

Strategies for promoting autonomous reading motivation: A multiple case study research in primary education

Jessie De Naeghel^a, Hilde Van Keer^a, Ruben Vanderlinde^a

^a Department of Educational Studies, Ghent University, Belgium

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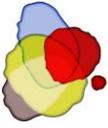
Abstract

It is important to reveal strategies which foster students' reading motivation in order to break through the declining trend in reading motivation throughout children's educational careers. Consequently, the present study advances an underexposed field in reading motivation research by studying and identifying the strategies of teachers excellent in promoting fifth-grade students' volitional or autonomous reading motivation through multiple case study analysis. Data on these excellent teachers were gathered from multiple sources (interviews with teachers, SEN coordinators, and school leaders; classroom observations; teacher and student questionnaires) and analysed. The results point to the teaching dimensions of autonomy support, structure, and involvement – as indicated by self-determination theory – as well as to reading aloud as critical strategies to promote students' autonomous reading motivation in the classroom. A school culture supporting students' and teachers' interest in reading is also an essential part of reading promotion. The theoretical and practical significance of the study is discussed.

Keywords: Reading Motivation; Reading Promotion; Primary Education; Case Studies

1. Introduction

Competence in reading is essential for functioning adequately in today's society. In this respect, it is crucial to encourage students' high-quality forms of reading motivation and, therefore, to stimulate them to read more frequently (De Naeghel, Van Keer, Vansteenkiste, & Rosseel, 2012; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997) and master important reading skills (De Naeghel et al., 2012; Becker, McElvany, & Kortenbruck, 2010; Wang & Guthrie, 2004). Unfortunately, research indicates that intrinsic reading motivation declines as children go through school (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Hence, it is important to uncover strategies which



foster students' "love of reading" in order to break through the declining trend in reading motivation throughout children's educational careers.

Reading motivation research indicates that teachers can play a crucial role in sustainably stimulating their students to read for pleasure and information (Gambrell, 1996; Guthrie & Cox, 2001; Guthrie, McRae, & Klauda, 2007; Guthrie et al., 2006; Santa et al., 2000). Moreover, encouraging students' willingness to read can be considered as a critical part of a high-quality education (De Naeghel et al., 2012; Guthrie & Cox, 2001; Guthrie et al., 2007), which can equip children from different socioeconomic backgrounds with the necessary reading competencies to be successful in today's society (OECD, 2004). Furthermore, teachers' activities to promote their students' volitional or autonomous reading motivation are of importance for achieving equal opportunities for all children, as teachers reach the majority of children independent of their socioeconomic background. In this respect, studying teachers excellent in promoting autonomous reading motivation can reveal critical strategies to promote reading motivation in education. Mohan, Lundeberg, and Reffitt (2008) even explicitly encourage further research on excellent reading teachers.

As teachers' self-reports on their reading instruction do not always correspond with their actual behaviour (Pressley, Rankin, & Yokoi, 1996) and, hence, observations of classroom teaching are explicitly encouraged (Mohan et al., 2008), it is essential to study what exactly occurs in classrooms from different methodological perspectives to enhance data triangulation. Therefore, a multiple case study research approach has been applied in the current study with an embedded mixed-method design (i.e., mix of quantitative and qualitative research approaches in which the emphasis is placed on the qualitative data; Creswell & Plano, 2007) to portray the strategies applied by teachers excellent in the promotion of high-quality forms of reading motivation. In this respect, the study advances an underexposed field in reading motivation research through the study of what exactly occurs in the classroom practice of teachers excellent in promoting autonomous reading motivation, aiming to identify critical strategies to stimulate students' willingness to read. Moreover, it contributes to classroom practice by formulating practical guidelines for teachers and schools.

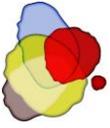
1.1 Autonomous and controlled reading motivation

Several studies underline the multidimensional nature of reading motivation (e.g., Baker & Wigfield, 1999; De Naeghel et al., 2012; Watkins & Coffey, 2004), indicating that children can be motivated for a variety of reasons. In line with the self-determination theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2000), which is a contemporary and promising motivation theory with a rich and continuously emerging empirical basis, De Naeghel et al. (2012) differentiate between qualitatively different types of reading motivation. Particularly, autonomous and controlled types of reading motivation are distinguished. *Autonomous reading motivation*, on the one hand, refers to engaging in reading activities for their own enjoyment (e.g., pleasure, interest) or because of their perceived personal significance and meaning (e.g., personal value, importance). On the other hand, *controlled reading motivation* is defined as reading to meet internal feelings of pressure (e.g., guilt, fear, pride) or to comply with external demands (e.g., expectations, reward, punishment).

The present study will especially focus on autonomous reasons for reading, as autonomous reading motivation is associated with more positive outcomes, including higher leisure-time reading frequency, more reading engagement, and better reading comprehension. Conversely, controlled reading motivation is related to less frequent reading in leisure time and lower reading comprehension scores (Becker et al., 2010; De Naeghel et al., 2012).

1.2 Promoting reading motivation in the classroom

The SDT formulates general guidelines to facilitate autonomous motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Particularly, conditions or teaching dimensions supporting students' basic psychological needs for autonomy (i.e., the experience of a sense of volition or psychological freedom), competence (i.e., the experience of being confident and effective in action), and relatedness (i.e., the experience of feeling connected to and accepted by others) are argued to encourage students' autonomous motivation to engage in activities



(Skinner & Belmont, 1993; Ryan & Deci, 2000; see Figure 1). In this respect, it should be noted that the need for autonomy refers to the experience of being the initiator of one's own behaviour or being self-determined and hence differs from acting independently without making an appeal to others (Deci & Ryan, 1987). The teaching dimensions distinguished in SDT are frequently studied in education in general (e.g., Skinner & Belmont, 1993; Sierens, Vansteenkiste, Goossens, Soenens, & Dochy, 2009) as well as in physical education in particular (e.g., Chatzisarantis & Hagger, 2009; Tessier, Sarrazin, & Ntoumanis, 2008), but less explicitly in primary education and in research on reading motivation. Moreover, previous SDT-based research especially adopted a quantitative approach (e.g., Chatzisarantis & Hagger, 2009; Sierens et al., 2003; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). Hence, the focus on qualitative methods in the present study adds value to the SDT literature.

The first teaching dimension, *autonomy support*, refers to giving students age-appropriate choices, recognising and connecting with children's interests, offering rationales, taking the students' perspective, and providing students with opportunities to take the initiative during learning activities (Reeve, 2002; Sierens, 2010; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). Several studies confirm that autonomy-supportive teacher behaviour facilitates autonomous motivation (e.g., Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2005) and positive learning outcomes, such as deep-level learning (e.g., Vansteenkiste et al., 2005) and performance (e.g., Black & Deci, 2000).

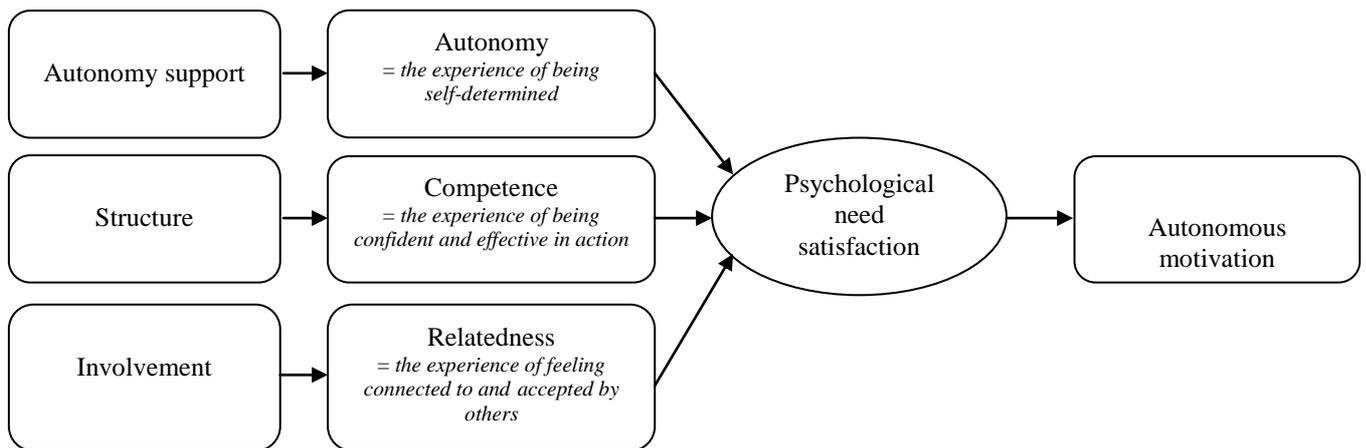
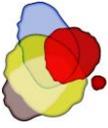


Figure 1. Teaching dimensions supporting students' basic psychological needs and hence encouraging autonomous motivation (SDT; based on Reeve, 2009).

The second teaching dimension, *structure*, primarily fosters children's need for competence. Structure concerns clearly communicating expectations, responding consistently, providing optimal challenges, offering help and support, and providing positive feedback (Reeve, 2002; Sierens, 2010; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). Research indicates that structuring by providing optimal challenges and providing positive feedback is positively associated with volitional or autonomous motivation (Mouratadis, Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Sideridis, 2008; Vallerand & Reid, 1984).

Third, the teaching dimension associated with children's need for relatedness is *involvement* or "the quality of the interpersonal relationship with teachers and peers" (Skinner & Belmont, 1993, p. 573). Teachers are involved with their students when they invest personal resources, express affection, and enjoy time with their students (Reeve, Jang, Carrell, Jeon, & Barch, 2004). Involvement is positively related to students' behavioural and emotional engagement in the classroom (Skinner & Belmont, 1993).

Literature explicitly focusing on the encouragement of reading motivation (e.g., Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006; Gambrell, 2011; Gaskins, 2008) formulates strategies relating to the significance of providing choices and recognising interests (i.e., autonomy support), scaffolding and positive feedback (i.e., structure), and helping one another and interaction about books (i.e., involvement) as well. Consequently, the value of the general teaching dimensions of autonomy support, structure, and involvement is acknowledged



in reading motivation studies and is therefore useful as a frame of reference to explore how teachers specifically encourage autonomous reading motivation in their classrooms.

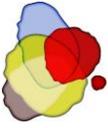
Although research on instructional programs focusing on promoting reading motivation in late primary classrooms is relatively rare (Guthrie et al., 2007), one instructional program did receive a lot of attention in the research literature, namely Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI; e.g., Guthrie & Cox, 2001; Guthrie et al., 2007; Guthrie, Wigfield, & VonSecker, 2000; Wigfield et al., 2008). CORI combines reading strategy instruction, conceptual knowledge in science, and support for students' reading motivation. The theoretical justification for practices which influence children's motivation in CORI (e.g., providing students with age-appropriate choices linked to personal interests, providing collaborative support to stimulate interpersonal interaction) comes in part from the abovementioned SDT teaching dimensions (Guthrie, 2004; Guthrie et al., 2000). However, it should be noted that the adoption of SDT in reading motivation research to study the enhancement of students' autonomous reading motivation remains rather limited and fragmented.

Above and beyond the significance of the SDT teaching dimensions of autonomy support, structure, and involvement the literature stresses the importance of teachers acting as reading models, valuing reading and sharing the "love of reading" to enhance their students' reading motivation (Gambrell, 1996; Pecjak & Kosir, 2008). Teachers' reading aloud is in this respect considered an effective strategy to stimulate students' reading for enjoyment (Fisher, Flood, Lapp, & Frey, 2011; Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996; Pecjak & Kosir, 2008). Middle school students, for example, explicitly corroborate the value of their teachers' reading out loud (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001). The literature, however, reveals contrasting results with respect to the effectiveness of reading aloud in early childhood education (e.g., Morrow & Gambrell, 2002; Meyer, Wardrop, Linn, & Hastings, 1993). In this respect, Lane and Wright (2011) emphasise that especially a systematic approach to reading aloud (e.g., dialogic reading; Whitehurst et al., 1999) yields important academic benefits for children (e.g., increasing vocabulary, listening comprehension, word-recognition skills).

Since teachers are part of a broader school environment or community, it can be argued that the school culture can support and foster teachers' and students' willingness to invest in reading. In this respect, Taylor, Pearson, Clark, and Walpole (2010) indicate that effective schools indeed prioritise reading at both the class and school level. Nevertheless, the role of the school and the specific school culture is still underexposed in reading motivation research. Daniels and Steres (2011) argue that schools' prioritising of reading as a school-wide goal and hence fostering a climate in which teachers and students are expected and stimulated to read will positively influence students' engagement. Particularly, they encourage the allocation of a specific time for students to read self-selected books during the school day, support for teachers and administrators to read and discuss their reading with students, teachers' professional development on literature, and investment in classroom libraries. Moreover, literature underlines the role which literacy coaches can play in professionally supporting teachers to reflectively consider and improve the quality of classroom reading instruction and student learning. Often, literacy coaches coordinate and support the literacy program of a school as well (Steckel, 2009; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010; Walpole & Blamey, 2008).

1.3 Aim of the present study

The present study is innovative in a number of ways. This study extends previous SDT research by applying SDT in research on primary school students and reading motivation. Moreover, whereas numerous SDT-based studies relied solely on quantitative research, the present study adopts an embedded mixed-method approach. This study also builds on the literature on reading motivation by studying reading aloud (Fisher et al., 2011; Gambrell et al., 1996; Pecjak & Kosir, 2008) and by exploring the critical role of the school's reading culture for teachers' classroom practices (Daniels & Steres, 2011; Taylor et al., 2010).



The present study aims at contributing to theory on strategies to promote autonomous reading motivation and at offering guidelines for teachers' classroom practice. In this respect, this study explores whether SDT's teaching dimensions (i.e., autonomy support, structure, and involvement; Reeve, 2002; Skinner & Belmont, 1993), reading aloud, and the reading culture at school can be identified as valuable strategies and stimulating contexts for the promotion of autonomous reading motivation in late primary classrooms. To pursue this goal, teachers excellent in promoting autonomous reading motivation were selected for a multiple case study research, as reading research explicitly expresses a need for further research on excellent reading teachers (Mohan et al., 2008).

2. Methodology

2.1 Design

A multiple case study research design (Yin, 1989) was chosen, since on the one hand it affords an excellent way to identify and describe how teachers promote autonomous reading motivation and on the other hand it contributes to the establishment of theory on the promotion of autonomous reading motivation. Also, the present study is regarded as an embedded mixed-method design (Cresswell & Plano, 2007).

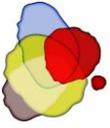
2.2 Teacher selection

The present study is part of a broader research project on reading motivation and the promotion of reading motivation in Flemish (Belgium) late primary education. This study questioned 1270 fifth-grade students and their 67 teachers. On the basis of this large-scale enquiry, three teachers were selected for the present case study research, Mrs. K, Mrs. S, and Mr. T (see Table 1), according to two criteria. First, in an open-ended teacher questionnaire the three selected teachers self-reported applying several reading promotion strategies in their classroom (e.g., book promotion, reading aloud, small-group reading activities) and engaging in reading projects at the school level (e.g., school library, book club).

Second, their students reported high levels of recreational autonomous reading motivation on the Self Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ)-Reading Motivation (see Data Collection section for a description of the instrument and Table 1 for more detailed background information on the selected teachers; Mrs. K's class: $M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.71$, Mrs. S's class: $M = 3.98$, $SD = 1.01$, and Mr. T's class: $M = 4.14$, $SD = 0.55$; sample mean of all classes [$N = 67$] = 3.63, $SD = 0.99$; De Naeghel et al., 2012). These two criteria reflect the selected teachers' excellence in terms of encouraging autonomous reading motivation. The three selected teachers agreed to participate in the present study.

2.3 Data collection

For the three selected teachers, qualitative and quantitative data regarding the class and school context were collected from multiple sources to enhance data triangulation. First, semi-structured teacher interviews were conducted which questioned their own reading motivation, their perception of their students' reading motivation, and the practice of activities at class and school level to promote reading motivation. Additional semi-structured interviews were conducted with special educational needs (SEN) coordinators and school leaders to explore the role of the school in promoting students' willingness to read. SEN coordinators are members of the school team with both a supportive function towards students and teachers and a coordinating function aimed at optimising the school's SEN policy. Second, field notes were taken by the researcher during at least two classroom observations of different reading activities in each class. Third, two questionnaires were administered to teachers and their students to assess their reading motivation (SRQ-Reading Motivation, De Naeghel et al., 2012) and execution/perception of teaching dimensions (i.e., autonomy support, structure, and involvement; Teacher as a Social Context (TASC) Questionnaire, Belmont, Skinner, Wellborn, & Connell, 1988). Fourth, school documents (e.g., the school website and inspectorate reports) were analysed.



2.3.1 Measurement scales

Students' autonomous reading motivation was measured with the SRQ-Reading Motivation (De Naeghel et al., 2012). Each of the eight items of the autonomous reading motivation subscale was administered twice, with regard to motivation for recreational reading on the one hand (e.g., "I read in my free time, because it is important for me to read") and motivation for academic reading on the other hand (e.g., "I read for school, because it is important for me to read"). In this respect, recreational reading referred to reading in students' leisure time and academic reading was defined as reading at school and for homework. Items were scored on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from one (disagree a lot) to five (agree a lot). The eight-item subscales had a good internal consistency with Cronbach's $\alpha = .90$ and Cronbach's $\alpha = .92$ respectively. The three teachers completed a slightly adapted version of the SRQ-Reading Motivation which measured autonomous reading motivation in general (i.e., without distinguishing between the recreational and academic context) and leaving out some less age-related items (e.g., "I have to prove myself that I can get good reading grades").

Students' perception of the teaching dimensions of autonomy support (e.g., "My teacher gives me a lot of choices about how I do my schoolwork"), structure (e.g., "My teacher doesn't make clear what he/she expects of me in class"), and involvement (e.g., "My teacher likes me") were assessed with the short version of the TASC questionnaire (Belmont et al., 1988; Sierens, Vansteenkiste, Goossens, Soenens, & Dochy, 2009). The eight-item subscales structure and involvement had an acceptable internal consistency, with Cronbach's $\alpha = .67$ and Cronbach's $\alpha = .75$ respectively. Regarding autonomy support, four items were deleted, since they raised questions during administration and were found to be too difficult for fifth-graders. This resulted in a four-item subscale with an acceptable internal consistency, Cronbach's $\alpha = .62$. Items were scored on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from one (*disagree a lot*) to five (*agree a lot*). Teachers completed an adapted version of the TASC teacher questionnaire (Belmont et al., 1988), which measured their execution of autonomy support, structure, and involvement in interaction with their students.

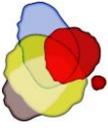
2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis consisted of two phases, a vertical and a horizontal analysis. In the vertical analysis qualitative and quantitative data on each teacher were collected and a within-case analysis was performed (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The interview transcripts, school documents, and field notes were labelled with descriptive codes (summarising the content of text fragments) and subsequent interpretative codes (reflecting concepts from the theoretical framework). We designed the coding scheme starting with the three teaching dimensions as described in SDT (i.e., autonomy support, structure, and involvement; Ryan & Deci, 2000) and further developed it in the light of the interpretative data. Text fragments with the same codes were clustered and interpreted with the use of the conceptual framework of this study. Moreover, teacher and student questionnaires (SRQ-Reading Motivation, De Naeghel et al., 2012; TASC, Belmont et al., 1988) were analysed with SPSS 18. The analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data resulted in a case-specific report for each teacher which presented the data in the same format. In the second phase, the case-specific reports were subject to cross-site or horizontal analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994) in which the cases were systematically compared for similarities and differences. To safeguard the quality of the data analysis, the intermediary results, interpretations, and conclusions were critically discussed by the researchers.

3. Results

3.1 Vertical Analysis

Data presented in the three case-specific reports are structured around the same themes: (1) context and teacher profile, (2) classroom design (i.e., the availability of reading material, reading promotion material, etc.) aimed at reading promotion in the class, (3) classroom strategies (i.e., teaching dimensions: autonomy support, structure, and involvement; and reading aloud), and (4) school-level strategies on reading



motivation. The selection of these themes was based both on theory and empirical evidence (De Naeghel & Van Keer, 2013; Daniel & Steres, 2011; Fisher et al., 2011; Gambrell et al., 1996; Marinak & Gambrell, 2007; Mullis, Martin, Kennedy, & Foy, 2007; Reeve, 2002; Sierens, 2010; Skinner & Belmont, 1993; Steckel, 2009). In the case-specific reports the source of results is mentioned in parentheses. Table 1 presents background information on the three selected teachers, their classes, and schools.

Table 1

Background information on the three selected teachers, their classes, and schools

| | Mrs. K | Mrs. S | Mr. T |
|---------------------|--|--|--------------|
| Teacher | | | |
| Gender | Female | Female | Male |
| Age | 49 | 35 | 34 |
| Teaching experience | 28 years | 10 years | 14 years |
| Class | | | |
| Number of students | 16 | 19 | 17 |
| Mean student age | 10.75 (0.31) | 10.91 (0.40) | 10.82 (0.45) |
| School | | | |
| Educational network | Subsidised private (Roman Catholic) | Subsidised private (Roman Catholic) | Community |
| District type | City | City | Rural |

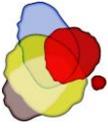
Note: Standard deviation in parentheses.

3.1.1 Promotion of autonomous reading motivation in Mrs. K's classroom

Context and teacher profile. Mrs. K is a 49-year-old teacher with 28 years of teaching experience. She teaches fifth grade in a small school located just outside the city. There are 16 students in her class, who are on average 11 years old. Mrs. K spends about 100 minutes a week on reading instruction. She uses “Taalsignaal” as a teaching manual for the Dutch language lessons. Her preferred teaching methods are whole-class instruction, small-group instruction, and independent work. Mrs. K hesitates to call herself a motivated reader, since she does not spend a lot of time reading novels. On the other hand, she is interested in journals, newspapers, informative books, etc. for gathering information [Teacher interview] and reports that she is an autonomously motivated reader [Table 2, element a].

Classroom design. Approximately 40 journals and 60 informative books are on the shelves. The Children’s Book Week (i.e., a national reading project) theme “Secrets” is illustrated on the bulletin board and books by Anthony Horowitz are displayed on a small table [Observation 1].

Classroom strategies. Autonomy support effected by affording choices, offering rationale, and taking the students’ perspective is not so prominent in Mrs. K’s teaching style [Appendix 1, elements a, c, and d]. She discusses various text genres and text fragments provided in the manual in a systematic way, posing rather standard questions: who?, what?, what about?, etc. In her opinion, the manual offers fascinating texts and nice illustrations with the potential to promote reading pleasure [Appendix 1, element b]. Although both Mrs. K and the school leader consider writing book reviews a questionable motivational strategy, students are required to write 10 reviews of self-selected reading material (i.e., six novels, one informative book, one comic book, and two poems) following an imposed format [Appendix 1, element a]. She is enthusiastic about “panel reading” as instructional practice which implies discussing and presenting informative texts in small groups. It gives students opportunities to be more self-determined [Appendix 1, element e]. After finishing their appointed tasks, students have the opportunity to read self-selected books or journals individually [Appendix 1, elements a and e]. She provides structure by communicating her expectations [Appendix 1, element f], offering students support when needed [Appendix 1, element h], and providing positive feedback [Appendix 1, element i]. Mrs. K is greatly involved in interpersonal relationships with her students. She takes time for and expresses enjoyment in the interactions with her



students [Appendix 1, element j]. The greater attention to structure and involvement compared with autonomy support is reflected in higher scores on the related subscales in the teacher survey [Table 2, element b]. Her students say they perceive more structure and involvement than autonomy support, but these remain moderate [Table 2, element d]. Moreover, her students report moderate levels of autonomous reading motivation [Table 2, element c].

Next to these SDT teaching dimensions, Mrs. K acknowledges the value of reading aloud to promote children’s reading motivation. She does not invest a lot of time in it, however. Further, Mrs. K engages in national reading projects [Teacher interview and Observation 1]. In the teacher interview she said: “In the Children’s Book Week, I read aloud every day. But otherwise ... I don’t have time for it, to my regret.”

School-level strategies. Mrs. K’s school has a large library, founded and run by the school leader. The library is open during lunch break and puts narrative as well as informative books at students’ disposal. The collection is frequently updated to stimulate students’ curiosity. In this respect, the school leader tries to pass on his “love of reading” to children and their parents by creating a reading culture at school. Moreover, he promotes national reading projects [School leader interview].

Table 2

Teachers’ and students’ autonomous reading motivation and execution/perception of teaching dimensions

| | Mrs. K | Mrs. S | Mr. T |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Teacher | | | |
| a. Autonomous reading motivation ^a | 4.00 | 5.00 | 3.88 |
| b. Execution of teaching dimensions | | | |
| Autonomy support ^a | 3.88 | 3.63 | 3.88 |
| Structure ^a | 4.14 | 4.00 | 4.00 |
| Involvement ^a | 4.63 | 3.75 | 4.63 |
| Students | | | |
| c. Autonomous reading motivation ^a | | | |
| Mean recreational reading motivation ^a | 3.15 (0.72) | 3.63 (.73) | 3.98 (.46) |
| Mean academic reading motivation ^a | 3.11 (0.88) | 3.43 (.80) | 3.91 (.57) |
| d. Perception of teaching dimensions | | | |
| Mean autonomy support ^a | 3.56 (0.67) | 2.56 (0.68) | 3.76 (0.27) |
| Mean structure ^a | 3.52 (0.52) | 3.69 (0.43) | 3.77 (0.22) |
| Mean involvement ^a | 3.45 (0.57) | 3.68 (0.65) | 3.92 (0.43) |

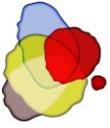
Note: ^aSubscale scores range from one to five, with five indicating a higher score. Standard deviation in parentheses.

3.1.2 Promotion of autonomous reading motivation in Mrs. S’s classroom

Context and teacher profile. Mrs. S is a 35-year-old teacher with 10 years of teaching experience. She teaches languages, social studies, and sciences half-time in a small school located in the city. There are 19 students in her class, who are on average 11 years old. Mrs. S spends about 130 minutes a week on reading instruction. She uses “Taalsignaal” as a teaching manual for the Dutch language lessons. Her preferred teaching methods are whole-class instruction, small-group instruction, and independent work. Mrs. S is an autonomously motivated reader, devouring novels, informative books, comics, etc. in her free time as well as for her professional development [Teacher interview and Table 2, element a].

Classroom design. Narrative and informative books are on the shelf at the back of the classroom. The collection is often renewed with books from the public library, depending on the themes discussed in the social studies and sciences lessons. Approximately 500 narrative and informative books are located in a small library room nearby the classroom [Teacher interview and Observation 1].

Classroom strategies. Mrs. S provides autonomy support especially by fitting in with students’ interests [Appendix 1, element b], offering rationales [Appendix 1, element c], and providing students with



opportunities to be initiators of their own behaviour [Appendix 1, element e]. For instance, her students are tutors for their third-grade peers in a reading project combining direct instruction in reading comprehension strategies and cross-age peer tutoring to practice their reading skills with self-selected books. In this respect, she explicitly discusses with her students why being a good tutor and using reading strategies is important. Mrs. S, the SEN coordinator, and the students experience these opportunities to read together as motivating [Observation 1, Teacher interview, and SEN coordinator interview]. After finishing their appointed tasks, students have the opportunity to work independently on additional material or to read self-selected books [Appendix 1, elements a and c]. Moreover, fifth-grade students write one book review on a self-chosen book (i.e., design a new cover, write a summary, and make a drawing [Appendix 1, element a]). Mrs. S and the SEN coordinator underline the importance of providing students with fascinating texts to promote reading pleasure. In Mrs. S's opinion, the manual does not offer enough interesting texts to practice reading comprehension. Therefore, Mrs. S often brings new reading material from the public library into the classroom to stimulate students' willingness to read [Appendix 1, element b]. It should be noted, however, that giving students choices occurs primarily during peer tutoring sessions [Appendix 1, element a]. Mrs. S provides structure by having a clear plan of the day, communicating her expectations [Appendix 1, element f], and providing student support [Appendix 1, element h]. As part of the reading peer tutoring project she gives direct instruction in reading comprehension strategies, supporting students' reading competence [Appendix 1, element h]. Mrs. S further invests a lot in interpersonal relationships with her students. She cares about how students do in class and takes their needs into account as much as possible. In other words, she is involved [Appendix 1, element j]. Data from the teacher survey illustrate that she especially provides structure and to a somewhat lesser extent is involved with her students and supports their autonomy [Table 2, element b]. Students' reports indicate that her students perceive more structure and involvement than autonomy support [Table 2, element d]. Furthermore, her students report moderate levels of autonomous reading motivation [Table 2, element c].

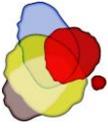
Besides implementing the SDT teaching dimensions Mrs. S reads aloud frequently. In the teacher interview she said: "I bring books to read aloud to stimulate them. ... Reading aloud is just for fun. No questions afterwards." Mrs. S further engages in national reading projects [Teacher interview].

School-level strategies. As mentioned above, the reading project combining direct instruction in reading comprehension strategies and cross-age peer tutoring is organised across different grades. Not only fifth and third grade, but also sixth and second, and fourth and first grade read together in this school reading project. Currently, the teachers themselves are responsible for running the project, coordinated by Mrs. S. In the early stages of the project, the school leader and SEN coordinator were more involved [Teacher, School leader, and SEN coordinator interview]. Furthermore, the SEN coordinator reads picture books in all grade levels to introduce new school projects [SEN coordinator interview]. Finally, there is a study group, in which Mrs. S takes part, which works out new ideas regarding reading and reading promotion in staff meetings [School leader interview].

3.1.3 Promotion of autonomous reading motivation in Mr. T's classroom

Context and teacher profile. Mr. T is 34 years old and has 14 years of teaching experience. He teaches fifth grade in a small private school in the countryside. There are 17 students in his class, who are on average 11 years old. Mr. T spends about 120 minutes a week on reading instruction. He uses "Taalmakker" as a teaching manual for the Dutch language lessons. His preferred teaching methods are whole-class instruction and independent work. Mr. T especially reads to gain knowledge. He prefers short passages in newspapers and journals, comics, and children's books [Teacher interview] and reports that he is an autonomously motivated reader [Table 2, element a].

Classroom design. Two bookshelves filled with approximately 50 narrative and informative books and two boxes with comics are put at students' disposal. A bean-bag seat and the step in front of the classroom provide a reading spot [Observation 1]. To expand the number of books in the class library, Mr. T asks parents to donate comic books that are no longer read at home and to give a book to the class as a birthday gift instead of sweets. Each week one student gets the role of librarian by lottery [Teacher interview].



Classroom strategies. Mr. T provides autonomy support by affording choices [Appendix 1, element a], fitting in with students' interests [element b], offering rationales [element c], taking students' perspective [element d], and providing students with opportunities to be initiators of their own behaviour [element e]. More specifically, he tries to teach reading in a meaningful context (e.g., making a class garden, solving puzzles, keeping abreast of current events [Appendix 1, element c]). In his opinion, the manual offers fascinating texts for teaching reading comprehension. In addition, he brings newspaper and journal articles to the class to study, a tradition which is copied by his students [Appendix 1, element b]. Mr. T likes to challenge his students with group assignments (e.g., making a picture book, searching for key words in various text passages [Appendix 1, element e]). He asks his students to make a drawing of a self-selected book during holidays, which is then presented in the classroom [Appendix 1, element a]. After finishing their appointed tasks, students have the opportunity to read or draw [Appendix 1, element e]. He provides structure by passing on his expectations [element f], providing optimal challenges [element g], offering support to his students [element h], and giving them constructive feedback [Appendix 1, element i]. Moreover, he is greatly involved in interpersonal relationships with his students. Mr. T attaches great importance to creating a respectful classroom atmosphere and listening to students' personal stories [Appendix 1, element j]. In the teacher survey Mr. T reports that he is highly involved with his students [Table 2, element b]. Students' reports confirm they experience autonomy support, structure, and involvement [Table 2, element d]. Moreover, the students report that they are autonomously motivated to read [Table 2, element c].

Next to implementing the SDT teaching dimensions, Mr. T reads aloud each Friday afternoon to create a stimulating reading atmosphere. In the teacher interview he stated: "... children really enjoy it. I create a nice reading atmosphere, reading expressively and immersing myself in the book ... and by doing so the interest of students in books certainly grows." His students are involved in the selection of the book and each finished book results in a creative project (e.g. a play, a scale model of the village described in the book). Furthermore, Mr. T engages in national reading projects [Teacher interview].

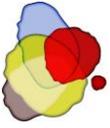
School-level strategies. Mr. T's school pays a lot of attention to reading. His school organises an overall reading project from kindergarten to sixth grade. The project was set up by Mrs. L, the school's SEN coordinator and literacy coach (Steckel, 2009; Walpole & Blamey, 2008), and the school leader. The project's theme is a story about a boy, "Jonah Sprout," who meets all kinds of letters during a boat trip. His boat (an old yard wagon) comes ashore in the school's playground. In the school "Jonah Sprout" is represented by a puppet [SEN coordinator and School leader interview].

Mrs. L, the literacy coach, acts as a pioneer for all reading activities at school. She promotes the Children's Book Week, the Reading Aloud Week, and Poetry Day (national reading projects). During staff meetings she illustrates possible activities and provides teachers with the necessary reading material. The introduction and closure of all reading activities is a collective school event. Each activity is introduced by a play with "Jonah Sprout" in the leading role and closed with a presentation of reading activities of each grade. Moreover, Mrs. L organises a book club for students of fifth and sixth grade in "Jonah Sprout"'s boat. During book club time, books are discussed and approached in a creative way (e.g., reading and cooking a recipe, improvising the end of a story [SEN coordinator interview]).

3.2 Horizontal Analysis

3.2.1 Classroom strategies for promoting autonomous reading motivation

SDT's teaching dimensions. In line with more general SDT research, the teaching dimensions of autonomy support, structure, and involvement (Reeve, 2002; Skinner & Belmont, 1993) could be identified as critical strategies promoting autonomous reading motivation in particular and this in each of the three cases. The selected teachers, however, especially differ in the extent and manner of the autonomy support they provide.



As mentioned above, *autonomy support* primarily nurtures students' need for autonomy or self-determined behaviour (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Students' autonomy is first supported by giving students age-appropriate choices (Appendix 1, element a; Reeve, 2002; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). In the three cases this is mainly reflected in opportunities to select books for independent reading and book reviews. Whereas Mrs. K provides an imposed format for the book reviews, Mrs. S and Mr. T allow more creativity and personal input. In addition, Mr. T occasionally provides choices between different assignments. In all three cases, however, there are still opportunities to enlarge the number of choices regarding what students read and how they engage in and complete reading tasks (Gambrell, 2011).

Second, the three teachers recognise the importance of fitting in with students' interests to promote autonomous reading motivation (Appendix 1, element b; Reeve, 2002; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). In this respect especially, Mrs. S and Mr. T bring supplementary reading material into the classroom related to topics studied in social studies and sciences, students' social environment, or the news. Furthermore, each of the three teachers has a classroom library, containing narrative and informative books, and sometimes comics or journals, which are at students' disposal during independent reading.

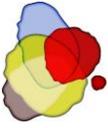
Third, students' autonomy is encouraged by the offer of rationales (Appendix 1, element c; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). Mrs. S clearly explains to her students why she teaches certain topics. Mr. T, on the other hand, tries to offer a rationale by teaching reading in a meaningful context. In contrast, Mrs. K does not seem to invest a lot of effort in this strategy.

Fourth, taking the students' perspective was only explicitly observed in Mr. T's classroom (Appendix 1, element d; Reeve, 2002; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). Finally, the three selected teachers apply various instructional strategies, such as panel reading, group work, cross-age peer tutoring, and independent reading, that allow students to be more self-determined or volitional and therefore fulfil the need for autonomy and encourage autonomous motivation for reading (Appendix 1, element e; Reeve, 2002; Sierens, 2010; Skinner & Belmont, 1993).

In general, Mr. T provides the highest level of autonomy support by providing choices, fitting in with students' interests, teaching reading in a meaningful context, taking the students' perspective, and providing opportunities to his students to be initiators of their own behaviour [Appendix 1, elements a to e]. From the student questionnaires it can be noted that his students corroborate to perceive the highest level of autonomy support [Table 2, element d] and, moreover, report the highest level of recreational and academic autonomous reading motivation [Table 2, element c]. The fact that Mr. T's students indicate not only the highest perceived autonomy support but also the highest level of autonomous reading motivation is certainly an argument in favour of his autonomy-supportive teacher behaviour (Reeve, 2002; Skinner & Belmont, 1993).

According to the interpretative data, Mrs. K, in contrast, appears to be the least autonomy-supportive of the three participating teachers. A closer look at the results of the teacher and student questionnaire suggests that Mrs. K and Mr. T report equal practice of autonomy-supportive behaviour [Table 2, element b]. Furthermore, Mrs. K's students perceive a higher level of autonomy support than Mrs. S's students [Table 2, element], although her students do report lower levels of recreational and academic autonomous reading motivation [Table 2, element c]. This finding illustrates how differences in research methods (i.e., interpretative or quantitative) can lead to different perspectives and conclusions, as detailed observation and questioning of stakeholders (i.e., interpretative methods) and information gathering by surveys (i.e. quantitative methods) probably do not address the research questions in exactly the same manner. Nevertheless, these methods can jointly help to create a fuller and more nuanced picture of what exactly happens in the classroom.

The teaching dimension *structure*, which promotes students' need for competence (Reeve, 2002; Sierens, 2010; Skinner & Belmont, 1993), is more or less equally addressed by the three case study teachers. All three communicate their expectations to the students, offer help and support, and provide positive feedback [Appendix 1, elements f to i]. In addition, Mrs. S invests the most time in explicitly teaching reading comprehension strategies to foster students' competence in reading [Appendix 1, element h]. Mr. T invests the most in providing optimal challenges by giving stimulating group tasks [Appendix 1, element g].



Results of the teacher questionnaire corroborate the roughly equal levels of structure in their classrooms [Table 2, element b], although the students of Mrs. S and Mr. T experience structure related to teaching practices slightly more in their classrooms [Table 2, element d].

The teaching dimension of *involvement*, associated with the need for relatedness (Reeve et al., 2004; Skinner & Belmont, 1993), is most prominent in the teaching style of the three selected teachers. All three invest a lot in interpersonal relationships with their students by explicitly making time to listen to students' personal stories and interests, expressing enjoyment in the interaction with their students, and taking students' needs into account [Appendix 1, element j]. Furthermore, Mrs. S and her school's SEN coordinator explicitly point to the importance of reading together as a motivating strategy, confirming the relevance of involvement between students (Reeve et al., 2004; Skinner & Belmont, 1993) and opportunities to collaborate as in CORI (Guthrie & Cox, 2001). According to the teachers' responses in the teacher questionnaire, Mrs. K and Mr. T seem to be most highly involved with their students. Moreover, Mr. T receives the highest score on involvement from his students [Table 2, elements b and d], corroborating the qualitative interview and observational data [Appendix 1, element j].

Reading aloud. Next to the teaching dimensions of autonomy support, structure, and involvement, reading aloud is recognised as an important strategy to promote autonomous reading motivation in the three cases (Pecjak & Kosir, 2008). In particular, Mrs. S and Mr. T often read aloud to stimulate their students' reading behaviour, whereas Mrs. K reports that she generally does not have enough time for it. Further, Mr. T explicitly indicates that he creates a stimulating reading atmosphere and involves his students in the selection of the reading material.

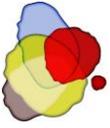
3.2.2 School-level strategies for reading promotion

The three participating teachers belong to schools which recognise the importance of reading. In Mrs. K's school the presence of a large library and the dedication of the school leader to managing the library communicate to teachers, students, and parents how strongly reading is appreciated by the school, and, hence, that encouraging reading is significant. In Mrs. S's school, Mrs. S plays a prominent role herself in coordinating a reading project which combines direct instruction in reading comprehension strategies with cross-age peer tutoring across different grades and in participating in a study group on reading and reading promotion. Moreover, the SEN coordinator of her school reads picture books in all grade levels. The school leader and literacy coach of Mr. T's school organise an overall reading project from kindergarten to sixth grade. Additionally, the literacy coach supports the teachers in promoting reading in their classroom and organises a book club for fifth and sixth graders. In sum, each of the three teachers belongs to a school that palpably acknowledges the importance of reading and therefore confirms that a school culture focusing on school-wide reading has potential to encourage teachers' and students' engagement (Daniels & Steres, 2011) and motivation for reading.

4. Discussion and conclusion

In order to break through the declining trend in reading motivation throughout children's educational careers, it is important to identify strategies which enable teachers to encourage students' autonomous reading motivation. In this respect, the present study furthers an underexposed field in reading motivation research by studying and identifying the strategies of teachers excellent in the promotion of volitional or autonomous reading motivation.

SDT formulates general guidelines or teaching dimensions to facilitate autonomous motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). These general teaching dimensions of autonomy support, structure, and involvement could be identified as critical strategies to promote autonomous motivation for reading in the classroom practice of the selected teachers. In this respect, the present study points to the theoretical significance of adopting these teaching dimensions in reading motivation research, as the SDT teaching dimensions have rarely been explicitly studied in the specific context of reading motivation before and on the basis of our results appear to be transferable and relevant to this research area. It should be noted that the participating

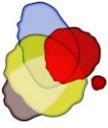


teachers more or less equally addressed the teaching dimensions of structure and involvement, whereas they differed particularly in the extent and manner of the autonomy support they provided. This indicates that even some of the selected teachers apparently invest less in or have more difficulties with supporting their students' autonomy and suggests autonomy support is a powerful strategy with opportunities for growth. Next to the significance of the SDT teaching dimensions, the results confirm the relevance of reading aloud as an effective classroom strategy to stimulate students' willingness to read (Fisher et al., 2011; Gambrell et al., 1996; Pecjak & Kosir, 2008). Further research is, however, needed to collect more detailed information on teachers' specific approach to reading aloud (Lane & Wright, 2011). What is of interest as well is that the teachers considered as excellent in promoting autonomous reading motivation belong to schools that invest in reading at school level, underlining the importance of a school-wide interest in and attention to reading (Daniels & Steres, 2011; Taylor et al., 2010). As the role of the school and school culture is still underexposed in reading motivation research, follow-up studies could enlarge their focus to how schools (e.g., school members [teachers, school leaders, literacy coaches, etc.], policy, projects, and curriculum) contribute to a supportive reading environment in order to formulate additional guidelines for school practice.

The identified strategies for promoting autonomous reading motivation are of particular importance for teaching practice and accordingly for teachers' professional development in both pre-service and in-service training. Considering the significant influence of the home environment on students' reading motivation (Swalander & Taube, 2007), teachers can play a crucial role in positively motivating all of their students to read (Gambrell, 1996; Santa et al., 2000). In this way, they invest in equipping their students with the necessary reading competencies to be successful in today's society, striving for equal opportunities for all. Further, the identified strategies are valuable as tools for reflection on and improvement of teachers' and schools' reading promotion approach and practice. First, it appears that the SDT teaching dimensions (Reeve, 2002; Skinner & Belmont, 1993) can be implemented and integrated relatively easily in classroom practice, as they merely involve a change of attitude and awareness of SDT's frame of reference. In this respect, teachers can make their own reading activities more supportive of autonomous reading by applying the SDT teaching dimensions (e.g., providing choices between different reading materials, offering rationales for learning activities, providing positive feedback to their students) without having to make time-consuming changes to their reading curriculum. As mentioned above, teachers can invest particularly in making their reading activities more autonomy-supportive (e.g., providing choices between different activities, matching students' interests, taking the students' perspective), as even teachers indicated as excellent in promoting autonomous reading motivation still have opportunities for growth. Additionally, as reading aloud remains an important and valuable activity in late primary education, teachers can invest more time in reading aloud in class to stimulate children's interest in reading. They can underline its significance for instance by scheduling reading aloud in the plan for the week. Moreover, teachers and schools can be inspired by the described school-level reading strategies to further their own school-wide reading policy.

This study focused on the strategies of teachers considered to be excellent in promoting autonomous reading motivation. It can be expected that the identified strategies will be less explicitly present in the daily classroom practice and schools of teachers who are less excellent or even rather poor at promoting autonomous reading motivation. Hence, these strategies can function as guidelines to improve their reading activities. Nevertheless, further research should offer insight into the classroom practices of teachers who are less than excellent in promoting autonomous reading motivation and explore possibilities to improve their skills through teacher training.

In sum, the present study points to the theoretical and practical significance of adopting SDT's teaching dimensions (i.e., autonomy support, structure, and involvement) as well as to reading aloud as critical strategies to encourage students' autonomous reading motivation in the classroom. Moreover, a school culture supporting students' and teachers' interest in reading is essential.



Keypoints

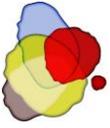
- This study extends SDT research by applying SDT in research on primary school students and reading motivation and by adopting an embedded mixed-method design
- This study contributes to reading motivation research by identifying the strategies of teachers excellent in the promotion of reading motivation
- This study indicates autonomy support, structure, and involvement as critical strategies to promote autonomous reading motivation in the classroom
- This study confirms the relevance of reading aloud as an effective classroom strategy to stimulate students' willingness to read
- This study builds on the literature on reading motivation by highlighting the critical role of the school's reading culture for teachers' practices

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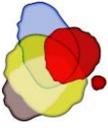
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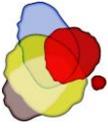
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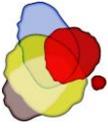
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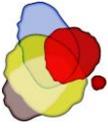
Appendix 1

Examples of the execution of SDT's teaching dimensions in Mrs. K's, Mrs. S's, and Mr. T's classroom reading activities

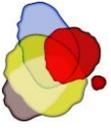
| Examples and illustrations | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| | Mrs. K | Mrs. S | Mr. T |
| Strategies to promote autonomous reading motivation | | | |
| Autonomy support | | | |
| a. Providing choices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students write ten reviews of self-selected reading material, i.e., six novels, one informational book, one comic book, and two poems, following an imposed format. <i>“I oblige them a little, since there are children who wouldn't read anything otherwise. ... They have still read something and maybe it motivates them to choose a book on their own ... but possibly it lets them take a dislike to reading.”</i> [Teacher interview] - During a group assignment students have the opportunity to choose their group members. [Observation 1] - Students choose books or journals for independent reading. [Observation 1] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students write one book review on a self-chosen book (e.g., design a new cover, write a summary, and make a drawing [Teacher interview]). - Students choose reading books during cross-age peer tutoring sessions and independent reading. [Observation 1] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Every holiday students make a drawing of a self-selected book, which is presented in class afterwards. [Teacher interview] - Students are involved in the selection of the book that is read aloud. [Teacher interview] - During a group assignment students have the opportunity to choose between different text passages, e.g. newspaper, children's newspaper, difficult sentences, ... [Observation 1] - During a group assignment students have the opportunity to choose their partner. [Observation 2] - Students choose books or comics for independent reading [Observation 1] |
| b. Fitting interests | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - According to Mrs. K the manual offers fascinating texts and nice illustrations. [Teacher interview] - Students are very enthusiastic about the mystery theme of the group assignment. [Observation 1] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mrs. S often brings new reading material from the public library into the classroom, since the manual does not offer many interesting texts in her opinion. [Teacher interview and Observations] - <i>“A story should be exciting, certainly for that age! ... And some children, not all of</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In Mr. T's opinion the manual offers fascinating texts. [Teacher interview] - Mr. T brings newspaper and journal articles to the class to study with his students. [Teacher interview and Observation 1] - <i>“I search for age-appropriate things (to read) such as first love. The</i> |



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| | | | <p><i>them of course, are interested in all kinds of details about famous historical figures.”</i> [Teacher interview]</p> <p>- <i>“We try to relate lessons to real-world experiences, if possible ... to involve the children and stimulate their interests. ... However, I still have to impose the material that I have to teach.”</i> [Teacher interview]</p> <p>- <i>“I think the most important thing in motivating children is matching their interests.”</i> [SEN coordinator interview]</p> | <p><i>giggling, the familiarity, that’s great ... I especially start from reality. ... In short, ... situations from their environment.”</i> [Teacher interview]</p> <p>- <i>“Don’t force them. Show them that there is something about their interests, perhaps a journal, an informative book, a novel, ... There is something for everyone.”</i> [Teacher interview]</p> |
| c. Offering rationale | - <i>“Clearly indicating lesson goals ... I don’t do that.”</i> [Teacher interview] | - Mrs. S discusses with her students why being a good tutor and using reading strategies is important. [Observation 1] | - Mr. T teaches reading in a meaningful context, e.g., making a class garden, solving puzzles, reading about current events, ... [Teacher interview] | |
| | | - <i>“I try to communicate why we do certain things. For instance, when I started class this morning I clearly indicated what we would do and why. It motivates them to engage in the activity.”</i> [Teacher interview] | - <i>“... offering a whole range of possibilities, preferably as integrated as possible ... makes them realize the relevance ...”</i> [School leader interview] | |
| d. Taking students’ perspective | | | - Reciting some difficult sentences, a boy stumbles over his words. Students laugh. The boy feels mocked, sits down on the ground, and starts crying. Mr. T lets him know that it is okay, accepts his emotional outburst, gives him some time, and talks to him during playtime. [Observation 1] | |
| e. Initiator of own behaviour | - During “panel reading” students discuss and present informative texts in small groups. <i>“The students really like panel reading.”</i> [Teacher interview] | - Fifth-graders are tutors for their third-grade peers in a reading project combining direct instruction in reading comprehension strategies and cross-age peer tutoring. <i>“... in reading comprehension children often work together ... Most children enjoy working together.”</i> [Teacher interview and Observation 1] | - Mr. T provides challenging group tasks such as making a picture book, creating a play, making a class garden, ... <i>“In the spring we make a class garden. Students look for a step-by-step plan to make the garden.”</i> [Teacher interview and Observations] | |
| | - After finishing the appointed tasks, students have the opportunity to read. [Teacher interview] | - <i>“Certainly reading together ... stimulating by reading together.”</i> [SEN coordinator interview] | - After finishing the appointed tasks, students have the opportunity to read or draw. [Teacher interview] | |
| | - The timing during the first group assignment is very restrictive. Students have seven minutes to find the answer to some questions on the blackboard concerning the author of a book. <i>“Still three minutes. ... Still 30 seconds! ... Stop!”</i> [Observation 1] | - After finishing the appointed tasks, students can work on additional material or read a book. <i>“... additional material to do on their own</i> | | |



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| | | | <i>has to be fun and motivating and can be completed at their own speed.”</i> [Teacher interview] | |
| Structure | | | | |
| f. Communicating expectations | - Mrs. K communicates step by step what the children are expected to do in the group assignment. First, make three groups of three and two groups of four. Go with your group to a computer and open the Dutch webpage of Wikipedia. Search for an answer to the following questions. ... [Observation 1] | - “ <i>Planning is very important for children, ... knowing first we will do this, and afterwards that, ...</i> ” [Teacher interview] | - Mr T clearly communicates how to fulfil the group assignment. First, go to your group. Second, choose a group leader. Third, turn over the sheet with the assignment. ... [Observation 1] | |
| g. Providing optimal challenges | - “ <i>Formulate this in a sentence, please.</i> ” [Observation 1] | | - Mr T provides challenging group tasks such as making a picture book, creating a play, making a class garden, ... [Teacher interview and Observations] | |
| h. Offering help and support | - The teacher drops hints to help the children find the right answer to the riddles and questions in the group assignment. [Observation 1] | - Mrs. S provides direct instruction on reading comprehension strategies. [Teacher interview] | - The teacher drops hints on how to decode the mysterious title of one of the assignments on the blackboard. [Observation 1] | |
| | | - After reading the text, she helps the children to answer the more difficult questions. For instance, she rereads a certain passage aloud. [Observation 2] | - Mr. T suggests strategies for the social studies and sciences’ test. [Observation 1] | |
| i. Providing positive feedback | - “ <i>Well read.</i> ” [Observation 1] | - “ <i>Very good, brief and to the point.</i> ” [Observation 1] | - “ <i>And giving positive feedback. Great! Stimulate. Okay, doesn’t matter, chin up.</i> ” [Teacher interview] | |
| Involvement (j.) | - The children may whisper the answer of the riddles or questions in Mrs. K’s ear. [Observation 1] | - “ <i>Who is already thinking about his future?</i> ” Children enthusiastically tell the teacher their dreams about future professions. Mrs. S takes time to listen to her students’ stories. [Observation 2] | - “ <i>I listen to their story, their interests, their favourite books ... I encourage their participation.</i> ” [Teacher interview] | |
| | - When Mrs. K reads a book, she asks the children to come and sit around her with cushions. [Observation 1] | - “ <i>I try to take the children into account as much as possible.</i> ” [Teacher interview] | - “ <i>We become equal, respecting each other. I respect them, they respect me.</i> ” [Teacher interview] | |
| | - “ <i>I believe the school library encourages a strong exchange between students. ... Some children say to each other: I read a nice book. You should certainly read it too!</i> ” [Teacher interview] | | - “ <i>I listen if there is something they want to tell me ... I go to a soccer game, a dance show which my students are taking part in. I show my interest in more than the regular lessons, e.g. how was soccer or rope skipping? I have a little chat with them in the playground. I just make sure that they like me and vice versa.</i> ” | |



[Teacher interview]

- One of the students talks about difficulties at home. Mr. T listens carefully and gives moral support.

[Observation 1]
