looked at how participants perceived specific disruptive behaviours in light of their seriousness and the last section asked participants to provide details into how they would deal with those disruptive behaviours within their classrooms.

The second section of the questionnaire used a graphic design, displaying a bull's eye to measure how serious teachers perceived certain disruptive behaviours to be. The reason behind this choice was to minimise the possible interference that language could have created when completing the questionnaire (Gotzen, Badia & Castelló 2007; Badia, 2001). Previous studies have alerted to the likelihood of bias when presenting scaled questionnaires around pupils' behaviour to the teaching population. Presenting the questionnaire through a visual design allows participants to express their views on how "serious" a behaviour is without having to classify it by using words (Gotzen et al, 2007). This is how this graphic design was used:

*Figure 3: Bull's eye.*

Please situate in the bull's eye the behaviours that are present in the column. Imagine that you observe one instance of these behaviours in isolation. Those behaviours that are most disruptive will be placed on the centre of the bull's eye and those that are less disruptive are farther away from the centre of the bull's eye, if any of them are not disruptive at all, you could place it outside the bull's eye.



**Throw or break small things when angry**

The child throws a pen into an empty space; the child breaks his/her work; the child breaks his/her pencil.

- Orange
- Blue
- Yellow
- Green
- Outside the bulls eye.

This part of the questionnaire, deals with teachers' perception of disruptive behaviour which is in line with my first research question "How is disruptive behaviour perceived by primary school teachers in Biscay and South Yorkshire?". This part of the

questionnaire presents participants with a bull's eye formed of four concentric circles (Gotzen et al, 2007). Participants were then presented with a series of behaviours that they needed to locate within the bull's eye depending on how disruptive they considered these behaviours to be, the more disruptive the closer the behaviour was placed to the bull's eye. If any of the behaviours were considered by the participants to be not disruptive at all, they could place them outside the bull's eye.

The third part of the questionnaire presented teachers with the same behaviours and they were asked to provide a supportive strategy or a disciplinary action the participants would perform if an instance of the behaviour occurred in their classroom. I decided to make a differentiation between supportive strategy and disciplinary action as I wanted to be able to capture as much of a breadth of action as possible. This section presented open ended questions and participants could write as much as they wanted.

*Figure 4: How disruptive behaviour is dealt with*

## How disruptive behaviour is dealt with

---

Please write down which supportive strategy or disciplinary action you would perform for the following behaviours. You do not need to complete options for each behaviour, if you think a behaviour does not need/require a supportive strategy or a disciplinary action you could leave it blank.

---

Throw or break small things when angry: Supportive strategy

Long-answer text

---

Throw or break small things when angry: Disciplinary action

Long-answer text

---

### 3.6.2: Interview

A structured interview schedule was developed using insight from the literature review and the pilot study. The interview schedule directly related to the research questions, as shown in the overview of the research table. Questions aimed to elicit responses around teachers understanding of disruptive behaviour, how they attribute disruptive behaviour and how they react to it. To see the interview schedule please see below within this section. Five out of the six interviews were conducted in schools, one was conducted through Skype, all the participants taught at different schools. The interviews lasted around 30 minutes. From the South Yorkshire participants, two were SENCOs and one was a Newly Qualified Teacher. From the Biscay Sample, two of the participants were part of the senior management team and one taught a Y4 classroom. This is the interview schedule that was used during the interview, sometimes I asked further questions to clarify some points or to expand, so these were the starting questions:

- ▶ How would you define disruptive behaviour in the classroom? (Relates to 1<sup>st</sup> research question, perception)
  
- ▶ What do you think is the effect of disruptive behaviour in the classroom? (Relates to 1<sup>st</sup> research question, perception)
  
- ▶ Can you give me examples of disruptive behaviour you have experienced in your classroom? (Relates to 1<sup>st</sup> research question, perception)
  
- ▶ Why do you think these behaviours happen in the classroom? (Relates to 2<sup>st</sup> research question, attributions)
  
- ▶ Do you think environmental factors influence disruptive behaviours? (Relates to 2<sup>st</sup> research question, attributions)



- ▶ Do you think people's responses influence disruptive behaviour?  
(Relates to 2<sup>st</sup> research question, attributions)
  
- ▶ Do you think the characteristics of the child influence disruptive behaviour? (Relates to 2<sup>st</sup> research question, attributions)
  
- ▶ What do you think can be done about disruptive behaviour in the whole class setting, in the whole school setting and in the whole country?  
(Relates to 3<sup>rd</sup> research question, actions)

### **3.7: Data Analysis:**

#### 3.7.1: Quantitative data

The Quantitative data provided by the questionnaire was analysed using descriptive statistics first (frequency and percentages). See table below for an example and appendix F for all the data:

*Table 4: e.g. of descriptive statistics analysis of perceptions*

#### Perceptions: Bull's eye

| Item:                 | Throw or break small things when angry |             |        |             |
|-----------------------|--|-------------|--------|-------------|
|                       | South Yorkshire                        | Percentages | Biscay | Percentages |
| Orange/ most serious  | 3                                      | 10%         | 5      | 13,5%       |
| Blue                  | 6                                      | 20%         | 15     | 40,5%       |
| Yellow                | 7                                      | 23,3%       | 12     | 32,4%       |
| Green/ less serious   | 12                                     | 40%         | 4      | 10,8%       |
| Outside of bull's eye | 2                                      | 6,7%        | 1      | 2,7%        |
| Number of responses   | 30                                     | 100%        | 37     | 99,9%       |

The first part of the questionnaire, the bull's eye was analysed by looking at how many people placed the behaviours in which part of the bull's eye, the closer to the bull's eye the more severe the behaviour was considered by the participants. Furthermore this data was also analysed using the Mann-Whitney U Test. The Mann-Whitney U test is used to compare differences between two independent groups (South Yorkshire and Biscay)

where the dependent variable is ordinal (degree of seriousness on the bull’s eye). This test allows us to see whether there is a significant difference in how serious the independent groups perceived an item to be. This descriptive statistics information (frequency) was used to do the Mann-Whitney U test using the SPSS programme which is a statistical analysis software programme.

The data generated by section 3 of the questionnaire (actions) once analysed qualitatively (see section 3.7.2: Qualitative data, for further explanation), was further analysed as quantitative data. See an example below and refer to appendix F for all the data.

Table 5: e.g. of descriptive statistics analysis of actions

**Actions: Qualitative part of the questionnaire**

| Item:              | Throw or break small things when angry |             |        |             |
|--------------------|--|-------------|--------|-------------|
|                    | South Yorkshire                        | Percentages | Biscay | Percentages |
| Remind of rule     | 8                                      | 12,3%       | 12     | 16,2%       |
| Punishment         | 12                                     | 18,4%       | 7      | 9,4%        |
| Involve parents    | 3                                      | 4,6%        | 2      | 2,7%        |
| Talk to the child  | 12                                     | 18,4%       | 17     | 22,9%       |
| Reparation         | 9                                      | 13,8%       | 20     | 27,0%       |
| Remove             | 5                                      | 7,6%        | 2      | 2,7%        |
| Offer help         | 15                                     | 23,0%       | 8      | 10,8%       |
| Alternative action | 1                                      | 1,5%        | 6      | 8,1%        |
| Total codes        | 65                                     | 99,6%       | 74     | 99,8%       |

When a participant was asked to describe what actions they would undertake depending on what DB they encountered, many participants described more than one action. For example, one participant from SY when asked how they would act towards throw or break things said: *“Give the child time to calm down before discussing what made them angry verbally or using a visual prompt to share feelings”*. This action was coded as both offer help (*“give the child time to calm down”*) and talk to the child (*discussing what made them angry*). Participants reporting more than one action within their responses was quite common. Therefore, I decided to focus on what codes were

represented within the data rather than equate codes to particular participants as I felt that would not provide the same depth to their responses.

Furthermore this data was also analysed using Z scores for two population proportions. The Z score for two population proportions test allows us to see whether two populations (South Yorkshire and Biscay) differ significantly on a categorical characteristic (the amount of times a certain code was reported). This test was also performed using SPSS.

### 3.7.2: Qualitative data

The thesis has two sources of qualitative data; the first was the third part of the questionnaire and the second was the interviews. Both data sources were analysed using Applied Thematic Analysis (ATA) (Guest et al, 2012).

ATA is a method that is independent of theory and epistemology and can be applied across a range of theoretical and epistemological approaches (Guest et al, 2012), making it ideal for this research taking into account my pragmatic stance. ATA integrates methods from a variety of theories (grounded theory, phenomenology, positivism) synthesized into one methodological framework. ATA's approach is a rigorous, yet inductive, set of procedures designed to identify and examine themes from textual data in a way that is transparent and credible (Guest et al, 2012).

The main difference between ATA (Guest et al, 2012) and other forms of Thematic Analysis described by other authors such as Braun and Clarke (2013) is that ATA is a very eclectic approach that tries to use as many tools as possible to achieve a comprehensive analysis of the data. For example, other thematic analysis approaches dissuades researchers from using numbers when reporting their findings or making inter-coder reliability measures (Pyett, 2003). Both using numbers within your analysis

and using inter-coder reliability measures are part of ATA and were used in this research.

To analyse the qualitative aspect of the questionnaire I first thoroughly read the raw data and made notes of similar responses and what they had in common and how they were different. I, then, upon further reading, started to develop codes which were stored in a codebook (See appendix: code book for questionnaire). Each code had the following components, a label, a short definition a full definition and guidelines about when to use and when not to use them. Early in the analysis I was able to identify 16 codes (Know the child, prevent behaviour, talk about feelings, remind of rules, ignore, behaviour system, punishment, agency, discuss, time to calm down, provide attention, offer help, alternative action, involve parents, reparation, remove and physical restraint). These codes were effective in representing all the data set, however, some of the codes e.g. know the child, physical restrain were under represented in the data and therefore it was decided that those codes that weren't at least represented 10 times within the whole of the data set would be either merged into another code, or removed and just referenced within the results. That is how I ended up comprising the final codebook for this analysis. An example of how some of the codes were merged into new codes was "talk about feelings" and "discuss" turned into the code "talk to the child"; another example was how the codes "prevent behaviour" and "provide attention" merged into the code "offer help".

The final codes that were used for the third part of the questionnaire analysis were the following (For more detail please refer to appendix: codebook for questionnaire):

- Remind of rules: The adult is telling the child about the rules, what behaviour is expected and what is not acceptable.

- Punishment: The response implies the child is being punished for their behaviour
- Involve parents: The respondent tells parents about the behaviour of the child or involves them.
- Talk to the child: the respondent is talking to the child about their behaviour or their emotions.
- Reparation: The response implies that the child has to repair the consequences of his or her behaviour, this can be done through repairing relationships or fixing the consequences of their actions in some way.
- Remove: the child is being moved away from where they are in that moment, this can be by asking them to leave, asking them to take a time out or through team teach.
- Offer help: The adult is trying to provide some type of help to the child, this could be through a particular intervention such as social stories or by helping the child calm down.
- Alternative action: The adult is providing the child with an alternative way of behaving in order not to cause the undesired outcomes from the current behaviour.

Once the qualitative analysis was finished, I treated the data as if it was quantitative (as it has been explained in section 3.7.1: Quantitative data).

The interview analysis followed a similar procedure, but instead of the analysis being done manually, I used the programme Nvivo, which is a qualitative data analysis computer software package. Firstly, due to the amount of raw data I decided to segment the data so I separated the data based on participant's responses to the cluster of questions that referred to each research question (perception, attribution and actions).

To see which questions refers to each research question please see section 3.6.2: Interview. Once the information had been segmented, each segment was read in depth, this was both the raw data from the SY and the B interviews. This allowed me to start to develop some initial codes that were later expanded, renamed or moved to a different section of the analysis. I did not separate the analysis between SY and B as by analysing the information together I was able to develop codes that would represent all the data regardless of context.

For a breakdown of how the analysis changed throughout the process see appendix: interview analysis iterations. These variations were achieved through the process of reviewing the codes and the extract connected to those codes to make sure they were accurately represented. Once the final codes were set, I went on to develop a set of tables and figures which encapsulated all the essential information on the codes from the interviews (see table 14, 15 and 16 and figure 15, 16, 17 and 18), this time separating the analysis by context. For a further breakdown of these tables and figures see the “introduction” of Chapter 5.

### **3.8: Time management and logistics**

This research started taking shape in October 2016. Unfortunately, I had to take a leave of absence from March 2017 to June 2017 which delayed the research considerably. Regarding logistics, the thesis was mostly completed from the UK, the data gathering process regarding the questionnaire was done online. However, due to the poor initial response from Biscay I decided to make a one week trip to Biscay (12<sup>th</sup> of March 2018, to 16<sup>th</sup> of March) in order to meet with schools and explain my research in the hopes of acquiring more participants, I also performed the Biscay interviews during that time. For a full breakdown of the time frame, please see appendix: time management and logistics.

## Chapter 4: Questionnaire results

### 4.1: Introduction

In this chapter I will be analysing the responses from the questionnaire. For information on what research questions the questionnaire answers, refer to table 3: Overview of the research in the methodology chapter. The sample for the questionnaire were 30 participants from South Yorkshire (SY) and 38 participants from Biscay (B)

### 4.2: Section one

- What key stage do you teach?

Participants in SY were asked to choose from the following options: Key Stage 1 or Key stage 2. The spread was quite balanced, 51.7% of participants taught Key Stage 1 while 48.3% taught Key Stage 2. In B teachers could choose from the following options: Y1/Y2, Y3/Y4 or Y5/Y6 as in Spain there are 3 different Key stages within primary education. The responses were also even, 34.3% taught Y1/Y2, 31.4% taught Y3/Y4 and 34.3% taught Y5/Y6.

- How long have you been teaching?

Participants could select the following options: 0-2 years, 2-5 years, 5-10 years or more than 10 years. Both samples had a majority of participants that had been teaching for more than 10 years, 56.7% in SY versus 73% in B.

- What is your gender?

The last question asked participants to provide information about their gender. In both samples, the majority of respondents were female, 96.7% in the SY sample versus 91.9% in B.

### **4.3: Section two and three**

In section two participants were presented with a bull's eye (see figure 3: Bull's eye in the methodology chapter), they were asked to imagine that they observed a specific disruptive behaviour within their classroom (items), they then had to decide where they would place that behaviour within the bull's eye if the centre of the bull's eye represented the most disruptive behaviour they could imagine and the outside represented a behaviour that was not disruptive at all. Data was then compiled and frequencies were presented for each of the items as well as percentages. These frequencies and percentages represent the number of people who believed a certain behaviour was e.g. orange (very disruptive) or green (not very disruptive). I will be using percentages in my results analysis, for a complete breakdown of the data refer to appendix F. This data was also analysed using the Mann-Whitney U test; only significant p-values will be reported. As a way of being rigorous in the analysis, I will describe the data in this manner:

- If most of the variance is within the orange or blue area, this is interpreted as a behaviour that is perceived as **very disruptive**.
- If most of the variance is within the blue and yellow areas, this is interpreted as a behaviour that is perceived as **moderately disruptive**.
- If most of the variance is within the yellow or green areas, this is interpreted as a behaviour that is perceived to produce **low disruption**.

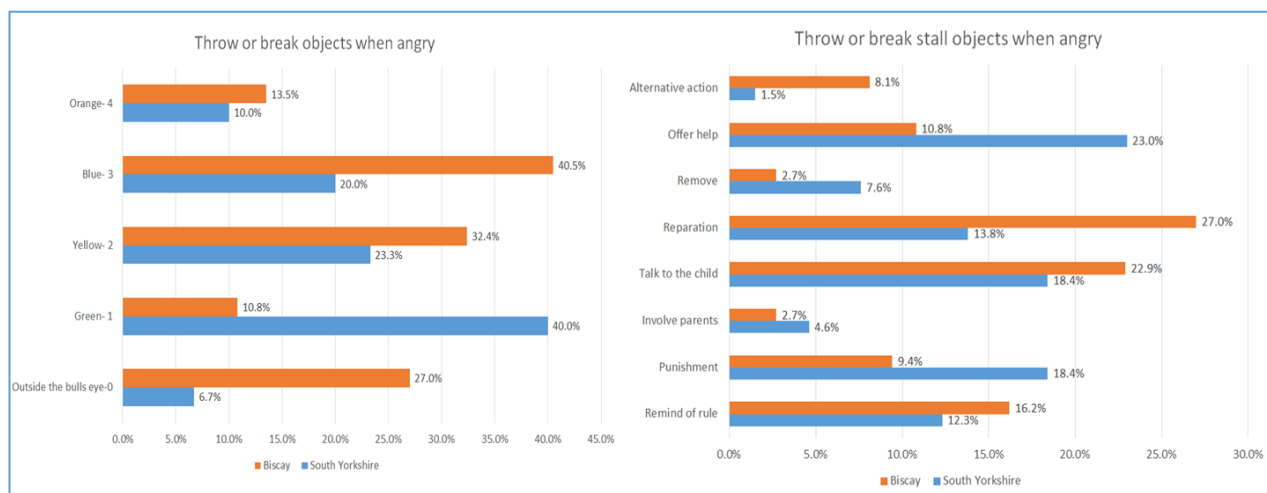
Participants were then moved on to section three in which they were presented with the same behaviours and were asked to provide information about what they would do as teachers if they observe an instance of such behaviour within their classroom.



This section was analysed using Applied Thematic Analysis, codes were created based on the responses provided. All the responses were coded, these were compiled and analysed quantitatively by using frequency and percentages as well as the Z score test for two populations, only significant p-values will be reported. For a further exploration of how the analysis was completed refer to section 3.7: Data analysis. This section of the questionnaire represents multiple response data; therefore, the results shown below represent the proportion of responses (codes) and not people. All the responses were coded using the same codes across all items with the exception of two items “Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant” and “Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is relevant” which added the code “ignore”, this was done as there was a proportion of the responses that would not have been coded otherwise in this items. The code “ignore” was not represented in other items. Results are presented comparing the South Yorkshire (SY) and Biscay (B) context.

#### 4.3.1: Throw or break small objects when angry

Figure 5: *Throw or break small objects when angry*



Teachers in B tend to perceive “throw or break small objects when angry” to be more disruptive than teachers in SY. 30% of participants in SY perceived the item to be within the very disruptive area of the scale (Orange/4 or Blue/3) versus 54% in B, which is a 24% difference. Using the Mann-Whitney test, this item presented with a p-

value of 0.013, which means that the difference between the way the two samples of participants perceive the behaviour is significantly different. Teachers in SY seemed to place this item more within the low disruption area, responses yellow or green. It is interesting to note that some participants in both regions thought this behaviour was not disruptive at all in the classroom. Regarding how teachers would respond to this behaviour. See table.

*Table 6: Throw or break small objects when angry*

|                          | South Yorkshire    |       | Difference |       | Biscay             |       |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-------|------------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| <b>Most represented</b>  | Offer help         | 23%   | 12.2%      | 13.8% | Reparation         | 27%   |
|                          | Talk to the child  | 18.4% | 4.5%       |       | Talk to the child  | 22.9% |
|                          | Punishment         | 18.4% | 9%         | 3.9%  | Remind of rule     | 16.2% |
| <b>Least represented</b> | Alternative action | 1.5%  | 6.6%       |       | Alternative action | 8.10% |
|                          | Remove             | 7.6%  | 4.9%       |       | Remove             | 2.7%  |
|                          | Involve parents    | 4.6%  | 1.9%       |       | Involve parents    | 2.7%  |

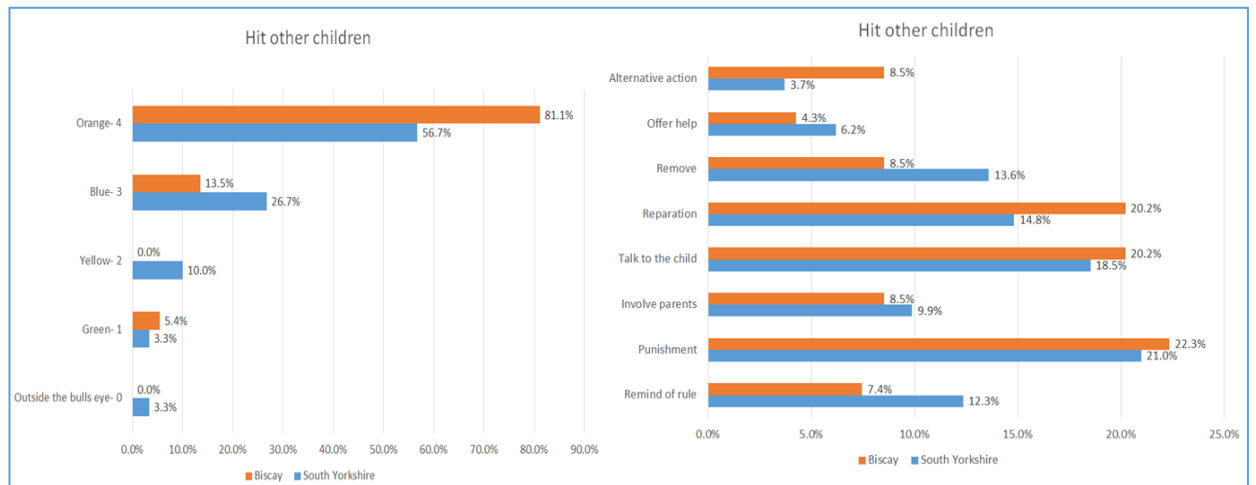
Summarising, it seems that the SY sample perceived the behaviour “throwing objects when angry” as creating low disruption, while in the B sample more than half of the participants perceived this item to be moderately disruptive. The way the two samples perceived this item was statistically significantly different.

Both samples of participant seemed to act towards this behaviour a bit differently, only one of the most represented codes were the same for both samples while the samples were quite in agreement about what actions they thought would not be as helpful (the least represented codes). In the SY sample we have responses such as “Give support with managing anger, calming techniques, stress ball, self-regulation strategies” which were coded as “offer help”, while the B sample seemed to be more represented by

responses such as “tidy up the objects or fix them up with their own efforts, tidy everything up and say sorry, fix the broken objects” which were coded as “reparation”.

#### 4.3.2: Hit other children

Figure 6: Hit other children:



“Hit other children” is perceived in both contexts as a very severe disruptive behaviour (81.1% for B and 56.7% SY). We can see that the responses from SY show more variance, having a number of responses in other areas of the Bull’s eye compared to B. Using the Mann-Whitney test, this item presented with a p-value of 0.031, which means that the difference between the way the two samples of participants perceive the behaviour is significantly different. Regarding how teachers would respond to this behaviour. See table.

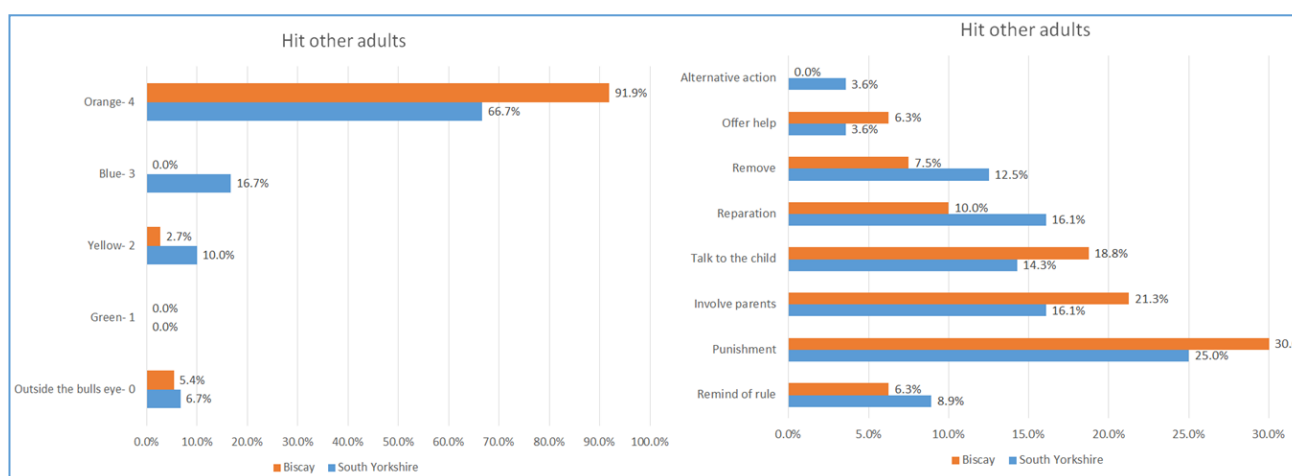
Table 7: Hit other children

|                          | South Yorkshire    |       | Difference |      | Biscay  |       |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-------|------------|------|---|-------|
| <b>Most represented</b>  | Punishment         | 21%   | 1.3%       |      | Punishment  | 22.3% |
|                          | Talk to the child  | 18.5% | 1.7%       |      | Talk to the child                                 | 20.2% |
|                          | Reparation         | 14.8% | 1.4%       |      | Reparation  | 16.2% |
| <b>Least represented</b> | Alternative action | 3.7%  | 3.7%       | 4.9% | Remind of rule                                    | 7.4%  |
|                          | Offer help         | 6.2%  | 1.9%       |      | Offer help  | 4.3%  |
|                          | Involve parents    | 9.9%  | 1.4%       |      | Involve parents<br>(remind of rule and<br>remove) | 8.5%  |

Both samples perceived the behaviour “Hit other children” as being very disruptive. The way they perceived this behaviour was statistically significantly different. The most represented codes for both samples were very similar. The SY and B respondents seemed to think punishment, talking to the child and reparation were the actions that they would perform if they saw an incident of this behaviour in their classroom. Examples of the responses for this item are the following: SY “Talk through incident with all children involved collectively and separately, social story/ comic strip work to discuss” (coded as talk to the child and offer help), B “he has to apologise and he would have to help the other child, do something positive for the child that he has hurt” (coded as reparation).

### 4.3.3: Hit other adults

Figure 7: Hit other adults



Hitting other adults is perceived in both contexts as a very severe disruptive behaviour (91.9% for B and 66.7% SY). We can see that the responses from SY show more variance again, having more responses in other areas of the Bull's eye compared to B. Using the Mann-Whitney test, this item presented with a p-value of 0.017, which means that the way the two sample of participants perceive the behaviour is significantly different. It is interesting to note those responses that place this behaviour outside the bull's eye, 4 participants in total from both contexts placed this behaviour there. Regarding how teachers would respond to this behaviour. See table:

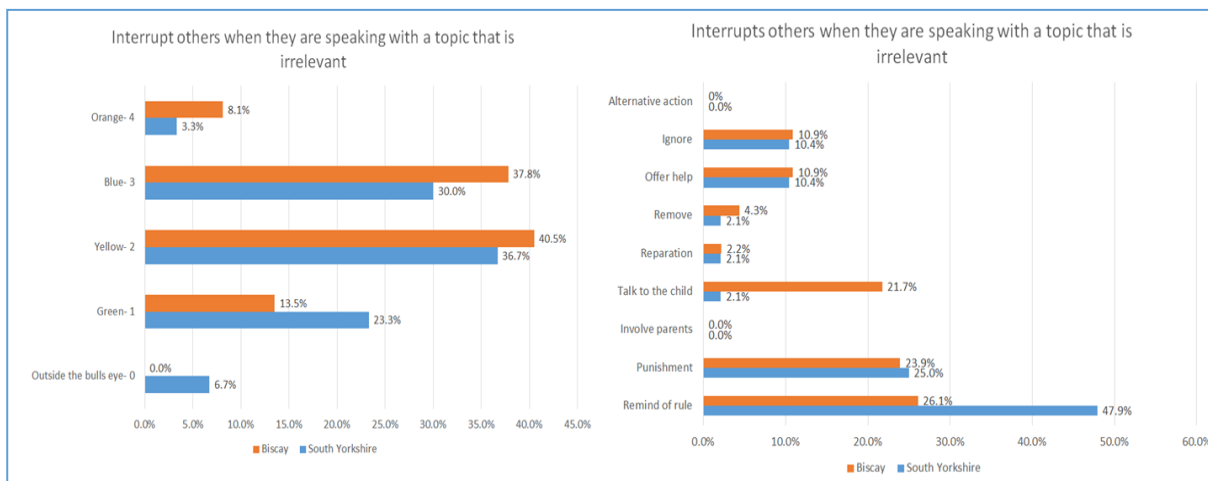
Table 8: Hit other adults

|                          | South Yorkshire    |       | Difference |      | Biscay             |       |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-------|------------|------|--------------------|-------|
| <b>Most represented</b>  | Punishment         | 25%   | 5%         |      | Punishment         | 30%   |
|                          | Involve parents    | 16.1% | 4.1%       |      | Involve parents    | 20.2% |
|                          | Reparation         | 16.1% | 6.1%       | 4.5% | Talk to the child  | 18.8% |
| <b>Least represented</b> | Alternative action | 3.6%  | 3.6%       |      | Alternative action | 0%    |
|                          | Offer help         | 3.6%  | 2.7%       |      | Offer help         | 6.3%  |
|                          | Remind of rule     | 8.9%  | 2.6%       |      | Remind of rule     | 6.3%  |

Both samples perceived the behaviour “Hit other adults” as being very disruptive. The way they perceived this behaviour was statistically significantly different. The most represented code for both samples was again punishment and both samples had involve parents as their second most represented code. Both samples were also in agreement with which codes were least represented. Responses for this item include: SY “Speak to parents, internal exclusion possible exclusion” (coded as involve parents and punishment), B “harsh sanction, inform the police if necessary” (coded as punishment).

#### 4.3.4: Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant

Figure 8: *Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant*



“Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant” was perceived by both samples as a behaviour that would be moderately disruptive. 78% of the B and 66% of the SY respondents reported this behaviour to be within the blue or yellow area. It is worth mentioning that a number of participants in SY placed this behaviour outside the Bull’s eye, meaning they considered it to be non-disruptive. Regarding how teachers would respond to this behaviour. See table.

Table 9: Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant

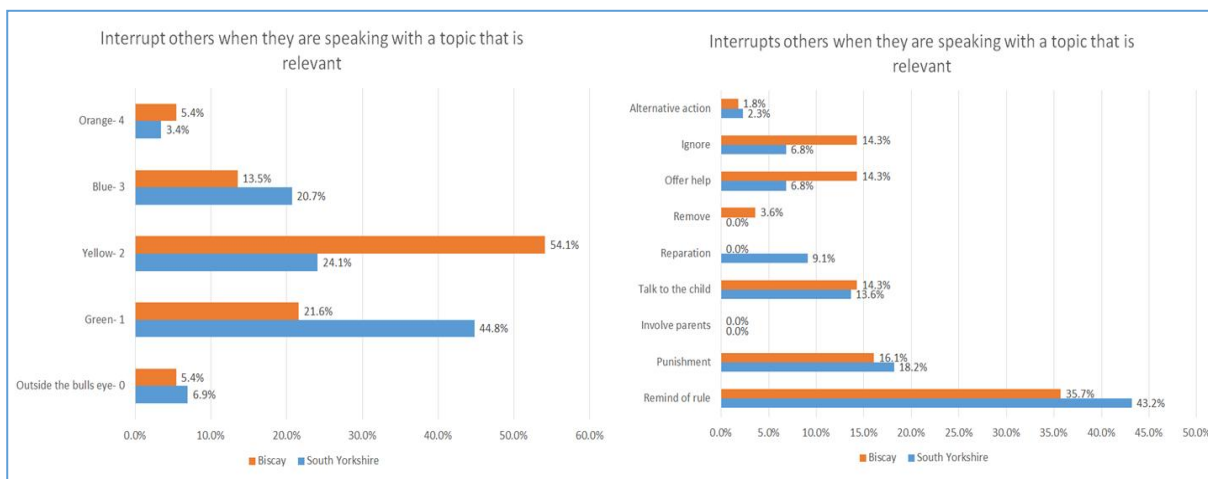
|                          | South Yorkshire |       | Difference and p-value |              | Biscay            |       |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-------|------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------|
| <b>Most represented</b>  | Remind of rule  | 47.9% | <b>21.8%</b>           |              | Remind of rule    | 26.1% |
|                          |                 |       | <b>0.0285</b>          |              |                   |       |
|                          | Punishment      | 25%   | 1.1%                   |              | Punishment        | 23.9% |
|                          | Ignore          | 10.4% | 0.5%                   | <b>19.6%</b> | Talk to the child | 21.7% |
|                          | Offer help      | 10.4% | 0.5%                   |              |                   |       |
| <b>Least represented</b> | Involve parents | 0%    | 0%                     |              | Involve parents   | 0%    |
|                          | Remove          | 2.1%  | 2.2%                   |              | Remove            | 4.3%  |
|                          | Reparation      | 2.1%  | 0.1%                   |              | Reparation        | 2.2%  |

Both samples perceived the behaviour “Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant” as being within the middle range of disruption. There was not significant statistical difference in the way this behaviour was understood by the two samples. The most represented code for both samples was remind of rule. It is interesting to note that there seemed to be two major differences between the codes that were recorded for SY and B, although for both samples remind of rule was the code most represented within the responses, for SY this was quite overwhelming with 47.9 of codes being represented by it. On the other hand, talk to the child was much more represented within the B sample (21.7% vs 2.1%). The difference between the amount of times Remind of rule was reported was statistically significant between the two samples as was talk to the child. Both samples seemed to agree on which codes were least represented. Examples of responses for this item include: SY “Discuss with the child why their behaviour is inappropriate. Consequences such as missing playtime for disrupting learning” (coded as remind of rule and punishment), B “Reflection after the fact, dialogue and ask him to walk a mile in his classmate shoes” (coded as talk to the child). As the reader can see, the talk to the child code implies the adult is actively

having a dialogue with the child, while the code remind of rule implies the adult stated what the behavioural expectation is rather than having a back and forth interaction.

#### 4.3.5: Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is relevant

Figure 9: *Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is relevant*



“Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is relevant” was perceived by SY as being a low disruption type of behaviour as 44.8% of teachers placed it on the green circle while 54% of B teachers decided to place it in the category above, Yellow, therefore seen it as more of a moderately disruptive behaviour. It is worth mentioning that a number of participants in both samples deemed this behaviour as non-disruptive (5.4% and 6.9%). Regarding how teachers would respond to this behaviour. See table.



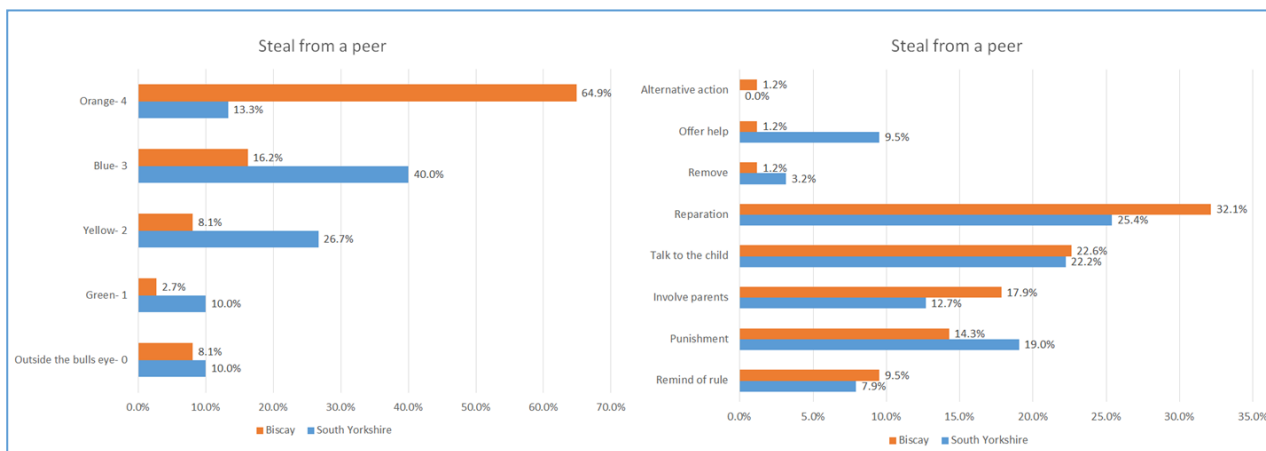
Table 10: Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is relevant

|                          | South Yorkshire    |       | Difference |            | Biscay             |       |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-------|------------|------------|--------------------|-------|
| <b>Most represented</b>  | Remind of rule     | 43.2% | 7.5%       |            | Remind of rule     | 35.7% |
|                          | Punishment         | 18.2% | 2.1%       |            | Punishment         | 16.1% |
|                          | Talk to the child  | 13.6% | 0.7%       |            | Talk to the child  | 14.3% |
|                          |                    |       | 7.5%       | Offer help | 14.3%              |       |
|                          |                    |       | 7.5%       | Ignore     | 14.3%              |       |
| <b>Least represented</b> | Involve parents    | 0%    | 0%         |            | Involve parents    | 0%    |
|                          | Remove             | 0%    | 3.6%       | 9.1%       | Reparation         | 0%    |
|                          | Alternative action | 2.3%  | 0.5%       |            | Alternative action | 1.8%  |

The SY sample perceived the behaviour “Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is relevant” as being within the low range of disruption while B seems to categorise it more within the middle range. The most represented code for both samples was again remind of rule followed by punishment. If we compare the results from the previous behaviour, which is very similar, the difference is that the topic is irrelevant. We can see that the B sample uses more the ignore code as well as offer help while the SY sample decreases their representation of these codes. In the responses from SY the code reparation was coded more when the topic was relevant while for B this is not a code that is represented. Both samples decrease their mentions of punishment when the topic is relevant and B uses more remind of rule. Examples of responses for this item are the following: “Child would be disciplined in line with the school behaviour policy” (coded as punishment) “Remind of hands up” (coded as remind of rule), B “Make him talk in front of the class and interrupt him” (Coded as punishment).

### 4.3.6: Steal from a peer

Figure 10: Steal from a peer



“Stealing from a peer” is perceived in the B sample as a very disruptive behaviour (64.9%). The SY sample seems to place it more within the moderately disruptive, 66.7% of participants placed this behaviour within the Blue and Yellow category. 10% of participants in SY and 8.1% B regarded this behaviour as not disruptive in the classroom. Using the Mann-Whitney test, this item presented with a p-value of 0.000, which means that the way the two sample of participants perceive the behaviour is significantly different. Regarding how teachers would respond to this behaviour. See table.

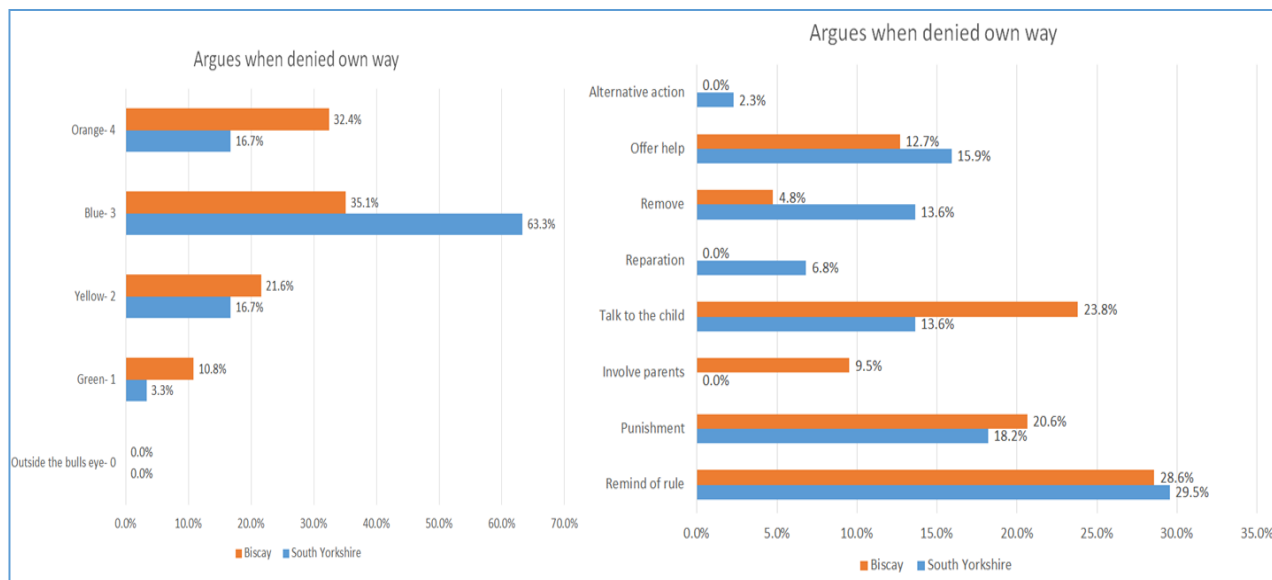
Table 11: steal from peer

|                          | South Yorkshire    |       | Difference |      | Biscay             |       |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-------|------------|------|--------------------|-------|
| <b>Most represented</b>  | Reparation         | 25.4% | 6.7%       |      | Reparation         | 32.1% |
|                          | Talk to the child  | 22.7% | 0.1%       |      | Talk to the child  | 22.6% |
|                          | Punishment         | 19%   | 4.7%       | 5.2% | Involve parents    | 17.9% |
| <b>Least represented</b> | Alternative action | 0%    | 1.2%       |      | Alternative action | 1.2%  |
|                          | Remind of rule     | 7.9%  | 1.6%       | 8.3% | Offer help         | 1.2%  |
|                          | Remove             | 2.3%  | 1.1%       |      | Remove             | 1.2%  |

The behaviour “Steal from a peer” was perceived as more severe by the B sample. The way the samples perceived this behaviour was statistically significantly different. The most represented code for both samples were reparation and talk to the child. Samples were different when it came to the third most represented code; SY had punishment while B had involve parents. SY also had a higher number of responses coded as offer help than B. Examples of responses for this behaviour were the following: SY “Discuss with head teacher. Communicate with parents. Agree upon appropriate consequence with all adults e.g. missing break times and lunchtimes” (coded as involve parents and punishment), “sorry to child, speak to parents, timeout at playtime” (coded as reparation, involve parents and punishment), B “Speak with him. Understand why he has done it. Find out what is missing in his house, ask forgiveness from the other pupil through a letter” (coded as talk to the child and reparation).

#### 4.3.7: Argues when denied own way

*Figure 11: Argues when denied own way*



“Argues when denied own way” is perceived by both samples as a very disruptive behaviour, 67% of the B and 80% of the SY sample places it within the orange and blue margin. It seems that SY sees this behaviour as more disruptive, as it does not have as

many responses within the blue margin. Regarding how teachers would respond to this behaviour. See table.

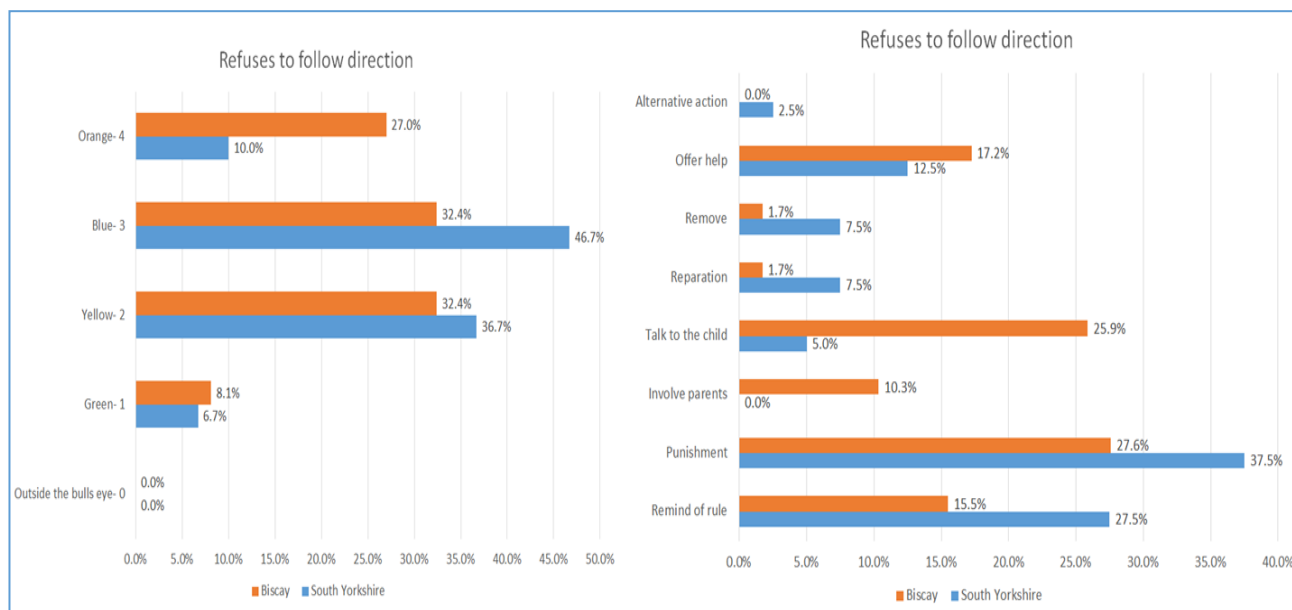
*Table 12: Argues when denied own way*

|                          | South Yorkshire    |       | Difference |       | Biscay             |       |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-------|------------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| <b>Most represented</b>  | Remind of rule     | 29.5% | 0.9%       |       | Remind of rule     | 28.6% |
|                          | Offer help         | 15.9% | 3.2%       | 10.2% | Talk to the child  | 23.8% |
|                          | Punishment         | 18.2% | 2.4%       |       | Punishment         | 20.6% |
| <b>Least represented</b> | Alternative action | 2.3%  | 2.3%       |       | Alternative action | 0%    |
|                          | Reparation         | 6.8%  | 6.8%       |       | Reparation         | 0%    |
|                          | Involve parents    | 0%    | 9.5%       | 8.8%  | Remove             | 4.8%  |

Overall it seems that the samples perceive “argue when denied own way” as being a very disruptive behaviour, the B sample however, had a bigger variance. The most represented code was the same for both samples, remind of rule. B had a bigger representation of the code talk to the child (10% difference). The SY responses were more varied, something to note is that the B sample reported involving parents in a number of occasion while that was not mentioned for the SY sample. Reparation and alternative action are codes that only appeared within the SY sample. Examples of responses for this item were the following: SY “Provide work around this outcome, possible SEN support plan outcome. Praise positive behaviour in class. Remind child of expectations” (coded as offer help and remind of rule), B “He has to understand through a dialogue that in the classroom he is not the one in command, tell his family” (Coded as talk to the child, remind of rule and involve parents), “Help him understand my reasons” (coded as talk to the child).

#### 4.3.8: Refuses to follow direction

Figure 12: Refuses to follow direction



The last item, “Refuses to follow direction” seems to be perceived as slightly more severely by the B sample as 27% of the participants placed this behaviour within the very disruptive band versus 10% in SY. The majority of SY respondents placed this behaviour within the blue band, they acknowledge this is a severe behaviour but would not recognise it as within the most severe band. Both sample perceived this behaviour as moderately disruptive. Regarding how teachers would respond to this behaviour. See table.

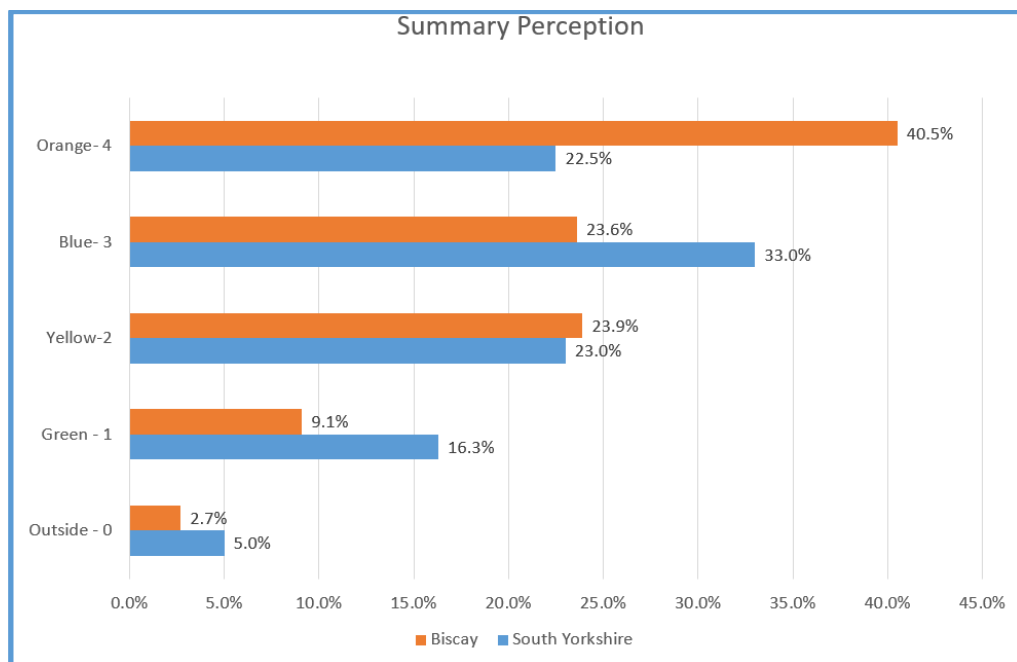
Table 13: Refuses to follow direction

|                          | South Yorkshire    |       | Difference and P-value       |                              | Biscay             |       |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| <b>Most represented</b>  | Punishment         | 37.5% | 9.9%                         |                              | Punishment         | 27.6% |
|                          | Remind of rule     | 27.5% | 12%                          | <b>20.9%</b><br><b>0.007</b> | Talk to the child  | 25.9% |
|                          | Offer help         | 12.5% | 4.7%                         |                              | Offer help         | 17.2% |
| <b>Least represented</b> | Alternative action | 2.5%  | 2.5%                         |                              | Alternative action | 0%    |
|                          | Talk to the child  | 5%    | <b>20.9%</b><br><b>0.007</b> | 5.8%                         | Remove             | 1.7%  |
|                          | Involve parents    | 0%    | <b>10.3%</b><br><b>0.035</b> | 5.8%                         | Reparation         | 1.7%  |

It seems the B sample perceived this behaviour to be more severe than the SY sample did, although both saw it as within the high range of severity. Both samples had as their most representative code punishment. One major difference between the two samples is the representation of the code talk to the child, within the B sample it represents 25.9% of the codes compared to 5% for SY this difference was statistically significant. The B sample also reported involving parents (10.3%) which was not coded for SY, this difference was also statistically significant. These are examples of the responses for this item: SY “I always follow through on the consequence laid out if the child still refuses to co-operate” (coded as punishment), B “First I need to know why he is refusing” (coded as talk to the child),” When he wants to take part in an activity he won’t be allowed to” (coded as punishment).

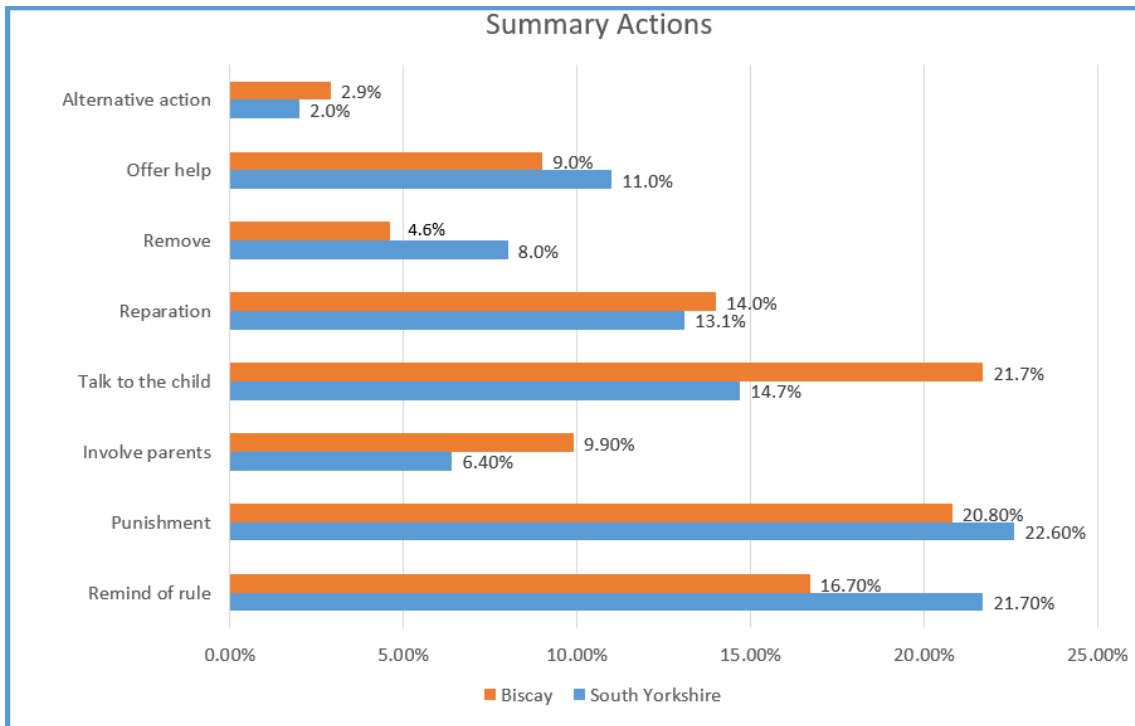
#### **4.4: Summary of data**

*Figure 13: Summary perception*



If we look at the overall data. It is clear to see that B tends to regard the behaviours that were presented on the questionnaire as more disruptive than the SY sample, with 40.5% of responses being placed within the orange circle which represents the most severe behaviour vs 22.5% for SY. The SY sample responses are more distributed through the different circles of the bull's eye. Furthermore, the Mann-Whitney U test indicates that four out of the eight behaviours listed on the questionnaire were statistically significantly perceived differently between the two samples, those are “throw or break objects when angry”, “hit other children”, “steal from a peer” and “hit an adult”. For the other behaviours there was not a statistically significant difference between the way SY and B perceive these behaviours to be; those are “interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is relevant”, “interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is relevant”, “argue when denied own way” and “refuse to follow directions”.

Figure 14: Summary actions



Regarding teacher’s reported actions when confronted with the behaviours that were presented on the questionnaire, the most representative codes overall for the SY sample are “punishment”, with 22.6% followed by “remind of rule” with 21.7% of the codes. The most representative codes for the B sample were “talk to the child” with 21.7% and “punishment” with 20.8%. The SY sample had more instances of the codes “remove” with 3.4% more representation than B and “offer help” with 2% more than B. The B sample represented more the code “involve parents” with 3.5% more than SY.

Using the Z score test, it appears that “talk to the child” (p- value 0.005) and “remove” (p-value 0.025) are the two codes that show a statistical significant. This means that the difference between the amount of time SY and B reported these two codes is statistically significant. B represented the code “talk to the child” more than SY and SY represented the code “remove” more than B.



## Chapter 5: Interview analysis and interpretation

### 5.1: Introduction

In this section I am going to present the analysis and interpretation of the interviews. This has been done using Applied Thematic Analysis (Guest et al, 2012), for further details refer to the methodology chapter. The analysis has been organised using the research questions (perception, attributions and actions). This analysis was assisted by the software programme Nvivo.

For each section, firstly, a visual representation of all the codes (see figure 15,16 and 17) and a table (see table 12,13 and 14) will be presented. Figures 15, 16 and 17 are visual representations of each of the section of the analysis (perceptions, attributions and actions).

Figures 15, 16 and 17 introduce the codes that were analysed for each context. The size of the font used for each code represents how present they were in the text (this is based on the coverage, see below for further explanation), the bigger the font the more coverage those codes had. Furthermore, some codes are amalgamated into groups (e.g. the code aggression and passivity is part of the group types of disruptive behaviour), this is represented either by arrows or by codes being placed underneath other codes.

On tables 12, 13 and 14 all the essential information of the analysis for each research question can be found. The table is broken down into the following columns:

- Code: This is the name of the code

-Interviews: Number of interviews in which the code is present, this is divided between Biscay and South Yorkshire

- Coverage: Amount of the overall transcript that is covered by this code. This is overall coverage from all the interviews in which this code is present for a certain context (B or SY). This measure was provided by the programme Nvivo.

- Content: How this code is represented within the data, what participants are expressing within the code

- Connected with: What other codes are being represented within the same area of the transcript.

The analysis then explores each code individually, providing extracts. If there is text in between “” this means that the text has been taken directly from the raw data. Extracts from the B interviews have been translated to convey the meaning in the most accurate way possible; translations are not literal but comprehensible, when there have been words that have a different meaning in Spanish or specific words that cannot be translated, there will be a box that provides a comprehensible explanation. Finally, there is an overall summary of the results for each research question.

## 5.2: Perceptions

Figure 15: Perceptions interview Biscay and South Yorkshire

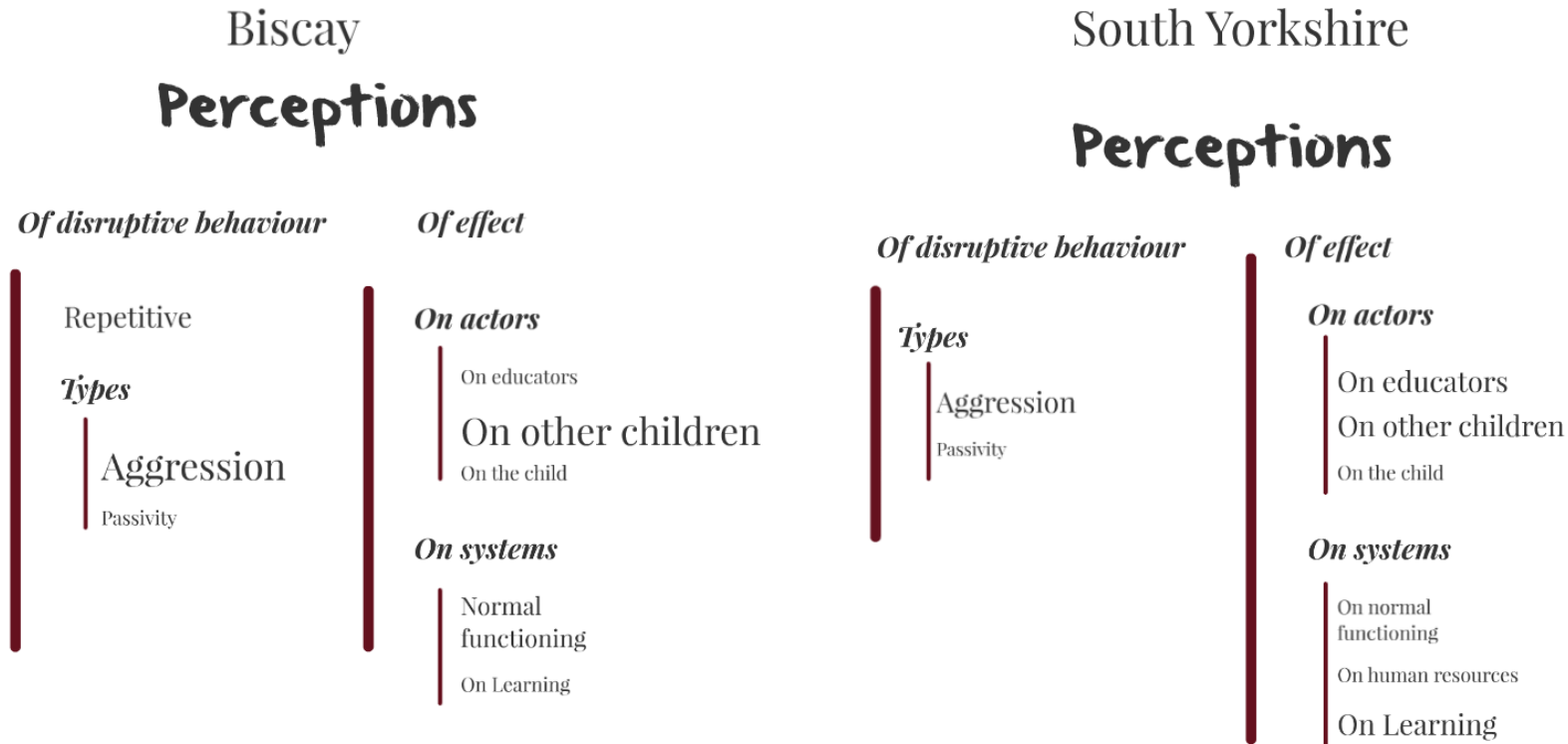


Table 14: Perceptions interview Biscay and South Yorkshire

| Code         | Interviews | Coverage | Content   | Connected with  |
|--------------|------------|----------|---|---|
| Repetition   | 2 B        | 3.1%     | DB turns more disruptive when it happens often  | -On normal functioning<br>-On learning<br>-Label  |
| Aggression   | 3 B        | 4.8%     | Physical violence towards peers, educators, family and objects, verbal violence towards peers and adults, threats of violence towards self, absconding. | - How the teacher responds<br>-Working with families<br>-Power and control<br>- Relationship child educator<br>- Support from other agencies<br>- Label |
|              | 3 SY       | 2.1%     | Verbal violence towards educators, peers and family and objects, physical violence towards peers and objects, absconding.                               | - Power control<br>- The child<br>- Psycho-emotional state<br>- On learning   |
| Passivity    | 1 B        | 0.5%     | This DB is seen as opposite of aggression, considered a dangerous DB.   | None  |
|              | 1 SY       | 0.4%     | The child is seen as introverted or passive and this is perceived as a DB.  | None  |
| On Educators | 1 B        | 0.6%     | DB as annoying to the Educator, DB as “arm wrestle”, there is going to be consequences for the educator if arm wrestle is lost.                         | - Power and control   |
|              | 2 SY       | 1.4%     | DB as creating frustration because of its effects. DB as affecting teachers’ ability to teach.  | - Understanding of behaviour<br>- On learning   |

|                       |      |      |  |  |
|-----------------------|------|------|--|--|
| On other children     | 3 B  | 4.6% | DB affects other children's attention, engagement in lessons. Other children becoming "accomplices" in DB. Struggle of prioritising the classroom. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relationship child educator</li> <li>- Talking</li> <li>- Calming down</li> <li>- Power and control</li> <li>- Boredom</li> </ul>                 |
|                       | 3 SY | 1.9% | Effect DB has on other children emotions. Other children may not understand the DB.  | None   |
| On the child          | 1 B  | 0.5% | DB impacts on the child's learning and academic development.   |  |
|                       | 2 SY | 0.6% | DB impacts on the child's emotional state.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On Learning</li> <li>- Psycho-emotional state</li> </ul>  |
| On normal functioning | 3 B  | 2.6% | DB impacts on the "rhythm" of the class, strong sense of normal functioning.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Immediate action</li> <li>- Power control</li> <li>- Boredom</li> <li>- How teacher responds</li> <li>- Repetitive</li> <li>-The child</li> </ul> |
|                       | 2 SY | 0.5% | DB impacting on the "climate" and "atmosphere" of the classroom.   | - On learning  |
| Human resources       | 1 SY | 0.4% | DB impacting on the number of adults in the classroom.   | None   |
| On Learning           | 3 B  | 0.6% | DB stopping the learning and affecting children's academical achievement   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repetitive</li> <li>- On the child</li> </ul>   |
|                       | 2 SY | 1%   | DB makes learning not be a priority in the classroom. DB makes teachers loose the flow of learning   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aggression</li> <li>- On educators</li> <li>- On the child</li> <li>- Normal functioning</li> </ul>   |

## **Perception of disruptive behaviour:**

### **Repetitive:**

*B: "If it is one after the other it means he wants to annoy, if he gets up once because he wants to pick something up or whatever, this is a low level disruptive behaviour, when it is repetitive it is no longer low level, we are speaking about a different level" M.*

This code is present within two interviews from B. Teachers imply that the fact an unwanted behaviour appears repetitively within the classroom means it turns it into a more problematic behaviour. It is interesting that there is no mention of DB as being repetitive within the SY sample and yet "Persistent disruptive behaviour", meaning repetitive, is one of the reasons for exclusion within the UK (Education Act, 2002). The idea that a behaviour becomes more disruptive if it is repetitive is logical as it would mean the more repetitive this behaviour is the more time would be taken out of learning behaviours both for the teacher and students.

### **Types:**

#### **Aggression**

*B: "It happens to us with a child that even threw a table because of how violent he became" C.*

*SY: "Or it can be more extreme, arguing fighting answering back, those sorts of behaviours as well" G.*

This code was present in all the interviews, both B and SY. Within the code participants spoke of physical and verbal violence, threats of violence towards self, absconding etc.

Within the interviews, when it came to what teachers perceived as being disruptive behaviour, most of the examples that were given as well as the descriptions, related to aggressive behaviours. It is interesting to note that within both groups of participants

there was mention of aggressive behaviour happening in the home as well, meaning that the disruptive behaviour that a child could show in school was not reserved only for this environment. Within the B participants there seemed to be an awareness of how serious aggressive behaviour within the home had become in the last decade. TV programs in Spain such as “big brother” portray child to parent violence and seek to address it. Teachers from B also spoke of a document that had been produced by the Basque Country Educational Department detailing a protocol schools should follow in cases of child to parent violence (Pereira, Montes, Ibarretxe & Agraña, 2012).

Furthermore, DB as aggressive behaviour seemed to be the strongest conception of what DB looks like for participants, this stands in contrast with some of the literature regarding DB. For example, in an article by Rivas, 2009 in which 407 teachers and trainee teachers were surveyed the most frequent DB that was reported was chatting in class, entering class late, students regularly going to the toilet and students preparing to leave early.

### Passivity

*B: “We now have a child that is 5, it is like he has invisibility. This is a disruptive behaviour that is very dangerous, if the child could, he would disappear from existence”*

*M.*

*SY: “It can be different levels. It can present in different ways, so you can have some children that e... might be passive, like introvert, acting in behaviours so really shut down”* N.

This code was present in one interview from B and one interview from SY. It was noteworthy to find these descriptions as part of teachers understanding of disruptive behaviour. Within the literature there is not normally mention of behaviours such as the ones described in this code, being linked with the concept of DB. The representation of

this code within the analysis in comparison with the code “Aggression” was small, however, it shows that there are broader understandings of what is considered disruptive in the classroom. This code seems to imply that not engaging in the classroom or not adhering to the normal functioning of the classroom can be perceived as a DB.

### **Perception of effect**

#### **On actors:**

#### **On educator:**

*B: “There is a low level disruptive behaviour which is simply annoying” M*

*SY: “Obviously, you become frustrated. Obviously because you have put the displays and the resources out and you don’t want them breaking. Just things like that really” E.*

This code was present in one interview from B and two from SY. It seems that DB affects educators in different ways not only does it impact on their ability to teach but it also affects them emotionally, feeling frustrated and annoyed. This in the long term can lead to what is described as burnout (Hastings & Bham, 2003). Furthermore, literature tells us that when teachers are stressed or insecure, their interactions with children become less effective (Ramvi, 2010), which could relate to another code that is going to be presented later on, child-educator relationship.

Within the quote from E, we can see how for her DB can lead to frustration as her efforts are made futile, the DB seems to be looking down on her efforts.

Furthermore, one of the participants from B describes DB in the classroom as being an “arm wrestle” between her and pupils: *“Because what they are doing is an arm wrestle in a way. They are testing how far they can go (with you). And of course, it is not going to be good for you if you don’t know how to stop it. In regards to his peers, it is not going to be good for you either because they are going to realise” M.*



This again seems to be referring to the emotional toil DB can have on educators. If you do not stop it in the classroom you are going to see further DB and it implies that other pupils may see that you are weak as a teacher and will try to in turn “arm wrestle” with you for power or control. Finally, we can also see within the SY interviews how DB can have an effect on teachers’ ability to teach, which in turn impacts on students’ learning.

On other children:

*B: “Specially this behaviour is affecting those who want to pay attention in the class” C.*

*SY: “The flip side is the impact on the other children there as well, and what impact that has. So, like for example, the wall instance, he was removed from the other children so they didn’t have to suffer that, see that, because we have some sensitive children as well” G.*

This code was present in all the interviews both from B and SY, however, the code seems to be more prevalent within the B interviews (4.6% coverage vs 1.9%). Participants took two very distinct approaches to speaking about how DB impacts on other children. While participants from B spoke of the impact on their learning and engagement with the classroom, participants from SY only made references to the emotional impact observing DB can have on other children.

One of the participants from B reported that she struggles with prioritising the class when a child displays DB: *“Here the inspectors tell you that you have to prioritise the classroom, I in a lot of times don’t agree. Because, of course, if I prioritise the classroom is all good, if I have 22 students and I is the one that is... but that one... If we don’t try to fix that child, he will always be like that” C.* It seems that there is acknowledgement that the class as a unit is more important than the individual pupil that is displaying the DB. However, in this quote we can also see the idea that the child is broken and unless there is an action that will “fix” the child, the DB will continue.

This implies the problem is within the child, something that will be discussed within the attribution section. Overall however, the teacher is implying that there needs to be an action from the school to try to address the situation. Furthermore, this idea of the needs of the many being more important than the needs of the few is quite common and is used within the UK to justify exclusions (Thomas & Glenny, 2000).

Furthermore, the same participant from B also spoke of how children who display DB will seek out accomplices: *“Of course he is alone, and because he is alone, he needs accomplices. what he does is seek out, seek out complicity”* C. This implies that children who display DB do not want to do it in isolation. This could be related to the idea within Functional Behavioural Assessment (Alter, Conroy, Mancil & Haydon, 2008) of the purpose of behaviour being: gaining attention, in this case from peers.

It is interesting to note, however, the word that has been chosen to express this idea: “Accomplices”, which is defined by the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language (RAE) as: “Participant or associate on a crime” (“Complices”, RAE online, 2018). This, based on the word’s definition in Spanish, links the idea of DB with the concept of a crime. This quote also seems to imply that DB is a group activity and that the child wants to do it with his or her peers.

#### On the child:

*B: “The first one that is negatively affected is him, that he is not capable of following the teaching and learning process. Then it is difficult or at least more difficult for him to achieve the minimum requirements, or that he achieves an appropriate competency development \*, it is complicated firstly for him” P.*

\* In the Basque Country as in many parts of Spain the way of evaluating pupils learning is using competences. Therefore, if a pupil does not make an appropriate competency development this means they are not achieving their expected grade.

*SY: “Also that impact that is going to have on that child, because is going to take them a while to calm down” G.*

This code was present in one interview from B and two from SY. Again this code seems to be presented very differently by the participants. The B participant talks about the impact DB has on children’s learning and future academic development, while SY focuses on the effect DB has on children emotional state. Within the last years several intervention programs focusing on emotional literacy and emotional regulation have been developed in the UK. One of the most well known is SEAL (Humphrey, Lendrum & Wigelsworth, 2010), two of the participants from SY mentioned using “Thrive” in their schools. This could be why within this sample the emotional impact DB has on the child was highlighted.

In regards to the B participant; Within Spain there is a social phenomenon named “titulitis” which would roughly translate to “titleism”. Titulitis is described by the RAE as: “excessive value put upon titles and studies certificates as a guaranty of someone’s knowledge” (“Titulitis”, RAE online, 2018). Titulitis is the idea that if you manage to get outstanding results throughout your education, go to university and get a masters you will get a good job. This could be the reason why participants decide to focus on the academic impact DB can have on the pupil. This phenomenon has meant that Spain has one of the highest rates of imbalance between academic training and employment in the European Union(EU) (Fundación CYD, 2016). Newly graduated students in Spain have one of the lowest rates of employment in the EU, 68% compared with UK, 84% (Eurostat, 2017).

On normal functioning:

*B: "Disruptive behaviour is an abnormal behaviour in the classroom" M.*

*SY: "Obviously the atmosphere will change within the classroom" E.*

This code was present within three of the interviews from B and two from SY. Both samples seemed to imply a strong sense of what normality is within the classroom across their interviews. This normality was not made explicit but it was the backdrop with which to judge whether a behaviour was disruptive or not. Words such as "rhythm", "climate" or "atmosphere" were used, which do not really take into account the complexities of a classroom environment and of the children and educators that inhabit it. There seems to be a very clear idea within the participants' minds of what a classroom has to look like, this same vision however, is not necessarily in the students' minds.

On human resources:

*SY: "It also disrupts in the sense that your kind of human resources. So your human resources often have to be used to kind of contain that situation" N*

This code was only present within one of the interviews from SY. Which is something interesting as in my work as a Trainee Educational Psychologist I come across numerous discussions of how children who are displaying DB or are identified as having SEMH needs, disrupt the school in this way, making the classroom lose an adult. It has also been found that having support staff within a classroom has a positive effect on classroom control. There is also a reduction in the amount of times educators deal with DB in the classroom (Blatchford et al, 2009), therefore, it makes sense that educators would be concerned about losing an adult within the classroom.

It makes sense this code was not represented within the B sample as classrooms are always only composed of one adult, the teacher, and therefore there is not the possibility of losing a member of staff. This could be due to class sizes in Spain being smaller, normally there is one teacher and maximum of 25 students in a primary classroom (BOPV, 2016).

#### On Learning:

*B: “(Disruptive behaviour) provokes that you have to stop the class” C.*

*SY: “Then you have that low level that has an impact on learning isn’t it? So the teacher is constantly dealing with low level behaviour then they are not dealing with the teaching and learning like they should be” G.*

This code was present in three interviews from B and two from SY. Both samples were in agreement in regards to what effect of DB has on learning, it affects the teacher’s ability to teach and has a negative impact on children’s academic achievement. DB has been shown to impact children’s academic achievement (DfE, 2012) which correlates to what was said in the interviews. It is logical teachers would be concerned about DB’s impact on learning as learning is normally seen as the purpose of education. With the Educational Reform Act in 1988 (Board of education, 1988) in the UK however, there was a change on the basis in which schools were financed which increased focus on data and academic achievement, this and achievement related pay (Board of education, 1988) for teachers may also contribute to this focus on the impact upon learning.

#### **Summary:**

The perception of disruptive behaviour that seems to be emerging from the interviews is that of aggression, aggression towards adults, peers and objects. There were also mentions of how the DB that is seen in the classroom can also have an impact at home

and how those aggressive behaviours can also be present in the family environment. Two of the interviewees from B spoke of child to parent violence and how it has increased recently. Teachers from B seem to connect the idea of DB with repetition; they perceive DB to be more severe the more repetitive it is, this on the other hand was not present within SY interviews, meaning that they may not consider as a factor. The effect DB had on other children was understood very differently between the contexts, SY spoke of the emotional impact observing DB may have on other children while B spoke of the impact on their concentration and ability to engage with activities and learning. B spoke of children who were displaying DB looking for “accomplices” meaning that other children could be led to display disruptive behaviour as well. This implies that teachers from B were more focused on the academic impact DB had on other children while SY was focused on the emotional impact. The B participants seemed to focus on how DB can be aggressive behaviour and the academic impact it can have on other children. In contrast, SY participants seemed to focus more, again on, DB seen as aggressive behaviour and the impact it can have on the educator and on the emotional wellbeing of other children that have observed the DB. Finally, they highlighted more the impact DB can have on the teaching and learning as a process.

### 5.3: Attributions

Figure 16: Attributions interview Biscay and South Yorkshire

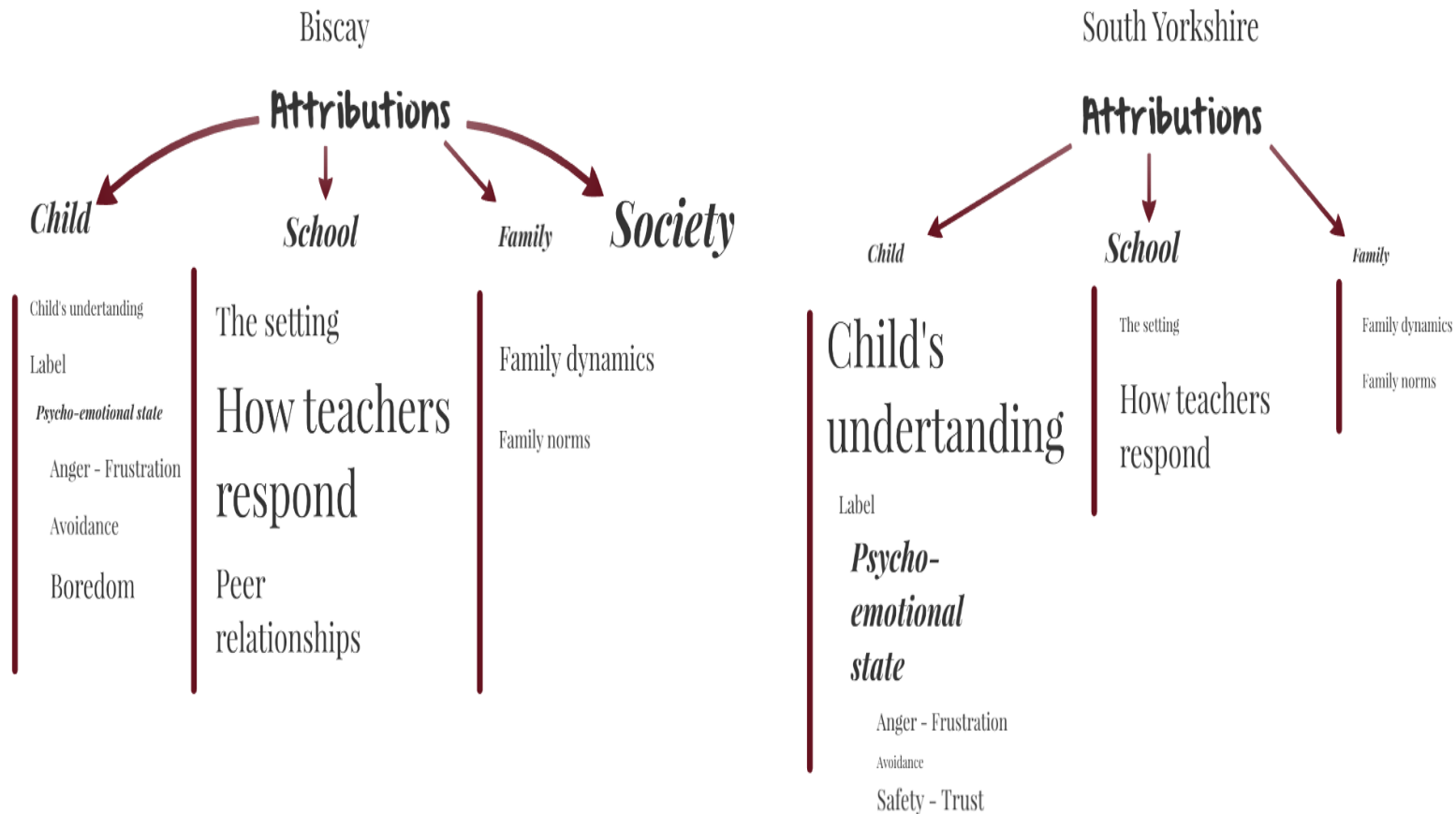


Table 15: Attributions interview Biscay and South Yorkshire

| Code                  | Interviews | Coverage | Content   | Connected with   |
|-----------------------|------------|----------|---|--|
| Child                 | 2B         | 3.7%     | Overarching theme, DB due to something within the child, not otherwise specified.   | - How the teacher responds<br>- Family<br>- Psycho-emotional state                   |
|                       | 2SY        | 1.5%     | Overarching theme, DB due to something within the child, not otherwise specified. DB presenting differently depending on the type of personality the child has.   | - Label<br>- Aggression  |
| Child's understanding | 2 B        | 0.4%     | DB as being triggered by how the child perceives the situation, not necessarily recognisable by adults.   | - none   |
|                       | 3 SY       | 9%       | DB being impacted by the family norms as child may not know what is appropriate within the school environment. DB being triggered by child interpreting the situation differently, not necessarily recognisable by adults. Child not being ready to access certain interventions. | - Relationship child educator<br>- Power control<br>- Safety trust<br>- Family norms |
| Label                 | 3 B        | 1%       | DB due to a label that can be applied to the child.   | - Anger – frustration<br>- Family dynamics<br>- Repetitive<br>- Aggression           |
|                       | 3 SY       | 1.2%     | DB due to a label that can be applied to the child  | - Understanding of behaviour<br>- Psycho-emotional state                             |



|                        |      |       |   |   |
|------------------------|------|-------|---|---|
| Psycho-emotional state | 1 B  | 0.03% | DB due to the child having emotional baggage  | none  |
|                        | 3 SY | 3.6%  | Overarching theme, DB due to psycho-emotional state of the child. DB due to the child being “dysregulated”, DB being “emotionally rooted”, child being “anxious” or “upset” | -Understanding of behaviour<br>-Power and control<br>-Child’s understanding<br>-Label<br>-Family<br>-Aggression<br>- On the child |
| Anger-Frustration      | 3 B  | 1%    | DB due to child feeling angry or wanting “vengeance” due to something that happened at home.  | - Power and control<br>- Label<br>- Family<br>- Aggression  |
|                        | 1 SY | 1%    | DB due to child being angry or frustrated   | None  |
| Avoidance              | 2 B  | 1.8%  | DB due to the child wanting to avoid work   | None  |
|                        | 1 SY | 0.1%  | DB due to the child wanting to get away from a situation  | None  |
| Boredom                | 2 B  | 2.5%  | DB due to the child being bored.  | - Talking<br>- On other children<br>- On Learning   |
| Safety- trust          | 2 SY | 2%    | DB due to the child not feeling safe/ not trusting the adults around him. Children showing DB where they don’t feel safe.   | - Child’s understanding<br>- Aggression   |
| The setting            | 1 B  | 3.9%  | DB due to the expectations school impose on children.   | None  |
|                        | 3 SY | 0.5%  | DB due to be put in an uncomfortable situation. DB due to not being used to the setting. DB due to the physical environment of the school.                                  | - Developing skills   |

|                      |      |      |  |  |
|----------------------|------|------|--|--|
| How teachers respond | 2 B  | 7.4% | DB being mediated by the way teachers respond to it. DB can increase if child is put in an uncomfortable situation by the teacher. DB would increase if it was not responded to by the teacher.      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relationship child educator</li> <li>- Power and control</li> <li>- The child</li> <li>- Aggression</li> <li>- Normal functioning</li> </ul>              |
|                      | 2 SY | 4.1% | Teachers response to DB can increase it or decrease. Teachers may not perceive that the way they are responding to DB is maintaining it or making it worse.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individualising support</li> <li>- Talking</li> <li>- Acknowledging listening</li> <li>- Training</li> </ul>  |
| Peer relationships   | 2 B  | 3.3% | DB as contagious. Way children speak with each other can impact the climate in the classroom. Increase in cyber bullying due to social media. Parental conflicts can be mimic by children in school. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Society</li> </ul>  |
| Family               | 3 B  | 1.8% | Overarching code. DB coming from the home environment.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding of behaviour</li> <li>- Plasters</li> <li>- Label</li> <li>- Anger and frustration</li> <li>- Family dynamics</li> <li>- Society</li> </ul> |
|                      | 1 SY | 0.7% | Overarching code. DB coming from the home environment  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Psycho-emotional state</li> </ul>   |
| Family dynamics      | 2 B  | 2.4% | DB due to changes in the family dynamics. Children presenting DB coming from “unstructured families” and of having parents that do not provide consistent care.                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Label</li> </ul>  |
|                      | 2 SY | 0.5% | DB due to issues such as “domestic violence, alcohol abuse or children being looked after.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- none</li> </ul>   |

|              |      |      |   |  |
|--------------|------|------|---|--|
| Family norms | 1B   | 1.4% | DB due to family and school having different norms of what is acceptable, setting limits at different levels. This was linked to child to parent violence.                | - Child's understanding                |
|              | 1 SY | 0.8% | DB due to family norms influencing a child's perception of what is acceptable in school and at home.  | - Society                              |
| Society      | 2 B  | 5%   | DB due to changes in society. Values being lost, how societal change reflects on family interactions. How the wider community can have an impact on children's behaviour. | - Family norms<br>- Peer relationships |

## **Child**

*B: "In this case I think it has to be a student who has some type of internal problem, something that he has. The normal student, for us to understand each other, the student that acts normally, I think he doesn't do that type of actions" C.*

*SY: "R: Do you think the way the child is can have an influence on disruptive behaviour?"*

*G: Like in their personality? Yea definitely, cause that is when you get some of the children who will put holes in the wall or others who will really go into themselves" G*

This was an overarching code that looked at DB being perceived as within child attributions. The code was present in two interviews from B and two from SY. The code "child" was coded when there was not a clearer explanation of what particular aspect of the child they were attributing the DB to. Teachers, mostly in the B sample, made numerous references to the child having something within him but did not go into detail about what they meant by it.

There are numerous examples within the literature that point to teachers mainly attributing DB to the child or family (Miller, 1995; Gotzen et al, 2007). Attributing DB to the child or the family avoids having to look at variables that teachers can more readily influence, such as their own behaviour or the school environment. This conceptualisation of DB is similar to the one observed by the Elton Report, back in 1989, where DB was seen as a problem of the child that needed to be managed by teachers (DoES,1989).

Child's understanding:

*B: "Then his classmates know that this student is like this, in the moment that he flips or something happens, or nothing happens but for him that is a trigger, he doesn't contain himself, he explodes" P.*

*SY: "He doesn't get along with many children, in fact, possibly not many children at all, he will often come and say he has done this he has done that. But actually, when you look into it, it is actually things he has done, that he doesn't understand" E.*

This code was present in two interviews from B and all the interviews from SY. This code explores how DB can be caused by the child's understanding of the situation. Both samples presented this code similarly, SY, however, also explored how the child's understanding of the situation may be linked to family norms (see extract within family norms section).

The idea that a child's perception of a situation would be linked to their family's norms is similar to that proposed by attachment theory (Bowlby, 1953) as the internal working model. The child would have internalised ideas of what is acceptable and how adults behave based on his or her experiences with the main caregivers. This links well with the idea presented earlier of normal functioning of the classroom, a child's internal working model of behaviour in a classroom does not necessarily correlate to the teacher's working model.

Label:

*B: "I understood this was due to his hyperactivity, he couldn't stop. These type of things are very common in hyperactives" M.*

*SY: "But you are going to get those children who are in that spectrum whether it is ADHD or ASD or so, yea, you got to be aware of their needs and support in that way"*

*N.*

This code was applied when teachers used certain statements or words that could be considered labels as an explanation for DB. This code was present within all the interviews. Teachers in B spoke of children having "attachment" issues, being "crazy", having "hyperactivity", being "hyperactives", having something "pathological" and having a "serious behaviour disorder". Teachers in SY spoke of children having "Special Educational Needs", being "hyper vigilant", having "sensory needs", having had "trauma, loss or bereavement", having "anxiety", having "Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder", having "Autism Spectrum Disorder" and not having a "diagnosis".

Looking at the words above it is clear that those are words heavily influenced by the world of medicine and specially psychiatry. Many of these words are diagnostic labels and most of the diagnostic criteria for such diagnosis are within child descriptions. It is interesting to note that the term Social Emotional Mental Health needs was not mentioned, when this is the term most linked with DB. The SY participants mentioned Special Educational Needs but they were not specific in which need they were talking about.

The B participants seemed to be vaguer with their descriptions, words such as "crazy" or "hyperactives" again evoke ideas of within child attributions but are not clear diagnostic labels. This could be due to psychological and psychiatric concepts within

education in Spain being quite new, Special Educational Needs were first introduced within the Spanish education system with the General Law of Education in 1970 (Boletín Oficial del Estado, 1970).

**Psycho - emotional state:**

*B: "These students have serious affective backpacks" P.*

*SY: "Cause obviously they are deregulated, they are not, there is something wrong" G*

This code was also an overarching code. Any mention of DB being due to the child's psychological or emotional state were coded here if they could not be best coded elsewhere. This code was present within one interview from B and all the interviews from SY. Teachers within SY (3.6% coverage vs 0.03%) used this code more, talking about how the DB was due to the child being "dysregulated", DB being "emotionally rooted" and of children being "anxious" or "upset". These are quite wide descriptions that do not really explain what the teachers think is happening for the child. Participants from B, on the other hand, seemed to be able to specify more what they thought was happening to the child emotionally according to them. One participant used the description of "affective backpacks" to describe why children behave disruptively, meaning children have affective baggage that may be impacting on their ability to behave appropriately in the classroom.

SY conceptualisation as DB being caused by a child's psycho-emotional state are more helpful, as the descriptions they have used are emotional in nature, and emotions are something that can be changed, something that is not fixed within the child. Adults have the power to affect them, rather than B's conceptualisation of backpacks which is something more permanent, not changeable.

Anger and frustration:

*B: "He wanted to draw, he would get full of rage, he would throw himself on the floor"*

*C.*

*SY: "R: why do you think these behaviours happen in the classroom?"*

*E: I think frustration as well for some children" E.*

This code was present in all the interviews from B and one from SY. Within this code participants describe how DB can be due to the child being angry or frustrated. This links with a study performed by Hughes, White, Sharpen and Dunn (2000) in which they observed the behaviour towards peers of pre-school children classified by adults as "hard to manage" because of their disruptive behaviour. The study concludes that the "hard to manage" group showed significantly higher rates of angry behaviour compared with controls. They believe this has to do with poor executive control rather than difficulties with empathy. This would be in opposition to the increasing use of emotional literacy programs within school such as SEAL, Thrive or ELSA, meaning that maybe the underlying issue seems to be more within the realm of impulsivity.

Avoidance:

*B: "I think that if in a given moment the student is nervous because in that moment he doesn't want to do that because he doesn't want to expose himself to that situation, he can get stressed to a point that it can provoke this (disruptive behaviour)" C.*

*SY: "And maybe going under tables or something just to get away, that kind of escapism" N*

This code was present in two of the interviews from B and one from SY. Within this code participants talk about how DB can be due to children not wanting to expose



themselves to a situation. This may imply that the child is insecure about being able to achieve in the situation and uses DB as a way of avoiding the frustration it may create. This is related to the idea of DB as communication (Faupel, 2003). This way of understanding DB implies that adults can support as they have an influence within the situation and, therefore, the way the child may react to it.

Boredom:

*B: "Look, some because of boredom, I think. Children simply are not interested in what they are doing and then they would rather do something else. I always tell them, If you are getting bored at any point, tell me, I will try to fix it, but don't bother anyone else.*

*That is one of the things, boredom" C.*

The code boredom was only present within two of the interviews from the B sample, it was seen as affecting other children and affecting learning. In a paper by Prieto Toraño (2015), boredom and inadequate peer relationships were the main self-reported reasons for educational disengagement, meaning it seems to play a role in DB. However, trying to find a link between boredom and DB within the UK literature has been difficult as it does not seem to be a variable that is taken into consideration, which actually fits with teachers not reporting it as an attribution for DB within this study. This code implies some degree of reflexivity of teachers' practices, implying that not engaging pupils enough with the teaching and learning process can lead to DB. This suggests teachers have the ability to influence DB as if the teaching is engaging children may not display DB.

### Safety trust:

*SY: "Because if children are in a situation where they are not feeling safe and secure that is when you see behaviours starting to bubble" G.*

This code was only present within two of the interviews from SY. Participants explored the idea of DB being caused by children not feeling safe within a situation or not trusting the adults around them. It is interesting that this code only appears within the SY sample, maybe implying that the B participants assume children feel safe and trust the adults around them even if they display DB. The idea of safety and trust within education most likely comes from the way attachment theory (Bowlby, 1953) has permeated the discourse lately. Again being the basis of some of the latest emotional literacy interventions such as Thrive (Thrive, 2018).

### Family:

*B: "But really, what is happening in the family is the problem" M.*

*SY: "Sometimes I think is maybe, something that is happening at home. If they come in school in an upset mood" E.*

This was an overarching code, segments were coded here if they could not better be described by a different code. This overarching code was used when teachers spoke of DB being caused by issues within the family of the child. This code was present in all the interviews from B and one from SY. Teachers from B used this code more than teachers in SY (coverage of 1.8% vs 0.7%). Meaning that when teachers in SY spoke of family variables they tended to be more specific. As per Miller et al (1996), family variables are one of the most common attributions of DB according to teachers.

### Family dynamics:

*B: "It can be that something is happening for them at home, I am now on senior management but every time that there is something like this (DB), for me all the alarms go off, it can be a divorce, unemployment, sexual abuse, physical abuse. Yes or yes there is something there, or it can be that a new brother or sister has been born" P.*

*SY: "Whether it stems from home life, experiencing domestic violence, alcohol abuse in the home all of those type of things. A lot of our children don't have great home lives"*

*G.*

This code was present in two interviews from B and two from SY. Within this code teachers acknowledge that a wide variety of situations that are happening at home for the child can have an impact on their behaviour in the classroom. Some of the things mentioned such as domestic violence, unemployment, physical abuse or family breakdown have been shown to be risk factors for exclusion (Munn, Lloyd & Cullen 2000) meaning that they could show themselves as DB in the classroom.

### Family norms:

*B: "The limits that they have in the family and the ones he has in school. And it depends because for one person one thing can be ok and for someone else the same thing can be appalling. In regards to limits, I see it at the park; I am also a mum of a 9-year-old girl.*

*And there are things that I think, but how could you allow that. And what for me is inadmissible for others is like puf, is children's' things" P.*

*SY: "You have parents who don't think that they should respect, they don't respect at home so why should your children? A lot of that respect for women, don't need to do that, respect for other ethnicities, don't need to do that, so sometimes it can be role models as well" G.*

This code was present in one of the interviews from B and one from SY. In this code family norms seems to be seen as not similar to school norms which is seen as the reason why children may be presenting with DB in the classroom. According to Martino-Alvarez et al (2016) in the survey that they did with 346 Spanish teachers, one of the main attributions for DB was family norms and limits, meaning this seems to be a common belief among teachers.

## **School**

### **How teachers respond:**

*B: “For some students, screaming is an aggression, and it is true, a scream is an aggression. But it can work for them, because maybe they need someone to stop them like that. But for others, it can cause the opposite, make the student even more angry” P.*

*SY: “If a child is very very hyper vigilant and struggles with control if you confront a child at that level and there is no element of understanding or no validation of how that child is feeling is just going to go badly. And I have seen this in previous schools. You are just asking for the child to swear at you or do something. You got to be the adult in this situation you need to understand where they are coming from and trying to de-escalate it and calm the situation and then deal with it afterwards. Some individuals see it as personal attack and actually I’m in charge so you should be listening, that kind of authority doesn’t work with some children” N.*

This code was present in two interviews from B and two from SY. Within this code teachers explored how DB can be increased or decreased within the classroom depending on how the teacher responds to it. This code shows teacher’s agency in responding to DB in the classroom. Participants made it explicit how teachers responding in a certain way could increase a child’s disruptive behaviour, meaning they

see how teachers' own actions have a role to play in maintaining or even escalating DB in the classroom. This is not normally the case within the literature, teachers tend to not attribute DB to themselves (Miller, 1996).

Peer relationships:

*B: "depending on who I mix with in class is going to help me be one way or another. If I get close to one (child) that already has disruptive behaviour, I will end up with disruptive behaviour" M.*

This code was present in two of the three interviews from Biscay. Within the code teachers talk about how if a child interacts with another that is already displaying disruptive behaviour, it is likely the child would become disruptive. They spoke about how the way children talk among themselves, being "barriobajero"\* can end up creating a negative climate within the classroom which can increase disruptive behaviour. They also spoke of how children's access to social networks have created an increase of cyber bullying which schools then have to deal with. One of the participants spoke of how if parents fall out how that in turn can create conflicts between children within school.

\* Barriobajero: the literal translation of this to English would be low-neighbourhood. Barriobajero is a slang term used in Spanish to refer to somebody who lives in a deprived neighbourhood, is vulgar or inappropriate in the way they speak.

The extract presented nearly describes DB as contagious. This could be related to the idea presented earlier of children who are presenting DB looking for "accomplices" (within effect on other children code). Again, I wonder if this idea could relate more to children trying to interact with peers and form relationships but this may get misinterpreted by teachers.

### The setting:

*B: “Because it is hard, children that are so small being sitting down in the classroom for so many hours, I mean, sitting on the tables with a book. It depends on their age, and the characteristics of the students, but it is a little complicated, and I think it is important to analyse that” P.*

*SY: “And a classroom is not particularly great to be honest, you don’t have areas where the child can go and have a safe space or your corridor space is tight that can cause bouncing into other children which can just kick off, you know” N.*

Only one participant from B spoke about this code and they described how DB could be due to the expectations imposed on children by schools (as seen in the extract). This code was represented in all the interviews from SY, they however, had a different approach to the way they represented the code. DB was seen as being due to the child being uncomfortable in the setting, the child not being used to the setting or due to the physical environment of the school (as seen in the extract).

The point raised by the B’s participant parallels what Martino- Alvarez et al (2016) found in their study, where intensity and duration of schooling was seen as a cause for DB, meaning teachers and the overall educational community has some degree of control over it.

### Society

*B: “A lot of times it comes from home, from society, from television, everything that surrounds them raises them. And what surrounds them is not good, they are surrounded by botellon\*, their mates, they are surrounded by fights, everything surrounds them” M.*

\* Botellon refers to the act of young people getting together at night and consuming copious quantities of alcohol on the streets. This has become a popular custom in the last decades, especially since 1990.

This code was only present within the B interviews, two participants spoke of society playing a role in DB, this code was not present within the SY participants. Teachers spoke of values being lost, values such as “solidarity, equality and respect”. They talked of societal change and how this reflects in how families interact with each other which reflects on what schools are being demanded to do (e.g. teach children values that should have been taught within the family). Participants also spoke of who children surround themselves with in the wider community and how this has an impact on how they relate to each other and staff within school. Interviewees seemed to imply that the messages about what is important that children are getting from school and the messages they are receiving from society do not match. Finally, one of the interviewees spoke of how in her parents’ generation there were clear right and wrong dichotomies that children learn and how that is not happening any more.

These descriptions could be understood through the phenomenon of rosy retrospection, which is the idea of judging the past disproportionately more positively than they judge the present (Mitchell & Thompson, 1994). As a quick search in Google shows, aid donations between 2013 – 2015 in Spain have increased 30% (Agudo, 2017), this is within the period of economic crisis with an unemployment rate of 25% in the country. This shows that the idea of values such as solidarity being lost is not the case. It is also interesting the idea of equality being raised as participants were all within the 40-60 age range. It is important to think about the Spanish context; Spain was a dictatorship until 43 years ago when Franco died. In terms of equality, during the dictatorship, schools

were segregated, divorce was abolished and generally society was based on catholic, nationalistic and fascist ideology (Moraga, 2008). Therefore, it is hard to imagine how there was more equality and solidarity in society before.

### **Summary**

SY and B participants agreed in attributing DB to the child, the school and the family environment. B participants seemed to focus more on the school attributions, highlighting the role of how teachers respond to DB as something that can inhibit or encourage DB. They also spoke of the expectations schooling places on children while SY remarked on the importance of the physical environment of the school. B participants also spoke of the importance of the relationships between peers and again spoke of DB as a group activity in which children encourage each other to behave disruptively. Both groups of participants talked about the importance of family dynamics and family norms as reasons for DB. Participants from SY explored more the idea of DB as being caused by within-child characteristics referring specially to the psycho-emotional state the child is in, as a reason for DB. They spoke of children being angry or frustrated and wanting to be safe and trust the adults around them mainly. B participants spoke more of the child being angry or frustrated, trying to avoid the situation they are in and being bored as reasons for displaying DB. SY overwhelmingly highlighted the importance of the child's understanding of the situation as an attribution. Finally B also attributed DB to changes in society.



## 5.4: Actions

Figure 17: Actions towards disruptive behaviour Biscay

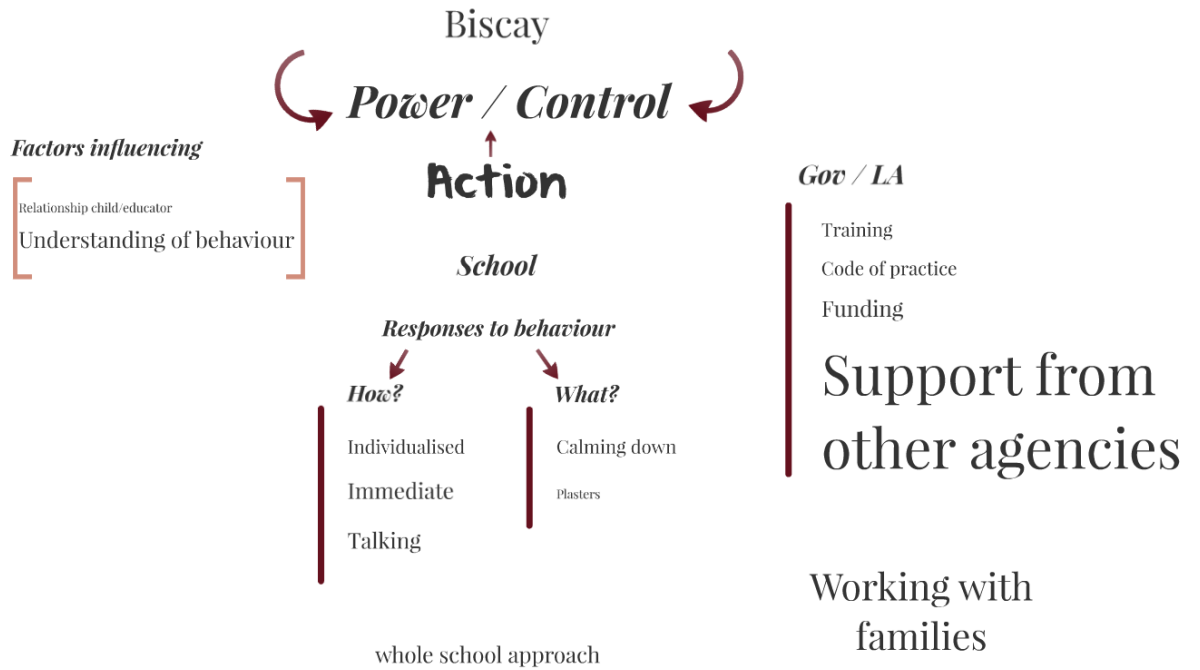


Figure 18: Actions interview South Yorkshire

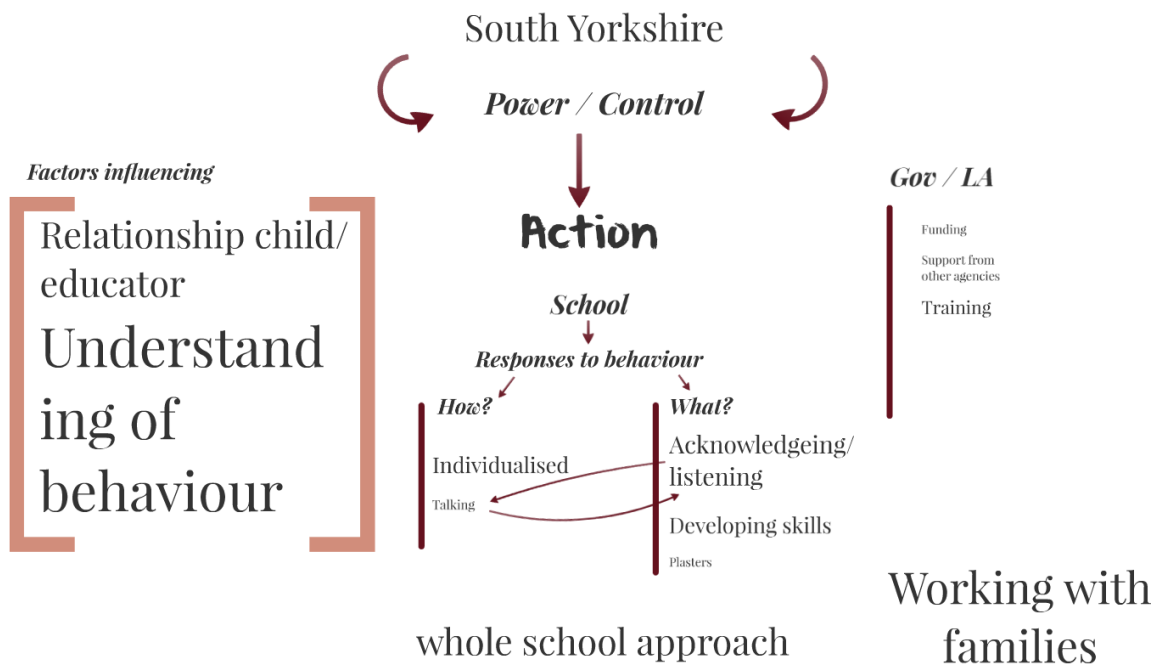


Table16: Actions interview Biscay and South Yorkshire

| Code                        | Interviews | Coverage | Content  | Connected with  |
|-----------------------------|------------|----------|--|---|
| Relationship child educator | 1B         | 0.2%     | If the relationship between the child and the teacher breaks how that can escalate DB.   | - On other children<br>- Aggression<br>- How the teacher responds   |
|                             | 2SY        | 5.7%     | Importance of knowing the child well. The relationship helps keep the child calm and allows the teacher to pre-empt if there is going to be DB and respond appropriately. Relationship as factor that could stop DB.                   | - Individualising support<br>- Developing skills<br>- Child's understanding   |
| Understanding of behaviour  | 3 B        | 3.6%     | Importance of understanding the reason behind the DB in order to know how to address it. Importance of involving all stakeholders to support finding out what is happening. DB can be seen as normal by others, DB as a call for help. | - Talking<br>- Support from other agencies<br>- Power control<br>- Family<br>- Whole school approach<br>- Working with families<br>- Repetitive |
|                             | 3 SY       | 9.7%     | Importance of understanding the reasons behind the DB. Reminding yourself as a teacher behaviour is communication. DB as not for fun, always a reason.   | - Label<br>- Psycho-emotional state   |
| Individualising support     | 1 B        | 1.9%     | Teachers' action need to be based on the individual child.   | - How teachers respond  |
|                             | 2 SY       | 2.2%     | Not all interventions work for all children. Children need individualised strategies.  | - Relationship child educator<br>- How teachers respond   |

|                             |      |      |  |   |
|-----------------------------|------|------|--|---|
| Immediate action            | 3B   | 2.1% | Response to DB has to be immediate. If DB is not dealt with immediately the problem can become bigger, it needs to be tackled as a team.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Talking</li> <li>- Working with families</li> <li>- Normal functioning</li> </ul>  |
| Talking                     | 2 B  | 2.2% | Dialogue as a way of dealing with DB. Learning social skills and reflecting through dialogue.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding of behaviour</li> <li>- Immediate action</li> <li>- Whole school approach</li> <li>- Boredom</li> <li>- On other children</li> </ul>                 |
|                             | 1 SY | 0.1% | Talking about the DB so it does not escalate.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How teachers respond</li> </ul>  |
| Acknowledging/<br>listening | 2 SY | 3.1% | Recognising and acknowledging feelings the child has in order to help him deal with DB. This will help him respond differently in the future. Linked to the thrive approach                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing skills</li> <li>- How the teacher responds</li> </ul>   |
| Calming down                | 2 B  | 1.3% | In order to stop DB teachers need to let children calm down, giving them space.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On other children</li> </ul>   |
| Developing skills           | 2 SY | 2%   | Staff need to fill the gaps in children´s development to help them develop self-regulation. Aim is to teach the child new skills to communicate what was previously being communicated through the DB. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- relationship child educator</li> <li>- Acknowledge/ listening</li> <li>- Whole school approach</li> <li>- Psycho-emotional state</li> <li>- The setting</li> </ul> |
| Plasters                    | 1 B  | 0.2% | The school is trying to solve a situation that they are not really able to have an impact upon as it comes from the family.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Family</li> </ul>  |
|                             | 1 SY | 0.3% | To solve DB adults, need to tackle the root of the problem, otherwise is not really addressing the issue.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>none</li> </ul>  |

|                             |      |      |   |   |
|-----------------------------|------|------|---|---|
| Whole school approaches     | 1 B  | 2.3% | DB has to be addressed as a whole school intervention, all the staff needs to collaborate as a team.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Immediate action</li> <li>- Talking</li> <li>- Power and control</li> </ul>                          |
|                             | 2 SY | 6.8% | DB has to be addressed as a whole school intervention. Mentions of using Thrive as a whole school approach.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing skills</li> <li>- Safety/ trust</li> </ul>  |
| Code of practice            | 1 B  | 1.3% | Children presenting DB are not being considered to have an SEN which means no support for the school.   | None  |
| Funding                     | 1 B  | 2.2% | Not enough support for pupils due to cuts. Schools left to fend for themselves. Students could be saved if there was more funding for support.  | None  |
|                             | 1 SY | 0.5% | Government not investing in what was promised.  | - Support from other agencies   |
| Support from other agencies | 3B   | 9.6% | There is a lack of support in regards to DB. Participants wanted support in understanding the DB. When there is support this is not always effective. Support from the police, Eps, Social services and Psychiatry. Multiagency working | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding behaviour</li> <li>- Calming down</li> <li>- Training</li> <li>- Aggression</li> </ul> |
|                             | 1 SY | 0.8% | Need for multiagency working. Support from early help and health visitors.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Founding</li> <li>- Working with families</li> </ul>   |
| Training                    | 2 B  | 1.9% | Participants wanted training to know how to handle situations so they do so in a more informed way.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support from other agencies</li> <li>- Power and control</li> </ul>                                  |
|                             | 2 SY | 1.3% | Participants wanted training to upskill staff in understanding DB as communication  | - How the teacher responds  |

|                       |      |      |  |   |
|-----------------------|------|------|--|---|
| Working with families | 3 B  | 4.9% | Participants wanted families to have a similar perception of DB. Families having different expectations than school, when school informs families about the DB they were not seeing it as DB. Participants wanted to involve and support families.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding of behaviour</li> <li>- Immediate action</li> <li>- Aggression</li> </ul>  |
|                       | 2 SY | 6.1% | Participants wanted families to have support from agencies, such as health visitors, without judgement. Involving parents in interventions was also important.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support from other agencies</li> </ul>   |
| Power- Control        | 3 B  | 6.1% | Students were described as “challenging” and “measuring” the teacher. Children wanting to control the attention, children feeling superior. Teachers were described as having to control who the children who were displaying DB were interacting with and placing demands on children. Children displaying DB to regain control of the situation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding of behaviour</li> <li>- Whole school approach</li> <li>- Training</li> <li>- Child’s understanding</li> <li>- Anger and frustration</li> <li>- How the teacher responds</li> <li>- Repetitive</li> <li>- Aggression</li> <li>- On educator</li> <li>- On other children</li> <li>- Normal functioning</li> </ul> |
|                       | 3 SY | 1.2% | Teachers were not authoritarian; boundaries were set up by adults. DB because children needed to feel in control. Children being “defiant” as DB. Children displaying DB to control situations.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Child’s understanding</li> <li>- Psycho-emotional state</li> <li>- Aggression</li> </ul>   |

## **Factors influencing:**

### Relationship child educator

*B: "He lost all respect for the teacher, the teacher didn't know how to respond to the student, the student was all the time in detention". M.*

*SY: "It is how you develop that relationship with that individual. That can then, reshape how they may behave in your classroom. That is not to say they will not behave differently elsewhere but is that relationship that you are developing with that pupil" N.*

Participants, especially those in SY (5.7% of the interview was covered by this code) spoke of the importance of the teachers' relationship with the student and how that can affect DB. They spoke of how the relationship can prevent DB, calm the child down and allows the teacher to know if DB is going to happen because of how well they know the child. Teachers can be considered a significant other in a child's life. Research shows that teachers influence children's conception of self, psychosocial development and educational outcomes (Myers & Pianta, 2008).

A positive teacher-students relationship has been showed to reduce aggression (Meehan, Hughes & Cavell, 2003), makes children more emotionally connected and interested in school (Rey, Smith, Jina, Somers & Barnett , 2007) and has been shown to decrease children's behavioural problems (Driscoll, Wang, Mashburn & Pianta, 2011). Conversely a negative teacher-student relationship has also been shown to influence negatively the child's peer relationships (Griggs, Gagnon, Huelsman, Kidder-Ashley & Ballard, 2009), academic achievement and engagement (Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, & Oort, 2011) and to increase aggression (Meehan et al, 2003). Children identified as having SEMH needs within Sellman's (2009) study reported that they thought it did not matter what tools a teacher has at their disposal, if the relationship between the student and the

teacher is poor, the tools would be misused. This highlights the importance also pupils attribute to children and educator relationships.

From the results of this study, it seems that SY teachers were more aware of the impact a positive or negative relationship with the child can have in terms of increasing or reducing DB in the classroom. Subsequently this means teachers are somewhat accepting of their role as co-creators of the relationship and hence, their agency in shaping it.

#### Understanding of behaviour:

*B: "First thing, when there is DB we need to know why that is" M.*

*SY: "Like I said before I think. There is lots of reasons behind the behaviour in a child, very few to none would choose to just be naughty for fun do they? it is, no, some might.*

*No but, like that child with a wall, is that reminding yourself that there is a reason behind that behaviour." G*

This code was present in all the interviews from both settings. Teachers were quite clear in saying that there is always a reason for DB and if the adult understands what the reason is, it means they can start to address it. Within the B interviews this code was heavily linked with support from other agencies.

This code seems to suggest teachers are seeing Behaviour as a means of communication. This connects with Faupel's (2003) notion of behaviour as communication in the absence of linguistic capacity to articulate intentions of feelings. In other words behaviour is communication. Wright, Weekes, and McGlaughlin (2000) propose that children may be displaying DB as a way of communicating their resistance to a curriculum or teaching methods that they perceive as irrelevant, disaffecting or patronising. The SY participants seemed to not focus on within school attributions as

much as B participants did, the coverage of school codes for SY was 4.6% while for B it was 14%.

It is still useful to realise that teachers are looking for reasons underneath DB, as this implies adults are trying to understand why it is happening in order to support the pupils. The next step may be to reflect more on adult's practices instead of focusing so much on within child variables, as it is likely the attributions will be a combination of multiple variables.

## School

### Responses to behaviour

#### How?

##### Individualised:

*B: "For some a scream is an aggression, and it is true, screaming is aggression, but it can work for them. Because maybe they need somebody to stop them like that. But for others it can cause the opposite, get him angrier" P.*

*SY: "Every child is different so is that understanding on an individual basis for what the background of that child is and how to best support." N*

This code was present in one interview from B and two from SY. The teachers from B spoke of how teachers' actions towards DB needed to be based on knowledge of the individual child who was displaying DB. Participants from SY agreed with this and also spoke of how not all strategies work for all children, interventions or strategies need to be adapted to the individual child.

The idea of individualising support goes hand in hand with what is referred to as person centred planning, which is a key component of the new code of practice (DfE, 2015) in



the UK. The idea of person centred planning (Claes, Van Hove, Vandeveldel, Van Loon & Schalock, 2010) emphasizes the importance of putting the person, in this case the child, at the centre of the action. Adults around him or her will have to adapt their approaches to what the child wants and the child needs.

Immediate:

*B: “In terms of those things we are good, if the child does it (DB) there is an immediate reaction. What we cannot do delay our response because it doesn’t make sense” M.*

This code was only present within the B interviews; all participants spoke of the importance of actions towards DB being immediate after the behaviour. They said that if DB is not dealt with immediately it can escalate and remarked on the importance of approaching DB as a team within the school.

Talking:

*B: “What can be done? Once you know what it is, maybe many times it is something silly and you can fix it in the classroom with a group tutorial\*, individual tutorial. Talk to the student, listen to the student, don’t beat down the student”. M.*

*SY: “If that is not recognised or spoken about that is going to escalate” N.*

\* The idea of tutorials within Spanish education has a different interpretation from how tutorials are understood within the UK. A Spanish definition of tutorial is: “an inherent activity to teachers’ functions. It can be done individually or in groups with students, with the aim of easing the personal integration and learning process of the students” (Lazaro & Asensi, 1987). Based on legislation, tutorials can be aimed at “teaching to think, teaching to live together and teaching to decide” (Morales, 2010). They can take many forms and shapes, it can be through a dialogue, involvement with the wider

community, with other schools or between year groups. Tutorials are normally taken as subjects and they will have an allocated slot weekly.

This code appeared in two interviews from B and one interview from SY. Particularly participants from B spoke of the importance of addressing DB through talking with the child. They emphasized children's ability of learning social skills and reflecting through dialogue. On the other hand, SY spoke more of how talking with the child is important to stop DB from escalating.

Verbal reinforcement (praise) has been shown to be one of the most effective ways of increasing children's motivation, verbal praise can increase motivation more so than tangible rewards (Cameron & Pierce, 1994).

### **What?**

#### Calming down

*B: "Tell us how we can react to calm him down, for him to be ok and for the class to be ok of course". C.*

This code appeared in two interviews within B and was not represented in the SY sample. Participants spoke of how in order to stop DB teachers need to let children calm down and give them space. This code maybe linked with the idea of DB being caused by the child being dysregulated and its psycho-emotional state.

### Acknowledging, listening

*SY: “Obviously, we got like 4 people who are like thrive trained and sort of that approach used on that VRF (Vital Relational Function, part of the Thrive approach), I can see that you are feeling really cross, just giving a name to that feeling recognizing that is all right to be cross but is not all right to punch, kick etcetera. Sort of that giving a name to that feeling and recognizing it, yeah, giving a name to that feeling and recognizing it and dealing with it in a different way will make a massive, massive difference.” G*

This code was present in two of the interviews from SY and was not present in the interviews from B. Participants spoke of the importance of recognising and acknowledging the feelings of children in order to help them deal with DB. This code was heavily linked with the Thrive approach (Thrive, 2018), and participants specifically spoke of how it was linked as seen by the extract.

### Developing skills

*SY: “Being that co-regulator to get to develop that child’s ability to be able to self-regulate. And be able to say when there is a problem instead of just showing in a way that is just physical and verbal. That they can go and seek you out, knowing themselves when they are getting to that point of dis-regulation” N.*

This code was present in two of the interviews from SY, it was not present within the interviews of B. In this code, teachers spoke of the need to fill the gaps in children development to help them develop self-regulation (as seen in the extract). Teachers also spoke of teaching children news skills to communicate what was previously being communicated through the DB.

This code again links well with the idea of DB as communication (Faupe, 2003). It also emphasises the idea of children developing independence in managing their own emotions with the help of a co-regulator, as we can see in the extract. It also links with the idea of DB being due to the child's psycho-emotional state.

### Plasters

*B: "Also, here we are always trying to put sticky plasters, we go around putting sticky plasters on. But really what is happening to them in their homes is the problem." M.*

*SY: "Yes you can use your distraction strategies and you can ignore for a while but that is just sticky plaster, and you actually have to get to the root. So, in a sense, that is not helping the situation long term." N*

This code was present in one interview from B and one interview from SY. This was relatively a small code, however, I think it is important to highlight it as teachers seemed to highlight the importance of acting on the root of DB or otherwise the actions the educators could do were only sticky plasters, with no real effect on the problem. This code both calls to action and can be understood as self-defeating, maybe, specially, as it was understood in B, highlighting variables that teachers perceived as difficult to impact.

### **Whole school**

*B: "Individualised tutorials, group tutorials, whole class tutorials. Inter group tutorials. That is what we have started to do. We put together ten students from one class and ten from another and we talk about problems. Is a kind of debate table, for example, we are now speaking about peer bullying. We have put them a video, then they have reflected with their classroom and then we take them out and we ask them what they thought about the video, what did you think about this character's actions?... And because they*

*are small groups, they get their own conclusions, we write them down and then we see what we agree on or not. Then we ask what would we change from this situation? And this helps, we have managed that the Y6 this year, that last year were horrendous Y5s, you can now speak with them. We are going to continue working like this". M.*

*SY: "Yes, it has to be a whole school approach and it has to be supported through the ethos of the school from your leadership team." N.*

This code was present in one interview from B and two interviews from SY. The B participant speaks of how DB has to be addressed as a whole school intervention and how all staff need to collaborate as a team. The SY participants agree and also mention Thrive as an example of a whole school approach.

Carroll and Hurry on their 2018 literature review on how to support pupils in school with social emotional and mental health needs, highlight how there is much more evidence base for whole school programs that aim to change disruptive behaviour rather than tier 2 (group) or tier 3 (individual) interventions.

### **Government / Local Authority**

#### **Code of practice**

*B: "I would put more help for this type of student that is not on the SEN list because based on those criteria that they set, he doesn't fit or doesn't reach the criteria. But he should be, he is in an extra official manner. But he needs help as well". P.*

This code was present in one interview from B. The participant spoke of how children displaying DB are not being considered to have an SEN which leads to no LA support to the school. As it has been explored within the literature review, within the Spanish code of practice children who display DB are not considered to have SEN unless they

also present with a learning difficulty or other need that would fit the criteria of the Spanish code of practice. This can lead schools to feel unsupported.

### Funding

*B: "I think there are few resources, and that PT\* and assistants I would like them to happen more. Because with the cuts, you only get PTs and helpers for students that have intellectual difficulties, or motor and physical. For students that have a terrible emotional problem or this type of problem (DB), you don't get help. When it is behaviour, is for the school to fend for themselves." P.*

*SY: "Always the same. There is this talk about early intervention but, yet, funding streams are going at the latter end still because that is the resource and that is necessary but, really, we need to be putting in money into developing services". N.*

\* PT: stands for Teacher of Pedagogical Therapy in Spanish. These are professionals that work in schools. Normally, each school will have at least one. They are allocated to children who are identified as having SEN by EPs. PTs normally have a degree in teaching and a masters in working with children with SEN.

This code was present in one interview from B and one from SY. The B participant spoke of the lack of support for pupils due to cuts in education and how they thought schools were being left to fend for themselves when children displayed DB. The SY participant spoke of how the government was not investing in what was promised.

This code for the B participant is closely linked to the previously presented code of practice. The idea that if a child is only presenting with DB and nothing else, because, this is not part of the SEN code of practice in Spain and, because of the recent cuts in education, schools feel unprepared to deal with the situation. During the week that the

interviews for B were conducted, Local Authority run schools in B were on strike for two days, to protest cuts in education.

### Training

*B: "Because I didn't know how to react to these situations, and is by being faced with them that you start trying things and you start to see, right? But I mean, I think that we have very little training in these type of cases". C.*

*SY: "And then making sure that all staff have that level of understanding and training to equip them." N.*

This code was present in two interviews from B and two interviews from SY. B participants wanted more training to know how to handle situations in a more informed way. SY participants wanted training to up-skill staff in understanding DB as communication.

Teachers' demand for training correlates with the literature. In Martino-Alvarez et al's, 2016 study, teachers reported that training as one of the key things that needed to improve in order to address DB more efficiently.

### Support from other agencies:

*B: "We lack help. We get the Educational Psychologist once a month but she comes to work with Reading and writing problems, but, these type of problems (DB,) she does very little. We can, of course, the day she comes, we can tell her: look we have a child that blabla. But then, she has to come one day to observe him, that day the child is placidly ok and nothing happens. Do you understand? Of course, if you had an EP in the school or three days a week that she could, or one day a week." C.*

*SY: "And working with multiagency, really, so as soon as there is a sign, you know, or working together you know, to make it less of an issue" N.*

This code was present in three of the interviews from B and in one in SY. This code was significantly more represented within the B participants (9.6% of the coverage of the interviews vs 0.8%). Participants from B spoke of the lack of support in regards to DB from outside agencies. Participants wanted support in understanding DB. They also mentioned that even when there is support how it is not always effective. They spoke of receiving support from outside agencies such as the police, Eps, Social services and Psychiatrist. They also highlighted the importance of multiagency working. The participant from SY also spoke of the importance of multiagency working and receiving support from early help and the health visitors.

Similarly, this code for B participants is closely linked with the code of practice and funding as seen by the extract. This also relates to available literature as again per Martino-Alvarez et al (2016), teachers reported that the first thing that needed to improve to be able to tackle DB was more coordination between services. Furthermore, from a more critical perspective, the idea of traditional schooling arrangements could be explored (Graham, 2008). With traditional schooling arrangements I am referring to the idea that teachers are used to and encouraged by the system to siphon off the problematic students to “experts” of abnormality, namely outside agencies such as EP or psychiatry as mentioned by some of the participants.

### **Working with families**

*B: “First, knowing that we are all in the same boat and that we have to row in the same direction. If I see a disruptive behaviour in my classroom and I speak with the family.*

*The family denying it to me doesn’t help me, or that they think that I’m making it up.*

*That they say: well, not with me, in the park he behaves perfectly” P.*



*SY: "I think from school's point of view is about getting parents on board, because we only got the kids for like 36 weeks of the year, we don't have them on the weekends, we don't have them in the holidays. So it is getting our parents on board". G.*

This code was present in all the interviews from B and in two of the interviews from SY. B participants spoke of the importance of families having a similar perspective to schools when it came to DB. How families could have different expectations of what was acceptable to do and what was not. Participants also spoke of the importance of involving and supporting families. Similarly, participants in SY spoke of the importance of families being supported as well by other agencies such as the health visitors without being judged. They also spoke of involving parents actively in interventions that were being developed by school.

Firstly, it is noteworthy that both settings used the metaphor of a boat to emphasize the importance of school and families working together or seeing things similarly. Again talking about how important it is to see DB as a multi setting issue. It does not only affect schools but also parents and teachers seem to imply that they need to work jointly to tackle it.

### **Power and control**

*B: "And they need to know that the one who is in charge is you and that you are not going to tolerate it (DB) under any circumstance and it doesn't matter what he does, that he insults you, that he kicks you that he throws himself on the floor. He has to see that he cannot win over you, then he accepts. Because he sees that really the one in charge is you and that over you there is no one." P.*

*SY: "What are these boundaries that you are setting in place and they will try to push against them." G.*

The code “power and control” was connected to the three aspects of the interviews, perceptions, attributions and actions. It was an underlying element that permeated all aspects of the interviews. This code could be identifying to be present within all the interviews from B and SY. Participants in B spoke of how students were “challenging” and “measuring” the teacher. They spoke of children wanting to control the attention, and of children feeling superior as reasons for displaying DB. Teachers were described as having to control who the children that were displaying DB were interacting with in order to not allow the DB to spread. Some teachers spoke of children displaying DB in order to gain control of the situation. Teachers in SY spoke of them not being authoritarian, how the boundaries were set up by adults and how DB was due to children needing to be in control. Children being “defiant” and needing to control a situation were seen as reasons for DB. This code seems to be more heavily presented within the B sample, 6.1% coverage compared to 1.2%.

The idea of power and control when it comes to the school environment is not new. Lewis and Burman (2008) already spoke of how teachers overtly or covertly resist pupil empowerment initiatives which concede power to pupils (e.g. such as co-production of rules and regulations, pupil voice initiatives). Pupils themselves also perceive disciplinary actions and exclusions as adults exercising power over them (Daniels et al, 2003). In her book *Childism*, Elisabeth Young-Bruehl (2012) talks about how children are seen by adults as possessions because of their lack of reasoning and abilities and need to be controlled because of it. Conversely, in a study by Sellman, (2009), children who were identified as having SEBD and were being educated within a Pupil referral unit explain how they thought they had more voice or power when they presented DB. They believed that if they behaved well, adults expected them to behave even better and therefore they saw DB as a way of regaining agency within the setting.

## Summary

Both sets of participants seemed to agree in terms of what they considered actions to respond to DB, however they decided to focus on different things. Participants from SY spoke at length of the importance of understanding DB and the relationship between the child and the educator as factors that influence teachers abilities to act towards DB. They also highlighted the importance of working with families and having a whole school approach. They spoke of responses to DB having to be individualised to that particular child and using dialogue and talking with the child to reduce the DB. They linked this strongly with having to listen and acknowledge the feelings of the child in order to be able to reduce the behaviour. They also spoke of the importance of developing the child's skills in order to decrease DB. Finally participants in SY remarked the need for more training, funding and support from other agencies in order to be able to tackle DB effectively.

Participants from B also spoke of the importance of the child and educator relationship and understanding DB as factors that influence DB but not to the same amount SY did. They spoke of approaches towards DB having to be individualised, immediate and through dialogue or talking to the child. They spoke of having to calm the child down. B also spoke of approaches having to be taken from a whole school approach and needing to work with families. Participants from B overwhelmingly spoke of the need of having support from other agencies which was closely linked to the need of changing the code of practice in order to consider children who present with DB as having a SEN. They also spoke of needing further training and more funding to support schools in dealing with DB.

## Chapter 6: Discussion

### 6.1: Introduction

This chapter is going to start by first responding to the three research questions that this thesis had set out to answer. This will be done by triangulating all the results from both the questionnaires and the interviews. Then, I will explore how this research can contribute to the practice of Educational Psychologists. Furthermore, I will explore the overall strengths and limitations of this thesis as well as areas for further study. The discussion will finish with a concluding section which aims to integrate the summary findings and its implications.

### 6.2: Research question 1: How is disruptive behaviour perceived by primary school teachers in Biscay and South Yorkshire?

*Table 17: Questionnaire perception results*

| <b>Behaviour</b>  | <b>South Yorkshire perception</b> | <b>Biscay perception</b> |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| *Throw or break objects when angry                                      | Low disruption                    | Moderately disruptive    |
| *Hit other children   | Very disruptive                   | Very disruptive          |
| *Hit other adults   | Very disruptive                   | Very disruptive          |
| Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant | Moderately disruptive             | Moderately disruptive    |
| Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is relevant   | Low disruption                    | Moderately disruptive    |
| *Steal from a peer  | Moderately disruptive             | Very disruptive          |
| Argues when denied own way  | Very disruptive                   | Very disruptive          |
| Refuses to follow directions  | Moderately disruptive             | Moderately disruptive    |

Teachers' perceptions were analysed using data from the questionnaires and the structured interview. The table above (table 17) shows a summary of teachers' responses to the behaviours that were explored in the questionnaire. Teachers were asked to categorise eight different behaviours depending on how disruptive they perceived them to be.

Teachers in South Yorkshire (SY) seem to perceive the disruptive behaviours (DB) listed in the questionnaire as less severe than did teachers in Biscay (B). 40.5% of responses from B were placed within the very disruptive range compared to 22.5% of responses from SY. Those behaviours marked with a \* were perceived as statistically significantly different between the two contexts. For the particular example of "Hit other children" and "hit other adults", although it seems they were identified similarly, SY participants identified these behaviours to be less severe than participants in B, even if they were still placed within the very disruptive category (91.9% of B participants placed "hit other adults" within the most severe category versus 66.7% of SY participants). Both sets of participants agreed on where they placed the following behaviours: "refuses to follow directions", "argues when denied own way" and "interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant".

It could be considered that from the behaviours listed in the questionnaire three were aggressive behaviours: "Throw or break objects when angry, hit other children, hit other adults" these behaviours were consistently perceived as more disruptive by the B participants, which correlates with the level of aggressive behaviours mentioned and highlighted within the B interviews. The "Aggression" code was present across all interviews but more heavily represented within the B interviews (4.8% coverage by B participants versus 2.1% coverage by SY participants). The fact that aggressive DB was

such a focus within B interviews is interesting as physical, destructive or aggressive behaviour is relatively uncommon in the classroom on a daily basis (Beaman et al, 2007). DB is more commonly associated with minor behaviour such as idleness, work avoidance, talking out of turn etc. in the international and UK literature (Beaman et al, 2007; Ofsted, 2014). Gotzen et al (2007), in her study, proposes the idea of decontextualized worry to highlight how teachers worry more and see as more severe behaviours that are socially frowned upon, such as stealing or hitting, instead of focusing on behaviours that actually impact upon the teaching and learning processes on a day to day basis, such as talking out of turn, refusing to follow instructions, etc. This seems to parallel what can be seen through the interviews and the questionnaires. In the interviews, when teachers were asked to provide examples of DB they had experienced in their classroom, they tended to describe aggressive behaviours, instead of describing behaviours that they are more likely to encounter on a daily basis. The participants spoke at length of how DB impacts on learning, but the behaviours they themselves described, e.g. “Threw a table, arguing fighting”, are not that likely to impact on learning regularly because of their low occurrence according to the literature (Beaman et al, 2007).

Within the interviews, participants explored their perceptions of the effect of DB. Both samples presented very similar codes, however, the way participants talked about them was different. SY focused more on the emotional impact DB has on other children and on the child that is displaying the DB, while B focused on how DB impacts on the learning of other children and on the child that is displaying it. Within Chapter 5: Interview analysis and interpretation, I propose the idea of whether this preoccupation for emotional wellbeing that SY seems to highlight in all aspects of the interview (perceptions, attributions and actions) could be related to the current popularity of emotional literacy and emotional regulation interventions e.g. Thrive or Elsa. These

interventions tend to be heavily based on attachment theory (Bowlby, 1953). In the interviews, two out of three of the participants from SY specifically named the Thrive approach. This is a good example of how psychological knowledge has permeated educational discourse and practices.

Participants tended to use masculine pronouns when speaking about children who were displaying DB. We can find examples of this in the interview segments presented in the results section e.g. “he wants to annoy”, “he was removed”. This is reflected in research as boys are portrayed to be more likely to display externalising behaviours than girls (Beaman et al, 2007) and if we link that to the fact that most of the descriptions of DB within the interview were of aggressive and externalising behaviours, it seems plausible that teachers were most likely thinking of boys displaying those behaviours.

**6.3: Research question 2: What is disruptive behaviour attributed to by primary school teachers in Biscay and South Yorkshire?**

*Table 18: Attributions summary*

|                           | Biscay | South Yorkshire |
|---------------------------|--------|-----------------|
| Within-child attributions | 10.4%  | 18.4%           |
| Family attributions       | 5.6%   | 2%              |
| School attributions       | 14.6%  | 4.6%            |
| Society attributions      | 5%     | 0%              |

The attributions of DB were analysed using data solely from the interviews, as there was no aspect of the questionnaire that looked at attributions. Table 16 shows the amount of text out of the entire transcript (six interviews) that was devoted to each type of attribution (coverage). This table allows us to make some comparisons in regards to how the two contexts attribute DB.

Participants from both contexts presented similar attributions. These attributions varied in terms of how much weight they were given in speech, that is, how much of the transcript was spent talking about them. Participants mainly attributed DB to within-child, school and family variables. Participants from B also attributed DB to changes in society, which is something that did not appear on the SY interviews.

In relation to within-child attributions, participants spoke of how DB could be due to how the child understood situations, the fact that the child may have a diagnosis and that is why they are displaying DB. Thomas & Glenny (2000) proposed the idea that there has been a change in education in terms of how we see DB. In the past, we may have seen children's behaviour as naughty, and therefore, deserving of a sanction. However, now children may be perceived as having a mental health need (with the label of SEMH) and therefore, deserve their needs being met. This may be because adults presuppose children are vulnerable and they want to support them. This enables the adults to create categories that encapsulate a range of ideas about what is normal and what is a mental health need. This link between DB and ideas of Special Educational Needs has been further explored in the literature review.

Participants from SY emphasised the way children understand a situation as an attribution for DB much more than participants in B. Participants also spoke of the fact that the psycho-emotional state of the child could be the reason why they were displaying DB. Both contexts agreed on considering anger, frustration and avoidance as psycho-emotional states that may be making the child display DB. Participants from B also spoke of boredom causing DB while SY participants spoke of the fact that the child did not feel safe, or trusted the adults around them as reasons for displaying DB. The participants from SY focused more on psycho-emotional codes than did participants in B. Thomas & Glenny (2000) challenge whether adult's understanding of children's need for stability, nurture and security are in reality a reflection of the school's needs for



order, calm and routine. It seems teachers attribute the problem to the child when in reality, the one that is struggling to maintain its own “normality” (order and calmness) is the system. Within-child attributions were explored by both sets of participants, however, SY participants gave these attributions more weight (18.4% coverage for SY participants versus 10.4% for B participants). This fits with what we can see from the UK’s literature, teachers tend to attribute DB to within-child and family variables (Miller, 1996). Despite this, the literature typically shows family variables are more represented than within-child ones. However, this was not the case for our participants (see table 16) if we use coverage as a way of measuring which attributions were more represented.

Both contexts also explored school as a reason for DB. Both contexts agreed on the setting being a reason for children displaying DB, this could be because of the physical space, the noise etc., as well as how teachers respond to the child being a cause of DB. Participants in B also spoke of peer relationships being a cause of DB, meaning that depending on whom children interacted with, they could start displaying DB. Participants from B spoke more at length about school variables than did SY participants. This stands in contrast with the Spanish and UK’s literature (Miller, 1996; Martino-Alvarez et al, 2016), which shows that school variables are not normally discussed as attributions for disruptive behaviour. For B participants, school attributions were the most represented attribution within the interviews.

The attributions that participants reported go mostly in line with Miller’s (1996) results, presented a decade ago, which was that family and within-child attributions were the main attributions for DB by teachers. In contrast with their results, the participants from this research did not explore family factors as much, SY participants mainly attributed DB to within-child factors (18.4% coverage). Something that is heavily criticized in the literature in terms of attributions of DB, is how little emphasis is given to schools’

variables, teachers tend to focus on attributions that move responsibility away from themselves and onto families and children (Miller, 1996). This is not really the case in this research, especially for B participants. For B participants, DB was mainly attributed to school variables (14.6% coverage) while for SY participants school variables came to be the second most represented (4.6% coverage). For both sets of participants, the most represented code within school attributions was “how teachers respond” which may show that teachers are starting to reflect on their practices.

Furthermore, both contexts also explored family variables. Teachers thought that family dynamics, that is, the way members of the family interacted with one another, was a cause of DB. They also spoke of family norms, meaning, the unique sets of rules within a family being the reason children displayed DB. Participants from B spoke more about family variables than did participants from SY.

Finally, participants from B also believed that society was to blame for DB. They spoke of how changes in society had made families and people in general “lose values” which impacts on children’s behaviour. B teachers spoke of “solidarity, equality and respect” being lost in society and how that gets reflected in the behaviour children show in school. “Society” was only recorded as a code for the B participants. Maybe this suggests that SY participants see DB as something more insular, only in the realm of school life which involves the setting, the child and their family but not the wider community and the society these systems are a part of.

#### **6.4: Research question 3: How do primary school teachers in Biscay and South Yorkshire respond to disruptive behaviour?**

Teachers’ actions towards DB in this research were analysed through data from the questionnaire and the interviews. Participants reported acting towards DB quite

similarly both in the interview and questionnaire. The most represented and least represented actions within the questionnaire were the following:

*Table 19: South Yorkshire and Biscay actions summary questionnaire*

| South Yorkshire             |                          | Biscay                      |                            |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Most represented            | Least represented        | Most represented            | Least represented          |
| - Punishment (22.6%)        | -Alternative action (2%) | -Talk to the child (21.7%)* | -Alternative action (2.9%) |
| - Remind of rule (21.7%)    | -Involve parents (6.4%)  | -Punishment (20.8%)         | - Remove (4.6%)*           |
| -Talk to the child (14.7%)* | -Remove (8%)*            | -Remind of rule (16.7%)     | -Offer help (9%)           |

The table above shows the most and least represented codes from the area of the questionnaire that dealt with how teachers responded to DB. Teachers were presented with eight behaviours and asked how they would respond to them if they saw an instance of them in their classroom. This table is a summary of the most and least represented codes for all eight behaviours. The representation of the codes marked with a \* was statistically significantly different between the two sets of participants. As can be seen from the table, participants from both contexts were mostly in agreement in terms of which actions they would perform, depending on what DB they were encountering in their classroom. There were significant statistical differences with regards to the amount of representation on the codes “remove” and “talk to the child”. In terms of item to item differences, that is each behaviour that was presented on the questionnaire, it is worth noting that on the item “interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant”, participants showed statistical differences on their use of the codes “talk to the child” and “remind of rule”. Participants from SY stated they would use more “remind of rule”, while B participants used more “talk to the child”. Furthermore, there was also statistical significance in the way each context handled an instance of a child refusing to follow direction. Within this item participants

showed statistical difference in their use of “talk to the child” and “involve parents”. Participants from B reported involving parents more than did participants from SY, they also reported using the strategy of “talking to the child” more.

In the Interview participants from both contexts mostly agreed on the actions they would follow to deal with DB in their classrooms and schools. Each context varied in terms of what they emphasised the most or on how much time they spent talking about certain actions. Participants from SY especially highlighted the importance of taking into account the relationship with the child and understanding why the child was performing that behaviour in order to know how to respond to it. This was also a factor to take into account for teachers in B but they did not emphasize it as much. Teachers are understood to be a significant other in a child’s life and they have been shown to influence children’s conception of themselves (Myers & Pianta, 2008). Therefore, it is logical that the relationship adults have with their students is going to be an important consideration in how they respond to DB. It has been shown as well that it does not matter what strategies teachers use to deal with DB, if the relationship between the adult and the child is poor, it is likely that those strategies will be misused (Harris, Vincent, Thomson & Toalster, 2006; Sellman, 2009). In regards to understanding the DB, it has been theorised that children use DB as a means of communication towards teachers and parents in the absence of linguistic capacity to explain their intentions or feelings (FaupeL, 2003). Therefore, it stands to reason that understanding the underlying factors behind the DB that is being displayed, will be an important factor in addressing it.

Both contexts mainly agreed on how they would respond to DB. They said approaches needed to be individualised and instances of DB needed to be dealt with through conversation. Participants from B also said that responses to DB needed to be immediate. Something to note is that punishing DB as an action was not mentioned within the interviews, even if “punishment” was the most represented code within SY

and the second most represented in B in the questionnaires. This could be because although punishment is an action that teachers were happy to acknowledge within a questionnaire they did not feel it was socially desirable to be sharing it within an interview.

Both contexts spoke of how responses to DB from schools could be considered sticky plasters as they were not addressing the issues, which some of the B participants who used this code identified to be within the family. This again implies there is very little that teachers can do about DB. This attitude could be compared with learned helplessness, in which someone accepts the fact that there is nothing they can do to stop a situation because they perceive they have no control over it (Seligman, 1975). Each context varied in their responses regarding what to do about DB in the interview. B participants said children needed to be helped in calming down while, participants from SY said there needed to be acknowledgement of the child's emotions and they needed to be listened to, as well as focusing on developing new skills with them. In terms of responses to DB from the interviews, we can see the parallels with the responses to the questionnaire. In the questionnaire, participants used the code "talk to the child" and in the interview similar ideas were coded as "talking". Within the questionnaire the codes "alternative action" or "offer help" can also be found. This parallels with the code "developing skills" from the SY interviews. It is quite positive that we can see parallels between the two data sets as it supports the validity of the results.

Both contexts also spoke of the need to approach DB as a whole school approach. It is interesting to note that when participants spoke of whole school approaches, such as Thrive or tutorials, these approaches were aimed at the children that would display DB but not at changing the practices of the school itself. Thomas & Glenny (2000) argue that true whole school approaches to DB or behavioural difficulties cannot exist while there is a healthy and growing notion of DB being a problem that is within the child.

This means that as long as problematic behaviour is seen as child centred and clinical, attention will be distracted from thinking critically about the systems children are made to inhabit. This has been reflected in this research's findings as within-child attributions were the most represented attribution for SY and the second most represented for B (see table 16).

Participants also spoke of how the Local Authority or the Government should respond to DB, both contexts agreeing about the need for more funding for schools to be able to deal with DB as well as support from other agencies and training. Participants from B specially highlighted support from other agencies as something that was needed much more than did SY. It is worth noting that this could be because in B there are not so many external agencies that will work with schools regularly. The job description of an Educational Psychologists in B involves only doing statutory assessments, this means they will visit once every two months or less, and they will not normally support schools in other ways, such as consultation based work, training etc. Statutory Assessments completed by EPs in B will highlight the needs of the child and the provision they require which will form the basis for a Report of Special Educational Needs, similar to what the old Special Educational Need's Statement in the UK (Gobierno Vasco, 1998). Athanasiou, Geil, Hazel, & Copeland (2002) proposed that when teachers attribute DB to within-child or family variables, they are more likely to seek support from outside services, to solve the problem. This goes in line with the results of this research. If teachers are not seeing DB as being caused by variables which they have control over, they will tend to try to shift responsibility. Furthermore, if we also take into account that within the education systems such professional routes do exist, e.g. Educational Psychologist referrals, Behaviour improvement team etc, this may also be enabling schools to use these processes to shift responsibility away from

them. Some authors even say that this is taken as a bureaucratic ritual rather than a meaningful endeavour to support the child (Thomas & Glenny, 2000).

Finally, both contexts tied it all together saying that schools and governments needed to work with families and support them in dealing with DB.

What is very interesting about these results, is how, even if teachers' actions both in the questionnaire and the interview present very similarly, if we look at educational outcomes such as exclusion, we can see that the problem of DB is being handled very differently by the two countries. This means that although teachers generally say they act towards DB very similarly, in the end, in the UK there are a significant number of young people being excluded from schools while in Spain it does not seem to be so common.

Through the interviews, the under tone of power and control was obvious. This was considered an underlying theme that permeated all aspects of teachers' understanding, their perception, attributions and actions. Teachers from both contexts, at times, seemed to be describing DB as a fight for power or control of the situation, from both the pupil and the teacher. One participant described it as an "arm-wrestle", making this a useful metaphor. Research shows that mainstream teachers openly or covertly resist pupils' empowerment initiatives as they tend to be uncomfortable about handing over power to pupils (Lewis et al, 2008). Other authors theorise that young people use behaviour as a way of resisting aspects of the education system they perceive as irrelevant, demotivating or patronising (Wright et al, 2000). When Sellman (2009) interviewed young people in a Pupil Referral Unit, they said they thought their voice was listened to more when they displayed DB because, otherwise, if they behaved well, they were expected to behave even better or to maintain that behaviour no matter what. These authors see DB as a way for pupils to take back control from adults, to challenge

authority and to try to get their voices heard. Young people could be using DB as a way of resisting power and getting their voice heard. Adults, in turn, clinicalise these behaviours (saying the child has SEMH needs) which allow them to exert further power to “fix” the child and their behaviour.

### **6.5: Application for Educational psychologists and teachers’ practice**

Children have the right to be educated; this is stated on article 28 of the Rights of the child (United Nations, 1989). As Educational Psychologists (EPs) it is our mission to protect and advocate for children’s rights, just as teachers’ aim is to provide the best educational experience they can for their pupils. We know that DB can lead to children being excluded from education as it can clearly be seen by looking at the reasons for exclusion in the UK and Spain (DfE, 2018b; BOPV, 2008). With the figures of exclusion continuously rising in the UK, it is clear this is an important issue for Educational Psychologists if they want to protect and advocate for the rights of children. Even if exclusions do not seem to be high within Spain, the fact that there is no transparent data about them is still concerning, therefore, it is still imperative to acknowledge the importance of the issue.

Before we can challenge or change adults’ understanding of DB, we first need to be able to understand it in depth. This research has aimed to do just that. The way adults perceive, attribute and report how they act towards DB is going to impact on the way they do interact with children who are displaying these behaviours. Therefore, it is key that EPs, and other teachers for that matter, are aware of what these perceptions, attributions and reported actions are, for us to be able to challenge those assumptions if needed.



Being aware of how things are understood allows us to put them in context and challenge them. For example, we know that most of the DB that teachers encounter in the classroom is low level DB, such as talking out of turn (Ofsted, 2014). This is something we can use when staff report concerns about disruptive behaviour. We could question what the frequency of the behaviour is, asking them to be analytic about it, which will help them and ourselves as EPs to reflect on the actual impact and function of the behaviour. It is important to take this into account because, otherwise, we and teachers can easily fall into the trap of labelling a child as having SEMH needs and denying them the right to be educated because of behaviours that when analysed in context, should not grant that outcome.

Another example of the importance of understanding this phenomenon in depth would be when teachers are attributing the DB to within-child attributions or their families (Miller, 1996) We need to be aware of this in order to challenge it if necessary. Teachers need to be aware of this as well to be able to reflect in their own practice. School attributions could help us move the problem and help reframe the focus to something that is more easily addressed. School variables are attributions that teachers can claim responsibility over with more ease than within-child attributions. This is not an either/or question, teachers can still perceive DB as a within-child problem, and it may be in some cases useful, but if the attribution for a problem is consistently placed outside of variables that stakeholders have control over, it is likely that the problem is not going to be addressed and the “blame” is going to be placed somewhere else.

This research has also highlighted how much the language of psychology and psychiatry has permeated educational discourse. We also need to be aware that, as EPs, we know those theories that have permeated the discourse, such as Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1953) have valid criticism which does not seem to be taken into account in its application in education. It is part of our role to be critical friends to schools, to

challenge their assumptions and to help them reflect on their practice. This may mean challenging whether by trying to be supportive towards students, e.g. labelling them as having a need because of their DB, they could be actually causing more harm than good. We know that children identified as having SEMH difficulties are over represented in the exclusion data: We also know that exclusions are correlated to young people engaging in delinquency acts, which can have a long lasting impact on their life prospects (McCrystal, Percy & Higgins, 2007). As EPs we also need to be aware of the pressure schools are facing, league tables and performance related pay are two very harsh realities of education. These realities mean that what is best for the child may not be best for the adults and the school as a setting. This means we need to be critical as EPs of whose needs we are meeting, the child's or the school's. Again, this is a point which teachers could take to reflect on their own practice, when we are removing children from a classroom or we are temporarily excluding them, who is benefiting from it?

This piece of research compares and contrast the opinions of adults who inhabit two different educational systems. What is important to remember is that the results of this research have not been terribly different between contexts, therefore teachers tend to think similarly about DB regardless of what system they inhabit. However, we know that the consequences for students can be very different. It is a fact that pupil referral units do not exist in Spain nor Special Schools for SEMH needs. Children with similar difficulties will be expected to be educated in mainstream schools. So if we know it can be done differently, we need to take this into account as EPs and as teachers, knowing that things can be done differently should help us keep in mind that the realities we are made to inhabit and the systems we work with can be changed. The systems can be different and by us challenging them, we are advocating for the rights of children and young people.

## **6.6: Strengths and limitations**

### 6.6.1: Strengths

One of the strengths this research possesses is its focus on disruptive behaviour as a concept instead of on children identified as having SEMH. This research benefits from focusing on DB due to the rapid changes in the nomenclature of SEMH needs, its lack of robustness as a descriptor and its power as a label (Thomas & Glenny, 2000). Furthermore, if I had used SEMH as the focus of this research it would have been difficult to say for certain that all teachers agreed on what SEMH meant. Looking at observable behaviours that teachers tend to describe as disruptive allows us to explore a more practical and observable phenomenon, that can be widely understood internationally. By having used concrete behaviours within the questionnaire and having left descriptions of behaviour up to the interviewees this research has avoided misinterpreting concepts. On the questionnaire, I presented participants with behaviours that I assumed would be classified as disruptive at some level. These behaviours appeared on several published tools that aim to measure DB, therefore, lending some validity (Sullivan et al, 2014; Adey et al, 1991; Martino-Alvarez et al, 2016). However, I still allowed participants to say that those behaviours were not disruptive (they could have placed them outside the bulls eye), therefore, allowing participants to interpret these behaviours as they wished. Furthermore, in the interview, I asked participants to describe DB as they understood it, using their own definition for the rest of the interview.

This is a mixed method study, which is not common within literature around DB, SEMH or classroom management. Studies around SEMH tend to be qualitative in nature, most likely due to the complexities of the phenomenon (Armstrong, 2014), while studies on classroom management or DB tends to be quantitative and based on

either observation or questionnaires (Lewis & Burman, 2008; Hayes, Hindle & Withington, 2007). This study brings the best of both worlds, allowing the reader to gain a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon.

The content validity of this research is good quality. Content validity is the ability an instrument has of appropriately measuring a complex construct. The questionnaire was created only for the purpose of this research, it used ideas and methods from different researchers (Gotzen et al, 2007; Miller, 1996; Alvarez et al, 2016; Clunies-Ross et al, 2008). The items were pre trialled (on the pilot study) and discussed in depth during research tutorials when the questionnaire was being developed.

Furthermore, the sample for this research showed to be quite varied in terms of what age group they taught. Participants showed an even spread between KS1 and KS2. This is quite positive as it most likely allowed the variety of responses that were gathered.

Qualitative data was analysed using Applied Thematic Analysis. The codes derived from the analysis were externally reviewed by my supervisor. Furthermore, the codes for the questionnaire were also tested for inter-coder agreement. This found and shows an 80% agreement which strengthens the validity of the analysis (see appendix: inter-coder reliability). Inter-coder agreement is a measure of the extent to which two coders would code the same data set in the same way using the same codebook (Lavrakas, 2008).

An exhaustive codebook was also created which helped support the validity and reliability of the questionnaire analysis as it allows reviewers or readers to understand in depth how the data was analysed. A similar procedure was followed for the interview analysis with the summarising tables (see table 14, 15 and 16).

This research is significantly different compared with the literature that has been reviewed in the sense that it aimed to compare and contrast the understanding of DB

between two contexts. There is very little research out there that has taken a cross-cultural approach, making this piece of research quite unique.

Participation in this study was completely voluntary; those participants that were interviewed chose to provide their means of contact. I arranged the interviews based on their preferences. I am fairly certain participants were comfortable during the interviews, I aimed to make the interviews as pleasant and non stressful as possible. I did this by making some small chat before starting the recording and reminding them of the aims of the study. I also repeated that they could leave the study at any point, even during the interview if they did not feel comfortable.

#### 6.6.2: Limitations

One limiting aspect of this research has been the time constraints in which the data needed to be gathered. This meant that schools had to be contacted and participants needed to respond to the questionnaire in a timely manner as the time span for the data gathering aspect of the research was two months (February to March) the time allocated for research activities within the course was 17 days from February to March. This meant I tried to be as efficient as possible when thinking about how to engage teachers with the research, I decided using a digital approach at first, I created a digital version of the questionnaire and disseminated it through email to all schools in the South Yorkshire and Biscay, approximately 350 emails were sent. However, this did not have the response rate I would have desired, especially from the Biscay region. I resorted to sending the email version of the questionnaire and calling the school at the same time to present my research to a member of the leadership team, with the intention of engaging more of the teaching staff. When this strategy did not provide me with more responses, I decided to bring paper copies of the questionnaire to several schools in South Yorkshire and Biscay. Therefore, in terms of sample size, this research has been able to gather a

small sample size taking into account the population it aimed to represent (South Yorkshire and Biscay schools have around 4,774 teachers) which means the conclusions gathered from the questionnaire cannot be considered representative of the total population and therefore its external validity is an issue, as the findings cannot be generalised to the overall population. Due to this, I decided to classify this research as a comparative study, an exploratory project mainly aimed at providing a first look into teachers' perceptions attributions and actions towards disruptive behaviour. For further research, I would aim to introduce the project personally to schools; I found that recruitment of participants was more successful when I interacted in person with the schools. This could be done during CPD days or team meetings within schools.

Furthermore, this research is based on self-reported information, both within the interview and questionnaire. Self-reported information is important data that should be gathered if the aim of research is to look at beliefs and perceptions, as is the case within this research. However, it is still important to acknowledge that any set of data is going to have its limitations. It is well known that self-reported information can be biased (Foddy, 1993). The relationship between how participants respond to and what they do can be weak as the responses can be idealised rather than represent observable behaviour (Foddy, 1993). It is also important to be aware of social desirability bias; especially during the interview as the questionnaire was anonymous but the interviews were done face to face and the interviewees knew I was a trainee Educational Psychologist. It would make sense to assume to some degree the responses were being monitored for social desirability (Lavrakas, 2008). An example of this is how the word "punishment or punish" was not used once during any of the interviews but it was still the most represented code for actions within the questionnaire.

Another issue was that the participants that contributed to the interviews were mainly members of senior management, all participants from B and two from SY fitted this

description. This could be classified as self-selection bias, as participants were asked to provide their information if they would like to be contacted for the interview. It could be that participants' willingness to volunteer their contact information would correlate with them feeling they know a lot about the topic or are not afraid of sharing their opinion. This would mean that some participants would not volunteer their information for the opposite reason, meaning, not all participants were as likely to get their opinions heard in the research. Self-selection bias often leads to a polarization of responses as not all points of view are represented (Lavrakas, 2008). This of course could not be avoided, as this anonymous and volunteer self-selection was part of the ethical clearance process this research underwent, but it is important to acknowledge it.

This research project had data in two languages, Spanish and English. I am fluent in both languages and therefore I was able to engage with the data without much difficulty. However, my supervisor and probably those evaluating this research may not be able to access the raw data that was gathered in Spanish. This presents as an overall limitation when it comes to validating the analysis or reviewing my conclusions. In order to address this limitation as much as possible, the extracts presented throughout this research were all presented in English. Furthermore, in the data analysis when the Spanish participants have used idioms or expressions that are highly rooted in Spanish culture these have been explained for the reader.

Another limitation of this study is that the questionnaire did not ask about frequency of DB. This is something that would have made the questionnaire exploration of perceptions of DB even better. The research is able to provide information about how disruptive teachers perceive behaviours to be but it does not tell us about how often they occur.

On the questionnaire I asked participants to describe what supportive strategy and disciplinary action they would perform if they observed an instance of a certain DB. The aim of this was to elicit as many responses as possible, however, by prompting participants to describe supportive and disciplinary actions I may have elicited responses that would have not otherwise been reported, which could have obscured the results in terms of what actions are actually happening in the classroom.

Finally, another limitation of this study was the choice to use a structured interview. The questions used during the interview were highly structured and correlated well with the research questions; however, this also had a negative side to it, as questions could be considered leading. Due to the fact I wanted to explore teachers' understandings of DB in quite a structured way (perceptions, attributions and actions), I used quite a structured interview approach. In further research, alternatively a more open ended or unstructured interview could be use to see whether the themes explored in this research also arise from participants in such an approach.

### **6.7: Further research**

Further research is needed to explore perceptions, attributions and actions towards DB further. Additional research should focus on looking at more variables. For example, in regards to perception, researchers should add the variable of frequency. That would allow the research to look at perception of DB as something more contextualised in everyday practice not just at severity, as has been addressed in this study. Furthermore, perceptions of DB and of its frequency could also be studied using observation, as there is very little research on this area that does not rely on participants' self-report.

With regards to analysing attributions further, a theoretical model could be adapted and I think it would be beneficial to approach attributions through a mixed method model, something that was not done in this study. Teachers could be asked to explore their



attributions of DB through a questionnaire using theoretical frameworks such as Weiner's attribution theory (2006) or the theory of planned behaviour such as the study by (Poulou & Norwich, 2002). Furthermore, more interviews could be conducted and analysed using the already provided framework for analysis as seen in Chapter 5. This would allow further research to check the replicability of this study in terms of its interview analysis.

Actions could also be analysed through observations, as again, this is something that the literature is lacking. It is important to be able to analyse whether self-reported information actually correlates with day to day practice on how teachers act towards DB.

Additionally, I think further research would need to use a bigger sample size. This study has promise but the results would be more valid if the sample size had been bigger both for the interviews and questionnaires. It would also be important if the sample, especially in the interviews, was varied and randomised. The sample of this study was voluntary and the participants of the interview were mainly teachers in senior management. This obscures the findings of the interview, as there is little representation of other stages of teaching, such as newly qualified teachers or experienced teachers who are not part of senior management. Further research could also aim to compare teachers' perceptions attributions and actions of DB in primary and secondary schools.

Finally, another approach that could be taken would be to look at how children or young people perceive, attribute and act towards DB themselves. This approach would be useful as it would examine another side to DB: How it is understood by young people themselves. A piece of research such as this, would be of great value as it would represent the voice of young people on an issue that is so dominated by adult voices.

## **6.8: Conclusion**

This research has explored primary teachers' perceptions, attributions and actions towards DB across Biscay and South Yorkshire. It has followed a mixed methods approach and all the information was gained through participants' self-report. Teachers' perceptions towards DB were found to be similar but with some interesting differences: teachers from SY perceived the behaviours listed on the questionnaire as less disruptive than participants from B; this was statistically significant in 4 out of the 8 behaviours listed. In the interview, when teachers spoke of what their definition of DB was, they mainly described aggressive behaviours. They spoke of how DB impacts on teachers and other children as well as the children themselves that are displaying the DB. Participants from each context had different ways of approaching this, however, participants from SY spoke more of the emotional impact DB has on other children and the child themselves, while participants from B spoke of how DB impacts on the academic performance of children more. Participants perceived DB to impact on the normal functioning of the class as well as on the teaching and learning process. Overall, perceptions of DB were quite similar between the two contexts, the main difference is how participants from B seemed to perceive DB as being more severe than did participants from SY and how SY saw DB impacting upon children more emotionally than academically.

Regarding attributions of disruptive behaviour, again both sets of participants responded similarly. They both attributed DB to children, their families or the school environment. Participants from SY focused more on within-child factors, especially on the child's understanding of the situation and their psycho-emotional state while B participants explored school factors and within-child attributions. B participants also spoke of how society affects children's behaviour in school.

Finally, participants mostly agreed on how to deal with disruptive behaviour. Both groups of participants had the same most represented codes within the questionnaire, the

only difference was that participants from B statistically significantly used the code “talk to the child” more than participants from SY. Both groups also agreed in the interview about the actions they would take towards DB. They both identified the relationship with the child and understanding DB as factors that influenced their actions towards addressing DB in the classroom. Participants from SY especially emphasized these aspects. Both groups also said they would address DB by talking with the child and taking an individualised approach to that child. While participants from B said they would calm the child down, participants from SY emphasized the importance of listening and acknowledging the child’s feelings and helping them develop new skills. Both groups also spoke of the importance of addressing DB through whole school approaches. Participants also spoke of the need for more training and funding and for support from other agencies in addressing DB, this was particularly important for B participants. All participants reported the importance of working with families in addressing DB.

This research is particularly relevant in that it compares and contrasts perceptions, attributions and actions towards DB of teachers from two different education systems. As it can be seen above, both sets of participants took a very similar approach in their understanding of DB. One of the most significant differences was in B participants’ willingness to explore school attributions, which is not common within the literature. The present research has revealed a teacher willingness to reflect on practice. This may imply that teachers are placing less blame within children or families. It could also mean that they are starting to perceive the issue of DB in a different way.

If DB is understood very similarly by teachers in Biscay and South Yorkshire, how could the realities of children who present with disruptive behaviour in these two contexts be so different, as has been shown on the literature review? That is children in the UK can find themselves excluded, sent to Pupil Referral Units or sent on managed

moves, they can be labelled as having Social Emotional and Mental Health difficulties. While children in Spain are unlikely to suffer any of those fates. The main difference is not on teachers' understanding of DB and that is something positive, as it allows us to see that a different way of doing things is possible without having to change the way teachers understand DB. The UK government has become complicit in allowing this reality to take place, a reality in which 605 students from SY were permanently excluded from their schools last year, despite the link between school exclusions and social exclusion posing a detrimental impact well into adulthood, has been proven (McCrystal et al, 2007). The Spanish government needs to provide better data about disciplinary actions schools are taking, as yearly data about exclusions is not published and, therefore, it is difficult to come to strong conclusions about young people's outcomes when there are instances of DB. From the information that I have been able to find, especially from the Basque Country, it is clear that permanent exclusions are an odd phenomenon at the moment in the Basque Education System, even when the conclusions of this study show that teachers' report of their perceptions, attributions and actions towards DB in B and SY are very similar.

### **6.9: Personal reflections**

Doing this piece of research has taught me a lot. I have developed my practice as a researcher but also expanded my thinking as an Educational Psychologist. I am particularly interested in the ideas around DB, SEMH and children and young peoples' behaviour in general, having done this research has help me frame adult's understanding of such issues better.

I firmly believe that in order to improve outcomes for young people as Educational Psychologists we first need to understand the other professionals that work very closely with young people and there is no other profession that works more closely with

children than teachers. Gaining a deeper insight into how they may understand disruptive behaviour, as a within child attribution or as behaviour that is trying to be aggressive helps me in my practice to challenge those assumptions in a way that is helpful and from the adult's perspective. I believe as an Educational Psychologist part of my toolkit is research and facts; being able to help adults reflect on their own practice and their own assumptions around DB is essential. This research has helped me achieve that with more ease within my own practice.

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The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

**Teachers' understanding of disruptive behaviour: A cross cultural,  
mixed methods study of primary teachers' perceptions, attributions  
and actions.**

**By:**

Raquel Avila Frau

A thesis submitted in particular fulfilment of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Educational and Child Psychology

The University of Sheffield

School of Education

November 2018

Volume 2

## **Appendix A: Literature review search terms**

In order to gather literature for my research, I used the following strategies: I searched the following terms using Google Scholar as well as StarPlus which is the library catalogue for the University of Sheffield. I also reviewed the reference section of the articles I read, in order to see if there was more related literature I could explore.

- Disruptive behaviour
- Disruptive behaviour UK
- Disruptive behaviour Spain
- Perception of disruptive behaviour
- Perception of disruptive behaviour UK
- Perception of disruptive behaviour Spain
- Attributions of disruptive behaviour
- Attributions of disruptive behaviour UK
- Attributions of disruptive behaviour Spain
- Actions disruptive behaviour
- Actions disruptive behaviour UK
- Actions disruptive behaviour Spain
- Measuring disruptive behaviour
- Cross cultural studies
- Thematic Analysis
- Mixed methods
- Outcomes disruptive behaviour
- SEMH perception teachers
- SEMH attributions teachers

- SEMH actions teachers
- Disruptive behaviour exclusion
- Exclusion outcomes
- Exclusion risk factors
- Behaviour management disruptive behaviour
- Student teacher relationships
- Disruptive behaviour Educational Psychology
- SEMH Educational psychology
- History of inclusive practices Spain
- SEMH inclusion





## Appendix B: Ethics approval letter

Downloaded: 13/11/2018

Approved: 14/12/2017

Raquel Avila Frau  
Registration number: 150107750  
School of Education  
Programme: EDUR138 Educational Psychology

Dear Raquel

**PROJECT TITLE:** How is disruptive behaviour perceived by teachers in South Yorkshire and Biscay

**APPLICATION:** Reference Number 015055

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 14/12/2017 the above-named project was **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following documentation that you submitted for ethics review:

- University research ethics application form 015055 (dated 19/10/2017).
- Participant information sheet 1035784 version 1 (25/09/2017).
- Participant information sheet 1035782 version 1 (25/09/2017).
- Participant consent form 1035781 version 1 (25/09/2017).
- Participant consent form 1035535 version 1 (19/09/2017).

If during the course of the project you need to [deviate significantly from the above-approved documentation](#) please inform me since written approval will be required.

Yours sincerely

David Hyatt  
Ethics Administrator  
School of Education

## Appendix C: Information sheets and questionnaire

# Questionnaire for schools

## Research project title

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How is disruptive behaviour understood by teachers in South Yorkshire and Biscay?

## Invitation

---

You are invited to take part in this research project. It is important you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Thank you for participating. You could contact me, the lead researcher and Trainee Educational Psychologist, Raquel Avila Frau at [ravilafrau1@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:ravilafrau1@sheffield.ac.uk) if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part in this research. Thank you for reading this.

## What is the project's purpose?

---

This research aims to investigate how primary school teachers perceive, attribute and deal with disruptive behaviour in the classroom. The research will gather data from primary school teachers from South Yorkshire (UK) and Biscay (Spain).

## Why might I participate?

---

You have been chosen because as a primary school teacher in South Yorkshire or Biscay you will have knowledge about disruptive behaviour in your institution. It is important to be able to gather the perspectives of teachers in order to work out what further support might be needed.

## Do I have to take part?

---

You will be able to keep a copy of this information sheet and you should indicate your agreement to the online consent form. You can still withdraw at any time, you do not have to give a reason.

## What will happen to me if I take part?

---

You will be asked to complete a web-based questionnaire which we estimate will take you 10 minutes. You may also wish to agree to a follow-up interview to find out more about your approach.

## What do I have to do?

---

Please answer the questions in the questionnaire. If you wish to participate on the follow up interview, please tick the box at the end of the questionnaire and leave your contact details.

## What are the possible disadvantages and risk of taking part?

---

Participating in the research is not anticipated to cause you any disadvantages or discomfort other than taking a little of your time (approximately 10 minutes for completing the questionnaire). The potential physical and/or psychological harm or distress will be expected to be the same as any experience in everyday life.

## **What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

---

Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will have a beneficial impact when it comes to understanding disruptive behaviour in primary schools. Results will be shared with participants in order to inform their professional work. This may well be helpful to individual participants as well as the systems in which they work.

## **What if something goes wrong?**

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If you have any complains about the project in the first instance you can contact me at [ravilafrau1@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:ravilafrau1@sheffield.ac.uk) or my supervisor, Dr Victoria Lewis at [v.lewis@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:v.lewis@sheffield.ac.uk). If you feel your complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction you can contact the University of Sheffield's registrar and secretary to take your complaint further

## **Will my information be kept confidential?**

---

All the information that we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in any way. Your institution will also not be identified or identifiable. Any data collected about you in the online questionnaire will be stored online in a form protected by passwords and other relevant security processes and technologies.

## **Will I be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?**

---

You might be recorded if you choose to participate in the follow up interview. Once the interview has been transcribed, the recording will be erased.

## **What type of information will be sought from me and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research projects objectives?**

---

The questionnaire will ask you about your perceptions of disruptive behaviour in the classroom and how you would deal with it. The interview will explore the same questions and will also be aiming to explore what attributions surround disruptive behaviour.

## **What will happen to the results of the research project?**

---

Results of the research will be part of my thesis. You or your institution will not be identified in any report or publication. A copy of the final report produced for the research will be send to all the institutions that participated on the research.

## **Who is organising the research?**

---

I am organising the research as lead researcher, Raquel Avila Frau, I am being supervised by Dr. Victoria Lewis (University of Sheffield).

## **Who has ethically reviewed the project?**

---

The project has been ethically approved by the University of Sheffield. The University of Sheffield's Research Ethics Committee monitors the application and delivery of the University's Ethics Review Procedure across the University.

## Contacts for further information

---

Raquel Avila Frau, Trainee Educational Psychologist, University of Sheffield, UK. Email: [ravilafrau1@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:ravilafrau1@sheffield.ac.uk), phone number: +44 (0)114 222 8177 (school of education)

## Consent Form

Title of Research Project: How is disruptive behaviour understood by teachers in South Yorkshire and Biscay?

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project. \*

*Check all that apply.*

Yes

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. \*

*Check all that apply.*

Yes

3. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for the researcher to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research. \*

*Check all that apply.*

Yes

4. I agree to take part in the above research project \*

*Check all that apply.*

Yes

## Basic information

Here you will be asked some basic information questions.

5. Where do you teach?

*Mark only one oval.*

Basque Country

South Yorkshire

6. What key stage do you teach?

*Mark only one oval.*

Ks1

Ks2

**7. How long have you been teaching?**

Mark only one oval.

- 0-2 years
- 2-5 years
- 5-10 years
- More than 10

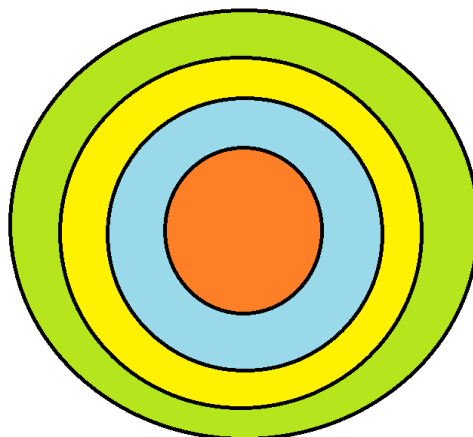
**8. What is your gender?**

Mark only one oval.

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

**Disruptive behaviour**

Please situate in the bull's eye the behaviours that are present in the column. Imagine that you observe one instance of these behaviours in isolation. Those behaviours that are most disruptive will be placed on the centre of the bull's eye and those that are less disruptive are farther away from the centre of the bull's eye, if any of them are not disruptive at all, you could place it outside the bull's eye.

**9. Throw or break small things when angry**

The child throws a pen into an empty space; the child breaks his/her work; the child breaks his/her pencil.

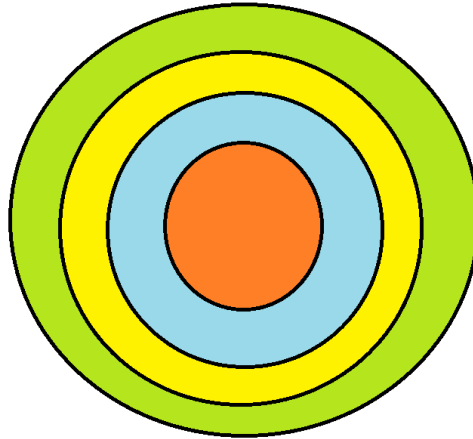
Mark only one oval.

- Orange
- Blue
- Yellow
- Green
- Outside the bulls eye.

**10. Hit other children**

The child punches/kicks/slaps another child  
*Mark only one oval.*

- Orange
- Blue
- Yellow
- Green
- Outside the bull's eye.

**11. Interrupts others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant**

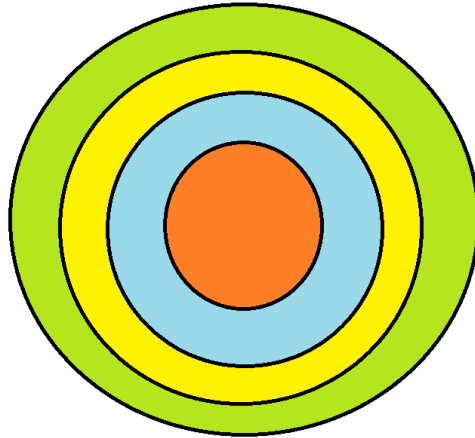
The child speaks when the teacher is explaining an activity; the child speaks when it is another child's turn to speak.  
*Mark only one oval.*

- Orange
- Blue
- Yellow
- Green
- Outside the bulls eye.

**12. Steal from a peer**

The child takes another child's calculator and takes it home.  
*Mark only one oval.*

- Orange
- Blue
- Yellow
- Green
- Outside the bulls eye.

**13. Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is relevant**

The child speaks when the teacher is explaining a topic; the child speaks when it is another child's turn to speak.

*Mark only one oval.*

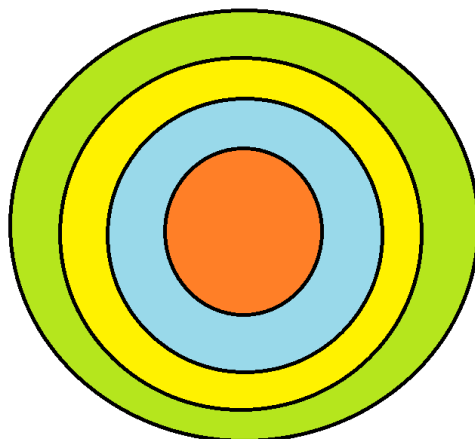
- Orange
- Blue
- Yellow
- Green
- Outside the bulls eye.

**14. Hit other adults**

The child punches/kicks/slaps an adult.

*Mark only one oval.*

- Orange
- Blue
- Yellow
- Green
- Outside the bulls eye.



**15. Argues when denied own way**

The child wants to play Lego, the teacher says he/she can't right now, the child then screams/cries/ that he/she wants to play.

*Mark only one oval.*

- Orange
- Blue
- Yellow
- Green
- Outside the bulls eye.

**16. Refuses to follow directios**

The child is told to tidy up and the child does not tidy up; The child is told to complete his/her work and does not complete the work.

*Mark only one oval.*

- Orange
- Blue
- Yellow
- Green
- Outside the bulls eye.

**How disruptive behaviour is dealt with**

Please write down which supportive strategy or disciplinary action you would perform for the following behaviours. You do not need to complete options for each behaviour, if you think a behaviour does not need/require a supportive strategy or a disciplinary action you could leave it blank.

**17. Throw or break small things when angry: Supportive strategy**


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**18. Throw or break small things when angry: Disciplinary action**


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**19. Hit other children: Supportive strategy**


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**20. Hit other children: Disciplinary action**

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**21. Interrupts others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant: Supportive strategy**

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**22. Interrupts others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant: Disciplinary action**

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**23. Steal from a peer: Supportive strategy**

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**24. Steal from a peer: Disciplinary action**

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**25. Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is relevant: Supportive strategy**

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**26. Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is relevant: Disciplinary action**

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**27. Hit other adults: Supportive strategy**

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**28. Hit other adults: Disciplinary action**

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**29. Argues when denied own way: Supportive strategy**

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**30. Argues when denied own way: Disciplinary action**

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**31. Refuses to follow direction: Supportive strategy**

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**32. Refuses to follow direction: Disciplinary action**

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**Follow up interview**

As part of my thesis I'll be conducting interviews with some of the people who have participated on completing the questionnaire, if you would like to participate on the interview, please leave your contact details below, thank you.

**33. Contact details:**

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**Many thanks for your participation**

This is the end of the questionnaire.

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## **Appendix D: Codebook for Questionnaire**

### Code Label: Remind of rules

Full definition: The adult is telling the child about the rules, what behaviour is expected and what is not acceptable

When to use: when the response talks about the rules of the school or what the child is expected to do and not supposed to do

When not to use: when the child is getting a consequence/ punishment for the behaviour, then use code “punishment”

### Code Label: Punishment

Full definition: The response implies the child is being punished for their behaviour

When to use: when the response mentions the behaviour system of the school or a concrete punishment such as no playtime

When not to use: when the child is being removed from the classroom, for that use the code “remove”

### Code Label: Involve parents

Full definition: The respondents tell parents about the behaviour of the child or involve them.

When to use: When responses mentions speaking to parents or involving parents.

When not to use: when there is no mention of parents.

### Code Label: Talk to the child

Full definition: the participant is talking to the child about their behaviour or their emotions.

When to use: When the response is talking to the child about their behaviour, asking them about why they displayed that behaviour, talking about their emotions or validating them.

When not to use: when the respondent is reminding the child of the rules use the code “remind of rules”, if is telling them what behaviour to display instead, then code “alternative action”.

### Code Label: Reparation

Full definition: The response implies that the child has to repair the consequences of his or her behaviour, this can be done through repairing relationships or fixing the consequences of their actions in some way.

When to use: when the response explains how the child is going to repair relationships with those affected, repair the environment or mentions restorative justice

When not to use: when the response is simply reminding the child of the rules he or she needs to follow, code that as “remind of rule”

### Code Label: Remove

Full definition: the child is being moved away from where they are in that moment, this can be by asking them to leave, asking them to take a time out or through team teach.

When to use: when the response implies the child is moving to a different location

When not to use: when the adult is trying to provide help to the child by helping them calm down, if that is the case, code “offer help”

Code Label: Offer help

Full definition: The adult is trying to provide some type of help to the child, this could be through a particular intervention such as social stories or by helping the child calm down.

When to use: When the adult is trying to provide help to the child

When not to use: when the adult is simply removing the child from the situation, in that case use the code “remove”

Code Label: Alternative action

Full definition: The adult is providing the child with an alternative way of behaving in order not to cause the undesired outcomes from the current behaviour

When to use the code: When the response implies the adult is offering an alternative way of behaving.

When not to use the code: When response implies that the way the child is acting is wrong. If not alternative is suggested code this as “remind of rule”

**Steal from a peer: Supportive strategy**

Give the child time to calm ~~discussing~~ what made them take the item-  
 discussion and use of a ~~social story~~ ✓  
 Discuss with student the purpose and outcomes of their actions. ✓  
 return property explain why its wrong remove from situation ✓  
 Asked why, give item back, apologize. ✓  
 Speak to parents. ~~Social stories~~ ✓  
 Find out if true first, find out why, ask to return it along with a discussion with ✓  
 parents  
 work on emotions, right and wrong. ✓  
 Social stories ✓  
 Acknowledge the feelings of child and explain that this is not acceptable ✓  
 ?  
 Learning Mentor would talk to the child and would be looking to find out the  
 reason behind the stealing - context of the action and what was stolen would be  
 important.  
 Talk about why ✓  
 1-1 chat discussing rules and the right thing to do/telling the truth ✓  
 Restorative practise ✓  
 Supported to share and give the items back to their peer. ✓  
 Ensure child apologises and understands how actions have affected his peer. ✓  
 Talk to child to try and establish why this has happened. Provide ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ ✓  
 (emotional support). Follow school reward and sanction policy. ✓  
 see answer above re hitting other children. Replace missing item. ✓  
 Not encountered this myself to date.  
 Restorative Practice approach - Talk through what happened and how feeling, ✓  
 those affected etc ✓  
 restorative circle ✓  
 comic strip conversation to discuss why this happened and seek pupil views. ✓  
 social story to support understanding of other child's viewpoint. restorative ✓  
 practice ✓  
 Discuss/try to get to reason why child is stealing. Use nurture language. Speak ✓  
 to parents. ✓  
 Talk through what would happen when older if they stole. How stealing objects  
 make others feel. What did they find so attractive about the object? Could we  
 make one so we dont steal from others. ✓

79%  
4 codes

|    |      |
|----|------|
| 35 | same |
| 9  | diff |

**Roba a otro alumno: Estrategia de apoyo**

Ayudar a devolver las cosas. ✓  
 Esta en mi opinión, no es una acción disruptiva: es una mala acción, pero no  
 disruptiva. Por qué ha robado? Qué necesidades de ese niño no estamos  
 atendiendo que necesita robar? Es muy complejo. ✓  
 Pedir explicaciones y explicar consecuencias que eso tiene en la vida adulta. ✓  
 Reflexión durante la hora del recreo. Días de reflexión. ✓  
 reflexionar junto con él. ✓  
 Recordar que no se pueden quitar las cosas de los demás, intentar que lo vea  
 poniéndole a él como ejemplo de persona robada y preguntarle qué necesidad  
 tiene de tener lo que ha robado ✓

same: 7

Diff or missing: 1

Devolver lo que ha robado ✓

Reflexión. ✓

Hablar sobre lo sucedido con la clase inmediatamente para recoger y contrastar la información, buscar testigos etc. ✓

Estudiar el tema en dirección. Nota a la familia, solicitar reunión y dejar constancia por escrito de todo ✓

Hacerle reconocer la acción que ha cometido. ✓

Hablar con él. Saber por qué lo ha hecho. Averiguar q deficiencias hay en su casa. Consecuencia para con el otro alumno. Por ejemplo, pedirle perdón por medio de una reflexión escrita. ✓

Dialogar con él ✓

Explicación personal de por qué no hay que robar.... lo que supone.... ✗

Fundamental proporcionar herramientas para respetar a los demás e inculcar como malos los comportamientos inadecuados. ✗

Dialogo y reflexión? ✓

Se aplica " EL documento de buena conducta " donde el niñ@ se compromete a no robar ni quitar nada a sus compañeros , cada día señala con una marca ✗ de color azul si ha actuado bien y de color rojo si ha quitado o robado algo . Al final de la semana o del mes se valora el computo general y en el caso de obtener muchas marcas azules se le refuerza de forma positiva , si no es así, se le reconduce el comportamiento con el fin de que cambie de actitud explicándole que hay que respetar las cosas de los demás y que si sigue así no tendrá amig@s y se perderá la confianza en él o en ella.

Dialogar con él e intentar que reconozca su error. ✗

hablar con el. Reponer y disculparse ✓

Dialogo y reflexion? Debe devolver lo robado ✓ notificacion a la familia, investigar porque lo hace. Reflexion ?

hablar y buscar los por ques, que haga una reflexion ?

hablarlo en clase

reparacion del material. disculpa publica al afectado. escribir ensayo sobre el robo y sus implicaciones. →

hablar con el para ver por que lo ha hecho. escribir lo sucedido

Habar con el. Que lo traiga o reponga, sobre porq que ha pasado, que analice su comportamiento

Explicarle que no esta bien hecho y que tiene que respetar lo de los demas

Hablar sobre la motivacion de dicha accion

Averiguar los motivos, dialogar con el y obligarlo a reflexionar sobre las consecuencias de su acción y otras similares hechas por adultos.

Decirle que devuelva lo robado.

Same : 25 (32)

Diff : (5)

81 Codes total

82%

overall

37 Total

86%



## Codebook

### Code Label: Remind of rules

Full definition: The adult is telling the child about the rules, what behaviour is expected and what is not acceptable

When to use: when the response talks about the rules of the school or what the child is expected to do and not supposed to do

When not to use: when the child is getting a consequence/ punishment for the behaviour, then use code "punishment"

### Code Label: Punishment

Full definition: The response implies the child is being punished for their behaviour

When to use: when the response mentions the behaviour system of the school or a concrete punishment such as no playtime

When not to use: when the child is being removed from the classroom, for that use the code "remove"

### Code Label: Involve parents

Full definition: The respondents tell parents about the behaviour of the child or involve them.

When to use: When responses mentions speaking to parents or involving parents.

When not to use: when there is no mention of parents.

### Code Label: Talk to the child

Full definition: the participant is talking to the child about their behaviour or their emotions.

When to use: When the response is talking to the child about their behaviour, asking them about why they displayed that behaviour, talking about their emotions or validating them.

When not to use: when the respondent is reminding them of the rules or is telling them what behaviour to display instead, then code "alternative action".

### Code Label: Reparation

Full definition: The response implies that the child has to repair the consequences of his or her behaviour, this can be done through repairing relationships or fixing the consequences of their actions in some way.

When to use: when the response explains how the child is going to repair relationships with those affected, repair the environment or mentions restorative justice

When not to use: when the response is simply reminding the child of the rules he or she needs to follow, code that as "remind of rule"

**Code Label: Remove**

Full definition: the child is being moved away from where they are in that moment, this can be by asking them to leave, asking them to take a time out or through team teach.

When to use: when the response implies the child is moving to a different location

When not to use: when the adult is trying to provide help to the child by helping them calm down, if that is the case, code "offer help"

**Code Label: Offer help**

Full definition: The adult is trying to provide some type of help to the child, this could be through a particular intervention such as social stories or by helping the child calm down.

When to use: When the adult is trying to provide help to the child

When not to use: when the adult is simply removing the child from the situation, in that case use the code "remove"

**Code Label: Alternative action**

Full definition: The adult is providing the child with an alternative way of behaving in order not to cause the undesired outcomes from the current behaviour

When to use the code: When the response implies the adult is offering an alternative way of behaving.

When not to use the code: When response implies that the way the child is acting is wrong.

If not alternative is suggested code this as "remind of rule"

## Appendix F: Descriptive statistics questionnaire

### Perception

|                       |   |                    |               |                    |                       |   |                    |               |                    |
|-----------------------|---|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| <b>Item:</b>          | Throw or break small things when angry                                  |                    |               |                    | <b>Item:</b>          | Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is relevant |                    |               |                    |
| <b>Codes</b>          | <b>South Yorkshire</b>  | <b>Percentages</b> | <b>Biscay</b> | <b>Percentages</b> | <b>Codes</b>          | <b>South Yorkshire</b>  | <b>Percentages</b> | <b>Biscay</b> | <b>Percentages</b> |
| Orange/ most serious  | 3   | 10%                | 5             | 13.5%              | Orange/ most serious  | 1   | 3.4%               | 2             | 5.4%               |
| Blue                  | 6   | 20%                | 15            | 40.5%              | Blue                  | 6   | 20.7%              | 5             | 13.5%              |
| Yellow                | 7   | 23.3%              | 12            | 32.4%              | Yellow                | 7   | 24.1%              | 20            | 54.1%              |
| Green/ less serious   | 12  | 40%                | 4             | 10.8%              | Green/ less serious   | 14  | 44.8%              | 8             | 21.6%              |
| Outside of bull's eye | 2   | 6.7%               | 1             | 2.7%               | Outside of bull's eye | 2   | 6.9%               | 2             | 5.4%               |
| Number of responses   | 30  | 100%               | 37            | 99.9%              | Number of responses   | 29  | 99.9%              | 37            | 100.0%             |
| <b>Item:</b>          | Hit other children  |                    |               |                    | <b>Item:</b>          | Hit other adults  |                    |               |                    |
| <b>Codes</b>          | <b>South Yorkshire</b>  | <b>Percentages</b> | <b>Biscay</b> | <b>Percentages</b> | <b>Codes</b>          | <b>South Yorkshire</b>  | <b>Percentages</b> | <b>Biscay</b> | <b>Percentages</b> |
| Orange/ most serious  | 17  | 56.7%              | 30            | 81.1%              | Orange/ most serious  | 20  | 66.6%              | 34            | 91.9%              |
| Blue                  | 8   | 26.7%              | 5             | 13.5%              | Blue                  | 5   | 16.7%              | 0             | 0.0%               |
| Yellow                | 3   | 10.0%              | 0             | 0.0%               | Yellow                | 3   | 10.0%              | 1             | 2.7%               |
| Green/ less serious   | 1   | 3.3%               | 2             | 5.4%               | Green/ less serious   | 0   | 0.0%               | 0             | 0.0%               |
| Outside of bull's eye | 1   | 3.3%               | 0             | 0.0%               | Outside of bull's eye | 2   | 6.7%               | 2             | 5.4%               |
| Number of responses   | 30  | 100.0%             | 37            | 100.0%             | Number of responses   | 30  | 100.0%             | 37            | 100.0%             |
| <b>Item:</b>          | Interrupt others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant |                    |               |                    | <b>Item:</b>          | Argues when denied own way  |                    |               |                    |
| <b>Codes</b>          | <b>South Yorkshire</b>  | <b>Percentages</b> | <b>Biscay</b> | <b>Percentages</b> | <b>Codes</b>          | <b>South Yorkshire</b>  | <b>Percentages</b> | <b>Biscay</b> | <b>Percentages</b> |
| Orange/ most serious  | 1   | 3.3%               | 3             | 8.1%               | Orange/ most serious  | 5   | 16.7%              | 12            | 32.4%              |
| Blue                  | 9   | 30.0%              | 14            | 37.8%              | Blue                  | 19  | 63.3%              | 13            | 35.1%              |
| Yellow                | 11  | 36.7%              | 15            | 40.5%              | Yellow                | 5   | 16.7%              | 8             | 21.6%              |
| Green/ less serious   | 7   | 23.3%              | 5             | 13.5%              | Green/ less serious   | 1   | 3.3%               | 4             | 10.8%              |
| Outside of bull's eye | 2   | 6.7%               | 0             | 0.0%               | Outside of bull's eye | 0   | 0.0%               | 0             | 0.0%               |
| Number of responses   | 30  | 100.0%             | 37            | 99.9%              | Number of responses   | 30  | 100.0%             | 37            | 99.9%              |
| <b>Item:</b>          | Steal from a peer   |                    |               |                    | <b>Item:</b>          | Refuses to follow direction   |                    |               |                    |
| <b>Codes</b>          | <b>South Yorkshire</b>  | <b>Percentages</b> | <b>Biscay</b> | <b>Percentages</b> | <b>Codes</b>          | <b>South Yorkshire</b>  | <b>Percentages</b> | <b>Biscay</b> | <b>Percentages</b> |
| Orange/ most serious  | 4   | 13.3%              | 24            | 64.9%              | Orange/ most serious  | 3   | 10.0%              | 10            | 27.0%              |
| Blue                  | 12  | 40.0%              | 6             | 16.2%              | Blue                  | 14  | 46.6%              | 12            | 32.4%              |
| Yellow                | 8   | 26.7%              | 3             | 8.1%               | Yellow                | 11  | 36.7%              | 12            | 32.4%              |
| Green/ less serious   | 3   | 10.0%              | 1             | 2.7%               | Green/ less serious   | 2   | 6.7%               | 3             | 8.1%               |
| Outside of bull's eye | 3   | 10.0%              | 3             | 8.1%               | Outside of bull's eye | 0   | 0.0%               | 0             | 0.0%               |
| Number of responses   | 30  | 100.0%             | 37            | 100.0%             | Number of responses   | 30  | 100.0%             | 37            | 99.9%              |

## Actions

| Item:              | Throw or break small things when . |             |        |             |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|--------|-------------|
| Codes              | South Yorkshire                    | Percentages | Biscay | Percentages |
| Remind of rule     | 8                                  | 12.3%       | 12     | 16.2%       |
| Punishment         | 12                                 | 18.4%       | 7      | 9.4%        |
| Involve parents    | 3                                  | 4.6%        | 2      | 2.7%        |
| Talk to the child  | 12                                 | 18.4%       | 17     | 22.9%       |
| Reparation         | 9                                  | 13.8%       | 20     | 27.0%       |
| Remove             | 5                                  | 7.6%        | 2      | 2.7%        |
| Offer help         | 15                                 | 23.0%       | 8      | 10.8%       |
| Alternative action | 1                                  | 1.5%        | 6      | 8.1%        |
| Total codes        | 65                                 | 99.6%       | 74     | 99.8%       |

| Item:              | Hit other children |             |        |             |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|--------|-------------|
| Codes              | South Yorkshire    | Percentages | Biscay | Percentages |
| Remind of rule     | 10                 | 12.3%       | 7      | 7.4%        |
| Punishment         | 17                 | 21.0%       | 21     | 22.3%       |
| Involve parents    | 8                  | 9.9%        | 8      | 8.5%        |
| Talk to the child  | 15                 | 18.5%       | 19     | 20.2%       |
| Reparation         | 12                 | 14.8%       | 19     | 20.2%       |
| Remove             | 11                 | 13.6%       | 8      | 8.5%        |
| Offer help         | 5                  | 6.2%        | 4      | 4.3%        |
| Alternative action | 3                  | 3.7%        | 8      | 8.5%        |
| Total codes        | 81                 | 100.0%      | 94     | 100.0%      |

| Item:              | Interrupts others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant |             |        |             |
|--------------------|--|-------------|--------|-------------|
| Codes              | South Yorkshire  | Percentages | Biscay | Percentages |
| Remind of rule     | 23   | 47.9%       | 12     | 26.1%       |
| Punishment         | 12   | 25.0%       | 11     | 23.9%       |
| Involve parents    | 0  | 0.0%        | 0      | 0.0%        |
| Talk to the child  | 1  | 2.1%        | 10     | 21.7%       |
| Reparation         | 1  | 2.1%        | 1      | 2.2%        |
| Remove             | 1  | 2.1%        | 2      | 4.3%        |
| Offer help         | 5  | 10.4%       | 5      | 10.9%       |
| Ignore             | 5  | 10.4%       | 5      | 10.9%       |
| Alternative action | 0  | 0.0%        | 0      | 0%          |
| Total codes        | 48   | 100.0%      | 46     | 100.0%      |

| Item:              | Hit other adults |             |        |             |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------|--------|-------------|
| Codes              | South Yorkshi    | Percentages | Biscay | Percentages |
| Remind of rule     | 5                | 8.9%        | 5      | 6.3%        |
| Punishment         | 14               | 25.0%       | 24     | 30.0%       |
| Involve parents    | 9                | 16.1%       | 17     | 21.3%       |
| Talk to the child  | 8                | 14.3%       | 15     | 18.8%       |
| Reparation         | 9                | 16.1%       | 8      | 10.0%       |
| Remove             | 7                | 12.5%       | 6      | 7.5%        |
| Offer help         | 2                | 3.6%        | 5      | 6.3%        |
| Alternative action | 2                | 3.6%        | 0      | 0.0%        |
| Total codes        | 56               | 100.0%      | 80     | 100.0%      |

| Item:              | Argues when denied own way |             |        |             |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------|--------|-------------|
| Codes              | South Yorkshi              | Percentages | Biscay | Percentages |
| Remind of rule     | 13                         | 29.5%       | 18     | 28.6%       |
| Punishment         | 8                          | 18.2%       | 13     | 20.6%       |
| Involve parents    | 0                          | 0.0%        | 6      | 9.5%        |
| Talk to the child  | 6                          | 13.6%       | 15     | 23.8%       |
| Reparation         | 3                          | 6.8%        | 0      | 0.0%        |
| Remove             | 6                          | 13.6%       | 3      | 4.8%        |
| Offer help         | 7                          | 15.9%       | 8      | 12.7%       |
| Alternative action | 1                          | 2.3%        | 0      | 0.0%        |
| Total codes        | 44                         | 100.0%      | 63     | 100.0%      |

| Item:              | Refuses to follow direction |             |        |             |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|--------|-------------|
| Codes              | South Yorkshi               | Percentages | Biscay | Percentages |
| Remind of rule     | 11                          | 27.5%       | 9      | 15.5%       |
| Punishment         | 15                          | 37.5%       | 16     | 27.6%       |
| Involve parents    | 0                           | 0.0%        | 6      | 10.3%       |
| Talk to the child  | 2                           | 5.0%        | 15     | 25.9%       |
| Reparation         | 3                           | 7.5%        | 1      | 1.7%        |
| Remove             | 3                           | 7.5%        | 1      | 1.7%        |
| Offer help         | 5                           | 12.5%       | 10     | 17.2%       |
| Alternative action | 1                           | 2.5%        | 0      | 0.0%        |
| Total codes:       | 40                          | 100.0%      | 58     | 100.0%      |

| Item:              | Interrupts others when they are speaking with a topic that is irrelevant |             |        |             |
|--------------------|--|-------------|--------|-------------|
| Codes              | South Yorkshire  | Percentages | Biscay | Percentages |
| Remind of rule     | 23   | 47.9%       | 12     | 26.1%       |
| Punishment         | 12   | 25.0%       | 11     | 23.9%       |
| Involve parents    | 0  | 0.0%        | 0      | 0.0%        |
| Talk to the child  | 1  | 2.1%        | 10     | 21.7%       |
| Reparation         | 1  | 2.1%        | 1      | 2.2%        |
| Remove             | 1  | 2.1%        | 2      | 4.3%        |
| Offer help         | 5  | 10.4%       | 5      | 10.9%       |
| Ignore             | 5  | 10.4%       | 5      | 10.9%       |
| Alternative action | 0  | 0.0%        | 0      | 0%          |
| Total codes        | 48   | 100.0%      | 46     | 100.0%      |

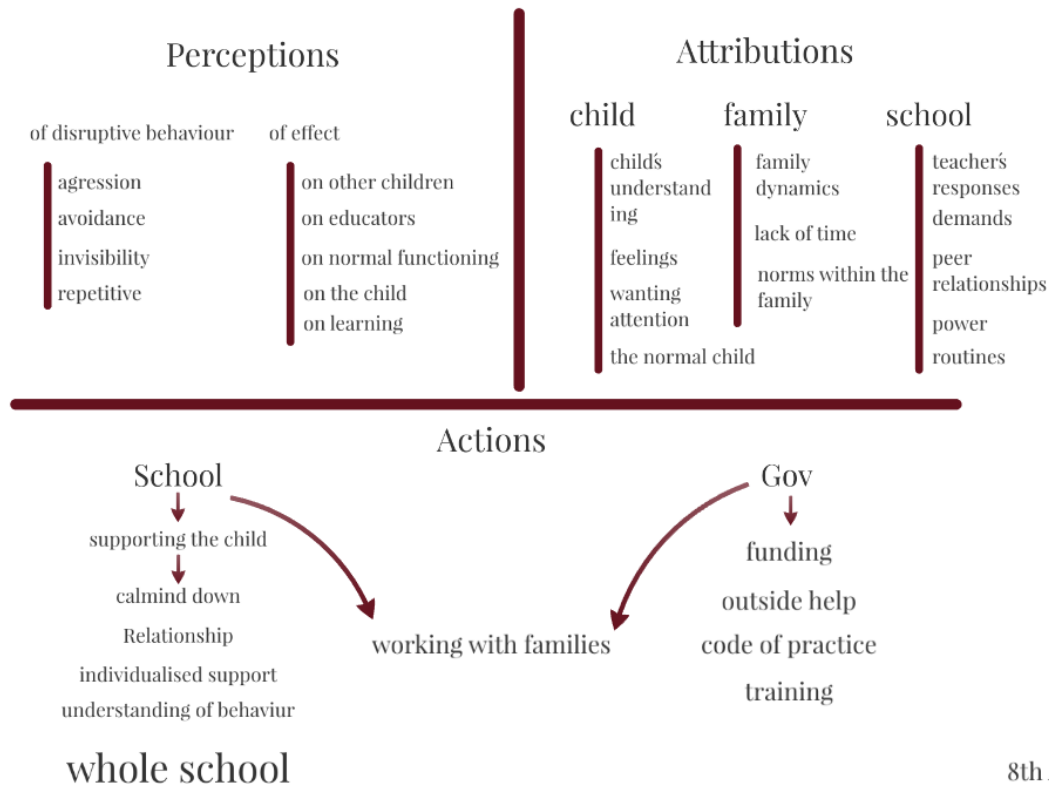
| Item:              | Refuses to follow direction |             |        |             |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|--------|-------------|
| Codes              | South Yorkshi               | Percentages | Biscay | Percentages |
| Remind of rule     | 11                          | 27.5%       | 9      | 15.5%       |
| Punishment         | 15                          | 37.5%       | 16     | 27.6%       |
| Involve parents    | 0                           | 0.0%        | 6      | 10.3%       |
| Talk to the child  | 2                           | 5.0%        | 15     | 25.9%       |
| Reparation         | 3                           | 7.5%        | 1      | 1.7%        |
| Remove             | 3                           | 7.5%        | 1      | 1.7%        |
| Offer help         | 5                           | 12.5%       | 10     | 17.2%       |
| Alternative action | 1                           | 2.5%        | 0      | 0.0%        |
| Total codes:       | 40                          | 100.0%      | 58     | 100.0%      |

| Item:              | Steal from a peer |             |        |             |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------|--------|-------------|
| Codes              | South Yorkshire   | Percentages | Biscay | Percentages |
| Remind of rule     | 5                 | 7.9%        | 8      | 9.5%        |
| Punishment         | 12                | 19.0%       | 12     | 14.3%       |
| Involve parents    | 8                 | 12.7%       | 15     | 17.9%       |
| Talk to the child  | 14                | 22.2%       | 19     | 22.6%       |
| Reparation         | 16                | 25.4%       | 27     | 32.1%       |
| Remove             | 2                 | 3.2%        | 1      | 1.2%        |
| Offer help         | 6                 | 9.5%        | 1      | 1.2%        |
| Alternative action | 0                 | 0.0%        | 1      | 1.2%        |
| Total codes        | 63                | 100.0%      | 84     | 100.0%      |

| Item:              | Interrupts others when they are speaking with a topic that is relevant |             |        |             |
|--------------------|--|-------------|--------|-------------|
| Codes              | South Yorkshi  | Percentages | Biscay | Percentages |
| Remind of rule     | 19   | 43.2%       | 20     | 35.7%       |
| Punishment         | 8  | 18.2%       | 9      | 16.1%       |
| Involve parents    | 0  | 0.0%        | 0      | 0.0%        |
| Talk to the child  | 6  | 13.6%       | 8      | 14.3%       |
| Reparation         | 4  | 9.1%        | 0      | 0.0%        |
| Remove             | 0  | 0.0%        | 2      | 3.6%        |
| Offer help         | 3  | 6.8%        | 8      | 14.3%       |
| Ignore             | 3  | 6.8%        | 8      | 14.3%       |
| Alternative action | 1  | 2.3%        | 1      | 1.8%        |
| Total codes        | 44   | 100.0%      | 56     | 100.0%      |

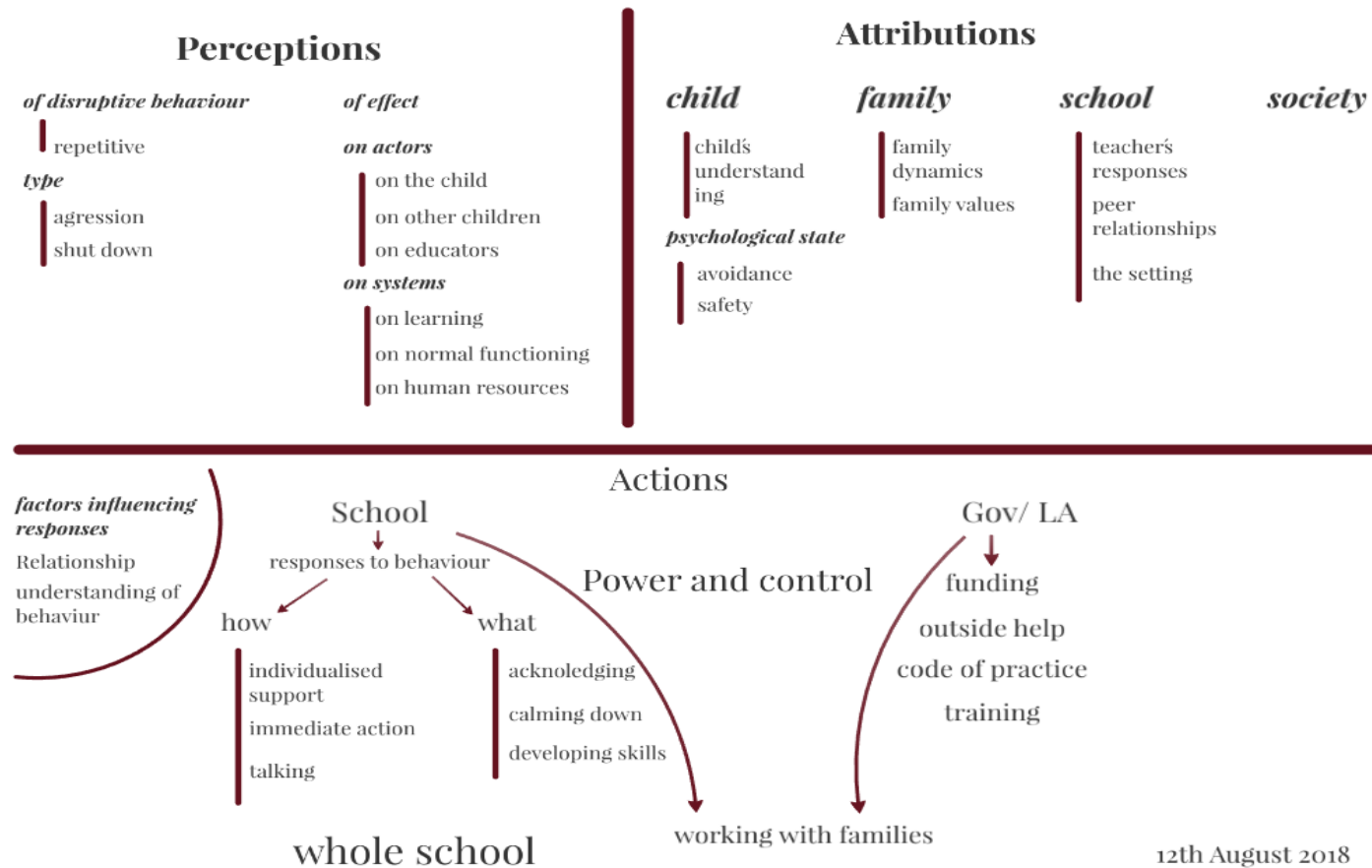
**Appendix G: Iterations of interview analysis**

# Version 1



8th August 2018

# Version 2



# Final version

## Biscay Perceptions

### *Of disruptive behaviour*

Repetitive

#### *Types*

Aggression

Passivity

### *Of effect*

#### *On actors*

On educators

On other children

On the child

#### *On systems*

Normal  
functioning

On Learning

## South Yorkshire Perceptions

### *Of disruptive behaviour*

#### *Types*

Aggression

Passivity

### *Of effect*

#### *On actors*

On educators

On other children

On the child

#### *On systems*

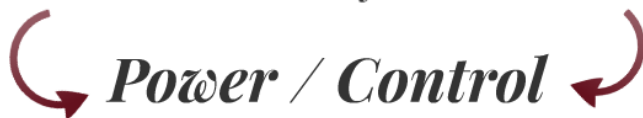
On normal  
functioning

On human resources

On Learning



Biscay



*Power / Control*

↑  
**Action**

*School*

*Responses to behaviour*

↓  
*How?*

Individualised

Immediate

Talking

↓  
*What?*

Calming down

Plasters

whole school approach

*Factors influencing*

Relationship child/educator

Understanding of behaviour

*Gov / LA*

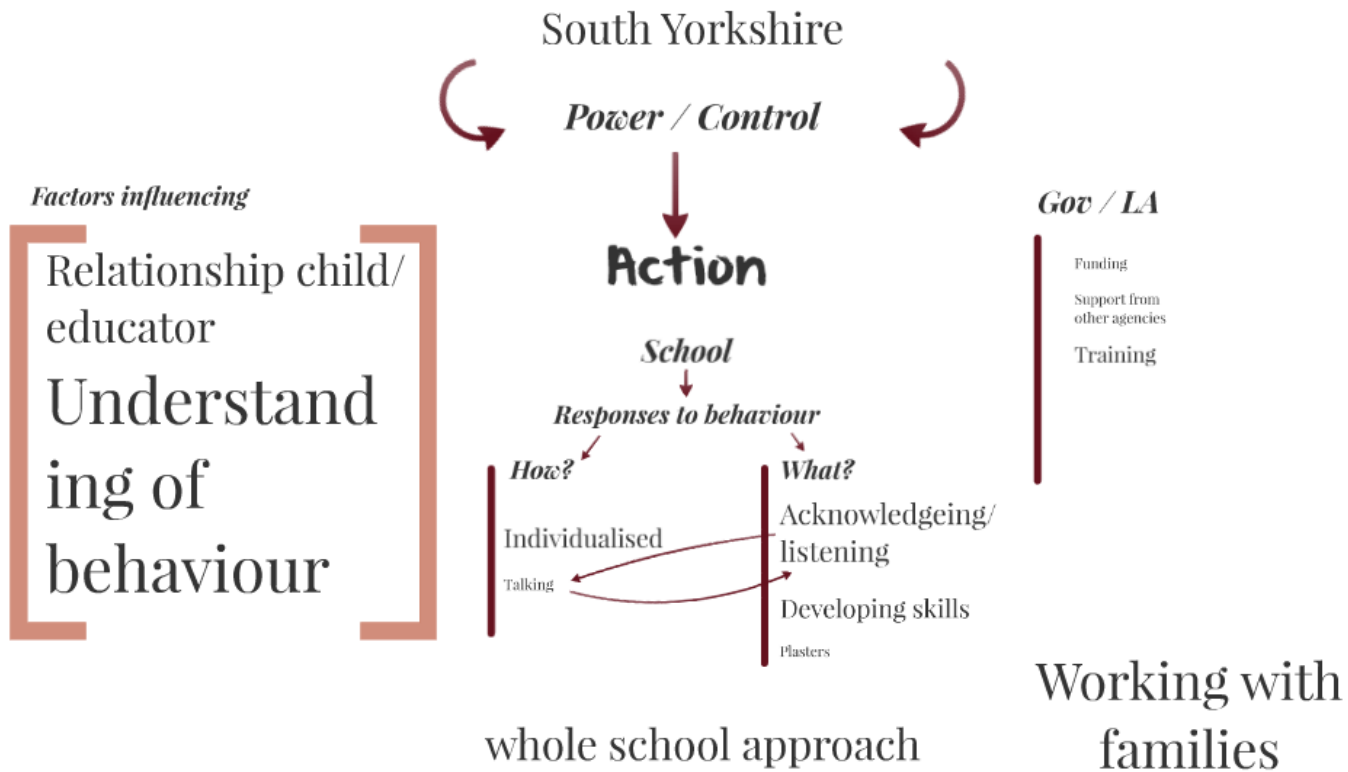
Training

Code of practice

Funding

Support from  
other agencies

Working with  
families



20th August 2018

## Appendix H: Time management and logistics

This research started taking shape in October 2016. Unfortunately, I had to take a leave of absence from March 2017 to June 2017 which delayed the research considerably.

Regarding logistics, the thesis was mostly completed from the UK, the data gathering process regarding the questionnaire was done online. However, due to the poor initial response from Biscay I decided to make a 1 week trip to Biscay (12<sup>th</sup> of March 2018 to 16<sup>th</sup> of March) in order to meet with schools and explain my research in the hopes of acquiring more participants, I also performed the Biscay interviews during that time.

| <b>Task</b>                    | <b>Notes</b>  | <b>Date completed</b>                   |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Literature review              | Draft finalised in December 2016. There has been ongoing work around the literature review throughout the research. | <b>October 2018</b>                     |
| Research proposal              |   | <b>14<sup>th</sup> of March 2017</b>    |
| Ethics application             | Started the process in September 2017. There was a delay due to the application being misplaced.                    | <b>14<sup>th</sup> of December 2017</b> |
| Methodology chapter            |   | <b>April 2018</b>                       |
| Pilot study                    | The pilot study started in 14 <sup>th</sup> of December 2017.   | <b>February 2018</b>                    |
| Data gathering: Questionnaires | The data gathering process started in January once the questionnaire was finalised.                                 | <b>March 2018</b>                       |
| Data gathering: Interviews     | The data gathering process started in March 2018. I travelled to Biscay to conduct some of the interviews.          | <b>April 2018</b>                       |

|                  |  |                                      |
|------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Analysis         | The data analysis started in March 2018 with the analysis of the questionnaires. | <b>August 2018</b>                   |
| Analysis chapter | draft  | <b>August 2018</b>                   |
| Discussion       | draft  | <b>September 2018</b>                |
| Thesis           | Draft  | <b>September 2018</b>                |
| Thesis           | Final draft  | <b>October 2018</b>                  |
| Thesis           | Submission   | <b>23<sup>rd</sup> November 2018</b> |
| Viva             |  | <b>To be determined</b>              |