

Marloes Schrijvers & Sarah Levine & Iris Vansteelandt

SYSTEMATIC DESIGN OF INTERVENTIONS FOR LITERARY AND READING INSTRUCTION

Introduction

Intervention studies in L1 language arts and literature classrooms are pivotal to investigate the effects of instructional approaches that have been purposefully designed to achieve certain learning outcomes. Ideally, design principles, design procedures and the resulting interventions (i.e., lessons, projects, materials) are described comprehensively in research papers. A lack of explicit and detailed descriptions poses a threat to the validity and replicability of interventions, and hampers gaining insights in the domain-specific instructional activities that are designed to achieve particular aims (e.g., Nieveen, 1999; O'Donnell, 2008; Rijlaarsdam, Janssen, Rietdijk, & Van Weijen, 2017).

For a special issue that is currently being set up for L1 – Educational Studies in Language and Literature, we collect papers that comprehensively describe the design of interventions in L1 language arts and literature classrooms. In a symposium, we would like to present three of these papers, that focus on (literary) reading interventions. These papers address a variety of design contexts, including primary and secondary school, as well as professional development programs for teachers.

In this symposium, we focus in particular on 1) initial design principles based on theoretical-empirical models, 2) the (iterative) development process toward (several versions of) an intervention, and 3) the implementation of interventions in the classroom. The aims of these interventions vary: they address affect-based literary interpretation (see abstract 1), reading motivation (abstract 2), and insight into human nature as a result of literature education (abstract 3).

The aim of this symposium is to draw attention to the importance of systematic design of and reporting on interventions in the field of L1 studies. The paper presentations will yield 'formats' or 'templates' for how intervention design processes may be set up, monitored, evaluated, and described. In doing so, the papers will also shed light on contemporary objectives that are strived for in L1 language arts and literature classrooms and offer detailed insights in domain-specific teaching and learning activities have been designed and implemented to achieve these objectives.

Keywords: literature education, reading, intervention design, intervention studies

Discussant: Jochen Heins, University of Hamburg

Abstract 1

Sarah Levine* & Karoline Trepper* * Stanford University, United States

This study examines the design and implementation of two iterations of a professional development workshop for high school teachers focused on affect-based approaches to literary interpretation. In two consecutive years, participating teachers lead affect-based discussions of literature in their own classrooms, where students showed gains in interpretive discussion compared to baseline discussions. However, the second iteration was significantly more successful than the first by several measures. This study describes and analyzes the effects of changes between iterations.

The workshops built on theories of transactional reading and the role of affect, emotion, and judgment, as well as small- scale studies showing that affect-based heuristics help move students from literal to interpretive readings. Workshop participants—all high-school language arts teachers from high-poverty schools across the United States—studied an affect- based interpretive approach called "up/down/both/why," in which readers use a positive/negative scale to evaluate a text's affective impact, and then explain their evaluations. Each cohort of 25 teachers spent five days practicing the heuristic, and some then taught the heuristic to their students. Both workshops led

to gains in teacher understanding and student interpretation, as shown by analysis of instructional outlines and materials, teacher survey data and written reflections, and classroom video. However, teachers in the second iteration gave the workshop significantly higher ratings, and a significantly higher number of teachers regularly used the heuristic in their classes. This study analyzes the workshop changes that contributed to these improved gains.

Analysis will focus on three important changes from first to second iteration: First, teacher educators asked the first cohort of teachers not only to practice the affective heuristic, but also to find or create affectively ambiguous texts that would lend themselves to affective evaluation. Teachers struggled with this task. The second iteration provided such texts to the teachers. Second, teacher educators encouraged the first cohort of teachers to distinguish between textual content and authorial craft when applying the affective heuristic. Teachers struggled with this distinction. In the second iteration, teacher educators used a more flexible approach in teaching the heuristic, showing teachers how to use the heuristic to help students articulate personal responses, evaluate literary aesthetics, and build literary criticism. Finally, the second iteration offered significantly more time for teacher discussion and practice. This study explores the affordances and constraints of the changes in design and implementation and discusses implications for future teacher education in literary interpretation.

Abstract 2

Iris Vansteelandt*, Hilde van Keer* & Suzanne Mol** * Ghent University, Belgium
** Leiden University, the Netherlands

Bringing continuous professional development in practice: Design principles for a professional development program for primary school teachers focusing on promoting students' reading motivation

Studies show that teachers' continuous professional development (CPD) is essential for educational quality, and moreover, when it comes to reading, key for students' success in education and participation in our 21st century society. Most of the research investigating professional development programs on improving teachers' self-efficacy for teaching reading and in particular on fostering students' reading motivation, however, fails to include clear and detailed descriptions of the design principles underlying the programs. Therefore, the present study provides a comprehensive description and operationalization of the design principles of a CPD program for primary school teachers focusing on promoting students' reading motivation combining Desimone's (2009) framework for effective professional development with Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Consequently, the CPD included core features distinguished by Desimone (2009) (i.e., content focus, coherence, active learning, collective participation and duration) and the need for autonomy, competence and relatedness as put central in SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2000) are analytically described and elaborated on. In view of reporting on the implementation check of the CPD, we further provide insight into whether these operationalized design principles were also perceived as such by the teachers participating in a first iteration of the CPD intervention.

Abstract 3

Marloes Schrijvers*, Tanja Janssen*, Olivia Fialho** & Gert Rijlaarsdam* * University of Amsterdam
** Utrecht University

This paper describes the design of literature classroom intervention for 15-year-old students in the Netherlands, which aimed to foster their learning about themselves and others. It was informed by a theoretical-empirical model of transformative reading (Fialho, 2012; 2018), an explorative study in Dutch literature classrooms (Schrijvers, Janssen, Fialho, & Rijlaarsdam, 2016) and three initial design principles identified in a review of previous empirical intervention studies (Schrijvers, Janssen, Fialho, & Rijlaarsdam, 2018). We aimed to investigate the effects of an iterative design process on both the validity and practicality of the intervention, which are important indicators of its quality (Nieveen, 1999), as well as on the initial design principles underlying the intervention, to contribute to theory and classroom practice. A first version of the intervention was developed in collaboration with teachers, tested in pilot studies, and subsequently taught by 13 teachers to 22 classes. In four lessons, students focused on internal and external dialogues with and about short stories while attending to transformative reading aspects such as identification, experience-taking

and sympathy for characters. We assessed validity and practicality by using implementation and evaluation measures, e.g., teacher logs, time on task observations, students' evaluation forms and interviews with teachers. Suggestions for improvement were derived from the data (e.g., use more lesson time, make learning objectives more explicit) which led to redesigning the intervention; subsequently, six teachers taught it to six classes. Overall, teacher and student data supported the validity and practicality of the redesigned intervention. This study thus suggested that an iterative design process may result in valid and practical domain-specific interventions. In addition, it allowed for complementing the initial design principles with sub-principles for operationalization in the classroom.

References

- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The 'what' and 'why' of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11, 227-268. doi:10.1207/s15327965pli1104_01
- Desimone, L. M. (2009). Improving impact studies of teachers' professional development: Toward better conceptualizations and measures. *Educational Researcher*, 38, 181-199. doi:10.3102/0013189x08331140
- Fialho, O. (2012). Self-modifying experiences in literary reading: A model for reader response (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://era.library.ualberta.ca>
- Fialho, O. (2018). Deepening readers' perceptions of self and others: The role of enactment-imagery, resonance and sympathy. Paper presented at the IGEL Conference, Stavanger, Norway, July 27, 2018.
- Nieveen, N. (1999). Prototyping to reach product quality. In: J. van den Akker, R. Branch, K. Gustafson, N. Nieveen, & T. Plomp (Eds.), *Design approaches and tools in education and training* (pp. 125-136). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer O'Donnell, C. L. (2008). Defining, conceptualizing, and measuring fidelity of implementation and its relationship to outcomes in K-12 curriculum intervention research. *Review of Educational Research*, 78, 33-84. doi:10.3102/0034654307313793
- Rijlaarsdam, G., Janssen, T., Rietdijk, S., & Van Weijen, D. (2017). Reporting design principles for effective instruction of writing: Interventions as constructs. In R. Fidalgo & T. Olive (Series Eds.), & R. Fidalgo, K. Harris, & M. Braaksma (Vol. Eds.), *Studies in writing series: Vol. 34. Design principles for teaching effective writing* (pp. 280-313). Leiden, Netherlands: Brill.
- Schrijvers, M., Janssen, T., Fialho, O., & Rijlaarsdam, G. (2016). The impact of literature education on students' perceptions of self and others: Exploring personal and social learning experiences in relation to teacher approach. *L1 - Educational Studies in Language and Literature*, 17, 1-37. doi:10.17239/L1ESLL-2016.16.04.01
- Schrijvers, M., Janssen, T., Fialho, O., & Rijlaarsdam, G. (2018). Gaining insight into human nature: A review of literature classroom intervention studies. *Review of Educational Research*. Advance online publication. doi:10.3102/0034654318812914