

1 Teaching on the Frontline

The positive effects of journal writing in the context of teacher preparation and teacher training are well documented (e.g., Dieker and Monda-Amaya, 1995; Gilar et al., 2007; Jarvis, 1992). Here a special education teacher started a journal upon commencing work at a large German city's specialized school to help him cope with the transition. At that time, he had more than 12 years professional experience. The journal covers the first 95 work days at the new school. During the first 33 work days, the teacher made daily entries without interruption followed by a lengthy hiatus lasting 36 work days. Finally, he started making entries again sporadically summarizing events on work days 70-95 (Fig. 1.1). There the journal ends. These »field notes« (Patton 2002, p. 302) offer insights into a challenging pedagogical world. The teacher made his journal available for a scholarly evaluation.

The several perspectives from which we can view these journal contents can be viewed yield the following questions for research: What student behavior is displayed here? What didactic and pedagogical strategies does the teacher employ and how can these be made still more effective? How does the journal-keeping teacher reflect on his educational work and how could one-on-one coaching provide him with effective support? What do we learn about the school culture as a whole and how it could be improved to better support the teacher's efforts in the classroom?

With regard to the first research question, an extensive literature shows that students with emotional and social needs often do not work on the tasks assigned by the teacher, that their behavior interrupts the lesson if it does not shut it down completely, and that they often provoke conflicts during class with other students and teachers (e.g., Kauffman and Landrum, 2011; Stichter et al., 2008), depending on how well developed the individual students' coping strategies (e.g., McSherry 2013) are. The situation is exacerbated by the concurrent existence of learning problems (e.g., Algozzine et al., 2011; Nicholson 2014).

Seen as helpful and effective, and hence as the backdrop for the second research question, is a caring teacher-student relationship (e.g., Cefai 2013; Cooper 2011; Garza 2009; Kniveton 2004), responding with sensitivity to the developmental needs of the students (e.g., Boorn et al., 2010; Boxall 2010; Colley 2009; Doyle 2003), tuning into the students' life experiences and learning preferences (e.g., O'Connor et al., 2011), and a teaching approach that also makes use of humor (e.g., Rogers 2013) in case of doubt. The teaching of social skills and emotional literacy (e.g., Kavale et al., 2004; Rae 2012) and teaching self-regulation (e.g., Mowat 2010) are additional action approaches holding the promise for success. In didactic terms, the following is held to be effective: employing variable and differentiated learning methods (e.g., Kern et al., 2001; Popp et al., 2011), reducing the level of task difficulty and the task duration in order to decrease escape-motivated problem behavior (e.g., Lee et al., 1999; Moore et al., 2005), offering opportunities to respond (e.g., Haydon et al., 2012), offering choices (e.g., Shogren et al., 2004) and, finally, giving behavior-specific praise (e.g., Marchant and Anderson, 2012). All pedagogical and didactic strategies must be carefully tailored to the specific context of a learning group (Conroy et al., 2014).

With regard to the third research question, we can fall back on a literature that addresses reflection on one's own educational practices (e.g., Schön 1983), teacher self-awareness and teacher resilience (e.g., Howard and Johnson, 2004; Richardson and Shupe, 2003; Skovolt and Trotter-Mathison, 2011) as well as coaching and performance feedback (e.g., Lane et al., 2014). The goal always remains the same: Reinforce

the individual teacher's professionalism and optimize the application of available know-how, here in the field of teaching students with emotional and social difficulties (Anderson-DeMello and Hendrickson, 2014). A solution-focused approach (e.g., Rae 2012) adds a great deal of value to this. Coach-the-teacher then is geared to the question of what works well. Fourth, looking at the school's overall culture, a key factor is involving the parents in all school-related issues (e.g., Ogden 2013; Sheldon and Epstein, 2002). Segregating their schooling in self-contained classrooms may impair the students' opportunities for social communication and participation (Panacek and Dunlap, 2003). The active involvement of the surrounding school community (e.g., Klein 2000) in school life therefore seems all the more significant. Support for the individual teacher by his colleagues and a dedicated principal (e.g., Blase and Blase, 2004; Blase and Kirby, 2009; Gamman 2003; Gardiner and Enomoto, 2006), either through joint supervision or reflection and the development of school-wide strategies, are indispensable. Further, well-developed interprofessional work (e.g., Eber and Keenan, 2004; Hamill and Boyd, 2001; O'Connor 2013) and an after-school program that offers stability and direction and, at the same time, relevant learning opportunities specifically to students in this field (e.g., Woodland 2008) are important pillars of a school culture that effectively supports the work of teachers in the classrooms.

To answer the research questions defined at the start, the field notes were subjected to a document analysis. For objectivity's sake, a second researcher worked in parallel, carrying out every step independently herself. The two researchers compared results. The content analysis filtered »themes« and »patterns« (Patton 2002) from the journal text. To this end, the text of 28,700 words was first divided into the smallest possible meaningful units. The next step dealt with labeling themes and assigning the material to these overarching thematic categories (Fig. 1.2). This was followed by finding patterns within the thematic areas.

The »case study« (Bassegy 1999; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007; Flyvberg, 2011; Patton, 2002, pp. 447-452; Stake, 2005; Yin, 2009) also serves as a point of reference here, for threaded through this teacher's

journal in effect are eight interwoven student cases. What follows is an overview of the themes and patterns that were found. These are illustrated by way of sample excerpts from the teacher's journal.

Description of the working conditions prevailing at this school takes up 4% of the entire journal: »... brief handover talk with the departing classroom teacher... I am taking over five of his students, with three new students from outside to be added, all of them between 14 and 16 years old... I will teach for 27.5 hours. Weekly... three schoolyard supervisions of thirty minutes each... I work alone in my classroom throughout. Every week, I can send a small group of students to departmental colleagues in the media classroom and shop classroom. There is a... billiards room... gym... foosball room and... school kitchen (day 2).«

Description of student behavior makes up nearly one-third (31%) of the journal text. Sorting all related patterns, 400 (62%) belong to the disruptive category and 242 (37%) to the constructive group. Nine cases (1%) are mixed, e.g.: »Leon is busily filing away... at a piece of wood that he found outside in front of the school. He is making one end pointed like a spear. As file, he is using a screw that he had fished out of my junk drawer. Working with such simple means, he says, reminds him of the survival strategies of the Huns... he wraps one end of the piece of wood with bast fiber, and now he has an archaic-looking hand weapon (day 13).«

Let us take a look at problematic patterns of student behavior (Fig. 1.3). With 22% not abiding by school rules is the most-frequently encountered pattern. Individually, this means: being late, leaving early, leaving school premises during recess. The frequency trend line for these patterns over the 95 days slopes slightly upward: »Patrick takes off without permission after recess (day 11)... Max drops out of sight, Patrick also disappears (day 16)... Acatey walks out of the individual class set up for him after a few minutes (day 28)... Dominic, Max, Tim and Leon for days already have been leaving the school grounds during yard recess and roam around the shopping street (day 29)... Jonas presumably has

been truant for days already. He has a cough, he says on the phone. During the past year, Jonas has missed more than 70% of school days (day 33)... Patrick's cell phone rings, and he is gone (day 80).«

The behavioral pattern acting aggressively toward other students can exhibit itself verbally and/or physically. It is also highly represented with 21%: »Acatey holds Fabian's book bag out the window and drops it... Acatey hurls the ball... straight into Tim's face... to the bike shed with Fabian, to unlock his bike for him. Acatey squeezes in between us and rides off on Fabian's bike, disappearing into the city (day 7)... Acatey strikes at Patrick's head as he stands in front of the window. The latter's head hits the window frame. Furious, Patrick attacks Acatey (day 14)... Acatey... tries constantly to provoke Leon, by hitting or kicking, or waving his hands or fist in front of his face, pretending to kick his head... gets very close to Leon's face, gathers spittle in his mouth and makes as if he is going to spit it at him... hurls curses at Leon: ›Fuck your mother! Your mother is a whore. You freak! Your mother crapped you!‹ (day 15)... The computer network cables are ripped out. Loud yelling and carrying on« (day 30).

Actively rejecting curricular learning registers at 18%. The trend line shows a marked downward slope (Fig. 1.4). »Nobody wants to work on the assignment sheets passed out (day 3)... The first one refuses. The next one reads a couple of sentences and stops... then Max throws his notebook, nearly hitting my head: ›Here, you can have it back!‹ Three, four more notebooks land on my desk (day 4)... the boys work maybe three to eight minutes. Max complains his sheet is too easy. ›I won't do it, don't want to, give me something more difficult; naw, now that is too difficult for me, I'm not doing it‹, throws the sheet on the floor... It's all over with the others, too (day 6)... Leon protests... when I pass out the homework (day 14)... The boys refuse to take out their work folders and books... Fabian gives subtraction on paper a try, but gives up already after five minutes... He will not accept any help (day 15)... ›I want to get on the PC and play; I'm bored‹... that Fabian has not filled out a single part of the English Level 1 work book from the previous school year... ›So what, it's all boring, can I go now?‹ (day 18).«

Acting aggressively toward the teacher as another disruptive pattern, expressed verbally and/or physically, was determined in 16% of cases: »Patrick swears at me: »Hey, you jackass! You mongoloid!« (day 11). Max... turns up his cell phone, it is a screeching, shrill piece of music... He says: »What's your problem? I'll punch you in the face in a second!« (day 15)... Acatey... »What did you talk about with my mother? I'll sock you!«... (day 19)... While I sit next to Fabian to show him written division, Acatey waves the broomstick behind my head (day 19)... Patrick attacks me, what's with »all this queer jabbering«, and what do I care how they are doing. Tim... he would love to beat me up good for all the »crap« we are doing during class here... moves his hands and arms karate-style. »You're just fucking with me«... Acatey demands to be returned to regular class. »Freak! German potato! Rat fag!« he hisses at me (day 28)... Leon says to me: »Freak, you can suck my big one!... I have nothing to say to you, you joker!« (day 32)... Leon threatens to beat me up if I dare to give him a new weekly lesson plan (day 33).«

Destroying learning materials and objects makes up 14% of the disruptive student behavior recorded by the teacher. The trend line clearly points down (Fig. 1.5): »Numerous objects fly out the window ... the classroom is on the 4th floor and the ceiling is very high... dishes, books, paper, notebooks... food... the sink is plugged up with glue and overflows (day 3)... Acatey rips a door from the cabinet that has a locker for each student (day 7)... Fabian with a piece of wood knocks stucco off places where the walls are already damaged. »So what, what's your problem? They're going to renovate in here anyway«, he says (day 10).«

Disruptive behavior in the wider community was a factor 5% of the time: »While I pay, Acatey and Fabian steal cones behind the ice cream seller's back... Fabian jostles an oncoming man... Fabian, with a smile, asks a woman if he can pet her dog... then pulls the yowling beast by its tail... the boys want to go to the cathedral... they go to a side altar and blow out dozens of candles... Acatey has seized on an offering box and is shaking it... to get at the coins inside... heads over to the candles again and spits the flame out on two of them... by the Rhine river promenade, they pull each other into a fountain (day 3)... Acatey tears open the door

to a midday care center. Children are playing with beads and blocks... Acatey sweeps everything off the table (day 14)... Acatey... puts down fifty Euro and says: »From a cell phone, with camera, ripped off... in... sold...« (day 15)... Leon, Max and Tim... threatened the owner of a health food store... when she asks them if she can help with anything else, they say no, but still do not leave the store... when the owner asked the boys to leave the store... Leon walked up to her and said: »You're about to get a punch in the mouth« (day 31)... Fabian... gives a parked car a kick. A colleague reports... that he had slammed a shopping cart against a parked car; then he jumped on the hood of another car (day 80).«

In 2% of the cases, the students ignored the teacher's specific instructions: »While driving the pedal cars, Acatey once more disregards the rules, crosses the threshold, purposely crashes into the others, drives through the door out on the street (day 11)... Max, during recess, climbs on top of the toilet house, and runs around on it (day 12)... Acatey shows up too early, he is trying to sabotage the new class schedule. He is also not ready to leave again (day 15)... as soon as the computers are up... games are booted up: Counterstrike and Döner-Mafia (day 30).«

In a further 2% of cases, the teacher had to deal with really dangerous behaviors by his students: »Twice, Max tosses a chair (with iron frame) against the wall (day 3)... Acatey runs over a first grader with the heavy pedal car while the teacher was crossing the schoolyard to the gym with her charges (day 6)... Leon is at the window sill... suddenly, a giant flame almost sets the curtain ablaze. He had wrapped a ping pong ball in aluminum foil and... lit it with a lighter (day 18)... Leon opens firecrackers, pretends he wants to examine the powder and finally pours it into a tennis ball. He fills the remaining empty space with thin paper and mounts a fuse on it (day 29)... Leon carries hair spray in his pocket... A... jet of fire shoots through the room (day 31).«

We now turn to the 242 constructive patterns in student behavior (37%). Figure 1.6 shows how the patterns were differentiated by categories. With 31% willingness to engage in curricular learning is the constructive behavior most often encountered among the students. The

trend line drops slightly: »Tim and Dominic participate in a half hour of English instruction (day 7)... It goes well for about twenty minutes. Then the boys want to get on the computer (day 13)... They actually begin to do math (day 14)... Acatey works along well today during the individual mentoring. After forty minutes, the air has gone out of him (day 30). They mostly take the weekly lesson plans home now and work on them more or less thoroughly... between 5% and 70%, on the daily plans 5% and 40% (day 72).«

Fifteen percent of cases fit the pattern communicating positively with other students: »Some of the boys have not breakfasted and want to go buy buns and cold cuts. When they return, they set the round table in back of the classroom (day 13)... Leon has brought buns to be heated... Because no one had yet done the dishes and cutlery, an improvised breakfast is served on a stolen tabloid newspaper on my desk, because the boys opine that it was the cleanest place. Margarine and chocolate spread... are ladled on with the finger, »just like in a Hun encampment«, Leon says (day 18).«

Following school rules (attendance) becomes visible in 14% of cases, the teacher took the trouble to note that certain students were in class. This shows a slightly decreasing tendency. Twelve percent of positive patterns relate to quiet, constructive behavior by the students during low-threshold, self-determined activities such as computer games, listening to music or playing foosball.

Reflecting on own behaviors and life backgrounds factored in 12% of the time. The trend line climbs slightly: »Can you picture it, how he beat me, my father? For years... He drank his fill and then he always started in... I swear, nothing was going on between that man and my mother... There my father stood in the doorway, legs apart... my mother told him that she was so tired... »Yes, from screwing!« says my father... He goes for her. »Don't you hit her«, I said, »I'll kill you!« But, he keeps after her and hits her in the face, several times. She is bleeding... she tears open a drawer... takes out a long knife and says to him: »All right, come on!« I run outside, take my cell phone and call the police... my father is lying on the floor, gurgling... I was totally out of it, my mother

in the corner, totally done in, shaking, crying« (Leon on day 25)... »Tim asks me, if I knew what ›psychological stress‹ is. A friend of his supposedly has it, so his doctor had told him. And that's why he still bed wets at night, at the age of thirteen. He himself had the same problem for quite a while. Did I have any advice for his friend by chance? (day 90).«

Building a positive relationship with the teacher was encountered in 9% of cases, with a slightly falling trend line: »Patrick shows me a picture of his attack dog... Then he offers me peanuts (day 3)... Leon tells me about his life as part of a Hun horde... that his identity was largely that of a Hun... his shock of dark hair, standing up on his head, long in back and shaved at the temples, emphasizes it (day 12)... I am invited to join an improvised breakfast. Tim insists that I also take a bun (day 13)... leafed through the Guinness Book of Records with Patrick and Leon. Leon lies to left of me on the side table and Patrick stands immediately to my right... we... comment on the pictures... Patrick smiles... friendly... there follow tentative touches to my hand, my arm or my shoulder (day 13)... Leon rides a skateboard... constantly, he calls out to me. ›Look at me... Look at me...‹ (day 15)... Leon meanwhile crisps his bread, and then mine also. He insists on doing this for me (day 16)... Leon rides skateboard again and constantly wants my attention, also physical touching, with me pushing him. This moves Patrick to pat me on the back and shoulder several times; this, from the same Patrick who usually avoids all physical contact (day 17)... Leon asks me if I have any chap stick, his lips were so dry (day 26).«

Asking the teacher for help, assistance or shelter was found in 5% of cases: »The new students seek sanctuary and protection with me, even if in disguised fashion (day 3)... Leon says he is afraid of getting into fights and so wants to stay close to me all the time (day 10)... Leon is still afraid and wants to sit in the office when I am not on the yard (day 11)... Leon... stays... in my vicinity in the school yard (day 13).«

Exhibiting successful emotional self-control shows up in 2% of cases: »Acatey can't get on the PCs, because of passwords set by the other students. He succeeds in maintaining control of himself (day 30).«

Positives and negatives lie close together and interlock: »Acatey invariably buys breakfast only for himself; now and then he shares some candy, but tosses it over so... contemptuously... that the others do not accept the stuff. Max, Dominic, Tim and Leon, in contrast, develop first solidarity arrangements among themselves; different students alternate, even if irregularly, in bringing something to eat and sharing with the others... When Acatey sits at his desk and eats whatever he has brought... he does so with loud smacking noises, something the others have a hard time putting up with (day 20).«

The positive can quickly tip into the destructive: »Leon devises a plan for a ›cozy kitchen corner‹, with food and drinks in the refrigerator to be bought out of a common kitty. ›When the others are ready, I mean, when they don't destroy or throw stuff around, then...‹ Acatey... provokes Leon... This time, Leon loses his cool and he shouts furiously at Acatey: ›For once, just shut your mouth, you damn foreigner! They must have crapped you out, huh? One of these days we'll wipe all our damn foreigners out!‹ and raises a chair and threatens to throw it at Acatey (day 16)... (in the billiard room)... We have been playing for three or four minutes, when Acatey's constructive mood suddenly turns. He hits the white ball so hard that it bounds over the table edge and shoots in the direction of my face. All the while, he grins at me out of his dark, glittering eyes. Acatey changes his stance, so get a better shot at me. Then he waves the queue in front of my face as if about to hit me with it (day 23).«

Ambiguous situations can be productive but require coolness and vision: »Leon has brought in a condom, fills it with water, knots it and plays with it... He reads attentively what I write on a poster, while he sits cross-legged to my right on the table... Leon raises the water filled condom to his mouth and sucks on it... Leon suddenly stands behind me and touches me on the throat, ears, neck with this phallic symbol... He does all this in a joking... way. Then he splats the water filled condom against my thigh so that it bursts. Leon contorts with laughter, but at the same time he seems embarrassed, and he apologizes (day 24)... Then Leon takes two... tables... shoves them up against the sides of my desk, lies

across them... pensively sucks and draws on the water filled condom... Then he says: »Oh, crap, my life is really messed up. I'm in an institution and then here, in this school, what kind of life am I going to have?... I've thought about jumping off a bridge« (day 25).«

Behavioral progress takes time: »Fabian is eating candy again and drops the wrappers on the floor. He picks them up unwillingly at the end of the class, but instead of throwing them into the waste basket purposely misses it. Finally, he does pick up some of the papers again. He leaves the rest on the floor (day 16)... Max is still spitting pumpkin seed shells on the floor, but more and more frequently directly into the waste basket (day 85).«

In a few instances, a student helps the teacher clarify his pedagogic concern, however, in a language suitable for precipitating the next conflict among the students: »Patrick: »You idiot, you bastard, you fly shit, didn't you get it? He means that you are responsible for what you learn here! Get it?!« (day 25).«

The documented teacher's behavior corresponds to almost the same extent (31%) with the comprehensively described student behavior. This we broke down into several patterns (Fig. 1.7). In 30% of the cases, the teacher is busy containing transgressive or destructive behavior: »The boys... are kicking the ball around the classroom. I... lock the ball up again (day 4)... then I grab the chair and pull it down... to the floor again (day 10)... I announce that I will send Max home immediately if he tears my seating arrangement up again... »It is not acceptable to speak with me in that tone of voice...« I ask him to turn off the music (day 15)... This time, I insist that Fabian picks up all the candy wrappers (day 16)... I approach Acatey determinedly and tell him that I do not like his game (day 23)... I plant myself in front of Acatey... will he »manage today to abide by three rules: no insults, no physical contact with another, no damaging anything?« (day 25)... Acatey demands to be returned to the regular classes. I tell him the conditions (day 28)... one day suspension from school for Leon, for reason of the hairspray and flame jet (day 32).«

Fostering curricular learning and implementing learning assessment is represented with 24%: »I choose a text about friendships in a clique

and ask the students to read (day 4)... pass out math sheets at differing levels of difficulty (day 6)... test his knowledge and skills in math and English... grade Leon's first homework assignment... exchange a more difficult text book for Leon's English book (day 10)... propose to delve into the Hun subject as part of school work (day 12)... try to be in better tune with the boys' actual math skills, test Tim's learning level (day 15)... Leon is interested in geometry, so we skip around in the book a bit (day 18)... I come up with the idea of taking what Leon said... developing it... into questions for research (day 24)... I engage the youths... in discussions about computer games... what they think about the effect of games on perceptions and behavior of the players (day 30)... discussion about Preußler's book ›Krabat‹... how far they have read in it, what they find interesting in it, where they are having difficulty understanding, I paint a poster... with the names of the fictional characters (day 33)... Next... step by step got the students... used to a weekly lesson plan, with regard to homework... The challenges... are widely varied, so that there is... something for every ability level in it... Later, I introduced... additionally daily lesson plans, in order to give the morning a firm but flexible structure (day 72)... I spoke about performance evaluations... that there would be objective content requirements for the various subjects, and I provide an overview for math, biology and English... to give them a chance to recognize their own performance level (day 75).«

The pattern exploring and reflecting the students' world was represented at 10%: »I start by talking about getting acquainted. I thought about a kind of chart for self-presentation... categories like interests, neighborhood, and age (day 3)... a discussion about experiences during summer vacation (day 5)... I speak extensively with Leon about the Hun horde... to which he belongs (day 12)... I ask the new arrivals how they are doing, how they spent the afternoon the day before and the evening (day 16).«

Teaching and acknowledging positive behavior occurred in 9% of cases: »I thank Dominic for his cooperation (day 5)... Acatey worked for ten minutes on problems he picked out himself from the math book. I praise him for this (day 11)... I repeatedly speak with Leon about not

letting himself be lured into a brawl with Acatey and give him praise for already having restrained himself for so long... Later, corrected Fabian's essay. I praised him for doing the work (day 16)... To Max: ›Did you not see a chance to come to Gerrit's aid or to at least exert a calming influence on the situation?‹ (day 19)... To Leon: ›Your great strength is that you can think so well about yourself and about everything that goes on inside you, that you are aware of these things‹ (day 25)... I boil water... and rinse the breakfast dishes... Does he ever help out in the kitchen at home, I ask Acatey... ›Wouldn't you like to sweep up? That way, you also have something to do. Besides, then I'll be finished faster and we can read something together‹ (day 27). I brought a Jiu-Jitsu trainer to class with me. The trainer and I acted as if we were provoking each other, then used different defensive techniques, he from Jiu-Jitsu, me from Tai Chi... we discussed aspects such as... inner strength, controlling one's own aggression, self-discipline, protecting one's own private space, and simply walking away at times (day 90).«

Developing learning motivation and future perspectives was found as a pattern in 8% of the teacher interventions: »I take up the wish of resuming schooling in a mainstream school and encourage the boys not to let up from applying themselves to their work (day 7)... Asked Max today about his perspective on job prospects, wants to ›turn tricks as whore at the train station‹ (day 14)... talk with Leon about his career goals... I suggest looking into which job specifications touch on his interests... e.g., electric equipment installer, electronic technician for drive technology, what the job descriptions are for these professions, what the training prerequisites and requirements are (day 25).«

Creating and maintaining classroom order and a healthy learning environment was found in 7% of cases: »In the cabinets, I lock up anything I can grab, so that everything does not go sailing out the windows... there is still sweeping up, with a borrowed broom (day 3)... I set up a schedule who can go when to the shop room and the media room (day 9)... I inform them about the new regime with the second time-shifted lesson plan (day 11)... I take Tim and Dominic with me... to buy... broom, hand broom, dustpan, rinsing bowl, dishwashing liquid, and a new binder for

each student (day 17)... I obtained green plants and put them on the window sills. In the back of the classroom, I put up natural science maps of fauna and flora and a teaching poster with all ship types (day 24).«

Building positive teacher-student relationships was a 7% factor: »I invite the boys out for ice cream (day 3)... I continually get... students from the two classrooms adjoining mine on either side. I take the opportunity to start a conversation with these boys as well (day 4)... I absolutely must sit down for this... I bring a teapot and buttered bread with me and sit down with the four of them. Tim insists that I also take a bun (day 13)... I ask Max and the others how they are getting along (day 15)... Leon crimps his bread in the meantime, later mine as well. He insists on doing this for me (day 16)... I bring more green plants to the classroom, sweep, wipe bookshelves, window sills, and tables with a moist cloth, rinse drinking cups, boil water, make lemon tea for the boys... create a familial ambiance (day 85).«

Clarifying group conflicts was found in 5% of cases: »Back in the classroom, I try to unwind the conflict between Acatey and Patrick (day 14)... after a short rest period the opponents spend in separate classrooms, we succeed in clearing up what happened and the interior process (day 17)... We end the talk with the agreement that they would avoid each other and should their paths cross, not to start arguing (day 19)... I also prepare two posters, one in orange, the other in yellow. This time with the headings ›external complaints‹ and ›inner complaints‹ (day 24)... As I am trying to pull apart two scufflers tied up in each other, Leon tries to stop me from doing so. First, I have to shake him off before I can intervene in the heated struggle of the two boys now fighting on the ground, already ringed by... spectators (day 30).«

The teacher's thoughts, emotions and reflections as another theme makes up 13% of the teacher's journal entries. We differentiated among the following patterns (Fig. 1.8): Seeing through and beyond the student behavior occurred in almost 30% of cases: »Why the wanton throwing of stuff out the window?... Establishing a hierarchy among one themselves?... To let go... of the teacher left?... Find out how I react to these things? (day 3)... Neither of the two budges. Perhaps it would mean a

loss of face... Acatey hangs on... to Patrick, although... physically the weaker. It is as if he was inviting... the punches and kicks... every few days he has blue splotches on his face (day 14)... The first, deeper-going relations take root among the students over the communal breakfast... that Acatey will not be asked to join in anymore, because he has blown it with this group... It is also possible that he does not find any kind of model for this kind of social interaction within himself (day 20). Leon has now emerged for good from my protective shadow and has changed sides. He starts to continually attack and insult me in front of the other students... he wants to arrive once and for all in the group of classmates and be accepted in it (day 30).«

Reflecting and clarifying self-perceptions and own emotions was encountered in 19% of cases: »I'm becoming uneasy (day 3)... the boys are as big as me and even with Tai Chi and fitness training, I do not want risk any physical altercations (day 5)... near-chaos (day 10)... Acatey takes my backpack, and, stupidly, in that class that day my valuables happen to be in it... the students have several times removed my bundle of keys from the desk. A... game, that... is nerve wracking (day 14)... The situation is improving... Hopefully, Acatey will not come in early again... recess is relatively peaceful (day 17)... For a few minutes at least, no outside violations (day 18)... Still, it makes me nervous. Somehow, I blame it on the system for not remedying the chronic staff shortage and seemingly being unconcerned with how I'm going to survive each round under these conditions (day 19).«

Pedagogical and didactical planning is present 12% of the time: »Locking the door and sending the boys who do not belong to my own class away... would... signal rejection (day 4)... In this group setting, which themes... deserve to be stressed?... I visualize what I observe... I describe moderation charts... and hang the charts in the... topic tracker: >to really make an effort and learn something, set goals for yourself, leave all things intact, make use of the teacher's learning offerings, everyone here is special, everyone here is likable, respect others... follow the rules, rule violations have consequences, respect the other's boundaries, be on time for class, formulate learning interests, feel secure, feel

good, be polite, do your homework, help each other, become a group, be at ease sitting around in a group, be in the present moment here. See how the boys react to this?« (day 20).«

Evaluating the effectiveness of own actions occurred in 11% of cases: »I start with a success, a bit of order... to be maintained (day 15)... It is hard to pull the two bodies locked into each other apart. Finally, I succeed (day 17)... I hold out the prospect that every properly completed assignment sheet will get credit for grading purposes. This seems to motivate some (day 18)... Acatey... furious »I'll slug you!... »No, you won't«, I tell him loud and clear. At the same time, I assume a defensive posture derived from Tai Chi. The message hits home (day 19).«

Planning behavior-related interventions factors in 9% of the time: »... slam the door shut, stick the key in the lock and lock it from the inside. This all has to happen very quickly... It is important that no one feels locked up. Locking a rampaging student out is a matter of self-protection and protection of the other students (day 19)... perhaps, make a start by preparing a meal together with Acatey and then eat it together with him and... then invite another student and another... (day 20).«

Analyzing teaching and learning processes was found in 8% of cases: »Holding a regular class is still out of the question (day 11)... that Max simply just copies all results... for the moment... is secondary, I think... homework... For all the others, this is still out of the question. They would do nothing with it (day 14)... I regard... the external chaos caused by the students as a reflection of their inner psychic situation. It makes no sense at this point to ask them to keep themselves in check and to help with sweeping, etc. (day 19)... Acatey... is excluded from the circle of the other classmates, because he simply cannot manage to control his destructive impulses (day 20)... The learning and work behavior had to be built up among the students... from scratch (day 72).«

Dealing with pedagogical dilemmata occurred in 6% of cases: »... what effects would my working with the police have on the quality of my pedagogical relationship with... the... boys, when almost every one of them engages in small-time criminal actions? (day 15)... Max goes to the bathroom... for a smoke? I am glad he is so peaceable today (day 19).

Still urgently have to study... the files... On the other hand, I shy away from it, because after reading these... statements, reports and expert opinions, all the notations are crimes and court dates... I no longer regard the boys without prejudice (day 19). Prohibit... Counterstrike... or thematize it? (day 30)... Döner-Mafia... Was that game... the template for the boys' performance in the health food store? (day 31)... The past year, Jonas has missed more than 70% of school days. Would a mandatory court appearance even do any good? (day 33)... Patrick is becoming softer, more trusting toward me... his father comes on like a Mafia boss. Meanwhile, I've gotten credit from both of them because I relegate everything that is not immediately related to... school to being a family matter, which I steer clear of completely. It is harder for the social worker... Patrick says the man talks too much (day 80).«

Reflecting on teacher-student relationships cropped up in 5% of cases: »... small... talk with the boys from the class next door... this way they feel someone is paying attention to them (day 5)... I sit down in the reading corner with Acatey... some days he appears to be downright fragile and to need support (day 13)... Max... sits cross legged on my desk... As if he wanted to say: ›Look at me! Here I am!‹... He never dared come that close to me before. He acts as if he wants to ram his fist in my face (day 24).«

Collaborating with fellow teachers and the principal as thematic area comprises 9% of the journal text: »The boys are now asking me for a soft ball... to play soccer in the hallway... I check this out with a colleague and learn that it is customary, for relaxation... to let the students... play soccer in the hallway... the colleague from the media room asks... if we had book requisitions (day 4)... here, all colleagues advise against bringing valuable items to the classrooms (day 10). Once again, a colleague had her new cell phone stolen from the teacher's lounge... The students are to arrive in shifts after the weekend in order to rectify the situation. The tip came from colleagues, all supported it in the teacher conference, including the principal (day 10)... Case consultation. I ask the colleagues to tell me about the four *old* students in my class (day

12)... The principal's view is that it is not about exerting power, but instead about acting consistently, for example: If you are going to break off the cabinet door, you will have to pay for it. Then we will ask your father to come and discuss what else remains to be done. So, think about what you are doing. This way, you put the responsibility on the youngster. The principal counsels against breaking ground in too many places and to concentrate foremost on the subject of reparations... The next subject to be thematized could be leaving class without permission. If I am not in a position to devote myself intensively to this construction site then I would do better... to hold off for now (day 13). The teacher next door needs a clean cloth... I send one over to her (day 15)... Visits during class time must be reduced. As a tentative solution we settle on leaving the doors open for a quarter of an hour before class starts to leave the students space for contacts... with each other (day 18)... Together with the principal and teaching staff, I decided that Acatey would no longer take part in regular classroom instruction. He will get three hours individual support from me... other than that, we will let everything that to date has functioned continue to run for him..., an hour of soccer with another class and the moped course (day 27).«

A total of 8% of the journal text falls under the theme collaborating with parents or guardians: »Leon's mother tells me this evening on the phone that I've gotten too close emotionally to her son, which he is having to compensate for by stepping up his aggressiveness (day 13)... Conference with Fabian's foster father, in the principal's presence... we discuss the damages... The father says I'm responsible, because I failed to prevent the escalation. He says: »If the hotel guests are dissatisfied, the host gets replaced!« I... invite him... to see for himself... I raise the possibility of setting up an individual learning plan for Fabian, that we can supplement jointly with the father's inputs... A call from Max's mother. He has now been thoroughly tested by a psychologist. »A ticking time bomb«, was what she said. »We'll be lucky if he only kills himself.« The psychologist advocates close child and adolescent psychiatry (day 17)... Conversation with Acatey's parents. Only the mother came... she knows it all by heart already... »Why does Acatey act the way he does?«... then

she talks about the beatings that Acatey... received as a child... explanations, that have to do with an unwanted pregnancy... back then, in eastern Turkey... In any case, it was difficult to love the child... the father has no emotional connection to the son. »Neither of us cares about him anymore«, says the mother. »We were in contact with a psychiatric clinic... Acatey did not want to talk with the psychiatrist. He said that the boy was filled with hate and violence, something needed to be done urgently. But we did not get a new appointment« (day 18)... Class open house evening... the parents read the subject roster on the wall... express agreement with the subjects I am emphasizing... Leon's mother says, her son has a big problem with being allowed to make mistakes. He had urgently to practice writing. He had been... covering up his weaknesses for years... During recess... a visit. The domestic partner of Leon's mother and a Hun friend, brass rings on his fingers, T-shirts with pit bull portraits. They came to see who is always beating up on Leon and to read the boys the riot act (day 28)... When I place a call to Jonas, loud Hip Hop music by a band greets me... A few days later, the phone line is disconnected... Acatey says, his parents had filed a grievance with the education office because he only gets nine hours of class (day 33)... Sent a list of all the unexcused absences by Jonas to the mother (day 72).«

The theme interprofessional work and relationship between school and community is represented at 4% in the journal. Interdisciplinary work occurs along lines like this: »Evening... phone conversation with Fabian's therapist... that Fabian acts almost »submissive«... in the three or four therapy sessions to date... and tries very hard to do what is asked of him. When it comes to school... he appropriates the victim role for himself. To the therapist, he selectively reports things that undergird this victim image (day 23).«

The school-community subject area is reflected in the following passages: »It is my birthday, and so I invite the students out to a Turkish pizzeria. When we get there, the door is still locked. Acatey beats with his fist against the glass. An old Turk runs over and tells him to knock it off... On the way back to school, a few boys get into an argument with the scaffolding crew on the church. Tim apparently had climbed up a

ladder. I mediate. Then a group runs into the church... I herd the boys right away out of the church, after the experience at the cathedral (day 17)... The windows of an apartment across from the school are repeatedly broken with stones. Some of my students seem to know something. The principal has numerous conversations. The perpetrator is never identified (day 80).«

Acatey and Leon pose the biggest challenge for the teacher throughout, as attested to by the frequency with which these two names appear in the journal (Fig. 1.9). Acatey's (16) behavior is characterized by a high degree of rule breaking and violence. The boy's moods fluctuate in an unpredictable manner. Destructive impulses or merely movement impulses are acted out immediately. Acatey meets bonding overtures on the part of the teacher with suspicion and aggression. But slow, continuous progress emerges. As the youth begins to trust the teacher, he faces up to class assignments and endures the frustration he experiences due to his glaring learning deficits. Even if only in very small steps, he begins to slowly conform to the school system of rules, although there is occasional serious recidivism. Passing the moped exam on the one hand is an incentive for him to practice his reading and to learn more German. He also tentatively begins to let the teacher help him; however, he lacks discipline and perseverance. Some days, Acatey at least manages to concentrate for five or ten minutes. But then he jumps out of his chair, abandons his practice materials and obeys the most varied impulses.

Leon (15), newly enrolled at the school at the same time as the teacher took over the class, attaches himself closely to him. The teenager immediately takes the initiative to form a strong bond in which he at first feels protected and cared for. On this foundation, he engages in both a first reflexive examination of his own situation in life as well as the tentative reentry into school learning. Leon had completely ceased learning in the secondary school that he attended before. The pedagogical relationship between the teacher and Leon is put to a severe test after a few months when the boy not only steps out of the teacher's protective sphere, but suddenly switches to attacking his teacher for several weeks

in an exceedingly destructive way. It may be assumed that the young man did this to be accepted by his classmates and admitted to the peer group he previously half dreaded. Once this phase ends, Leon is successful in resuming his reflexive examination of his own life situation and also his school learning in the previously developed form.

Fabian (16), the foster child, constantly avoids entering into a binding pedagogical relationship. His work habits remain erratic. Although he has the most intellectual potential in this study group, he steadfastly rejects learning and lets his impulses drive him in all directions. Fabian persists in his challenging behavior the entire time.

Max (14), abandoned by his abusive father, confronts the teacher in a suspicious, hostile manner and during the entire documented period cannot be motivated to enter into a trusting educational relationship. His pattern is one of provocation and attack. His emotional inner life seems torn, fear- and conflict-ridden so that all conversation about emotions and personal experience is blocked aggressively. He works at learning things in fits and starts as long as the group has no more than three or four students and the very dominant or impulsive ones are not in the room. Before the new teacher arrived at the school, Max stood on the ledge outside the window (4th floor) and threatened to jump.

Patrick's (16) behavior is gradually becoming more stable. He slowly gains confidence in his teacher, although, depending how he feels on a given day, he can also act highly aggressively and insultingly towards the teacher. In sheltered situations, where just a few and quieter classmates are present, he begins to grapple with his massive learning deficits and actually practices his reading and math. Wanting to pass the moped test spurs him on and he also accepts the teacher's help for it.

Dominik's (14) social behavior stabilizes soon after he also newly enrolled at the school. He quickly comes to trust the teacher, but also tends on occasion to behave in a provocative manner, probably to avoid jeopardizing his status among his peers. Initially, he applies himself well to his weekly and daily lesson plans, wavering now and then, but in the end continues to develop fairly well.

Tim (14), also newly enrolled at the school when the teacher arrived at the school, built a positive relationship with the teacher right from the start. Still, he repeatedly heaps verbal abuse on the teacher, but there is something playful and ritualistic about it and it evaporates quickly. Often, Tim smiles at the end of these swearing tirades and will say something conciliatory designed to mollify the teacher again. Similarly to Leon, in the beginning he attaches himself to the teacher but not nearly as closely. He quickly gains his footing in the new school environment. He abides by some rules; others he interprets loosely or circumvents.

Jonas (15) skips school completely after putting in a brief appearance at the start of the school year. After several attempts by the teacher to contact the parents about this, the telephone line was disconnected.

The social behavior of nearly all the students throughout this class made high demands on the teacher. Two students especially, Acatey and Leon, monopolize his attention (Fig. 1.9). Complicating the situation are the simultaneously prevailing learning problems of the 14-16 year old youths. As concerns students Leon, Patrick, Dominik and Tim, the teacher manages to create a reliable pedagogical relationship, based on which they can then reengage with the learning process. With Acatey this works only fitfully, with Max and Fabian hardly at all in the recorded time frame. The teacher continually offers an ongoing, reliable teaching relationship and exactly the same differentiated learning proposition. There is no deviating from them, even in turbulent times, as when Leon behaves in a very destructive manner toward the teacher. The differentiated and individualized learning opportunities in the form of daily and weekly lesson plans provide choices for the students, exerting a positive effect on the youths' willingness to learn. The teacher also provides numerous chances to participate in the lessons, also to address their own experience and backgrounds of experience and to express themselves. He praises and rewards positive student behavior in school. In Leon's case, he even succeeds in guiding the teenager to a deeper, reflexive examination of his educational biography and life circumstances. On the other hand, Jonas, the consistent school truant, drops off the teacher's radar. His name hardly appears any more in the journal.

This teacher is a »reflective practitioner« (Schön 1983) who seeks to understand what motivates his students' behavior. He analyzes the pedagogical and didactic processes so that he can better calibrate his own actions to the individual learning requirements of his students. On his own initiative, he consults with a coach outside the school in order to expand his own professional action palette.

A trusting relationship with parents and guardians is an important pillar of this school's culture. A close, stable working relationship marked by trust exists with Leon's mother and step father, as well as with the social workers in the group home where the teenager lives during the week. The whole of the work with respect to Leon is developed cooperatively and decisions are implemented consistently. The contacts with the respective parents of Max, Acatey, Patrick, Dominik and Tim are also under an auspicious sign. However, they do not agree on shared concepts for moving the teenagers ahead. Fabian's foster father initially met the teacher with mistrust and aggressiveness, but the teacher nonetheless manages to throw the switch leading to a more positive working relationship.

Cooperation with the police oriented toward intervention and prevention is not practiced for the school as a whole. There is also no collaboration between the school and companies, businesses or social institutions, such as churches, associations, etc. in the surrounding neighborhood. Systematic behavior control is not a component of this educational program. Still, a school-wide behavior management strategy emerges in which group constellations can be varied and changed within certain parameters and selected topics in problem behavior can be worked out situationally. A colleague also supports the teacher by taking Acatey along for hours at a time with her own students to play soccer or for moped training. From time to time, case discussions take place where the teacher can get inputs from his colleagues for further work with his students. In the daily course of things, the teacher must rely on himself.

This teacher, unfazed by extreme student behavior, proffers an educational relationship and differentiated learning opportunities. He works

consistently on building up constructive and dismantling destructive student behavior. He is always trying to stimulate interest in learning on the part of students, develop individual learning goals jointly with the teenagers and to tailor appropriate learning materials to fit these highly individualized learning processes. Through individual coaching, this teacher could now be assisted in formulating his support goals relative to the individual students more clearly and to pursue them even more consistently afterwards. Acatey and Fabian urgently would need to be shown how to master their impulses so they can function in group settings. Max would need aid in coping with his fears so that he can put up with having other teenagers in the room. Given Tim's and Dominik's relatively stable personalities, they could be worked with more consistently in developing disciplined learning and work behavior. Dominik could also become a kind of peer tutor for Max. For Patrick, a consistent external learning environment would have to be created in which he would not have to hide his learning difficulties. Where sufficiently good contacts exist with the parents, but where there was as yet no sturdy working relationship, as in the case of Acatey, Fabian, Patrick and Tim, it seems that the problems and interests of the parents could be explored more extensively, in order to then involve them more intensively in the educational furtherance of their children. Where there is no contact at all, as with the mother of the truant Jonas, a joint home visit by the teacher and a youth services worker would seem to be indicated in order to make clear the scholastic interest in the youth's personal and professional future.

Based on these journal entries, interprofessional work is rather weakly developed. With respect to Leon, it actually works very well, because here the parents, home workers, youth services and teacher maintain steady contacts. The principal and the teacher corps should make it their goal to collaborate intensively outside the school with youth services, police, psychological, psychiatric and social pedagogical facilities. In this way, a truant like Jonas could eventually be reconnected to the school, and the criminal behavior of some of these students in the neighborhood could be curbed. That Acatey in the final analysis only gets

about 5-6 hours classtime per week, though this is understandable in view of the stress he puts on the learning group, nevertheless, this kind of flexible but also truncated schooling gives rise to intervals without rules in which there are always new violations of boundaries and punishable acts and the youth becomes ever more alienated from school learning. An after-school program is lacking and should be urgently instituted in this school. Teacher support must be expanded; more presence and commitment by the principal could be helpful, as could involvement by the community surrounding the school. The bonding pedagogy practiced within this school is without doubt a great strength. Complementary behavior management would seem advisable, to further consolidate the behavior of individual students, protect fellow students, and to unburden the teacher with respect to his very high energy expenditure and to let him really teach. However, this would require working consistently, in an engaged and close manner, with all the extracurricular network partners, such as youth services, the police, and neighborhood stakeholders, etc. Of course, the school would need to have more personnel assigned, so that such a demanding learning group as described here can be consistently team-taught by two teachers.

It was not this teacher's intent to systematically treat categories derived from theory in his journal on a daily basis. He simply wanted to unburden his soul by writing down what he had experienced in his work (Fig. 1.10). This gives the textual content a high degree of subjective truth. He openly discusses the daily difficulties that confront him every day as teacher. A spontaneously authored journal text is naturally subjectively colored and does not allow for generalizations. To get as objective a picture of the educational work at this school as possible, we would need journals or verbal reflections from other teachers, the students, parents and the school principal. On the other hand, this journal gives us vivid insight into an educator's daily life that is very challenging. The journal only became available for scholarly evaluation after the fact, when the documented processes already were history. The teacher communicated verbally that he would have continued to put his peda-

gical experiences to paper had a coach given him professional feedback on it. There might even be a chance that forms of student-related support planning, teacher coaching, pedagogical quality improvement and school enhancement in the field of teaching students with emotional and social difficulties in the future could rely in part on journals kept by teachers.

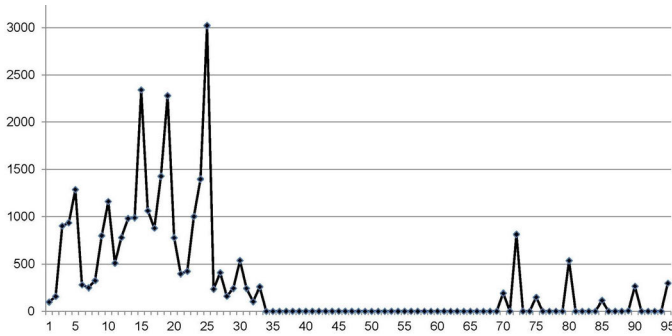


Figure 1.1: Quantity of written words per day

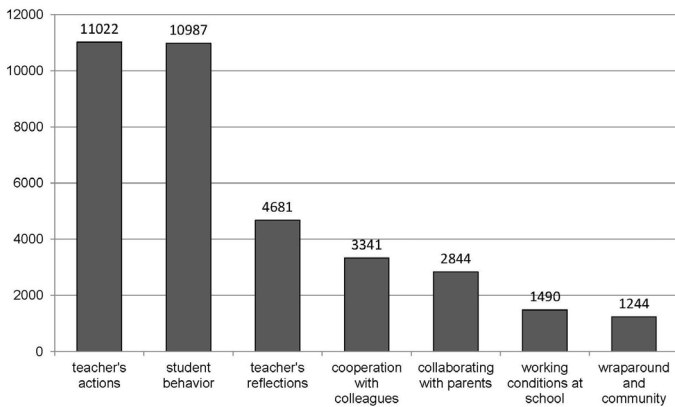


Figure 1.2: Themes of field notes and quantity of words in each category

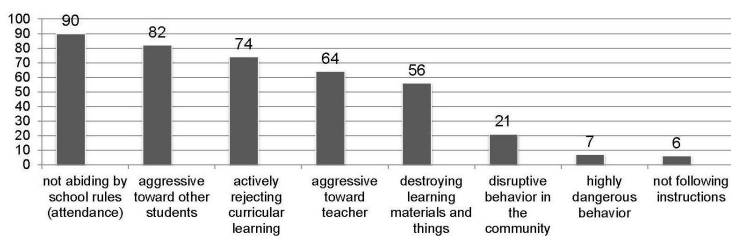


Figure 1.3: Student behavior: Negative patterns with quantity of words

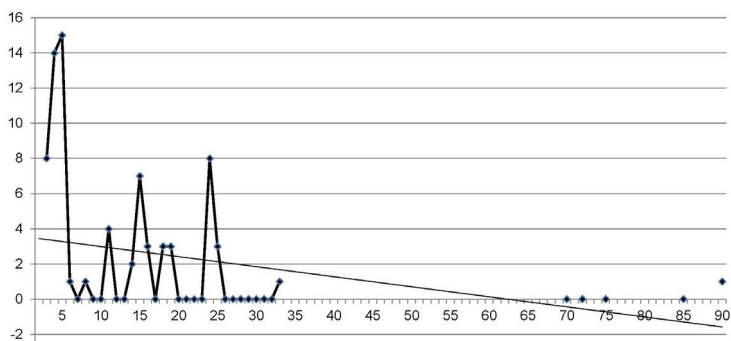


Figure 1.4: Students actively rejecting curricular learning with quantity of pattern per school day, and trend line

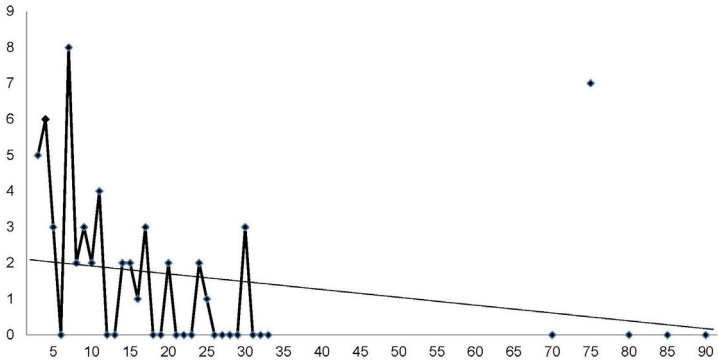


Figure 1.5: Students destroying learning materials and things with quantity of pattern per school day, and trend line

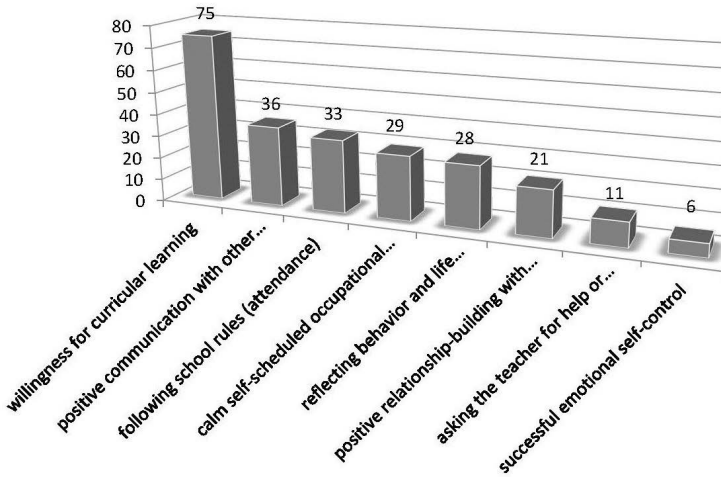


Figure 1.6: Student behavior: Positive patterns and quantity of pattern

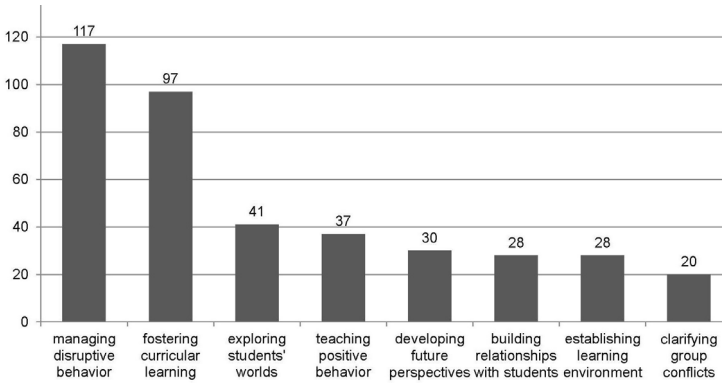


Figure 1.7: The teacher's actions: Patterns and quantity of pattern

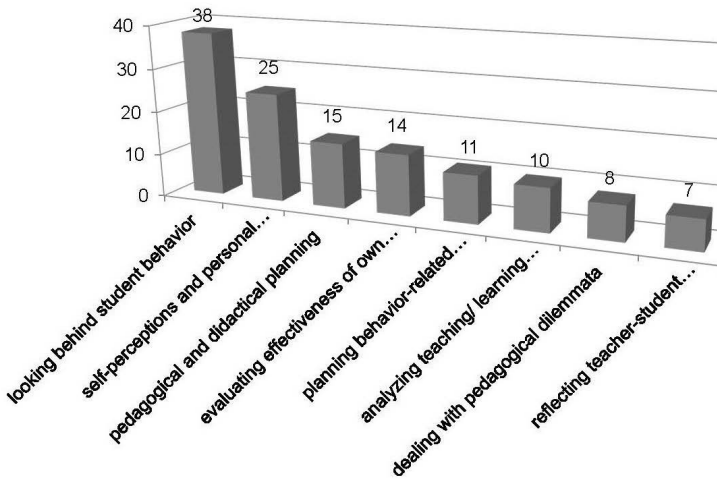


Figure 1.8: Patterns in the teacher's reflections and quantity of each pattern

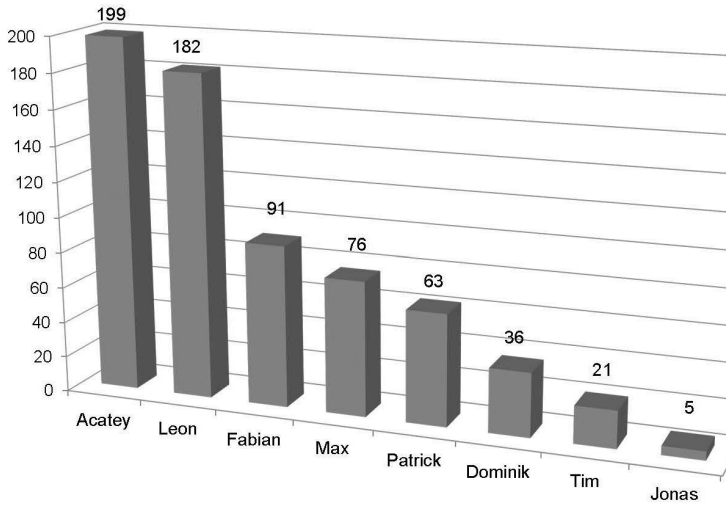


Figure 1.9: Frequency of individual students' names in the journal



Figure 1.10: The positive effects of journal writing in the context of teacher preparation and teacher training are well documented