

Unaccompanied Minors in the School System in Norway

A Study on the Unaccompanied Minors' Relationship to Their Teachers and How the School Influences Their Integration



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Abstract

The focus on this thesis is the relationship between unaccompanied minors and their teachers, and role the school has on the UM's integration in Norway. An unaccompanied minor (UM) is a refugee arriving without parents or a legal guardian, and who is under 18 years. In this study I have conducted six interviews with immigrants that arrived as an UM. To analyse the data I have used Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, as well as research on the relationship between the teacher and student.

The findings of this thesis suggest that teachers are important for the UM in the school. If the teacher is able to connect with the student, it will be easier to conduct the teaching in the classroom. However, for some students the teacher was more important, and was an adult that they could trust to share their problems with. According to the interviewees it was easy for them to see, based on facial expression, behaviour, and their tone of voice, if the teacher truly cared, or if it was their job to care. There are many things that the teacher can do to increase the probability of a relationship with the students, such as asking the UM how they are feeling after they have been sick. Most of the interviewees had established a relationship with a teacher that they felt they could trust in with their problems. The relationship with the teacher is not only influenced by the connection between these two people, but also by the other students in the classroom and adults that take over some of the parental responsibility of the child. Most of the UM in this study had a good relationship with their fellow students, although it was seldom that the whole class was together outside school.

This study indicates that the school is very important for integration. It is a place where the students learn language and culture of the new country, but it is also an important social arena. Most of the interviewees had friends that they met at school, although there are other places where they meet people. However, since most of the interviewees attended schools for immigrant they did not get the opportunity to meet Norwegian peers. For the UM, socialising with Norwegians would enhance their language and cultural understanding. Many of the interviewees had tried to establish relationships with peers at their football team or in other arenas, but it was difficult. Even though the interviewees were happy in Norway, they wanted to know more Norwegians as it would make their life better.

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1.0 Introduction

There are approximately 15 million refugees in the world (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 2013a). It is believed that almost half of those are children (UNHCR, 2013b). The number of asylum seekers coming to Norway changes every year, with 2002 and 2009 at the peaks of 17 480 and 17 226 respectively (UDI, 2010). Although there have always been immigrants in Norway, the ethnicity of the immigrants has changed significantly over the last 40 years (Statistisk Sentralbyrå (SSB [Statistics Norway]), 2013a). According to SSB (2013a), the largest groups of immigrants in Norway were from Poland, Sweden, and Lithuania. They arrive for different reasons; some come for work or studies, and some seek refuge because of war, famine or prosecution in their countries of origin.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2013) believes that the number of displaced children who are alone is increasing, even though it is difficult to find exact numbers. These children are in danger of being killed, tortured, raped, robbed and recruited as child soldiers (UNICEF, 2013). One group of children is called unaccompanied minor (UM), which constitutes a small section of the number of asylum seekers. UMs are children under the age of 18 who arrive without their parents or a legal guardian (Utlendingsdirektoratet (UDI [Norwegian Directorate of Immigration]), 2009). They represent a small group, but are considered one of the most vulnerable members of the refugee population. In 2005 the Norwegian Government specified that refugee-children arriving with or without their parents are the most vulnerable, and their rights and life-situation will have a bigger focus in the future (Statsministerens kontor (SMK [Prime Minister's Office], 2005). Approximately 3000 UMs have been granted asylum in Norway over the last ten years (Aalandslid & Enes, 2012). Their new life in Norway begins after they are granted asylum and given residence permit in a municipality.

When the UM are settled it is important that they experience safety, a sense of belonging and the feeling of success in their life (Kohli, 2007), and the school system helps in establishing a more stable life. Most of the UMs are very dedicated to school and have high ambitions for their education (Eide, 2000; Hopkins & Hill, 2010). According to Norsk Offentlig Utredning (NOU [Norwegian Public Exposition], 2010:7), numbers from 2008 show that half of the UMs does not finish high school. There are many reasons why UMs

drop out of school. According to Eide (2000), one of the main reasons is that they lack understanding of the Norwegian school system. The experience they have in school and especially in the classroom are therefore very important for their willingness to continue their education. The teacher and the relationship s/he has with the students are the most important aspects of the school. The school plays a very important role in their integration into the Norwegian society (Pastoor, 2012), both when it comes to learning the language and socialising with other people (Bø, 1995). It is therefore vital for an UM to finish their education.

This research is carried out to explore the importance of the school system to the UM, the challenges they face in school and the function that the school has for integration into the Norwegian society. This may help the teachers, and the school system, to understand their role in the UM's life, and develop more knowledge on how they can help to ease the transition. It is also important that the municipalities understand how school influences the children. In this study, I have used semi-structured interviews so that the experience and opinions of the interviewees will have the main focus. There has not been much research on this topic, which is why I wanted to increase the attention on the topic with this thesis. There is however a study being done at Folkehelseinstituttet (FHI [Norwegian Institute of Public Health]), which is exploring some of the same topics over a four-year period, which will be presented within 2014 or 2015.

The research question is in four parts and will firstly look at *how UMs experience the Norwegian school system*, secondly *what relationship the UM have with their teachers*, thirdly *how that relationship may affect the lives of the UM* and fourthly *what role the school plays for the integration of the UM according to their own experience*.

In the introduction section there will be a focus on who the unaccompanied minors are and what characteristics there are to them as a group. We are also looking at statistics on their residence in Norway before we look at their role in the Norwegian school system. We will then go through how the education is planned for the UM and what role the school has in their life.

1.1 Who are the Unaccompanied Minors?

An UM is someone who is under the age of 18, and who arrives in the country they seek refugee without a parent or others who have the parental responsibility (UDI, 2009). Despite the diverse nature of the group, there are some common aspects in the lives of UMs:

- They are without their parents' immediate care, guidance and protection
- They are in a foreign country with foreign language, culture, traditions, food etc.
- They arrive as refugees from societies with armed conflict or other organised crime, countries with high poverty and few opportunities for education and work
- They have in different degrees experienced loss, grief and other traumatic experiences (Barne- og familiedepartementet (BFD- [Department of Children and family]), 2001)

Even though there are some similarities, it is a heterogeneous group. The reason why the UM fled, what the children have experienced during their escape, the childhood in the UM's home country and how they adapt to their new life is very different for each youth (Valenta & Berg, 2012). There are also big differences within the same minority-, cultural- and ethnic group when it comes to reasons for escaping and experiences after arrival in Norway (Eide, 2012). The number of UMs that apply for asylum in Norway has varied much each year. There were between 300-900 applicants per year from 2001 – 2012, with a dramatic increase in 2008 and 2009 with the peak being 2500 (UDI, 2011; UDI, 2012). In 2012, 74 % of the UMs seeking asylum were given asylum in Norway (UDI, 2013).

In 2012 close to half of the UMs arrived from Afghanistan, this has been a country of origin for many UMs arriving over a long period. Countries such as Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Algeria are also highly represented in the ethnicity (UDI, 2012). The majority of the UM are boys, and they are mostly between the age of 15 and 17 (Aalandslid & Enes, 2012). It is believed that boys are overrepresented among the UMs because they are often at greater risk during war and conflict (Pastoor, 2012). Boys are also ranked higher in some cultures, and in some cultures it is considered unsafe for girls to travel alone (Pastoor, 2012).

The migration also affects boys and girls differently, where girls is considered having bigger risks of being sexually assaulted and being victim of trafficking, while boys is more prone to being forced into other types of violence and forced labour (Øien, 2010).

The reason for migration varies from country to country, and family to family. According to Øien (2010), many of the UMs may have started their trip as migration for work or education in neighbouring countries. Her research, which is based on interviews with 30 UMs, found many similarities between the children's reasons for escaping. There was usually not one reason for leaving, but several causes that make the foundation for the decision (Øien, 2010). The most common direct causes are the following:

- War and armed conflict in the area where the UM is from
- The family situation or threats and danger experienced in their social network
- Education and work
- Migration to a neighbouring country that did not have the expected outcome

Even though one of these causes could be the main reason for escaping, for most part there are also individual stories, which could be more complex and difficult to talk about (Øien, 2010). The decision is directly affected by the situation within the family, local community or the country of origin, as well as economical-, social-, security- and existentialistic factors (Øien, 2010). The UM's parents, grandparents, older siblings or other relatives usually take the decision for them to migrate. However, most of the youth claimed to understand why they had to leave (Øien, 2010).

The reason why some refugees arrive in Norway specifically has long been speculated by governments, non-governmental organisations and scientists. According to Øien (2010), there are very few of the UMs that know which country that will be their destination when they start the migration. In the search of a better life and social mobility they leave for Europe, and when they arrive in Greece, Italy, France or other known transit-countries, they meet people who then tell them of which countries to travel to (Øien, 2010).

More than 3000 UMs have been given residence permit in Norway between 1996 and 2009 (Aalandslid & Enes, 2012). UMs are prioritised in the asylum seeking process, and the goal of Integrerings- og mangfoldsdirektoratet (IMDi- [The directorate of Integration and Diversity], 2013) is that the UM should be housed in the municipality three months after the positive reply on their asylum application, which varies from each year. In 2012 this was 3, 2

months (IMDi, 2013). UMs are prioritised in finding a municipality that accept the refugee as IMDi sees that their vulnerability makes it more important that they are settled fast so they can start their new life.

Since 2007 the responsibility for the UMs has been shared between UDI and Barnevernet [Social Services], which means that the children who are from 0-15 years on arrival are taken care of by Social Services, while UDI is responsible for those over 15 years of age (Valenta & Berg, 2012). This means that when the UM arrive in Norway they are taken to different types of asylum camps. Those who are in the care of Social Services live in a care centre, while UDI transfer the UM to an ordinary asylum camp or in a section for UMs in an asylum camp (Valenta & Berg, 2012). In the future, the idea of the government is that all children arriving as an UM will be taken care of by the Social Service, but there is no plan as to when that will happen (Eide, 2009). After an UM is given residence permit in Norway, UDI, Barne-, ungdoms- og familieetaten [Children, youth and family Unit], and IMDi cooperate with municipalities to find a good place to live according to the needs of every UM (Eide, 2012).

When the UM receive a positive reply on the application, the personnel at the asylum camp compose a file with information on the child together with the individual and their guardian. The material gives the municipality data to locate a living facility that complies best with the needs of the child, which ranges from foster homes to a house with other UMs under supervision, or living by themselves (IMDi, 2012). In this way the social workers in the municipality have information so they can give the UM the necessary attention (Valenta & Berg, 2012). It is up to each municipality how they want to organise the living arrangements, school, leisure activities and other arrangements (Eide & Broch, 2010).

According to Øien (2010), most of the UMs felt that the first phase in Norway was both confusing and frustrating. They experienced it as a time filled with a hope to be able to settle, start school and be acquainted with Norwegians. According to Kohli and Mather (2003), there are three psychological barriers the UM have to deal with when they have settled. Firstly, being strangers in the country and not knowing the culture, norms and values. Secondly they have to deal with the memories from their past, and thirdly they are taken care of by the government, where one has to learn how the bureaucratic system works (Kohli & Mather, 2003). Research has shown that UMs are a vulnerable group that is more likely to experience traumatic events before, during and after their escape (Oppedal, Seglem & Jensen,

2009). They are also feeling more lonely than many other refugee groups (Oppedal, Jensen & Seglem, 2008), especially in the beginning (Kohli & Mather, 2003).

According to Cobb (as cited in Oppedal et al., 2008), having a stable network and support from family, friends and other people may be the most important factor in decreasing the possibility of psychological problems. In a normal youth population, approximately 5% of the youth suffer from depression (Oppedal, Jensen, Seglem & Haukeland, 2011). According to Oppedal et al. (2011), 18% of the UM interviewed had high clinical values of depression over a two year period. 22% of the youth reported a higher level of depression after one year, showing that many of the UMs develop more psychological problems after they have lived for some years in Norway. The numbers show that girls score a higher level of depression, and there appear to be some differences between ethnic groups, although it is difficult to say anything definite (Oppedal et al., 2011). There are many reasons for why the UMs are depressed, for example if they experience a long asylum seeking process, have trouble with understanding the language, and are feeling lonely, will increase the likelihood of depression (Heptinstall, Sethna & Taylor, 2004).

When youth are depressed, they have trouble establishing close relationships with other people, especially romantic ones (Oppedal et al., 2011). Since they keep having flashbacks from their past, they also have trouble sleeping and have problems focusing in school (Oppedal et al., 2009). Every person reacts differently to grief, and for UMs it can be hard to find people to talk to. However, it is very important to find a way to work on the despair so that it does not affect their life and concentration (Dyregrov & Dyregrov, 2008). Research has also shown that UMs are more prone to psychological problems than refugee children that are accompanied by parents (Bean, Derluyn, Eurelings-Bontekoe, Broekart & Spinhoven, 2007). The reason could be that having good relationships with other people have shown to reduce the psychological trouble for UMs (Oppedal et al., 2011). According to Oppedal et al. (2009), 75% of the UMs that do not have adults that they are close to, have high levels of depression.

It is difficult to measure the quality and importance of a relationship between two people. Immigrants will learn the language and culture faster if they know ethnic Norwegians. According to Oppedal et al. (2008), approximately 70% of UMs reported that they had Norwegian friends, although most of the youth had more friends that were from their own ethnic cultures. Even though they report to have many friends, 68% of the youth interviewed

in Oppedal et al.'s (2011) research claimed that they were lonely. Since most children meet their friends during school or leisure activities, it is important that UMs are encouraged to attend.

Most of the UMs use some time to learn Norwegian, and they also find it hard to become friends with ethnic Norwegian youth for unknown reasons (Oppedal et al., 2011). Participating in social networks is very important because the youth can seek support and ask for help if they need it (Oppedal et al., 2011). The goals of the psychosocial work is to gain trust, and show that the people care about the UM. It is important to create structures and constant follow-up with a focus on the future (Valenta & Berg, 2012). Oppedal et al. (2011) found that most of the UMs wanted to be a part of Norwegian culture. However, many of them had difficulties in integrating it with their ethnic culture. There are big differences between ethnic groups, as well as individually, in how they explore and integrate the culture into their identity (Oppedal et al., 2011).

Through media there has previously been a negative focus on UMs in Norway, where they have been portrayed as children who create many challenges for the system (Eide, 2009). This has led to more resources being spent on research, as well as in the system, so that better efforts are given to UMs (Eide, 2009). With more research, one hopes that there will be a better understanding of UM and create a better structure for their settlement in Norway. For the UM, school is crucial and a very important aspect of their life, but it is also a very complicated system and many rules to how and what the students need before they can continue after middle school.

1.2 Unaccompanied Minors in the school system

Education is a universal right, and has a high value across many cultures. According to the United Nation's Child Convention §28 (UNHCR, 2012), every child has the right to attend school. Since Norway has incorporated the Child Convention into its law, every child that is believed to be staying for more than three months in the country, has the right to an education (Opplæringsloven, §2-1 [the Law of Education], 1998). This means that the refugees that stay for longer periods in the asylum camp is given access to education, although it can be very limited in some municipalities because of lack of funding (Valenta & Berg, 2012). For some of the UMs, this could be the only education they have attended in their life, while others have some or more extensive background from schools in their home country (Valenta

& Berg, 2012). For some of the refugees attending school, it can be seen as a way of justifying their escape, because most of them are seeking a better life and see school as a way towards a good job and a stable life (Kohli & Mather, 2003).

For refugees, school is an important arena for development of language, social network, re-establishing a daily rhythm, and a way to create hope and dreams about a future (Wade, Mitchell & Baylis, 2005). According to Cummins (2000), it can be possible to learn enough of a language to manage to communicate in everyday life in one to two years. However, school is not only a place to get knowledge; it is also an arena that plays an important part in integration and getting to know peers (Pastoor, 2012).

After the UM is given residence permit in a municipality the child is enrolled in school. Depending on the UMs age, the child starts either elementary, middle or high school (Pastoor, 2012). In the Norwegian school system one of the main goals is that each student should be given equal training, independent of their abilities, social background or prerequisites (Daae-Qvale, 2009). This can lead to big difficulties because the UMs have very different backgrounds, both when it comes to previous education and support from parents abroad and new guardians (Daae-Qvale, 2009). In Norway, the school system is divided between the municipality and county, depending on the level in the school system (Pastoor, 2012). For the first ten years (i.e., from the age of 5/6 to 15/16, depending on which month one is born), it is the municipality that is responsible, and afterwards they start high school, which is under the county's jurisdiction (Pastoor, 2012).

Since most UMs arriving in Norway are mostly between 15 and 17 years (Aalandslid & Enes, 2012), they find themselves entering the Norwegian schooling system at the end of middle school, and start of high school. According to Norwegian law, one needs to have passed the first ten years of education (elementary and middle school) or similar schooling, to be allowed to enrol in high school (Pastoor, 2012). This means that those UMs who are 15 years have the right to attend full-time school, and will be given the equivalent learning of the first ten years in Norwegian school (Valenta & Berg, 2012). If the child is 16 or older, they are supposed to start high school. However, if they do not have the education and knowledge that is necessary, they have the right by law to start at a school for adult refugees, where they learn the knowledge from elementary and middle school. The school is full-time and takes between one to three years, based on how fast the students learn, and after they pass the exam, the student can start high school (Pastoor, 2012). There are different models on how the

education is organised, and it is organised the same for all children whether they arrive alone or with company. Since the children do not know Norwegian, the main goals of most models are to teach them Norwegian, so they can eventually start in a normal school (Pastoor, 2012).

There are four models that are often used for newly arrived asylum seekers (Pastoor, 2012). It is a goal that the education should be adapted to the child's age and previous experience (Valenta & Berg, 2012). In the first, and the most common model, the school place the child in an ordinary class, either from day one or after an introduction (Pastoor, 2012). In this model they follow the normal education, and can be given extra Norwegian tutoring. The second is separate introduction class at a Norwegian school where the focus is primarily on learning Norwegian, and when the level of language is deemed sufficient orally and written, they are placed in an ordinary class (Pastoor, 2012). The third option is a combination of the first two, where they are placed in an ordinary class, but parallel they also attend special introduction program focused on learning Norwegian (Pastoor, 2012). The last model is an introduction class, where the education is directed at learning Norwegian. After the child has learned sufficient Norwegian, they are transferred to a school in their neighbourhood (Pastoor, 2012). Since it is up to the municipality to choose which model to use, there are big differences in the education, as the cost of education can be bigger than what the government gives in subsidies, and many municipalities do not have the extra funding (Valenta & Berg, 2012).

According to law, minority students also have the right to education in their mother tongue (NOU [Norwegian Public Exposition], 2010:7). Research has shown that if an immigrant knows their first language, it makes them feel confident and they achieve better results in other subjects (Hek, 2005). When the minority students attend school, they are given an extra course called Basic Norwegian and Mother tongue for Language minorities, which they attend alongside their ordinary subjects (Rambøll Management, 2008). From the school year 2007/2008 the government implemented new curriculums in these subjects, which give the students lessons according to their level instead of their age (Rambøll Management, 2008).

Half of the UMs that started high school in Norway do not finish the education (NOU [Norwegian Public Exposition], 2010:7). The reasons for why they leave school differ from person to person, but Eide (2000) found in his research that two major reasons was that they do not understand the school system, and that they do not like the way the tutoring is held in

the classroom. Lødding (2009) also found in her research that youth that quit high school are tired of school, and do not feel that the time spent in school is meaningful. Before they started high school, they thought it would be easier, and they had trouble understanding the subject at that level (Lødding, 2009). For the refugees it is very important to understand the language and even though they know Norwegian, the academic understanding of a language can take up to seven years to learn (Cummins, 2000). Numbers show that the most important predictors of quitting during high school are the grades and their attendance in 10th grade (Lødding, 2009). Grades and understanding is very important for the student's likelihood to stay in school, and if the teacher does not have time to help the student, they can also be given extra help with homework, either from the school or different voluntary organisations (Pastoor, 2012). However, this is also based on the budget within each municipality.

When UMs drop out of school, a vital part of their connection to Norwegian society disappears as well. This connection, when present, has a positive effect on their psychosocial well-being (Pastoor, 2012). To maintain this connection is therefore very important. School also helps the children in coping with other difficulties in their life. Many of the UMs suffer from different psychological problems (Oppedal et al., 2009), and having a routine and future plans can help the UMs feel better. The school can help the child feel like they have a purposeful life, by helping them to master their challenges and working on how they handle difficult experiences and challenges (Eide, 2000).

Research in the UK has indicated that it is difficult for children to adapt to school when they arrive in the middle of the school year and for those over 15 years of arrival (Wade et al., 2005). Education in Norway is also very different from many other countries, where the students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning (Daae-Qvale, 2009). Although this is meant to help the students become more independent and take control of their own education, it can create a division, because it requires skills in Norwegian, reading-skills, the ability to work on projects, and that they are able to write academically based papers (Daae-Qvale, 2009). For some UMs, their ambitions may make up for the disadvantages that they face, but many may not be intellectually capable or able to focus, because of various emotional problems (Kohli & Mather, 2003).

The school is very important when it comes to establishing a relationship with other people, not only peers. According to Eide (2000), many UMs form a special relationship with adults they communicate with on a regular basis. Most of the youths said that one of the most

important persons in their life was a public employee, this can be a teacher, refugee worker, social worker, interpreter, or people who have the responsibility for the everyday life of the UM (Eide, 2000). Even though the public employee is a very important person that provides the UM with information and support, the UM is more insecure about this relation compared to the relation they have with family, because the public employee is paid to do the job, and they strongly fear that the person will leave them (Oppedal et al., 2009).

UMs are a group of youth that are looked upon as very fragile and vulnerable, but they are also a very resilient group. Resilience is measured in a person's ability to overcome difficulties (Valenta & Berg, 2012). There is no exact answer to why some are more resilient than others, but biological factors, protective factors in their upbringing, and protective factors in their new life in Norway all play a role. Research has shown that support from important individuals, making plans for the future, being independent and having a meaningful purpose in life on a short and long-term plan helps (Valenta & Berg, 2012). In establishing a new life, the UMs are looking for peace, order and an ordinary life, and different people will help them in finding the feeling of having a home (Kohli, 2007). For some children the teacher has turned out to be that one person that gives them support, and gives them a chance to prove themselves, raise their confidence, and respect them (Nordahl, 2010).

It is very difficult to find exact numbers on how many UMs that are attending school, because the numbers from the different databases will classify students that work part-time as workers, not students (Aalandslid & Enes, 2012). 65% of UMs were either working or studying, which is the same number as other refugee groups, but much lower than the 85% in the Norwegian population. Of these 65%, there are 11% that are registered as students, and there are more women than men that are studying (Aalandslid & Enes, 2012). Looking at the numbers, they also show that more than one-fourth of the UMs fall outside of the work-force, and do not study either (Aalandslid & Enes, 2012). There are also big differences between the different countries, with Sri Lankans ranking as high in participation in comparison to Somalis, who have the fewest active UMs. Across all ethnic groups, the number of UMs in work or studies increases according to length of residence in Norway (Aalandslid & Enes, 2012).

2.0 Theory and research

This study explores the social relations between people, and how they can affect our lives, specifically focusing on UMs arriving in Norway. A relation between two people is established when a person in a given situation acknowledges the other person or participates in their action (Bø, 1995). It is important that there is an attachment and a confirmation, and that the person understands what type of relation it is, and what expectations there are (Eide & Vike, 2009). In a multicultural context, it is important to have good communication between the different individuals. It is also vital that there is a focus on having empathy, the ability to understand, have respect for the other and solidarity with their communications partners (Qureshi, 2009).

There is not much theory on this field of research, which is why this study will use different theories that are related to the topic. First, this study will use the theory of Bronfenbrenner on ecological systems to show the influence people and institutions have on a person. There will then be a focus on the relationship between teacher and student, and what role this relationship plays for the students. Since students attend school every weekday, they can establish a strong and important connection with their teachers. For UMs it can become an important relationship since they may not have important role-models such as parents, siblings or other relatives close to them.

2.1 Bronfenbrenner's ecological model

Urie Bronfenbrenner has developed an analytical model, which shows the complexity of how humans and the environment affect each other (Fyrand, 2005). The ecology of human development is a model of the processes in the life of a growing person, characterised by thought, feeling and action, and the properties of the immediate setting in which the developing person lives, as this process is influenced by the relations between the settings around the child, and the larger context they are embedded in (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The life of a human consists of five systems; micro-, meso-, exo-, macro- and chronosystem, which influence the growing individual, and this process affects the relations between them, as well as the larger context. These systems explain what Bronfenbrenner (1979) calls the “blueprint over the organisation of every setting”.

The microsystem consists of the people and institutions the individual interact with every day: it is a pattern of activities, roles and interpersonal relations that the individual experiences (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The type of system one belongs to depends much on the type of activities and relations that they have, both chosen ones (like leisure activities) and natural ones (like family) (Fyrand, 2005). Within the microsystem, there is mutual influence on the different parties (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), which for example means that the teacher is not only influencing the student, but the student also affect the teacher.

The mesosystem comprises of several microsystems and the relationship between them (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For a child this could be the relationship between home, school and the neighbourhood friends, and for an adult it could be between family, social life and work. The cooperation between the different systems has a significant influence on the development of the individual (Fyrand, 2005). The relationships in the mesosystem are created when there is contact between the different parties (Bø, 1995). When it comes to refugees, it is very important that the different relations teach the same norms and values in the new environment for the child. For UMs it is important that there is a good connection between school and other significant adults, so that the child can get confirmation about what they learn (Bø, 1995). If the systems around the child overlap in many areas, this can help to create a stable environment around the child (Fyrand, 2005). For many UMs there is little connection between different microsystems, which therefore could lead to a less unified development. The child can receive unequal norms and values from each microsystem, which could make the UM confused about what s/he should do.

The exosystem is settings that influence in a more circumstantial way. It does not involve the individual as an active participant, but the events in the setting will affect the settings around the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The exosystem could be how the government decide that the money within the municipality is used or it could be the decisions within the municipality, which directly influence the days of students. For example if the funding was higher, there would be more teachers, or new rules within the school system from the government can change the structure of the classes and organisation of the school day. The experiences the UMs bring from their home country will also shape the way the child acts and interprets events in their life. The exosystem can therefore have a big effect on the child's life, both long and short term.

The macrosystem are the traditions, rituals, values and ideologies that exist within a culture in micro-, meso- and exo-systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The macrosystem will influence all the other systems because of the influence culture have on people and institutions (Fyrand, 2005). For the UM that settle in a new country and establish a new life, the systems they bring with them from their home country is not necessarily the same, and therefore needs to be rebuilt. This is what Bronfenbrenner (1979) calls an ecological transition, which is when an individual's position in the environment changes because of alterations in roles, setting or both. For the UM this will mean a change in both factors.

The chronosystem extends into a third dimension. This system looks at the effect that time has on the persons characteristics and environment, and whether it changes or is consistent over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). A child is affected by the time s/he grows up in, and if the environment around the child changes over time, this will affect the personality.

The human development is a process that the individual goes through, where they learn about the different concepts in the ecological environment surrounding them, and this will enable them to engage in the activities that will teach them the form and content of the environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Before arriving in Norway the UM has experienced a different ecological environment that will influence them in their transaction to a new setting. It is therefore important that the development of the child takes these differences into consideration when the child is involved in a new activity and thought in a new environment. When the child understands more about the ecological environment they participate actively in, one can also modify and add to the existing structure and content (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Whether the socialisation of the child is successful or not, depends on the microsystems connected to the adolescent child.

The system does not only give the child directions as to how to behave, but it is also important that the child feels acknowledged and valued through connections with others (Bø, 1995). The environment directly around the individual is the most important relationship, although the connection to other persons is nearly equally important (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In other words, it is not only the connection that is vital, but also the influence it has on the environment around the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). There are many different systems around an UM that might influence them in different ways, for example school, friends, home and family. If there are no connections between the environments the child could be given different rules as to how to behave, especially if there is no cooperation between the settings.

The connection between two people is defined as a dyad (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). A dyad entails that the two people have to pay attention and participate in one another's activities. This will influence the development of the individual for two reasons (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Firstly, it is a critical context for development of the person in itself, and secondly, it will constitute a building block for the microsystem, which the person can use to construct larger interpersonal structures and connections (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). As the UMs builds new relationships, the people they connect with can lead to other systems, for example one of the interviewees had Norwegian friends that they had been introduced to through a common acquaintance.

Within all dyads there are three characteristic parameters that describe the connection between the individuals (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The first is a degree of reciprocity between the individuals. As a result of the influence between the members, the individuals have to modify their activities according to the other (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). When the teacher is transferring his/her knowledge to the student, the child will learn more, and as a result the activities will become more intricate. This could result in an acceleration in pace, and an increase in the complexity of learning processes (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The second parameter is the balance of power (Bø, 1995). Even though a dyad is reciprocal, one member can be more dominant than the other (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). It is not only about physical or economic influence, but can also be the power one has when s/he have more knowledge, maturity and competence. Through life the child will have different power relations with people, and the UM will learn to cope and understand what it is. If the child learns from these relations, and if the socialisation succeeds, the power balance becomes equal between the individuals (Bø, 1995). Through the ecological development the child will experience different associations with unequal power relations, which will teach the child what power is and how to cope with it (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The third parameter is emotions, which develop between individuals, as positive, negative, ambivalent or asymmetrical (Bø, 1995).

The relation between people is influenced by another important factor, which is roles (Bø, 1995). Within every society, an individual has several roles, consisting of a set of activities and relations which society expects because of the position (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Roles are usually identified by the different social positions in a culture, which holds different expectations regarding how the holder should behave and how others should act towards the holder of the role (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). A role which has a function in the microsystem has its roots in the macrosystem, where the ideology and institutional structures define the

expectations that the individual have towards the others, and how the individual behaves (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). It is therefore difficult for the UMs when they arrive in a society that has a different macrosystem, which can create confusion concerning new expectations to the behaviour of different roles. The role as a student has different meanings and behaviours than a student is in the UMs' home countries.

The interpersonal structure that the child learns in settings like the home will later influence how the child perceives the structures in school, and subsequently affect the development of the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The settings in the mesosystem can enhance the development of the child if the roles, activities and dyads in the microsystems of the individual, encourage to growth of mutual trust, positive orientation, goal consensus and balance of power (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For immigrants arriving in Norway with knowledge and understanding of a structure that is very different from that of the Norwegian society, could explain why some UMs have difficulties in the school system. The structures that the UMs learn from their home will influence how they see and perceive the organisation of the classroom, and the role of the teacher.

When an individual enters a new setting, information about the new environment must be made available so that the child can continue developing with valid information, advice and experience (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). It is important that the activities within the settings are becoming more complex, so that the child can develop intellectually, emotionally, socially and morally (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). These activities should happen on a regular basis with one or more people that the child has a strong, mutual emotional attachment to, and who are committed to the child's well-being and development (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

In new settings like the school, the teacher can be an important guide for the UM. In some of the schools that the interviewees in this study attended, the administration had organised that the UM had one contact teacher that they would speak to if they had questions or problems. This shows that these schools understood that the children could face trouble in the beginning, and will need advice and valid information on the new structures. The interaction between the child and the other important individual, are in a substantial degree reliant on the involvement of a third party that encourage, assist and express admiration and affection for the person caring for, and engaging in, the activities with the child (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). If a relation is to have an effect on the development of the child, it is

vital that the child first observes the action of a person, and that the person then responds to the child or interacts with the child (Bø, 1995).

2.2 Relationship between teacher and student

When a child arrives alone in a new environment, it is important to establish new relations with adults who can be role-models, who can guide them with their values, and set limits (Bø, 1995). If the child experiences new relations with stable, sensitive and available adults, they can easily learn to trust others (Bø, 1995) and their world will seem more predictable (Davis, 2003). One such adult can be teachers in their new school, as teachers are the most important adult and a powerful force in school (Murray & Pianta, 2007). The debate over what influences students, and how they will succeed in school has been discussed for a long time. Research has shown that the background and environment of the child have a big impact, which includes friends and parents. The school is also very important, which entails the environment at school, how the school is organised, and most importantly: the teacher (Hernes, 2010).

2.2.1 The teacher's organisation and behaviour in the classroom

In the school the most important arena is the classroom. If the teacher has a good relationship with the class, and have the competency to lead the class and maintain the rules, it will have a positive effect on the learning and the development of each student (Crosnoe, Johnson & Elder, 2004; Nordahl, 2010). A good environment means that there is a good relationship among students, and between students and teacher, and that there are expectations to learning and participation of everyone in the class community (Nordahl, 2010). This relation will also affect how students look at the education in the classroom, and how they feel about the school and different subjects (Fredriksen & Rhodes, 2004; Nordahl, 2010).

The relationship between teacher and students can influence the identity of children, and the teacher can have a significant role in building a positive self-image in students, through positive comments and mastering challenges in the classroom (Nordahl, 2010). A classroom with a good environment is experienced by the students as more varied, engaging and participatory, and there is also less trouble with problematic behaviour (Nordahl, 2010; Teven & McCroskey, 1997). If some students in the classroom makes noise and disturbs other fellow students it can create a conflict and frustration among those children that are interested in studying, like some of the UMs interviewed in this study experienced. Research has shown

that in a classroom where the teacher makes sure that there is a balance between structure and autonomy for the students, there is an increase in the students' responsibility for their own learning, motivation for academic tasks, self-esteem among students, and better understanding of the subject (Davis, 2003; Klem & Connell, 2004). It is therefore vital that the teacher develops psychological bonds with the students (Klem & Connell, 2004; Nordahl, 2010).

In the Norwegian school systems, the pupil has a very strong autonomy, and if the child refuses to learn, it can prove difficult for the teachers to have a calm and peaceful classroom with good opportunities to learn (Eide & Vike, 2009). Therefore it is very important to establish a good relationship with the students, because the teacher can help the child through a positive change if the teacher knows more about the child's opinion, intentions, and their view on reality (Nordahl, 2010). If a teacher has an UM in their classroom, it is important to establish a good relationship with them because they may need more attention and help than other students. The expectations that the teacher has to the class, as well as their belief and behaviour in the classroom, contributes to an increased quality of the relationships with their students (Fredriksen & Rhodes, 2004). It is therefore some qualities that will make it easier for the student to connect with the teacher.

2.2.2 Qualities of the teacher

For students, there are many qualities that make it easier to establish a good relationship with a person. It is important that the teacher supports them, makes them feel good about themselves, is good in conflict management, and has good referential skills (Frymier & Houser, 2000; Palaiologou, 2007). It is also important that the teacher is tolerant, but uses discipline in order to create a classroom focused on learning (Petegem, Aelterman, Keer & Rosseel, 2008). The teacher must also be aware of how they express their emotions and attitude towards their students with their facial expression, gaze, gesture and other body movements (Fredriksen & Rhodes, 2004; Teven & McCroskey, 1997).

If the teacher shows empathy, understanding and is responsive towards the student, many will believe that the teacher cares about them (Klem & Connell, 2004; Teven & McCroskey, 1997). The UMs in this study were aware of the gestures and facial expression the teachers in Norway has, and believed this was a very good indicator of their feelings. The way the teacher behaves in the classroom will influence what is valued in the classroom (Nordahl, 2010). One of the basic things in a relationship is trust, and the teachers needs to be believable and trustworthy so the student wants to talk to them (Nordahl, 2010). During their

travel from their home country, the UMs has meet many people, and could have been betrayed many times, which could make it difficult for them to trust people.

Many teachers do not realise what impact they can have on students: that they in certain cases can be the main reason for some students to attend school, and that they can influence students regardless of their individual characteristics and family background (Davis & Dupper 2004). As many UMs that start at school in Norway have a challenging upbringing, the teacher can be a very important factor in attending school.

There are also other factors that contribute to the teacher-student relationship, such as the connection among fellow students, the student's feelings towards the school and how the teacher handles cultural differences (Fredriksen & Rhodes, 2004). If there are few conflicts and negative attitudes in the relationship, it will be less marked by anger and aggression, which can result in better academic results for the student because they are more likely to approach the teacher with problems (Ang, 2005). According to Oppedal et al. (2011), many of the UMs arriving in Norway has psychological problems; this and being frustrated because of other difficulties in life can cause the students to have anger issues. If the UM has a good relationship with their teacher it could be that the student can manage to not allow these problems to interfere with their academic work. Even though a teacher may have none or all of these qualities listed above, there may still be difficulties in the classroom, and it is important to focus on how the teacher solves these problems.

2.2.3 Difficulties in the classroom

If the UMs are part of a Norwegian class, there can be trouble with the amount of reading requirements and the understanding of it. The number of students in one class may determine the extent of attention the teacher pays to the UM and his/her problems (Daae-Qvale, 2009). If the teacher has a negative influence on the students it can limit, block or even change the goals and opportunities that the student could have (Nordahl, 2010). The students are also affected by frequent changes in the environment, for example many different people and changes in staff, which can lead to insecurity and small possibilities for the child to establish a relationship with one or several adults (Bø, 1995). A bad relationship with a teacher, and towards the school, may lead the student to having trouble with their academic results and could eventually leave the school.

There has been a lot of focus and debates on why students drop out from school. There has long been a tradition of blaming the parents and the student, although each individual has several different reasons (Davis & Dupper 2004). The school plays a big part in the decision to leave, and it is easier for schools to change some of the rules and behaviour from their side, rather than hoping for a change in students' backgrounds (Davis & Dupper 2004). The relationship between students and their school is shaped from the beginning, and if the student fail to establish a good attitude towards the school, s/he is running a higher risk of dropping out before finishing high school (Davis, 2003) Students who have low academic success, poor attendance in class, behavioural problems, numerous school transfers and/or a poor attitude toward school, are in the danger-zone for dropping out (Davis & Dupper 2004). Those who do not succeed in school are also more likely to have problems with drugs, crime and bad physical as well as bad mental health (Hernes 2010; Nordahl, 2010). Students who dropped out from school perceive their teachers as not helpful, not motivating, and not offering help when they experienced difficulties in learning (Domagala-Zysk, 2006).

For an immigrant it is preferable if the school has a specialist teacher that speaks the mother tongue of the students, and who have pedagogical training in dealing with different learning needs the students will settle more easily and feel more comfortable, in school (Hek, 2005). Even though the number of those types of teachers is limited, it should become a priority for the schools. Many students also lack basic social skills which make it difficult for them to find a place in the classroom (Davis & Dupper 2004). For a teacher there are many challenges that arise when the student comes from a different country, and that can affect their relationship and understanding of each other.

2.2.4 Cultural differences at school

There may be big cultural and ethnic differences between the student and teacher, and it is important that the parties are aware of the differences, so that it does not interfere with the relationship. These differences can be linked to the variance in relation to language, religion, social background, style and/or taste (Eide & Vike, 2009). Scharf and Hertz-Lazarowitz (2003) found in their study that there are cultural differences in how students experience the relationship with their teacher, fellow student, best friends and the class climate. For teachers it is important to have an understanding of how culture controls thinking, emotions and actions in a person, and that occurs whenever people interact (Qureshi, 2009). Research has also shown that in a classroom or a school where there are many people of the same ethnicity

or culture, the student feels more comfortable (Crosnoe et al., 2004). Therefore it may be good for the students to start at a school for immigrants, so they are more relaxed in the school as the transition to a new life in Norway can be very challenging.

In the Norwegian school there are values, expectations and teaching which can influence children differently based on their culture and social background (Nordahl, 2010). The teacher chooses a way of teaching that they are comfortable with and where they feel that they have more control, but for some students this can inhibit their learning because of previous experience and habits (Nordahl, 2010). Brok and Levy (2005) found that students' opinions on how the teacher behaves in the classroom varied according to ethnicity. According to Fraser and Walberg's (2005), the teachers communicate in a different way with student of unlike ethnicity, which could explain to some degree why the non-western students believed that their teacher was more dominant and less cooperative than their western counterparts (Brok & Levy, 2005),

In many schools there is a vision and goal to be looked upon as a multicultural school, but for many schools it is difficult to follow up because there are few schools that have forums where the teachers can discuss issues regarding the minority students (Daae-Qvale, 2009). This may lead to the teachers using different pedagogical theories at once, and thereby causing more confusion (Daae-Qvale, 2009). As Norway has become a multicultural society, the schools have had many different challenges. It is important that the teachers challenge the stereotypes and prejudice that exists, because lacking this can lead students to hide their culture, instead of using it as a resource (Qureshi, 2009). However, it is also vital that teachers do not focus too much on cultural differences, but instead focus on communication with the students (Qureshi, 2009). According to teachers working with minority students, there is still a tendency towards inadvertently giving the students a negative focus concerning their culture (Daae-Qvale, 2009). Research also indicates that students are treated differently by their teachers according to ethnic background (Brok & Levy, 2005).

Even though the teacher's role is very important for emotional support and academic goals (Fredriksen & Rhodes, 2004), the role of the parents or guardians are also very important (Nordahl, 2010). Vedder, Boekaerts and Seegers (2005) found that immigrant students felt less supported by their parents than their Dutch peers. This could happen because the parents of immigrant youth may have difficulty understanding the local language, and because their academic background may differ from the European classroom. As UMs does

not have their parents in the country, other family members or guardians can acquire that role. Students that have support from both their teachers and parents, show high self-esteem in school subjects, while those that do not have support from teachers and parents are not doing well at school (Harter, 1996).

However, for students that only have support from the teacher, it may compensate for what the parents are not supplying (Harter, 1996). For many immigrants, it is difficult to understand some subjects in school, not only because of language, but because school in western countries are structured around norms and values stemming from a white middle class (Davis & Dupper, 2004). According to Palaiologou's (2007) research, the ethnicity of Greek students influenced their learning and psychosocial adjustment, and that the immigrants were generally having more trouble. This could be the reason why teachers can be more important for immigrant students than for their peers (Fraser & Walberg, 2005). If the teachers manage to establish contact with their students it is a good way to start establishing a good connection between the students because that can create a good atmosphere, which also makes it easier for the teacher to teach.

2.2.5 Relationships between students

In the classroom, the relationship between the teacher and student is also influenced by the relationship between the students. Social connection with peers is very important for children, as it can give them a sense of belonging, safety and understanding of the social environment, while it could lead to loneliness and isolation for those who do not have it (Nordahl, 2010). Support from friends and peers can be of support in achievements for the UMs (Hek, 2005). Research has shown that students who have close relationships with their fellow students achieve better results in class (Ladd, as cited in Birch & Ladd, 1996).

A peer-to-peer relationship is very important, because activities in school have an impact on the social scene (Sanchez-Martí & Ramírez-Iñiguez, 2012). A good relationship among students of different ethnicity creates a more inclusive atmosphere in the school, and will help students think and consider their attitudes, emotions, individual welfare, self-esteem, prejudices and acceptance of others (Fredriksen & Rhodes, 2004; Sanchez-Martí & Ramírez-Iñiguez, 2012). There is higher likelihood of increased relationships and connections to the society when there is equality, cooperation and common goals among students, providing that the society supports the relationship with law and customs (Dovidio, Gaertner & Kawakami, 2003).

3.0 Methodology

This study focuses on UMs' impression on the Norwegian school, their relationship with their teachers, and how the school influences their integration in Norway. Since I wanted to focus on the experiences of the UM, I decided to use qualitative research method, because it allows me to explore the opinions of the interviewees. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), qualitative research consists of twelve aspects; Life world, meaning, qualitative, descriptive, specificity, deliberate naiveté, focus, ambiguity, change, sensitivity, interpersonal situation, and positive experience. Qualitative research consists of many different methods of data collection, and in this study I decided to use semi-structured interviews, so the stories of the interviewees would be brought forward. This section will focus on the preparations and choices I did when I was doing the interviews. I will also go through how I conducted the analysis, and ethical issues of interviewing UMs.

3.1 Preparations

When I started working on this study, I contacted the local office of IMDi in Trondheim. I met with the person working on issues regarding UM, and we had a talk about possible topics, in which I decided to work on the school system. On a later occasion, I was also invited to a conference that IMDi organised for municipalities in their region that had UM in their care. This was very insightful to some of the trouble that the municipalities have, and topics that they were interested in.

Initially I contacted different places in Trondheim, and made contact with Enhet for Voksenopplæring (EVO [Unit for adult education]), and Internasjonalt Senter [International Center]. International Center is a café in the city of Trondheim where many immigrants meet. I spoke to the owner there, who said he would talk to people, and I put up information about the study and my contact information on their board. After my initial talk, I visited the International Center every week to talk to the owner, and to become a familiar face so people would know who I was. After my fourth visit, there were still no interviewees, and during my talk with the owner he informed me that most of the people coming to International Center had received a negative reply on their asylum application. They were therefore not eligible participants for this study. When it comes to recruiting participants I put too much emphasis on International Center, and I should have contacted more places earlier in the process. The

reason I focused on International Center was that I wanted some participants that did not attend school, and this could have been a place where I could contact them.

I did get contact with EVO in Trondheim, and they put me in connection with one of their sectors. To preserve the anonymity of the participants I will not mention which one. I was contacted by a social worker who worked with the UM, who invited me for a visit to the school. At the meeting we talked about the study, and how I would approach the students. We also met the leader of the sector. After getting approval from the principal of EVO, the leader invited me for a meeting to talk about how we should organise it. We informed and talked to the teachers during lunch, as they were informing the students.

The leader wanted the study to be voluntary, and not be perceived that the students were forced to participate, so the teachers were given the responsibility to inform the students about the study. It was arranged that I would be at the school when the day was finished, and those students who were interested could talk to me. Together with the leader of EVO, I was sitting outside the classrooms when school was finished. It was a good help to have somebody familiar there, so s/he could talk to some of the students about participating. There were five students who showed interest, and I gave them the information paper and talked about the study. Some of the students wanted to think about it, while one agreed to participate.

The school had been helpful in establishing contact with students, and allowing me to have the interview in one of the classrooms after school-hours, but the process had taken very long. It took two months between the first meetings to when I talked to the students, both because there was a public holiday, but also the bureaucracy in the school. It was also very difficult for me to know what the teachers said about the study, since I was not allowed to talk to the students in the classroom. Even though the leader said s/he was surprised of how many had talked to me, I had hoped to recruit more students.

In the beginning I had also contacted Norwegian high schools in Trondheim that had programs for immigrant students. I only got answer from one teacher. I sent information about the study, and the teacher said s/he would talk to the students who matched my criteria. Unfortunately, I was also not allowed to come to the school to talk to the students myself. Even though I sent several e-mail and tried calling, I did not hear anything more from him/her, and after some time I assumed that the students were not interested. Therefore I was very surprised when a student contacted me by e-mail.

Since the search for participants had not gone well in the first round, and lot of time had gone by, I decided that instead of going through the bureaucracy of contacting people and institutions in Trondheim I would contact people in Stavanger. In Stavanger I have several contacts that work with immigrants in many different areas, and therefore it would be easier to get in touch with UM to talk about the study. Since the study is not location specific, it was no problem to recruit in a different city. I also contacted many immigrant organisations, but there was no response. Some months earlier I had read an article in the local newspaper in Stavanger about an UM, so I contacted the journalist who put me in contact with the UM. After recruiting enough participants I started conducting interviews.

3.2 Interviews

This study consists of six interviews with people who arrived as UM, but now are over 18 years old. I chose to have participants over 18 years because the participants will have lived some time in Norway, their life will be more established, and they may be more comfortable talking about their past. This also meant that I did not have to talk to the UM's legal guardian to get permission for interviews, which could have taken long time. There was no specific requirements when it came to gender, but since most of the UM that arrive in Norway are men (Aalandslid & Enes, 2012), I was aiming for five male participants. In the end I interviewed two women and four male interviewees. The country of origin has no specific value in this research, since it will not focus on one specific country, and the study is too small to compare different ethnicities.

When I was looking for participants for the study I did not set an upper age limit, but I required that it should not be more than five years since they ended or left the Norwegian education system. I set the limit to five years, because the participants would not have forgotten certain aspects of their life in school. Their age ranges from 18 to 28 years, and their length of stay in Norway are from 1, 5 years to 11 years. Like most UM all my interviewees arrived when they were 15 years or older. The interviewees had attended school in Norway, and their length varied between six months and five years. They were also in different stages in their education, where some were in the end, one was on maternity leave, some had finished and some had quit their education. When I decided to work on this topic, I wanted to focus on the UM and their experience of the school system in Norway. I therefore chose not to interview teachers, or other people that could be relevant. It was important for me that there were some variations between the interviewees. In this way I was hoping that the information

would be more general, and give a clearer picture than only interviewing current students. However, it proved to be more difficult to find informants that had finished school, than those who currently attend school.

Before I started the interview I conducted a test-interview with the owner of the International Centre in Trondheim. He arrived in Norway as an UM, and I therefore had a test-interview with him to see if the questions were suitable, and that the order of questions felt natural. This also allowed me to modify the questions and change some of the more difficult words. The interview guide focused on different aspects of the UM's experience in school, both before and after arrival. Most of the questions were open so that it was up to the interviewees to talk about the most important aspect on that area. The interview guide was composed of questions I found from other research papers, and questions I made when I was reading through the theory and other information about the lives of UM. If the interviewees had trouble answering I tried with more direct questions. In some situations I also provided interviewees with examples to enable brainstorming.

Even though I had a test-interview some of the questions were difficult for the participants, most likely because some of the participants had poorer Norwegian than my test-interviewee who had been in Norway for several years. In the beginning of the study I was hoping that I would have funding so I could have an interpreter with me at some of the interviews. Because of the limited financing from the institute, I could not have an interpreter. This resulted that all the participants had to have enough understanding and knowledge of Norwegian to have a long conversation and be able to express their thoughts. Therefore the participants had to be qualified students, which could mean that this study does not have students that struggle with language and subjects. It is clear that despite my efforts to make the study easy, language difference created some distortion.

According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), the first few minutes of the interview is the most decisive. This is when the contact between the interviewer and interviewee is established. Before starting the interview the interviewees will want to know about the interviewer, and their intentions, before starting to talk about the subject freely (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). It is also important that the setting of the interview is encouraging the interviewees to speak openly (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In this study the interviews were conducted in different settings, and the interviewees chose locations they thought were convenient. I found it hard to find neutral places for some of the interviews where no one

would be able to hear us. Since some of the questions could reveal sensitive information, it would be best to have the interview in a private area. Most of the interviews were conducted at a school that were familiar to all interviewees. One of the interviews was conducted in the participant's house, because the participant had a child. The last interview was conducted on a Sunday, and we therefore used an office area that the interviewer had access to.

I conducted five of the interviews in Norwegian and one interview in English. One of the participants asked that we do the interview in English because s/he was more fluent in English than Norwegian. Each interview lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. All of the interviews were recorded, and later transcribed by me. In total there were 49 pages of transcripts from the interviews. After I had transcribed, I corrected some words so that it would be easier to read, this was mainly problems with using correct Norwegian grammar. I also took away sounds like "Ehm" and "Mmm", to make the transcript concentrated. I later translated the quotes I decided to use in this paper into English, with exception of the one interview that was done in English. During the interviews I also took notes on central topics that we talked about. After the interview, I took some time to write down thoughts about what was said during the interview and how the interview went, both looking at the interviewee and myself. I also went over the questions if they needed rephrasing. In the paper I will not give the date of the interview because I do not want people that we met, or talked to about the interview, to recognise the date. I also did not conduct several interviews with any of the participants. In the text I use square brackets [] when I add information that will make it easier for the reader to understand what the quote is about, or removing information that can reveal the identity of the interviewee. I use (...) when I have removed text from the quote to make it shorter, but still containing the meaning of the quote.

It is hard to know what the interviewees think about the situation, and if they understand what the interview will be used for. Before we started I read through the information paper where I explained the use of the study, but in retrospect I should have gone into more detail what the study will be used for, and what a master thesis is. Some of the interviewees may never have been to an interview, except their interview to apply for asylum. I therefore tried to make the situation as comfortable as possible underlining that this interview will only be accessed by me and my supervisor. This was especially important for those who were recruited through common acquaintances. In some of the interviews I observed that some of the topics were difficult to talk about, and I therefore did not probe if

the topic was not very important. For most of the interviewees it did not seem that the questions were hard to answer because they did not intrude very much on their personal life.

Even though the questions did not intrude on their personal life, some questions were hard to answer because of limited knowledge of Norwegian. To solve this problem I could have sent the questions on beforehand, but that could have led the interviewees to having all the answers ready, which would disturb the interaction in the interview. On the other hand I could have told them to think about the specific topics, but not give them the questions. In the information paper I sent before the interview, the topic of the study was written, which means that those who read it knew what the questions would be about. This indicates that it was the way the questions were formulated that the interviewees found hard to understand. It is also difficult to know if the interviewees were giving me the answers they thought I wanted, or if they were telling me the truth. In most of the interviews the response was mostly positive, making it seem like there were no trouble with the Norwegian school. That is also one reason why I started using examples, so the informants understood I was looking for both positive and negative aspects.

During one interview I experienced that there were some electronic disruption in the room, which led to disturbance on the tape so there was only static noise. I noticed it when we finished the interview. In which I sat down directly after the interview and wrote down everything I could remember, going through every question. I managed to recover most of the interview, but as a result I have no direct quotations from one interview. After this incident I started testing the tape recorder to make sure that it did not happen again. When I started working on this thesis there were some ethical issues that need to be thought carefully through before starting, especially since I am focusing on a group like UM.

3.3 Ethical Issues

3.3.1 Interviewing unaccompanied minors

UMs are seen as a very vulnerable group, as they are alone in a new country, and trying to adapt to a new situation while also struggling with their past. When I decided to write about this topic, I thought about the ethical issues on interviewing UMs. In most of the interviews there were few problems when it came to answering questions. One of the interviewees was very reluctant to answer questions about the past, and as the information was not crucial to the study I decided not to pursue the topic. Before I started the interview I

assumed that the interviewees would be reluctant to answer questions about their past, but to my surprise there was very few incidents when that happened. It might be because I am a stranger that they will not meet again, and they therefore feel that telling me will not harm them in any way. At the end of the interview I also asked each interviewee how they were feeling after. Over the past years there has been more studies focusing on UM (Eide, 2000; Oppedal et al., 2008; Oppedal et al., 2009; Oppedal et al., 2011; Valenta & Berg, 2012; Øien, 2010), which has led to a bigger demand for interviews. Since most of the studies have been located in Oslo, there has not been the same demand in Trondheim and Stavanger, which means that my interviewees most likely have not been participants in a study before.

3.3.2 Permission and consent

Before starting to recruit participants I had the study approved by Norsk Samfunnsvitenskapelig Datatjeneste (NSD [Norwegian Data Inspectorate]), which insures the participants rights and gave guidelines for the gathering of information for this study. Prior to the interview I gave information on the study to each participant, either by e-mail or in paper. The information paper contained the theme and purpose of the study, and information about how the interview would be conducted, and that it would be anonymous. To make sure that each participant understood the information, I went through the information before we started the interview. I also made sure that each participant understood that if they wanted to withdraw from the study, they could do so at any time without having to give a reason, and as a result the interview would be deleted. After having agreed on the consent, each participant signed a paper that they were given the information. Since some of the participants were recruited through common acquaintances, I was very careful to be sure that they did not feel obligated to participate.

3.3.3 Anonymity

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) highlights that there can be consequences for the participants if they are identified, and since some of the topics are sensitive, it is important that this study does not give out information that will identify the participants. Since the number of UM in Norway is not very big, it was vital that this study kept the confidentiality of the participants. Therefore there is certain information about each participants that will not be disclosed, as country of origin, age and name of places or asylum camps they have lived in. I have used pseudonyms instead of real names of the participants to ensure confidentiality. Their names are now Fariad, Aziza, Lian, Desta, Jamaal, and Rashid.

3.4 Analysis

Since the study focuses on what the interviewees say during the interview phenomenology would be a good way of analysing. Phenomenology focuses on the interviewees perspectives, and how they describe the experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). However, since the interviewees in this study are immigrants who do not have Norwegian as their mother tongue, this study has not used phenomenology as the use of language and how they use their language would not give information on the subject. The analysis was conducted by dividing the topics into themes that arouse during the interview, and further analysis on what was said about each topic by the interviewees. Even though this study is too small to generalise for all UM, it gives an idea of what role the school has in their life. I chose not to be very specific about upper age limit, gender, ethnicity, and current living area because I wanted to look at UM in general.

3.5 Validity and reliability

The reliability in a study looks at whether the study can be reproduced at another time and by other researchers (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In qualitative research it is difficult to replicate a study because the researcher plays a vital role in what information one gets from the interview. In this study the interviewees have different relationships with their teachers making each story unique. The UM also have different backgrounds both before and after they arrived in Norway, which also will shape their interpretation and experiences. My position as a researcher and the way I act in the interview will also influence the answers, and what the interviewees say. Some of the participants have connections with people I know, and this could compromise and make them hide information. Even though I reassured them that no one except my supervisor would hear the interviews, I can never know if the interviewees believed it. If another interviewer that had different relationships with the participants conducted the interviews, they might get different answers to some questions.

When one looks at the validity of a study, one look at whether the study seeks out the information it claims to investigate (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Although this study is too small to generalise the experience of all UM, the participants have different experiences, and are at different stages of their education which gives the study different perspectives. The participants were recruited in different ways which mean that these participants may not be representative of all UM.

3.6 My role as a researcher

When conducting the interviews it is important to remember that it is not only the interviewees that influence the interview, but also the researcher who plays an important role (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). When conducting the interviews it is important to remember that the researcher's behaviour and how you act could affect the results one gets from the interviews. When I was transcribing the interview I found that there were some mistakes I made, which I think happened because I was nervous. I reviewed myself after each interview, and I felt I became more comfortable in the situation. I interviewed people of different age, although most of the informants were some years younger than me, and some were around my age. This could prove to be both an advantage and a disadvantage, because the informants could have trouble taking me seriously, but on the other hand the younger informants might find it easy to talk because I am close to them in age. I tried to act professional around the informants, but also create a good atmosphere, so they would relax.

Since I was unfamiliar to all informants, I did not have very long time before the interview to establish trust between us. Since the informants were recruited either from school personnel or acquaintances, there was some trust that was transferred from that person. Some of the informants might have been nervous because they were unfamiliar with the situation, and if I noticed signs of discomfort I tried to reassure them about their worries. It was also hard to keep a professional appearance during some of the interviews, because some of the informants have experienced many unbelievable things. In the cases where this happened I showed empathy, and like I mentioned earlier, I decided not to continue asking questions on the topic if the interviewee was not comfortable to talk about it.

4.0 Presentation of data and analysis

When an UM arrive in the municipality, s/he needs to learn about culture, values, norms and language of their new country. Most children mention adults in their list of significant others, and their parents as one of the most important (Blyth, Hill & Thiel, 1982). When those persons are not present, other adults could take over some of the responsibilities. According to Blyth et al. (1982), additional people that have an influence on the children's life, were seen in school context. In a school, the adult that the students will have most contact with, is their teacher.

(1) The teachers are also important. It is important that we get a good education from the teachers and learn to be good to ourselves. It is important. (Rashid, pg. 7)

Like Rashid explains in this quote (no. 1), the teacher is very important as their primary contact in the school. For the UMs, it is important to establish a new life and rhythm that is based on their new expectations to a life in Norway. When the child starts a new life in Norway, they have to re-socialise and the microsystems around the child will contribute to that. As an important contact in the Norwegian society, the teacher can help the child in the beginning of their new social life. However, it is also important to remember what happened before they came to Norway, because the experiences the interviewees have from the school in their home countries will affect how they view the school in Norway. Hence, reviewing UMs' school experience from home country and in Norway is important. Their relationship with the teacher, fellow students and other adults will also influence their school experience.

4.1 School experience in their home country

All the informants had some experience with school in their home country. Some of the interviewees had very limited schooling, one because s/he had to start working; the other because s/he was forced to quit because of disciplinary problems. Three of the interviewees had more extensive education than the rest, where two of them finished or almost finished their primary education before they had to flee. One of the interviewees did not attend ordinary school because his/her father did not like that the school used another language than their mother tongue. Since his/her father was jobless, even though he was educated, he could teach his children in their home. Jamaal described his school-life as characterised by uncertainty (quote no. 2):

(2) *It was difficult to go to school, because we could not concentrate and learn there. But, because every year it happens, war or conflict between two groups. So it may be that we do not go to school one day, one week we have to stop going to school. Sometimes it may that we do not go to school for one month, only sitting at home doing assignments, like that. So, it is like walk, stand, walk, stand.* (Jamaal, pg. 1)

Even though Jamaal had many problems in school and did not have the possibility to attend it for a long time, he was still determined to work on his homework. The interviewees believed that their experience in school was to some degree positive and they learned many subjects. Nevertheless, they lacked freedom and school was characterised by big classes. The interviewees also said that the teachers were very strict and some of them used violence when the students had dirty clothes, misbehaved or could not answer questions. Jamaal explained his teacher's behaviour like this (quote no. 3):

(3) (...) *They were strict. You get kicked if you do not do well; they beat you or bite, like. You get kicked if you do anything wrong. The teachers are strict.* (Jamaal, pg. 1)

It may seem that the teachers were not so strict towards the women, although that may be a coincidence of different teaching styles in countries, or it may be that teachers are more violent towards males.

Having some experience from school provides the children with some basic knowledge, and understanding of what is expected in a classroom. However, it might influence the way they experience the school system in Norway, especially the behaviour in class, both by the teacher and students. When the interviewees have experienced violence from their teachers on many occasions, it can be strange for them to enter a Norwegian school system where there is no violence from teachers. Nevertheless, it is not only the violent behaviour of the teacher that has been influenced. Within the macrosystem of their home country, the role as a teacher can have a very different status than it has in Norway. Therefore the students may have different expectations and demands for the teacher than what they experience in Norway. Even though some of the interviewees had not attended school for a long time before arriving in Norway, it did not seem to alter their opinion on the importance of education. When the interviewees started school, there were some new experiences in which they learned how the school is organised in Norway.

4.2 School in Norway

When the UM start school in Norway, there are a lot of adjustments and new routines. Most of the interviewees did not express that they had any expectations before starting their

education, although one claimed that s/he thought it would be very hard because of language difficulties. All interviewees were certain that attending school was very important.

4.2.1 The importance of education

(4) First, when I was living with my family, my mom and dad were saying: 'It is always good that you get a good education'. The education is the key of the life. I think that it is good to learn some things, because if you don't know anything you can find no job and you can't help your children. (Aziza, pg. 5)

Aziza (quote no. 4) describes how important education was for her. All the interviewees believed that education was vital to success in life, both in order to get a good job and income. It also makes life better, and for some, one might think that it makes the flight from home worth it. In most cultures, school is very important and this example also makes it clear what impact the parents' beliefs and the macrosystem has on the UM. It is very important to have education in Norway to be ensured to have a good job. Therefore the amount of people starting at university is very high, as 22% have a university degree that last up to four years, while close to 8% have finished a degree that precedes more than four years in Norway (SSB, 2013b). However, there are big differences within the population, as numbers show that many female immigrants do not finish high school, in comparison to the fact that the majority of men finishing a doctorate are immigrants (SSB, 2012). It is clear that the country of origin accounts for a big deal of the differences, where Afghanistan, Somalia, and Morocco have the lowest education level (SSB, 2012). When the interviewees started school in Norway there were many new things that they experienced.

4.2.2 Experience of starting school in Norway

(5) At Norwegian course? Everything was new to me there, and it was difficult to understand the words, what it means and what people say. What do people say? And then eventually I got better and better. (Rashid, pg. 3)

This quote (no. 5) describes how most of the interviewees felt when they started school. When the interviewees started classes after settlement, they began with learning Norwegian language, culture and norms, as well as subjects that are required for entry to high school. The type of school the UM attends, depends on the age of the refugee, as well as on the economy and school system of the municipality. Since this study recruited interviewees in big cities, the municipalities had several models that the immigrants could attend. Most of the interviewees in this study attended a school for immigrants that prepared them to start high

school, while two of the informants attended Norwegian high schools with different teaching models. Some immigrants face problems when they start school.

(6) *Then I started studying like that in middle school, in 10th grade, it was like very sudden, it comes all up, understanding almost nothing. First of all, it was very hard and first of all, I did not understand my own language. Secondly, I could not read or write, and then, I kind of had, in a way, I had no hope that I one day could start to read and write, I had lost my hope from before.* (Fariad, pg. 1)

Fariad explains in this quote (no. 6) how it was being analphabetic when he arrived in Norway. With help from the teachers and working many hours at school and at home, he managed to learn both Norwegian and his own mother tongue. Every year one estimates there are over 1000 immigrants that start school in Norway who have trouble reading or writing, and many more have never attended school. This is especially immigrants from Asia and Africa (NOU [Norwegian Public Exposition] 2011: 14). This can be very challenging for the school if they do not have the experience and resources. Many of the interviewees also spoke about the differences between the classroom in their home country and in Norway.

4.2.3 Experiences in the classroom and at school

Most of the UMs had attended some form of education before they arrived in Norway. This means that they had some knowledge of what happens in a classroom, although there are some differences between countries, especially when it comes to pedagogy. Most of the teaching in Norway is done on the black board, or working either alone or in groups on a subject, like Aziza explains in this quote (no. 7).

(7) *We learn on the board, sometimes she even take little tests, and sometimes we work in little groups. She take out one little picture and we have to tell what we see and you have to talk Norwegian.* (Aziza, pg. 5)

However, some teachers would occasionally take the students outside the school area, such as to the theatre. Like Lian explains in this quote (no. 8), most of the interviewees appreciated having a more varied teaching approach.

(8) *Not just sit inside the classroom and talk, or give an assignment, and just say this is there. They must go out, take with them the students and show them. Or go for a walk. There are some teachers that just sit in class and say that this is only it.* (Lian, pg. 5)

According to Davis (2003) and Klem and Connell (2004), it is important that the teacher has a mixture of structure and autonomy for the students so they learn to manage their own learning, increase their self-esteem and have a better understanding of the subject.

According to the interviewees, they liked it when the teachers were active and created discussions among the students, and did not only sit in the front of the classroom reading from a book. The UMs that Hek (2005) interviewed also emphasised that they felt like they belonged in the class when they could contribute with their experiences. If the students are to add knowledge to class it is important that they feel connected with the teacher and fellow students. If this is absent, the UM could experience more problems in class, and have less problems with leaving the school.

The change to a new school system can be an ecological transition. For some UMs it can be both positive and negative as their knowledge will increase, but it also makes them more vulnerable in the classroom. Most of the interviewees had some bad experiences from their home country, especially in turns of asking questions during class. For some of the interviewees it was very important that when you raised your hand you were given help to understand instead of overlooked. Interviews showed that the students adjusted to the new teaching style and learned what is allowed in the classroom, like Aziza say in this quote (no. 9)

(9) I like it, it was. They teach you; first of all, you must not have scared for them if you don't know anything. And you could say: 'Teacher? I don't understand', or something like that. They help you to understand you. (Aziza, pg. 3)

Most of the interviewees thought that the school system in Norway was good, despite some aspects that they missed. One of the interviewees was especially happy about having the opportunity to have more practical subjects than only theoretical ones. S/he also thought that the teachers could be stricter in Norway, and that there could be less freedom, for example fewer holidays. Even though it did not appear to be a common problem, one of the interviewees mentioned that the students in the class must understand that there are many different cultures among the students, which could suggest that there has been problems in his/her class. When the immigrants are going through an ecological transition, it may be that the teacher and other students do not see that the macrosystem that the UM have from before arriving in Norway is so diverse. If the fellow students are not open and tolerant from the beginning, difficult situations can arise for the teacher. Especially in schools for immigrants, where there are people from all over the world, there will be incidences where there is miscommunication, which could also happen with an immigrant in a class with only ethnic Norwegians. If the environment in the classroom becomes negative and full of conflicts, it will also be difficult for the teacher to establish a relationship with the students, as well as to

teach them. However, it is not only the students and the teacher that needs to be open-minded, but also the UMs.

It would be better for the teachers if the schools would organise forums where the teachers can discuss the difficulties they may have with the immigrant students (Daae-Qvale, 2009). One of the interviewees attended a small school where s/he knew that the teachers exchanged information about the students, in order to know what was happening in other classes. This will make it easier for the teachers to cooperate, concerning the way that they teach, and they will also be able to draw knowledge from the experiences of other teachers. This was not reported by other interviewees, but that does not necessarily mean that the teachers do not talk with each other in the different schools.

One of the interviewees believed that it was very important that the school created a good atmosphere among the students. The school that the interviewee attended would organise shared gatherings at every semester where the different classes would gather in the cafeteria and eat food and relax together. The school would also participate on the Norwegian National Day, May 17th, and would encourage all the students to participate in the parade. This is a good example on how Bronfenbrenner's (1979) mesosystem influences how the student views the school, and how the mesosystem can influence the microsystem around the student. These types of activities can influence how the students feel about the environment in their school. When there are problems in one microsystem, other microsystems can influence the other in a positive way. It is important to like the school one attends, which could influence the students' success in their subject. It is not always possible for the teachers and the school to help with all the schoolwork, so many immigrants receive help from organisations outside the school to finish their homework.

4.2.4 Help with homework and subjects outside school

Two of the interviewees spoke about having trouble with their home assignments. One of the interviewees attended an event called "leksehjelp" or "help with home assignments", which is common in many cities in Norway. It is organised either by the municipality or volunteer organisations, most often to immigrants, but also to other students who need help. Many of the UMs, and other immigrants, get help from these events. For UMs who live alone it may be important, because they do not have anyone to help them with their home assignments. It can be very difficult for many UMs to adjust to the Norwegian school system and the importance of taking responsibility for one's own learning. When these students are

working on projects and assignments, it can be difficult for them, because of limited knowledge of the language. At these events, the students can be given help with different types of homework, either to write, to learn how to find literature, or be given more detailed explanations of a subject. Rashid explained it like this (quote no. 10):

(10) On Wednesdays we have this help with home assignments in the library (...) There are some teachers there. We do our assignments and they help us. (...) It is good, it is important. A lot is happening and it is better than sitting at home. (Rashid, pg. 9)

Even though few participants talked about this event, it may be that they had attended it previously. It may also be that the UMs that lived in a housing facility did not attend these events because they had help at home. Many of the students also get help from the teacher, especially if they have a good relationship and when the student feels comfortable to talk to the teacher about their problems.

4.3 Relationship with the teacher

In the school the child meets important role-models who teach him/her about roles, attitudes and expectations in their new society (Bø, 1995). This day-to-day interaction is called primary social control, and can regulate the behaviour and value system of the child (Bø, 1995). For UMs who do not have their parents as role models, it is necessary to develop relations with other non-parental adults who can help them develop social and emotional regulation skills (Davis, 2003). UMs in Norway report that 62% have a professional care-person as a confidant, while 26% have a family member to talk to (Oppedal & Idsoe, as cited in Oppedal et al., 2011). Even though an UM might need people around them to establish a connection with, they need to be open and want it, as the other person also must be willing to start a relationship, which means more than being an acquaintance. If neither or only one of the persons wants a connection it will most likely not happen.

Some UMs develop a close relationship with their teachers. A relationship, or dyad as Bronfenbrenner (1979) called it, can be characterised by paying attention and participating in each other's activities. Through different types of relationships, the child will learn how the social world works, and the different sides to it. For an immigrant, and especially an UM, the relationship with the teacher can be more significant than to ethnic Norwegians, because they have less resources and fewer connections than the students that grew up in the country (Crosnoe et al., 2004). Children who do not have these relations may experience unpredictable environment, and they will have greater focus on interpersonal needs (Davis,

2003). Although children have different backgrounds, how the teacher follows up each student, and how they create a good environment in the class, will help children in overcoming challenges that they may have had when they first arrived in class (Hernes, 2010).

According to Hernes (2010), in Oslo the school accounts for 70% of the differences in grades, while family background only counts for 30%, which is an indicator that it could be the same in other big cities. This shows that the teachers can have a very important role for the students. However, it is also important to take into consideration that the relationship that the teacher establishes with the student is limited, because they rarely create a connection to other microsystems. When the student leaves school, the relationship ends. Therefore it is very important that the UM creates connections with other adults and fellow students, as they are more likely of helping the UM establishing other microsystems. Fariad explained that the teacher is very important, and if s/he have a good relationship with the students, it can help him/her in understanding the actions of the students (quote no. 11):

(11) If I have that, if you have a good teacher and they make contact with you, the ones that see you, your life. If they understand you, how you behave, know you a little bit more, then that teacher, the teacher can help you more than those who do not know you. That is very good. (Fariad, pg. 12)

4.3.1 First impression of the teacher

For an UM the school can be an ambiguous place to be, especially in the beginning. If the teacher makes a good impression on the first day, it can help ease the transition for the student. This is what Lian experienced (quote no. 12).

(12) (...) but when I enter the class the first day, they were so nice. So, I thought, I must go to school now. (Lian, pg. 5)

When he came to class the first day he experienced a very good attitude from the teachers, which helped him to adjust, and encouraged him to attend school. Many UMs have their first school experience in Norway when they are still in the asylum camp, and waiting for their reply on the application. Since it is a turbulent and difficult time for an UM, school can be a safe and stable place. A first impression of the teacher and school might influence how they look at the Norwegian school system. However, it is not only at the first school that the interviewees have an important first impression, but also when they get their residence permit and start at a new school in their new municipality. After the first impression, the teacher has to establish and build a relationship with the student.

4.3.2 How the teacher can establish a relationship with the student

It is important that there is a good relationship between the teacher and the students to be able to create a good atmosphere in the classroom and to teach the students. All teachers have a relationship with their students, even though it is only an exchange of few words in the classroom. For UMs that come from a different culture it is important that they understand what the relationship means, and what expectations the teacher has from the student, because it can be different from previous experiences (Eide & Vike, 2009). However, it is difficult to find out exactly why some teachers connect with students more easily than others.

(13) If you look in a way, how they talk, how they are. Some people they say ‘ Hey, how are you doing?’ or something like that. You see if, in one way or another, you feel some kind of, that you talk to people, if they are interested or something like that. You immediately understand how that person is, all teachers are different. (Fariad, pg. 6)

This quote (no. 13) represents many of the descriptions from the interviewees of teacher’s behaviour that made it easier to connect with them and to feel if they are interested. This is consistent with the knowledge that many people use a person’s facial expression, gaze, posture and other body movements to understand a person’s emotions and attitude (Fredriksen & Rhodes, 2004; Teven & McCroskey, 1997). One of the interviewees explained that s/he knew that the teachers cared because if s/he was sick one day, they would ask him/her next time if s/he was feeling better. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), emotions are vital in a relationship, although they can also be negative, ambivalent or positive. The emotions will help contribute to the importance of the relationship for the individuals. This may also be one of the reasons why the interviewees did not connect with some teachers. It is apparent that the interviewees appreciated that the teacher takes contact outside the classroom, which shows that they care. If the teacher gives some of their extra time to the UM, it will increase the possibility of gaining trust from the student.

The way that the teacher behaves in the classroom was also very important. The interviewees also indicated that it was central that teachers are interactive with the students, and that they create discussions in the class. The teacher has to be active and engaging with the students. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), one of the parameters to describe the connection between individuals is reciprocity. Between a teacher and student, it could be the student acting positive towards the teacher when s/he is friendly towards them. However, it could also be the interaction between them where the teacher experience that the student is learning and the tasks become more complex. The teacher has an advantage in the relationship

with having more knowledge, maturity and competency in the school subjects, which will influence the balance of power in the relationship (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). According to Bø (1995), this inequality will become equal if one party learns from the relationship and socialisation.

Many of the interviewees said that they thought it was important that the teacher was strict, but fair towards all students. This will be very different from what most of the interviewees experienced in their home countries, where the teacher would hit them if they were wearing the wrong clothes. Fariad explained in this quote (no. 14) what he thought was the difference between some teachers:

(14) All the teachers are really very good, but he is in a way, everybody pays attention. If one of the other teachers, if they say anything, say 'Hello' or something like that, speak very low or something. They maybe sit, they maybe do other things. You have to be good at being strict at the same time as you have to be good in a way. You that, say, do a little bit fun or something, and then everybody pays attention. (Fariad, pg. 7)

It may not be possible for teachers to pay attention to every student, but it is important for all humans to be acknowledged, respected and heard, and each teacher must make their own choices when it comes to how to communicate best with their students (Nordahl, 2010). The teacher should develop techniques concerning how to create good connections with all the students, so that the students feel a connection to the teacher (Teven & McCroskey, 1997). Since the classes are big, it might be useful if the teacher develops some techniques that ensure the students that they are paying attention, even though the teacher is focusing on other students for some time.

Nordahl (2010) has observed that there are big differences in how the students behave with different teachers. This can be due to differences in communication between the teacher and student, which would influence how the relationship develops. For the students, the feedback that they get from the teacher is very important for their progress in the subject. When the students learn new things that they may have been struggling with, it is important that the teacher acknowledges that. This confirms what Bø (1995) meant with the importance of giving children acknowledgement and valuing them in their work, for example through feedback to the students.

(15) If I had learned something, if I had learned a word or something, the teachers gave me lots of positive feedback. And then I got more, more energy and then I had to work. So really from I was, I did not like school and suddenly I came like, I started liking school and then I became more interested. (Fariad, pg. 1)

As Fariad says in this quote (no. 15) it is very important that the teacher gives constructive but also positive feedback, so that they can use it to improve their skills. This is according to what Frymier and Houser (2000) and Palaiologou (2007) also claims; when the teacher supports the students and make them feel good about their work, it will increase the likelihood of a relationship between the student and teacher. For Fariad it was good that the feedbacks was directed in a positive way, not negative, because those gave him energy and hope to continue working. It may not be very important, because none of the other interviewees mentioned the importance of feedback for their progress. However, the teachers could either give their feedback in a less obvious way or the interviewees do not believe the feedback to be of any importance to them. All students get feedback so they can progress in the subject, but what gives them energy to continue the work is different for each individual.

Many of the UMs had a strong relationship with the teachers at their first school, and found it difficult to connect with teachers at schools they attended later. The reason they had a strong relationship, may have been that this was a very distressing time for the UM, and their teachers were dedicated and talking to them every day. The school was also most likely small, and they had the same teachers every day, which created a safe and continuous environment for the students. This could have created a very strong relationship, which is why some of the interviewees talked to and travelled to visit their old teachers, even many years after they left the school. Even though it is not easy for the teachers to establish a relationship with all the students, having time to talk both in the classroom and after/before class, helps.

4.3.3 Time to talk with the teacher

Some of the interviewees indicated that some subjects were very hard, and sometimes they did not understand everything. According to Valenta and Berg (2012), many UMs feel that the schoolwork was unfamiliar and demanding, and that they had a lot of frustration because the process was very hard. One of the interviewees often talked to teachers, especially when there were words that s/he did not understand. If the teacher has time during class they would explain the meaning. If there was no time, the teacher would explain the words after class if they had an opportunity. It is therefore good if the school can arrange the school day so that teachers have time to talk to students outside the classroom. It is also important that there is communication between the different teachers about subjects, and that the teachers do not have too much work so they have energy to talk to the students outside of class (Fredriksen & Rhodes, 2004).

(16) Our teachers, when we even meet outside they show you respect and they greet you. Sometimes when there is break time, the teacher will stay there to see and to talk to others. (Aziza, pg. 9)

Another of the interviewees (quote no. 16) said that teachers would sometimes sit in the classroom afterwards to talk to the students, which for her indicated that the teacher cares about the students. When the teacher is trying to establish a relationship with the student, it is important that there is good communication, and one way of doing that is to take time to talk to the students outside of class. However, this is not always possible because the school has organised the schedule so that the teachers do not have time between classes. From the interviews, it is clear that in the schools where most of the interviewees attended, the teachers took time from their schedule if the students needed help. For the teachers that do not have enough time between classes, it is important to find other ways of creating a connection with the student, so that they feel they are being seen.

There was one of the interviewees that did not mention that the teachers took time between classes, which was the one who attended a normal Norwegian school. This may indicate that the teachers working at schools that are for immigrants have more understanding of what immigrants might need when they start at school. In a Norwegian school, it is common to ask the teacher for help if the student wants it, but for immigrants this may not happen because they are scared of the repercussions. If the teachers are not paying attention and talking to the immigrants, and even more so for UMs, they might fall out of the school system, or make it through with lower grades than they could have attained, if teachers had had time for them. In all the schools there was one teacher, or a contact person, that the students were assigned to, so that they had someone regular to talk to.

4.3.4 Contact person at school

All of the interviewees had one or two teachers that they had a good relationship with during their time in school. For some it was a teacher from their first Norwegian course, but for most of the interviewees it was their contact person at school. The majority of the interviewees had a contact person that the school had organised for them to talk to and they contacted them if they needed to, like Jamaal explains here (quote no. 17).

(17) And I have not had very many problems that I could tell my teacher. But if I had problems, I could just tell my contact person. (Jamaal, pg. 3)

The informants talked to this individual when they had problems with teachers, fellow students, subjects or any other concern. While some of the interviewees regularly used their contact person, one of the interviewees did not feel comfortable to talk about more serious problems, and only used the contact person for minor problems. The reason that most of the informants chose to use their contact person, was that this was his/her job. The contact person was a teacher that worked at the school, and all the interviewees had the teacher in a subject. For the interviewees the relationship is based on the student taking contact, which some of them seemed to like as it gave them control (quote no. 18).

(18) Yes, it is something good, that something you decide to do. Because even talking, it is up to you who you are talking to, things are good to freedom. (Aziza, pg. 6)

Having a contact person is a good initiative for the school, but it may also create confusion for the students. One of the interviewees had a problem with one teacher, but when s/he talked to the teacher s/he was told to take it up with his/her contact person. This organising makes it very easy for the students if they are unsure of who to talk to, but if a teacher refuses to take up issues with a student then it should be reconsidered. Even though none of the interviewees in my study indicated that they did not like their contact person, it could happen that they do not feel comfortable talking to this person. If that is the case, then the school should be open for changes. It may be that the rules are very strict, as one of the interviewees experienced when s/he wanted to complain to a different teacher. For the teachers it may be easier if the roles they have in the school are resolute, but why we trust a person is different for each individual and does not necessarily follow the role of a contact person. There is some trust that may be associated with a certain role, but the level of trust will be established when they meet. In a relationship, trust is very important. For those UMs that could trust a teacher or contact person, it was clear that they benefited from having this contact, as they could talk to someone if they had problems.

4.3.5 Trust

(19) There are sometimes people, you don't know them and when you come to know them, the people give you trust. And you get a good relationship with the person. (Aziza, pg. 5)

Aziza emphasised (quote no. 19) how important trust is in a relationship. Trust is essential if you want a child to talk about themselves and their history (Kohli, 2007). To establish this trust, it is important to be honest, clear, truthful and precise in getting and giving information to the child. This process may take some time, but many of the children already

have problems trusting people (Kohli, 2007). This is a very important note, especially for UMs who have had many negative experiences during their migration and before fleeing. In the school in their home country, many of the interviewees had experienced violence, which one might think could cause the students not to trust the teachers in the beginning, before they understood that this will not happen in a Norwegian school.

Most of the interviewees said that they trusted their teachers. There was only one of the interviewees that did not trust the teacher and therefore had trouble connecting with them. According to Oppedal et al. (2011), the UMs could have trouble trusting the teachers and contact persons, because they know it is their job to care, and are therefore paid to care about them. One way to measure the trust in this study was whether the students had talked to the teachers about their situation because it can be a delicate subject to talk about. It seems that most of the interviewees believed that the teachers knew about their history, as they had talked about it. One of the interviewees had informed the teachers, but the others were not sure how they knew. However, they thought that the staff at school could have read it in their file, or the interviewee had told them and forgot. This indicates that the UMs in this study trusted their teachers, even with sensitive information. If children learn to trust other people, it is easier for them to build a positive self-esteem and confidence, by reducing feelings of being lonely, unloved and isolated (Mitchell, 1990). For some students it takes time to trust a person, and in that time there will be some difficulties connecting with the teacher.

4.3.6 Difficulties for the teacher to connect with students

All of the interviewees had at some point a close relationship with one or more teachers. However there were some teachers that the interviewees did not manage to establish a connection with. One reason why this happened was numerous changes of staff, which meant that the students did not have enough time with the teacher. According to Bø (1995), the frequent changes will lead to insecurity, and less possibilities for the child to connect to the teacher. One of the interviewees had attended a school in a small town for several years where s/he had a good relationship with several teachers. This was according to him/her because they had met over a long period of time, which created security for the interviewee. It is likely that there are fewer teachers in that school, which could mean that the students have the same teacher in several subjects. It takes time to establish a relationship, and one of the interviewees believed that this was the reason why s/he did not have a good relationship with his/her teachers, as s/he had only attended the school for one year.

However, if it takes more than one year for some people to connect with the teachers, it will be difficult for that person because it is very common to change teachers when one change school years and class. It might be that this interviewee had trouble trusting his/her teachers, and letting them get to know him/her for unknown reasons. Therefore, changes in teachers may also be a good thing. When a teacher starts class with all new students they have no knowledge about how the students behave or their attitudes, which could be good and bad. Those students that want to continue with misbehaviour can easily do that, but those students that previously has been labelled as stupid and misbehaving could get an opportunity to change. If a teacher has information about a student from before, s/he might treat that student according to that knowledge, which may make the student continue that behaviour even if s/he might want to change.

Even though all the interviewees did not have a close relationship with some teachers, all of them would greet and talk to their teachers if they met them outside school. This could indicate a more basic relationship, based on acquaintance from school. There were also other factors that made it difficult to connect with the teacher.

(20) To tell you, I did not like the teachers here [second school], or I liked some of them, they were very nice and sweet. Some of them were like that. It was too many students here, they could not. I know, I will not say that it is a mistake, there were too many students. They could not make contact with everyone, they could not show what the subject was about and what it was. They were busy all the time. (Lian, pg. 3)

This quote (no. 20), shows what many of the interviewees believed to be another reason to impact establishing a relationship with the teacher; the number of students. Most of the informants attended classes with 15-20 students, which forces the teacher to divide his/her attention. In a small class, the teacher will have more time to talk to each student, while in a big class there might not be enough time to follow up on subjects, and also get to know the students. This shows how much the relationship is affected by how the school is structured, whether there is an atmosphere in the class where connections can be made, and most importantly how they organise the number of students in each class (Crosnoe et al., 2004).

In the Norwegian school it is common to have between 20 and 30 students in each class, which makes most of these classes in a standard size, and some smaller. Some teachers manage to create a good environment for the students, even though there are many students, because they manage to create an atmosphere where there is limited noise and disturbance. If there are few students that demand attention and extra help, the teacher can manage to divide

the attention between the students. If the students have difficulties connecting with the teacher, their contact person, or other people at the school, they might not trust them enough to complain to them if they or the class are having problems at the school.

4.3.7 Complaints to the teacher and the school

If there are students that complain, it is central that teachers and the school pay attention. Students want the teacher to listen to them if they have trouble, and for some immigrants it may be that they have difficulty adjusting to the different subjects, and the teacher should take their concerns seriously (Hek, 2005). One of the interviewees and his/her class complained about a teacher that was talking so fast it was hard for the students to understand anything. The teacher was replaced, which made the students feel appreciated. However, most of the interviewees had more regular complaints to their teachers.

(21) So, I went to my teacher and said many things. 'Why do you give me such low grade? I have worked so hard'. (...) And the next day he said 'You shouldn't say anything, you don't have to confront people. When we say things, you must work, do the mistakes you do. If you correct them, you will move forwards'. (...) When I gave good communication and so I learn. (Fariad, pg. 5)

As Fariad says in this quote (no. 21), it was more common to complain about grades, as two interviewees had experiences trouble with unjust grades according to themselves. Both of them indicated that it was very important that the teacher listened to them, and took their opinion serious. It is clear that the teachers want their students to be the best they can, and it is good for the students to be able to get second chances to prove what they can do. Even if the teacher does not approve of the complaint, because the grade they have put is correct, the student might learn from the feedback s/he receives. For some students there are more personal issues that cause them to have problems, and some will not talk to their teachers. The experiences that they have before they arrive in Norway can cause the students to develop psychological problems, which could cause them to have difficulties attending school.

4.3.8 Difficulties attending school

As mentioned earlier many students stop going to school for many reasons, and the amount of immigrants that drop out of school is a big problem. If the student drops out of high school it increases the chance of unemployment and bad health (Hernes, 2010). There are many reasons why some UMs do not continue school, one of them being psychological problems, and secondly they can also become bored if they are not challenged enough.

Many UMs experience psychological problems after they are settled, which can be due to worries about family or other traumas from their past (Oppedal et al., 2011). One of the interviewees indicated that some days it was hard to go to school because of past experiences. According to Valenta and Berg (2012), many UMs experience difficulties in concentration. Even though one of the interviewees in this study had trouble going to school, s/he felt safe in Norway and was sleeping well, which could indicate that s/he is not suffering from big psychological problems, although this study have not collected enough data to support that. Other interviewees could also have trouble, but did not mention it during the interview. They might have found techniques to minimise their problem, or they never had any psychological problems. Many of the interviewees have or had been in a romantic relationship, which could indicate that they did not have severe psychological problems, as Oppedal et al.'s (2011) study show that it is difficult for people with psychological problems to form a romantic relationship with someone.

However, it is not only psychological reasons that cause the students to drop out of school. One of the interviewees attended class where most of the curriculum was what s/he already knew, and was too basic for his/her knowledge. This led him/her to dislike school and lose the enthusiasm that s/ he had. Eventually s/he was moved to a more advanced class, but the process had made the interviewee dislike school. It is important for students to have some challenges in their school day. One of the interviewees explained that when s/he was applying for high school, the counsellor had advised him/her to attend a school with practical subjects, instead of a school with only theory because s/he did not want him/her to do something that was too hard. In the case of this interviewee s/he chose the "hard way", and was a very good student. It can be difficult for the counsellors at school to know all the students, and how they are and their dreams. However, if the UM have good grades, shown improvement, and a will to work on the subjects, the counsellor should try to challenge the students. Numbers from SSB (2012) show that people from Afghanistan and Somalia have the lowest education among immigrants, this could indicate that the school system for immigrants is not working very well. Some of the people may also experience a difficult time adjusting to the Norwegian society, which could cause them to have trouble functioning in the school.

Even though most of the interviewees where not finished at school it seems, based on plans for the future, that most of them are aiming for practical subjects. This may be their own choice, but it can also be that they are not trying more advanced subjects. They can believe that it will be too difficult because of language, and they want to start working. One of the

interviewees that was finished with school and has worked for some years, had decided to return to school to become a more qualified worker, which could indicate that s/he wanted to get a better future after s/he has been settled. For many UMs their lives will change during their stay in Norway, and the choices that they made when they had been in Norway few years may change. As time, or the chronosystem, passes the child will experience things that will make them change their microsystems and the choices they have made. Therefore, it is important that the teacher pays attention to the UMs that they have in their classes. If the teacher has education it may be easier for them to detect signs from the student.

4.3.9 Teacher's education

If the teachers have a good education where they learn about communication and pedagogy, it will help them in establishing a good atmosphere in the classroom. Rambøll Management (2008) found in their study that most teachers who have classes in 'Basic Norwegian' have education either as teachers, university degrees, or other degrees. Among the teachers that have classes in student's mother tongue and bilingual subject education, many did not have the formally approved teacher education. Many of the teachers did have a long experience in teaching, but it shows that the teachers that focus on helping immigrants are not expected to have the same level as other teachers (Rambøll Management, 2008).

The teachers who teach in mother tongue and bilingual subjects may not have the same amount of education as other teachers, but having a lot of experience compensates that to some degree. When it comes to mother tongue and bilingual subjects, it can be difficult to find teachers that have the required education, and speak the correct language. Even though the teacher may not have any education within teaching, these classes will be much smaller. So it is easier for the teacher to have time to establish a relationship with each student. It may also be easier to connect with this teacher, because they are more likely to have cultural similarities. However, it is not only subjects and how to teach one learns when training for a teacher, it is also communication.

Based on the interviews in this study, there appears to be a difference between the teachers in the schools. In the schools that are for immigrants, or those that has course for immigrants, it appears that the teacher has more knowledge about other cultures, and how the change of environment can affect the children. For most teachers that do not have any extra training within cultural understanding, it will be hard to know how different the change is for the students. Most people have not visited countries where immigrants and UMs come from,

so it is hard to understand how big the difference is, without some course. Therefore, it would be good that municipalities that have immigrant students arrange a course for teachers that will have foreigners in their class, so they can better understand why the students may act as they do. The schools that specialise in adapting the courses for immigrants have appointed a contact person for the individual student, because they know they will need somebody to talk to about difficulties in school.

However, it is not only the teacher that affects the relationship between the student and teacher, but also differences between schools. Some of the interviewees have had some problems when they were forced to change schools, because of the rules in the Norwegian system. However, one of the interviewees has also changed school according to his/her own wish, and they have therefore experienced some of the different models of programs for immigrant students.

4.4 Differences between schools

All of the interviewees have attended different schools, but for some this change was more significant than for others. For many of the interviewees it appears that the first year of their education was the best one. Some of the reason why they liked the classes was that the students were in the same situation as them, and they had the same eagerness to learn Norwegian and start school again. The teachers were also very kind, and the number of students was small so the teacher had more time for each student. From the interviews it is clear that the main difference between each school is the teachers, and how they behave towards the student, which according to Nordahl (2010), is very important. This shows how important teachers and fellow students are for the satisfaction in school. For Jamaal (quote no. 22), the first school has a better system, and the change of teaching style did not make school better for him.

(22) Much more freedom than here [in the second school]. There [first school] we had more free, the teacher there said you have to do this, you have to do this. You should not do this, you do not have to do this. We had a very good system. (Jamaal, pg. 2)

Even though all of the interviewees have changed school, some were forced to change or stay behind because of the Norwegian system.

4.4.1 Problems with bureaucracy

Two of the interviewees had trouble regarding the changing of schools, because of the rules in the Norwegian system. One of the interviewees got a residence permit in the neighbouring municipality, and therefore had to change school. This transfer was not positive, because s/he was very satisfied at the first school. In the new school there were many good things, but s/he got bored because they were going through the same material as the previous class. After one year they changed the type of program the interviewee attended, and s/he started training for exams to attend high school. However, when s/he was finished with this class there was trouble with the papers, which made it impossible to start high school. This made him/her very frustrated because people had given promises that failed, which made the UM angry. For the interviewee it was difficult to understand why s/he could not continue at the first school, when it was not far to travel.

There are other cases of immigrants who attend schools which are not in their home municipality. The interviewee might have heard of these, and therefore did not understand why s/he was forced to change schools. However, in those cases it is most likely the case that the municipality does not have the necessary qualifications to accommodate immigrant students in their school, and therefore make arrangement for the UM to attend school in a neighbouring municipality. The interviewee may have overreacted, and let anger about other topics influences his/her behaviour. The interviewee could be frustrated about the situation, or s/he felt that despite the effort of fleeing the home country s/he could not get help in the new country. It is as very clear that many UMs who quit school has behavioural problems like this interviewee (Davis & Dupper, 2004), and there are many reasons for why they have these issues. For people around the UM it is therefore important to talk and help the person to overcome these problems, so the situation does not interfere with the education.

Another of the interviewees, Jamaal, had attended an introduction class at a normal Norwegian high school before he was given residence permit in another municipality. He then started at a school for immigrants, and after some years in the new school, he had taken a Norwegian test and passed. This test is designed to find how his understanding of Norwegian is, and would allow him to start high school. He was eager to start in a new school, because the students were noisy, and the classes were not challenging because of the different levels among the students. However, he had not been transferred, which made him frustrated since he did not know why, like he explains in the following quote (no. 23):

(23) I speak good Norwegian, understand good Norwegian, have passed Norwegian test 2. And I have lived in Norway long time, why do I have to sit here for three more years? Because it is good for me that I go to high school, that I go to Norwegian school. (...)
(Jamaal, pg. 5)

For the UMs arriving in this country, there are a lot of new rules that they need to understand and learn. It is therefore important that the teachers are aware, and talk to the students that are having a difficult time with the bureaucracy. For one of the interviewees these problems forced him/her to quit school, which is not the outcome the school wants. The interviewee spoke about returning to school, because of the importance of education. According to Bronfenbrenner (1994), the chronosystem takes into account that the person changes over time. For the UMs the school can be difficult when they first arrive. After some time of trying and failing they will have a more stable life, and they might want to return to school. It is as well up to the students to take contact with the teacher, or contact person, to talk to them about why these things are happening, because this problem can also cause them to lose concentration during class. For some immigrants who do not have the same problems, it can help to move to another city to explore more of the country, and challenge themselves in another type of school.

4.4.2 Changing of school voluntarily

There was only one of the interviewees that decided to change to a school that was in another city. He was a very good student, and the teachers in his school advised him not to leave because they feared that he would not manage the transition to a new school, which could make him lose his concentration and quit. However, he decided to move because he wanted to experience different cities (quote no. 24).

(24) Because of friends and other, they said 'You have to live here', in a way they were positive to me and after that I said that I no matter what would move there. No matter how difficult it will be, I will continue at school. But when I came here and it was safe here. There are advantages and disadvantages. (Fariad, pg. 4)

Even though Fariad knew that he would face difficulties about the change, he thought that it will work out. When he moved he lost his network that he had spent years building up, and despite his fears he continued with school. One of the reasons could be that he has been in Norway for several years, as research (Oppedal et al., 2011) has shown that the longer the UM stay in Norway the more likely they are of studying and working, and they adapt easier to changes. For all three of the interviewees who changed schools, it gave them the opportunity to experience different models of school that exist for immigrants.

4.4.3 The difference among the types of school-models

As mentioned before, there are different models of organising education for immigrants. Fariad attended a high school that used a teaching model for immigrants who want to take subjects aimed at starting university. In other models, the students attend a normal high school, but could extend the number of school years if necessary. For Fariad the change of school was very good, because in a bigger school he felt that he was more challenged, and could develop faster, as read in the quote (no. 25).

(25) It depends a little bit on the situation you are in. And if you are very good and do not have a lot of needs for help and such things, you have also to come to this school, big school, where you can develop fast. But if you have extra needs or something like that, then it may be better in a small place. You can get help and develop better. (Fariad, pg. 6)

For the other interviewees, the change was not necessarily good. One of the interviewees became bored when the curriculum was repeated from the last school. For the schools, it is difficult to know what the students have learned before they arrive at the school. Since the time between arrival and settling is different for each person, what they have learned before, and the different developments of each student, makes it hard to develop programs for many immigrants. The Norwegian school system is based on all students being equal, which for many immigrants can be frustrating, because they might be used to a different system. Some of the older immigrants might also feel that the school is making it more difficult for them to enter a Norwegian high school. It should be possible for students who have extensive schooling from their home country, to be able to exceed faster in the school system.

Unfortunately, it is not always up to the UM to choose the type of school they will attend. All municipalities need to have a program for the immigrants that are given residence permit in the area, but some schools have limited knowledge about teaching immigrants. For the UM it might be good to start at a school where there are other immigrants, which could comfort them, because there is something familiar at the school. It is also impossible for the UM to start directly into a Norwegian school, both because of language and knowledge. Many UMs struggle with subjects, and having the necessary knowledge before they start in a Norwegian class will make it easier.

Some municipalities do not have money to extend and specialise the education for immigrants, therefore it is important to give information to the children on their rights if they

want to change schools. Even though it was successful for Fariad, it can be difficult for some students to move to a city, where they most likely do not know many people, and do not have a network to support them. Before Fariad left, he was concerned about moving to a bigger city where there are more activities, and it is also more expensive, but he managed to overcome these problems. In the process of changing schools the contact person, teachers and administration at school is central. The students cannot understand all the rules themselves, and know when and if they could change schools. Some students may change schools because the atmosphere in the classroom is not good, as the relationship between students is very important for the UM happiness at school.

4.5 Relationship with their fellow students

If the UM is to establish a relationship with their teacher, it is important that the atmosphere in the classroom is good. This means that if the fellow students are friends, both in the school and outside, it will benefit the connection between the teacher and the UM. With a good environment in the classroom, the teacher can more easily talk to his students without worrying about interruptions. According to Blyth et al.'s (1982), children list nonrelated young people as a significant other, and more frequently for females than male. The majority of the children meet with other young people in school, showing how important the school is in facilitating friendship between peers. When children have friends that are the same age as them, the friendship will influence the social skills, and may shape their identity and self-worth (Bø, 1995).

For a child, the fellow students and peers can be one of the most important microsystems. This relationship will influence the identity of the UM, as the UM will affect the identity of their friends. Identity is a concept that has many different meanings and factors, depending on different theories. The term identity encompasses what different self-concepts a person has in a group of society, and how much value that group has, will influence how one sees themselves (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995). In that process a person has multiple identities that reside within them as roles and norms that one uses in different settings. In connections with fellow students and peers in a new society, the UMs are forced to shape some of their identities in a new way. The relationship with the other students will not only influence their identity, but also be someone whom they can talk to and confide in.

4.5.1 Connections in the classroom

Many children use the school to meet peers, and they use a lot of time and energy to establish and maintain that connection (Nordahl, 2010). There are many ways for the teacher to create contact between students. One way of doing that is creating discussions and group work, which forces the students to communicate and work together. Many of the interviewees spoke about this as a good way to talk and learn from one another, and as activities that they liked (quote no. 29).

(26) I am so impressed when we work together, we work together very well. (...) So when we discuss about it, I get all new ideas and new perspectives. That is the most important, that we work together. (Fariad, pg. 4-5)

Fariad worked very well with the students during class. He would often ask for help from other students that he knew had more knowledge about the subject, which could indicate that they had a good relationship. It may seem like Fariad had been fortunate to be in a class with fellow students that wanted to connect with him, as for the other interviewees that did not. For one of the interviewees, this was one of the few occasions where s/he had more extensive contact with fellow students in the class. The teacher can try to facilitate a connection between students, but if the other students do not want to, the teacher cannot force the students to talk more than necessary. There are also other ways that the teacher can organise them to talk more with each other. In Aziza's class the teacher arranged so that students from the same country did not sit together in class. This meant that they could not use their mother tongue, but was forced to use Norwegian, and Aziza believed that this was important (quote no. 30).

(27) Because when you are sitting someone who is coming from your same country, you can't talk Norwegian. Because you speak with your language, and he with his language, but if you are sitting with a person that is from a different country, you are obligated to speak Norwegian and you can even learn new words. (Aziza, pg. 10)

Most of the interviewees had good connection with their fellow students, and they worked well together on projects and group work. There were two of the interviewees whom did not have strong relationships with other students. One had attended the school for a short time, which s/he felt had not been enough time to connect with the students. The other interviewee had trouble connecting with the students in the current class, but s/he did have strong connections with the fellow students from the previous school. This could indicate that the interviewee did not want friends, or that the students had a problem connecting with each other. However, the interviewee could also feel uncomfortable in the class, and did not like

the fellow students for some reason. If the students do not have a good relationship with their fellow students it can affect the atmosphere in the classroom. The teacher can be affected by the relationship between the students, which can cause the teacher to have trouble teaching the students. This is apparent as the interviewees in this study that had trouble with their fellow students also had trouble connecting with their teachers. There are different circumstances that can damage the atmosphere in the classroom.

(28) But here it is also good, but a little bit more noise, they do not respect. (...) when the teacher is standing there, they do not respect the teacher. They make trouble. So they do not feel like they are really attending school. (Jamaal, pg. 2-3)

Like Jamaal (quote no. 31), several of the interviewees spoke about noise in their classes, which they felt were not respectful of the teacher. This could indicate that some of the students who are attending schools for immigrants are not taking their classes serious. There may be different levels among the students, and those that find the class boring might become impatient and start making trouble. Even though there was noise in some of the classes, it appears that the informants liked their peers.

When one looks at the student's background from their home country, it is surprising that they are not more scared of the repercussion that the noise can give them. This could show that the students know that the teacher will not use violence, and use that knowledge to do what they want during class. This could be a problem for the teacher, because s/he could lose the authority they have in the classroom. For the students, it is important that the teacher is in control of the class so the students are comfortable (Nordahl, 2010). If that is the situation, a good environment would give the students the possibility of extending their relationship with the fellow students to outside of school. As Nordahl (2010) also emphasize, the environment in the classroom will also influence the students' willingness to attend school, and therefore is very important.

4.5.2 Relationship with fellow students outside of school

Most of the interviewees were friends with their fellow students outside of school, although there were big differences in how many friends they had and how close they were. Being friends with the other students can create a good atmosphere in the classroom, since people know each other. In Bronfenbrenner's (1979) mesosystem, connection between the microsystems with a link between school, friends, and home is important. Having a connection with fellow students can be very beneficial for the socialisation, and for the

determination to attend school. However, in many classes it also creates groups, where the different groups does not interact, which is why it is important to have events for the whole class outside of school, like Fariad explains in this quote (no. 32).

(29) When we have a weekend where, if there are many people, have like Facebook, before we have had this Facebook group, so there are some students who say: 'We are having a party for the class'. So we go to them, everybody is gathered there, some people drink, some people do not drink. So we sit there and play cards and stuff like that, it is pretty good. (Fariad, pg. 7)

It was clear that Fariad (quote no. 32) had the best connection with his fellow students, especially outside of school. The atmosphere in the class was very good, and it was unique in this study that the whole class would meet on their own initiative. All of the interviewees spoke about being good friends with some fellow students, but it was usually when the school organised events that the entire class would be together. Fariad went to a school with mostly ethnic Norwegian students, which could contribute to a better environment, because the students may have known each other for a long time, as they live in the same city, and possibly same neighbourhood.

Destå also went to high school with Norwegian students, but she was only close friends with two girls, who were immigrants. She would say hello to the other students, but they did not speak unless they were working on a project together. Destå claimed that she tried to make contact with the Norwegian students, but they did not want to be friends with her. Therefore, it appears that when it comes to establishing relationships between fellow students all classes are different. It may be the atmosphere in the school or the teachers that creates the difference. It is also up to the students to establish contact with other students, and if there are some people who are willing to take the initiative it can create a better atmosphere in class. In a classroom with a good atmosphere, the teacher can establish relationships with the students, and establishing a connection to another microsystem is very important.

4.6 Relationship with adults outside of school

The parents and teachers may have the most significant influence on the student, but friends, family, neighbours, and other individuals whom they have regular connection with, could also be important to the child (Bø, 1995). If the UM has a strong relationship with other adults it can benefit the connection the teacher has to the student. It would help the UM if there are connections between their microsystems, as that gives them confirmation on the

relationship they may have established with the teacher. Family is the closest microsystem to most people.

4.6.1 Family members

Two of the interviewees had family living in the same city. This is consistent with the numbers from Oppedal and Idsoe (as cited in Oppedal et al., 2011) where 26% of UMs reported having a family member to talk to. One of the interviewees had an uncle, but it appears from the interview that they did not have a close relationship. For Lian, having his brother close was very important, and as one can read in quote (no. 26), they spent a lot of time together and his brother meant a lot to him.

(30) I do have a brother, here in [name of city]. I have a lot of contact with him. (...) Yes, I love him of course. (...) Yes, we speak about everything, not like everything, but we talk about everything. (Lian, pg. 6)

Some UMs do not have any family that live in the country, and they only have contact via internet or phone. Family is important for the UMs, as they are a strong connection to their home country. As a significant microsystem, it is important for the UM to keep a connection with the family, so that they know what happens, and the child does not worry about their situation. The relatives may want to be assured that the decision to send him/her away was justified. If the UM keep in contact with their family on a regular basis they are an important microsystem for the child, as they give advice and support. However, they may not have the same connection to the child as people who are around them in daily life, which could create a stronger microsystem than with their relatives. This could be a legal guardian, a social worker, or adults that work in their living facilities.

4.6.2 Adults in the living facilities and their guardians

According to Blyth et al. (1982), around 60 - 75 % of the children also listed a nonrelated adult they trust in, which for an UM may be their guardian, or staff working at their living facilities. Half of the interviewees had at some point contact with adults outside of school, and these people provided comfort and a trustworthy connection.

(31) Where I was living before. Where they let young people under 18 years live. And I had one "primary contact person" and she becomes like my mom. (Aziza, pg. 4)

As can be read from quote (no. 27), Aziza had close connection with a woman working in the house she used to live in. She was her contact person among the staff, and they

had a very close relationship. They still had contact even though she moved out, which could indicate a strong connection between them. Another of the interviewees also had a good relationship with the staff in the living facilities. S/he spoke to them about problems, but after an incidence where they broke their promises, s/he did not trust them as much as before.

For some of the UMs that live alone, the guardian may become more significant for them, if they are very attentive and helpful. One of the interviewees was lucky to have a guardian that was very supportive, and they are still in contact with each other. The guardian had helped him/her very much, especially in the beginning of the settlement, when things were difficult. None of the other interviewees spoke about their guardian as more than a person that helped them when absolute necessary, which could indicate that most guardians do not want a close relationship. Having a person that they trust will make it easier for the UMs to establish their new life. If they are having problems, or need to talk with somebody, these people can help, and having this kind of connection can help with their mental health too (Oppedal et al., 2008). It can also help the UM if there are connections between the different people in their life, as that can cause less confusion about what they learn.

4.6.3 Connection between the school and adults in the UM's life

In Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory, the mesosystem consist of connections between the different microsystems. It would benefit the UM if there was a connection between the school and their caretaker, either an employee at the living facilities or a guardian. It is important that the student get confirmation on their work in school, and that the guardian work together with the school, so that the UM is not confused about norms, values, or other aspects of the new culture. If a relationship gets recognition from a third party that express admiration, the relationship will grow stronger, for example if the guardian recognise the work that the student and teacher has done on a subject. According to Hek (2005), having a connection between the home and school was very important for UMs, as it made them feel like they were an integrated part of their school. For an UM it is also important to build up a network of mesosystems that creates a connection between the relations, so that they might help the UM together. For those interviewees that had more extensive contact with adults, there were also a connection between guardian or staff and the school. For Aziza, this connection was important, and she described it like this (quote no. 28):

(32) The people represent like our parents, and they help us if the school want to talk to the parents. They talk to school and do like this. (Aziza, pg. 6)

For Aziza it was more like the staff were her parents. There could be many reasons why Aziza feels differently than the other interviewees, and one could be that Aziza lost her parents before she fled. This may have made it easier for her to accept and appreciate other people acting as her guardian, than for the other interviewees who still have parents that are alive in their home countries. However, for most of the UMs there is no connection between the school and their guardian or staff at their house which could indicate that there are few bonds between the microsystems in the interviewees' life. This can cause them to have doubt and miss the confirmation that they get from adults in their life. Having different microsystems that support the UM will also make the ecological transition into the Norwegian society easier.

4.7 Integration into Norwegian society

When talking about Norway, and what they liked about the country, many of the interviewees mentioned freedom, peace and stability. They especially mentioned freedom of speech and opinion. One of the interviewees also spoke about equality between people, and how there was no corruption in Norway. These are important factors that might be the reason why some immigrants flee from their home country. For one of the interviewees it is clear that this also affects the view on his home country as a place where s/he does not want to return to.

(33) What can I do if I am Norwegian or not? I live here, have the same rights as Norwegian youth, I attend school, have a job and I have a place to live, and stuff like that. (Rashid, pg. 10)

For Rashid (quote no. 37) and other interviewees, having the same rights and opportunities as other Norwegians made them feel part of society, but they did not feel Norwegian because they did not have contact with Norwegians and were not acknowledged as Norwegian. Therefore, one might say that having confirmation from others influences what you feel your identity is, which is consistent with the youth in Oppedal et al. (2011). One of the interviewees felt that until s/he had citizenship and a passport s/he was not Norwegian, although s/he felt integrated because of knowledge of the language and society. For Rashid the change of identity had made him doubt his former identity. Since he has been given no confirmation from other people it has made him doubt what character he should have, or if the label that is given matters (quote no. 38):

(34) But I do not know, whether I feel Norwegian or foreigner. I do not care who is Norwegian, who is foreigner, who is black, who is light. I think we are all people, it is that. (Rashid, pg. 10)

Integration is a concept that has been given many different meanings and associations to different people. The previous government looked at integration as having two different meanings, as both a process and a goal, where integration is adapting the immigrants to a life in Norway (St. meld. nr 49, 2004). According to NOU [Norwegian Public Exposition] (2011: 14), integration concerns topics of qualifications, education, work, social mobility, living conditions, participation in democratic processes, feeling of belonging to the society, respect of differences, and loyalty to common values. These topics can be used to look at how successful integration is. Other definitions may have more or less dimensions to it.

For some immigrants integration can sometimes become assimilation (IMDi, 2008), which means that one discards the old culture, norms, religion, and language, and allocate themselves into the new culture (NOU [Norwegian Public Exposition] 2011:14). One of the interviewees said that it is important that the immigrants do not lose their own culture, but create a balance. According to IMDi (2008), integration is a two-way process, where the minorities are affected by the majority, but that the majority is also affected by the minorities. In order for an immigrant to feel integrated it is important that they are open, but it is also vital that the Norwegian society accepts them. Some of the interviewees expressed that they felt Norwegian, but that their ethnic culture is important, especially when they were spending time with friends from the same culture.

For some of the UMs arriving in Norway, it will be difficult to find a balance between their ethnic identity and their new role in Norway. The UMs are a part of Norwegian society, but they are also part of the diaspora from their home country. Diaspora is people who live outside their homeland, and still have some connection and feeling of belonging to that country (Tölölyan, 1996). According to Brubaker (2005), there are three elements that are consistent between all definitions of diaspora. It is important to have dispersion in space, an orientation towards a real or imagined home country, and to keep some identity boundaries towards the host society. For some UMs, finding that balance between their home country and their new home will be very tough. When the child goes through an ecological transition (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), there is a change in the type of role that they have in society, for example they may be living on their own, they are more in charge of their own finance, and may not have the same rules as they would have had in another community. During the human development and re-socialisation, they need people to guide them in the new concepts, and help them to engage in activities. Having a connection to Norwegian society is important to feeling integrated.

Most of the interviewees were friends with other immigrants that they either went to school with, or met in other arenas, like church or the gym. It did not seem to be important that they were from a specific country, although many of the interviewees had more friends from their home country. However, many of the interviewees also wanted contact with ethnic Norwegians.

4.7.1 Contact with ethnic Norwegians

All of the interviewees were interested, and believed it was important to have contact with ethnic Norwegians. In the new macrosystem, the UMs experience a different culture, which is very different from that in the interviewees' home country. Therefore, it is important that the UMs have people to help them to understand the differences, and incorporate the parts of the new culture with their own. One of the interviewees had more contact with Norwegians than the others, because s/he was attending an ordinary Norwegian high school. There it was easier for him/her to establish a connection with Norwegians. Since s/he had lived for many years in a small town, where one is more visible in the community, s/he had made many friends there. This could have made it easier for him/her to make contact with Norwegians when arriving in a new city, because s/he might know how the cultural codes work. However, it may also be that s/he was a more out-going person, who people found it easy to connect with. Some of the interviewees also knew ethnic Norwegians through other friends, from being neighbours and from other areas of life. Having this relationship is not only because the UMs want friends, but they believe that knowing Norwegians may make living in Norway easier.

(35) It is very important to have contact with Norwegians, because it can help on the language. You do not feel that you are on another side. (...) I speak Norwegian only here in school and when I work I speak Norwegian. But there is nobody that I can speak Norwegian with. (Rashid, pg. 12)

As Rashid talk about in this quote (no. 34) all the interviewees mentioned that it was important to have contact with Norwegians, because it would help them with learning the language. This is also consistent with what the UMs that Oppedal et al. (2011) interviewed believed to be an important aspect. When the UMs talk with Norwegians they can correct their vocabulary and spelling. For one of the interviewees it became difficult to maintain his/her Norwegian after s/he left school, because s/he does not use a diverse language at work, and most of his/her friends are immigrants. There are many typical grammatical mistakes that immigrants have, which will make their talking a little bit different compared to Norwegians.

As knowing good Norwegian is central to many jobs, it is important that the UMs learn the language correctly. However, it is not only language that ethnic Norwegians can help with, but also social and cultural knowledge that will help the immigrants in their academic life (Sanchez-Martí & Ramírez-Iñiguez, 2012).

(36) The Norwegian school is best, because there we work together with Norwegians. We go to the same school, same class. So when we see them outside, we say 'Hey, hey'. But now I can't, nobody that I can say 'Hey' to, because I don't know them. It is hard to know them, to tell them 'Hey'. (Jamaal, pg. 4)

School is also very important for establishing social relations (quote no. 35). One of the interviewees, who previously attended a normal Norwegian school, expressed that s/he felt that it was easier to make contact with Norwegian students there, because they knew each other from school. It is difficult to facilitate a good relationship between people, but for immigrants it would be good to have classes in a Norwegian school, to have an arena to enable them to talk to other youths.

For an UM the school also plays a very important part of their integration, as they will learn about culture and language of their new country. The experiences they have in school can also affect the decisions they make later in life, but school is also where they prepare for studies or work, and is an arena to make friends (Bjerkan, 2009). One of the interviewees agreed that the school had been vital to his integration into Norwegian society. It is also important that the Norwegian youth are open and willing to be friends with immigrants. For several reasons some of the interviewees had some difficulties establishing contact with ethnic Norwegians.

4.7.2 Difficulties in establishing contact with ethnic Norwegians

Some of the interviewees made efforts to establish contact with Norwegians. One of the interviewees was very active in an organisation that worked in the local community. This organisation could have been a good arena to establish a connection with other people, but for him/her it was difficult to arrange anything outside the organisation. Rashid played football in the local club, which could also be a good arena to meet people from the neighbourhood. However, he still found it hard to get in contact with his Norwegian team-players. He believes that the players are scared of him, or they might not be used to immigrants (quote no. 36).

(37) No, I don't feel like that [feel Norwegian]. Because I don't have any Norwegian youth, friends, nobody. Almost nobody. I live there, I play on the football team there. But no

one of them comes to take contact with me. (...) I think they think foreigners are strange or they are scared. I don't know. They are not used to them. (Rashid, pg. 10)

Some of the interviewees explained that they are struggling to establish contact with Norwegian peers. It is difficult to know why the Norwegians are not interested in knowing the UM, as it seems that the interviewees are very determined and willing to make friends. One of the interviewees did have many Norwegian friends, which was mainly due to the fact that s/he attended a Norwegian high school and not a school for immigrants. It can therefore be that many of the interviewees will have more Norwegian friends when they start at a Norwegian high school after completing their course. For one of the interviewees the school had been a good arena to get to know Norwegian peers. S/he had previously been to a school that used a model for immigrant students where the immigrants have some classes by themselves, and some with the other students. This created opportunities for the interviewee to talk to fellow students. Even though it did not create a close relationship, it was a start. It also made the interviewee feel like s/he was a part of society and more integrated, which is why s/he wanted to change schools. For him/her attending a Norwegian school would make it easier to connect with Norwegian peers, which was very important.

Although some of the interviewees who had finished school, or who was working, did not have many connections to Norwegians at work. There are differences to how the work environment is, and if the leaders do not encourage an environment outside work, the staff may not start a friendship. It might also be difficult for the UMs and immigrants to know the culturally appropriate way of starting a friendship. However, the person could also be satisfied with their life and network.

However, it is not always that the school can facilitate all connections, especially when an UM does not attend school in the same municipality as they live. In these cases it might be that adults, for example trainer on the football team, needs to do a better job in facilitating a relationship. Therefore, it might be an idea to encourage other parts of society to enable communication between youths and immigrants, and help them in making connections easier. The school has an influence on all children, and it will impact the future of the students.

4.8 Thoughts on the future for the UMs

All the interviewees had many dreams and hopes for their future. One of the interviewees was clearly a person with many dreams, and had trouble deciding what profession to pursue. S/he was not sure if the grades and language was good enough to finish

a certain education, or if s/he should go for a profession where s/he was almost guaranteed to find a job afterwards. Other interviewees were not specific to a definitive profession, as long as s/he had experience, and a good salary. For some interviewees it was also important to have a family.

(38) If I do not get to go to school, I do not have a future, I think. I have to go to school first. I really want to be an electrician, and I want to try to go to high school, but if not, I do not know what I am going to do. (Lian, pg. 7)

Like Lian (quote no. 39), the interviewees that were currently working, or were on paternity leave, also had dreams about continuing their education. One of the interviewees was planning to return to school to train for a better job in his/her field. Two of the interviewees dreamed of becoming electrician and car mechanic, which they might consider as a stable and good profession with a higher value in their society than in Norway. The girls choose softer occupations, and were maybe more determined to help others, maybe like themselves, as they wanted to become a social worker and teacher of language. To get a good job it is important to be integrated and especially know the language (quote no. 40).

(39) If you don't study, we don't understand the other culture, and then the culture is very different. If you don't understand the culture in the language, it is very difficult to start working. (Fariad, pg. 4)

The dreams and hopes of the interviewees can be measured and viewed through Maslow's theory on needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs describes different levels of satisfaction that motivate people (Maslow, 1943). In motivation theory there are five levels of needs, which after the first need is satisfied one starts to think about higher needs. For a person, the most important thing is to have their physiological needs covered, like food, water, shelter and clothing. As soon as the first step is complete there is a new need that arises of safety and security. After this step a person needs love and belonging, both to a place and people around them. When the third need is gratified, people start to look at their self-esteem, and start working on their confidence, achievements, and respect of others. On the top of the hierarchy there is a fifth need for self-actualisation. At this step a person is supposed to find their meaning and inner potential, and become spontaneous and creative (Maslow, 1943). This hierarchy of needs is apparent in some of the interviewees working on improving their situation. However, it may also be that they are struggling to decide on their dreams, because they are now in a society where it is possible to achieve the highest need. When they were growing up in their home country the UM might have been taught to choose more stable professions rather than taking a chance to fulfil your dream, or their home country did not

have different options. According to Hopkins and Hill (2010), when the UMs arrive in their new country they experience the feeling of establishing all the needs in Maslow's hierarchy, as they are arriving with very little, everything needs to be built from scratch. The knowledge they get from this experience is valuable for others. Therefore, it is very important that the interviewees give some of their knowledge on how it is to arrive in Norway, and what UMs that arrive should focus on.

4.9 Advice for other UMs arriving in Norway

When looking back at their time in Norway the interviewees may see that there were some things that they could have done differently. Their main advice was to learn the language so they can integrate faster. The youth should also be open to a new culture, and understand that they are in a new country with different traditions. It is also important to have a good attitude towards people trying to help you, and listen to the advice they give. The most important thing is to work hard and never give up, especially on school because it is important to learn language, culture, traditions, and it is the way to get a good job. If there are misunderstandings in the class, or other places, it is important to be patient, and try to solve the confusions.

5.0 Conclusion

This study has looked at how UMs experience the school system, how their relationship is with their teachers, and what part the school plays in the integration. The study has also looked at other adults, fellow students, and friends outside of school, and how these people influence the UM's life. Even though this study is too small to say anything absolute, it will give an indication. Arriving in a new country without a network is never easy, and it will take time before the UM manage to stabilise their life. After they are settled, starting school is seen as one of the most helpful tools. Before the UM arrive in Norway they have been through many events that shaped their identity and influenced how they think and act. All of the interviewees had previously attended school, although some more than others. It did not seem that the previous experiences had caused a bad impression, as the interviewees knew that the attitude and behaviour of the teacher in the new country was different. It can appear that they were more satisfied that they were in a new situation, and that the violent punishments would not happen anymore.

The interviewees were very happy to be in school, as education was very important for them. The overall experience of the Norwegian school system appeared to be good. Most of the education in the classroom happens on the black board, like most countries have. However, the interviewees also preferred to be interactive, have discussion, and use the surroundings if it was possible. To have a good atmosphere in the classroom is very important, so that the teacher can concentrate on teaching. According to the interviewees, the teacher needed to be fair, but strict to create a good atmosphere, so there is no difference between students. The interviewed UMs also mentioned problems related to the national organization of schools for immigrants. There is very little that can be done on these problems, except explaining why it is happening, and trying to find a solution that is within the rules, which also makes the UM content. On these occasions the counsellor, or teacher, can be important.

It is clear that the interviewees formed a strong attachment to the first school, and the teachers there. This school was when the interviewees were at the asylum camp, and waiting for their reply on the application. Because it is an emotional time for the UM, one can imagine that the relationships that they form there could mean more than relationships with teachers in other schools. The teacher in the first school is present every day, can bring comfort, and is

someone they can trust. Several of the interviewees took trips back to their asylum camp to visit the school staffs, which shows that they meant much to them.

Since all the interviewees were 15 years or older at arrival in Norway, most of them started at a school for immigrants learning Norwegian, and subjects that are required for entry to high school. Two of the interviewees continued their education at a normal Norwegian high school. In most of the schools there was a teacher that was listed as a contact person for each individual. The interviewees were supposed to talk to this person if they had problems, concerns, or questions about anything. This study shows that most of the interviewees used this person for solving their problems, and their relationship became an important microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). There were some of the interviewees that felt they had a good relationship with other teachers, but not as close as with their contact person. For the one interviewee that did not have a contact person at school, it appears that this could have contributed to him/her not forming a closer relationship to teacher, and s/he did not talk about problems with a teacher. It seems that having a teacher assigned as a contact person makes it easier for the UM to establish a closer connection.

It is very difficult to establish a good relationship with all students, and a good relationship is more an exception than a rule for most students. Most students may have a good relationship with their family, or other adults, that they can trust with their problems. However, for an UM that has a small network, it will be beneficial for them to have adults that can help them in their new life. If the teacher has knowledge and understanding about the student they can help him/her to achieve their social, personal, and school goals (Nordahl, 2010). If the teachers know the student they might understand why the students act the way they do.

Despite the fact that this connection happens to only some students and few times during school-life (Fredriksen & Rhodes, 1996), there are things that the teacher can do to increase the possibility of a more influential relationship. According to the interviewees in this study, one can notice if a person cares when observing how they speak and body language. It was also good if the teachers had time to talk to the students between classes, but also be interactive in class. If the teacher creates a good atmosphere in the class, with discussions and facilitate a relationship between the student, it would help the UM to have a better school day. However, a teacher can also be a good teacher, and good at teaching in the subject, but still have problems connecting with students. It is not only the teacher that needs

to want a relationship, but the student must also want it. According to the interviewees, they had the closest relationship with their contact person, which was assigned to the student from the school administration, so it seems that this initiative from the schools is very good.

From the interviewees in this study it seems that the relationship they have with the teacher is important. It is of course good to have a teacher that knows the subject, and can teach the students what they need, but for most students the connection stops outside the classroom. However, there are big differences between the teachers, and between schools, both when it comes to what the teacher wants, and what the school facilitates. It seems that the teachers working at schools where there are specialised courses for immigrants have more knowledge about possible difficulties in adapting to a Norwegian school, and a better system so that the school day is more facilitated. Teachers that work at these schools may have more education regarding communication and culture problems, or they might have an interest in working with immigrants. It was only in these schools that the school had organised for a contact person, which one can imagine created a safe and reliable communication between them.

The fellow students will also influence the relationship between the teachers and UM, as a good atmosphere is important for the teacher to make contact. Some of the interviewees had contact with students outside the school, which created a good environment in the classroom. The fellow students can also be a friend that the UM needs as many of them struggle with problems from their past. It can also be difficult for UM to adapt to a new society, and their previous experiences can cause psychological problems. From the interviews it seems that the interviewees in this study do not have any psychological problems, although it is normal among UM (Oppedal et al., 2011).

It is clear that the school is very important when it comes to integration, not only as a place where refugees learn the language and about the culture, but for those that attend Norwegian schools it is a natural arena to have more contact with Norwegian youth. All of the interviewees had mostly friends from other cultures, but they believed it were very important to have contact with ethnic Norwegians. All of the interviewees were pleased to be in Norway, and believed that it was a good environment to live in. For them it was very important to be integrated and contribute to society. By having Norwegian friends the interviewees believed that their knowledge of Norwegian and the culture would improve.

For one of the interviewees it was clear that school was where s/he had made contact with most of the Norwegians that s/he knew. It may not become a very strong and close relationship, but it gives the youth an opportunity to talk to Norwegians. The youth in Hek's (2005) research believed that they should access mainstream education, so that their peers could learn more about them. It would also make the settlement easier, as integration is a two-way process. As most of the interviewees attended a school for immigrants there were few that had contact with Norwegians. This study was conducted in big cities, which means that there are many different models to be used. Therefore it is best if they start at a school where they can learn Norwegian, before they are transferred to another school. Therefore, it is important that the UM are transferred to a Norwegian school as fast as they have the knowledge and possibilities for it.

If the UM is not attending a Norwegian school other elements in the society should try to facilitate relationships between peers. For Norwegian youth it may be difficult to establish a connection with UM, and adults in the community may have to initiate a connection, as having Norwegians friends will make life in Norway easier for the UM. When the UM arrives in Norway there are many new things that will make it difficult to establish and build a life. In that process the youth needs people around them to support them whether it is a teacher, social worker, uncle, friend, or a neighbour. It is especially important to look after those UMs that live alone, as they are more vulnerable. School is very important in the life of an UM, as both a place to learn and socialise, and it is important the students stay in school. Many UMs quit school, but hopefully they return to school to finish their education when their lives become less difficult.

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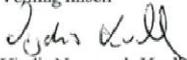
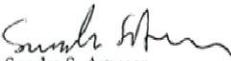
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Appendix

Appendix no.1: Letter from NSD

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES		
Øyvind Kvello Psykologisk institutt NTNU 7491 TRONDHEIM		Harald Hårfages gate 29 N-5007 Bergen Norway Tel: +47 55 58 21 17 Fax: +47 55 58 96 50 nsd@nsd.uib.no www.nsd.uib.no Org.nr. 985 321 884
Vår dato: 07.11.2012	Vår ref: 32030 / 3 / SSA	Deres dato: _____
Deres ref: _____		
TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER		
Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 05.11.2012. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:		
32030	<i>Unaccompanied Minors in the school system in Norway - A study on their relationship to their teachers and how the school has influenced their integration</i>	
<i>Behandlingsansvarlig</i>	NTNU, ved institusjonens øverste leder	
<i>Daglig ansvarlig</i>	Øyvind Kvello	
<i>Student</i>	Ina Tvedt Solberg	
Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet, og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger vil være regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. Personvernombudet tilrår at prosjektet gjennomføres.		
Personvernombudets tilråding forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, eventuelle kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.		
Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/forsk_stud/skjema.html . Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.		
Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt .		
Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 22.06.2013, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.		
Vennlig hilsen		
		
Vigdis Namtvedt Kvalheim	Sondre S. Arnesen	
Kontaktperson: Sondre S. Arnesen tlf: 55 58 25 83		
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering		
Kopi: Ina Tvedt Solberg, Tellefensgt 1, 7030 TRONDHEIM		
<small>Audelingskontorer / District Offices OSLO: NSD, Universitetet i Oslo, Postboks 1055 Blindern, 0316 Oslo. Tel: +47 22 85 52 11. nsd@uio.no TRONDHEIM: NSD, Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet, 7491 Trondheim. Tel: +47 73 59 19 07. kjrr@wv.uib.no TROMSØ: NSD, CUI, Høgskolen i Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø. Tel: +47 77 64 43 36. nsd@hio.no</small>		

Appendix no.2: Interview Guide in Norwegian

Spørsmål til intervju

Bakgrunn:

1. Alder og hvor lenge har du bodd i Norge?
2. Kan du fortelle meg litt om bakgrunnen din før du kom til Norge?
3. Hva er situasjonen din nå? Jobb, utdanning, familie, venner, bosted

Skolen

1. Gikk du på skole før du kom til Norge? Hvordan opplevde du den undervisningen, læreren, elevene?
2. Hvilke forventinger hadde du før du begynte på skolen i Norge?
3. Hvor lenge har du gått på skole i Norge, og hvilken type skole var det?
4. Hvor viktig er skolen i hverdagen din?
5. Hvordan opplevde du årene på skolen? Undervisning, andre elever, mange forskjellige lærere
6. Hvordan var læreren(e) din?
 - a. Snakke om ting som var vanskelige? Evt hvem andre?
 - b. Oppførsel i klasserommet/undervisning
 - c. Oppførsel utenfor klasserommet
 - d. Hva har de gjort for å oppnå spesiell kontakt
 - e. Stoler du på læreren(e)
7. Visste læreren(e) om situasjonen din?
8. Hvor viktig har læreren(e) din vært for skolegangen?
9. Hva synes du er viktig at en lærer gjør og ikke gjør i klasserommet?
10. Er det noe kontakt mellom skolen og bosted/verge?
11. Hadde du kontakt med andre voksne? Hvordan var den kontakten?

Andre

1. Hva tenker du når jeg sier "norsk"? Føler du deg "norsk"?
2. Hva liker du best med Norge?
3. Hva er det viktigste når det kommer til integrering for deg/Hva betyr det å bli en del av det norsk samfunnet for deg?
4. Hvordan er nettverket ditt i Norge? Hva betyr nettverket for deg?
5. Har du noen råd til lærere som underviser enslige mindreårige?
6. Har du noen råd til de som ankommer som enslige mindreårige?
7. Hva er din plan for fremtiden? Hvordan vil du oppnå det?
8. Er det noe mer du vil fortelle?
9. Hvordan følte du at intervjuet gikk?

Appendix no.3: Interview Guide in English

Background

1. Age and how long have you lived in Norway?
2. Can you tell me shortly about your background before you came to Norway?
3. How is your life now and earlier? Job/education, family, friends, living facilities

School

1. Did you attend school before you came to Norway? How did you find that education, the teacher, the students?
2. What expectations did you have before you started school in Norway?
3. How long have/did you attended school in Norway, and what type of schoolsystem?
4. How important is/was school in your life?
5. How did you experience the years in school? The education/teaching, other students, teacher(many different, one?)
6. How was your teacher(s)?
 - a. Talk about difficult things? If not, anybody else?
 - b. Behavior in classroom/way of teaching
 - c. Behavior outside the classroom
 - d. If special contact, what did they do?
 - e. Did you trust your teacher(s)?
7. Did the teacher(s) know about your situation?
8. How important was the teacher(s) for your education?
9. What do you think it is important that a teacher does or does not do in a classroom?
10. Was there any contact between school and living-facilites/legal guardian?
11. Did you have contact with other adults? What type of contact?

Others

1. What do you think about when I say “Norwegian”? do you feel «Norwegian»
2. What do you like best about Norway?
3. What is the most important for you when it comes to integration/is it important to be part of Norwegian society? Why?
4. How important is your network to you now?
5. Do you have any advice for teachers that teach unaccompanied minors?
6. Do you have any advice for those arriving as unaccompanied minors?
7. What are your plans for the future? How will you achieve it?
8. Anything else you want to tell me? That you forgot earlier?
9. How did you feel the interview went?

Appendix no.4: Letter for informants

Informasjon til informanter

Undersøkelse om skole og kontakten med lærer

Jeg er en masterstudent i psykologi ved NTNU i Trondheim. Jeg skal skrive om hvordan enslige mindreårige flyktninger opplevde skolen i Norge, hvordan forholdet til læreren var, og hvordan dette kan ha påvirket integreringen i Norge. Jeg ønsker å intervju voksne som kom til Norge som enslige mindreårige asylsøkere.

Jeg vil bruke båndopptaker, og ta noen notater underveis, mens jeg intervjuer. Opplysningene vil bli anonymisert slik at det ikke er mulig å gjenkjenne personen. Både jeg og veilederen min, Øyvind Kvello, har taushetsplikt. Opplysninger som navn og alder vil bli endret på. Andre opplysninger vil også bli endret slik at det ikke skal være mulig å gjenkjenne de som er blitt intervjuet. Båndopptakene og notatene vil ikke bli delt med andre enn min veileder Øyvind Kvello. Opptakene slettes når oppgaven er ferdig, innen sommeren 2013.

Det er frivillig å være med på intervjuet, og du har mulighet til å trekke deg når som helst uten at det blir stilt noen spørsmål eller at det får noen konsekvenser for deg. Hvis du trekker deg vil all informasjon slettes. Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk Samfunnsvitenskapelig Datatjeneste.

Hvis du har lyst å være med på intervjuet kan du sende meg en mail på inats@stud.ntnu.no, eller kontakte meg på mobil 40073325. Ta også kontakt hvis det er noe du lurer på.

Med vennlig hilsen

Ina Tvedt Solberg

Mastergradstudent

Inst. for Psykologi

Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet (NTNU)

Appendix no.5: Consent form

Samtykke til deltakelse i studien

Jeg er villig til å delta i studien

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

Jeg bekrefter å ha gitt informasjon om studien

(Signert, rolle i studien, dato)