

# Linköping University Postprint

## A Categorisation of School Rules

Robert Thornberg

**N.B.:** When citing this work, cite the original article.

Original publication:

Robert Thornberg, A Categorisation of School Rules, 2008, Educational Studies, (34), 1, 25-33.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03055690701785244>.

Copyright © 2008 [Taylor & Francis Group](#), an informa business

Postprint available free at:

Linköping University E-Press: <http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:liu:diva-11809>

# A Categorisation of School Rules

Robert Thornberg

## **Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to investigate and describe the content in school rules by developing a category system of school rules, and thus making the logic behind different types of rules in school explicit. Data were derived from an ethnographic study conducted in two primary schools in Sweden. In order to analyse the data, grounded theory methodology was adapted. The analysis resulted in a category system of school rules, containing the following main categories: (a) relational rules, (b) structuring rules, (c), protecting rules, (d), personal rules and (e) etiquette rules. In the light of this categorisation, more consciously pedagogical and professional work with rules can be conducted. The category system can counteract vagueness and unreasonableness, as well as highlighting the content, logic and functions of different school rules.

School and classroom rules exist in every school and function like miniature constitutions or codes of law (Jackson, Boostrom, and Hansen 1993). Boostrom (1991, 94) defines *classroom rules* as “dos and don'ts of the classroom - all those guidelines for action and for the evaluation of action that the teacher expresses or implies through word or deed”. *School rules* are a wider concept than classroom rules and are here defined as prescriptions, legitimised by teachers, about how to behave in school situations, standards by which behaviour in school is judged to be appropriate, right and desirable, or inappropriate, wrong and forbidden. According to Buckley and Cooper (1978, 256), rules “specify appropriate student behavior, and are established verbally, either orally or in written form, by an authority figure”, who usually is the teacher or the school staff. School and classroom rules are often intended to regulate or prevent all kinds of student conduct likely to disrupt activities, cause injury or damage school property (Doyle 1990). According to school discipline and classroom management literature (e.g., Evertson, Emmer, and Worsham 2003; Jones and Jones 2004; McGinnis, Frederick, and Edwards 1995; Weinstein and Mignano 2007), rules help teachers to manage the classroom and to maintain discipline. Their function is to regulate and control student behaviour in the classroom in order to create and maintain an environment conducive to learning. Furthermore, Weinstein and Mignano (2007, 100) argue that clear rules and routines reduce the complexity of the classroom: “They minimize confusion and prevent the loss of instructional time”. Research has shown that one of the characteristics of effective classroom management is that teachers are skilled in establishing and maintaining clear rules and procedures (e.g., Bohn, Roehrig, and Pressley 2004; Emmer, Evertson, and Anderson 1980; Freiberg, Stein, and Huang 1995; Sugai, Horner, and Gresham 2002). A meta-analysis of classroom management studies, conducted by Marzano (2003), shows that effective design and implementation of rules and procedures are linked to lower frequency of disruptions in classrooms. Moreover, because schools actually can be dangerous places, where students can be victims of violence, harassment, bullying, etc., school rules and regulations are urgent but not enough to reduce the dangers that schools can pose (Potts 2006). Research suggests that a powerful preventive component is to create a schoolwide positive climate (Freiberg and Lapointe 2006) in which social skills and other expected behaviour are explicitly taught and effectively reinforced (Lewis 2001; Lewis et al. 2006; Nelson, Martella, and Galand 1998).

With reference to Weinstein and Mignano (2007), classroom rules need to be consistent with school rules. Furthermore, they argue that rules should be reasonable and necessary as well as clear and understandable. This is also in line with Malone and Tietjens's (2000) guidelines for formulation of rules. Rules have to be rational, easily understood and “deal with behavior that is necessary for an optimum of learning environment” (Malone and Tietjens 2000, 165). Nevertheless, Schimmel (1997) argues that schools usually violate what we know about good teaching in their practice of developing and teaching their rules. According to him, most often rules are: (a) negative, restrictive and unexplained; (b) authoritarian - i.e., handed down in a dictatorial manner - often viewed by students as arbitrary and illegitimate; (c) developed without student participation; (d) written and distributed in a formal and legalistic rather than educational manner, void of a process for assessing whether students understand them; and (e) lacking in standards or procedures that allow students to challenge or question the fairness of specific rules or their implementation, or whether they are unnecessary, irrelevant, discriminatory, ambiguous or inconsistent. However, children are not just passive recipients, but active agents in their socialisation process (Corsaro 2005; Magnusson and Stattin 2006; Prout and James 1997), and research has shown that students reflect upon, value and judge school rules and teacher interventions (e.g., Alerby 2003; Devine 2002; Elliott et al. 1986; Killen 1990; Scarlett 1988; Tattum 1982; Thomson and Holland 2002; Weston and Turiel 1980). If students do not see the point of a rule, they tend to view it as unimportant or

unnecessary. Moreover, if they do not believe in the point (i.e., teachers' rule explanation), they also tend to view the rule as unnecessary. Hence, students usually judge such rules as bad or wrong (Thornberg in press).

Hence, to investigate school and classroom rules and make their reasons and functions explicit is a motivated research project in order to expand the knowledge base of classroom management and school discipline. According to Merrett and Jones (1994), despite the fact that most schools have quite elaborate systems of rules, very little research is done in order to examine the nature of these systems. The aim of the present study is to investigate and describe the content in school rules by developing a category system of rules, and thus making the logic behind different types of rules in school explicit. By doing this, a professional language of school rules can be constructed, which helps teachers to: (a) overview the rules in school in a systematic way; (b) consider and differentiate between rules in terms of reasonableness and necessity; and (c) enhance the possibilities to work with school and classroom rules in a pedagogical manner, or as Schimmel (1997) has put it, to teach rules the same way as teaching instructional content, congruent with what we know about good teaching.

## **Method**

The data described in this paper are derived from an ethnographic study conducted in two primary schools in Sweden. Two kindergarten classes (6-year-old children), two classes in grade 2 (8-year-old children) and two classes in grade 5 (11-year-old children) participated in the study. School and classroom rules were investigated by observations in classroom, as well as in other school contexts, such as the playground, dining-hall, etc. Everyday interactions between teachers and students, rule transgressions among students, and teachers' corrections and rule explanations were registered by field notes and audio recordings. Documents such as posters with school rules and classroom rules were also registered. Moreover, interviews with 13 teachers were conducted in order to examine how they reason about the practice and the content of discipline, school rules and pedagogic work with values. Group interviews with 139 students were also conducted. The qualitative analysis of the fieldwork data was accomplished by procedures influenced by different versions of grounded theory (Charmaz 1990; Dey 1999; Glaser and Strauss [1967] 1999; Guvå and Hylander 2003; Strauss and Corbin 1998). Coding of relevant indicators, indicator sorting, systematic comparisons of differences and similarities, and concept and category system construction were essential aspects of the analysis process in this study.

## **Results**

There is a muddle of school rules embedded in the everyday school life and it is indeed necessary to study the rules more closely to better understand them in a more systematic way. One way of doing so is to categorise this fuzzy set of school rules. The analysis has developed a category system of school rules, based on the empirical data, as a way of seeing their content. This analysis resulted in five rule categories: (a) relational rules; (b) structuring rules; (c) protecting rules; (d) personal rules; and (e) etiquette rules. This analysis and its findings were also checked against and confirmed by group interviews with the students.

### **Relational rules**

Relational rules refer to rules about how to be and how to behave in relation to other people. This category regulates actions that result in consequences for other people's welfare and includes prohibitions of actions that will harm others physically or psychologically. Some of the relational rules are about decrees to behave in the best interest of others - i.e., to act pro-socially. Examples: be nice to one another, show others respect, take care of others, take others into consideration and help out one another. Other relational rules are prohibitions of behaviour that results in harmful consequences to others - e.g., don't fight, don't kick others, don't bully, don't tease others and don't call one another names.

### **Structuring rules**

Structuring rules refer to rules aimed at structuring and maintaining the activities that take place in school or at structuring and maintaining the physical environment, including physical property, where activities take place. This category can be divided in two subcategories: (a) activity rules and (b) environment rules

### ***Activity rules***

Activity rules refer to rules aimed at structuring and maintaining the activities, to regulate the individuals in order to uphold activities. Activity rules can be seen as rules of the game that build up and structure the activity itself, and contain decrees about how to behave in different situations, but also prohibitions of behaviours that disrupt, disturb or counteract the activity. This subcategory can, in turn, be divided into five subcategories.

*Work rules* refer to those rules aimed at structuring and maintaining schoolwork activities in school such as lessons, deskwork, circle time, classroom discussions, groupwork, etc. Examples: don't interrupt classmates in their deskwork, do not talk during deskwork, raise your hand if you want to speak, don't all speak at once.

*Free activity rules* refer to those rules aimed at structuring and maintaining students' own free activities in school - i.e., games and other activities not initiated by teachers, and that usually occur during breaks or free play. Examples are rules that structure and maintain play activities and ball games that take place in the playground during breaks. The students get the rules for these activities by tradition (established football rules or rules of the game), or through negotiations or rule modification conducted within the peer group, the class or the school, with or without teacher involvement. However, when teachers are involved in these processes (often as a result of conflicts or fights between students) and they legitimise these kinds of rules, they receive the status of school rules.

*Transitional activity rules* refer to those rules aimed at structuring and maintaining different activities that occur before, between or immediately after lesson activities or students' free activities, or between lesson activities and free activities. Examples of transitional activities are procedures when students begin the school day by entering the cloakroom and then the classroom, when they are going out to or coming in from breaks, when they move between different classrooms and breaking up routines of the day. Examples of transitional activity rules are: be on time for lessons, immediately go inside when the bell rings, stand in line and wait for the teacher to tell you to enter the dining-hall, and don't stay on in the changing-room.

*Preventive activity rules* regulate students in their everyday life beyond the lesson activities in a way that is supposed to promote the lesson activities by creating conditions for the individual students, when they are following these rules, to participate in the lesson activities in a desirable way (according to the teacher's view). One of these rules is that students must not be indoors during breaks, but must be outside. In some incidents, observations are made in which teachers, in their interactions with students, motivate this rule by claiming that they need fresh air. Three reasons can be seen in the teachers' statements. One reason is that it promotes the students' concentration skills; another is that the students might get a headache if they do not go outside; and a third reason associates fresh air with going outside and moving about, so that the students can stay calm and sit still during lessons. Another school rule within this subcategory is that you should have done your homework and should be well prepared.

*Supportive rules for work activity of other groups* refer to a specific set of rules prescribing students to behave in order not to disturb or disrupt the work activities of other groups or classes if they are nearby. Such rules support the activity rules that are valid for activity in these other groups. Examples include: don't speak loudly or be noisy when you are walking in corridors with open doors to other classrooms in which students are working, or when you are outdoors during a break, don't stand near a classroom window, looking through it and trying to communicate with those indoors who are involved in work.

### ***Environment rules***

This subcategory of structuring rules contains rules aimed at structuring and maintaining the physical environment (indoors as well as outdoors), including physical property or artefacts, where activities are integrated or take place. Moreover, a distinction can be made here between two further subcategories.

*Preventive environment rules* refer to those rules aimed at preventing a destroyed or loosened structure of order in the physical environment by decrees about being careful with the physical environment and its artefacts and by prohibitions of different types of damage or vandalism. Examples include: don't leave litter all over the playground, don't scribble on the walls, don't play football near walls with windows and be careful with properties of the school.

*Restoring environment rules* refer to those rules aimed at restoring or rebuilding the structure of order after a conducted activity - i.e., re-create order after oneself, for instance, bring back sticks, balls and other items used during the break, tidy up after woodwork lessons.

### **Protecting rules**

Protecting rules refer to rules about safety and health. This category comprises prohibitions of harming oneself or exposing oneself or others to risks of accident. Protecting rules contain two subcategories.

*Health-related rules* refer to those rules aimed at promoting or protecting students' health. Examples of health-related rules from this study are allowing the bringing of fruits and vegetables to school, but no candy. The candy ban existed, one teacher explained in interview, so students would not "cause damage to their own teeth and health and to avoid

being overweight". The rule against shouting indoors was related to protecting the students' and teachers' hearing. One teacher reasoned:

They are not allowed to make too much noise in the dressing rooms because if they shout and so on, that wouldn't be good for their hearing.

*Accident prevention rules* refer to those rules aimed at upholding safety and preventing students from unintentionally harming themselves or each other. Examples include: don't run in corridors, be careful when you play on ice and don't cycle or roller-skate in the playground. One teacher said:

This issue about running in corridors, accidents actually have happened, people have slipped and hurt themselves and knocked out teeth.

### **Personal rules**

Personal rules refer to those rules which call for self-reflection on one's own behaviour and taking personal responsibility for oneself and one's actions. This category contains three basic rules, according to the analysis of the data in this study. The *rule of personal responsibility* concerns taking personal responsibility for what one is doing and saying. You have to stand by what you have done, you don't lie about your actions or throw blame on someone else. The *rule of pre-thinking* means that the students have to think before they act: consider the intention of your actions and the consequences that may result before you act. The *rule of doing one's best* is a basic rule that teachers occasionally draw students' attention to, often formulated as "[you] do as well as you can" or "do your best".

### **Etiquette rules**

Finally, etiquette rules refer to those rules which manifest customs or traditions in school ("school etiquette") or in society ("social etiquette") about how to behave in social situations, and which are not covered by the concept of relational rules. When some of the teachers talked about these rules during the interviews, they usually used words and expressions like "tradition", "culture", "manner", "being old-fashioned" and "that's how we do things". Behaviours that break these rules, do not "fit":

It looks unpleasant.

It looks sloppy.

Examples include: don't wear your cap in classroom, don't swear or use bad language, don't chew gum (even if it contains fluoride) in school, and don't sit like a "sack of potatoes". Concerning the cap ban, one teacher said:

This is the way we in Sweden act when we are in a restaurant, I suppose. We don't walk around with something on our head then, do we? Accordingly, it's a kind of rule that still hangs on, you know ...this is about our tradition, it's the way we behave; you don't wear cap indoors.

Teachers refer to social norms and expectations when they motivate rules in this category.

## Category overlap

In accordance with the prototype model of categorisation (see Dey 1999), these five rule categories overlap to some degree. Some rules can, for instance, function as both relational rules and structuring rules simultaneously. For example, the classroom rule of raising one's hand and waiting one's turn to speak during classroom discussions or conversations functions (a) as a structuring rule, by structuring and promoting the activity (i.e., the common discussion or conversation in the classroom) and stopping students from speaking without permission and thus disrupting the one who is talking and those who are listening, and (b) as a relational rule, by hindering students from inconsiderately beginning to speak at the same time as someone else.

The banning of swear words is an etiquette rule in regard to swearing as an element in talking about a movie or telling a story, for example, but a relational rule in regard to swearing at others. This is a distinction that many students in the study made:

Well, listen to this. If you swear at someone, they can then be upset or angry, and so on, and that's bad. But if you don't swear at anyone but you just say, "Damn, what a good pass you made", then no one will be upset. (5th-grade boy)

To swear when you unintentionally hurt yourself, like accidentally running into a chair or other object, does not matter, they argue, because "things have no feelings" (5th-grade boy). The banning of chewing gum can be perceived as a protecting rule if it is about preventing students chewing gums with sugar (a health-related rule), but as an etiquette rule if it is about preventing students from chewing gums with fluoride - i.e., if the rule does not discriminate between types of chewing gum, which none of the schools did. The rule against running around in the classroom can be seen as a structuring rule (structuring and maintaining work activity and preventing students from disturbing or disrupting self or others in this activity), as well as a protecting rule (preventing students from accidents such as running into furniture or other students, slipping, and unintentionally harming self or others). By such overlapping characteristics, this category system reflects the complexity of school rules.

## Discussion

School rules are constantly present in the everyday life of the school by being either followed or transgressed. When followed in the flow of interactions, they seldom attract attention. They are maintained by habit and routine. However, when they are transgressed, they may attract attention by the responses of teachers or other students. The rules help teachers to manage the classroom and to maintain discipline (cf. Doyle 1990; Jones and Jones 2004; McGinnis et al. 1995; Weinstein and Mignano 2007). However, to enhance the possibility of developing and teaching school rules in a pedagogical manner (cf. Schimmel 1997), they have here been understood in a systematic way. The major contribution of this study has been to provide a framework for surveying and understanding the sometimes fuzzy or indistinct nature of school rules.

Five main categories have been constructed: (a) *relational rules*, i.e., rules about how to be and how to behave in relation to other people; (b) *structuring rules*, i.e., rules aimed at structuring and maintaining the activities that take place in school, or at structuring and maintaining the physical milieu (including physical property) where activities take place; (c) *protecting rules*, i.e., rules concerning safety and health; (d) *personal rules*, i.e., rules calling for self-reflection on one's own behaviour and taking personal responsibility for oneself and one's actions; and (e) *etiquette rules*, i.e., rules which manifest customs or traditions in school or in society, about how to behave in social situations not covered in the concept of relational rules.

Some notes of caution, however, need to be sounded regarding the findings in this study. Firstly, the sample in the study limits transferability, since it is sampled from only two schools (and six classes) in one Swedish town. Further research in other schools, in additional grades and in different countries should therefore be conducted in order to validate and develop or to challenge this category system of school rules. With reference to grounded theory (see Strauss and Corbin 1998), this system and its concepts can, of course, be developed and modified by further research.

Secondly, the findings can be problematised in terms of overlap between categories. This is a consequence of Dey's (1999) version of grounded theory regarding categorisation, which plays an essential role in the present analysis. In order to achieve greater sensitivity to the multifarious complexity and social reality of school rules and school life, the analysis uses a prototypical rather than classical model of categorisation. A prototype is presented as a set of typical characteristics of a category. Membership of a category is thus a question of degree of family resemblance to the prototype rather than sharing the full set of common features. Hence, overlaps between categories are possible. If categories are defined only by properties that all members share, then no member should be a better example of the category than any other member.

Nevertheless, research within cognitive psychology as well as linguistics has drawn our attention to the so-called prototype effect - i.e., certain members of a category are judged as being more representative of the category than other members (see Lakoff 1987). This phenomenon would appear to indicate the failure of the predictions of the classical model. Furthermore, by giving concrete examples of rules in every category in this study, communicative validity (testing the validity of knowledge claims in dialogue: Kvale 1995) is met by giving the reader the opportunity to judge the reasonableness of the sorting of categories.

### **Implications for education**

The rule categorisation in this study better clarifies the content of the sometimes indistinct sets of school rules, and thus more clearly exposes the content of the system of school rules, as well as offering easier access to a systematic overview of the rules in school. In the light of this categorisation, more consciously pedagogical and professional work with rules can be conducted. A clear framework of rules can counteract vagueness; furthermore, when the

reasoning behind rules is made explicit, they can be analysed with a more conscious concern for priorities among the rules: “Why do we have this rule? What is its functional or pedagogical point?” Hence, this makes it easier to consider the degree of reasonableness and necessity, as well as making rules clear and understandable (cf. Malone and Tietjens 2000; Weinstein and Mignano 2007). Important components in rule acceptance among students appear to be that students perceive or recognise the reason behind the rule and perceive them as reasonable and trustworthy. In contrast to many other school rules, etiquette rules often fail in this respect, and are thus normally valued as least important or unnecessary among students (Thornberg in press). In conclusion, a systematic categorisation of school rules highlights their content, logic and functions and, thus, provides a professional language of school rules that promotes a more conscious and professional classroom management and discipline in school.

## References

1. Alerby, E. (2003) 'During the break we have fun': A study concerning pupils' experience of school. *Educational Research* **45** , pp. 17-28.
2. Bohn, C. M., Roehrig, A. D. and Pressley, M. (2004) The first days of school in the classrooms of two more effective and four less effective primary-grades teachers. *Elementary School Journal* **104** , pp. 269-287.
3. Boostrom, R. (1991) The nature and functions of classroom rules. *Curriculum Inquiry* **21** , pp. 193-216.
4. Buckley, P. K. and Cooper, J. M. (1978) Classroom management: A rule establishment and enforcement model. *Elementary School Journal* **78** , pp. 254-263.
5. Corsaro, W. A. (2005) *The sociology of childhood* Pine Forge Press , Thousand Oaks, CA
6. Charmaz, K. (1990) 'Discovering' chronic illness: Using grounded theory. *Social Science and Medicine* **30** , pp. 1161-1172.
7. Devine, D. (2002) Children's citizenship and the structuring of adult-child relations in the primary school. *Childhood* **9** , pp. 303-320.
8. Dey, I. (1999) *Grounding grounded theory: Guidelines for qualitative inquiry* Academic Press , San Diego, CA
9. Doyle, W. (Moles, O. C. ed.) (1990) Classroom management techniques. *Student discipline strategies: Research and practice* pp. 113-127. State University of New York Press , New York
10. Elliott, S. N., Witt, J. C., Galvin, G. A. and Moe, G. L. (1986) Children's involvement in intervention selection: acceptability of interventions for misbehaving peers. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* **17** , pp. 235-241.

11. Emmer, E., Evertson, C. and Anderson, L. (1980) Effective management at the beginning of the school year. *Elementary School Journal* **80** , pp. 219-231.
12. Evertson, C. M., Emmer, E. T. and Worsham, M. E. (2003) *Classroom management for elementary teachers* 6th ed., Pearson Education , Boston, MA
13. Freiberg, J. H. and Lapointe, J. M. (Evertson, C. M. and Weinstein, C. S. eds.) (2006) Research-based programs for preventing and solving discipline problems. *Handbook of classroom management: Research, practice, and contemporary issues* pp. 735-786. Lawrence Erlbaum , Mahwah, NJ
14. Freiberg, J., Stein, T. and Huang, S. (1995) Effects of a classroom management intervention on student achievement in inner-city elementary schools. *Educational Research and Evaluation* **1** , pp. 36-66.
15. Glaser, B. G. and Strauss, A. L. ([1967] 1999) *The discovery of grounded theory* Aldine de Gruyter , New York
16. Guvå, G. and Hylander, I. (2003) *Grundad teori Grounded theory* Liber , Stockholm
17. Jackson, P. W., Boostrom, R. E. and Hansen, D. T. (1993) *The moral life of schools* Jossey-Bass , San Francisco, CA
18. Jones, V. and Jones, L. (2004) *Comprehensive classroom management* 7th ed., Pearson Education , Boston, MA
19. Killen, M. (1990) Children's evaluations of morality in the context of peer, teacher-child, and familial relations. *Journal of Genetic Psychology* **151** , pp. 395-411.
20. Kvale, S. (1995) The social construction of validity. *Qualitative Inquiry* **1** , pp. 19-40.
21. Lakoff, G. (1987) *Women fire, and dangerous things: What categories reveal about the mind* University of Chicago Press , Chicago
22. Lewis, T. (2001) Building infrastructure to enhance schoolwide systems of positive behavioral support: Essential features of technical assistance. *Beyond Behavior* **11** , pp. 10-12.
23. Lewis, T. J., Newcomer, L. L., Trussell, R. and Richter, M. (Evertson, C. M. and Weinstein, C. S. eds.) (2006) Schoolwide positive behavior support: Building systems to develop and maintain appropriate social behavior. *Handbook of classroom management: Research, practice, and contemporary issues* pp. 833-854. Lawrence Erlbaum , Mahwah, NJ
24. Malone, B. G. and Tietjens, C. L. (2000) Re-examination of classroom rules: The need for clarity and specified behavior. *Special Services in the Schools* **16** , pp. 159-170.
25. Magnusson, D. and Stattin, H. (Lerner, R. M. ed.) (2006) The person in context: A holistic-interactionistic approach. *Handbook of child psychology, Theoretical models of human development* pp. 400-464. John Wiley , New York

26. Marzano, R. J. (2003) *Classroom management that works: Research-based strategies for every teacher* Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development , Alexandria, VA
27. McGinnis, J. C., Frederick, B. P. and Edwards, R. (1995) Enhancing classroom management through proactive rules and procedures. *Psychology in the Schools* **32** , pp. 220-224.
28. Merrett, F. and Jones, L. (1994) Rules, sanctions and rewards in primary schools. *Educational Studies* **20** , pp. 345-356.
29. Nelson, R., Martella and Galand, B. (1998) The effects of teaching school expectations and establishing a consistent consequence on formal office disciplinary actions. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders* **6** , pp. 153-161.
30. Potts, A. (2006) Schools as dangerous places. *Educational Studies* **32** , pp. 319-330.
31. Prout, A. and James, A. (James, A. and Prout, A. eds.) (1997) A new paradigm for the sociology of childhood? Provenance, promise and problems. *Constructing and reconstructing childhood* pp. 7-33. 2nd ed., The Falmer Press , London
32. Scarlett, P. (1988) Discipline: Pupil and teacher perceptions. *Maladjustment and Therapeutic Education* **7** , pp. 169-177.
33. Schimmel, D. (1997) Traditional rule-making and the subversion of citizenship education. *Social Education* **61** , pp. 70-74.
34. Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1998) *Basics of qualitative research* 2nd ed., Sage , London
35. Sugai, G., Horner, R. and Gresham, F. (Shin, M., Stoner, G. and Walker, H. M. eds.) (2002) Behaviorally effective school environments. *Interventions for academic and behavior problems: Preventive and remedial approaches* pp. 315-350. National Association of School Psychologists , Silver Springs, MD
36. Tattum, D. (1982) *Disruptive pupils in schools and units* John Wiley , Chichester
37. Thomson, R. and Holland, J. (2002) Young people, social change and the negotiation of moral authority. *Children and Society* **16** , pp. 103-115.
38. Thornberg, R. School children's reasoning about school rules. *Research Papers in Education* — in press
39. Weinstein, C. S. and Mignano, A. J. (2007) *Elementary classroom management: Lessons from research and practice* 4th ed., McGraw-Hill , New York
40. Weston, R. and Turiel, E. (1980) Act-rule relations: Children's concepts of social rules. *Developmental Psychology* **16** , pp. 417-424.