Children's discourse on development in online and offline fields: A study of positions and symbolic power

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Abstract

Children's relationship to consumption is uneasy: children are understood of as either vulnerable and in in need of protection or as competent and agentic consumers. Childhood and consumption has most often been studied through the concept of consumer socialization. Consumer socialization relies on a developmental understanding of children that considers children as becomings rather than beings in the now. Instead of this conventional approach to the study of childhood, I take a more active view of children in this dissertation. My aim is to understand children's consumption of online games in the now, as active participants within their peer groups. I have approached this subject by using Bourdieu's field theory, which puts emphasis on positions of agents and symbolic power in relations between agents within competitive fields.

This dissertation is based on data collected in both online and offline contexts. For the offline part of this study, I have conducted group interviews with children aged 10-11 in two elementary schools in Finland. Online, I did netnographic research in an online world of a game called MovieStarPlanet. I analyzed children's communication with respect to these two contexts to better understand their positions and power relations.

This dissertation contributes to two streams of literature. First, it contributes to the literature on Bourdieuan fields in Consumer Culture Theory (CCT). Contributions to this literature are threefold: First, I show how within their marginalized social space children build capital within specific fields. Second, I argue that development is the part of the underlying logic behind children's experiences in these fields. Finally, I contribute to this literature by focusing on intrafield status competition and the specific positions taken discursively within a field. By considering children's peer cultures as fields, I also contribute to the childhood, and childhood and consumption literatures. I reveal how the relations between the popular and the unpopular function within and online and an offline context. I also show how, rather than merely passively going through developmental stages, children discursively "do" development in relation to capitals in fields.

Tekijä
Terhi Väistö

Väitöskirjan nimi
Lasten diskurssi kehityksestä internetissä ja koulussa: tutkimus positioista ja symbolisesta vallasta

☒ **Monografia**   ☐ **Artikkeliväitöskirja**   ☐ **Esseeväitöskirja**

Tiivistelmä

Lapsuuden ja kuluttajakäyttäytymisen suhde on ongelmallinen: lapset nähdään usein joko heikkoina ja suojeltavina, tai aikuisten kaltaisina kykenevinä kuluttajina. Lapsuutta ja kuluttamista on usein tutkittu kuluttajasosialisaation käsitteen kautta. Kuluttajasosialisaation taustalla on ajatus lapsista kehittyvinä ja tulevaisuudessa kykenevinä kuluttajina, sen sijaan että heidän elämäänsä tulkittaisiin nykyisyydessä.

Tässä tutkimuksessa kuluttajasosialisaation viitekehyksen sijaan näen lapset aktiivisina kuluttajina omassa sosiaalisessa ympäristössään koulussa ja netissä. Tavoitteeni on ymmärtää lasten nettipelaamista tässä hetkessä. Tutkimukseni viitekehyksenä käytän Bourdieun kenttäteoriaa, joka korostaa yksilöiden positioita ja heidän välisiään valtasuhteita tietyssä sosiaalisessa kontekstissa. Olen kerännyt laadullista aineistoa sekä netissä että koulussa. Alakoulussa tein ryhmähaastatteluja 10-11 –vuotiaiden lasten kanssa. Netissä tutkin netnografisen menetelmän avulla onlinepeliä nimeltä MovieStarPlanet. Analysoin lasten välistä kommunikaatiota keskittyen positioihin ja valtasuhteisiin.

Tämä väitöskirja lisää ymmärrystä lasten kuluttajakäyttäytymisestä kuluttajakulttuurin tutkimuksessa. Väitöskirja näyttää kuinka lapset rakentavat sosiaalista ja kulttuurista pääomaa sosiaalisilla kentillä netissä ja koulussa. Lisäksi väitöskirja esittelee, kuinka kehitys ja kasvaminen ovat lasten valtasuhteiden taustalla. Lopuksi väitöskirja esittelee kuinka lapset kilpailevat statuksesta ja positioivat itsensä toisiin lapsiin nähden ja rakentavat valtasuhteita kehittymisen diskurssin kautta.

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Contents

List of Figures and Tables

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

"We did everything adults would do. What went wrong?"
– William Goulding, Lord of the Flies

Children are often regarded as becoming, and this view of children has influenced the way their consumer behavior has been studied: Children are seen as being in the process of consumer socialization. In this thesis, I take a different approach to childhood consumption. I aim to understand children's consumption in the now within their peer groups. Thus, this research has two aims. First, working within the tradition of Consumer Culture Theory (CCT), I contribute to the literature on Bourdieuan fields within CCT. I do this by studying the rich context of childhood peer cultures. Second, by taking a Bourdieuan perspective on childhood peer relations, I contribute to the literature on childhood, and childhood and consumption in particular.

1.1.1   Vulnerable and developing children

Children and markets have had an uneasy relationship. This stems from traditional understandings of children and childhood. Starting with 18th century French philosopher Rousseau, childhood has been closely linked with nature. Rousseau compared children with plants and warned that if the natural quality of childhood were not nurtured, it would vanish. Thus, children had to be protected from the European adult society, which he considered unnatural and contaminating. Representations that draw children from adult contexts are still found in our society (Taylor 2011).

In addition, the generalized understanding of children as mainly developing derives from the overarching influence of developmental psychology in relation to childhood. Developmental psychology naturalizes children's characteristics, which are seen as universal, context free, and ahistorical (Modell 2000). This understanding of childhood as vulnerable on the one hand and developing on the other has implications for how children are considered within consumer culture, in which childhood is marginalized (Qvortup 2005; Cook 2003, 2004b).

Historically, children coming into the marketplace and being given the status of consumers have been regarded as part of a transformation of cultural con-

struction of the child and childhood. This transformation is part of a process of extending to children the status of full persons. The status is realized when they gain recognition as legitimate, individualized, and self-contained consumers. Marketing for children once was directed through the parents, mainly the mother. Then the market started to advertise to children themselves and thus to construct the child as the consumer (Cook 2004: 4).

Today, children as consumers are contested in the area of consumption. Children as consumers can represent both corporate exploitation and individual autonomy (see Langer 2004). Children interested in consumption can be regarded either as over-indulged by parents or as actively participating in the pleasures of childhood and consumer capitalism (Cook 2007).

According to Langer (2004), the ambivalence created by bringing children into the market is managed by inscribing products with qualities that are associated with the sacred, the developing, or the fun-seeking child. For example, toy makers become naturalized and sacralized as part of childhood, when childhood is associated with play, fun, and toys. The child consumer is then a social construction or an "an assemblage of qualities, beliefs and conjectures concerning the 'nature' and motivation of children regarding commercial goods and meanings" (Cook 2007: 38).

Parental control to protect children from the market is based on historical accounts of childhood and developmental psychology (McNamee 2000). Children's relation to consumption is in constant negotiation of the borders and whether they have already been breached (Langer 2004). The general consensus is that as consumers-in-training, children need to be educated because however media literate, they are little informed of the long-term risks associated with their consumer choices. This is not because they are manipulated but because they are inadequately informed of the risks so that the there is a need to reconsider the approach to educating young consumers to be risk literate in the mediated marketplace (Kline 2005).

Marketing to children and the commercialization of childhood often draw on wider arguments that see children as competent social subjects with a right to participate in society and with influence over their lives (Tingstad 2007). Thus, children are an important segment in the world of advertising and marketing. They need to be approached both as consumers at the moment and also as what they will become when they grow up and become adult consumers (James and James 2004: 10).

These two points of view, the exploited and the empowered child, are equally problematic (Cook 2005). According to Cook (2005), researchers embracing the extremely agentive child that is supported by the commercial voices expose themselves to criticism. He states that these two contradictory images of current childhood should be rejected. In contrast, children and childhood vary

among individuals. Similar to adults, children are both subjects and objects and active and passive.

1.1.2   Study of children's consumption

Children have been largely absent in general theories of consumer culture. When children have been studied in consumer research, the focus has been mainly on developmental issues (John 1999). Thus, research on childhood and consumption is centered on the concept of consumer socialization, which considers children to be different from adults, who represent the behavioral totality of sociological life (John 1999; Jenks 2005). John's (1999) review of decades of *Journal of Consumer Research* articles shows most of it focusing on developmental aspects and stages of childhood and related to, for example, advertising knowledge. The developmental model used in this type of research is based on Piaget's (1960) model of cognitive development of children.

In contrast to the dominance of developmental- and socialization-focused research on children and consumption, some authors have started to focus on more social and cultural aspects of the phenomenon. For example, Cook has studied portrayals of children in historical accounts (see, e.g., Cook 2004a, 2007). In addition, some research has examined brand symbolism and other aspects of consumption within children's peer groups (Nairn et al. 2008; Marion and Nairn 2011). These studies have found that consumption and brands play an important part in the social lives of children.

At their time, new digital technologies, such as television and the internet, have awakened new hopes and fears. The relation between youth and media has taken two forms which are focused on discourse of cultural pessimism or discourse of cultural optimism. These are basic reactions to youth and media (Drotner 2000). Thus, both technologies and childhood evoke fears and fantasies. Both negative and positive arguments build on a general understanding of childhood. Children may be regarded as possessing a natural creativity or as vulnerable and in need of protection. Whether good or bad, the new media are considered to have a strong influence on children (Buckingham 2008).

Simultaneously, children's consumption is becoming more and more independent, mediated, and entwined with their everyday lives. Compared to other media, the internet is highly interactive and allows children access to a wide variety of content without the knowledge of their parents (Tufte and Rasmussen 2010). According to McNamee (2000), the overarching control of children's space by adults may explain why children are so eager to play video games. By playing these games, children can take part in adventures that they cannot experience in the offline world. According to a recent report, more than 400 virtual worlds have been designed for children with hundreds of millions of users (Smolen 2012, in Grimes 2013). Research on these worlds, in which consumption often plays a central role, is slowly increasing, but much remains unclear.

What is interesting, but also an understudied area, is how media consumption is merged with children's everyday lives. According to Buckingham (2008), more focus should be put on the social contexts in which new technology is used and the social relationships in which technology plays a part. He claims that the culture surrounding children's games is a way of sustaining interpersonal relationships. Thus, it is important to study how technology enters peer groups and families, how children learn about technology, and how their use of it is regulated.

In my research, I am interested in the ways in which online networking games and virtual worlds are entwined in the everyday lives of children at school. I examine the ways children talk about and relate to each other both within the game and outside the game at school, using the game as a tool for construction of their social worlds. Getting to these questions is not possible by using only research traditions and methods based on and concepts found in developmental studies of childhood and consumer socialization; it demands a more cultural approach. Thus, I have conducted and analyzed group interviews with children aged 10 to 11. In the group discussion data, I have specifically focused on the interactional data in which children position themselves.

Consequently, I draw on sociological research to better understand children's peer groups and consumption. In contrast to theories of socialization and development, in sociology, a new understanding of childhood and studying children was developed in the 1990s: the new sociology of childhood (see James and James 2004). The new sociology of childhood is based on an understanding that children are active agents in their social worlds and child-appropriate methods should be used when studying children (Banister and Booth 2005; Bartholomew and O'Donohoe 2003; Christensen and Prout 2002). In my research, I build on concepts and studies of childhood that focus specifically on children's social lives: peer groups and cliques and the practices of inclusion and exclusion that are part of the social organization of children's groups.

To gain deeper theoretical understanding of the role of online games in children's peer relations, I use Bourdieu's work, particularly his theory of fields. Bourdieu's concepts of cultural and social capital in relation to specific fields in society have been influential. The field theory developed in France has been used in consumer research in different contexts, in CCT research in particular. CCT research building on Bourdieu's field theory has either focused on the individual's generalized cultural capital in society or concentrated on capitals within a specific field (Coskuner-Balli and Thompson 2013). Research following Arsel and Thompson's (2011) concept of field-dependent capital has focused on aspects such as valorizing practices of marginalized field-dependent capital (Coskuner-Balli and Thompson 2013), field-dependent capital that supports or challenges primary socialization (Saatcioglu and Ozanne 2013), and difficulties of leaving a field (McAlexander et al. 2014).

In sociological discussions of capital and fields, research on children remains limited. The focus is mostly on their internalization or rejection of the norms imposed on them by adults such as parents and teachers (Morrow 1999). Children have been seen as tabula rasa, as passive recipients of capital. Social capital has been considered a by-product of parents' capital. It thus exists in the context of the family and its surroundings rather than in children's own social networks. Social capital has also been described as an asset that children can use when they grow up rather than in the present. Because of this future orientation, research often fails to explore how children use and make sense of their networks and create and manage new ones (Leonard 2005, 2008; Morrow 1999). Again, socialization is seen as unidirectional and childhood is considered a state of becoming rather than being. Ideas developed in research on children's networks and peer groups have not been sufficiently incorporated into the social capital discussions (Edwards 2004; Morrow 1999). This is despite these two streams of literature focusing on similar issues found in both streams of research: mainly power and how it is used in social settings. Bourdieuan studies have mainly focused in meso-level fields in children's peer culture research on micro settings.

Leonard (2005) argues that even though Bourdieu can be criticized for not acknowledging childhood in his work, his concepts of agency, habitus, power, and competence when combined with insights from the new sociology of childhood provide a framework for understanding social capital and its significance in childhood. In addition, Morrow (1999) argues that social capital might be useful in understanding children, whose choice and freedom are constrained. According to Martens et al. (2004), because of the emphasis of habitus as being learned and internalized, it is surprising that no applications of Bourdieu's theory exist with respect to children's consumption. Rather, this appropriation of habitus and intergenerational transfer of capitals are conceptualized as the vague process of socialization. Focusing on children in analysis would be valuable as it would show how capital is transferred through generations and how habitus is internalized by individuals. This research would reveal how and from whom children learn to consume online media and how cultural values and taste are transmitted between generations.

This thesis focuses on children's fields. Studying children's fields can contribute to the general understanding of consumption fields. Childhood and children's fields are specific settings that differ from adult contexts. The difference is related to children's position in the margins of society and the understanding of children as developing. Because of this, children's fields are also relatively autonomous from the hierarchy between what has been traditionally characterized as high or low cultural fields. Nevertheless, children's fields are always linked to the adult context through for example children's status as needing protection. By focusing on the concepts of cultural and social capital and symbolic power and domination related to fields, I aim to get to the specifics of power in children's peer cultures. I also focus on how children's peer groups as

fields draw from more general cultural influences such as the discourse of development.

Looking at children's peer groups through Bourdieuan theory has several implications. First, children are no longer merely socialized into consumption, but they become actors with strategies to lift their status within a specific field. As discussed in the chapter on Bourdieu, these strategies are not necessarily conscious. Bourdieu's theory has been criticized for not taking into account social interaction that is not strategic or intended as position-building. I acknowledge this limitation of focusing on the competitive side of social life. Nevertheless, it is a valuable addition to the study of childhood that has previously been considered naturally evil or sacred (Jenks 2005).

1.2   Central concept of the thesis

While I go into each of the central concepts in more detail in the literature review, I outline them here for clarity.

Childhood is conceptualized as a social construction. According to Gittins (2008: 36), children are material and biological beings, but they are nevertheless born into a "social world, a linguistic world, a gendered world, an adult world full of discourse, with complex and contradictory meanings." Children are then defined as those who inhabit this socially constructed space. What is important in this thesis is that children themselves take an active part in the social construction of childhood.

Development is a concept heavily researched in relation to childhood. Similar to childhood, I see development as culturally constructed. I do not deny the biological facts of development, but in this thesis the interest in development lies in the ways children use it as a discursive or underlying resource within their fields.

Field is a concept from Bourdieu describing a social space of relations and positions that agents have and strategies they use to achieve a more favorable position. *Peer group field* I conceptualize as the agents or children at school within one class who have different positions of popularity and thus can be divided into the dominant and the dominated.

Position in a field is the way children in their talk relate to online games or other resources as sources of capital. This position also determines their relations to other agents within the field.

1.3   Research gaps and questions

Within CCT, there has been increasing interest in using Bourdieuan concepts to better understand consumption. In particular, the concept of field has

gained momentum within CCT (see, e.g., Arsel and Thompson 2011; Dolbec and Fischer 2015; McAlexander et al. 2014). I contribute to this stream of literature in three different ways by looking at children's consumption fields.

A gap also exists in the study of childhood and consumption. As stated earlier, children and consumption have mainly been studied through the concept of socialization, which emphasizes learning and acquiring skills that will be needed in the future as consumers. In contrast, I concentrate on children's lives in the present. Even though the focus in this thesis is on the active child in the now, development is necessarily a part of children's lives.

The research problem of this thesis is: **How do children discursively compete within their social fields and what is the logic behind children's fields?** What emerges through this field analysis is a new view on consumption in childhood. I aim to address the problem through three research questions, presented next. These questions relate to childhood as a marginalized field, change and movement within fields, and struggle within fields. There are three research gaps and questions.

1.3.1   Gap 1: Agentic child in marginal spaces

First, previous research has looked at consumption in relatively mainstream fields and mainly focused on middle-class consumers (see, e.g., Arsel and Thompson 2011). Some research has focused on more marginalized fields, following Thornton's concept of subcultural capital, which works in alternative social spaces. Research has also explored subcultures of consumption that can be considered marginalized fields, such as Kates' (2003) study of gay consumption. In addition, Saaticioglu and Ozanne (2013) examine status-building within the marginalized community of trailer parks. Furthermore, Coskuner-Balli and Thompson (2013) look at how at-home fathers try to capitalize their consumption practices within a new marginalized gender identity.

When it comes to childhood, some research has taken a more active view of childhood and consumption (see, e.g., Ruckenstein 2010, 2013; Nairn et al. 2008). This is a positive turn in the study of childhood, as children's lives are more and more entwined with consumption.

However, there remains the gap in examining the specific capitals that function within these marginalized spaces of childhood. Taking a more active view on children, I study the role that online consumption plays in their social lives and the ever-present development related to childhood. I do this by looking at childhood social spaces through a Bourdieuan lens. Thus, children's social spaces and groups emerge as fields of struggle. Childhood is an excellent context for studying this because of its marginalization in all of society (Qvortup 2005). In addition, previous literature has failed to address how capital is built within a field that is structured by adults and, in one way or another, experienced by a social group that is not independent.

I aim to answer the following research question: ***What is specific to children's marginalized fields?*** Thus, I intend to contribute to the literature on fields by looking at the ways in which capital is accumulated within a marginalized space. Coskuner-Balli and Thompson (2013) state that subordinate cultural capital circulates in marginalized fields and thus has low conversion rates in high cultural capital contexts. Childhood is a totally different context; it partly functions outside (or inside) this dichotomy of high cultural capital and low cultural capital but has field-dependent capitals of its own.

1.3.2 Gap 2: Development in children's fields

Second, previous research on fields within CCT has focused on relatively stable fields. For example, Kates' (2003) study of the gay subculture reports that people enter a field and stay within it. In addition, consumers functioning within the taste regime of soft modernism put a lot of time and effort into their home. Because of these investments consumers have made, this context is also relatively stable (Arsel and Bean 2012). However, less interest has been expressed in movement and change: how consumers carry capitals from one field to another (and back) and how they move between fields leaving some fields behind. What the research specifically does not address is how people invest in and build capital in one field and then move this capital into another field. Scholars have also been interested in less stable fields and change. For example, as mentioned earlier, Coskuner-Balli and Thompson (2013) look at how at-home fathers construct their emergent status and aim to carry capitals from their previous status. In addition, Arsel and Thompson (2011) examine whether indie consumers who have invested within a field stay within the field or consider leaving it. Most indie consumers in the study had chosen a field, made investments, and now tried to protect them. In addition, Scaraboto and Fischer (2013) investigate how consumers try to change a field to be included in it by relying on its and outside logics. Finally, McAlexander et al. (2014) look at how consumers who have made significant investments in a field are constrained by these investments when trying to leave the field.

In addition to stability within fields, there is relevant stability in hierarchies among fields. For example, yachting as a source of capital is consistently regarded as higher than bowling in the adult context. What makes children's capital games and fields different is that there is no stability. As children 'grow,' there is a constant need to go on, move forward. In this process, the value of former fields as sources of capital changes in relation to how childish individuals are perceived to be.

One of the main interests of the research at hand is change in childhood. In contrast to relatively stable adult fields, children's fields have constant instability due to development. Therefore, these fields offer possibilities to study change and disruption. Through children's talk, I aim to see how they build

their current acceptable practices in relation to past and present situations in their field.

Therefore, I aim to fill this gap by answering the research question: ***What is the role of development and change in children's fields?*** I contribute to the literature on fields in CCT by focusing on childhood fields and social spaces as being in constant movement. Childhood is a perfect context for studying this movement because of the constant development and change happening within it.

1.3.3 Gap 3: Struggle and competition in children's fields

Third, what sometimes remains in the background in the literature on fields within CCT is that Bourdieu's concept was first and foremost about competition and struggle. For example, Arsel and Bean (2012) focus on taste as a practice, leaving the competitive aspects of status-building in the background. Some previous research has looked at intrafield status consumption. For example, Kates (2003) and Üstüner and Holt (2010) examine how status is built within a specific context or field. However, little research has explicitly looked at the struggle through positions that consumers take within a field. This is closely related to the concepts of symbolic power and dominance that are crucial to Bourdieuan thinking.

The literature on childhood peer cultures reflects an interest in power and weakness, in particular in the building of in-groups and out-groups, popularity cliques, and bullying (see, e.g., Adler and Adler 1995; Eder et al. 1995; Goodwin 2008). All of these research streams have an inherent relationship with power struggles. Therefore, a deeper theoretical discussion of these issues as they relate to power is warranted. Moreover, these concepts are often entwined with childhood. Thus, in-groups and out-groups, popularity cliques, and bullying are power and status struggles in childhood specific to the developmental state rather than related to adult human behavior or culture in general. Taking a Bourdieuan lens to the study of these phenomena results in a deeper understanding of how these concepts of power relate specifically to children's social lives.

In addition, what have not yet been extensively studied are the ways in which cliques and popularity are structured as fields around online games that are an important part of children's lives. Because childhood is a specific time period in which social relations are formed around cliques and bullying, power is extremely important. Childhood is then appropriate for studying symbolic power and violence.

I aim to fill these gaps related to fields and childhood by answering the following research question: ***What types of positions in relation to development are found in children's fields? Based on these positions, how***

is symbolic power used? Thus, I contribute to the literature on fields by focusing on positions and symbolic violence within them.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is structured into five chapters. The second and third chapters focus on the theoretical basis of the work. Chapter 2 outlines the literature on childhood and consumer socialization, as well as peer cultures in childhood. Chapter 3 focuses on Bourdieu's theory of fields and its current applications in CCT and the study of childhood. The findings section is divided into two parts. First, I show how children discuss development within the field of peer group and the taster the taste regime related to development the field of online game. Second, I show how symbolic power works within these fields. The final chapter outlines the contribution of the work in relation to previous research.

2. Childhood studies: From socialization to active beings

Childhood is characterized by change. In addition, historically and culturally, conceptions of childhood change. Also, members of childhood are constantly changing as they grow out of the period. Nevertheless, the category of childhood exists throughout this process (Aries 1969; Jenks 2005).

Traditionally, childhood and children have been characterized by two aspects in both research and the common understanding of childhood. First, children are marginalized in our society and in sociological research. Within our current Western society, children are outside the public sphere and confined to their own spaces (Qvortup 2005). Second, children are considered to be developing, incomplete, and becoming rather than beings in the moment. As I delineate below in the literature review on childhood and consumption, the two prevailing conceptions of childhood have had a strong impact on consumer research and childhood in the form of consumer socialization literature. This review of previous literature draws heavily on sociology and developmental psychology. My aim is to show how children have been regarded in previous research in sociology and consumer behavior throughout decades of research.

However, more recently, within sociology, a new, more interpretive way of understanding childhood has emerged. Thus, after reviewing developmental and socialization research on children, I introduce the concept of the new sociology of childhood and research based on it. This approach to studying children takes a more active view of children; it is also the approach I employ in my own research.

2.1   History and marginalization of childhood

One of the aims of this thesis is to look at the specifics of children's fields and how the marginalization of children is present in their social lives. This demands an understanding of children as part of the larger society. In this chapter, I show how children are marginalized and confined to their own spaces and also marginalized through adult control.

Historically, childhood and children have been conceptualized in different ways. The idea of childhood has not always existed. Also, today its definitions

and the way its end is determined vary among cultures. According to Gittins (2008), the status of childhood has been characterized by referring to physical or sexual maturity, legal status, and sometimes chronological age. Traditionally in Western countries, for boys, the beginning of work has been characterized as a transition from childhood to adulthood. For girls, it has been marriage or childbirth. Only recently has this changed. In the 1960s, Philippe Ariès is the first to note the idea of childhood being socially constructed rather than a natural and biological given. He claims that in medieval society children were seen as mini-adults rather than belonging to a distinct social group (Gittins 2008).

Within our everyday lives and recent sociological research, children have been marginalized. This is because within sociological thought humankind is viewed as a behavioral totality. This refers to complete adults and thus leaves little room for children. Theories of socialization have offered a way to incorporate children into this view (Qvortup 2005).

Children have been confined within a variety of childhood contexts: one of school, one of family, one of kindergarten (Qvortup 2005). This has had implications for research on children and consumption, including in my own work. Also, data collection for this thesis is in children's own spaces: the school and the online networking sites collected for them. Children gain visibility in and in relation to these confines but are excluded from the dominant sectors of social life (Qvortup 2005).

The agency of children is limited and connected to the changing understandings of childhood. This exclusion of children from social life has not always been the case. In medieval society, children were present. However, they did not exist as children but as mini-adults who were part of public life (Qvortup 2005). Today, adults instantly tend to recognize children as different, less developed, and in need of explanation (Jenks 2005). Additionally, according to Hardman (2001), despite their popularity in other domains, in sociology, children have been regarded as a muted, unperceived, and elusive group. Children gradually emerge into the adult space by accident, by degrees, or through awards or privileges (James et al. 1998).

Different images of childhood offer a framework for studying the discursive constructions of childhood and the relationships of power and knowledge (Smith 2011). Historically, childhood has been considered in relation to how it should be managed and how children should be brought up. This is a form of social control. Jenks (2005) offers two differing images of childhood: the evil child and the innocent child. Smith (2012) adds a third image of the participative child. The images suggest three distinct ways of social control. The image of the evil child, which is characterized in terms of a wild, willful, and sensual child, demands child-rearing which exercises strict control over children. The image of the intrinsically good or angelic innocent child is controlled through

child-centric approaches, in which the child has freedom to develop according to his or her own interests. The third, the image of the participative child, which promotes children's voice and their participation, sees children as partners in the socialization process (Jenks 2005; Smith 2011).

Thus, children's behavior is constantly managed by adults (James et al. 1998; Smith 2011). According to James et al. (1998), the central issue surrounding childhood space is that of control. They state that the school, the city, and the home are "dedicated to the control of the child's body and mind through regimes of discipline, learning, development, maturation and skill" (James et al. 1998: 38). Thus, childhood is subject to increasing boundaries and 'other' places are created for children through everyday leisure activities. These spaces are further differentiated by gender (McNamee 2000).

This multitude of controlled spaces may also explain the enthusiasm for play. For example, in video game play, children can experience adventures not possible in the offline world. These creative online spaces offer children the possibility to escape the boundaries of childhood (McNamee 2000). In addition, children's consumption of space in the urban environment is characterized by active and corporeal engagement with spaces that are devoid of the features that attract the interest of adults (Wells 2002).

Children come to understand themselves as marginal. For example, Devine (2000) reports that children construct themselves as having subordinate status in relation to teachers in schools. Teachers' power is evident in their freedom to move around school, their possibility to tell children what to do, and in their adult status, having the knowledge and experience that comes with being older.

In conclusion, the marginalization of children in their own controlled spaces forms a basis for the study of children and childhood. This research demonstrates that this understanding is present in the structures within which children construct and develop social relationships with each other. However, the aim of this study is to look at what is happening between children within these marginalized social spaces of childhood. As I will show later, I do this by applying Bourdieu's concepts to concepts such as bullying and popularity as they relate to childhood.

2.2 Traditional view of childhood: Development and socialization

To understand the concept of childhood and especially its relation to consumption, I start with the conceptualization of childhood in developmental psychology, the most common way of understanding childhood. Below I review the history of developmental psychology, present the most prominent

theory by Piaget, and show why developmental psychology has been criticized by those who work with more active constructions of childhood.

Developmental psychology is the oldest among childhood disciplines (Alanen 2012). According to James et al. (1998), developmental psychology has been the primary way of observing childhood within medicine, education, and government agencies (James et al. 1998). Developmental psychology arose in the late 19th century as a reaction to the theory of evolution and anthropology. Developmental psychology participated in social movements concerned with comparison, regulation, and control of groups and societies. It is closely linked to the tools of mental measurement, classification of abilities, and establishment of norms (Burman 1994).

Development can be defined as the "physical, intellectual, psychological or social getting on in life" (Kelle 2001: 96). This conceptualization is based on the dichotomy of immaturity/maturity that is evidenced in our everyday lives. Child development is not regarded as intentional or consciously registered, but something that just happens (Modell 2000). Adolescence in this conceptualization signifies the transit from one status to the other (Kelle 2001).

Developmental psychology takes advantage of two everyday assumptions: First, children are a natural phenomenon instead of a social one and, second, this naturalness stretches out to their inevitable process of maturation. This stems from our everyday experience of having and relating to children (James et al. 1998). Developmental psychology pervades our everyday lives and scholars have suggested that it is not possible to avoid thinking in developmental perspectives in our current conditions (Burman 2012). Developmental psychology affects our thinking about ourselves more than any other variety of psychology (Burman 1994: 2).

According to Burman (1994), normative descriptions relating to childhood development easily turn into naturalized prescriptions. She states that representations of childhood function as a mirror on which fantasies of nature and society can be projected. This view is supported by Jenks (2005: 6), who claims that "being a child, having been a child, having children and having continuously to relate to children are all experiences which contrive to render the category as 'normal' and readily transform our attribution of it to the realm of the 'natural.'" Jenks adds that focusing on childhood as a naturalized state, both in everyday speech and in theory, hides its significance as a social phenomenon.

In developmental psychology then, development has been considered universal, context-free, and ahistorical. The study of child development has focused on the following three interrelated aspects. First, it involves finding biological patterns of change in an individual's activities. Second, it focuses on observing what advances change in an individual while simultaneously maintaining con-

tinuity. Third, it aims to explain individual differences in underlying processes (Modell 2000).

The most influential psychologist who has built the concept of the developing child is Jean Piaget. His work has also influenced consumer socialization research. According to James et al. (1998), Piaget's work on genetic epistemology and extended biology has produced the most materially reductive image of childhood. They categorize the concept of developing child along with other presociological descriptions of children such as the evil, the innocent, and the immanent child, which have been used in describing children historically.

Piaget identifies universal and clearly defined stages in child development. These stages have been influential in all subsequent research. The sensorymotor stage begins right after birth. After this, children move from preconceptual and intuitive thought to 'normal' people capable of formal operations. The model assumes a hierarchy between the low status of figurative thought to the high status of adult, operative intelligence. Figurative thought is characterized by particularistic behavior and incapacity to transfer training. Behavior is summoned by emotional responses. Operative intelligence of adults is characterized by action, cognitive manipulation of objects, and transformation of those objects (James et al. 1998). According to Jenks (2005), the underlying assumption is that the adult world is not only complete and recognizable, but also desirable.

Critique of developmental psychology has focused on two of its main assumptions: first, that children are inactive in the development process and, second, that this development is a universal phenomenon, independent of culture. According to Qvortup (2005), by bringing childhood into the context of science through developmental psychology, children have been regarded as becomings rather than beings. Because the stages are predetermined and linked to age, these theories leave little room for children to assert any individuality, except as forms of deviance (James and James 2004).

Developmental psychology uses evolutionary assumptions to link the social and the biological and provides a sphere in which evolutionary and biological ideas can be continuously legitimized (Jenks 2005). Developmental psychology and socialization theory are based on knowledge about the difference of childhood and elaboration of the process of integration (Jenks 2005).

However, even though the developmental model of childhood has been criticized, the biological phase of childhood is universal. Childhood as a period of rapid physiological and psychological change is found among all people everywhere. Nevertheless, these biological facts are interpreted differently in different cultures (Woodhead 1995, in James and James 2004).

The developmental understanding of childhood has implications for this study as well. The studied group of children was chosen based on age, as they all were in the same grade at school. In addition, the games the children played were created with a particular age and specific developmental aspects of each age group in mind. Finally, as I show in the findings, developmental awareness emerged as important for the children themselves in terms of how they defined themselves in relation to others. However, the aim of this study is not to rely on the developmental understanding of childhood. Instead, the starting point is in the new sociology of childhood, which takes a more current and active view of children than developmental understanding does. The structures of development are nevertheless constantly present.

2.2.1 Consumer socialization

Thus far, I have shown that childhood is considered a developmental stage for transitioning into adulthood. The socialization literature builds on this assumption. In this chapter, I first introduce the origins of consumer socialization as presented in the socialization literature. Second, I introduce the concept of consumer socialization and review the literature on consumer socialization agents. Finally, I discuss the criticism of the concept of consumer socialization. An overview of socialization provides an understanding of contemporary research on children and consumption. In addition, one aim of the research is to understand the role of development and change in children's fields, and the socialization literature offers a basis for this.

2.2.1.1 Origins: Socialization

According to Jenks (2005), sociologists relate to childhood experience through theories of socialization, whether in relation to institutional contexts of the family, the peer group, or the school. These are the three serious arenas of childhood in which children are exposed to induction procedures. According to Russel and Tyler (2002), relying on developmental ontology, children are part of the same space as adults because they are in the process of becoming adults. Children are thus considered incompetent social agents compared to adults. On the other hand, they are also viewed as occupying a relatively autonomous social realm and therefore are conceptualized as being children.

Thus, in sociology, the main interpretive device of childhood research is socialization. This is, according to James et al. (1998: 22), a close parallel exists to the developing child of developmental psychology. They state that sociological theorizing has always been concerned with development of the child. This is because aspects like social stability and integration depend on predictable forms of action from the participants in a society. Jenks (2005) states that this aim to understand childhood only through one-sided theories of socialization leaves the child under theorized and hides the social experience of being a child.

According to Corsaro and Eder (1990), child socialization has been studied from three viewpoints: behaviorist, constructivist, and interpretivist. The research has moved from more passive understandings of children to focus on what is happening in their cultures and how socialization happens on a cultural rather than individual level.

First, behaviorist theories, which were prominent until the mid-1960s, emphasize learning through modeling and reinforcement as mechanisms of learning. The behavioral approach ignores social interaction and culture, such as peer culture, and portrays children as passive receivers of adult socialization. Behaviorist theories have been criticized for their individualistic emphasis on simplistic processes (Corsaro and Eder 1990).

Second, the constructivist approach to socialization has been highly influential in consumer socialization research (John 1999), as represented by Piaget's cognitive developmental theory in which children acquire skills and knowledge in their social environment. This constructivist understanding of socialization is individualistic in its approach. It lacks focus on how children become part of and also reproduce cultural patterns. The emphasis on individualism is also reflected in the emphasis on development, on how children move from immaturity to adult competence (Corsaro 1992). Less research has been devoted to what it is like to be a child in children's social worlds and how children through communicative events become part of interpersonal relations and cultural patterns (Corsaro and Eder 1990; Corsaro 1992).

Finally, more recent sociocultural theories are based on the work Russian psychologist Leo Vytogsky. According to Vygotsky, human activity is meditational and carried on with language and other cultural tools (Corsaro and Fingerson 2009). Vygotsky extends the constructivist emphasis on children's activities to the importance of interactive events as basic to producing and maintaining cultural systems. However, much of his research has still focused on individual development (Corsaro and Eder 1990).

New conceptions of development involve a focus on children's agency in the socialization process. They emphasize the importance of social aspects and the need to study children's experiences with peers. Children both affect and are affected by culture (Corsaro and Fingerson 2006). The process of human development is bound to the process of enculturation and of orienting oneself within systems of meaning (Gaskins et al. 1992). This recognition has led to an appreciation of the creativity and autonomy of children's peer cultures (Corsaro and Fingerson 2006).

The role of children differs in these approaches. Behaviorist theories assume that children are passive, stressing the inputs and influence of adults over children. Constructivist theories examine the more active child, the one who is

more in charge of his or her own learning. Finally, the interpretive theories introduced by Vygotsky emphasize children as parts of social environments.

However, it is important to note that these theories have largely overlooked the social aspects of learning. Nevertheless, it is based on these approaches, especially the constructivist learning theory, that the consumer socialization literature has been built.

2.2.1.2 The concept of consumer socialization

Children's place in consumer research has been similar to their place in sociology; they are considered to be developing and becoming (Cook 2008). Thus, the research has focused on consumer socialization that has been defined as processes by which "young people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the marketplace" (Ward 1974: 2).

Consumer socialization is an area of study in various disciplines, including marketing, sociology, psychology, anthropology, home economics, and consumer technology (Ekström 2006). Consumer socialization research is specifically interested in the social aspects of economic development, such as learning social roles and the processes by which children acquire consumption-related skills, knowledge, and attitudes (Ward 1974; de la Ville and Tartas 2010).

The study of consumer socialization has been of interest to policy makers, marketers, and consumer educators since the 1970s (Gunter and Furnham 1998: 13). Traditionally, the consumer socialization literature has focused on age as the primary determinant of the consumer socialization process (John 1999; see also Achenreiner and John 2003; Belk et al. 1982, 1984; Caruana and Vassallo 2003; Gronhaug and Venkatesh 2007; Kuhlmann 1983; McNeal 2007; Saltmarhs 2009).

As stated earlier, the consumer socialization literature has been mainly built on Piaget's theory of cognitive development (John 1999). John (1999) reviews the consumer socialization literature of children's development as consumers; her scale of consumer socialization stages is based on Piaget's studies of child development. The consumer socialization literature also encompasses research on the social learning model, which seeks to explain how environmental influences affect the individual (Gunter and Furnham 1996).

2.2.1.3 Consumer socialization agents

Socialization agents are defined as people or organizations involved in socialization. They have great influence because they are in frequent contact and have control over the rewards and punishments given to children (Gunter and Furnham 1998).

The consumer socialization of children is influenced by multiple agents. The early literature emphasizes mainly the role of parents, peers, and mass media

(Ward 1974). Consumer socialization can also be regarded as the accumulation of cultural capital between the child and a host of social networks such as family and friends (Martens et al. 2004). Also, school has been seen as a relevant socialization agent.

First, parents have been considered the most important socialization agent of children and much of the socialization research has focused on their influence (see, e.g., Caruna and Vassallo 2003; Dotson and Hyatt 2000; Grant and Stephen 2005; Quart 2003). Parents have a strong impact, for example, on children's purchase behavior (Dotson and Hyatt 2000). The importance of parents is evident because all kinds of consumer behavior are practiced with the family or in the family context. Children have a chance to observe and imitate this behavior (Kuhlmann 1983). Parents are thus the first identification model for children (Rodhain 2006).

Parental influence on consumer socialization can be seen through the child's daily living experience. Parents influence children when shopping by showing differences between products and at home by talking about products and giving judgments and reasons for purchases or passing judgment on advertisements (Gunter and Furnham 1996). According to Gunter and Furnham (1996), companies themselves try to act as consumer socialization agents through advertising and stores, but most realize that getting to children in a store is only possible via their parents. Thus, brands have understood that they have to offer products that respond to parents' needs and wants (Köksal 2007). Parents can influence children's brand relationships in three different ways. First, they can pass their own brand relationships to children. Second, they have an impact on children's ability to come into contact with brands. Third, they teach children rational aspects of consumption (Ji 2008).

Parents are considered the most effective educators of children because they can teach their values, beliefs, and behavior patterns to their children. Therefore, parents should also be regarded as the main protectors of children when it comes to consumption and marketing (Gunter and Furnham 1996).

Parents' influence is more important in relation to products consumed at home than in the public sphere, where children's own opinion is more important. As children grow older, their freedom of choice increases and school and peer group influences become increasingly important (Duff 1999).

Peer groups influence the parent-child interaction because parents provide children with money to purchase the brands or products that are popular in the peer groups. On the other hand, according to Martens et al. (2004), children sometimes reflect the social and material status of their parents and thus act as symbolic representations of their parents' cultural orientations and attitudes. Children end up acting as symbols (Martens et al. 2004).

Second, peers also operate as socialization agents. According to Aledin (2009), peer groups play an important role in consumer socialization. According to John (1999), surprisingly little research exists on peer influence on children, as most of the research has been conducted with adolescents (see, e.g., Kjeldgaard and Askegaard 2006; Ritson and Elliot 1998). Nevertheless, peers' influence is considered most important in children's understanding of consumption symbolism (John 1999).

Peer influence increases and parents' influence decreases as children get older. According to Roper and La Niece (2009), peer approval replaces family approval as the main influence on children's consumer behavior as the children move through their tweens. When communicating with their peers, children learn about others' product preferences and take these preferences into account when evaluating products. The symbolic meanings of goods can be learned from peers as well (Gunter and Furnham 1998). Children are influenced by their peers and might be unaware of the extent of such influence on their consumption choices and brand preferences (Roper and La Niece 2009).

Third, in addition to parents and peers, mass media are the final major socialization agent (John 1999). Today, social interaction occurs differently than before, for example, by chatting on the internet (Ekström 2011). Therefore, in addition to understanding media and the internet as socialization agents, they also function as platforms for socialization agents such as peers and companies that interact with children who are learning to become consumers. In contrast to Gunter and Furnham (1996), who find that parents are the most important socialization agents in children's lives, after the rise of online media, the media are regarded as the most important sources of information (Tufte and Rasmussen 2010).

Online, companies can interact with children without the knowledge of the parents (Tufte and Rasmussen 2010). For example, advertisers engage children through advergames online and brands are often represented as integral components of the games. Thus, playing reinforces brand awareness and encourages repeated visits (Moore 2004). An ongoing debate exists about whether advertising to children is unfair. According to critics, advertising to children should be limited because children lack the cognitive skills and life experience needed to resist companies' persuasive messages. Supporters, on the other hand, state that product information provided by advertising helps children make more informed choices (Moore 2004).

This approach to children and consumption, even though it is focused on connections between people, leaves out two-way interaction between children themselves. The related literature investigates the direct influence of different agents on children's growing and learning to be consumers. For example, interaction among peers is considered an influence rather than social interaction between children who are friends. In addition, the study of socialization agents

builds on a linear understanding of socialization: Children move from the parent's sphere of influence to that of peers.

The consumer socialization literature offers a basis for understanding children's consumption. However, a deeper understanding of what happens within the social situations that are conceptualized as consumer socialization is needed. Even if not regarded as mere learning from different agents, the different agents presented are the ones with whom the children studied in my research actively communicate. The learning that takes place in interactions between children and other agents warrants further theorizing.

2.2.2   Socialization: Critique and reconceptualizations

There has been criticism of the concept and theory of socialization within sociology, especially the new sociology of childhood. In addition, reconceptualizations aim to incorporate a more active view of the child into the framework. The socialization framework that focuses on observation and imitation in learning consumption-related skills is somewhat limited. The literature ignores the emergence of new behaviors (e.g., creative behaviors) in children, adolescents, and also adults. New behaviors are those that have not been available in the social environment previously and thus could not be learned from the social environment (de la Ville and Tartas 2010). Recent research into childhood finds that children are becoming economic actors in a complex cultural system. The system suggests that children are always being guided by others, including caregivers and more experienced children (de la Ville and Tartas 2010).

The interpretive approach questions the linearity of socialization and sees socialization as reproductive. It extends Piaget's view of children as active accommodators to children as social producers of their own worlds (Corsaro and Rizzo 1988). In this view, peers become as important as adults in the socialization process. The interpretive approach to socialization demonstrates that socialization and therefore development is a collective process that occurs on a social rather than individual level (Corsaro 1992). Interpretive socialization sees children negotiating and interacting with others and, through this, learning social knowledge on which they build. Therefore, socialization is a process of increasing density and the reorganization of knowledge. A major aim of the interpretive approach to socialization is to understand the dynamics of children's peer cultures. In peer cultures, knowledge of childhood is transformed into knowledge that is needed to participate in the adult world (Corsaro and Eder 1990).

Children produce their own culture by appropriating information from the adult world. This process of appropriation both reproduces adult culture and transforms it to fit the needs of children's peer culture. This process of appropriation and transformation is referred to as interpretive reproduction (Corsaro and Eder 1990). According to the interpretive approach to studying child-

hood, cultural meanings develop and children are able to construct their own meanings. They do not just conform to and take the adult culture at face value, but both challenge and comment on it. Thus, their cultural knowledge is a combination of beliefs of the adult world and interpretations and unique aspects (Eder et al. 1995: 8). Interpretive reproduction is based on Giddens' notion of the duality of social structure. In this view, structures are seen as both enabling and constraining (Corsaro and Eder 1990). Therefore, verbs such as "acquire" and "learn" that are related to socialization are misleading as they convey a unilateral transmission to the child, making the child a passive recipient. This is contrary to the understanding that children actively select and use cultural resources and also contribute to the production of culture. The process of how children invest cultural resources with meaning is simultaneously individual and collective. In this process, children shape their own developmental experiences and also contribute to production and transformation of peer and adult cultures (Gaskins, Miller, and Corsaro 1992).

Three key premises underlie interpretive approaches to studying children's socialization. First, the process of children's meaning creation can be understood only by situating children in their cultural contexts. The unit of analysis is not the child in isolation, but children and the context together as a system. Second, meaning creation is an active affective process. Participation in collective cultural routines and practices is anything but passive. Within this process, children take a variety of stances toward cultural resources: They reach out for, transform, and actively resist them. Third, language is key to understanding meaning because it is the primary tool with which children construct shared realities and gain entry into the interpretive frameworks of their culture (Corsaro and Eder 1990).

Interpretive socialization theory is more in line with the new sociology of childhood, which acts as a counterweight to psychological views on childhood and development (Kelle 2001). According to Kyratzis (2004), children socialize one another, constructing their own norms and valued identities within their peer groups. These social systems evolve and offer solutions to the problems of power and inclusion. This view emphasizes the social construction of childhood and children's relationships and cultures as worthy of study in their own right. Rather than looking at the cognitive aspects of childhood that render children quite passive, children are seen as active social agents.

The term socialization has been challenged because of its individualistic and forward-looking connotation, which stresses the way individuals learn to fit into society (Corsaro and Fingerson 2006; Corsaro 2005; James, Jenks, and Prout 1998; Thorne 1993). The new sociology of childhood focuses on children's own cultures rather than the adults they will become.

Reconceptualizations of consumer socialization have taken a more cultural perspective (e.g., Cook's (2010) concept of commercial enculturation). Cook

(2010: 66) states that "consumption and meaning, and thus culture, cannot be separated from each other but arise together through social contexts and processes of parenting and socializing with others." In prior research, Cook and Kaiser (2004) introduce the concept of anticipatory enculturation, which focuses on the structures, institutions, and practices that are part of commodity-based webs in children's lives. Consumer enculturation sees children as entering into social relationships through goods and their associations rather than just being socialized into becoming a certain type of consumer (Cody 2012). These new ways of conceptualizing consumer socialization aim to understand children becoming consumers from a more interactional viewpoint than does the consumer socialization literature.

In addition, Ekström (2011: 71) calls for a revisit of the concept of consumer socialization. She encourages reconsideration of both theory and methods, arguing that the scope of the concept should be expanded to "encompass lifelong consumer socialization, different life events and spheres of consumption, dialogs, negotiations, and translations, as well as the socio-cultural context in which socialization occurs."

In a partial response to this need, Littlefield and Ozanne (2011) expand the understanding of consumer socialization by avoiding a focus on the individual cognitive development of children and instead emphasizing the importance of family and adults in the socialization process. In a study on hunting, they find that youth not only reproduce the meanings of hunting that are offered by their elders, but are engaged in tinkering to construct a host of masculine identities.

2.3   The new sociology of childhood

The previous section on development and socialization in childhood describes the contemporary understanding of childhood. The new sociology of childhood offers a more cultural and versatile understanding of childhood and children. This is the view of children I take in this research. By regarding children as active members of their social environments, I aim to learn how children understand development and competition within their ever-changing fields.

Re-theorizing childhood started in the 1980s and 1990s with introduction of the new sociology of childhood (Alanen 2014). Childhood studies as such are multidisciplinary and populated by psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, historians, geographers, philosophers, ethicists, and economists (Alanen 2012). This approach fosters studies on a variety of issues and questions that have been overlooked, excluded, or marginalized by focusing solely on childhood socialization (Bühler-Niederberger 2010). In contrast to traditional socialization theories, the new sociology of childhood sees childhood as socially constructed and children as active social actors (James and Prout 1997). The common understanding of childhood has applied chronological boundaries to

it, locating it between infancy and adulthood. In the new sociology of childhood, more importance is placed on the ways in which childhood is constituted in society and how childhood can be understood within society (Pole et al. 1999.)

The new sociology of childhood is based on the assumption that children are not just simple passive objects or products of universal biological and social processes, but active participants in their own worlds and the wider world around them (James and James 2004: 24). Children are considered individuals within a particular historical and cultural context (James, Jenks, and Prout 1998; Jenks 2008: 7). According to Jenks (2008), the new sociology of childhood pulls childhood away from its commonsense understanding to see children as individuals within a particular historical and cultural context.

In recognizing children's agency, it is important to see the constraints under which they construct their worlds. It would be a mistake to assume no difference between the agency of children and that of adults (Pole et al. 1999). Even when concentrating on childhood as a social construction, childhood as a particular phase in the life course of all members of all societies has to be taken into account. First, the materiality of the biological phase of childhood is a cultural universal. It is a phase in people's lives everywhere and it is marked by rapid physiological and psychological development. The biological phase thus works as a sort of structural constraint on theories that consider children to be active. Children's skills and competences are somewhat shaped by the 'facts' of their current developmental stage regardless of the cultural context. This common shared experience of the process of maturation must be considered when looking at children individually and in groups (James and James 2004).

Two key propositions are involved in thinking of children as more than developing individuals. First, childhood cannot be regarded as just a descriptor of a biological phase. Instead, childhood is historically and politically contingent and subject to change. In addition, how we see children and behave toward them shapes their experience of being a child and, therefore, their responses and engagement with the adult world (James and James 2004: 13).

Listening to children themselves has become important in sociology. This draws attention to the need to take children's own interests and perspectives on the social world into consideration (James and James 2004: 24). Alanen (2014) states that if childhood is not thought of as part of sociology, there can be no account of the social. Thus, sociology as the science of the social remains incomplete until childhood has been incorporated into it. This is a gap in the sociology literature. The core domains of sociology ignore children as social actors and the new sociology of childhood has not entirely changed this (Bühler-Niederberger 2010).

The new sociology of childhood sees children as active agents within the constraints of their particular environments. They are influenced by both their status as a child and the constructions of childhood present in a particular society. Taking the new sociology of childhood as the approach to childhood in my study has several implications. First, by looking at childhood as socially constructed and children as active social actors within certain contexts, I move away from the understanding of children as merely developing or learning. In addition, the new sociology of childhood focuses on both the agency of the children and the constraints under which they interact with each other. Finally, the new sociology of childhood has implications for how I have conducted my research. I have aimed to listen to children within their own social setting.

2.3.1 Children's social lives

Taking the new sociology of childhood as a basis, I next review the literature on children's peer cultures and friendship groups. I specifically concentrate on two phenomena central to children's social experiences: popularity and cliques. These two areas of research are concerned with power relations in childhood and youth, which tie closely to the aim of the research on struggle in children's fields. In addition, this research shares similarities to the Bourdieuan field research introduced in the next chapter.

Interpretive research into children's peer cultures has looked at children and their worlds per se and tried to understand them mainly through ethnographic research of children's peer relations. Thus, rather than residing in individuals' heads, according to the interpretive view, culture is produced and reproduced through public negotiations (Corsaro 1992). Corsaro (1990: 197) defines children's peer cultures as a "stable set of activities or routines, artifacts, values, and concerns that children produce and share in interaction with peers." Building on this, Corsaro and Eder (1990) identify two characteristics within children's peer cultures: attempts to gain control of their lives and attempts to share this control with each other. These characteristics are further divided into the themes of sharing and social participation, confusion and conflicts, and challenging of adult rules and authority.

The first central theme is the importance of sharing and social participation. Coordinating and generating play and shared meanings and maintaining joint action and making new friends are complex processes that can be difficult for children (Corsaro and Eder 1990).

The second theme is addressing confusions, concerns, fears, and conflicts within children's culture. Although social participation and friendships are central to the peer culture, differentiation and conflict can also be found. Research on cliques, bullying, inclusion, and exclusion are a part of research on children's conflicts (see, e.g., Adler and Adler 1995; Goodwin 2008; Thorne 1993). These disturbances are generated both within the peer culture and through experiences in the adult world.

Resistance to and challenging of adult rules and authority is the final theme. In their peer groups, children resist and evade authority. These practices provide children with a sense of autonomy and control. During elementary school, they gradually move toward social differentiation within peer groups and away from concentration on adult authority (Corsaro and Eder 1990).

The study of children's peer culture has focused on several interrelated subjects that are mainly based on the themes identified by Corsaro and Eder (1990). For example, plenty of research has focused on children's friendship groups and how these groups construct and maintain differential levels of status and prestige, which is measured through a person's popularity with peers (Read 2011).

However, according to Goodwin (2008: 3), little research exists on how children interact within peer groups. Within their groups, children establish relationships in a context in which parents and teachers are not present. In the peer setting, participants' identities are negotiated through talk. Roles in this context are achieved rather than ascribed.

Kelle (2001) has studied the ways in which children talk about development. According to Kelle (2001), children use developmental status to construct collective identities within their peer culture. She puts 'development' in quotation marks to emphasize the discourse by children. The focus is on the theoretical object of development as reconstructed by children. She finds all children to be part of the discourse of development. They are regarded as either pushing the discourse or refusing it and, thus, placing themselves as early in development or maintaining the status as a child. Children construct development as a social process and use discursive means to find possibilities to profit from development.

2.3.1.1 Friendships and popularity

Two strands can be found in the study of children's friendships. The first comprises studies that focus on memberships of friendship groups and the second studies the qualities that children look for in friends. Reviewing previous literature, Howe (2010) concludes that friendship groups of school-aged children are relatively homogenous. Within these groups, friends resemble each other on a wide range of demographic, cognitive, and social characteristics.

Studying qualities children look for in friends has been accomplished mainly by asking children to list preferable qualities of friends. Howe (2010: 99) argues that children expect their friends to be playmates, helpers, admirable, accepting, loyal, genuine, non-judgmental, trustworthy, and sharing interests and values. The relative emphasis on these attributes changes with age. According to Bigelow (1977), children move (between ages 9 and 11) from a reward-cost perspective to a normative perspective on friendship. In the reward-cost perspective, friendship is valued based on sharing in the child's normative

activities and providing help when needed. Later, children find a normative perspective, in which friends are identified as accepting, loyal, genuine, non-judgmental, and highly admired. In early adolescence, children expect a more emphatic friendship, which emphasizes opportunities for self-disclosure and shared interests and values (see Howe 2010).

Popularity is another key concept studied in relation to childhood and youth. Eder et al. (1995) classify students into two groups: the popular and the un-popular. This ranking is partly based on social class, but is also a result of students' extracurricular activities (Eder et al. 1995). According to previous research, popularity is gender-specific. Elementary schools are powerful sites for constructing culturally specific gender relations. Gender-appropriate models for popular girls and boys are embedded in idealized notions of masculinity and femininity. Children actively synthesize these ideals from the larger culture and apply them to themselves and others. When trying to fit into these parameters of popularity, children simultaneously socialize themselves to gender roles (Adler, Kless, and Adler 1992). Gender segregation is constructed and negotiated within children's peer cultures rather than being a natural fact strictly based on biological or cognitive factors (Aydt and Corsaro 2003).

Eder et al. (1995) report that children in the school they studied shared a concern for being accepted and recognized by their peers. They wanted to feel a sense of belonging within their peer group and used different strategies to keep the group together, including collaborative teasing to reduce conflict among girls and modifying the rules of informal games to avoid conflict among boys.

Popularity as a construct differs by research type. A distinction exists between sociometric popularity and popularity perceived by children themselves (Owens 2009). Researchers have studied what constructs a popular boy or girl at school. These characteristics are related to place, time, and culture. Popularity among boys results, for example, from sports, coolness, toughness, social skills, and success in cross-gender relationships. Among girls, popularity is gained through appearance, parents' socio-economic status, social skills, and academic success, drawing attention from high-status males through appearance or participating in well-regarded practices (Adler et al. 1992; Chase and Dummer 1992).

Popularity is also about visibility among peers. Popularity among girls is based on being known or recognized and sought after as a friend. The most popular girls are known and sought after (Merten 1997). Howe (2010) finds that social popularity covers admiration and contempt as well as liking and disliking. Owens (2009) finds that popular peers are publicly visible, prominent, and prestigious but not necessarily well liked. Popular girls are also powerful and influential and use power in intimidating ways, including threats, verbal harassment, spreading rumors, and manipulating friendships. Eder et al. (1995) ar-

gue that activities such as cheerleading and athletics are a source of popularity as they offer greater visibility within the school. In particular, certain athletic events are heavily attended and make participants in these events highly visible. Members of athletic teams and cheerleading squads make their membership more visible by wearing uniforms at school and having both formal and informal dress codes.

According to Goodwin (2008: 29), girls position themselves in the peer group in relation to one another and differentiate members based on who has access to privileges of the upper middle class or local cultures of hipness. They distinguish between peers by using symbols from the larger culture. Commenting behind others' backs constitutes younger girls' resistance at school and can be directed against those who position themselves as members of the ruling elite. Similar to Goodwin (2008), Eder et al. (1995) find a group of girls who are interested in popularity and want to be more popular. They spend time gossiping about other girls' appearance and behavior.

Goodwin studies children's use of play to determine group hierarchies. In the play of jump rope, the relative skill level of participants determines who has authority to define the rules of the game (Goodwin 2008: 154). Goodwin also states that features of the language used may be more closely related to one's achieved position in a certain context than gender differences.

Being popular is important in childhood, as it influences children's ability to make friends, be included in fun activities, and develop a positive sense of self-esteem (Adler and Adler 1995). Girls who are not in these popular groups wonder why it is that they are not popular. They rely on the popular girls who are cheerleaders or their friends to gain status and are upset if ignored by the popular girls. Some of the cheerleaders abandon their former friends to join the popular groups, which results in other girls considering them snobs (Eder et al. 1995).

Losing popularity can happen through failing to acknowledge one's peers and seeming arrogant. Therefore, popular girls work to sustain their high status. There is a paradox of popularity in which students who are acclaimed are vulnerable to being called stuck up and therefore losing their status and becoming unpopular and disliked. This may be true as there is a failure in the culture that allows hierarchy to be explicitly celebrated (Merten 1997).

Children also produce their society and its structure through conflict. Thus, conflict plays a constitutive role in which participants work with relational patterns of social organization. Conflict arises from the pursuit of individual interests within small groups. The small group structure is achieved through managing conflicts. Therefore, conflict functions to develop a sense of social structure and reproduce authority, friendship, and interactional patterns (Maynard 1985).

2.3.1.2 Cliques

Cliques are a central theme of research into children's peer cultures. This theme is closely related to popularity. The structure of cliques is part of the organization of children's worlds. Cliques have a hierarchical structure; they are exclusive and dominated by leaders as the most popular children. Cliques offer an exciting social life and attention and interest from classmates. Children form cliques based on popularity and unpopularity (Adler and Adler 1995).

Children do not necessarily create inclusive play for everyone, but exclude some of their classmates (Goodwin 2008: 2). Children's cliques become exclusive through screening of potential members. Accepting or rejecting potential members is an embedded practice within the group. The leader of the clique holds a power position and ultimately determines whether one is accepted to the group or not. New members can join the group either by invitation or by soliciting a clique member. For example, potential members can use low-risk strategies of attempting first to become accepted by peripheral members of the clique or solicit the leader directly by imitating his or her style and interests. The leader of the group finally determines a potential member to be acceptable or unacceptable. Even when other members introduce new members to the group, their staying in the group after a probationary period is determined by the leader (Adler and Adler 1995).

Cliques are in constant contact with children on the outside: They may recruit new members or cast members out and bully or look for respect outside the group. A change in clique members changes the social situation of the whole peer group. Membership in popular groups is highly regarded by children and many children hope to join them (Adler and Adler 1995).

Techniques of exclusion are also used in status struggles. Group leaders may enhance their position by disdaining others lower in the hierarchy both inside and outside the cliques. Bullying those outside the clique can also create solidarity within the clique; it may solidify the group and give them power over the vulnerable (Adler and Adler 1995).

Among girls, meanness can be a byproduct of competition and conflict, as well as a tool used to protect or pursue popularity. The sociocultural construction of meanness is linked to popularity, transformation of popularity into power, and feelings of invulnerability and vulnerability (Merten 1997). Also, exclusion may not be imposed to higher one's status, but because of attempts to affiliate with a group in the first place. Exclusion and ridicule develop because of a social group's strong feelings of differentiation between in-groups and out-groups.

Status relationships within cliques are related to the relationships members have with the clique leader. Those who remain closely tied to the leader are more popular. To have relationships with those in a central position in the

clique, children sometimes abandon previous friendships both inside and outside the clique. Those who have lower levels of group status may look for respect, admiration, and imitation from children outside the group (Adler and Adler 1995).

Domination also occurs within groups. Central clique members may be cruel to members of lesser standing. Bullying that starts with the leader is often followed by other group members to build their status within the group. Children may go along with the behavior because of the feelings of power, inclusion, and privilege generated. Others may join because of the absence of ridicule toward them (Adler and Adler 1995). Goodwin (2002) finds the sanctioning of clique members when someone tries to raise him- or herself above other clique members. This happened through cryptic comments in the presence of the individual who is targeted, talk about someone when he or she is not present, and directly by excluding someone or yelling insults.

Eder et al. (1995) argue that those students who are rejected from cliques sometimes behave aggressively or in a hostile way toward others. When talking about and evaluating an object or experience, girls simultaneously negotiate what constitutes value and control the borders of their group. They also criticize those they associate with fashions that the girls within the group find passé (Goodwin 2008). Stigmatization within the group can last longer than stigmatization directed toward those outside the group. It may lead to clique members being cast out and after this seeking to make new friends outside the group. Sometimes, when children are still popular among those outside the group, making new friends is easy. However, sometimes, because of the ways they behaved earlier as members of the clique, it may be difficult to be accepted by the unpopular children. Also, they may not want to befriend the unpopular children. These children may go through a period of stigmatization and keeping to themselves. Therefore, being cast out of a clique has strong consequences for the individual, as it is the ultimate form of exclusion which influences their social life, appearance, and identity (Adler and Adler 1995).

2.3.2 Consumption and brands in peer groups

Ultimately, the aim of this thesis is to understand consumption and development in children's peer groups. Therefore, I next introduce literature on childhood and consumption that takes a more cultural approach to the subject of the study than consumer socialization literature. This section focuses mainly on how children use consumption in their peer groups in symbolic ways (e.g., using brands in symbolic ways and constructing in- and out-groups at school).

According to Martens et al. (2004: 161), "relatively little is known about how children engage in practices of consumption or what the significance of this is to their everyday lives and broader issues of social organization." Children form opinions of people based on their consumption. A lot of research has focused on children and clothing brands in relation to the symbolic aspects of

consumption. For example, Elliot and Leonard (2004) report that less-privileged British children find the owners of expensive and branded trainers to be rich and young and owners of unbranded and inexpensive trainers to be poor and old. In addition, children wearing branded trainers were considered to be popular and able to fit in with their peers. Thus, children wished to have branded trainers to fit in with their peers and the popular children at school. Not having the branded trainers might lead to teasing or bullying. Also, Banerjee and Dittmar (2008) find that the children they studied believed that to be popular among their peer group they would have to have the right games, clothes, shoes, and other material goods. Children might also choose their clothes based on which friends they will see and where they will go (Grant and Stephen 2005).

Similar to research on popularity, children who own the cool brands might be considered cool but also unfriendly (Roper and Shah 2007). Thus, popularity and brands, cliques and in-groups are interlinked. According to Roper and Shah (2007), being cool and owning the right brands can enhance one's popularity within the peer group and help in gaining respect and acceptance with the rest of the children. In addition, those who are popular might feel pressure to keep up with what is happening with the newest brands.

According to Ross and Harradine (2004), children aim both to express their individuality and to conform to groups by wearing brands that others recognize. Children thus seek individuality in a safe way by wearing slightly different versions of accepted and mainstream brands or looks.

However, status related to branded clothes is not the only thing that matters to children. When it comes to looks, Marion and Nairn (2011) suggest that clothes and accessories are used not only to show status and group membership, but also to remember personal past experiences. For example, items received as presents from parents are important for teenagers.

According to McNeal (2007: 295), in- and out-groups can be based on brands and other consumption choices that start to develop after the age of eight. Nairn et al. (2008) study the ways in which children adopt, adapt, and assign meanings to brands. Children's process of discussing whether certain brands are cool or uncool is complex and contested and imbued with group membership rituals.

Roper and Shah (2007) study brands that were present at school among children aged between 7 and 11 from lower socio-economic groups. Similar to other research (Rodhain 2006; McNeal 2007), they find that consumption of brands can result in division into in- and out-groups. Those not wearing the right brands might be discriminated against or experience teasing, bullying, and social exclusion. Children thought that those who did not wear particular

brands might be embarrassed because of that. In addition, brands were used to hide the socioeconomic background of children.

Rodhain (2006) studies how children identify with different groups through consumption. First, they identify with gender. Brands seem to be more important for boys than girls. Second, children identify with age groups. They find that branded clothes are often associated with older children. Identification is also made with peers at school. Children tend to identify with group leaders and wish to have the same brands as the leaders do. Fourth, children identify with their parents, who are both important identification models for them and play a role in the identification process to peers by refusing to buy the brands their children wish to own. Finally, children identify with the bigger community and culture through brands. They associate brands and products with their ideal culture.

Finally, Buckingham and Seiter (2003) find that popular consumption items in childhood ultimately become victims of their own success. After they are taken up by the early adopters (i.e., the cool children), they are embraced by others (i.e., the aspirational consumers). As this happens, the ability of the product or brand to convey distinction is diluted and the cool kids move on. These products will then move on to new generations which they will claim as their own and then distinguish them from previous generations.

Ritson and Elliot (1999) focus on social uses of advertising; rather than looking at individuals, they focus on a group of young people at school that discusses advertising at school to build their group and define boundaries between the in-group and out-group. According to Ritson and Elliot (1999), sixth formers (about 16 years old) talk about advertising at school to strengthen group structures and interpersonal relations. One has to have seen an advertisement and thus had an experience of it to partake in the conversation. Without this experience, access to the discussion is difficult. As they state, the one who has not seen the ad is "the unfortunate individual [who] remains physically present but semantically absent from the group." One wants to see a particular ad because of the individual pleasure sought from it but also because of the possibility to be part of the social interaction within the social group.

Consumption can bring children together in new ways. In a school class, Ruckenstein (2013) reports on children acquiring Nintendo DS consoles after others already had them. Only one child's parents refused to purchase the console, but the daughter nevertheless played the game at a center. Because the price of the console was high, children had to think of ways to acquire one. Children and parents started a practice in which children collected money at their birthday to purchase the console. Children had to be creative because of the economic hierarchy between parents and children and turn to alternatives like a communal gift.

2.4 Conclusions

In this review of the literature on childhood, I have first concentrated on the larger picture of childhood: that it is considered a developing and marginalized space, different from adulthood. I have then discussed how childhood has traditionally been studied in consumer behavior. Finally, by taking a more active view of the child conceptualized by the new sociology of childhood, I have reviewed the research on popularity and cliques that is important for my research. Finally, consumption plays a central part in children's peer relations. Brands function to build in- and out-groups and hierarchies in children's friendships. As a result, brands are closely related to the formation of cliques and popularity in childhood.

Developmental psychology explains childhood as a natural phenomenon, which as Burman (1994) states, leads to thinking of childhood as a developmental stage only. This reliance on development has some consequences. First, it leads to a one-sided understanding of what childhood is. Second, it leads to the use of metrics in studying children, leaving their own experiences in the background.

In the chapter on children's peer groups, I introduce the new sociology of childhood research. This stream of literature takes a more active view of the child. This is a needed addition to the literature which views children more comprehensively than merely as developing beings. Plenty of research in this stream revolves around children's friendships in different social contexts, most importantly the school. I have reviewed the concepts of popularity and cliques, which are elemental in understanding status and hierarchies in children's social groups.

In the next chapter, I turn to Bourdieu, in particular his research focus on status and hierarchies. I review the literature on his concepts of field and capitals and research that builds on this work. As in other sociological research, there is little space for children in Bourdieu's work. When he writes about children, it is through the familiar concept of socialization. However, the concepts of popularity and cliques, which I review in the previous chapter, also illuminate hierarchies and status, sharing a focus with Bourdieu's work. Thus, Bourdieu's concepts are suitable to add to our understanding of children's social worlds.

3. Bourdieu's theory of fields and current applications

Bourdieu developed his theory of fields starting in the 1970s. The field concept represents a change of focus in his studies, driven by critiques that his primary concept of habitus had been too static. Martin (2003: 24) notes that Bourdieu's field theoretic approach offers "an intuitively appealing and theoretically generative account of the sociology of striving." Thus, Bourdieu gradually moved toward a more dynamic concept of field (Swartz 1997). Bourdieu's concept of field is closely linked to the concepts of habitus, capitals, and practice.

Since Bourdieu's work, the field as a concept has been actively used in sociology and is currently popular also in CCT (see, e.g., Arsel and Bean 2012; Arsel and Thompson 2011; Allen 2002; Fischer and Scaraboto 2013; Üstüner and Thompson 2010; McAlexander et al. 2014). As a starting point within CCT, Holt (1997) revisits the concept of field as a way of looking at consumption in the United States. Since then, CCT research has examined capitals and fields in a variety of contexts and mainly through two different streams (Coskuner-Balli and Thompson 2013). The first stream follows Thornton's (1996) concept of subcultural capital, which focuses on groups in lower positions in a socioeconomic hierarchy creating their own status systems. Within CCT, this has been conceptualized as field-dependent capital (Arsel and Thompson 2011).

The concept of cultural capital has produced several extensions or modifications. I review some that are relevant for my work here. I will explore Thornton's (1996) concept of subcultural capital, which has been influential in cultural studies in other fields. Finally, I will examine the extensions made within CCT. Among these are the concept of field-dependent capital by Arsel and Thompson (2011), which draws from Bourdieu's concept of specific capital and Thornton's subcultural capital. Second, the concept of deterritorialized cultural capital examines functions within a society different from Bourdieu's France.

In this chapter, I also describe how childhood traditionally relates to Bourdieuan field analysis. I show how children's peer groups or fields specific to

childhood can be researched using Thornton's (1995) concept of subcultural capital and Arsel and Thompson's (2011) concept of field-dependent capital.

3.1 Capitals

Before going deeper into the concept of field, that is, what is happening within fields and how agents relate to each other within fields, I review the concept of capital and the different forms capital takes in Bourdieu's literature. The four types of capital are social, cultural, symbolic, and economic. In this review of capitals, I have emphasized both general literature on capitals and also how different capitals have been studied in the context of childhood.

In Bourdieu's theory, the concept of capital is defined differently than in economics. Capitals are a generalized resource that can take both monetary and non-monetary and tangible and intangible forms (Anheier et al. 1995). According to Bourdieu, the concept of capital should be extended to all forms of power: material, cultural, social, and symbolic. Individuals and groups draw on symbolic, cultural, and social resources to maintain and enhance their positions in the social order. A range of labor (social, cultural, political, religious, familiar) can be used as power resources and can, under certain conditions, be converted from one form of capital to another (Swartz 1996).

Bourdieu focuses on the difference between capitals and how different and relatively independent forms of capital transform themselves into each other. Although use of the concept of capital seems like a non-reductionist, materialist reading of culture, the study of transformation of different forms of capital offers a more dynamic and holistic analysis (Schuller, Baron, and Field 2000). According to Swartz (1996), the relationship between capitals is made more complex through the concept of symbolic capital, which is defined as the accumulated prestige or honor of a person (Thompson 1991). Symbolic capital is the form of capital "that one or another of these species takes when it is grasped through categories of perception that recognize its specific logic, or, if you prefer, misrecognize the arbitrariness of its possession and accumulation" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 119). Symbolic capital stems from successful use of other capitals as a state of legitimation. Other capitals obtain a symbolic effect when they gain symbolic recognition. Cultural capital is most often converted to symbolic capital (Lamont and Lareau 1988). Symbolic capital is a form of power that is not seen as power but as legitimate demands for recognition, deference, obedience, or services (Swartz 1996).

In addition, Bourdieu shows that it is possible to convert among cultural, social, and economic capital. However, it is not equally possible to change one form of capital to another (Swarz 1996). Bourdieu sees economic capital as the most important of the three forms of capital as it helps individuals develop connections that lead to and reproduce privileged access to other forms of capital (Leonard 2008). Economic capital is stronger because it is more easily

convertible to cultural and social capital than vice versa. In addition, social and cultural capitals are more closely associated with each other than with economic capital (Swartz 1996). For example, in their study of indie culture, Arsel and Thompson (2011) find that social and cultural capital is not spent such that it is exhausted in value. In contrast, conversions of one form of capital to another can provide a possibility for increasing overall capital.

In understanding children and consumption, it is important to focus on what capitals are in place and relevant. Parents provide children with economic capital that may help them access social networks. However, as children grow older, their social capital may be most crucial in influencing their consumption. Accumulation of cultural capital not only involves a transfer from parents to children, but also a transfer within and between a host of social networks and institutional relationships. Thus far, it has been unclear what combinations of capital are important for children in their distinctions from and identification with others; this might be different from that of adults. Bourdieuan analysis suggests that children's distinctions are mainly class based, but it is possible that their distinctions are based more on interpretations of age, maturity, and childishness (Martens et al. 2004).

3.1.1 Social capital

Social capital is a popular but controversial concept; it is used and recognized in a range of disciplines, but it is also a source of confusion resulting from definitional problems (Holland 2009). Putnam, Coleman, and Bourdieu have all conceptualized social capital differently. Bourdieu's application is more critical than that of others and draws on theories of social reproduction and symbolic power (Dika and Singh 2002; Schuller et al. 2000).

According to Portes (1998), the first systematic analysis of social capital comes from Bourdieu, who defines it as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word" (Bourdieu 1986: 21). Later, Bourdieu (1993) defines social capital as consisting of social network and connection contacts and group memberships which, through the accumulation of exchanges, obligations, and shared identities, provide actual or potential support and access to valued resources and sociability that is sustaining of networks through skill and disposition (Morrow 1999).

Bourdieu's treatment of the concept of social capital is thus instrumental. It focuses on the benefits that individuals get from participation in groups and the deliberate construction of sociability for the purpose of creating this resource. Social networks are constructed through invested strategies oriented to the institutionalization of group relations (Portes 1998).

Bourdieu's social capital can be decomposed into two elements: the social relationship that allows individuals to claim access to resources possessed by their associates and the amount and quality of those resources. By using social capital as an instrument, people can gain access to economic resources, increase their cultural capital through contacts with experts or individuals (embodied cultural capital), and affiliate with institutions that confer valued credentials (institutionalized cultural capital). However, acquiring social capital requires investments of both economic and cultural capital (Portes 1998).

Bourdieu's argument is that the establishment and effectiveness of social capital depends on social groups that establish boundaries through symbolic and actual exchanges. Individuals within these groups struggle to constantly maintain or improve their social position (Leonard 2008).

Compared to other forms of capital, social capital contains an intangible element. It does not reside in people's bank accounts like economic capital or in people's heads like cultural capital. To possess social capital, a person must be related to others as others are the source of their advantage (Portes 1998). Schuller et al. (2000) state that one merit of the concept of social capital is that it shifts the focus of analysis from individual agents to relations among agents, social units, and institutions.

Like all of Bourdieu's concepts, social capital has not been studied specifically in children's contexts. According to Leonard (2008), adult indicators of social capital have little relevance in understanding how young people network. In addition, Morrow (1999) states that the research on social capital has not moved beyond adult-centered perspectives and preoccupations to understand children as social actors who shape their social environments (Leonard 2008). Classifications of taste are often made from the adult perspective. These enforce the boundaries between the categories of children and adults. Thus, Bourdieuan analyses of adult consumption cannot be directly imposed on children's consumption (Martens et al. 2004).

However, some research has focused specifically on social capital within childhood. For example, Morrow and Vennam (2015) study children's social capital in social support and social networks in developing countries. They find that children who have social capital (in the form of strong social networks) cannot use their social capital if it is not tied to other forms of capital and thus cannot escape poverty and disadvantage. They claim that by linking the study of social capital to other types of capital and viewing children as having agency within constraints, it is possible to link micro-social and macro-social factors.

Leonard (2005) finds that convertibility of capital in childhood is more difficult than reported in previous research studying adults. This may be due to children's weaker position in relation to adults. Nevertheless, children are ac-

tive in developing networks both with each other and with adults from outside the family. She states that children's stocks of social capital have local value rather than national value because of the relationship between adults and children and the possibility of adults dominating the evaluations of symbolic exchange (Leonard 2005). Karsten (2010) finds that schools and neighborhoods are the most relevant spaces for children to build social capital. However, through a longitudinal study in Amsterdam, she also reports that children's possibility for building social capital is decreasing. This is due to children losing many social ties across age, class, religion, and ethnicity.

Finally, social capital is closely linked to the aims of my research. First, it offers the possibility to focus on relations between agents within a specific field. As the third research questions aims to better understand power relationships between children in their particular fields, social capital, with its emphasis on networks and access to resources through others, is important.

3.1.2   Cultural capital

I now turn to cultural capital, another form of capital important for my work. Of the capitals identified by Bourdieu (1986), cultural capital is the most developed. It has been used to explain how the judgment of the dominant group is seen as universal and therefore allows the group to legitimize its domination (Schuller et al. 2000). However, as in the case with the concept of fields and social capital, cultural capital has also been found to cause confusion. Cultural capital can be defined as "high status cultural signals used in cultural and social selection" (Lamont and Lareau 1988: 153). The concept was first developed by Bourdieu and Passerson to analyze the contribution of culture and education to social reproduction (Lamont and Lareau 1988).

Cultural capital can exist in three forms: first, in the embodied state, which means the long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; second, in the objectified state, such as in the form of cultural goods; and third, in the institutionalized state, such as having graduated from a highly regarded school (Bourdieu 1986).

In its fundamental state, cultural capital is linked to the body and presupposes embodiment. The accumulation of cultural capital in the embodied state presupposes a process of embodiment, which costs time that must be invested personally by the investor. This capital can be acquired, depending on the context, quite unconsciously (Bourdieu 1986).

In addition to embodied cultural capital, some cultural capital is objectified in material objects and media, such as writings, paintings, and instruments. This materiality makes it transmissible (Bourdieu 1986). According to Holt (1998), the power of cultural objects results from the inferred cultural aptitude of the consumer rather than group consensus or economic scarcity. One needs significant cultural capital to understand and appreciate the categories of cultural

goods. These goods vary in the level of cultural capital that is needed to consume them successfully. As a consequence, objectified cultural capital is less relevant today. Class differences are more identified by practices (i.e., the embodied form of cultural capital).

Finally, in its institutionalized state, cultural capital neutralizes the properties of being embodied and linked to its bearer. Through institutional recognition, it is possible to compare qualification holders. It is also possible to establish conversion between cultural capital and economic capital (Bourdieu 1986).

Lamont and Lareau (1988) show that Bourdieu and Passerson have themselves used the concept of capital in differing ways. For example, it can consist of informal academic standards in the form of informal knowledge about the school, traditional humanist culture, linguistic competence, and specific attitudes, or personal style. It has been also described as linguistic aptitude, previous academic culture, formal knowledge and general culture, and diplomas. Cultural capital is seen as an indicator and basis of class position; cultural attitudes and behaviors are tastes that vary according to cultural and economic capital (Bourdieu 1984). Finally, cultural capital is described as a power resource that facilitates access to power positions and simultaneously works as an indicator of class position. Thus, according to Bourdieu, cultural capital is alternatively an "informal academic standard, a class attribute, a basis for social selection, and a resource for power which is salient as an indicator/basis of class position" (Lamont and Lareau 1988: 156).

Cultural capital is expressed in consumer actions. Bourdieu emphasizes status as continually reproduced as a consequence of social interaction. Holt (1998) argues that this is because all interactions are classifying practices in which people negotiate their reputation. Cultural capital is gained through consumption of objects that are difficult to attain and can be consumed only by those who have the ability to obtain them.

Cultural capital is learned in childhood. According to Brooker (2015), cultural capital is the product of time and effort invested by mothers or other caregivers. This capital is embodied cultural capital: the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are internalized by the child. Lamont and Lareau (1988) state that children from the dominant class enter school with key social and cultural cues that have yet to be acquired by students from the working and lower classes. These students can acquire the social, linguistic, and cultural competencies that characterize the upper middle and middle class, but they cannot achieve the natural familiarity. Differences in academic achievement are normally explained by differences in ability, rather than differences in the cultural resources of the family. This transmission of privileges is legitimized through cultural capital (Lamont and Lareau 1988).

More recently, researchers have found limitations in Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital in highly differentiated societies. The concept has been developed within a distinct tradition of high culture and is thus tied to assumptions of high cultural hegemony. Some of its power may be lost when exported to other national contexts with more cultural pluralism (Swartz 1996). An example of how the concept should be refined is Üstüner and Holt's (2010) concept of deterritorialized cultural capital. In their context within the Turkish middle class, cultural capital is not based on socialization and habitus, but rather "based upon the ability to properly interpret, learn, internalize, and then enact the consumption of a distant other" (Üstüner and Holt 2010: 50). This means that consumers are strategically pursuing taste that circulates and is defined in discourse. Deterritorialized cultural capital is relevant in children's contexts as well. As the findings will show, at the same time that children are being socialized in different contexts, they have to interpret, learn, and internalize consumption of, for example, older age groups within the children's fields. Learning the specific capitals valued within each field is part of this process.

3.1.3 Subcultural and field-dependent capitals

In this section, I discuss two more recent concepts built on Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital: subcultural and field-dependent capitals. These are important for my study because they focus on distinctions within specific social spaces or fields and contrast with Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital that was developed for society as a whole. As children move within their own fields (of school and online games), field-dependent and subcultural capital become useful tools for studying childhood.

As stated in the previous section, shifts in the concept of field occurred throughout Bourdieu's career. This was also the case with development of his concept of capitals. He gradually moved away from talking cultural or other forms of capital and replaced them with "specific capital" and [name of field] capital (McQuarrie et al. 2013). Several extensions of capital that work in more specific settings or fields followed Bourdieu's studies on generalized cultural capital. Subcultural and field-dependent capitals are presented here.

Thornton (1996) conceptualizes subcultural capital in relation to cultural capital. She asserts that little attention has been paid to hierarchies within popular culture. Rather, research has focused on divisions and hierarchies between high and popular culture. Researchers have not investigated how youth accumulate cultural goods and experiences to use strategically in their cultural worlds. Thornton also states that Bourdieu neglected the influence of media, which she sees as the primary factor governing subcultural capital's circulation. Understanding media and knowing and performing popular culture are important aspects of subcultural capital (Ostberg 2007).

Thornton develops her concept of subcultural capital in relation to youth club cultures. Thornton does not accept Bourdieu's claim that the status of a specif-

ic cultural capital is determined by the dominant class. She states that those groups that are lower in the socioeconomic hierarchy can create their own systems of status and ascribe value to subcultural capital that would not work in elite fields (Coskuner-Balli and Thompson 2013).

According to Thornton (1996), Bourdieu's capitals (i.e., cultural, economic, and social) function within a social world in which players have high volumes of institutionalized cultural capital. However, subspecies of capital function within other domains that are less privileged. This form of subcultural capital affects the social status of its holder in ways similar to its adult equivalent. Similar to cultural capital, subcultural capital can be objectified and embodied. Thornton states that subcultural capital confers status to those who understand the subculture. It affects the status of a young person in much the same way that cultural capital affects the adult. For example, it can be objectified in fashionable haircuts and music collections; it becomes important to be in the know, use slang, and perform the current dance styles (Thornton 1996).

Unlike the general cultural capital defined by Bourdieu, the conceptualization of subcultural capital is highly contextualized and related to the subculture being studied. However, as a concept that functions in alternative social spaces, it might be more suitable to studying children's capital-building than the concept of cultural capital.

Thornton's form of subcultural capital works in marginalized consumption fields that have lower conversion rates for capitals that function in higher fields (Coskuner-Balli and Thompson 2013). Members of the club culture Thornton studied differentiate themselves from the higher culture. Class does not correlate directly with levels of youthful subcultural capital and it is complicated by subcultural distinctions. A fantasy of classlessness exists within subcultures. For example, those who grew up attending private schools may use a working-class accent during their years in the subculture. Thus, subcultural capital is used to rebel against and escape the parental class (Thornton 1996).

Bourdieu touches upon subcultures by showing how people differentiate themselves from high culture through language. By opposing a system (such as Thornton's youth do by hiding their private school accents in subcultural contexts), one might end up excluding oneself from that system and thus be compelled to take a position of being dominated. Slang can be considered as a rejection of the dominant modes of speech. Slang can also be used to produce distinction within a dominated market. By overtly rejecting the dominant modes of speech, individuals simultaneously take for granted the established hierarchies and show that they share the same system of evaluation, which is working against them. This is symbolic power or violence, which will be discussed later in this literature review (Thompson 1991: 22).

Thornton's concept has since been appropriated to research in CCT. According to Kates (2002), Thornton addresses questions of subcultural hierarchy and authenticity and raises the issue of localized cultural capital. However, she does not address the uneven distribution of subcultural capital among insiders, which then leads to distinctive consumption practices.

Kates (2002) aims to fill this gap by taking a different look at subcultural consumption than Schouten and McAlexander (1995) and others. He distinguishes between leisure subculturalists and the enduring gay subculture. He finds that gay subculture is a pervasive, permanent, and more stigmatized subculture than those previously studied that he characterizes as hobbies or youthful phases. He especially reconsiders structure, ethos, and subcultural boundaries. In the context of gay consumption, he finds three key aspects of subcultural consumption: contested meanings, constructing and consuming boundaries, and building individual distinction through consumption practices.

Within the gay community, Kates (2002) reports an internal status competition that is based on complex and subtle dynamics that are contradictory and conflicting. He claims this is different from previous subcultural studies reporting that status competition is based on an internal, coherent ethos of the subculture and application of subcultural capital within this context. Thus, within his context, subcultural capital is gained through individualistically combining elements of subcultural meaning.

Bullen and Kenway (2005) do not see subcultures as necessarily resisting dominant cultures, but rather as being excluded by them. In contrast to positioning subcultures as sites of resistance, Leonard (2008) suggests that subcultural capital is more useful in looking at the lives of children and young people. She states that subcultural capital enables children to create social spaces that are not contaminated by existing adult values and cultural norms. According to Leonard (2008), Thornton's work has potential for understanding the marginalization of children and youth, which cannot be grasped with adult indicators of status.

Leonard (2008) claims that adopting Thornton's framework enables more sophisticated accounts of social capital to be developed, in particular those that are related to the role of media and consumer society in redefining childhood. The framework can also focus on the ways children are shaped by and also shape new images of childhood. Studying children through Thornton's approach would help in understanding how children and young people "develop, use, dilute, modify, and resist many of the current building blocks associated with accumulating social capital" (Leonard 2008: 241).

Arsel and Thompson (2011), following Thornton (1996), introduce the term field-dependent capital which, rather than concentrating on subcultures and

high cultural capital (HCC) and low cultural capital (LCC) distinctions between consumers in general, focuses on specific fields, in their case the indie consumption field in which consumers make investments, accumulate capital, and finally protect those investments they have made in these fields. The concept of field-dependent capital is close to what Bourdieu calls "specific capital." Both field-dependent and specific capital function within a particular field and not necessarily in others. Arsel and Thompson (2011) conceptualize cultural capital in a contextualized fashion as a "field-dependent resource that can be mobilized in particular status games and not in others." In this case, the Bourdieuan (generalized) cultural capital still functions in the broader hierarchy within the society, but field-dependent capital can be used to explain consumption practices within a specific consumption field (Arsel and Thompson 2011).

In their study of indie consumers, Arsel and Thompson (2011) find that consumers possess a mid-level of generalized consumer capital. Thus, they have resources to compete in status competition based on aesthetic taste, more so than those with lower levels of cultural capital. In their indie field, consumers cultivate their distinguishing taste within a bounded aesthetic realm, where critical standards of taste are appreciated. The consumers might be ill-equipped to partake in the status games that are favored by the high cultural capital consumers. Thus, their destigmatizing practices might reflect their subordinated position within the broader taste hierarchy.

Within a specific field, Arsel and Thompson (2011) identify different strategies or demythologizing practices used by consumers that are related to their status position within a specific field. These demythologizing practices are needed because of consumers having their aesthetic interests trivialized rather than providing a source of identity value. These practices vary according to the degree to which these consumers are vested in the consumption field. First, consumers with high cultural capital distance their practices from the myth. Second, consumers with lower cultural capital transfer the stigmatized myth to scenesters while simultaneously legitimizing their own investments in the field. Third, consumers proclaim sovereignty from the field of consumption by showing interest in other marketplace offerings.

Studies have examined how consumers accumulate field-specific capitals. McQuarrie et al. (2013) find that fashion bloggers act as "cultural capitalists," accruing capital as they make displays of taste. Once they have a sufficiently large audience for these taste displays, their cultural capital becomes convertible into economic and social capital and they start to become assimilated into the fashion system. In addition, Scaraboto and Fischer (2013) find that once consumers have accumulated large amounts of symbolic capital, from being followed and seen as influential by their peers, they start connecting with other actors in the field. They are then approached by market actors who aim to capitalize on their influence within the field. They can also use this accumulated

symbolic capital and power to try to change the field. They might become institutional entrepreneurs because of their symbolic capital and efforts to apply symbolic power. Accumulation of capital within a field can also occur within a community through gift-giving. Here, rather than building from individual to individual, capital is accumulated by giving outside the community but building social capital within the community through this practice (Weinberger and Wallendorf 2013).

Furthermore, Coskuner-Balli and Thompson (2013) state that the two research streams found in consumer research related to Bourdieuan fields and capitals have not taken into account the status hierarchies between consumption fields. For example, yachting is generally more respected than bowling. The at-home fathers they studied were trying to enhance their conversion rates of the domesticated (i.e., subordinate cultural capital) to build cultural legitimacy. This is a form of capitalizing consumption practice which functions to increase the conversion rates and status value of a specific type of capital investment. This has further implications for the research at hand, as placing capital gained in children's online games within this continuum is challenging. Even though general social networking skills can be appreciated in today's society, having a high-level member as a friend in an online game or playing an online game is not on the same scale as yachting and bowling.

As children grow older, they move from one practice to another, simultaneously leaving fields behind. Research on fields has also been interested in consumers' leaving of fields. Arsel and Thompson (2011) find that leaving a field might constitute a loss of capital, as it is not necessarily transferable to other fields. Some consumers may end up leaving a field. For example, indie consumers that had higher levels of generalized cultural capital were more likely to stop making identity investments within a field that had acquired stigmatizing cultural associations. McAlexander et al. (2014) look at consumers crossing fields that are perceived as oppositional. The Mormons they studied were disaffected by the ideology of the field and it became difficult for them to stay in the field. Simultaneously, all their accumulated capital within the field made leaving difficult. These consumers aimed to transfer their field-specific capital to other fields when leaving.

Arsel and Bean (2012) look at the ways in which some middle-class consumers make consumption choices according to a taste regime determined by soft modernism that is mediated by the website Apartment Therapy. This research follows Holt's (1998) move of focus from consumption objects to consumption itself. Arsel and Bean (2012) agree that taste is somewhat class-conditioned. However, the marketplace today offers consumers endless resources for distinction within class boundaries. They define a taste regime as "a discursively constructed normative system that orchestrates the aesthetics of practice in a culture of consumption" (900). Finally, a taste regime can regulate different types of social spaces, such as subcultures, brand communities, or broader life-

style-level groups. Taste regimes demarcate the boundaries of consumption fields (Arsel and Bean 2012).

3.2 Field theory

3.2.1 Concept and background

Bourdieu's conceptualization of field and capitals serves as a model of social organization that draws from Weberian, Marxist, Durkheimian, and phenomenological traditions. The basis of this model is the competition of capital within diverse social fields (Holt 1998). Thus, Bourdieu's work revolves around power; symbolic power in particular. He is specifically interested in relations between social structure and action (Swartz 1997).

Bourdieu introduced the concept of field to better understand concrete social situations that are governed by objective social relations. Social formations are structured around hierarchically organized series of fields, which have their own ways of functioning and relations of force. These fields are relatively autonomous but structurally homologous to each other (Johnson 1993).

Bourdieu argues that culture provides grounds for human communication and interaction, as well as domination. The arts, science, religion, and language are symbolic systems that shape our understanding of reality but also establish and maintain social hierarchies. Bourdieu explores how cultural resources, processes, and institutions form competition and hierarchies of domination between individuals and groups. Thus, his work focuses on cultural socialization of individuals and groups in status hierarchies and how fields of conflict push people to struggle over valued resources. He is also interested in how these struggles occur through symbolic classification and how actors pursuing interests within such fields reproduce the social stratification order (Swartz 1997).

According to Swartz (1997), Bourdieu's concepts are not meant to respond to canons of internal consistency and generalizability. Rather, his concepts shift in emphasis and scope depending on the opposing viewpoints that they address. Emphasis on the concept of field changes in Bourdieu's analysis depending on what he is observing. Thus, field theory is an analytic approach rather than a static formal system (Martin 2003). Bourdieu has used his concept in different ways at different times. This creates both problems and possibilities. According to Warde (2004), the reluctance to formalize his concepts makes it difficult for others to perform similar analyses of empirical phenomena. However, changes in the concept of the field also allow for freer use of concepts in different contexts (Swartz 1997). In addition, Warde (2004) argues that sociology is in need of complex meso-level concepts that can be used to understand structural and institutional change.

Despite the vagueness of the concept, Warde (2004) states that a field is integrated around the following things. First, there are stakes within a field and agents within a field are committed to the value of those stakes. Second, a field is structured around a set of positions that agents occupy within the field. Third, a set of these positions is related to strategic actions within a field. Fourth, agents within a field are endowed with certain resources and dispositions (the habitus).

Bourdieu's concepts link to other concepts that he uses as synonyms. Bourdieu has used the concepts of market and game as metaphorical synonyms for the concept of field (Thompson 1991). Bourdieu defines a field as a "game devoid of inventor." He states that this game is much more fluid and complex than a game that can be designed by a person. Thus, field as a game is not designed or produced by anyone but follows rules and regulations that are not explicit or codified (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Bourdieu also uses the concepts of market and field interchangeably. However, Bourdieu's concept is not interchangeable with the neo-classical concept of market. The concept refers to a force field in which capital distribution represents hierarchical power relations among individuals, groups, and organizations that compete with each other (Swartz 1995: 120).

Fields have logics, which refers to the ways they function, what is valued within them (capitals), and how agents strive for status and power within them. Each field has its own logic, but homologies can be identified between fields. First, to an extent, all fields function along the logic of economics. All fields are oriented toward increasing a specific capital and maximization of profit (Thompson 1991: 15). Second, also similar to every field is the structure of the dominated and the dominant, as well as struggles for exclusion and mechanisms of reproduction (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 106). Logics can also differ within a field. For example, artists are often torn between two logics, that of the field of production, which does not appreciate commercial success, and that of the expectations of vast audiences (Bourdieu 1993: 50).

The concept of field has also received criticism. Warde (2004) states that the concept has been overstretched and thus subsumes many phenomena that are indirectly related. It also eliminates a range of social activity that is not competitive. This can be identified as a shared illusion, a mutual recognition of the participants, and reference to a common history of activity, but these are not sufficiently subjected to specific analysis.

Warde (2004) also states that Bourdieu assumes that all conduct that is worthy of sociological analysis is strategic and competitive. This is echoed by Rocamora (2002), who sees Bourdieu's analysis as a mechanistic account of material culture which ignores the pleasure one is able to get from culture. Through Bourdieu's thinking, it is possible to reveal symbolic violence and the pursuit

of self-interest which would otherwise be masked as dispassionate and disinterested judgment. However, some actions do not conform to this competitive logic across fields and exist in some more than in others. Thus, the concept cannot address non-strategic action and purposeful behavior in noncompetitive circumstances (Warde 2004). What becomes evident in the literature review on the concepts of field and capitals is that they are used differently in different contexts and by Bourdieu at different times.

Some research has been conducted on children's fields. Sedano (2012) studies constructions of ethnicity in different childhood fields. She bases her construction of children's fields on the notion that children are subordinated agents in adults' social worlds. With this in mind, she identifies three kinds of social fields. First are bureaucratic fields, in which adults represent bureaucratic institutions. An example of this is teachers at school. Second are domestic fields, where adult members of the domestic groups socialize with children. Third are play fields, in which children organize their relations without adult supervision. Tensions can exist among these fields. For example, children in the bureaucratic field of school have tried to turn it into a playing field by ignoring the teacher during class. My research falls into the play field, which is nevertheless structured by adults: At school, the teachers are present even within informal interaction with the children, and online moderators and others are present on the sites.

Home belongs to the domestic field identified by Sedano (2015). Bourdieu's concept of field recognizes that homes are not necessarily harmonious places. Instead, they can be places in which negotiations and battles about power are fought. Thus, the study turns to how agents who struggle for scarce resources come to challenge and reproduce their social status (Mayall 2015).

According to Sedano (2012), play fields are those in which children have the power and those that allow children the greatest capacity for political actions. Through cultural conventions, children create differences in status that are not necessarily the same as those developed by adults. She finds that status is built on five main principles. First is seniority, or the time children have belonged to the group: The longer one has belonged to the group, the higher the status. Second, younger children are expected to respect children. Third, gender involves whether the other sex is allowed in the group or not. Fourth, children under the same adult's supervision socialize together. Fifth, habitus is the setting of embodied styles of communication and ways that value is appreciated within a context (Bourdieu 1984).

Again using Sedano's (2015) classification, in the bureaucratic field, Winter (2015) studies review meetings for children in care. Within these meetings, children's parents and social care workers position themselves according to their capitals. She identifies two types of capital in these meetings. First is the capital of the social care workers she identifies as 'objective/assessed knowing

the child.' With this, she refers to the knowledge of the child that is based on developmental needs and, for example, health, education, and self-care skills. This is consistent with the dominant social positioning of the social worker, resulting in this 'scientific' and 'objective' knowledge being regarded as superior. The second type of capital she calls 'subjective/relational knowing the child,' which is claimed by the parents. This type of capital draws on personal relationships with the child within the private sphere of family. It is historical, subjective, and personal. This type of capital is considered less valuable and based on the subordinate position of parents in the meetings. This research shows that within children's fields children are marginalized. Children are not present at these meetings and they are constructed either through parents' subjective understandings or the social care workers' 'objective.' These constructions of children are used to occupy the subject position of the child whose participation becomes compromised.

These research examples demonstrate that childhood and children have been studied using Bourdieu's concepts. I provide further examples at the end of the following section, in which I focus on struggle and competition in fields.

3.2.2 Habitus and field

Confusion related to Bourdieu's concepts continues with habitus. According to Maton (2012), habitus is one of the most misunderstood, misused, and hotly contested concepts. It is structured by one's past and present circumstances, such as family and education. In addition, habitus is structuring in that it helps to shape one's present and future practices. Finally, it is a structure because it is systematically ordered.

Maton (2012) shows that the relationship between habitus and field is constantly changing. A mismatch of varying degrees exists between the structure of the field and its members with different habituses. An example of this misfit is a social situation in which one anticipates feeling awkward and out of one's element. One might decide to avoid this social situation. In contrast, a social situation in which one feels comfortable and at ease is a match between one's habitus and the field. In this situation, one is attuned to the unwritten rules of the game and underlying practices within that field.

Habitus is built in childhood. Habitus relates to the taste and practices accumulated in one's upbringing (André and Hilgers 2015). This view of childhood as a time in which habitus is accumulated is close to the concept of socialization, as both see childhood only as a passing stage. However, if one wishes to study childhood in the now and within children's own fields, Bourdieu's other concepts become more relevant.

In childhood studies, habitus has been used in different ways. Tomanović (2004) has studied family habitus as the "allocation, distribution and the use of family resources and thereby structures everyday life of children" (p. 356).

Family habitus activates different types of capital and brings about different types of childhood practices. One's habitus accrued during childhood also relates to how childhood is viewed by adults. According to André and Hilgers (2015), during socialization, children internalize a view of childhood and the role of the child in the society in which they live. They reproduce this view of childhood as they become adults.

Brooker (2015) sees children's habitus in their everyday lives as the tendency to approach experiences in certain ways, whether with determination and resilience or uncertainty. These dispositions are learned through early experiences with adults and reflect the individual and collective habituses of those children with whom one is in contact. The habitus disposes a child to invest actively in his or her success or to accept a lesser place in the field of power in the classroom.

Knight (2015) studies children and young people who go outside their local area to secondary school. In some cases, she finds a mismatch between the habituses of students and the field to which they move. This causes them to be more conscious and aware of themselves. She especially finds this among young people from the ends of the social class spectrum: students of high-income families attending private schools away from home and socially disadvantaged youth going to schools in an affluent area.

3.2.3 Competitive fields

According to Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992: 76), specific capitals (e.g., academic and intellectual capital) only function in relation to certain fields. Agents enter fields by possessing a configuration of properties, or efficient characteristics, that are called specific capital (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 107). As will be reviewed in the following sections, capital presents itself as economic, cultural, social, or symbolic.

Field and capitals are inherently interlinked and Bourdieu identifies specific capitals related to specific fields. According to Holt (1998), Bourdieu documents how cultural capital is enacted in fields of consumption such as food, interior décor, clothing, popular culture, hobbies, and sport. Capitals only function and exist in relation to a field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Certain forms of capital, fundamental capital, are effective in all fields. There are also trump cards, whose force varies depending on the game. Both the value of different forms of capital and the hierarchy between capitals vary across fields (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Thus, cultural capital functions within consumption fields through conversion into tastes and consumption practices.

Some fields are more autonomous than others, but they are never completely independent of other fields and their forces. Sometimes to succeed in a field one has to appeal to groups of forces that are outside the field (Thompson 1991). Bourdieu sees those fields, within which stakes are mainly symbolic, as

autonomous from the demands of politics and economics. There is no way to identify quality or value in the field. These determinations are unstable and constantly changing. Within these fields, effort is not necessarily rewarded, and the value of specific positions may vary according to the agents occupying the positions (Johnson 1993).

To determine what a field is and where its limits are, one needs to define the capitals that are active in that field. This is a hermeneutic process of going back and forth between the specific capitals active in the field and the specific logic of the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Another way to determine the limits of the field is to see where effects are on an object. When effects end, the field ends (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Also, Üstüner and Holt (2010) emphasize that the limits of consumption fields are contested. In the Turkish context they studied, two groups of consumers, those with HCC and those with LCC, compete on the scope of their competitive field.

In addition, no inherent laws of relations between fields exist, so they must be investigated case by case (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Defining the limits of a field is difficult, as they are "always a stake in the field itself" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 100). Borders are dynamic and part of the struggle within the field. Agents on a field try to differentiate themselves and reduce competition within a certain subsector of the field. A field does not have parts, as every subfield has its own logic, rules, and regulations (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

3.2.4 Struggle

According to Swartz (1996), Bourdieu sees conflict as the fundamental dynamic in all social life. The struggle for power is the key in all social arrangements and this struggle occurs over economic and material resources.

To be accepted as a legitimate player in a field, one must have some knowledge of or skill in playing the field. One invests capital in a field in such a way that produces maximum profit or benefit. Typically, no one enters a game to lose it (Johnson 1993). Consumers' investments in a field leave sociocultural marks on their identities as knowledge, habituated tendencies, and cultivated aesthetic tastes (Arsel and Thompson 2011). Illusio, which comes from the word ludus, meaning the game, refers to specific interest that is both presupposed in a field and also produced by a historically limited field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). To play the game of a field, one needs to believe in it and the stakes within it. Any particular person in a field makes an investment in the game, which is called illusio. The investment is the inclination to act. This comes from the ability to play the game (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Those participating in the field have a belief (doxa) in the game and its stakes. Because they play, they agree that the game is worth playing, without any contracts (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

Each field has its specific illusio or interest, value attached to the stakes and mastery of the rules. This interest differentiates itself according to one's position in the game, whether one belongs to the dominated or the dominant (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

More recently, taste regimes have determined the types of capitalizing practices possible in a field. This helps to explain how consumers gain cultural capital through their participation in a marketplace. The taste regime that binds these integrative practices together also demarcates the boundaries of a consumption field from which consumers can draw their cultural capital. Thus, the objects, doings, and meanings that a practice orchestrates also constitute a variety of cultural capital resources that are available to consumers who take part in the taste regime (Arsel and Bean 2012).

Thus, fields can be regarded as fields of struggle. Within fields, there is always a struggle for the stakes and scarcities generated within them and in the forms of capital they employ (Bourdieu 1992: 51). Struggle constantly produces and reproduces the game and its stakes. People reproduce the practical commitment to the game and its stakes. The game no longer works when people start wondering if it is worth playing (Bourdieu 1991).

Bourdieu approaches the concept of the field by thinking about it relationally. The structure of the field is determined by the relationships among the positions that agents occupy in the field. The field is dynamic so that a change in an agent's position means a change in the field's structure. Bourdieu then looks at relations between positions rather than interactions among agents (Johnson 1993: 6). This illustrates the distinction between relations of interaction and structural relations that constitute a field; the polar individuals may never meet or might ignore each other systematically and yet this practice is determined by the negative relation that connects them (Bourdieu 1993: 46).

Agents can produce effects in the field. One's position in the game influences the strategies within the game. This position makes players either aim to maintain the current distribution of capital or to unsettle the distribution (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Position also determines whether strategies are more or less risky, subversive, or conservative (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 99).

Within a particular field, agents occupy diverse positions from which they participate in the competition for control of the interests and resources (Johnson 1993: 6). One occupies a specific position in a field based on the accumulation of one's capital. As fields are relatively autonomous, agents may hold different positions in different fields. However, in some instances, positions can correspond. However, to understand a field, one needs to reconstruct the field and the links between the positions and agents within the field (Thompson 1991: 29). The aims of the individuals in a field of struggle are determined in the structural space of positions (Thompson 1991). These can be determined by

close scrutiny of the field. Each player in the game has a stock of different capitals which determine her "relative force in the game, her position in the space of play, and also her strategic orientation towards the game." People construct their view of the field from the position they have within it (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

Position-taking happens in relation to the space of possibilities within a field (Bourdieu 1993: 30). When a field is regarded as a field of position-takings, it is considered a product of permanent conflict. Field is all about position-taking within it (Bourdieu 1993: 34). Position-taking may arise almost mechanically, which means it might be almost independent of agents' consciousness. It happens based on relationships between positions that are determined relationally and negatively (Bourdieu 1993).

According to Bourdieu (1993: 68), those highest in economic, social, and cultural capital are the first to move into new positions. Also, beginners in a field aim for a dominant position. However, as the attractiveness of a field increases, the profits of a dominant position decline.

Agents orient themselves toward specific interests or goals, but their actions are not always outcomes of conscious consideration or calculation in which different strategies are weighed against each other. If action is thought of as calculated, one forgets that through habitus people are predisposed to act in certain ways and to pursue certain goals (Thompson 1991).

3.2.5   Symbolic power

The more formal a market is, the more it is dominated by the dominant, meaning those who have legitimated competence and speak with authority (Bourdieu 1991).

Cultural capital partakes in domination by legitimizing certain practices as superior. These practices are also naturally made superior to those who do not participate in them. Then through a process of inculcation, they see their own practices as inferior and thus exclude themselves from legitimate practices (Johnson 1993).

Bourdieu sees classes as sets of agents occupying the game and its stakes. They possess similar quantities of similar capital, as well as similar life chances and dispositions (Thompson 1991). For Bourdieu, class identities are constructed relationally and reflect the oppositional character among existing classes. Conflict between classes determines the degree of institutionalization of social boundaries. Boundaries depend on the symbolic power of particular groups to impose their vision of social divisions of society as legitimate (Swartz 1996).

Cultural practices are structured around binary oppositions. The value of each element is defined in relation to other elements in the system. For example,

lifestyles are not specific by class, but obtain significance in relation and in contrast to each other. The dominant class can be understood only in relation to the dominated class and culture (Swartz 1996: 63).

In everyday life, power is often exercised routinely, transmuted into a symbolic form. Symbolic power can be invisible. Those who are subjected to power recognize its legitimacy and its hierarchical relations. Thus, they fail to see that hierarchy is an arbitrary construction that functions to serve a certain social group. Symbolic power requires active complicity from those who are subjected to it. They need to believe in the legitimacy of symbolic power and in the legitimacy of those who wield it (Thompson 1991: 23). Similar to Bourdieu (1990), in their interviews with underclass men seeking to work in the hairdresser field, Üstüner and Thompson (2012) find that members of a subordinated group need to believe their lifestyle practices are inherently inferior to the dominant fashion.

In less institutionalized societies, symbolic power can be exercised through soft means such as giving gifts. Thus, domination is sustained through interpersonal relations rather than institutions. In societies that have objectified institutions, domination does not have to occur so much through interpersonal relations. Institutions enable different sorts of capital to be accumulated and there is no longer the need for individuals to pursue strategies aimed at the domination of others. Violence is thus built into the institutions themselves. Therefore, the dominated resist and exert a certain force. Belonging to a field means that one is capable of producing an effect in it. This effect does not have to be more than a reaction of exclusion from those in dominant positions (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

According to Lamont and Lareau (1988), Bourdieu conceives exclusion as one of the most pervasive forms of power. Lamont and Lareau quote Bourdieu and Passerson (1997), saying that power exercised through cultural capital happens by shaping people's lives through exclusion and symbolic imposition. Power is exercised by legitimating specific cultural norms and practices as superior and institutionalizing these claims to regulate behavior. The dominant class makes its preferences and practices seem natural and authoritative. This is symbolic violence.

Hierarchies and domination can be seen in social systems without resistance or even conscious recognition from its members. These hierarchies of domination are supported by cultural practices and symbols. However, there is a struggle for power in social life; legitimation is necessary for power to be used successfully. Individuals in status hierarchies struggle over value resources through strategies and thus reproduce social stratification within their field (Swartz 1997: 6).

Bourdieu uses the concept of field in contrast to those who stress total domination, as there is a constant struggle within a field. Thus, fields are sites of resistance and domination and relationally linked to one another (Swartz 1997: 121). Even though those who dominate a field can make it function to their advantage, they must always deal with resistance and claims of the dominated (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Those in the dominated positions aim to increase their capital, their tokens, within the tacit rules of the game. Players can also try to change the rules of the game. They can try to change the relative value of capitals or the exchange rates between capitals. These strategies aim to discredit the capital on which the opponent's power rests. In addition, agents aim to valorize the species of capital that they themselves possess (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

I end this section with a discussion of struggle in children's fields. Vuorisalo and Alanen (2015) show that children in early education discursively position themselves. They identify two fields within this context. First is the intergenerational social field, in which adults and children communicate. The second field is the (intra)generational field of children's peer group. These two fields are interlinked. They produce practices that operate through daily activities in preschool and some generate symbolic violence between children. Children who are in a weak position do not expect opportunities to participate more and do not know how to change this lack of opportunity. The context at hand, the Finnish education system, which is considered equal for everyone, nevertheless uses practices that produce inequality among children.

3.3   Conclusions

In reviewing Bourdieu's work, I have focused on the concepts of field and different types of capitals. These are some of his most important concepts and, in addition, crucial to my work. As Swartz (1996) states, Bourdieu's concepts are not internally constant and generalizable. In addition, their use has changed over time. This affects the way concepts can be used in current research. The focus in my reading and further use of Bourdieu's work is on the concepts of struggle, symbolic power, and domination. Instead of focusing on capital-building as such, I focus on the competitive elements of these concepts within a particular field. I have also reviewed relevant current work that draws on Bourdieu in the fields of sociology and consumer research, particularly CCT. In this thesis, I have used Bourdieu's concepts of field and social and cultural capital in a highly contextualized fashion. I have used them on the micro level rather than to illuminate macro characteristics of broad societal fields. Thus, they are used with micro concepts found in childhood studies, such as popularity and cliques.

3.4 Literature summary

The literature on fields and the literature on children's peer groups are two separate streams that rarely cross paths. In Bourdieuan thinking and most research following it, children have been passive recipients of capital (Leonard 2005, 2008; Morrow 1999). Childhood is merely a stage for passing through into adulthood, in which parents pass on their capital to their children. As reviewed throughout the chapter on Bourdieu's fields, more recent literature has specifically studied children's fields (e.g., Vuorisalo and Alanen 2015; Knight 2015). Furthermore, even though the research streams are separate, some commonalities and possible avenues exist to connect them.

First, in both the child in the new sociology of childhood and the traditional understanding of the child as developing, socialized children share commonalities with the Bourdieuan agent. As discussed earlier, the agent in the developmental psychology and socialization literature is not agentic at all, as many times children are regarded as objects of processes rather than active agents in their social settings. Similarly, Bourdieu sees children in the process of socialization and accruing habitus, thus similarly to the developmental and socialization literature. However, children as agents in the new sociology of childhood are approached differently. Children are regarded as having more agency in their social settings, but nevertheless constrained by their surroundings. In addition, within this stream, interest has shifted from children as becomings to beings in the now. Bourdieu's aim is to go past the agency-structure debate through his concept of practice. Sewell (1992) argues that Bourdieu does not consider the subjects of his studies to be 'cultural dopes.' They are endowed with capacity for strategic and autonomous actions. However, his concept of habitus leads to all agents necessarily reproducing structures. Furthermore, Reed-Danahay states that Bourdieu's agent is not someone free to make choices and strategies, but someone who lives under the constraints of their habitus and the objective conditions of social fields (Reed-Danahay 2004).

Even with the strong structuring force of habitus and field, Bourdieu's theory of fields incorporates change. First, change within Bourdieuan fields occurs through struggle as those within it try to change it for their own advantage. According to Hardy (2012), change is often taken for granted in Bourdieu's writing. In times of stability, change happens gradually through, for example, capital accumulation. However, the mismatch with habitus and field can cause hysteresis, and new opportunities are created by altered field structures. Based on children's evolving position in society as they grow and the biological developmental facts, for children, change is constantly present. As I will show in the findings, these two ways of change occur simultaneously in children's fields.

In this thesis, peer groups are conceptualized as a field. Focusing on micro-level groups differs from Bourdieuan field analysis, which often focuses on larger fields with bigger institutions, such as the field of art (Bourdieu 1993).

In addition, much of CCT research on fields has focused on larger groups (e.g., Arsel and Thompson 2011). Positions, capitals, and struggle can be found in both meso- and micro-level contexts, and they offer a rich avenue for studying struggle and competition in smaller contexts as well. An example of this in the context of children is the study of Vuorisalo and Alanen (2015) on struggle and symbolic power in pre-school children's groups. Thus, combining Bourdieuan concepts with those found in children's peer group literature, one can obtain a new understanding of childhood and consumption. In the beginning of my findings section, I further discuss the specific aspects of the two fields of my study: the field of school peer group and the online field of MovieStarPlanet.

Struggle and competition are inherent to Bourdieu's analysis. According to Bourdieu, all social life is competitive because there is always struggle for scarce resources (Bourdieu 1992). The literature on children's peer groups does not assume that all action is competitive or strategic as Bourdieuan thinking does. However, much of the research reviewed on children's peer groups has a competitive aspect. Inclusion, exclusion, bullying, and consumption objects are used for power in children's peer groups. For example, Bourdieu finds that exclusion in relation to childhood and youth cliques is one of the most pervasive forms of power (Lamont and Lareau 1988).

As struggle is at the forefront, in Bourdieuan terms, positions emerge. In Bourdieuan thinking, this means getting a wanted position within the field and, in the child peer culture literature, becoming popular in the group. These are the coveted positions. There are similarities between the popular and the dominant. Both groups have power and visibility within their fields and/or peer groups. In children's peer groups then, the struggle is about getting to the top of the hierarchy in the class by using capitals the children have and accumulate. Positions are related to what one has within the context. Research has identified different ways that children become popular within their groups, such as sports achievements or consumption objects. On a more general level, in Bourdieuan thinking, these are conceptualized as capitals.

Finally, taking a Bourdieuan perspective on childhood has several implications for my study of children's peer groups. First, looking at children's peer groups as fields leaves their individual development and learning happening in the context of consumption in the background. Instead, the focus is on their positions within the group and the role of development as a discursive resource within fields. Second, children are viewed through the Bourdieuan agentic lens of accumulating capitals via strategies within fields. This goes against the traditional understanding of children as inherently good and in tune with nature. The Bourdieuan perspective sees them as agents within fields, structured by their developing habitus. However, by bringing these two streams together, it is possible to develop a more vivid analytical picture of what is going on in my context. By bringing Bourdieuan thinking to analyzing childhood peer cultures, one can see what children do as more strategic action, which is not

common in analyzing childhood because children have traditionally been considered passive in the literature.

4. Methodology

The aim of this thesis is to focus on two specific childhood fields: peer group at school and peer group for the online game MovieStarPlanet. I am interested in how children move between these two contexts and how popularity in one is connected to popularity in the other. I have chosen to study this topic through the discourse of children. This decision was driven by the data: The interactions of the children in the group discussion were rich in status-building discourse and leaving this out of the analysis would have hidden interesting findings. Children in the interviews were simultaneously constructing another field (online) and positioning themselves in the field of peer group. The interactions within the field of peer group offered the possibility to see position-taking and symbolic power in practice. In addition, looking at interactions in the interviews, I was able to see how children themselves discursively performed development rather than merely being influenced by it.

In this chapter, I first describe my research approach. I then focus on the specifics of conducting interpretive consumer research with children. Finally, I describe the research context and data collection and analysis processes.

4.1   Analyzing discourse in fields

Bourdieu is interested in language and the way it becomes part of social structures and domination. However, his research is not discursive, as he emphasizes the structures in which language is set. In this section, I first review Bourdieu's relationship to language. In addition, I show how discursive studies and Bourdieu's concepts related to fields are connected and how these two approaches have been used in previous research.

4.1.1   Bourdieu and language

According to Bourdieu, words, expressions, and discourses are filled with symbolic power features (Blommaert 2015). Language is then an indicator of social relationships and their dynamics. Symbolic features occur across the entire field of language in society. Bourdieu provides the following example

from France: He states that symbolic features can be seen in the way country people feel insecure and 'lose voice' when talking to 'sophisticated' Parisians. The Parisians are considered to occupy a superior symbolic position. This insecurity leads to hypercorrection and self-stereotyping (Blommaert 2015).

Linguistic exchange is an economic exchange in which a symbolic relation of power exists between the product with some linguistic capital and the consumer or market. This exchange is capable of producing both material and symbolic profit. Thus, utterances are not only signs to be understood, but also signs of wealth that are meant to be evaluated and signs of authority to be believed and obeyed. It is rare in ordinary life for language to function only as a form of communication (Bourdieu 1991). Similarly, when one criticizes a work of art, the statement contains a referral to the value of the work, the value of it being affirmed, but also a claim to have the legitimacy to talk about that work of art. Thus, critics take part in a struggle for monopoly of legitimate discourse about a work of art (Bourdieu 1993).

Communicative interaction does not occur without the reproduction of power relations. Thus, the meaning-bearing construction of linguisticality is related to the interest-laden constitution of society. In this thinking, all 'validity claims' by agents can also be regarded as 'legitimacy claims.' In analysis then, there is a need to identify conditions of real speech situations rather than the ideal speech situation (Susen 2013).

Reproduction of power relations happens without agents being aware of it. Language and practice in general are opaque because subjects do not know what they are doing. People's actions carry more meaning than they are aware of; in discourse, people legitimize or delegitimize power relations without knowing they do this (Fairclough 1989).

As stated previously in reviewing Bourdieu's work, within a field agents come to occupy different positions. When such positions are thought of in discursive terms, speaking and discourse production are ways of taking up a position in a social field. Furthermore, these position-takings form the agents within any particular field, or "the speaker who produces discourse in a field like the academy comes to be shaped by the positions (s)he takes up and the forms of discourse they call forth" (Hanks 2005: 73).

However, for Bourdieu, discursive acts are not in the center of fields. Fields exist prior to particular engagements and are in this sense objective (Hanks 2005). Thus, Bourdieu's analysis does not specifically focus on discourse. The role of language in Bourdieu's studies is situated within his larger theoretical framework. He sees language as dependent on the structure of social space (Sandberg 2008). However, even though language is secondary to social structural forces, it can be seen as both a resource and a medium for social-symbolic struggles (Myles 2010).

4.1.2 Discursive analysis of fields

According to Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999), Bourdieu disparages discourse as part of struggle for the constitution and classification of social relations. They argue that interaction must influence the forces on fields, but also admit that these forces are also a structural precondition for interaction. They claim that by analyzing interaction discursively one can trace the fundamental changes in the balance of forces between fields. In this view, field positions and relations are not only a preconstructed frame for interaction within a situation, but they also are worked and potentially changed in the course of interaction.

Symbolic struggles on fields can thus also be regarded as discursive struggles. These symbolic struggles can restructure fields and redefine the boundaries between fields (Hanks 2005). Fairclough (1995) views daily interactions as a way in which dominant discourses become norms within particular fields. According to Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999: 104), "struggles are enacted in the course of communicative interaction, and that communicative interaction is the discursive facet of the constitution (and reproduction) and reconstitution of the social, including the structuring of positions within and relations between social fields. This entails an analytical focus upon communicative interaction which Bourdieu consistently resists." Thus, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) argue that studies focusing on interaction can complement and enrich Bourdieu's own account. In this view, competition in a field is a struggle not only over profits of distinction, but also over classifications.

When taking a more discursive approach to fields, one must give language a more constitutive role than Bourdieu does. This is done by not reducing language to a structure of class relations. However, it is important to acknowledge the objective socio-economic structures of a field. Material reality and social practice are nevertheless constituted through discourse (Sandberg 2008).

Fields can thus be analyzed through discourse. According to Hanks (2005), a study that focuses on language would compare, for example, the kinds of effects discursive resources have when put into use in fields, the strategies speakers pursue, and the ends they achieve through discourse (Hanks 2005).

There are plenty of examples research combining analysis of discourse with Bourdiean concepts. Most of these have based their analysis on critical discourse analysis (see eg. Reyes 2011; Harju and Huovinen 2015; Thurlow and Jworksi 2006; Harrington 2015, Ostermann 2003). Also within CCT, field-related discourse has been of interest. For example Arsel and Thompson (2011) study of demythologizing discourses of hipsters and Coskuner-Balli and Thompson (2013) how at-home fathers discursively try to capitalize on their new consumption practices.

4.2 Children in consumer research

Bartholomew and O'Donohoe (2003) promote the use of qualitative methods in studying children and consumption. In their interpretative research on children and advertising, Bartholomew and O'Donohoe (2003) find that children have three roles in dealing with advertising, from which different parts to be played emerge: They are "meaning masters, style masters, and performance masters; as ad avoiders and independent consumers; and as precocious planners, tactical technicians, and reality questioners." This sort of meaning could not have emerged through positivistic experimental research. Models of child development overlook children's sophisticated grasp of the advertising genre (Bartholomew and O'Donohoe 2003).

Relatively few studies have examined children as consumers. This is in part due to methodological and design issues. It can be difficult for researchers to gain access to child subjects and the ethics of dealing with child informants is complex (Davis 2010). According to Pole et al. (2003), the challenge is not limited to data collection methods, but also concerns the status of children within the research process. In studies of education and children as part of a family, children are not seen as subjects of research in their own terms, but as parts of wider educational or social issues. The children per se are not the focus of the research; rather, the studies focus on the wider social processes which constitute aspects of childhood (Pole et al. 1999). Additionally, in academic literature, children are often seen as vulnerable, naïve, and powerless. Positivistic, quantitative research has led to presenting children as passive receivers of, for example, advertising (Bartholomew and O'Donohoe 2003).

Banister and Booth (2005) encourage the development of a child-centric approach in consumer research. They encourage researchers to reflect their stance toward children because this stance influences the research design. The assumptions and concerns brought to the research process shape the techniques and methods employed (Harden et al. 2000). Banister and Booth (2005) promote the use of approaches that acknowledge appropriate forms of language and behavior. Therefore, when researching children, researchers should develop methods and media with which children can relate their experiences by taking an active role in the data collection and give children the tools, environment, and voice with which to relate their experiences (Banister and Booth 2005). Children are, for example, accustomed to expressing themselves in creative as opposed to vocal means and research can benefit from designs that use these talents (James et al. 1998). I take this into account by talking with children, and as I describe more closely below, part of the interviews was spent drawing or writing, whichever the children preferred.

In taking the child-centric view, sociology, health research, and cultural studies have moved further than marketing and consumer research as few marketing studies have acknowledged the debate in other subject areas. Researchers are urged to think carefully about how they are trying to understand their participants. Children have long been seen as difficult or incompetent research participants, but by shifting the research focus to embrace childhood as a culture in its own right, a context for a fruitful data collection process emerges. Children can be keen, able, and useful research participants if their involvement and expertise is harnessed differently than those of adults (Banister and Booth 2005).

Christensen and Prout (2002) offer four main perspectives available for researchers. First is the child as the object of research. Second is the child as the subject of research. Third is the child as a social actor in the study, and fourth is children as participants in the research and actively co-producing the phenomenon and the study. In the first perspective, children are seen as objects to be researched. Their lives are studied objectively from the outside by adult researchers. Children's accounts are weighed and tempered by the accounts of parents, teachers, social workers, or other 'gatekeepers.' The second perspective is somewhat more child-centered. Children are seen as becoming and not yet completely adult in their understanding. The ethical focus is on children's ability to give informed consent. The third perspective sees children as social actors who have independent experiences of their social world. Data collection methods and interpretation need to stay true to the child's experiences. In the fourth perspective, children do not merely voice their experiences but are co-creators in the design and methods of collecting information. Researchers seek to involve children in all stages of research (Christensen and Prout 2002). In their study, Banister and Booth (2005) find it important to give their participant a voice rather than re-articulating the adult meaning. In this research project, I take the third approach of seeing children as social actors with their own experiences of the social world. I think it is important to understand children as active actors in contrast to the inactive view provided by previous research that focuses on child socialization and development.

The knowledge of children and childhood depends on the research methods employed to gain access to their worlds and their visibility in the society in which they are studied (Pole et al. 1999). Also, Bartholomew and O'Donohoe (2003) call for more attention to theories that incorporate social and cultural issues and see children as active, socially and culturally situated consumers. They claim that children themselves feel a need to present themselves to the world as independent competent selves and the quest for a sense of power and control is particularly urgent for children. In this research, I aim to see children as active social actors within the study and in their environment. In this view, children are seen as constructing the social world together in their particular context.

Ethical issues influence the way children are seen in research. Christensen and Prout (2002) suggest that the ethical view of children is formed by the researcher's social theory. This means that the paradigmatic perspective shapes research questions, methods, and theoretical perspectives as well as the ethical view of children as individuals.

Ethical considerations are frequently encountered in conducting research with children. Ethics is more essential with children than adults because of their minority status, informed consent, and anxiety about children's cognitive competencies (Davis 2010). However, Alderson and Goodey (1996) argue that this set of ethics is grounded in spurious assumptions. If the Piagetian view is rejected and children are not seen as not competent or fully functioning beings, then the implication that children constitute a separate species for ethical purposes is questionable. The main issues of ethics and children should not revolve around children's innate difference from adults but relate to children's social location as subordinate to adults (Harden et al. 2000.)

In research it is essential to close the gap between the researcher (an adult) and the children and to develop rapport with the children in their own space on their own terms (Banister and Booth 2005). Some have advised suspending all adult-like characteristics or attempting semi-participation and friendship with the children who are studied (Mandell 1991; James et al. 1998). Banister and Booth (2003) experience reflexive engagement during ethnographic research in the sense of becoming a child again, although to children the researchers might still have been represented as responsible adults. To the researchers, it is important to recognize this status as an adult and at the same time effectively communicate the role of someone who is not there to teach right and wrong as adults tend to do. During this research, I felt the most important thing was to listen to the children and try to understand the questions from their point of view. This is not always easy. I think the children considered me in a different light than other adults at school, where the study was conducted. The reason for this is probably that we concentrated on things the children themselves wanted to talk about.

4.3 Research context and data collection

According to Darbyshire et al. (2005), using multiple methods to research children's experiences is valuable and provides insights that may not be gained by using only a single method.

During the research project, data were collected in multiple ways: interviews and group interviews at an elementary school in the Helsinki metropolitan area, netnography in the online children's games MovieStarPlanet (MSP), Club Penguin, and Panfu, and interviews with employees of a company running a site for children and marketing data from the game companies.

The data for my dissertation have been collected in Finland. Finland offers a rich context to study children's online consumption, as most children have access to the internet at home. A study on children's media use found that 99% of the respondents aged between 10 and 12 had the possibility of using a computer at home, and 53% had a computer in their own room (Suoninen 2013).

The more specific context for my study is online (networking) games. Defining games specific to this study is somewhat difficult because the games often include aspects of online games and online networking sites. Also, online games are popular; among boys in the fourth grade, 72% play online games almost every day, while the number for girls is 47%. Social networking sites targeted at preteens are also popular: 79% of the fourth grade girls had a profile and about half of the fourth grade boys did (Suoninen 2013). The games I focus on (especially MovieStarPlanet) are more popular among girls than boys, and within my respondents only girls play this game.

4.3.1 Data collection at school

The school is one of the main arenas of control in children's lives. Training in techniques of self-control and good behavior is evident in school children (Downing 2008). The structure of the institution of the school is based on law and rules. When school is regarded as an institution, it is a facility governed by regulations. School is compulsory and collective. One of the tensions of school is between individuality and collectivity. Some general principles and instructions are related to school. School is also regulated through rules that are school-specific. School as an institution can also be seen through the study of language and discourse. At school, students and teachers have roles and tasks which result in interactions and relations between them (Palmu 2003).

Interview data in my research were collected in two schools in the metropolitan area of Helsinki. Both schools are in high-income areas and are public schools. If I were to follow the first stream of Bourdieuan CCT research that focuses on differences between HCC and LCC consumers, they would most likely be at the HCC end of the spectrum. However, as stated earlier, the focus here is on subcultural or field-dependent capitals specific to children's fields.

Almost all schools (including the ones in my study) in Finland are public, and even the private ones are often funded by the government. Children normally go to the nearest school in their area, but they can apply to a school farther away. The schools I studied had about 300 and 350 pupils, respectively, and they taught grades 1-6. Each class had about 20 pupils. The children interviewed in the two schools were 9 to 10 years old.

Altogether, 83 children took part in the interviews and focus groups. In the beginning of the research process, in the fall of 2011, 15 students participated in the individual interviews. In the same elementary school, when the second group interviews were conducted in spring 2012, 24 pupils participated. In one

elementary school, in which group interviews were conducted in the spring 2013, 34 students from two different classes participated.

For the interviews and group interviews conducted in Helsinki, permission was obtained from the city's education board by sending an application describing the objective and aim of the study. To receive permission for the study, the research had to be linked to the educational task of schools. After receiving approval from the school principals, parents were asked for permission to have their children participate. Finally, the children could choose to participate in the research or not (Thomas and O'Kane 1998). One of the pupils who had received approval from his parents decided not to participate. Most participants seemed enthusiastic about being interviewed; some were somewhat quiet.

The teacher at the schools studied talked about the interviews with the children before the interviews began. When I went to the school I first introduced myself and my project to the whole class before starting to talk to each of the groups individually. In the group interview, I again introduced my research and the plan for the interview.

Interviews
In the first part of the research, interviews were conducted at an elementary school in Finland. Coming to the school as an outside researcher was somewhat difficult and the children's enthusiasm to participate in the interviews was not always very high. This might be due to my being an unknown adult asking them all kinds of questions. Thus, I decided to turn to group interviews as a form of data collection shortly after the research process started. Ultimately, the data analyzed in my dissertation are all group interview data. However, the interviews conducted in the first part of the study helped in identifying important themes then discussed in later group interviews.

Group interviews
According to Moisander and Valtonen (2006), focus groups make it possible to understand how groups create their own worlds in discussion with each other. This focus on participant interaction is considered one of the most important factors in focus group research, but it is often absent from it (Belzile and Öberg 2012). Interaction between the participants as well as with the researcher distinguishes focus group data from one-on-one interviews (Wilkinson 1998).

Wilkinson (1998) states that it is because of the considerable degree of control participants have in a group interview that they enjoy their participation. According to Darbyshire et al. (2005), children are comfortable discussing matters in groups and familiar with the process. According to Wilkinson (1998), individual opinions are formed and shaped through interaction with others and thus focus groups are closer to ordinary social processes and everyday social interchange. This can be maximized by interviewing pre-existing social

groups. Children can also be interviewed with friends, which makes the situation more comfortable for them (Tinson 2009). According to Smithson (2000), constructing the moderator as "other" can make the group collectively powerful and the moderator ignorant. Porcellato et al. (2002) find that children can express differences of opinion in a group context. As Wilkinson (1998) argues, the researcher has much less power over a group than an individual in an interview situation.

In addition, Gunter and Furnham (1998) find that focus groups are helpful in gathering valuable information from children about their consumption habits and preferences and provide further understanding of the language used in discussing these matters. Groups should be small enough for children to be able to discuss the topic at hand in peace. Keeping girls and boys apart is preferred because their interests might differ and communication in single-gender groups may be easier. In conducting focus groups with children, researchers should remembered that they will not necessarily be able to hold the children's attention for a long time and thus the discussion time should be limited (Gunter and Furnham 1998; Morgan et al. 2002; Wyatt et al. 2008). Thus, data that emerge during group interviews differ from data produced in individual interviews.

For this thesis, the group interviews conducted with three to four children from the same class at two elementary schools in the Helsinki metropolitan area lasted approximately 45 minutes. This made the children comfortable and there was no need to make introductions among the group members (Gibson 2007). Girls and boys were in their own groups. Groups were either formed randomly or the teacher decided who would be participating with whom. The interviews were quite unstructured, and themes revolved around the internet in general, and then focused on online games and networking sites. The participants were asked to discuss things like friendships online and at school, memberships in the online games, and relations in the online games, including conflicts and gift-giving.

The group interviews also involved drawing. Using exercises and activities is useful in children's group interviews to maintain children's concentration and interest, enabling them to work together and the researcher to introduce the subject of the research (see Gibson 2007). Participants were asked to draw something related to their internet use. Because much of the discussion revolved around online games, many of the children drew their rooms or avatars from online games. In this project, drawings were not analyzed, but they were used in the interviews to facilitate the discussion. Most children found the drawing task likable; those who did not enjoy drawing received suggestions to write about their experiences instead.

The group interviews produced richer data than the individual interviews conducted in the first part of the study. This might be because the children felt at

ease with their peers from the class and often talked to themselves and left me to the background. The gap between me as an adult researcher asking questions and them as children responding to the questions was minimized and their power increased when more than one participant was in the interview. At times the children concentrated on discussing with each other and I let them talk without interrupting. Talking with the children was easy as they were interested in the topic and many were excited to share their thoughts and experiences. During the research process, I presented myself as an adult different from their teachers. For example, if I saw children running in the hallway, I did not comment on this like the teachers did and taking turns in the discussion went more on the children's own terms than mine. However, if I noticed that children stayed in the background, I asked them some basic questions to give them the feeling they could contribute as well. Similar to Darbyshire et al. (2005), the aim was not to have individual interviews with a group of people, but to stimulate and generate interactive conversation with and between the children.

4.3.2 Online data

Children and marketers are on the leading edge when it comes to new media (Tufte and Rasmussen 2010). According to Schor (2005), the internet has become an important part of children's everyday lives. It is a commercial medium that includes commercial sites for children. For example, advergaming is strongly growing. Children adapt quickly to new media technology and advertisers seek to be innovative in targeting children with commercial messages. Parents, teachers, researchers, and politicians are left behind (Tufte and Rasmussen 2010).

For the second data collection method, I used netnography (Kozinets 2002). Netnography has been defined as a method that provides "information on the symbolism, meanings, and consumption patterns of online consumer groups" (Kozinets 2002: 61). Netnographic research was part of my data collection in addition to interviews and group interviews. In the beginning of the research process, I spent time in Panfu and Club Penguin. As MovieStarPlanet was the most played game by the children in the group interviews, the latter part of my research was conducted mainly in MSP. The netnographic research in children's online worlds revolved around playing the games online and following the discussions in chats and on walls of popular players. If asked to become a friend on the site I accepted, but I did not communicate with the players otherwise.

Being present as a researcher in children's virtual worlds poses ethical challenges. In contrast to Kafai (2010), I did not identify myself as a researcher in MovieStarPlanet or the other sites I occasionally visited. Because I was working in a community aimed at children, I did not take an active part in their interactions.

4.3.2.1 MovieStarPlanet

Virtual worlds have become an increasingly important part of children's online use. Some virtual worlds have tens of millions of registered users, most of them younger than 13 years old. Virtual worlds' popularity increased around 2005, when sites like Webkinz World and Club Penguin became extremely popular among elementary-school-age children. After this, many television companies and media conglomerates launched their own virtual worlds (Grimes 2013).

My research context in the online part of the study is MovieStarPlanet, a game community from Denmark which was launched in 2009. Games that are similar to this and sometimes mentioned in the interviews are GoSupermodel and Stardoll. The game has been played in 16 countries and 11 languages. According to its website, MSP has more than 140 million registered users. It is targeted to children aged 8 to 15. Playing the game is possible without the parents' knowledge, as one does not have to register through the parents' email to play.

According to Tufte and Rasmussen (2010), there is increasing interest from companies in targeting children through the new media. Advergames, video games that are produced by advertisers that promote branded products, seem to be aimed at children and therefore cause concern (Tufte and Rasmussen 1010). Thus, new levels of interaction and intimacy are built between marketers and children. This happens as traditional barriers between content and commerce disappear (Montgomery 2000; see Chung et al. 2005). Popular branded online games offer children both entertainment and play opportunities, but they also transform children's activities to information gathering through data-mining activities (Chung et al. 2005).

Figure 1. www.moviestarplanet.fi

MovieStarPlanet is both a social networking site and an online game. The aim of the game is to "become rich and famous." When entering the game, children create their own avatars, or movie stars as they are called on the site. One can choose the sex of the avatar, in addition to other features such as different parts of the face, hair, and clothes. Looks are important in the game as looks

77

are evaluated by other players and can thus influence getting friends or a boy-friend in the game.

When entering a site, one is met by a host of movie stars. One of them will guide you through the site and give presents such as site currency. After this short introductory process, one is able to visit the multiple features on the site.

Activities on the site include chatting, playing games, shopping, and making movies. Chatting happens in both chat rooms and players' own rooms. Chat rooms are divided into those that can be accessed by everyone and those that are only accessible to VIP members or players at certain levels in the game. It is also possible to send private messages to individual players and write on their walls. Each player has a profile to which the wall and rooms are linked.

The currency of MSP is called Starcoin. Players can earn starcoins in several ways in the game. Starcoins can be acquired by playing games and by purchasing the VIP membership. It is also possible to earn starcoins by making movies that others watch. Also, a wheel of fortune that gives players starcoins can be turned once a day. Finally, starcoins can be earned by giving or receiving a greeting from someone. However, commercial internet sites are not free of problems. Nairn (2008) found the advertising to be unfair and deceptive on sites that were specifically targeting children. Advertisements were not labeled or they were hidden in the site content. In addition, sites often subjected children to pester power. Some sites constantly offered children the possibility of creating wish lists that could be sent to their parents by email. Children do not necessarily find advergaming to be commercial because it is more related to play. In MSP, starcoins can be spent at a shopping mall on the site. New clothes are added regularly to the collection. Clothes are divided into clothes that can be bought by everyone and clothes that can only be bought by those who have the VIP membership.

Status on the site is strongly based on the type of membership and game levels. The site lists the top players who have achieved their status by playing the game for a long time, social connections on the site, and how to buy memberships and consume on the site. One of the most important aspects is to have lots of friends from whom one can get help in advancing in the game. For example, friends can help by giving you autographs, which result in more fame that is needed to get from one level to another. Fame points show how far along a player is in the game. Any particular level requires players to reach a specific amount of fame. Fame can be earned by, for example, spinning the fame wheel and playing the games. Gifting is a system in which players can give and receive clothing and items to and from other players in the game. Part of gifting is a wish list, on which players can put their desired items.

Premium membership in the game is called VIP status. MovieStarPlanet is free to play, but to get all the advantages offered by the site, one needs to purchase

a monthly membership, the VIP membership, paid by credit card. These advantages include a bigger collection of clothing, exclusive areas for chatting, and an instant increase in popularity. In MSP, memberships can be bought for a week, month, three months, or year. The cost of a year's membership in Finland at the time of the data collection was 80 euros, a three-month membership was 33 euros, a one-month membership was 14 euros, and a week's membership is 6 euros (in July 2014) In addition to MovieStarPlanet, many games played the young informants (such as goSupermodel, Panfu, Habbo Hotel, and Club Penguin) function along a similar logic. This is called "the velvet rope model" (Grimes 2013).

According to Grimes (2013: 9), the velvet rope model is designed to "serve as a promotional tool for stimulating demand among non-paying players for the games' premium features and paid-subscription membership options." The velvet rope model may become an integral part of the gameplay itself, as acquiring the right items in sufficient numbers is important even though access to these is stratified based on membership status. Grimes (2013) finds the display of items to be the preferred mode of exhibiting achievement in games such as Club Penguin. Collection of items is strongly encouraged in in-game announcements.

The velvet rope model places non-playing members at a material disadvantage. Thus, a structural hierarchy emerges between those who play for free and those who pay. The advantages to those who play are constantly displayed to other players to show the exclusivity to both groups. Display of exclusive items can be likened to acting as a brand ambassador within the site. This might increase the company's need to require these players to behave nicely (Grimes 2013).

Companies running virtual worlds for children must take safety into consideration. According to Grimes (2013), however, safety features such as "safe-chat" are ultimately designed around corporate interests. Safety discourses are used to sell the virtual worlds to parents and children by presenting them as child-appropriate spaces. At the same time, the chat systems may work to cross-promote, brand, and do third-party advertising. Also, MSP promotes safety on its website, especially in the section that is meant for parents. Indeed, supervisors actively follow and moderate conversations on the site.

4.3.2.2 Other games

Minecraft is a game most boys taking part in the interviews had played. Minecraft can be bought and played with different consoles. The game advertises itself as a "game about breaking and placing blocks. At first, people built structures to protect against nocturnal monsters, but as the game grew players worked together to create wonderful, imaginative things" (minecraft.net).

Figure 2. www.minecraft.net

Panfu and Club Penguin are also games previously played by the children taking part in the interviews. In Panfu, the avatars are pandas. It is originally a German game translated into different languages. The game advertises itself as "Games & adventures for curious kids" (panfu.com). On the site children can play games, talk to old and new friends, and style their pandas with clothes that can be purchased on the site. In Club Penguin, a game created by Disney, the avatars are penguins. It contains activities and games similar to those on Panfu.

Both Panfu and Club Penguin function along the logic of the velvet rope model discussed earlier: The game is free to play but to gain access to all the benefits in the game, one must buy a membership. In addition, both games strongly promote safe play for children.

Figure 3. www.panfu.com

Figure 4. www.clubpenguin.com

Finally, Habbo Hotel is a virtual community that some children had played but most said it was not suitable for them. Habbo is targeted to children older than 13 years. Activities in it are similar to those of Panfu and Club Penguin: meeting friends, chatting, and playing games. It also functions based on the velvet rope model.

Figure 5. www.habbo.fi

4.3.3 Data analysis

As stated in the previous section, in this research process, I used a discursive approach to see how positions and groups are constructed based on valuable capital. After I collected the data, I transcribed all the interviews. After transcribing the interviews, I carefully read all the data. Coding was based on both previous literature stemming from Bourdieuan concepts and children's emic descriptions.

After carefully coding the data, I went through multiple rounds of combining the codes into themes. In the iterative approach that is characteristic of hermeneutic analysis, I went back and forth between individual participants' ac-

counts, contrasting those with others in the group. In addition, I analyzed the data within a particular group and then looked at the data between groups. This made it possible to focus on particular positions both within each group interview and within the school class as a group in general. Thus, the analysis was conducted through part-to-whole iterations (Thompson 1997). This made it possible to look at how children situated themselves in relation to the games that were talked about and, most importantly, each other.

In the group interviews, I focused on two specific aspects of the data. First, I was interested in the children's ways of communicating among themselves and how they built their status within these groups. Second, I concentrated on how they talked about the online worlds they visited and how that mirrored what I found during my netnographic research. I situated these discussions in the broader sociocultural context of participants being children in a society in which childhood is considered mainly as a process of development and socialization within the society.

Traditionally, analysis of focus group data has been individualistic despite the social aspects of the method. Kitzinger (1994) reviews more than 40 reports of focus groups and finds none that concentrated on conversation between participants. This is despite the social context of the focus group and the larger structures within which the discussion is placed affecting the data generated (Hollander 2004).

The analytical focus in this thesis is on both the content of discourse and participant interaction. According to Belzile and Öberg (2012), participant interaction is often absent, even though it is a distinctive feature of the focus group method. They state that more socially oriented research focus groups are regarded as dynamic social processes, in which participants collectively construct a narrative about a topic. Wilkinson (1998) sees the aim of the social constructionist framework in analyzing data generated in focus groups to be a focus on co-construction of realities between people. Thus, data collected from one participant must be considered together with the social context in which they were collected. Lack of disclosure and strategic shaping of comments in focus groups limit the usefulness of focus groups in understanding individual thoughts and feelings, but make focus groups excellent for analyzing social interaction (Hollander 2004).

Because of it's focus in ongoing interaction, I found analysis of children's discourse to be a valuable in data analysis. Allred and Burman (2005) have argued that discourse analysis as an approach that questions the conventional model of the individual is valuable for groups of people who have been historically been denied full subject status. This is because discrouse analysis includes children in the category of the 'normal subjects' and critiques the modernist subject. Even though children's talk may not be as elaborate as that of adults' I found it to be rich especially in interaction between the children.

5. Findings

Within the context of my study, I focus on two different fields. The first field is that of the school peer group, which consists of a group of children in the same class. Children who participated in the discussion are in the fourth grade, so they are ages 10-11. The practices of girls and boys are somewhat separate at this age group, so I have divided this field into two subfields, one for boys and one for girls.

When interviewing children at school, I found two online games to be extremely popular: Minecraft for boys and MovieStarPlanet (MSP) for girls. All the examples in this chapter relate to those games. What is important here is the ways these games function as sources of capital and of popularity in children's peer groups as fields. I have decided to focus on one specific online field, MovieStarPlanet, in order to closely describe one taste regime and the movement of capital within the two fields. Thus, a deeper discussion of the field of Minecraft is left to future research.

Therefore the second field studied is a field of a particular online game, MovieStarPlanet. This field is constructed within an online game with its own rules. I find those who play this game and construct a field with its own status game within it. The status game or field is not independent of the online game, but as I show in this and the following chapter, it is different. I chose MovieStarPlanet for closer study, because it offered rich possibilities for exploring status building within an aesthetic consumption environment. As I show in the later chapter, the link between that and the school peer group fields was evident.

The specifics of these two fields, the school peer group fields and the MSP field, both online and offline, are first described in sections 5.1 and 5.2. Section 5.3 focuses on symbolic power based on the taste regimes and positions. Before going into the specifics of each field, I describe their characteristics in the following table. The table is constructed based on a list of characteristics of fields identified by Lahire (in Vuorisalo and Alanen 2015).

Table 1. Characteristics of fields

Characteristics of fields	School peer group field	MovieStarPlanet field	Argumentation for separateness of fields
Fields are micro-world in a macro-world	Exists within larger structures of the school. Can be separated by gender: subfields of girls and boys.	Entering the field requires logging into the game. Field is accessible through game play.	Fields exist in separate locations and not all members of one field are part of the other.
A field has its own game with specific rules	There are rules in relation to what games are accepted to be played and what are not. Rules are related to social relations within the field.	Rules of the field are built based on the rules of the game, made explicit in the discussions between players.	The rules and specific capital within these fields are not the same. However, the logics of popularity and development are similar.
Agents within a field are involved in a struggle about the stakes	Stakes are, e.g., access to a particular game, success in a dominant game.	Struggle for higher positions, beauty and higher-level friends.	The struggles are different but at times intertwined, as capital is carried between these two fields.
Capital is unevenly distributed, and positions of dominant and dominated emerge	Dominant: the popular players with access and possibility to determine popular games. Dominated: those who follow and either accept the **dominance or not**	Dominant: the high-level VIP players with money, looks, friends and boyfriends. Dominated: those with less capital and fewer possibilities for succeeding in the game.	Positions within these fields are similar, but the agents occupying them are different.
Agents employ different strategies to lift their position in the field	Strategies: moving capital from online to the peer group field. Getting access to the dominant game among the first children.	Strategies: playing games, begging, befriending the popular players.	There is a link and movement of capital between fields. But the strategies used are different because the finally valued capital resources are different.
Interests of agents are specific and cannot be reduced to economic interests	No monetary rewards in the field.	Money is used for buying outfits, etc., but rather than an end, they are a means to becoming more popular.	

The next figure shows the link between the two fields. It illustrates how agents relate to each other and the fields they inhabit.

Figure 6. Findings: two fields

First, the green background circle illustrates the structure within which children's fields exist. It illustrates the general understanding of childhood as developing and children being in the process of socialization. As I will show, this understanding of childhood influences the children's fields through the taste regime of development. Children relate to each other and the fields they are in through this taste regime.

Second, the two blue circles within the green one represent the two fields. The circle on the left is the of the peer group field. This field exists within the school (darker blue circle). The blue circle on the right is the MSP field. This field exists within the MSP game (darker blue circle).

Third, the two red circles represent the games children have played in the past (dissociative game) and expect to play in the future (aspirational game). They relate to these games within the peer group field.

Finally, there are agents (Elli, Iina and Aada) within the fields. These agents relate to each other, the fields and the games.

5.1 Movement between games in the peer group field

According to Bourdieu one must have some knowledge or skills on how to play the field to be accepted as a legitimate player within a field (Johnson 1993). One invests one's capital in a field in a way that produces maximum profit or benefit. Typically, no one enters the field to lose it (Johnson 1993:8). The peer group field is not chosen in my context; that is, one cannot choose in what field one wishes to play, but one is put into a school peer group field and expected to work within that.

In this research, the field knowledge and skills one needs are related to the games children play. Whatever position the children were taking in relation to this game, they are, nevertheless, taking part in the peer group field. Everyone in the discussion had some sort of capital, that is, either some sort of game skills or at least game knowledge.

This chapter concentrates on how children together construct a set of acceptable and unacceptable games and how they discursively determine what is and is not played. First, I introduce the dominant games within school peer groups. Second, I show how children within this field determine the age acceptability of games. Based on this analysis, I show in the following sectiosn how children negotiate positions by using this taste regime and the resulting symbolic violence.

5.1.1   Present: Dominant game

Each of the peer groups had one dominant game that "everyone" played at that particular time. This was most often MovieStarPlanet for girls, and for boys it was Minecraft. The following excerpt shows how a group of boys answered when I asked them whether they play anything else besides Minecraft.

> Interviewer: Are there any other games [besides Minecraft]?
> Aleksi: Well I don't really play anything else.
> Valtteri: Me neither.
> Eero: Me neither

Dominant game is a game everyone plays and, as will be shown later, a game that is talked about constantly at school. The boys say they play exclusively Minecraft. Minecraft was constructed as a game most boys in the field played. First then, discourse of the dominant game comes across as unanimous. They do not admit to playing any other game than the dominant one.

Similarly, the next excerpt shows how girls to previous excerpt construct playing MSP as something that everyone in peer group field do.

> Interviewer: All of you go to MSP?
> Aliisa: All of our class goes.
> Katariina: It is a kind of a popular place.

Aliisa states that all of the class goes to MSP. As I show later, Aliisa and Katar-iina are not the popular children in the class, so they approach this topic from a more dominated position. Instead of what Aliisa states here, it is not all of the class that appreciates and visits MSP, even though this talk is all-encompassing.

As I show in the following sections on negotiating positions, as well as exclu-sion and inclusion in the peer group field, gaining access to the games was a prerequisite for starting to build one's favorable position in the peer group. Previous research has shown that friendships among children and youths, e.g., making friends and keeping them, are complicated processes that children act on daily (Corsaro & Eder 1999). In my context, taking part in this process means being on top of the game, plus knowing the field, knowing which game at the moment is the dominant one, and gaining capital within that game. This happens only after one has gained access to the particular game.

> Interviewer: How did you start playing that game?
> Eemeli: Well a friend of mine showed it to me many years ago and then I got ex-cited about it. My dad downloaded it for me maybe a year ago.

Eemeli describes starting to play the game as a process, in which he got access to it first through a friend and after that through his father. First, a friend of Eemeli gave him information about the game. After that, he gained access to it at home. His dad was the gatekeeper for him to access the game that was be-coming popular. Initiation thus came from friends and access from parents. Here one can see the two important socialization agents and their relative roles in children's play. Peers determine the popular practices at this point, and par-ents provide their children with access to the game. Often, three things coa-lesce for someone to enter the dominant game at the moment: first, one needs to have access to it through social capital at school. Second, one needs to have access to it through parents, who often decide if the game is suitable for their child or not. Third, as will be shown later, these things must happen at the right time, preferably at the forefront of the group, if one wants to build as strong capital as possible in relation to that game. This shows how children are dependent on their parents, even within fields where they are not present.

> Interviewer: How did you go there?
> Aada: [I heard about it] from a friend.
> Linnea: I just somehow… funny, it became a thing and then I just went there and then I realized that it is a really nice place.
> Interviewer: What do you mean by a thing?
> Linnea: Well I don't know, I just somehow…

Aada heard about the game from a friend. Linnea stated it had become "a thing" and then made her decision to start to play the game as well. Linnea does not elaborate on what she means by the game becoming "a thing." The

game had become popular among the children at school and there was pressure for her to go and see what the game was about. Both Linnea and Aada used their social capital and access from their friends to learn about the game before they could join in.

One needs friends, or social capital, to gain access to a dominant game. Visiting friends after school allows access to others who are playing. Corsaro and Eder (1999) found that children's must share their lives with others relates to self-identification processes. Agency is also a factor: each one must decide on their own if they want to play the game or at least give an account that they have made the decision on their own rather than based on what everyone else was doing or extant peer pressure.

Having the possibility to access the games is a prerequisite for being able to participate in status building. Similarly, even though not explicitly approaching the phenomenon through Bourdieu's theory of capital, Ritson and Elliot (1999) found that sixth formers talk about advertising at school in order to strengthen group structures and interpersonal relations. One needed to have seen an ad and, thus, have experienced it in order to participate in the conversation, otherwise access to the discussion was difficult.

5.1.2 Past: Constructing a childish game in peer group field

Nairn et al. (2008) found children constructed "cool" as what they found suitable for their age. Children participating in this study did the same in relation to online games played. Through their discourse children, confirmed what is "cool" and differentiated themselves from younger age groups.

First drawing a border to separate from the past allows children to construct acceptable practices. Children unanimously distance themselves from past games. The first way of distancing oneself from the game is claiming one has not been associated with it in the first place or had been there only once. In the excerpt below, boys unanimously detach themselves from Panfu.

> Interviewer: Are you in Panfu?
> Aleksi: I have been there once.
> Eero: No.
> Aleksi: But I wasn't there for a long time.
> Valtteri: Me neither.
> Interviewer: How come weren't you there longer?
> Aleksi: I don't know really.
> Valtteri: I didn't like it that much.

In the excerpt above, Aleksi first stated that he has been to Panfu only once, and after Eero says he has never been there, Aleksi further dissociates himself from the game by stating that he did not go there for a long time. Rarely within the interviews did children mention anything positive with respect to Panfu.

Furthermore, prompts to further elaborate why they have left the game garnered only vague responses or were left unanswered.

The discussion from the previous excerpt continues below. In this excerpt boys talk about when they stopped playing Panfu and how it happened. They tie playing the game into their younger selves and tell how the excitement in relation to that game ended and how discussions about a new game commenced.

> Aleksi: I played it when I was quite a lot younger.
> Eero: Like three four years ago.
> Valtteri: Me too.
> Interviewer: What happens when playing ends?
> Valtteri: Some other games that are a lot better come along.
> Eero: And you like forget the game.
> Aleksi: Yeah the excitement ends.

The three boys univocally associate Panfu to a time long ago, then give three reasons for ending playing a game. First, playing a particular game ends because it is replaced by something else. The games that typically replaced the old ones are targeted at older children than the ones they had been previously playing. Second, replacement of an older game includes the excitement of the previous game ending, and third, the previous game is forgotten. When this discussion of the boys is viewed through the Bourdieuan lens, the focus is on the positions the boys take within it. According to Bourdieuan discourse theory, every statement in the field is relevant to one's position in the field. However, here the boys demonstrated little possible variation of position. Talk about what role these games played in the past was limited to stigmatizing and dissociating talk. This stigmatizing talk protects one's field-dependent capital within a field during a turbulent taste regime change. Positive talk about a "childish" online game would result in capital loss.

Sandikci and Ger (2010) note that consumers engage not only in practices that reflect the acceptance of cultural norms but also use the marketplace as a field where power is contested. Stigmatizing talk of past practices is used to draw borders around the past. In this context at hand, drawing borders builds a basis for acceptable games in the field in the present. As I will show later, there is a power struggle in the school field that relates to the acceptable games in the present. However, in relation to past games, children are unanimous in their stigmatization.

> Julia: Well I haven't been to Panfu in a long time.
> All: Laughter
> Iida: Me neither, everyone has stopped going there.
> Sofia: Me neither, everybody says that it is for sissies.
> Interviewer: Well you said that Panfu is for sissies, so have you played it before?
> Ella: Yeah.
> Julia: Yeah.
> Sofia: Well then when we were really small.

Ella: Yeah everyone like
Sofia: Yeah then it was cool but now we have grown a bit and it is not that cool to move around as pandas and talk to each other.
Julia: Besides there is a time limit that before eight in the morning you're not allowed… you can't talk to anyone, and after eight you can't talk to anyone.
Sofia: Yeah you can also use these ready
Iiris: Welcome
Saara: A little like welcome or hi or something like that.
Julia: Oh like after eight?
All: Yeah.
Julia: I've never used that.
Sofia: Me neither.

As Sofia states, it was cool to play Panfu before. Therefore, it used to provide children with capital in the past. However, what was previously acceptable and valued capital within this field no longer provides children with the desired status, it is now regarded for 'sissies'. The capital that could once be accumulated and used in the school field is no longer valuable.

These types of discussions were common in the interviews. Children were in agreement as they described a game they used to play as childish and dissociated themselves from it. This movement from one game to another is taken for granted by the children, and they never questioned or wondered about it. There is little variation in discourse about the meaning and usefulness of past games.

The old game's restrictive rules were constructed to be suitable for younger children but not for children their age. Julia and Sofia said they never agreed to use the predetermined words such as hi or welcome that were given to them when speaking was not possible. This is a limitation on what children can do, and as previously stated, one of the central themes of children's peer cultures that Corsaro and Eder (1990) identified was the challenging of adult authority. Challenging the authority of an adult who has designed an online game is difficult for them, but they can leave the site and move to games where these kinds of restrictions do not apply. As they move from site to site, children must gain related cultural capital to determine what kind of structures are appropriate for them at any time. In this case children constructed the structure of not being allowed to talk to each other during certain times as too controlling.

Linnea had accumulated capital in the game Howrse but then left that game. Aada stated that "nobody" played that game anymore. Children repeatedly used totalizing words, such as everyone and no one. Thus, in relation to the stigmatized game they constructed themselves as a quite unified group. This similar pattern of building a group through comments such as "everyone plays MSP" was also found in relation to the current dominant game (discussed above). Therefore, if one assumes, based on Bourdieuan thinking, that what one says within a discussion in a field is targeted at enhancing one's position, then it can be argued that the games played previously no longer provided

children with capital that could be used to lift their status within the peer group field.

Talking about change in themselves is another way of disassociating from games of the past. In the next excerpt, reasons for having stopped playing the game are quite similar to the previous excerpt's, but Maria mentions that it is also related to themselves.

> Interviewer: Have you heard of a place called Panfu?
> Aurora: We have been there.
> Maria: Yeah.
> Interviewer: Not anymore?
> Amanda: It has been a really good place but then it wasn't that fun anymore.
> Interviewer How so?
> Maria: We grew up a little.

First, Aurora states that they have been there. Using "we" defines playing the games and the old games as a common and shared experience, something they did together. Then, Maria gives a reason why they have given up the game: growing up. Referring to themselves as having grown up a little gives children a possibility to still visit Panfu; then, it also works as a resource for building a distinction not only between themselves and those who play the game at the moment but also between themselves as present and in the past.

In the next excerpt, children discuss Club Penguin, a game they no longer play.

> Interviewer: What's a difference between those?
> Katariina: Well it's American. And it's done for a bit younger kids.
> Interviewer: How do you know?
> Katariina: There are these childish games and well not like for children but like six-year-olds and meant for those on that level.
> Aliisa: Meant for IQ level of younger.

One association that children do not want is that of being younger children. Childhood is all about development, and this can be seen also in the children's discourse. They distinguish themselves from those and the practices of those whose brains are less developed. It is interesting that Iina refers to the IQ of younger children, as previous research has found development and, especially, children's brain development is such an over-encompassing part of discourse on childhood that it relates to every aspect of childhood (see, e.g., Kelle 2001). One can see here how development is also used as a way to distinguish one's group from those lower in the developmental hierarchy.

There was an exception to leaving behind childish games. Some children had accumulated large amounts of capital within different online games. In their talk, children leave the games behind regardless of the social, cultural and symbolic capital they have accumulated within it. However, one participant said she still went to play Panfu every once in a while.

Maria: There are nice games. I go and play some games there sometimes. It is a place where you jump on buildings.
Aurora: I know it.
Maria: They always show me in the day's records, I'm so good at it.

Maria had become very skillful in a game played in Panfu. She had thus accumulated a large amount of field-dependent cultural capital within a game and went to play, because she got to the top ten list in the game whenever she played it. Within the group, in order not to be associated with the stigma related to playing a childish game, she had to associate it to the strong capital that she has accumulated in that game. Maria thus employs a destigmatizing practice. Arsel and Thompson (2011) found that consumers use strategies of destigmatization to protect the capital they had invested within a consumption field. For the children in this research, destigmatization of a practice of playing an old game does not seem like a viable option for a long time, as they must move on. One of the reasons children may go back to a practice that is a game that has become stigmatized is that, if they have accumulated enough field-specific capital within a game, they may stick to a stigmatized practice even though it does not provide them with capital in the school field.

Maria also does not rely only on Panfu's top level list for game related capital. Instead, as I will show later in the section on anticipatory practices, she also visits Habbo Hotel, a game generally considered unacceptable because it is meant for children older than themselves. Thus, both in relation to past and future games, Maria differentiates herself from others in the peer group field and, in these instances, draws from destigmatizing discourse to maintain her field position.

5.1.3 Anticipatory and resisted future

This section demonstrates the ways children within the peer group field talked about future games and online practices. I define future games as those children are not commonly playing at the moment, most of which have age restrictions that would inhibit them from entering the games.

I show how children construct some online games and social networking sites as something they anticipate playing in the future. Some of these games or networking sites were not yet permitted for them, so the children most often relied on their parents for justification to go to those sites.

Aurora admits to faking her age to access the game in the next excerpt, but Maria had permission from her parents.

Interviewer: So there are age limits but you can still go?
Aurora: Yeah. You can say that you were born in 1992.

> Maria: Or then there is an age limit, but I told them my real date of birth but then you have to only put your parent's permission so then younger kids can enter as well.
> Interviewer: So your parents agreed.
> Maria: Yeah.

In their talk, the rules of the game are less important than the rules set by the parents. Parents giving their permission to enter a game lets the children participate, even though the game parameters would not yet allow them to enter. Thus, in case they are challenged by their peers at school, children in these discussions rely on their parents' authority. Parents' permission is reason enough to be going on a site that is not accepted by the peers. This offers the children of permissive parents the possibility of early access to a game and, thus, the possibility to start building their capital related to the game before their peers.

In the next excerpt, children talk about how they can access a game when it is not forbidden.

> Eerika: But nobody really follows [the rules] because it is so difficult to monitor.
> Aliisa: Like in Facebook, you can just fake your age there.
> Eerika: But if you put it wrong there once, or if I put I'm ten, it says I'm under aged and you can't do this and you must wait a little and then you can try again.

Facebook and other games can be accessed without the parents' permission. As children know this, and use age limits anyway as a way to question others' presence in the older children's games, it means that children are using the adult-made restrictions mainly as a way to restrict what their friends are doing. This is similar to the challenging of adult authority as found in relation to the games found "too childish." Children have found ways of going around the adult-set rules to access games and networking sites that are considered to provide value in the peer group field.

Children prepare themselves as a group for the future games and sites to keep their position in the field that is dynamic and might change any day:

> Iina: I will probably be so big that I don't want to play anymore. Then I would probably be somewhere in Facebook or Instagram or Skype the whole time.
> Aada: Or in Twitter.
> Interviewer: Have you been?
> Aada: Well yeah, I've been in Instagram.
> Linnea: I'm in Instagram too.
> Iina: I'm not yet.

Children talked about where they would go next and if they have been to games made for older children already. They will be done with playing and move on to the sites older children are using. They are anticipating leaving games in general and moving to services made for adults. They thus anticipate

that the current capital drawn from MSP will run out, as has been the case with other games such as Panfu. Development is a constant in their lives.

Even when future practices are stigmatized in the present, they are anticipated. Waerdahl (2005) used Merton's concept of anticipatory socialization to understand children anticipating a movement between schools. These children face a status change in the future that they cannot control. According to Waerdahl (2005), the child needs to alienate itself from the group or class it is in and gather knowledge of the desired group or class. However, for children moving between games (or schools), this does not happen in isolation but as a movement as a group. Thus, they do not must dissociate themselves from the group they are in but, instead, from their younger practices, such as playing Panfu, and from the younger at present. Similar to drawing borders on childish practices by dissociating from games such as Panfu and low capital members in MSP, an aspirational and anticipatory future is present in children's talk.

Children are well aware of games that older children play and the social networking sites they visit. In the group interviews, they position themselves either for or against these sites. The two positions taken towards the future are related to the struggle in the field: in their talk, children either try to keep the sources of capital the same and protect their accumulated capital in the current field, or they try to change the field by moving talk to a game in which they have accumulated capital and others necessarily have not. Standing still and not moving is not a long-term option. Children anticipate moving in order to stay in the game.

Some children aim to keep the school class field unchanged by resisting movement to games meant for older children or young people. They do this by referring to adult authority and the assumed danger within the games.

Habbo Hotel was a place that was often dissociated by the children. Many stated that children should not be playing the game. The game, and especially what was going on in the game and what the people who were playing the game constructed, were not accepted. The main problem was how other people, who were considered to be older than them, behaved in the game.

In the next excerpt, girls talk about Habbo Hotel, which was one of the most stigmatized games in the group discussions.

> Interviewer: What is for older?
> Katariina: Some go to Habbo Hotel, but I'm not allowed to join Habbo, because there are these guys that ask for your address and if you give that, they will come for real and some there in Habbo they act like they are twelve years old and then they ask and then they are like middle aged men or women.
> Aliisa: Yeah, Habbo is like not allowed for those under 12.

Katariina gives a description on what is going on in Habbo Hotel. Aliisa interestingly relates this to the age limit of the game. Under her statement about the age limit of the game lies an assumption that the safety of the game is related to its age limit. Katariina and Aliisa assume that games that are meant for younger children are somehow less vulnerable to predators than other games with a higher age limit.

This stigmatizing talk of Habbo Hotel limits the game outside children's possible selection of games to be played. Through a Bourdiean analysis of their discourse, it also serves another purpose. Describing Habbo Hotel as dangerous protects children's capital within the peer group field. By not accepting Habbo Hotel as a game from which one can draw capital to build status within the peer group field, children can maintain the status quo, and the valuable capital stems from the games they are playing at that moment. The age limit is a general rule that lets children reject the game for themselves. In the next excerpt, children in another group discussion talk about Habbo Hotel in a similar way.

> Interviewer: What others are there besides MSP and Stardoll?
> Maria: And Habbo hotel, I go there.
> Matilda: I never go there, the people are so mad there.
> Aurora: One of them said to me when I went there with a friend of mine, so he said this is my bar so get out of here. Then my friend replied that this is our place as well so he was so mean.
> Maria: Yeah, they talk pretty weird.
> Amanda: Yeah they talk all these stupid things that I don't want to say now.
> Aurora: Yeah and they talk dirty and talk like things like that we would not talk about now.

In the excerpt, Maria first mentions she goes to Habbo Hotel. When Matilda then rejects the place by saying she never goes there, and Aurora recalls an uncomfortable experience she had with a friend in the game, Maria agrees there are some people who "talk weird" in the game. The discourse against the game is stronger, since Maria, as someone who plays it, agrees with the girls that everything is not necessarily good in the game. A taboo about what is going on in the game governs what kind of things are talked about. Children do not explicitly mention what kind of things are said in the game. They only vaguely describe them as being weird, stupid, and things they would not say themselves.

Children stigmatized Habbo Hotel, but for different reasons than Panfu or Club Penguin have been stigmatized. Whereas Panfu and Club Penguin are characterized as too childish, Habbo Hotel is constructed as dangerous and meant for people who are older than themselves. Children balance between these two ends. However, some children tell that they have visited these sites, even though it is not accepted in the peer group.

Children who have access to the future games often argue against criticizing the children who are not are against moving to the next game. When talking, the children tightly control their peers' practices through talk focused on future practices. They use the age limits that the sites have made for them. In addition to the rules restricting what they can do, the rules also protect them.

In the next example, the discussion continues of Maria visiting Habbo Hotel. Aurora is again challenging Maria being in Habbo Hotel, and Maria defends herself.

> Interviewer: What age are they there?
> Maria: Yeah they can be like.
> Aurora: 16 years old.
> Amanda: 20 years old.
> Matilda: But there is an age limit, isn't it 10?
> Matilda: No it's 12 or 13.
> Aurora: So what are you doing there then?
> Maria: I don't know- I'm not the only one in our class who's there.
> Aurora: Of the girls you probably are.
> Maria: I'm not.
> Aurora: Then who?
> Maria: Iida.

Aurora refers to the adult-set age limit and asks why Maria plays the game if she is younger than the limit. By doing this she takes a stigmatizing stance towards a game she says should not be played by them yet. This stance protects her position in the field from a change, as if it protects the way things are now. It's possible to try to keep a field constant by referring to adult authority to block unwanted practices. Aurora again asks what Maria is doing in the game if she is not as old as she should be. Maria's defense is to answer she is not alone in it, that there is another girl in class, Iida, who also plays the game.

Those who have been playing the games before others thought they should must defend themselves against other's accusations. Children use their parent's rules and the service to stigmatize the practice of playing a certain game. According to Bourdieu (1993), those highest in different forms of capital are the first ones to move into a new position. Some types of capital are associated with children moving on to new games before others do. However, in this instance, because of strong stigmatization of Habbo Hotel by other girls, this does not work for Maria. Instead, she must defend her choice of going to Habbo Hotel by drawing on social capital, saying she is not the only one girl in the class to go there. In addition, as the previous excerpt shows, gender differences exist between the girl and boy sub-fields. There are different rules when playing Habbo, as the restrictions are more prevalent for girls than boys.

In the next excerpt, the rules of the companies running the site and the parents' rules are different.

> Iida: Why are you in Facebook when you are under age?
> Kiira: I went there when I was seven when my mom said I can go.
> Iida: My mom is really against Facebook, even when I'm like 16 or 14 when I get there.
> Kiira: 13.

Iida starts the discussion by questioning Kiira about going to Facebook. There was tension between the two of them in the discussion. Kiira had received permission from her parents to go to Facebook. She argues for breaking the rules of the game and the peer group by stating that her mother had given her permission. Iida, who often positions herself against the Internet use in general, states that her parents would not want her going to Facebook even if the rules of the game would permit her to do so. There are two different positions to online networking sites brought forward here, and this brings the argumentation back to the parents. This excerpt portrays how in children's discourses in relation to their practices, parents as important socialization agents come along in the school's discursive field as well. Maria had to fight a stigma related to Habbo Hotel in the previous excerpt. Similarly here, Kiira must defend herself against Ida's questions about entering Facebook when under-aged. She chooses her parents as an authority to draw from in her destigmatizing discourse.

Children can use different tactics for getting to know a game that is unacceptable for them at the moment. Some children have better possibilities for this than others. This is the case in the following excerpt, in which girls are talking about visiting Facebook, which, in addition to Habbo, is not yet an acceptable game in the field.

> Sofia: You don't go to Facebook do you?
> Julia: No, do you think that a little sister of a 13 year old never looks at what she's doing on Facebook?
> Ella: Is Matilda 13 already?
> Julia: Didn't you know, she's in our school?
> Ella: Oh right, but she seems a lot older.
> Julia: But she looks like she's 15.

Children can have access to older children's games through siblings whose playing they may be able to watch and whose excerpt they take. Like Aurora, who challenged Maria going to Habbo Hotel in the previous excerpt, Sofia questions whether Julia goes to Facebook. Julia defends herself by drawing on outside social capital. She states that her older sister is 13 (and thus accepted in Facebook), and through her sister she also has access to Facebook. Julia draws capital from her sister in accumulating knowledge related to Facebook. Older siblings are used as vessels of anticipatory socialization. This knowledge can become crucial in moving to Facebook and changing the field by changing her position.

However, this knowledge about Facebook that is still denied from them is valuable also in the present. Julia has an acceptable access to Facebook that others do not yet have. She does not must log in to Facebook herself, which is against the rules, but she gets a peek through her older sister. She can also carry this capital related to her sister to the school peer group. Ella takes an admiring role in this discussion. She asks Julia whether Matilda is already 13, and when Julia quite bluntly replies, Ella gives Matilda credit by saying she looks a lot older. Julia accepts this by stating that her sister looks like she could be 15. During this discussion in which Sofia and Julia were constantly challenging each other, Ella mostly stayed in the background. She had a more dominated position among the stronger girls who had access to capital she necessarily did not.

As was shown, there are two positions taken towards games that are not yet unanimously played by the children. First, one can position oneself according to what is the more dominant discourse of stigmatizing the practice of going to games that are considered appropriate for older children. Second, some children take a proactive position and tell others they have visited the unacceptable games. They must defend their actions during the discussions. In field theoretical thinking, the position one takes within a field is related to one's current position in the field. This position is determined by the player's capital. These two positions in the field can be seen in the strategies children use during the discussions. By stigmatizing going to games that are not acceptable, children try to maintain the current distribution of capital within the field. By talking of going to these games, one tries to change the field by introducing a new game as a possible source of capital. These agents within a field try to differentiate themselves and reduce competition within this subsection of the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

Talking about the future, similar to talking about the past, defines the field's borders, but there is a difference. Whereas in relation to the past everything was clear and unanimous, in relation to the future different positions are taken. Bordering the acceptable practices in relation to the future is then more contested and complicated. The field's limits are "always a stake in the field itself." Borders are dynamic and part of the struggle within the field.

5.1.4 Conclusions

I have shown two discursive ways in which children distance themselves from the old games in the peer group field. First, they do this by talking about changes in the games. Second, they talk about changes in themselves, that is, them growing and developing. Through this talk, children are constructing a basis for a set of acceptable practices by disassociating themselves from the unacceptable practices that are deemed to be childish and boring and that are regarded for younger children or for their younger selves.

In the peer group field, Panfu is associated strongly with childishness by children for three reasons. First, the avatars in the game are cute pandas, which may remind them of the plush toys from childhood. Second, its games are deemed to be made for younger children, not for them. Third, there are rules within the game the children no longer find acceptable for them. These include the impossibility of talking to one's friends during certain times. They see the rules designed to protect them as limiting their liberty in the game. They build distance to the old games through the binary of boring and exciting. Boring, depressing and the end of excitement are associated with the old games. Those games become common without surprises, encompassing childish things such as plush toy avatars and rules that are deemed childish.

There is no struggle here, or at least it is less visible in their talk. Field-dependent cultural capital is gained only in relation to making the dissociation to the unacceptable practices, especially to those games that are deemed childish, like Panfu. If the practice is continued, this is explained through a reason that does not stigmatize, such as saying one is particularly skillful in a game within the game.

Stigmatizing practices are used to draw borders to the past. Stigmatization of previous practices does not contribute to a power struggle within the school group. It is, rather, a common ground upon which capital struggles related to the present and future are built. There is unanimity within the groups of children not to play Panfu. Thus, disassociating oneself from Panfu works as a kind of basis for the field, something agreed on, a discursive construction, upon which the struggle for capital can be built. This is a quite unanimous discourse of what are and are not acceptable practices. Thus, constructing the field of acceptable practices within school happens first by disassociating from unacceptable practices. Their apparent childishness characterizes these practices. As Sandikci and Ger (2010) noted, consumers not only engage in practices that reflect their acceptance of cultural norms, but they also use the marketplace as a field in which power is contested.

In this section I have also shown how children construct aspirational future games as either positive or negative. Within the peer group field, there are two positions taken about the future. These positions work only in relation to the present. First, one is promoting the dominant discourse of the one game and stigmatizing the practice of going to games that are for older children. Second, some are entering the games already and must defend their actions. These strategies may depend on one's capital in the class and also within the interview group, as they are discursive strategies used within the group to secure one's position.

Talking about anticipatory games similar to how they talk about dissociative games relates to defining the field's borders. A stigma is also related to these discourses, but in relation to anticipatory games, everything is less deter-

mined. Past games have been left behind, but the future is ahead, and they must cross the border of the dominating discourse into the future at some point. These rules are then reinforced by the children at school. However, these games may be ones they're expected to play in the future as they "grow up a little." Defining the border of the field in the past was relatively straightforward, as there were some practices that were considered childish and left to the past. Bordering the field in relation to the future, however, is more contested and complicated. According to Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:100), defining the field limits is difficult, as those limits are "always a stake in the field itself." Borders are thus dynamic and part of the struggle within that field.

Regarding anticipatory games, children in the peer group field take positions in the discussions and in the practices they participate in online. One's position in the field determines the strategies one takes within the field. One aims either to maintain the current distribution of capital or to unsettle the distribution. The dominant position is to stigmatize moving on to the new games at this point. This tactic is often challenged and questioned in the discussions. The children are, thus, trying to protect their field-dependent capital. Those who have accumulated large amounts of capital within a game may also try to keep the current status of the game in the peer group. Those who have high capital within the peer group at school might also be likely to try to move towards a practice in which they have already accumulated some capital while others are still in the previous game.

5.2   Taste regime of MovieStarPlanet

Next I describe the taste regime of the online field studied, MovieStarPlanet, focusing on looks, VIP membership and boyfriends as manifestations of the aspirational taste regime. According to Arsel and Bean (2012), a taste regime is a discursive system that orchestrates the visual and material order in a given aesthetic domain of consumption. The taste regime offers shared meaning and values that help people produce representations of objects, doings and meanings. The taste regime enables people to evaluate, choose, arrange and use objects in specific ways. I am interested in the ways a taste regime is used to build positions and symbolic violence in the MSP field. In this section I start to build my argument on how cultural resources play a part in establishing and maintaining social hierarchies in childhood. My analysis focuses on the things that are valued within a specific field and on how individuals with an accumulation of capital are evaluated within this field. The taste regime determines what is valued in the game, what the specific stakes within the field are, and how positions are built on these.

First I will describe the game's taste regime through three different types of valued capital: looks, VIP membership and boyfriends. Second, I will show

how, based on these, children participating in the group interview build distinctions to agents in different positions in the MSP field.

Table 2. Characteristics of MSP taste regime

Characteristics of taste regime	Field of MovieStarPlanet
Enforced by	The game moves down from the dominant players, who are looked up to.
Sociohistorically contextualized discursive system	Takes from the overall culture of what women look like in popular culture.
The domain regulated	The field within the game of MovieStarPlanet.
How sets apart styles, preferences and dispositions	There is one dominant style that others differ from, so being able to build that style is the way to fit in and advance one's position in the field.
Turning textual and visual representations into practical knowledge	Using looks of popular VIPs players to build one's own look.

5.2.1 Valuable capitals in MovieStarPlanet

In this section I introduce three types of capital deemed valuable in MSP: looks, VIP membership and boyfriend. These types of capital are valuable, because they can be used to enhance one's position in the field. However, before moving to the specific capital appreciated in the field, I start with a quote showing how the informants emphasize the aims of playing MSP:

> Katariina: Yeah, because everyone wants to be best in the game.
> Interviewer: What do you mean by being best?
> Katariina: That you are on a really good level and then beautiful and then you have a lot of friends.
> Anni: And good movies and a nice room.

According to Katariina, everyone wants to be best in the game. As stated previously, MSP is a game in which proficiency levels and getting to the top levels are priorities for the children. Within this game and its structures, children construct a field with particular rules and practices.

Being best in the game means one belongs to the dominant position in the field and that one has plenty of different types of capital. First, a high level is the most visible sign of one's position on the site. This is a structure the MSP game determines. One gets to the top by spending a lot of time on the site. Second, being best is related to having a beautiful avatar and a nice room in the game. This is partly determined by the game and partly by the children themselves.

The game promotes clothing for avatars, but getting ahead in the game is not based on what one looks like. However, the players in the field determine what is appreciated and fashionable and what the avatars should look like. Based on this, the look is evaluated by other players, who choose whether to accept the player as a friend in the game, based on this evaluation. The game is, thus, also a field, in which one must work to gain field-dependent cultural and social capital in order to join the dominant.

5.2.1.1 Looks as field-dependent capital

The game enforses the taste regime. Even before one enters the site, one gets a clear image of what the movie stars on the site look like. The game invites the visitor to log in and become "rich and famous" and shows avatars in trendy clothing. After entering, this same taste regime is most visible among the highest ranked players, the top ten, who can be conceptualized as the dominant players within the field. They have the highest accumulated capital in the field and, thus, they can determine the dominant looks in the field. As I will show, their styles are similar to each other's, are compatible and change often. The two avatars shown next were number seven and number three on the top ten list of MSP at the time of research. When I asked during the interviews what kind of styles there are in the field, Linnea replied: "There are quite many, there are these regulars [styles] and then there is VIP."

Figure 7. Two popular avatars on MSP

Looks that are created according to the dominant taste regime have two shared characteristics. First, there is a field-dependent taste regime on the site that is related to how old one's avatar looks like. Children dress their avatars older than they are themselves. The avatars in the pictures look older than the game's users of the game: the avatars most often look like they are 16 to 19 years old, while the children themselves are younger. Second, as can be seen above, their outfits are "compatible." According to the children, compatibility

means that clothes and accessories are of the same color with very little variation.

In the next excerpt, compatibility is constructed as what is important in being good looking.

> Interviewer: Yeah, what kind of clothes do you buy?
> Linnea: Fancy.
> Iina: Nice.
> Aada: Some that fit with others.
> Linnea: So that you don't for example buy black, well black goes with everything, but buy orange and buy like red and then it turns all weird.
> Iina: Weird. You could buy like light blue or something.

Building a look in which all clothes fit with each other is a priority within the MSP field. The taste regime determines the ways clothes should go together. This is mainly based on the clothes' colors, and this is similar to the ways the dominant avatars were dressed in the earlier excerpt. In addition to describing the taste regime in the online field, girls in this excerpt also position themselves as knowledgeable about the game in the peer group field: they can evaluate what looks good and what does not in the online field.

The taste regime is strong among the most popular players. The avatars also look very similar to each other. In the examples above, the only noticeable difference between the avatars is the color of their clothes. These two players were not friends in the field, but they still had the same hair, face paintings, and very similar shoes and dress. This likeness was evident also among the whole top ten, both boys and girls. Kates (2002) noted that consumers within gay subculture produce slight individual distinction. Children here do the same. Their avatars look very much the same, and distinction is achieved through small differences. This echoes previous research, as Ross and Harradine (2004) found that among children, there is a need both to express individuality through clothing choices and, simultaneously, to conform to the group norms and wear recognizable things.

As shown in relation to the dominant taste regime, looks are one of the most important types of capital on the field. The children participating in the group discussion understood this.

> Interviewer: If you buy something then what do you buy?
> Aurora: Nice clothes.
> Maria: I buy normally clothes because my house doesn't matter.

Stating that clothes matter in the game constructs MSP as a competitive field. Within this field, Maria tells us she invests in things that are important. According to Johnson (1993), those in a field invest in the things that produce maximum profit and benefit within it. Girls find that clothes as a basis on

which to build one's position are more valuable than one's house. Through stating that clothes matter, Maria constructs her strategic approach to MSP as a field. Thus, what one purchases on the site is part of managing one's image by what the avatar looks like. Maria further evaluates that in this process, one's house is not so relevant that one should invest money in it.

Looks and being beautiful are the basis on which everything else in the field is constructed. This is visible in the next excerpt.

> Interviewer: Why is it important to be beautiful?
> Katariina: Because then...
> Eerika: Yeah nobody.
> Anni: Well if you are ugly your movies will become
> Aliisa: You get best friends more easily, friends, and fame.
> Katariina: So that everyone gets this image that you a worthwhile to be asked a friend.
> Interviewer: Why is that?
> Katariina: Well why is that so then.
> Eerika: Because you see that she doesn't go there a lot and doesn't get money so that she could buy clothing.

Girls talk about the transformation of one type of capital to another within the site. Looks are not only an asset on their own, but they are also constructed as a tool for attaining other types of capital, such as friends and the possibility to make better movies. Looking good is, thus, a prerequisite for becoming popular on the site.

Within this field, all members are evaluated according to their looks. As Katariina states, through one's looks one is able to portray an image of oneself as worthwhile enough to be asked to be a friend. Children in their talk thus construct members of the field thorough their potential value as a friend. This is a utilitarian view of friendship that has been shown to be the way children see others as friends in early childhood. This utilitarian construction of friendships persists in this competitive field online.

Finally, looks in MSP are a form of both objectified and embodied cultural capital. Not only does one must have the right clothes and possibility to buy them, but one also needs to have the needed skills and taste to put together a compatible, appreciated outfit. This is discussed further below.

5.2.1.2 VIP membership as field-dependent capital
Another form of cultural capital that is valuable in the MSP field is the VIP membership. VIP membership is a trump card within this field, as it instantly lifts one's position in the hierarchy and can be translated to other types of capital as well.

> Interviewer: Why would somebody want a VIP?

Aada: Well it's fun when you…
Linnea: Then if you don't have so much clothes you can buy clothes. Like that.
Interviewer: What does it matter what clothes you have?
Iina: There are many different clothes.
Linnea: Then you can like.
Iina: You can make look books, they are quite nice and then you can love and then you get fame from that.

Having the VIP membership is related to one's status in the field, partly because players can get more clothes with it. Having a membership and clothes on the site is not enough, though, as one also needs cultural capital, such as skills and knowledge, to build an outfit out of the clothes. In this way one gains status. As stated previously, changing one's clothes frequently is part of the site's taste regime and, thus, is important. In addition, a large amount of clothes gives VIPs a possibility to accrue more capital within the site through activities such as building "look books." Children put together outfits out of their collection of clothes in look books that other members on the site can evaluate.

In the following excerpt, Linnea compares options for regulars and VIPs.

Interviewer: When you said cool, what does it mean to be cool?
Linnea: Well you are not, so that all your clothes fit together nicely and there are no horrible hair and like that. There are awful hair and like that. There are awful hair and then cool and like that. But usually all the best ones are like VIPs and then they can cost like 250 and they are still VIP and the basic one costs like 400 so that those things and the hair and like that. And then like that.

Linnea sees that coolness and style are constructed as a contrast between fitting together and having no capital to build a look. In addition, the possibility for an acceptable look is linked to the VIP membership. Valuable and good looks are those that can be bought only if one has the membership.

In addition to looks, social relations in the field are a source of capital for the VIP. Friends can be carried as stamps and shown to others, as discussed in the following excerpt.

Anni: So that you are popular like that so you want to show your friends like that you have a lot of friends.
Eerika: So that you are VIP.
Anni: Yeah VIPs they can have most friends, so that…
Aliisa: And a VIP is a bit like special like a star, so you want to show I'm a VIP and I have so many friends. And VIPs can have excessively like because I am VIP I will show you, because you are a regular so you don't get so many cool stuff and other and so many friends.

Social capital in the form of friends is valued in MSP. Here Anni, Eerika and Aliisa discuss why VIP membership is important for having a lot of friends in

MSP. From their position of someone who does not have a VIP membership on the site, that is, as a "regular," the VIPs have an abundance of everything. For example, the VIPs then use their friends as an additional source of status. Anni says "you want to show your friends you have friends." Having many friends is linked to being popular, which is the dominant position in the field. Children in the discussion then construct a binary between the regular and the popular players as the dominant players. Those who are the dominant ones are said to use their abundance of friends to make their field position visible.

Additionally, in her last statement, Aliisa constructs the VIPs as aiming their behavior towards those who are not in a dominant position in the field. VIPs are then seen to strategically use their accumulated social capital among their friends. They aim to show that there is a difference between the regular and the VIP in their capital and, thus, in their field position.

Those who have VIP membership become popular in the field. In the next excerpt, the girls describe what popularity in the field, which is often linked to VIP membership, means. As stated before, the popular players are the dominant ones on the site. They have accumulated the most capital and are appreciated by other children.

> Interviewer: How do you become popular or what does it mean?
> Anni: Well everybody likes them.
> Eerika: Well they have played the game a lot and they have a lot of friends and they are on a good level and like that.

In this first excerpt, Anni and Eerika describe two characteristics that can be used to identify the popular players. The things that determine how one becomes a high status player are constructed as being well liked, having played the game a lot and, thus, having advanced to a high level in the field. These characteristics are similar to what has been found to be popular in previous research. The popular ones have been described as being highly visible, well liked and having special status because of their skills (Howe 2010).

The girls are talking about having VIP membership and how many times they have had it, in the next excerpt.

> Interviewer: Have you had that VIP?
> Aurora: I've had it.
> Maria: I've had it.
> Amanda: I've had it maybe 10 times.
> Matilda: I haven't.
> Aurora: I've had it two times no three.
> Maria: I've had it at least 10 times.
> Amanda: And I'm VIP now.

When one looks at this talk through the Bourdieuan lens of position takings in discourse, the girls try to outshine each other about having the membership.

Also, based on how valuable a VIP membership is constructed and the sometime difficulty of getting it (having to do chores), children are competitive about the membership. First, Amanda states she has had the membership maybe ten times, Maria has had it as many times, and Amanda has it at the moment. Having the membership is valuable, then, not only in the online field but also within the peer group field.

Matilda is the only one who has not had a VIP membership, so in this discussion she stands out from the other girls, who each take turns describing how many times they have had the membership and whether they have it at the moment. This description of having a memberships comes off almost like a competition in which the girls try to outshine each other. Thus, the membership that is valuable in the game comes to be valuable also in the peer group field.

VIP membership is a type of trump card that can be bought in the game. It is similar to what Eder et al. (1995) found cheerleading and athletic teams to be in American high schools. These activities lifted the social status of the person who took part in them. These activities were made highly visible through their uniforms. In the context of online games, the VIP membership is available to everyone who acquires money from their parents to buy it. It works as an instant marker of distinction in one's profile. I find that in children's fields, symbols like the membership or the boyfriend are constructed as a basis of social division into in-groups and out-groups (Roper and Shah 2007).

Memberships are special statuses with privileges that can be purchased in the games. In the next excerpt, the girls are talking about how they gained their memberships.

> Interviewer: Do your parents buy you those?
> Julia: No
> Sofia: No
> Ella: Well my dad does not agree because it is online.
> Sofia: Well my dad was like if I've done well at school then I get it. Once he was at this hospital and when I went to visit him, he bought me a VIP from there. I think that if parents want if their kids have done something good they would buy it because wouldn't they want their kid to be happy.
> Julia: I got the membership when I had read one Harry Potter book, I'm only on the second book, I had been reading the first one for two years because I found it so boring then.

Sofia and Julia have memberships in the game. Sofia justified her parent's decision to buy her the membership by saying that if a child has done well and her parents want her to be happy, they might buy the membership. Some children in the interviews were against the memberships. As the membership was commonly viewed as valuable (as the girls previously showed by each one telling how many times they have had the membership), as a discursive move, this

is a step back from the dominant way of talking about the game. Ella's view draws on her father's, according to whom the membership is useless, as it does not relate to the real world. As stated above, Ella has a less dominant position in this field. Julia and Sofia, the stronger girls with higher capital, are louder in their arguments, while elsewhere Ella remained more quiet. She also commented admiringly about Julia's older sister seeming even older than 15.

The children in the interviews described making significant investments in online games that can be conceptualized as fields. First, the children spent time building game-related cultural capital in skills and knowledge about the game and trying to get ahead in it. Second, the children built extensive social networks in online games. Third, as shown in the next excerpt, they invested economic capital that they received from their parent as birthday presents or by performing house chores to buy memberships in the games.

> Interviewer: How do you agree with your parents about the memberships?
> Amanda: Well I don't know, every once in a while.
> Matilda: We don't have anything like that because I don't really want to
> Maria: I must do some house chores, at least me.
> Aurora: I got it as a birthday present.
> Amanda: Well my dad is so nice that when I once asked him he gave me. But if I ask my mom she says I must do something.
> Interviewer: House chores?
> Amanda: Yeah.

Previous literature suggests that investments within a field would lead to them becoming important to one's identity, which would then result in the field becoming difficult to leave (Arsel and Thompson 2011; McAlexander et al. 2014).

5.2.1.3 Boyfriend as form social capital
The boyfriend is another form of capital on the site. Boyfriends are visible to all other players in MSP and are also made visible by the members themselves, as the next example illustrates.
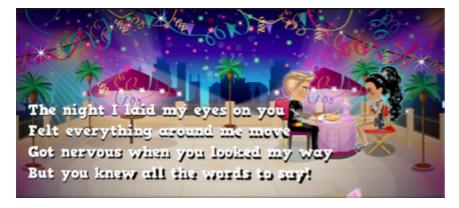

Figure 8. Romantic dinner in MSP

The user in the picture above shows herself having a dinner with her boyfriend and has added a romantic text to accompany the picture. This picture gives a romantic view of the relationship, but as is shown in the following discussions, boyfriends are not always necessarily partners in the traditional sense but, more importantly, are social and cultural capital that benefit them in the popularity struggle. In the following excerpt, Linnea gives a blunt description of having a boyfriend in MSP.

> Interviewer: Those boyfriends what are those?
> Linnea: It means that some guy, you can just ask if you run into a nice boy, you can ask if he wants to become my boyfriend, so it isn't really anything more serious, he just…
> Aada: So there's this when you open a person's picture, then you can see if she is VIP and you can give autographs and buy clothes for her and then on the side there are three best friends and boyfriend if you have. And there you can see the boyfriend's picture and then they write in their status that I love him.

As previously shown, good looks and many high profile friends on the field are important to one's status. Boyfriends are also constructed as valuable possessions that give advantage on the field. Aada says having a boyfriend in MSP is nothing serious and no elaborate processes are used to choose one. Thus, boyfriends are considered not only as social capital in the field but also as resources one can access through the boyfriend. More importantly, boyfriends function as objectified, field-dependent, cultural capital on the field. In the excerpt above Aada lists boyfriend together with sign of VIP membership, autographs, clothes and best friends. In addition, telling that you love your boyfriend is in this same listing. This list of can be used to assess one's status on the field. This comes across similarly in the next excerpt, in which Anni, Aliisa and Eerika discuss how having a boyfriend online is not the same as having boyfriend in the real life.

> Interviewer: Do kids your age have boyfriends [in real life]?
> Eerika: No
> Anni: Well I don't have one
> Aliisa: Well I know a friend from music class.
> Interviewer: How do you have boyfriends online if not offline?
> Eerika: Well because it's not physical like that. It is only a note on your thing, so it's only, it's also a bit more cool.

Girls in the group discussion had no boyfriends in real life, and only one of them said she knew someone her age with a boyfriend. Eerika describes having a boyfriend online as different from having one offline. According to her, physicality makes the difference. In another discussion, when asked if girls had boyfriends in real life, they shouted "no" together to tell me this was unthinkable. Then, as was stated in the previous excerpts, having a boyfriend in one's profile makes them valuable in the field, as it is a sign of coolness, which builds one's status on the field. A boyfriend is constructed neither as a typical form of social capital, through which one can access resources, nor are they not con-

structed as partners who would support one in other ways besides as a status marker.

Aliisa says that a friend in her form's music class has a boyfriend. As Eerika states, having a boyfriend online is considered cool, but even offline, knowing someone who has a boyfriend, even though one does not have one, may increase one's position in the field. This is because knowing someone is a link to their own social capital or coolness.

In the next excerpt, the children discuss high-level players in the game.

> Katariina: Then all these on higher levels, they would want to have boyfriends so that they would be popular and so.
> Interviewer: Why is it popular to have a boyfriend?
> Katariina: Well somehow like teenagers always have boyfriends so that.
> Aliisa: Ugge.
> Katariina: Yeah Ugge has that Dapi.
> Eerika: Are they still?
> Aleandra: Is it? Quite many don't have, alkorenssi does not have, Ugge doesn't have
> Katariina: Well at least it's more teenage-like if you do.

This excerpt once again emphasizes the instrumental view children have of boyfriends in the game. It is important to have a boyfriend, because teenagers also have boyfriends. Thus, boyfriends as a source of capital in the field are also related to one's developmental status. Teenagers' practices, such as having a boyfriend, are constructed as valuable.

A boyfriend is constructed as a form of social capital during the girls' discussion. Having a boyfriend is related to their developmental status online, because in real life it is something that is considered as normal for teenagers but not for children their age. Having a boyfriend is more acceptable in the online world, because it is done for status purposes. This is similar to friends being defined differently in the online and offline worlds.

In another excerpt, all of the girls had boyfriends.

> Interviewer: Do you have boyfriends?
> Linnea: Yeah.
> Iina: Yes.
> Aada: Yes.
> Interviewer: What does it mean there?
> Linnea: That just is.
> Aada: It is.
> Linnea: There is like nothing to it. A friend of mine, or like my best friend in real life. So she like made her own guy and then she asked her other guy as her girlfriend. So that her own guy is her own guys boyfriend.
> Interviewer: Ok.

Aada: My little sister has done the same.

Iina: Like Eveliina.

All these girls say they have boyfriends in MSP in this discussion. As Linnea again states, there is "nothing to it." She argues for this by telling how her friend had built her own boyfriend on the site. Building one's own boyfriend shows, furthermore, how important having one in MSP is. This also shows how children regard MSP a competitive field in which one acts strategically to build one's status. Making one's own boyfriend is a known practice also for Iina and Aada, who also know others who have made their own boyfriends. By describing how others have made their boyfriends in the group discussion, the children here construct their own positions like those who have acquired boyfriends on the site without needing to build one themselves.

In conclusion, friends and boyfriends are considered as two different things in MSP: First, they are resources to the image the person conveys and that can, thus, be attached to the person him or herself. A VIP member on a high level is, thus, a valuable sign on one's profile that immediately lifts one's status. This is similar to a nice outfit or the membership sign one can have on their profile. Second, through these friends, the children can address their valuable resources, often through trade. This trade is initiated often by those who are not famous by asking them to be friends with them. They are considered valuable as friends, because through them, children can acquire autographs and other things that help them to get on in the game. This is based on the structure of the game and will be discussed further in the following sections related to symbolic power. Popularity is, then, built on these two aspects of social capital: the image portrayed by having a friend and the amount of resources that help one in the game and one can access through a particular person. This is part of the interest in the famous players and the source of their attraction on the site. Having this instrumental view on is not all-encompassing, though. The children still describe their online friends online similar to how they would describe their friends in offline fields. Things like loyalty, helping and trustworthiness are important. Additionally, they describe feeling disappointed when friends, especially those on the higher levels whom the children look up to, do not behave as they consider friends should towards each other,.

5.2.2 Distinguishing from other players

The children taking part in the group discussions took different stances to MSP's taste regime. Thus, it is not possible to totally separate the peer group field and online field in this section, because the children take both stances towards MSP and position themselves within the peer group while talking about MSP. In this section I will first show how the children describe younger players in MSP and, second, how they do this in relation to players who act "too teenagelike."

5.2.2.1 Dissociating from younger players in MovieStarPlanet
Dissociation happens also within the online MSP field, in addition to distancing from games played previously in the peer group field. That is done mainly by differentiating oneself from younger members in the field.

I previously showed how looks are an important type of cultural capital on the site. Having the right look on the field is only possible if one has the skills to build a suitable look. These skills are part of one's embodied, field-dependent capital that is partly based on one's age. This is visible in the next excerpt.

> Iida: So that she will never be asked as friend isn't it so that those are so young so there is a bit like the older the better.
> Kiira: More cool.
> Iida: So some who are eight will not be asked to be friends if they don't have some school friends who they chat with them.

This description is the opposite of how the popular players are described. In this excerpt Iida and Kiira construct the field from their position outside the dominant discourse. They have claimed they no longer play the game or have not played it at all. The field is constructed as appreciating older members, and the younger players have less capital and are in a lower position already because of their age. According to Iida, those who are younger and unable to build friendships on the site must carry social capital from school to gain friends on the field.

This discussion is continued in the following excerpt, when the MSP field becomes connected to the positions within the peer group field.

> Eveliina: It just looked like it had been created by a little girl.
> Interviewer: How can you tell?
> Eveliina: Well if she has.
> Kiira: If she is ugly. They think.
> Iida: She doesn't have compatible.
> Kiira: Put blankly: ugly.
> Iida: No eight or 14 year old like they can see what goes well together so there is a difference in capability so that for excerpt me and my friend who is seven so we have so much difference in style that when she asks me so that help me I don't know what to were to my friend's birthday party so that I suggest her something that I think is really cool in my opinion and so and then she wants something in one color and then if there are nice leggings or something or some dress and leggings so she thinks that there must be all the colors in the rainbow and you can really see that.
> Interviewer: So there is a difference.
> Iida: Well yeah so that rainbow colors.
> Kiira: Well I don't have any rainbow shirts or some rainbow or a hipposhirt.
> Iida: Yeah something like hipposhirts and such.

The children in the excerpt construct themselves as knowledgeable consumers who can put together an appropriate look both online and offline. The girls

here differentiate themselves from "little girls" in the game who do not have the embodied capital needed to dress themselves in a compatible manner in the field.

Kiira and Iida participate in the same discourse both online and offline. They differentiate themselves from younger children (the little girl and the younger friend). Younger children are constructed of incapable of appropriate dressing. Kiira and Iida thus construct themselves as having higher cultural capital in their ability to look cool. Through this judgment then, they accredit themselves with the needed capital of succeeding in the field.

Iida talks about the capability of putting together clothes. She then accredits the embodied cultural capital to older children and describes a seven-year-old, who is couple years younger than herself as not having this capability. She portrays herself as someone who gives advice to someone with less ability and knowledge of a general taste regime in putting together an appropriate look for a birthday party. Younger children's taste is associated here with hippos and rainbows that are constructed as childish, similar to pandas in the online world Panfu. Colorful outfits belong to the past and fitting colors to the present.

As found previously, Kiira positions herself strongly against MSP and calls the whole MSP game childish. She highlights her position here again by stating that others in the discussion find the avatars ugly that are made by little girls. Thus, she positions herself outside this field and as disinterested in the things that happen within it.

This discussion shows the importance of one's age and of the embodied capital related to age in building one's status on the site. Those who are younger and, thus, incapable of building a look are not valued as friends or as social capital; thus, it is difficult for them to climb in the field's hierarchy. The taste regime, which values older looking looks, determines who is valued as a friend on the site.

5.2.2.2 "Going overboard" in MovieStarPlanet

In this section the girls in the MSP field construct some practices of the dominant players as going too far. As becomes evident, this stigmatization of these practices is related to what is and is not acceptable for children their age.

As shown in the previous section on looks, competition within the MSP field is built based on this taste regime of what one should look like.

> Interviewer: What does it mean to be good looking?
> Eerika: Well basically quite…
> Aliisa: Almost like change your clothes every day and some are quite pretty but some go totally overboard, then they have all these sunglasses and everything bling and everything rouge and make up and all.

From her position in the field, Aliisa makes a subtle distinction between what is acceptable and unacceptable. She constructs changing one's clothes as important to show one's capital in the field. Those with a large amount of clothes can change their looks daily; simultaneously, they present their embodied, field-dependent capital by showing they can repeatedly put together a nice look.

But, there is a limit to what the girls construct as acceptable. Having make up and being bling is, according to Aliisa, going "overboard." Similar to the offline world, in which some games were acceptable and others not, the children here craft a position for themselves between what is acceptable and cool and unacceptable and either childish or too developed. Both of these ends are stigmatized. They come to constantly evaluate what is appropriate according to the taste regime and their developmental position.

Also within the MSP field, some children took a subverting position towards the dominant taste regime. Iida derides the field and evaluates the looks of the dominant players and the taste regime on the site in the next excerpt.

> Iida: Well it draws them like because it looks somehow good, some people think, it looks terrible good that you have this giant head and then like this very skinny but anyway like in some parts really advanced so the guy so it looks good for those, then when there are all these clothes still that make it even more like ohlala.

Iida talks about how the body of the avatars is constructed in relation to the children's real-life bodies. Building a "skinny but advanced" body is about looking older than one is in real life. Iida does not talk directly but goes around the subject using words like "ohlala" and "advanced."

She evaluates the taste regime and finds it too close to the teenage, too far ahead of her own space in development. She represents here the logic of the field where looking older is appreciated. Iida then uses the taste regime of the site that appreciates older looking avatars as a way to position herself against the field altogether.

The children needed to find a balance between what was found as too childish on the one hand and too developed on the other hand. This was the case also in relation to another sort of capital, having a boyfriend, as the next excerpt shows.

> Aliisa: Then some have these animation, so there are kissing animations and all things and some use them. And some who are totally crazy with their boyfriends although they don't even know each other they use those kissing animations.
> Interviewer: They kiss them?

Aliisa: Yeah.
Eerika: Yeah but it's only in the profile so it's not...

Using kissing animations in the field is regarded as a way to show off to others. These practices of the popular players are also characterized as crazy. Aliisa does not accept this and constructs this as going too far. However, Eerika says later that this action happens only in one's profile and is, thus, not real. This shows the irreconcilable logic of the children's fields: on the one hand, being popular and teenage-like is what is appreciated and aimed at, but, simultaneously, the actions of the popular are constructed as too bold, on the other hand. Finding an acceptable position between these two stigmatized ends is what the children constantly negotiate, both online and offline.

Having a boyfriend is related to these other things of being older that Iida describes in the next excerpt.

Iida: Nowadays you can like what I've seen from my friends you can start dating there with some guy and then it has become really popular when you can be someone totally else than yourself without anyone knowing your identity and you can like say something stupid, you probably can't because there must me some rule I don't know, but there you can look as stupid as you want so dumb like you ever wanted or so fancy that you think you are and you can buy all makeup and things like that and then when you can start dating there what I've seen from when others play and Daniel plays.

As can be found from the two previous excerpts, Iida takes a subverting position towards the game. This talk is similar to what she said about the avatars' looks. According to her, having a boyfriend relates, then, to being able to do anything, to being stupid and acting older than you normally would in real life. This is what Iida, who is against the game altogether, criticizes here. She is positioning herself against the things that the game represents, especially acting older than one actually is. Acting older is what one's developmental status in the game is built on.

Within the MSP field, children construct their position based on a developmental taste regime. They stigmatize positions that take a too-childish or too-old look on field consumption practices. Similar to what Goodwin (2008) found in relation to girls and gossip, the children spent time assessing others' behavior and evaluating what appropriate behavior is. Here the appropriate behavior is related to developmental what is acceptable and what not at this age and in this context. Based on the markers of looks and boyfriends, the children who know the game can determine the position of each of the players. Distinction in this field is based on age. Children who are constructed as being too young to be able to put together an acceptable look are viewed as unable to succeed in the field like others. They have entered the field without the needed skills to participate in the competition. They lack the field-dependent and embodied cultural capital to put the taste regime on the field into practice. This

results in them falling into the dominated position. They do not have the minimum capital to be effective in the field, so they resort to strategies such as creating their own boyfriend in the field or using outside capital, such as friend in school, to get ahead in the game. Thus, taste in the game is related to one's age as an indicator of class position. Age is related to one's skills to distinguish what does or does not fit together. In this field, looks come to represent both objectified and embodied cultural-capital. First, one's avatar is evaluated based on its look. Second, the member overall, and especially her age, is evaluated based on this look.

In conclusion, "childish" practices and young children are constructed as inferior. The children are, thus, building on their general understanding of childhood as developing into something better. Through their dissociative talk of past practices and younger children, the children participate in their own marginalization.

5.2.3 Conclusions

In this section I also show how the children construct the online field as competitive through the taste regime and valuable capital. I have discussed three types of field-dependent capital that were found to be valuable within the online field: looks, boyfriends and the VIP membership. These types of capital are field dependent, as they are not generally transferable to other field; however, the peer group field is an exception. Through discursive action, the children use capital gained in the online field to construct their position in the peer group field.

Social capital has been conceptualized as the resources one can access through a person, a personal network, and the resources of the network. This is what "friends" and "boyfriends" are for children many times. They are friends in the sense that is seen to be instrumental and a specific aspect of childhood friendships that move on from this stage as they grow older. Online, this stage is related to the game and is, thus, a permanent part of how friends are viewed in this context.

Based on markers such as looks, money and friends, the children determine the position of each of the members of the MSP field. This evaluation can be used to determine what is valuable within the field or, in other words, what the stakes of the game are.

The previous excerpts give quite a harmonious picture of what is going on at school in relation to the game; however, according to Swartz (1996), Bourdieu sees conflict as the fundamental dynamic of all social life. Struggle for power is the key in all social arrangements, and this struggle happens over economic and material resources. Even though children's lives have been thought to consist of playing and learning, they are no exception when it comes to power and struggles. This has been found in previous research that shows cliques, bully-

ing, inclusion and exclusion are all part of children's everyday lives. These topics, which will be further discussed in the following sections, are based on what is valued within the peer group fields and the MSP field that have been described in this section.

5.3   Symbolic power and resistance

This section describes how symbolic power and resistance emerge in the two fields. I first show how the dominant players are constructed and act so that they exclude others from their group. Second, I show how the dominated players in the two fields also have power and how they resist the power of the dominant group.

5.3.1   Positions and exclusion in the peer group field

Children position themselves in the peer group in relation to the game. In this section I show examples of a negotiation process among the children during the group discussions, first in relationship to who was first in a particular game and second in relationship to their exclusion from and inclusion in particular games.

5.3.1.1 Negotiating positions

The previous section shows how children construct a dominant game and how they gain access to and membership in the games. The focus now is on how children construct and negotiate positions related to the dominant game. Status positions among children are related to who was the first with access to and knowledge of a dominant game. Being first in a game can be used as a way to secure one's position in the school peer group.

The next excerpt shows how the agency of starting the game at the school group is given to Viljami. Again, the word "everyone" comes up, as, according to Eero, almost everyone started the game in a similar way.

> Interviewer: How did you start playing?
> Aleksi: Well I found it when boys in my class... they were talking about it.
> Eero: Viljami started it.
> Aleksi: I pretty much found out what kind of a game it is and I thought it was a good game.
> Eero: Almost everyone in our class started it that way.
> Aleksi: Yeah.

The previous section showed that children have one dominant game that most of them play. This is a common ground on which the players of the game start constructing positions. One of the ways to construct positions is to determine who was the first one playing the game. This similar pattern was evident many times in the data. The children's talk of the past is quite united. Talking about everyone in the school group brings them together and shows inclusion by

something shared. Everyone playing or everyone starting the game in a similar way gives a quite unanimous view of the group. However, as the previous excerpt showed, Eero mentions that "*almost* everyone" started the game in a similar way, so there are some who started it differently, or maybe did not start at all.

> Interviewer: How did MSP become so popular?
> Heini: Well I don't really, when I came to this class I was like new here, so then I didn't really care about the place, but then when everyone was there I thought I would do it as well, but then I don't complain about that place that much. But I guess it was like, it went so that first there was one person there and then it went to the next one and the next one.
> Riika: For me it was like I was in MSP, I had two guys there last year, then I took all those passwords and went there but it didn't work.
> Aava: For me it was I guess so it started so that the most popular guys in our class like Anni and Kiira and Mikael started to go to MSP and then others thought that if those are there then it must be quite a good place. But I don't really care about it that much but there are these pets, you can take are of them and play with them and there are games and other nice things. And then you can of course like get friends and become famous and make movies and so on.

Heini and Aava do not have a particularly positive view of MSP. Heini says she did not like the place but followed others to get in the game. Aava followed the most popular children in their class to the game. Even if they do not particularly like MSP, there is a must play it, because others, especially those more dominant within this field, have started to play it. Then, because of the valuable capital the game provides by being associated with the dominant members in the school field, it is not possible for these children to stay outside the game. Staying out would mean they accept their position as outsiders in the power struggle.

The following discussion shows a group of boys talking about the order in which the children in their class started to play Minecraft. Viljami, mentioned previously as the one who started the game, is at the center of the discussion.

> Interviewer: How did you start talking about it [Minecraft]?
> Eetu: Wait a minute, it started was it...
> Juho: When Viljami got Minecraft, then I got it, then Matias had had it, then Eemeli got it, then Konsta, then Elku, then Oskari.
> Eetu: Leevi, Leevi got it quite in the beginning as well.
> Juho: Actually, without school nobody would even know about it. Thanks to you [Viljami] Minecraft is here.
> Viljami: I already knew about it on third grade so then.
> Juho: Then the trouble started because of you.
> Viljami: Troubles, yeah..
> Eetu: It wasn't Viljami, Matias was the one who brought it here and played it the whole time. Before that we talked about WOT a lot.

> Viljami: No then on the third grade when I started to know a lot about Mine-
> craft, then I told about it to Eemeli, then Eemeli told you and then started the
> spread of information.
> Juho: Well why did you tell Eemeli about it.
> Interviewer: So this happened on third grade
> Juho: Yeah.
> Viljami: I have played for two years, oh wait a minute maybe three.
> Eetu: I haven't been able to play it because our computer broke down.
> Viljami: Have I played it for three years now.
> Juho: I have played for a couple years.

The conversation starts with Juho explicating the order in which the boys started playing the game. Viljami is named as the first one. He claims he was the second who started playing the game and Matias was third. Later on in the discussion, Eetu argues it was it was Matias, not Viljami after all, who brought the game to the class. Viljami disagrees and aims to reclaim his position as the first one who knew about the game and told about it to Eemeli. During another discussion among Tommi, Oskari and Niko, Oskari states that "Viljami is the best player in our class," to which Tommi replies that "Leevi can do every-thing." There is, thus, ongoing discussion within this field about who can be credited for bringing the game into the peer group field and who is the most qualified player in the field.

This discussion creates a rank order, or an order of positions, among the boys. The boys participating in the discussion have different views of the situation. Within this peer group field of the boys (also in other discussions), Viljami is constructed as the most dominant player in terms of being first and bringing Minecraft into the field. Viljami himself takes part in this construction of posi-tion by defending himself if his position is questioned. Juho also tries to craft the position of the second for himself. He does this in two instances. First, in the beginning he claims he got the game after Viljami. Second, at the end of the discussion, he argues he has played the game for a couple years, after Viljami has contended he has played the game for three years.

Eetu takes a different position in this discussion. One's position in a dominat-ing practice is related to one's possibilities to participate in it. Eetu was not mentioned in the list of boys who got the game first in the class. Additionally, at the end of the discussion he tells that he has not been able to play the game, as his computer does not work. As found previously, his position in relation to the game in the field is more subverting.

Access to the game and determining the rank order is, then, part of the discur-sive struggle on the field. This discussion shows the children constructing their positions in relation to each other using access to the game as a resource. The precondition for entering a game is the social networks within the field, or in other words, social capital. Bourdieu's concept of social capital can be broken down into two elements: the social relationships that help people to access the

resources of those within the relationships and the quality of those resources. One needs to hear about the game and gain access to it. Those who gain access to the dominant game in the beginning can gain cultural, social and economic capital in it before others in the field join in.

The next excerpt shows a similar discussion between two girls, Julia and Sofia. There were tensions between these two girls during the interview, as shown previously in relation to their talk about Facebook. There was a drawing task in the group interviews. I asked the children to draw their favorite online places. The next excerpt shows Julia and Sofia talking while drawing.

> Julia: Why didn't I draw the new Stardoll. Old was nicer, but you weren't there then so you don't know it.
> Sofia: I know, the avatar was there on the side, I was there for a week perhaps.
> Julia: Yeah, right. Oh no, I've forgotten how to draw this.

Julia states her knowledge of Stardoll at the beginning of the excerpt and claims Sofia could not have the same knowledge of the game as she does. Sofia argues she had been to the old Stardoll and proves this by specifying the location of the avatar. Julia pays no attention to this by saying, "yeah right," and moving on. Children openly construct positions of themselves and of others in their social fields in relation to who was first in the game. During these somewhat tense interactions between Julia and Sofia, other girls in the group, Ella and Iida, remained silent. Within this field and this specific discussion, Ella's and Iida's positions were less dominant than Julia's and Sofia's, and they did not participate in the two other girls' power struggle. This came across in their silence and that they had started to play the MSP later than the two more dominant girls. I probe into this more deeply when the discussion turns to actively hiding the games as sources of capital from others.

5.3.1.2 Exclusion and cliques: Secret clubs

Obtaining information about the new game and gaining access to it is part of the struggle within the field. In this section I highlight how the children tried to keep the game as a valuable and restricted source of capital by keeping it a secret from others.

Viljami, who was positioned as the one who introduced Minecraft to the class, is talked about again in the following excerpt. A different group of boys is talking about a club Viljami created to keep the game a secret from others.

> Mikael: First like in our class, nobody talked about Minecraft so that everyone would keep it as a secret.
> Mikael: Yeah.
> Matias: Oh yeah, Viljami kept it a secret.
> Mikael: Yeah Viljami invented this club that everyone who has Minecraft tells nobody but then it spread, because there is a group of boys in our class, so it spread to other boys through them.

> Interviewer: What was this club for?
> Mikael: I don't know.
> Eemeli: Because Viljami thought it would have been boring if everyone had it, but it's a bit boring really.
> Interviewer: Why?
> Eemeli: Because everyone has it.
> Mikael: But it's fun in multiplayer.
> Matias: Everyone talks about it then.

Viljami is positioned as a leader in this discussion, too. He built a clique around the game to hide it from others. However, at some point the information about the game started to spread among those in the class, and the game became dominant. The children's cliques have been found to build on practices of inclusion and exclusion as potential members are screened. The clique's leader has a power powerful position and finally determines whether one is accepted to the group or not (Adler and Adler 1995). This field had an exclusive clique one could only access with connection to Viljami, its leader. Only within the group could one gain capital associated with the game before others, but the game's exclusivity as a source of capital evaporated as some boys in the clique started to tell others about the game. This resulted in the game becoming "boring," according to Viljami. This is because when the game spreads among other players, there are implications to the game's value as valued source of capital in this field. As more and more children in the field start to play the game and become competent to play it, the game loses its possibility to confer status to the players who have played it in secret.

This discussion among Matias, Mikael and Eemeli demonstrates an instance of exclusion. Mikael is talking about a game to Matias without naming it to keep it a secret from Eemeli.

> Interviewer: What [other game] do you talk about then?
> Mikael: Well one other game
> Interviewer: What is that?
> Mikael: *Laughter*. Well I don't know.
> Interviewer: Is it something you are not supposed to be playing?
> Mikael: Well they think...
> Eemeli: Or I don't play it because it doesn't it.
> Matias: It doesn't work.
> Eemeli: There is an age limit.
> Matias: Do you mean world of tanks?
> Mikael: What?
> Eemeli: Yeah.
> Mikael: Not that one but there is also...
> Matias: Which one?
> Mikael: The one that you and Oskari have (whispers)
> Matias: But I don't play that anymore.
> Mikael: Oskari doesn't either that much.

This excerpt again shows that there are different positions to be found. Mikael tries to use a secret game a source of exclusivity during the discussion. A previous discussion relating to who played Minecraft first showed that Matias was constructed with Viljami as the one who entered the field of Minecraft first, giving him a dominant position in the field in relation to online games. This can also be seen here in the way Mikael approaches him as a dominant member in the field. He tries to talk to Matias without letting Eemeli know what the game is that he is talking about. Mikael is then positioning Matias and Oskari (who was not in this group) as having capital related to a game that is still a secret to others. Matias finally understands what game Mikael is talking about but brushes it off by saying that he no longer plays that game. Then when Mikael tries to build exclusivity with Matias based on the secret game of Matias and Oskari, it does not work, as Matias does not construct the game as valuable. Mikael then constructs his own position as someone who knows about the game the dominant ones are playing but does not yet have access to it.

Eemeli is simultaneously excluded from the discussion by Mikael. He tries to guess what Mikael is talking about without succeeding, and Mikael is unwilling to disclose the name of the game to Eemeli. Eemeli's position in the field is difficult. When it came to online games, he was among the first to start with Minecraft and, thus, had the possibility to gain capital within that game before many others. However, his position was more complicated than that. During the data collection at school, Eemeli got into a fight with other boys at recess, and this was not the first time, based on how this was discussed in the class. The teacher wished for understanding from the other children, as Eemeli often ran into trouble because of his hot temper. Then, within this discussion, Eemeli's exclusion by Mikael shows that he tried to keep Eemeli out of the exclusive clique who knows about the newest games after Minecraft. This exclusion that is based on positions the children had before entering the discussion are forms of symbolic violence.

5.3.2 Power imbalance in friendships

In this section I first show how possible friends are evaluated online in the MSP game and how the resulting hierarchy is formed among players. Second, I show how evaluations made online about friendship translate to the real world of social relations among the children. I focus on a particular case in which the children discussed not being accepted to play jump rope with a group of more popular girls.

5.3.2.1 Becoming friends with the VIP online
This section shows how symbolic power in the field becomes visible in the talk about the relationship between popular and regular players. The following excerpts show the hierarchies between the dominant players and the dominated players in MSP. I first show how the popular players are seen to behave, how the lower players are evaluated and how friends are chosen in the game.

Second, I describe how the power imbalance between popular and regular players continues after they have become friends in the game.

This section illustrates how the popular individuals on the online field are constructed in the interviews. Bragging about one's popularity and the capital the popular players have accumulated is discussed as a way the popular players behave.

> Interviewer: Do those VIPs behave differently?
> Hilda: Not normally.
> Pinja: But sometimes some of them say that yeah I'm VIP or something like that.
> Hilda: Or don't I have nice clothes and a nice room and everything.

Hilda and Pinja talk in this excerpt about the way the VIP or the popular behave. Iina first states that they often behave differently. Aada adds that sometimes they brag about being VIP. Iina then says that they might also brag about their clothes and their room. Thus, the VIP are constructed as bringing forth their position in the field and displaying the capital they have accumulated in the game.

The next excerpt shows the girls further describing how the popular players behave differently from others.

> Interviewer: How do those on high levels behave, somehow differently?
> Aliisa: Well they don't normally reply to your messages and like, and then they can go to like chat to brag and be like cool. And then they normally keep to themselves.

The quote sums up the general way of describing the popular group. Previous research has shown that the popular ones have high visibility among peers, are known and recognized and sought after as friends (Merten 1997). The popular players are also constructed here as "keeping to themselves." Not replying to messages can be conceptualized as a sign of exclusivity and use of power. Bourdieu (1994) stated that the structural relations in the field may lead to polar opposites never even meeting each other. They also might actively ignore each other. Keeping to themselves also relates to cliques. Howe (2010) found the children forming groups and finding friends in others who were relatively homogenous and resembled themselves in different characteristics.

The children discussed the ways the dominant players showed their status on the site. This status is based on the distinction between those with high and low cultural capital in the field. There are rules and regularities of behavior in the field that show what is expected from each position. Levels in the game are class positions, as those occupying them possess similar amounts of capital. Popular individuals are the dominant players on the site, the ones with high field-dependent capital but also or especially with symbolic capital, or the ac-

cumulated prestige and honor within the field (Thompson 1991). This accumulation of symbolic capital in the field stems from successful use of other capital (Swartz 1996). Some of these markers are closely related to the structure of the game and are, thus, institutionalized. The market is then somewhat structured and dominated by the dominant ones (Bourdieu 1991). These characterizations -- the VIP, the famous, the high-leveler and the popular – are linked to the concept of popularity found in previous research related to the social organizations of children and youth. The concepts of popularity and hierarchies are, thus, evident in the site.

In conclusion, the popular players are the dominant players on the site. The popular ones are constructed as envied and valued by those in different positions. Construction of the popular position shows the power imbalance in the field. As the next section will show, these power imbalances are visible in the relations between the dominant players and the dominated players. I turn to instances in which capital related to the online games is carried from the game to the offline discussions within the group interviews. The focus is then on one specific game and how capital built within that is used in the discussions.

As stated before, clothing and looks are very important in the game. In the following excerpt, Aliisa describes the experience of having to start the game with little money and clothes and being evaluated by those with better styles.

> Aliisa: It means like if you are really poor, when you begin you get like if you choose like bad clothes, you get like, in the beginning you get maybe 300 [stardollars], with that you get like pants or a shirt, so, they start to say like you have so ugly clothes, why don't you ever change them. Because those rich and famous they, for example I have this friend on level 8, she has everyday different clothes and different status. So she goes to change it everyday. And then she like, I thought that oh that's so unfair, she has so much, and I have like half a year the same clothes, until I get a little bit of money and I can buy something new.

When entering the field, the member is poor and has few clothes. Aliisa says those on higher levels comment on the way someone looks by asking why the low levelers do not change their clothes. The high levelers have the power to evaluate those on lower levels. Aliisa describes here her position in the game as someone with fewer things and less status compared to those who have advanced to higher levels in the game.

A group of girls discusses how those on higher levels choose their friends in the next excerpt.

> Katariina: Probably that those on higher levels don't want any zero levelers as their friends.
> Eerika: Yeah when they are themselves on 25th level or something like that.
> Katariina: For example if you are on level 25, so you don't want me as your friend, some 10 leveler as a friend when I'm like level 7.

Aliisa: I´m 11, I have a couple friends on level 20 and higher, but quite a few take.

The children in the discussion evaluate themselves as possible friends of the popular players, or those players who are on higher levels in the game. The image one portrays as someone on level seven is different from someone on level 11. In this talk, the children legitimize the cultural practices and norms that are portrayed by the dominant players (Bourdieu and Patterson 1997). Levels emerge as class positions: those with similar amounts of capital are in the same "class" in the field. The hierarchy and practices of asking and choosing friends persists because children do not question the power relationship in which the dominant players can evaluate and choose possible friends.

When talking about the difference between levels, they also show specific knowledge and expertise of how the field works in this discussion. Aliisa has the highest field position, and she claims to have some friends even on levels 20 and above. Telling about these also lifts her position and status in the school peer group. Later in the section on jump rope, this same group of girls talk about being left out of jump rope when it is played by more popular or dominant girls. Within both these contexts they define themselves as the dominated. Within these children's fields it means they are not as popular and sought after as friends than some others. Therefore, in this instance, there is a connection between the status children construct for themselves both online and offline.

The girls are more closely talking about how the popular players related to other players in the field in the next excerpt.

Interviewer: How do they behave towards others?
Eveliina: Well everyone is there like wow she is on a high level, let's ask her to be a friend, so they never accept.
Interviewer: They don't?
Eveliina: Because they usually have so for example this one guy who is on I think 11th level so she has 47 friend requests and 30.
Iida: Don't those who are on high levels normally have VIP?
Eveliina: So 35-37 messages so they don't time to look thorough all of them.
Kiira: Oh no terrible I have 37 messages.
Interviewer: Why do they get so many messages?
Eveliina: Well because they are well known so that they like talk and they talk to these guys that accept my friend request.

Eveliina says others admire those on high levels and approach them to ask them to be their friends. Those on the highest levels do not accept these requests. The popular players are constructed as busy because of the high levels of requests they constantly receive. The children here show they understand why the popular players act as they do. This again helps the dominant players to keep their field status. This must be accepted in order to play the field and stay part of it.

What is also interesting in this excerpt is how Aliisa describes her friend on level 8 as rich and famous, showing that field dominance and who is regarded as dominant are relative. In another group interview, the girls themselves were on levels 8 and 10 and, thus, would have been regarded here as dominant players. They were again looking up to players on the highest levels of the game as dominant.

The following excerpt shows the same children continuing to discuss how the popular players choose their friend in MSP. The discussion moves on to their own position in the game, which reveals also the girl's relationships at school.

> Katariina: And then they write in their status something like...
> Aliisa: Yeah they write like...
> Katariina: They are like those on zero level and sixth level don't ask me as a friend.
> Interviewer: How come?
> Aliisa: Because they want good high leveler friends so that they don't get a bad reputation.

The popular players are described as managing their image through friend selection. Katariina tells how those on the higher levels, who have the possibility to choose their friends exclaim in their profiles that they do not want low levelers as their friends. This is one way to declare one's status by declaring one has more friend requests than one can take and, thus, has the possibility to choose.

Lower-level friends are associated with "bad reputation." Higher-level friends lift one's status and low-level friends make one's status lower in the hierarchy. This also has a connection to real life, as younger players who cannot go higher because of their lack of embodied field-specific capital are those who are also not accepted as friends.

As stated earlier when discussing MSP's taste regime, the avatar's looks, in addition to levels, are part of choosing one's friends in the field. The girls discuss this in the following excerpt.

> Interviewer: How do those who are on higher levels choose their friends?
> Iina: I don't know, we're not.
> Linnea: Well maybe if someone on zero level asks you to friends, so I don't think they take those, so that you must be on a quite high level and then VIP.
> Aada: And good looking and like that.
> Interviewer: What do you mean by good looking?
> Linnea: Yeah like there are these horrible clothes in this shopping place and then there are also beautiful ones. But then if you look horrible they don't probably take you.
> Aada: Even though you are on a high level.
> Interviewer: Why is that?

> Pinja: Maybe they have a different taste in clothes. Then you're like she's not really my style. Then you don't take them as your friend.

The popular players choose their friends based on someone's ability to conform to the taste regime. The children show in this discussion that they understand the expectations they face if they wish to be friends with the famous. Not looking right according to the taste regime constructs one as unwanted as a friend. The taste regime, then, is finally determined by the dominant players. They have the power to choose their friends, and they do this partly according to the looks of those who ask them to be friends. This description is similar to what cliques have been reported to do in choosing members. The leaders of the clique are finally able to choose who is accepted and who is not (Adler and Adler 1995).

The children in the discussion estimate what they should look to be accepted as friends by the dominant players. Thus, they succumb to the power imbalance by accepting the dominant players' taste regime, showing that style is an important determinant of friendships in this field.

The following excerpt builds on this and shows how Julia and Sofia (who argued like this during the whole interview) discuss popular players choosing their friends in MSP. Julia had asked these players to be friends after Sofia had told her about them. It is possible from this discussion to see how children aim to carry social capital from the online game into the field at school. This discussion also makes visible the tension between the two girls.

> Julia: Well yeah these Irtokarkkiboksi and Sussu and Sarah they don't really speak to anyone.
> Interviewer: How do you know them?
> Julia: Well they are just these kind of guys and then well I asked them to be friends through her because she told about them to me and then, but then it's a bit annoying because they think that they are so famous there in the game place that they don't talk to anyone.
> Sofia: They talk to the higher guys.
> Julia: Well yeah..
> Sofia: They don't probably..
> Julia: Yeah if you're on Julia: Yeah if you are on level eight or nine.
> Sofia: Weren't you on seven or eight?
> Julia: I'm on nine!
> Sofia: Level?
> Julia: On ninth level.
> Sofia: Yeah but then when you asked them.
> Sofia: So on which level were you?
> Julia: Well I don't know, so they don't talk to those who are under level 10, when 20 is the highest.
> Sofia: They talk to those…
> Julia: Yeah everyone is like on level twenty.
> Sofia: They talk to like famous people, they don't probably have time.. I've heard. But Irtokarkkiboksi and Sussu, they have talked to me through email.

Iida: But they are..
Julia: What, do you know them?
Sofia: No like you can send those messages to others, so I talk to them through
that.

In the beginning, this discussion revolves around what Julia's level when she asked the popular players in the game to become friends with her. Sofia asks several times what Julia's level was when she asked the popular players to be her friends, but Julia ignores her questions. Sofia questions Julia from a more powerful position in the game. This becomes visible in the latter part of the excerpt, when Sofia states that the players they are talking about have talked to her through the game's mailing system. Previously she had mentioned that these players only talk to those on higher levels.

The way Sofia positions herself in the discussion draws on different capital gained in the online game. First, she counts herself as being one of the high-level players. Thus, she has game-related cultural capital. Second, she has connections to the higher-level players. This is game-related social capital. Sofia brings these two types of capital forth during the discussion. For example, she states that the famous players only talk to other high-level players, and later on says that those players have talked to her. This illustrates that her position in the game is different from Julia's, who was not accepted as a friend by the popular players. Her position is higher in the game than Julia's, giving her the possibility to challenge Julia's position in the game within the context of the school peer group. Thus, the online game is used as a resource to position oneself and others also in school.

This makes Julia's position vulnerable in this discussion. She starts the discussion by judging the behavior of the popular players in the game, but then, by being quiet about her position in the game, she admits to being on the levels Sofia says she is. She does not have the same capital in the online game as Sofia, so she uses the mentioned evaluation of popular players, for example, as a way to position herself in relation to the game.

Even if the children participating the interviews are not among the highest players in the field, neither are most of them the youngest players on the lowest levels. The following excerpts show how the children construct themselves as having the power to choose their friends according to their capital or positions in the game.

Interviewer: How does it affect that if you are good looking you get more
friends?
Eveliina: Well I wouldn't accept any zero levelers with pink hair.
Interviewer: Why not?
Kiira: Yeah, why?
Eveliina: I don't know.
Kiira: Because you don't want them to be your friends.
Eveliina: No well they write they really beg for everything.

In this excerpt, Eveliina describes those who are on the lowest level in the game. She constructs them as having unacceptable looks and begging for everything. As observed earlier, looks are appreciated and a source of additional capital in the field; they describe similar evaluative practices detailed in the previous excerpts that the dominant popular players on the site used. These practices then move down the hierarchy, which strengthens the taste regime relating to what the game's avatars should look like.

Eveliina and Kiira also relate to each other within the school field, in addition to talking about their positions in MSP. They define their position in the school field using the online field as a resource. Recall the first chapter where I discussed online games in general in children's talk, when Kiira positioned herself as submissive in relation to MSP. Here, she continues to talk from this position in two of her comments. First, she repeats my question on why zero levelers with pink hair would not be accepted as friends. Second, she answers for Eveliina when she does not give a reason for not accepting a low-level player as her friend. Kiira shows she has enough knowledge to evaluate the game and the decisions made by players in the game by simultaneously positioning herself outside MSP. Eveliina must argue for her position as someone who plays the game. She explains she does not want low levelers as friends, as they beg for things in the game. Begging was constructed as an unacceptable practice by the children.

Thus far, I have shown how the popular players choose their friends according to the sites' taste regime: the level and looks of others. I have also discussed how the children in the interviews accept this imbalance of power by talking about being rejected by the popular players. Next, I show how the power imbalance exists even after becoming friends with the popular players. This is described by the children through their interactions with the popular players.

Becoming friends and gaining status in the MSP can be difficult. It is possible in MSP to give other players gifts. This leads to risky possibilities for lower-level players. Some players resort to the stigmatized practice of "begging" to advance their position in the game. The following excerpt discusses this.

> Interviewer: Can you tell what you have done?
> Anni: A good online friend is someone who doesn't tell anyone what you have told them and doesn't cheat or bully and also helps. It is a bit odd that when you beg for gifts then you get this bad reputation but then on the other hand if you beg yourself for gifts then it's ok but when others beg from you it's a bad thing.
> Interviewer: Why is that?
> Anni: I don't know.
> Interviewer: Can you beg in different ways?
> Eerika: Yeah, like you can convince or then you can blackmail so that they are so like that really I will soon get to the [next level] if you help me you save my file and then they might help.

Katariina: And then when everybody is begging for these gifts so that can you give me gifts. There is this money and a wish list and a store in which you can buy clothing and then all of them ask if you could buy them clothes. It is really annoying when they are like can you give me a gift.
Interviewer: Why do they ask?
Eerika: Because they want to get on levels
Katariina: And then they want that their guys would be beautiful or something.
Aliisa: Yeah all kinds of jewelry and hair and everything they put on.

Begging is a form of asking for gifts that is socially stigmatized in the MSP field. Asking for gifts and other favors is found somewhat acceptable, though irritating, but begging is not as appropriate in the field. This delicate distinction between the two practices -- asking and begging -- shows the skills and knowledge of the field that the children playing the field must have to be successful in it. Anni further describes the tension created by begging. She states that one can acquire a reputation from begging, yet even those who condemn begging might beg themselves. The structures of the game that make it possible to help and receive help from others have resulted in this risky practice.

Those on lower levels are expected to give back, in addition to trying to receive gifts from higher level players by giving and begging. The next excerpt shows Eerika talking about giving gifts to those on higher levels.

Eerika: Yeah it's like cool, then they ask special hellos so they cost diamonds so you must buy them so special hellos and things like that they want.

Eerika states that her being on a lower level means she must buy the popular players gifts. Using the phrase "must" means one is required to do something according to the internalized ideology on the field. Through this talk, group hierarchies and privileges become natural and acceptable. Symbolic power demands that those who are subjected to it believe in it (Thompson 1991). The children report that they act according to the rules of the field: the superior must be given gifts and to be asked to be friends.

These reciprocal relationships are risky for those who have less power in the game. Katariina describes an instance of being tricked by a high-level player:

Katariina: Then once this guy on a really high level, I told her that I, if she could accept my friend request. Then she was like I can accept it if you give me one hello. There are these diamonds, you can use 15 diamonds to give one. And then she tricked me, she didn't take me as a friend after all, she just blocked me.
Interviewer: How does it feel when stuff like that happens?
Katariina: Well not nice.
Eerika: Not nice.

In this excerpt Katariina tells about being tricked by someone on a higher level, showing the power imbalance between the high-level member and herself. There are three instances of symbolic power in this excerpt. First, Katariina

must ask for the high-level player to be her friend. Symbolic power is not seen as power, as such, but as a legitimate demand for recognition and services by others (Swartz 1996). Second, after asking the high-level member to be her friend, she had to give her a present for this favor. Finally, after doing this, the member tricked her by not accepting her friend request and blocking her. Katariina thus took a risk in asking someone on a higher level to be her friend. Having a high-level member as her friend would have been so beneficial that she took the risk of giving her hello, which cost her diamonds in the game. The popular player in the powerful position used her position and tricked Katariina.

5.3.2.2 Exclusion in the game of jump rope
This section describes how those in the dominated position critique the popular game and how it is played. Like all positions, even the dominated exert a force within a position. This can be no more that a reaction to being excluded by those in the dominant position (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). I divide those in the dominated position into two subgroups: the accepting dominated and the subverting dominated. Those in the accepting dominated position are trying to follow those dominant in the field and play according to its current rules. Those in the subverting dominated position try to change the field by undermining the value of the trump card; that is, the game that is providing them the most capital in the field at the moment.

Hierarchies and practices of domination, the way these are done, are carried from the online to the offline: similar practices are used in relation to friends in the offline world. The particular way of choosing a friend shown in the next excerpt shows how the hierarchies and power relations of the online world are carried into the relationships between children in the offline world. Even though children are talking about a game that happens in virtual reality, those things are also very much present in their lives at school.

> Interviewer: Are you friends with others in your class?
> Katariina: But there are some that they don't go there so often so they do not reply to my friend requests.

Katariina gives a reason for some other children not accepting her friend request online. She talks from an accepting dominated position, as she is the one who must ask children who are more popular to be friends with her online. Following the previous discussion, in the next excerpt Katariina with other girls talk about being left out of jump rope. It becomes evident that the talk is not only about jump rope but also about the social capital at school and its connection to the online games.

> Katariina: And all the girls here, so those who are in the jump rope and like that so they have like VIP.
> Interviewer: Jump rope?
> Eerika: Well there is this like some guys don't want to take us play jump rope,

because we are apparently bad. And then they like are like so called 'fab' and those guys and different...

Aliisa: They have all the people in our class on their side and they get all the attention.

Interviewer: So they are on your class?

Eerika: They have that VIP.

Later in the discussion, Aliisa returns to the topic:

> Aliisa: And then in our class for example Tiia and these they are on the level eight. So that I bought them gifts to them, and gave autographs. So at school they do not take me, they don't take us to jump rope. So there's the thank you like that. When I give her autographs, so here's the thank you, so how I'm treated after that.

There is a group of girls in their class that play jump rope and do not accept the girls who talk here to play with them. The other girls have formed a clique into which they accept some and do not accept others.

The positions within the school class come to be interlinked with one's position in the online game. Simultaneously as Aliisa is talking about jump rope, she is talking about the girls having a VIP membership in the game. She then positions herself as dominated within both of these two fields. She and her friends are not accepted to play jump rope in the offline field, nor does she have a VIP membership in the online field like the popular girls who play jump rope do.

While constructing herself as dominated, Aliisa constructs the jump rope girls as dominant. They have the VIP membership, which is valuable and appreciated in the online world. They also have the power to choose who they want to play jump rope with. Finally, as she states, these girls "have all the people in our class on their side and they get all the attention." They show disappointment in their inferior position in the school class and in their inability to become part of the popular group of girls.

Aliisa has given gifts to one of the popular girls online, which made her expect better treatment at school and that she would be allowed to play jump rope with them, but this did not happen. She is further constructing herself as dominated and subject to symbolic violence in her talk of approaching the dominant players through gift giving. Giving gifts is one of the examples Bourdieu used in describing symbolic violence within an uninstitutionalized field

The same girls who were not accepted to play jump rope and who give gifts online to the popular girls at school are talking about MSP levels in the next excerpt.

> Aliisa: And then its like I asked Anni to be my friend when I was on second level, and Anni was like I can be, then when I told her I'm on level two she was like ok let's wait until you are on the fifth level.
> Katariina: She asked me as a friend already on third.

Here, Aliisa tells how she asked Anni, one of the popular girls who played jump rope, to become friends with her. Anni had used her level in the game as a way of evaluating whether she accepts Aliisa as friend. Referring to game levels in evaluating possible friends is a common method online. A similar method is also used in relation to members of the same field at school. Katariina replies that Anni has asked her to be friends already when she was on third level.

Here again, the power relations are obvious. Anni is given the power to evaluate whether she takes these girls as friends. She is described as using this power as well in her evaluation of their worthiness as offline friends. She is, thus, drawing on online capital and evaluative criteria in the online environment to evaluate potential friends in the offline field.

However, all agents can produce effects within a field. The strategies one uses vary according to one's position. One's position also determines the riskiness of the strategies (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). In the previous excerpts, the girls' position is that they lack capital in relation to the dominant ones; thus, their strategies are vulnerable to the dominant players.

In the previous excerpts, the girls constructed a link between what is going on in the field of school and the online field, which shows how these two fields, though different, are very closely linked. Bourdieu noted that fields are relatively autonomous, and the same positions are not possessed in different fields (Thompson 1991:29). However, one can see in this context that status and capital are carried between the online and the online fields, and their positions are interlinked. Here, the concept of online friend also influences the concept of school friend. In the online thinking, friends are considered more through the reward-cost perspective that has been associated with early childhood (Bigelow 1997). Thus, in this context, possible friendships in the game are evaluated through numbers: one's levels, number of friends and money.

5.3.3 Resistance in subversive discourse

As Bourdieu has stated, those in the dominated position within a field also have power. Here, I show this power of the dominated power within the two fields of study. First, in the online MSP field, the high-level players are seen as a valuable resource for capital, and because of jealousy, they are also in danger of being bullied by others in the field. Second, in the peer group field, some children take a subverting dominated position in which they try to change the field so as not be so attached to the dominant game.

5.3.3.1 Power of the dominated online

Children do not construct themselves or others who are on lower levels as totally without power in relation to the dominant players. They do construct those on lower levels as acting strategically in relation to the dominant players.

From the viewpoint of the dominated players, the popular players can be seen as a scarce resource and a form of valuable social capital that they aim to acquire as friends. The previous excerpts have shown that this gives the dominant players not only the power to pick and choose their friends within this field but also a possibility to take advantage of those on lower levels. However, as the following excerpt shows, the popular players can also be constructed as being used by others in the MSP field:

> Aliisa: And then others can be like, if they are not VIPs themselves they can say on the other side of the screen where we are like see, I have four VIPs as my friend and you only have one. And then for example when I was VIP I got always when I went into a game some guy asked me to be their friends, like they are only interested in those guys who are VIPs and somehow more special, but it doesn't mean that one is more special if you have this small golden plate in your profile where it says VIP.

In this excerpt Aliisa describes those on lower levels asking the popular players to be friends. She says VIPs are used as a resource for gaining field-dependent capital outside the online field of the peer group. Those on lower levels can use the popular players or the VIPs to attain status in other fields.

From her position as a regular in MSP and as a not popular girl in the school peer group field, Aliisa criticizes those members who wanted to have her as their friend only because of her VIP sign. She is drawing on the traditional view of friendship that is not based on how a person can be used because of their status.

The previous excerpt shows that the status one has by being friends with the popular players online can be translated to the real world. However, the popular players are also constructed as a source of valuable capital in the online MSP field.

> Interviewer: Why does everyone like them [the popular players]?
> Aliisa: Because they want to be their friends like they kind of take advantage of them, that they can like they have these VIPs these good ones and they are so good like they for example give you an autograph you get a lot more fame like they are on a higher level and then they have VIP and then they can more easily give you gifts and like that and then if you are like a lower level then they want a good friend so they agree. And then those on low levels so they get a bit so they take advantage of them so that they get fame from those good friends.

Here again, the lower levelers are described as taking advantage of the VIPs. The children in the field try to turn one type of capital into another. The rela-

tionship between the two positions is that of both aiming to use each other in the field. This is partly structured by the game.

Those pursuing interests within fields reproduce their social stratification order (Swartz 1997). Here, the dominated by asking and the dominant players by choosing reproduce this order continuously within this game. This is partly facilitated by the online game, but it is also reproduced by the children playing it. There is a similar upward mobility in this game that was previously described by Arsel and Thompson (2011). They found gift economy exchanges may not only lead to reciprocal obligations and a commitment to social networks but may also contribute to field-dependent cultural capital, which may result in a higher position in the field. In my context reciprocal obligations and commitments to social networks do not always work; in contrast, popular players are described as taking advantage of the vulnerable position of the regulars.

High-level players, in addition to being used as a resource for capital building both online and offline, are also considered to be in a vulnerable position because of the way they are approached by other players in the field.

> Linnea: Yeah, well we don't know who it is, but the name of that guy in MSP is Mystique, so she is on level 25.
> Aada: And Ugge, he is on level 25 as well.
> Interviewer: What are these guys like?
> Iina: Well they wouldn't want to be there high because.
> Linnea: Yeah because they have like friends so they will get so many friend requests and then they get messages all the time
> Linnea: They can have like 100 messages that you haven't read and you will never read them because it must take like an hour for you to read every message like what's here. So that can you give me an autograph and so on.

According to Iina, those on high levels "wouldn't want to be there." Thus, the popular players are constructed here as not being happy with their position. Power here is shifted to those who constantly send the popular players messages and requests in the game, in contrast to the previous section. The popular players suffer because of the demands they receive due to their position. In this talk popularity emerges as an unwanted position.

The next excerpt shows the girls discussing further how they approach the popular players on the site.

> Interviewer: What do they write in those messages?
> Linnea: they are like some are negative like you are weird and something like that, but sometimes it can be like can you be my friend, can you give me an autograph, can you be my best friend and so on.
> Iina: Because everyone would probably want to be their friend because then you get more easily fame because everyone knows those guys.
> Interviewer: How?

> Linnea: If you give autographs like the higher level you are the more stuff, fame you get so that if you are on level 0 you will probably get 10 from one autograph. But if you are like on level 25 you get like 100.

The girls describe two ways to approach the popular players. The first, the strategic approach, has been demonstrated in the previous excerpts; that is when one asks the popular players to be their friends to gain benefits from this relationship. The girls here describe what it is like to be the popular players in the field. According to the girls, being on top is not just fun, but they receive more attention and messages than they have time for from the dominated players trying to use them to get ahead in the game.

The second way the popular players are approached is more dismissive and less strategic. This approach is to write negative things on the popular players' profiles. A similar approach was found also in relation to online games in general, as was demonstrated by the children who tried to change the field by dismissing the dominant game. This approach is described in more detail in the following excerpts. The popular players are constructed here as vulnerable, with other players talking badly about them.

There is an expectation of how to approach the popular players. The next excerpt reveals that some players do not act according to these rules.

> Linnea: Yeah but like if you are on zero level those are probably a bit jealous to those on higher levels so that they can be a bit like can you give me a gift or I like I notify about you or something like that.
> Interviewer: So they behave badly.
> Linnea: Yeah.
> Interviewer: Why are they jealous?
> Iina: They would probably want to go to the 25th level themselves as well.
> Linnea: Yeah or at least to level 20.
> Interviewer: Why?
> Iina: Because then they would get a lot more money and everything and could buy all the clothes that they would want to.

The girls in this excerpt construct some members on the field as jealous of the popular players. These members do not conform the rules for how relations between the dominant players and the dominated players should work. I call this position *subverting dominated*. The subverting dominated players are those members who do not act according to the power distribution and symbolic domination on the field but try to change it by acting inappropriately towards the dominant players. This can be blackmailing, for example, as is done by those who say they will notify something negative about the popular players if they do not do as asked.

The popular players must deal with this resistance and the claims of the dominated players (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992):

> Eerika: I wouldn't want anyone writing things like that to my status
> Interviewer: So it's not only good.
> Katariina: Yeah like everyone is jealous at you and want
> Eerika: And you have a bigger danger in being hacked.
> Interviewer: Jealous?
> Eerika: Yeah because they don't have all the privileges that the guy has.
> Katariina: When everyone wants to be their friend and
> Aliisa: In my old class all the girls and almost all boys were in MSP and quiet many of them got hacked and they had to start from the beginning when their guys had been taken.

Some members try to unsettle the distribution of capital within a field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:101). Hackers do this and simultaneously exclude themselves from the legitimate practices (Johnson 1993: 24). Hackers do not accept the existing power relations within the field and are trying to change them.

Those who are constructed as subverting dominated players are not playing the field according to the rules the children have made. Thus, they stay outside this game, because they do not use the language of the dominant **players.** Those who do not behave according to the rules of the field do not talk to the popular players the way they are expected to and put themselves into a vulnerable position by doing this. This is similar to using slang as a form of distinguishing oneself from the dominant players and can lead to excluding oneself from the system by overtly rejecting the dominant players. They thus take for granted the hierarchies that exist in the field and work against them. This is symbolic power (Thompson 1991; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

There is an expectation regarding how the popular players should behave to stay popular. The powerful are in danger of losing their position.

> Interviewer: Could it happen that they would no longer be popular?
> Linnea: Yeah but it is quite unlikely.
> Interviewer: How could it happen then if it did?
> Aada: So that they for example said bad things about someone and then the other guy would write like although she is her best friend she would say in her status that she is a fraud and that she says bad things about others and that she isn't nice.
> Linnea: And so that she doesn't give back even though she promises and so, you can also delete someone from your friends, so that they would probably do that then.

Goodwin (2002) previously found some group members sanctioning other members who tried to rise above other clique members. Thus, there is a form of social control towards the popular players who must behave according to the rules to stay popular. The popular players who behave badly might lose their status, though this is improbable.

The next excerpt is from an MSP member's wall:

> "Ugge and Sella have blocked me without a reason! I just wanted to be friends with Ugge and made him nice looks, but when I looked at his profile the next time, he had blocked me! I hadn't even begged for gifts! Isn't this stupid! So the truth about Ugge and Salla is that they block guys just for fun and Sella is my friend! What's the problem with me? Can't those on 25-21 levels could have one 9 leveler that they had to block me. I feel SO bad thanks to Ugge and Sella!)':"

This message was published on the member's wall and, thus, can be read as an attack against these two dominant members in the game. The popular players would then must defend themselves from these kinds of attacks. The popular players must try to maintain their position by giving gifts to each other and trying to keep the current distribution of capital intact (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Similar to the children in the study conducted by Roper and Shah (2007), even though unpopular children see the popular children as bullies or rude, even those who are cool, they still want to be cool themselves.

In the online field, the relationship between dominant players and accepting dominated players is related to their use of power and a strong difference in positions. The dominant players use power in different ways in relation to the accepting dominated players: the dominant players require the others to give them presents, choose friends based on their capital and can trick them because of their more powerful position. The accepting dominated players who are subjected to this play the game and ask the dominant players to be friends, admire them and hope for their acceptance. Those in the subverting dominated position act differently. They do not directly subject themselves to the power of the dominant players; instead they do so indirectly by behaving badly towards them. They are not following the rules and norms of the field but are acting against them. Even though they try to play against the rules of the field, they are simultaneously, or because of this, drawn to the field and are putting themselves into the subverting dominated position. The dominant players complain about the ways the subverting dominated players behave.

5.3.3.2 Subverting dominated position towards online games
Finally, also in the school peer group field, some children take a subverting dominated position towards online fields in general. The children taking that position in the field have different angles from which they discursively approach the dominant practices within that field.

The data show two ways that children take the subverting position. First, children may think the game is not for them for different reasons unrelated to time. Second, they might claim the game is too childish, that the dominant practice is too dominant and prevailing, is too childish or too superficial.

What is often referred to as time is when the dominant practice becomes the dominant discourse at school and the children do not talk about anything else. This is what the other children complain about.

Next, Kiira and Iida, who both oppose the game, complain about it. Again, their complaining is about everyone talking about it, as shown in the previous excerpts. They also complain about the practice as such: everyone spending so much time in the game that there is no time for doing other things.

> Kiira: I say with no respect, I say without. It's so annoying. Then like everyone is the all the time, like all the time. They like must get there, hey do you come there tonight at nine.
> Iida: And like call like I can't make it because I'm in Moviestarplanet, I would like to go the library for example or somewhere so they are like I can't come now, I'm in moviestarplanet, so that see you then and then I ask like ok see you then. And then the next day when she comes to school and like "really in moviestarplanet there was this new hair and it's so lovely there.

Kiira and Iida both challenge playing MSP. This challenging discourse is similar to a previous one, in which going to games that were meant for older children was challenged. However, there are two distinct differences. First, with this position, Kiira and Iida are in minority within the field. Most discussions based on playing MSP (the dominant game in the girl subfield) were, as shown previous to this excerpt, constructing everyone in the field as playing the game. Kiira and Iida within their subfield were the only ones who criticized playing the game. Second, this criticism is stronger than the one related to games that should not be yet played.

Kiira is not apologizing for taking a strong position against the dominant game MSP. I call this negative position against the dominant discourse a subverting position. While positioning herself against the dominant game, she is also positioning herself against the dominant group, the positive ways of talking about the game and that it is played by everyone. This relates to Bourdieu's study of language and slang. Slang can be described as a rejection of the dominant modes of speech within any field. As Kiira's does in her talk, this type of speech rejects the dominant discourse and can be used to produce distinction. By overtly rejecting a dominant mode of speech, actors within a field take the dominant and established hierarchies for granted and show they share the dominant system of evaluation. This is one form of symbolic power and dominance (Thompson 1991).

Similarly, but by arguing differently, Iida is also taking a subverting position towards MSP. She describes being left on her own going to the library as others spend their evenings playing MSP. She complains that the dominant game has made other possible practices unattractive for the children.

They are taking an antagonistic position to the game that is dominating the free time of their friends and also dominating the talk at school. Iida is talking about the distinction between the real and the online, everybody being in the online world and then not doing the things that could be done in the real world.

Iida, whose position to MSP is subverting, is wondering how she knows about the game so much. She has acquired a lot of information about a game that she does not play.

> Iida: I can't believe that I know so much although I haven't even been there but apparently it just comes so much information when everybody plays that you must listen yourself but luckily everyone doesn't lecture about it so much.

This is also a strategy of subverting the game, trying to distance herself from it, even though she is able to give so much information about it. Those who are taking a subverting position and opposing the game are, nevertheless, sucked into the discourse because of its dominance. By taking this position to a discourse that is as dominant that it is, they build their position in the school peer group. The game is so dominating that one must take a position on it. By taking this position, they show they have a right to evaluate it.

Similar to Kiira and Iida, Eetu takes a strong approach against Minecraft in the following excerpt.

> Eetu: If there hadn't been Minecraft, then our class wouldn't be babbling about it all the time.
> Interviewer: Do you talk about it much?
> Eetu. Yeah. It has taken everyone's life.
> Juho: Eetu hates Minecraft.
> Juho: Well always Minecraft exit and green… explodes.
> Interviewer: What does everyone talk about it?
> Eetu: Well it's a bit annoying. Well you can talk about it every now and then but people talk about it way too much, all the time.

Juho clarifies Eetu's position by saying that Eetu hates Minecraft. Eetu uses different ways of arguing against Minecraft. He says everyone is talking about it, and it has taken over everyone's life. In a following excerpt, Eetu states that he is unable to play the game, because his computer has broken down. He is, thus, unable to participate in capital accumulation from this dominant game. His answer to this situation is try to discredit the game and the capital it brings to its players in the field.

According to those in this subverting position, others in the field have nothing else in their minds besides the game. Their discourse is aimed at destabilizing the field in which one type of talk about a game is dominant.

Iida comes form a different position. She plays another game from the one that is dominating at the moment. Iida likes to play Stardoll every once in a while, so her discourse builds on that position as well.

> Iida: Well friends, with the gang. With the gang, somebody says that hey this Stardoll is like so out, it is so dumb and I don't want to be here that this is so dumb, nothing happens here so let's go instead to movies and make all of us this own style of ours and chat there every single day and so on every single second and then we can like make our own style and tell everyone our passwords so that if someone forgets and then if she fights and does everything stupid to a another guy and then when everybody notices that she has moved to movies-tarplanet and then if you do want to, if you don't want to be left out of the group then so you go along with the gang there and leave the guy in the old place that doesn't play that anymore and then just goes along with the others.

She blames the gang for deciding what is "done by everyone." She is talking about what they do all the time, every single second. She expresses her annoyance about the whole thing. She says that if one does not want to be left out of the group, one must go to the new game. According to Iida, the new game MSP, on their free time, is what determines if one can belong to the group or not. Exclusivity and inclusivity is based on this outside practice that she herself does not participate in. Her position, then, is different from the majority, who are either bringing the dominating discourse into the class by playing the game or are accepting this dominating practice, somewhat grudgingly. They then go along with it and try to fit into the group at school by taking along the same practice, which they would not necessarily take on without the pressure coming from their peers.

Kiira is taking a subverting position to the games of the present, and she distinguishes herself not only from the games others play but from the group in total. By declaring a dominant game, MSP, as childish, she is declaring the whole group to be childish.

> Kiira: Like, I'm not that childish

Kiira does not associate herself with the dominating practice, MSP, anymore. She has moved on and now downplays the current dominating practice. She gets a subverting position to the dominant game and tries to change the field by putting negative connotations to the prominent practice. This is done similar to the way the children dissociated themselves from Panfu, but in this case, it is not unanimous.

5.3.4 Conclusions

There are forces and struggles in each field. There are aims either to transform or to conserve the field's forces. The network of relationships between the positions orients individual's strategies within different positions (Bourdieu 1993). My research has found that some children occupy an accepting domi-

nated position. They are playing the game at school by playing the game online and trying to carry over the capital between the two. However, this is not always simple because of their dominated position.

There were negative aspects related both to entering the game and to playing the game. These would come from the accepting dominated position. Most children are trying to play the game, but they have less capital in it and in the class than some others have. Some have more symbolic capital than others. Capital is related to a new practice that they try to hide from others. It is a practice of domination and power, of trying to keep things secret inside the clique. Sometimes this clique has a leader who determines who is and is not allowed to know about a game.

Previous research in children's peer groups has found that popularity is an envied and sought- after position, and children wish to relate themselves to the popular players. Like the divide between popular and the unpopular at school (Eder et al. 1995), there is a divide into the regulars and VIPs, the high levelers and the low levelers, and so on. These dichotomies are clear markers of status within the field, and the information about one's status is instantly recognizable to everyone.

Bourdieu's moved his analysis from individual agents to relations between agents within social institutions (Schuller et al. 2000). The taste regime I have described in my context is a basis for these relations. This presents what is valued, and then the taste regime gives clues on how those with different types of capital and, thus, different positions, should go about accumulating the valuable capital. The practices are different for those in different positions. In Bourdieu's terms, the popular players are the dominant ones. They have accumulated capital that others envy, and they use their power in the field to accrue even more capital.

As Bourdieu stated, the dominant class can only be understood in relation to the dominated players (Swartz 1996). The relations between those with high and low field-dependent capital represent two different positions in the game; that is, they are in a certain position with certain resources accumulated in the game. These relations show the hierarchical organization of the field.

6. Discussion and future research

This dissertation contributes to two streams to the literature. First, I contribute to the literature on Bourdieuan fields in CCT. The field literature contributions are threefold: First, I show how, within their marginalized social space, children build capital within specific fields. Second, I argue that development is the underlying logic behind the children's fields. Third, I contribute by focusing on intrafield status competition and the specific positions taken discursively within a field in relation to a dominant taste regime.

I also contribute also to the literature on childhood and on childhood and consumption, in particular, by regarding children's peer cultures as fields. First, I focus on capital within the children's fields and also show how the relations between the dominant and dominated positions function in two children's fields. Second, in relation to capital in fields, I show how development as a discursive construction is the dominant logic behind children's fields.

The following discussion has three parts. First, I argue for the benefits of studying active children in marginalized consumption fields. Second, I look at development and change as inherent logic in the children's fields. Third, I focus on the discursive constructions of struggle: positions and relations within a field.

6.1   Active children in marginalized consumption fields

This section answers the research question: What is specific to children's marginalized fields?

The first theoretical contribution of this thesis has been to consider children's social worlds as fields. As stated before, this thesis takes the perspective of a new sociology of childhood and regards children as active participants discursively constructing their peer groups both online and offline, instead of following most of the consumer research on children that focuses on cognitive stages of development in consumer socialization (1999). Thus, I am moving away from looking at children as passive and socialized individuals and, like Kelle (2001), consider development as something that occurs in children's peer cultures. In this process, the special aspects of children's social worlds must be

considered. These aspects include the marginalization of childhood and the biological development necessarily associated with childhood. By taking a more active view of childhood, I have shown how Bourdieu's theory of fields, previously used mainly in adult contexts, also functions within children's social worlds. Thus, the naturalization of childhood as something evil or sacred and the common focus of childhood development can be questioned and children considered more as agents within their contexts (Jenks 2005).

My research contributes to the literature on fields in CCT by looking at how capital is accumulated in a marginalized space of childhood. According to Coskuner-Balli and Thompson (2013), subordinate forms of cultural capital are generally found in marginalized social fields. These fields have been previously researched in CCT (see e.g., Schouten and McAlexander 1996; Kates 2003). Arsel and Thompson (2011), for example, also studied the indie field, which had relatively lower rates of generalized cultural capital. Some subcultures are more marginalized than others. Kates (2003), who studied the marginalized space of gay consumption, framed gay subculture as different from the leisure consumption subcultures. He argued that gay subculture has been more marginalized in its history than other previously studied consumption subcultures. I argue that childhood emerges as one of the most extreme in its marginalization of all the marginalized spaces studied previously. According to Qvortup (2005), childhood has been confined to its own premises. I find children play a part in this marginalization, in that they themselves marginalize and stigmatize fields that have been left behind. Calling a practice childish, as the children did in the interviews, shows that the children participate in their own marginalization process.

Socialization has been traditionally regarded as the way cultural capital and habitus are constructed; however, previous research has argued that this is not always the case. Üstüner and Holt (2010) found in their study of Turkish consumers that cultural capital is based not on socialization but rather upon the "ability to properly interpret, learn, internalize, and then enact the consumption of a distant other" (Üstüner and Holt 2010:50). They call this deterritorialized cultural capital. Learning consumption habits from abroad is an extreme case but, similar to other fields, one must learn learn field-specific rules rather than rely on one's socialization. This happens also to an extent in subcultures and marginalized fields that have been studied, for example, by Thornton (1996), Schouten and McAlexander (1995) and Kates (2003). Thus, one must know the rules in consumption subcultures in order to participate, and those rules are not necessarily those one has learned in one's socialization process within the family.

The children's fields discussed here show that the things learned at home are not the things that necessarily matter, because capital learned at home may be without value in the children's fields. Thus, in this thesis I have studied children's fields outside the socialization process of parents or school and of chil-

dren as becoming. Using field theory has led me to look at childhood social settings as specific, marginalized fields with their own logics, capital and power struggles. This echoes Leonard (2008), who suggested that subcultural capital is a useful way to look at children's lives; the subcultural capital concept enables them to create social spaces that are uncontaminated by adult values and cultural norms.

Children's fields do not exist in isolation. Children are in the process of accruing habitus, in the Bourdieuan way of thinking. Social class differences begin in early childhood and accumulate over time (Dumais 2005). According to Lareau (2003), habitus provides children and adults a sense of what is comfortable and natural. They learn habitus at home and eventually take it for granted. Tomanović (2004) found that children's lives are shaped by family habitus through the use of space, the organization of time and cultural tastes. She found, for example, that teenage culture is influential on older children. Building on this, I have shown how both school peer group structures and online games can be seen as a part of producing habitus. This is because, as Arsel and Thompson (2011) stated, the investments that consumers make within a consumption field leave sociocultural marks on their identities. These can be seen in their practical or tacit knowledge, habituated tendencies and cultivated aesthetic tastes. Therefore, I found that the children participating in this study had accrued habitus due to their backgrounds, but the study's interest focuses more on childhood fields.

Children's fields are also influenced by the surrounding society. This is evident in the context of MSP, which constructs the avatars based on existing stereotypical beauty ideals from the adult world. The children incorporate these ideals into their taste regimes through the games and use them as a basis of positions and symbolic violence. Thus, as has been stated previously, the children's fields do not exist in isolation but, instead, exist within the structures they live in.

Children may be simultaneously inside and outside the generalized cultural capital. They may have inherited generalized cultural and social capital from their parents, but the capital they gain in online games, for example, is not always valuable in the generalized capital game, it is valuable only in their own context. Therefore, children's fields cannot be put into the traditional HCC/LCC field hierarchy. One way of looking at the particular marginalization of children's fields is through capital conversion from field to field. For example Coskuner-Balli and Thompson (2013) have shown how investments are made into subordinate forms of cultural capital. In their study, at-home fathers were trying to increase the conversion rates and status values of these investments within broader status hierarchies. For children, this conversion from their own fields to general 'adult' dominant fields is not always possible As stated before, it is possible to put yachting and bowling within a hierarchical axis of LCC and HCC, but capital gained playing children's online games

and social networking does not necessarily fall on an axis; in a way, it is out-side of this scale of hierarchies. Skills related to digital media that children acquire through game-play can also be valuable in adult fields, of course, but adults may equate the status games of MSP, for example, with play specific to childhood; thus, those skills are not comparable to adult fields. These games and their relation to children's school lives have a value that is not convertible to the adult culture or contexts. Within my context I encountered this in the way children described their parents reactions to online game play and bully-ing that happened within the games. Children said that their parents were not interested in the games and some of them refused to buy children member-ships in the games by saying that the games are not 'real' and thus a waste of money. In addition, children were bullied within the games, their parents would tell them just to leave the game. Adults then considered the games as 'unreal' play of children rather than a part of their social lives that is connected to their peer relationships at school.   I argue that this is another reason that childhood is marginalized more than other consumption subcultures studied previously, in addition to other aspects of childhood discussed in the theoreti-cal part of the paper. Thus, children's fields are particularly good arenas for studying field-specific capital within a marginalized field.

Using Bourdieu's concept of field and struggle allows us to see children as more active agents within their own social spaces. We can consider children's "development" as a struggle, a perspective that emphasizes aspects of becom-ing that are competitive and that make the active and strategic child more visi-ble. These processes happen within the context of childhood's social space, which in previous research has been viewed through concepts such as bullying, cliques and popularity. These concepts that are related to power are also pre-sent in this research, but they are supplemented with Bourdieu's "strategic" concepts.

Finally, Thornton (1996) and Ostberg (2007) have argued that Bourdieu ne-glected the influence of media, which plays an important part in building sub-cultural capital. Through this research I have shown the importance of online media context specifically in children's fields.

6.2   Underlying logic of children's fields: development

In the previous section, I have argued that childhood and development can be studied through focusing on children's marginalized fields. In this section I focus on the following questions:

What is the role of development and change in children's fields?
The second theoretical contribution of this thesis is to show that the logic in children's fields is partly based on development. According to Dolbec and Fischer (2015), the logics of fields determine what actors pay attention to with-

in a field; for example, these are the contradictory logics of art and of commerce in the field of fashion.

Children's lives are inextricably entwined with development. As the literature review has shown, development is the most common way to understand childhood. This structure, coming from society, influences children's everyday lives and their fields. Based this thesis' findings, I argue that development is the dominant logic within children's fields. Following Kelle (2001), I have shown how this development can be done discursively. This argument is supported by two things related to the studied children's fields, shown previously: first, the capital that children construct as valuable within their fields is (at least partly) based on development. Second, leaving fields after investments have been made is easier in these fields than in the adult fields studied in previous research.

I find that within the particular marginalized space of childhood, development as a basis on which to build status is of great importance. Thus, I follow Martens et al. (2004) and argue that age or, more importantly, enactment of age, becomes the determinant of status instead of more traditional characteristics of rank that are found in more stable adult fields. Consequently, instead of aspiring to a higher social class, children aim to be like their older peers or siblings. This process is discursively controlled within the peer group.

In this section I concentrate on two aspects of development in children's fields. As the section on struggle discusses later, development emerges as a complicated process that requires taking positions and accumulating and protecting capital within different fields.

Children tried to find a position for themselves in relation to the games played in the past, future and present during their talk in the group interviews. This is partly what development in childhood is: it occurs through discourse in relation to practices in time. By finding their position in the timeline of past, present, and future games, they are simultaneously participating in the power struggle and claiming a place in the class hierarchy. They can be either dominant, in the forefront of development, or in a dominated position: talking of the games either in an accepting way or in subverting ways.

Development here is discursively constructing suitable and acceptable practices of the now in relation to past and future. Thus, capital in this context is also discursive, referring to and building it in relation to the online world or to fields found online.

Children move from game to another in this context of online games. Change and movement between the games happens also in the adult context, but this is not as frequent as in the children's fields. For children, there are times of relative stability, which can also be characterized by anticipation of moving into the next phase. According to (2013) Coskuner-Balli and Thompson, Bour-

dieu's view is that significant sociocultural disruptions can create heteorology, which forces people to compete outside their current LCC/HCC field. This suggests that there is stability within the fields anyone inhabits at a certain moment, and only disruptions change this. For children, movement between fields that have different sorts of compositions of capital are more regular and constant.

Capital is related to development. The function is in specific childhood social settings. Its background lies in the naturalization of childhood development in our society. Capital related to development is related to their ability to change and move, to acquire knowledge about future practices, about having the right things at the right time and managing this process.

In contrast to adult cultural capital, which is stable, a part of the person in its embodied state, child-embodied cultural capital must be more adaptive, as their skills and knowledge of the environment are constantly changing. What is stable, though, is the must keep up with this process within one's peer group. This echoes Kelle (2001), who studied children using discourse to construct collective identities. Her understanding of "development" was as a construction of children in their discourse. Building on this, I have shown how children construct positions in the struggle of development.

Next, I first describe how capital related to development functions in the peer group field. Then, I move on to its description in the MSP field. Finally, I discuss the commonalities of these two forms of capital related to development and how children relate to it.

Capital related to development is present in the peer group field's taste regime and is associated with what games are played and acceptable at the same time. First, to be credible players in this field, children must distance themselves from the games that the group views as childish, especially the field's dominant players. Second, they must be in the know about the dominant game. Finally, they must balance the act of moving on to the next game or field, whether it is another game or like one they have been visiting Facebook. Children must balance between these two ends: staying in the present or going forward to future games and selves. Children take a specific position towards these two ends and simultaneously craft their own position in the field, in general. This is further discussed in the section on investments and leaving.

Children in the online field build and draw on capital related to development based on the sites' taste regime. This taste regime is influenced by the online game. Two main sources of capital are the looks of the avatar as cultural capital and the boyfriend as a source of social capital. Based on these two sources of capital, children position themselves between the two ends in relation to development. First, the children in the interviews admire those on high levels

who dress themselves and put on make up like teenagers. However, they also criticize players who kiss boyfriends and act "too teenager-like." Second, children are wary of coming off as too young. One can identify a player as too young, of looking bad and ugly, of being unable to build a compatible look for one's avatar and of using the unacceptable practice of begging. Being young is associated with lower levels of capital, a lower position, and an inability to successfully participate in the field. The children must negotiate between these two logics to find their own place and position in the field. It should be remembered that this field is not autonomous, and the children participating and making decisions in it also must think about their position in the peer group field.

The following aspects are common to these two fields and show how capital functions in them: First, to be a credible player in the field requires that one must distinguish from the past, from younger children and childish practices, which are considered a dominated position without enough possibilities to function in the current field. Second, they must balance between appreciating the present or moving on to the future. As Buckingham and Seiter (2003) found, popular consumption items in childhood become victims of their success as they are appropriated by all children after the early adopters. I contribute to this how children do this in discourse in their peer groups. Third, based on this balancing and the amount of other capital they have in the field, they craft a position from which they look at the field as a game and at the other players in it. Finally, change and keeping up is constantly present in both fields. The relative stability found in adults' fields is not visible here. The children are constantly on the move, trying to determine what is acceptable at any particular moment, when to stay and when to go.

In addition to capital related to development, I find change is a constant characteristic of the fields studied. The children in my study make investments within one field, but in time they start stigmatizing the field in their talk. Leaving here is constructed discursively in the talk about childishness.

Previous research has found that consumers make investments into consumption fields, which makes leaving those fields difficult. After making investments into a field in the form of social ties or an accumulation of embodied capital, one becomes so invested in it that leaving is difficult (McAlexander et al. 2014). This leads consumers to defend the value of their field-dependent capital (Arsel and Thompson 2011). Similarly in online gaming, people invest time and money and build social relationships in games that may sometimes lead to difficulty leaving the game (see e.g. Kuss and Griffiths 2011)

Few studies have examined the difficulty of leaving a field. An example of this is the study by McAlexander et al. (2014) on leaving a religious field. Leaving happens when an institution within a field does not structure one's identity anymore, for example. Leaving is not simple, though, as one's accumulated

field-dependent cultural, social, symbolic and economic capital lead to stickiness of that field (McAlexander et al. (2014).

I have shown that even if children make significant investments within a field by accumulating cultural, social and economic capital, they do not necessarily stay and, in the case of it being threatened, will resort to the destigmatizing practices Arsel and Thompson (2011) characterized. This is due to the pressure from another field that demands they move on. In their discussions, the children did not talk about the inconsistency between investing a lot of time and money into a game and then abandoning the game rapidly because of the changes in peer group.

I also found a connection between those who first leave the soon-to-be childish games to those who proclaim (mythologized) consumer sovereignty (e.g., Arsel and Thompson 2011). Consumers in the indie field claimed their investments in it were only a facet of their identity projects. They argued that their cultural spheres and cultural interests were multidimensional and could envision moving on from the indie field altogether at some point. This talk of varying interests is similar to those children in the interviews who were regarded as popular by others. These children undermined the game others were still playing and mentioned several other games and networking sites they had visited. Their talk was less committed to one game, as many others were. This non-commitment to a particular game leads to fluidity, which is important in children's fields that are constantly changing. Change was also crucial in the online field, in which one's looks were evaluated based on how often clothes were changed. In general, children cannot become as attached to a field as indie consumers can. Commitment at one point is needed to build enough capital within a field, but commitment that lasts too long puts one in a dominated position, as the popular players have already moved on. I argue that, in the long run, fluidity in relation to sources of capital in children's fields is important for attaining high status, i.e., popularity within it. Finally, children do not construct a stark difference between online games and social networking sites such as Facebook and Instagram. They regard social networking sites as aspirational sites that they will move to from the games as they become older.

Building on Fournier's (1998) identification of consumer's brand relationships, Ji (2002) identified several relationships children have with brands. These included first love, for example, in which the brand has a great impact on the child and a secret admirer who refers to a relationship in which a child has admiration for a brand but cannot obtain it. Based on my findings, I would add serial monogamy to these relationships, which happens on a group level. Children commit to a game and are ready to abandon it quickly when the time comes.

6.3 Childhood consumption as struggle

This answers the research question: What type of positions in relation to development are found in children's fields? Based on these positions, how is symbolic power used?

In current research on consumption fields, the focus has not always been on struggle and competition. For example, McAlexander et al. (2014) detailed the stickiness of field-dependent capital within religious fields, but they gave less attention to the competitive side of fields. Arsel and Bean (2012) paid attention to the practices of taste rather than to its classifying aspects. In addition, Warde (2004) criticized Bourdieu for assuming all action is competitive and strategic. Some previous research has examined intrafield status competition (see, e.g., Kates 2003; Üstüner and Holt 2010). I contribute to this literature stream by focusing on the specific positions that are constructed in discourse within a specific children's field. According to Holt (1998), all interactions function as classifying practices. Consumers negotiate their positions in these interactions. In my research, I found these positions to be constructed in relation to development. Thus, focusing on competition can give a new understanding of social phenomena occurring in childhood. As stated by Goodwin (2008), there has not been enough research on how children interact within peer groups without parents and teachers being present.

I contribute to the study of consumer socialization by analyzing Bourdieuan power relations in childhood through consumption. Rather than learning something or being taught about consumption through socialization, children struggle among themselves in the fields in relation to development. As I have shown, children position themselves in relation to practices they consider too developed or too childish.

In this section I first show how children move capital between the two fields of study. Furthermore, I show how children take positions towards the developmental taste regime characterized in the previous section. Second, I discuss how children reconstruct symbolic violence and resistant action in the group discussions.

As Bourdieu has stated, fields and capital are interlinked. Defining the limits of the field means defining what capital resources are active within that field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:107). In this thesis, I have identified these capital resources in the chapter relating to the movement between online games and the taste regime related to MovieStarPlanet. Within the peer group field, there is a dominant game that provides children with the most capital. I have shown how capital emerges in discourse: it is what consumers construct as valuable.

Children carry capital between the two fields. For example, high-level friends from MSP can also be used as a source of status in the peer group field. Even

though there are forms of capital that work in both fields, some forms are specific to only one field. Capital resources collected in the MSP field are carried to the peer group field in discussions between the children. In the interviews children negotiate the capital and each other's position in the MSP field. Capital in the MSP field is, thus, used as resources with the aim of enhancing one's position in the peer group field. The two fields in this research are not autonomous, but they are closely related. This relationship is built on the same agents being present and in the interaction in both fields.

6.3.1   Positions in the consumer socialization struggle

According to Bourdieu, the dominant and dominated structure is found in every field, along with the struggles for exclusion and mechanisms of reproduction. As shown by previous research, these are also topics in childhood studies, as bullying, cliques and other forms of exclusion and inclusion are found in childhood relations.

Consumer socialization has been regarded as the acquisition of skills related to consumption (John 1999). I show that these skills related to consumption are not only an end in themselves, but they are used as resources in the fields of childhood. I build on Goodwin's (2008:3) notion that there is little research on how children establish relationships in peer groups and how their identities are negotiated through talk. Moving from an individualistic understanding of socialization to thinking about groups and relations between children, I focus on the competitive aspects of children's peer groups in connection with development.

Consumers are always aspiring to something in a field. For example, Üstüner and Holt's (2010) intercultural research shows how the elite's consumption practices are driven by Western middle class values, while those of the with lower cultural capital aspire to be like the Turkish higher classes. Thus, the LCC consumers see the field or social class competition consisting of consumers within Turkey. LCC consumers take a dominated position in relation to high society and celebrities, whom they emulate and give the power to define the status symbols. Who one regards as dominant can be different from where one is looking. I argue that the group that is aspired to is *close enough*. For Üstüner and Holt (2010), the Western consumers are further away than the Turkish celebrities for the LCC consumers in Turkey. For HCC consumers, who were travelling, the dominant positions they aspired to were the Western consumers. Correspondingly, the children in my research were aspiring to the next possible "level." In the offline context, children aspired to be like those in the next age group, the position they anticipate taking soon. In the online context, depending on one's level in the game, the popular individuals could be those on level eight, when for others the popular players were those on level 20 or higher.

One's individual position in a field has been found to affect how the field is talked about. For example, participants with a higher status in the field would use different destigmatizing strategies than those with a lower status (Arsel and Thompson 2011). The capital accumulated in the field had provided them with cultural authority, so individuals distanced themselves from the hipster myth by finding nuanced distinctions between the consumption styles of hipsters and indie-oriented consumption practices (Arsel and Thompson 2011). Similarly, children talk differently about the games in relation to the position they occupied in the field at school. This is in relation both to the dominant game and to what is going on in the dominant game. From a constructionist understanding, one's position was evident in the way the field was talked about: those who were in a dominated position talked about the relations more. The children would describe the hardships of the social structure or the games' inequalities. They would do the same in relation to the school field. They would also talk about the things expected of them because of their dominated position. This talk further brings them into the dominated position in these fields, and they find their position in it this way.

Children must determine their own place on the continuum between the two logics of present and future. This is connected to their overall status position in the field. I have characterized three positions available for children in relation to online games. First, moving to a new game before others can be a valuable source of capital. Second, the position of those who follow the dominant players to a new game, whether they find the game interesting or not. Third, the subverting dominated position; that is, those who try to resist online games as dominant capital within the field. I argue that constructing the "other" is, most of all, a way to construct one's own position in a field. Even though not explicitly discussed in the paper by Arsel and Thompson (2011), consumers within the indie field are not only trying to distance themselves from the hipster icon or myth, but they are also trying to distance themselves from lower positions in the field. Thus, their talk is not only about the myth in the field, but also about the relations in the field. At least to some extent, this is what every field is built upon: how consumers or individuals in it relate to other positions in it. As stated before, these positions are in connection to one's field-specific capital. Additionally, the generalized cultural capital consumers possess determines whether they will continue making investments in a field that has become stigmatized. Similarly, in the study by Kates (2003), gay consumers constructed the "ghetto queen," who was described as "hopelessly extreme, stereotypical gay consumers who work, live, eat, dwell, socialize, and copiously copulate exclusively in the geographic and social confines of the gay area." Similarly, in my research children in the interviews constructed the other they dissociated themselves from. In addition, among peers in the offline context, these were the younger children they knew or had been before. In the online context, these were those acting against the written and unwritten rules of the game. However, children did not only construct the lower other, the position that was younger and less equipped to participate in the field; they also constructed the

popular players. The popular position was simultaneously constructed as both desired and criticized. On the one hand, the popular players are highly idolized. For example, in the MSP field, the popular players have all kinds of capital the children would wish for themselves, such as plenty of clothes, friends on high levels and money. On the other hand, they were constructed as braggers and bullies who ignored those who approached them. Children also mentioned negative aspects of being the popular players, for example, being used by others and being vulnerable to hackers.

Therefore, there are two sides to the constructed position of the popular players from the position of the dominated players. This echoes previous research in children's peer culture literature on how the popular players have been described in the school setting, for example. This is also similar to the LCC consumers in the study by Üstüner and Holt (2010). As discussed previously, the LCC consumers emulate the consumption of the HCC Turkish consumers, but they also criticize them for being too involved with the West and looking down on others. In contrast to the children in my research who construct the popular players as the dominant and different from themselves, the Turkish LCC consumers see them as status peers with insecurities relating to the West.

I have shown how consumers in a field craft their positions in discourse in relation to others. In particular this is done by those in the lower positions who construct the dominant position and, thus, define their own, relatively lower position in the field. The dominant players are the popular players in children's fields. They are constructed both as enviable and, sometimes, disliked.

6.3.2   Symbolic violence

The research at hand also contributes to previous research by showing how children legitimize a field and the positions in it by in their discourse reconstructing symbolic violence. The study of childhood has identified phenomena such as cliques and bullying that are manifestations of symbolic violence. This is because these phenomena, similar to popularity, are built on exclusion, which Bourdieu (1990:51) conceives to be one of the most pervasive forms of power. I find that children specify a dominant game that is the only acceptable game. As stated by Bourdieu and Patterson (1997), power is exercised through legitimating specific cultural norms and practices as superior. This legitimization is then used to regulate behavior.

According to Bourdieu (1990:51), "all symbolic domination presupposes on the part of those who submit to it, a form of complicity which is neither a passive complicity to external constraint nor a free adherence to values." For example, hairdressers in Turkey did this by interpreting their own backgrounds as being less cultured and sophisticated than those of their clients. They also aspired to consume in ways similar to their customers' consumption practices (Üstüner and Thompson 2012). Comparably, children in my research who occupy a more dominated position reinforce the dominant structure by giving the dom-

inant the power. I found both discursive symbolic violence and descriptions of symbolic violence in the group. Discursive symbolic violence happens in the interview situation between its participants. Descriptions of symbolic violence are something happening outside the interview situations that are retold. Positions are constructed by both of these two types of talk.

Within the fields studied, the children construct little variation for personal choice. This is different from the young consumers studied by Kjeldgaard (2009). The high school youth would aim at establishing their own style, while simultaneously being aware of typifications that were associated with different styles. Style switching happened within a range of acceptable styles. Thus, I argue that as children grow older and move from elementary school to high school, the possibility to choose between styles or consumption practices increases, and the dominant practices become more contested.

Symbolic violence can be found in children's talk in both fields studied. In the peer group, field symbolic violence is present in exclusion and in secrecy related to games, for example. Children construct the positions of who was first in the game and give those individuals power. When talking about the MSP field, children construct symbolic violence of the popular players. This violence is present in the ways the relationship between the popular players and the regulars is constructed. Those in the dominated position are expected to give gifts to the popular players. The dominated players are the ones constructed as approaching the dominant as supplicants. The dominated players are then constructed as being in a vulnerable position. In addition, the popular players use the MSP taste regime to determine the worth of friends. This evaluation of friends is accepted by those on the lower levels, who aim to become friends with the higher levelers. Building on the concept of the taste regime by Arsel and Bean (2011), I have shown how the capability to build one's looks according to the taste regime becomes an explicit way to evaluate players within the field.

The type of popularity constructed within the MSP field also has consequences for how children's relationships evolve in the peer group field. MSP makes popularity something that is visible in one's rank and in the VIP sign. These are markers based on which children in this field partly evaluate each other and base their strategies to advance in the field. Thus, next to the concept of "the quantified self," which makes it possible to use data to monitor one's life, quantified relationships emerge within children's (and especially girls') fields that find a position for each member through levels of popularity. As shown in the jump rope example, when some girls tried to become friends with those who were higher in popularity in the MSP field, these quantified relationships can move to children's social lives outside the field. An interesting avenue for further research, as more and more communication is moved to online environments, is whether these new ways of conceptualizing "friendship" will have a lasting influence on the offline concept of friendship.

Children come to accept this talk of the symbolic violence. They legitimize the field by talking and accepting the power imbalances in the field. Similarly in the peer group field, they participate in continuously reaffirming the field through talk about the popular players. Within a field, the dominated players have the power of resistance that the dominant must take into account. The dominated players try to increase their capital or change the game to their advantage. In this way they try to discredit the capital on which their opponent's power is built (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). This links to previous research that has found that consumers may try to change and forge a favorable position for themselves through strategic action. Scaraboto and Fischer (2013) showed how plus size consumers online formed a collective identity and engaged in communicative action to change a field. Their goal was to be included in the fashion marketplace or field. Supported by more powerful institutional entrepreneurs, they engaged in change strategies to bring change into the field. Even though not discussed in detail, Scaraboto and Fischer's consumers are subjected to symbolic violence by the fashion industry. They feel left out of the field altogether, because of not being offered clothes like those who wear smaller sizes. In their demand and wish for clothes that like those of fast fashion, they come to accept the logic of the field and subject themselves to a position in which they are left out of it.

However, as Bourdieu has claimed, those who overtly reject a dominant speech, for example, come to accept the power hierarchies that work against them. Thus, by resisting the dominant game in the peer group field, children put themselves into a dominated position. This is similar to two consumers in the study by Holt (2002), who rejected the typical consumer identity project through oppositional ideas of reflexivity. This pursuit of agency happened in the market, which, nevertheless, continues to be the symbolically charged arena of their identity construction. Children who reject the dominant games are drawn to the discourse about the online games within the peer group field whether they want to or not.

There are descriptions of resistance in children's talk of the MSP field. The position of the popular players is not only constructed as favorable, but the popular players are also constructed as being in a vulnerable position, vulnerable to hackers and other types of bullying. The children also construct the popular players as being taken advantage of by the regular players. Through analysis of the discourse, one can see the symbolic power that is present in relations between the dominant and the dominated players. As Merten (1997) has shown, losing popularity is also possible by behaving arrogantly. I have shown that, even though this possibility also exists in the online field, the popular players are, nevertheless, considered to behave arrogantly towards the dominated players by explicitly asking low-level players to ask them to be friends and then fooling them into give gifts in exchange for favors they do not return.

Symbolic power is closely linked to stigma and stigmatization, one of the important themes found in the children's talk. Previous research has looked at stigmatized groups (Coskuner-Balli and Thompson 2013; Kozinets; 2001). In this thesis the focus has been more on stigmatized practices. An example of a stigmatized practice (that became accepted) in previous literature is wearing a veil or a tesettür that Sandicki and Ger (2010) studied. In this thesis I have shown how children engage in stigmatizing discourse of previous practices that are now deemed childish.

According to Link and Phelan (2001), it takes power to stigmatize. Stigma always serves the dominant group. Power related to stigma is often overlooked, because power differences are taken for granted. Accoding to Sandicki and Ger (2010), what ultimately becomes stigmatized reflects the dominant group's interests. Thus, consumers who choose to engage in a deviant practice may do this to oppose mainstream norms, for example (Sandicki and Ger 2010). There were instances of opposing mainstream norms within my research. An example of this is Iiris, who criticized playing online games and preferred going to the library. I argue that this is a discursive attempt to stigmatize a dominant practice of a field in order to change the field.

Sandicki and Ger (2010) state that some deviant practices or consumption choices that were once stigmatized can become ordinary and fashionable. This happens when a stigmatized practice becomes an attractive choice after power struggles among groups and is accepted by many. I found a process of stigmatization and destigmatization in my research. In discourse, there is stigmatization of old practices by deeming them and those who currently engage in playing them as childish. There is also stigmatization of practices that will be played in the future. Some agents within the field engage in destigmatizing talk of these future practices.

6.4   Limitations and further research

Children in this research live in affluent areas in the Helsinki metropolitan area. This has consequences for the findings in this research. For example, they had possibilities for accessing a computer at home, playing games on their mobile phones and purchasing memberships online, which not all children necessarily have. Thus, their struggle for positions within a peer group field happened in a context in which they could use economic capital provided by their parents. The study's findings would have been different if they did not have this possibility. I would encourage future research to look into the contexts where children are more on the other side of the digital divide.

The MSP field discussed in the interview was mainly visited by girls. Thus, the field-specific capital such as having a boyfriend is particular to this context and does not exist in all others. But the data on Minecraft that was not further ana-

lyzed in this study showed that the children looked up to older players and constructed them as dominant and popular. In the future, research focusing on online games that are more equally played by girls and boys would be enriching.

As my research consisted of group interviews that took place only once, I could not grasp the change as it was unfolding in time. In the future, longitudinal research on how children move from one game to another through negotiations at school could provide additional insight into the phenomenon.

Finally, this research is methodologically limited by studying children. There is a power imbalance between the adult who interviews and the children who answer the questions. This limitation was mitigated by interviewing children in groups of peers so they outnumbered the interviewer. In addition, as found in this research, interviewing children in groups also provides the benefit of eliciting interaction between them.

6.5 Implications for adults engaging with children

Based on this research, I find the most important thing that parents, teachers and marketers can do is to listen to and talk with children and try to understand their social worlds.

I would encourage parents not to leave children on their own to play the games. In the data that was collected during this study but not reported in this thesis, children said their parents were not very interested in the games. This is a new world for children, and it might be beneficial for parents to become familiar with the games and play them with their children. In addition, asking questions and trying to understand how children experience the games and why they play them would be beneficial. When children want to buy memberships and spend money in the games, it would be good to try to understand why this is so. When there is bullying or other negative behavior in the games, explaining these to parents would be easier if children knew their parents had some understanding about how the game works.

For teachers it might be useful to understand how the online world works together with the social world at school. Therefore, when new media studies are taught at school, discussions about the online games played in the school might be useful. This is important, especially when it comes to bullying, which is happening more and more online as well.

I encourage marketers to be responsible. This would mean enforcing age limits, for example. In addition, they should consider that children do not play games with parents and can feel lost in new online worlds. If there are levels in the game, it would also be good for children to construct the games so that relations between positions do not result in bullying or other negative actions.

Working together with children to build the site as a fun and friendly place to visit would also be good. Finally, I would encourage companies to build online sites that do not exploit children's biggest insecurities but instead encourage them to be who they are, in the present.

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